Black Sea Synergy

The EU supports regional development in South-East Europe with its Black Sea Synergy initiative. By encouraging cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea, the synergy offers a flexible forum for developing practical region-wide solutions to address regional and global challenges.

Launched in 2007, the Black Sea Synergy encourages a bottom-up approach to project development, identifying and supporting the needs, priorities and aims of partners in the region, and what they want to do together. The key elements of the Black Sea Synergy include building confidence, fostering regional dialogue and achieving tangible results for states and citizens in the region. A stable, secure, resilient and prosperous Black Sea region is in the direct interest of its citizens and of the EU overall.

1. On 5 March 2019, the EEAS and the European Commission published the third implementation report of the Black Sea Synergy. The Joint Staff Working Document 'Black Sea Synergy: review of a regional cooperation initiative – period 2015-2018' is a factual review, underlining results, drawing lessons learned and flagging key aspects, further informing the developments of this initiative. It confirms the practical utility of the Black Sea Synergy initiative, its positive contribution to regional cooperation and its yet untapped potential.

This third review refers to the positive developments in the areas of blue growth, maritime policy, marine research and innovation, fisheries, environmental protection and climate change, cross-border cooperation and civil society engagement. Areas of cooperation such as education, science and innovation (beyond marine), culture and tourism, energy and transport, albeit less developed, receive interest from partners in the region. In particular, the region has potential for interconnectivity both within the EU and between continents, considering the "bridging role of the Black Sea basin" mentioned in the 2018 EU Communication on ‘Connecting Europe and Asia — Building Blocks for an EU Strategy'. Other fields could offer opportunities for future cooperation, such as social affairs, employment, and trade. The image of the areas of cooperation and their current progress can be visualised as the following three concentric circles:
The 2019 Joint Staff Working Document reviews links of the Black Sea Synergy with other EU strategies and policies relevant for the Black Sea region, such as the EU Strategy for Danube Region and the EU Communication on ‘Connecting Europe and Asia — Building Blocks for an EU Strategy’. It also reflects on the cooperation with regional and international organisations active in the Black Sea, particularly with the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).
2. In 2015, the EEAS and the European Commission published the second implementation report of the Black Sea Synergy. The Joint Staff Working Document 'Black Sea Synergy: review of a regional cooperation initiative', covering the 2009-2014 period, provided a snapshot of the progress achieved in the main areas of cooperation in the Black Sea region. This review referred to strengthening regional cooperation via concrete projects and making the best possible use of the wide range of EU's tools in order to bring added value to the citizens of the region while ensuring environmental sustainability.


See also

EU supports better cooperation in the Black Sea region
Burgas declaration, European Maritime Day 2018
Black Sea NGO Forum
Black Sea cross border cooperation
www.eeas.europa.eu

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