

# RESPONSE

Building Response Frameworks under existing  
& new Marine Pollution Challenges in the Black Sea



Milestone 10

**List of policy-related entities**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

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## Project background and context

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The RESPONSE, supported by the European Union EMFAF, under Grant Agreement no 101124661 has duration of 36 months, starting from 01.10.2023. The project consortium involves six partners from five different countries: Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Georgia. Five of the participants are based in countries bordering on the Black Sea, and the lead beneficiary, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), has a long history of working with the region and with members of the consortium. The partnership includes one university, two research institutes and three environmental NGOs: the Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN) regional NGO network based in Varna, Bulgaria; the National Institute of Marine Research and Development (NIMRD), based in Constanta, Romania, leading research institute for the Black Sea; the Institute of Market and Economic & Ecological Researches of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (IMEER NASU), Odesa, a public institution, part of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; the Black Sea Branch of Ukrainian Environmental Academy of Sciences (BSBUEAS) is Odesa-based NGO with a team of professional researchers; and the Greens Movement of Georgia / Friends of the Earth (GMG/FoE) – Georgia, an NGO, part of the international environmental network. All three beneficiaries from EU Member States have extensive experience in marine pollution projects under the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe programmes.

RESPONSE aims to identify and promote the development and establishment of new-generation advanced training schemes and curricula to support early warning, region-wide mechanisms for monitoring natural and man-made disasters. Various training programs, platforms and curriculum have been implemented to monitor marine pollution and ensure knowledge integration and dissemination. Still, training material, best practices, standards and protocols often differ among platforms and programs, hindering progress towards implementing an integrated, transdisciplinary and multidisciplinary marine pollution training system. Peculiar events, such as armed conflicts, create new environmental and societal challenges that call for international, coordinated responses.

RESPONSE acknowledges the importance of deeper understanding of marine ecosystems and river-delta-sea connections, the need for development of harmonized procedures, standards and methodologies in marine monitoring across the Black Sea countries to support healthy and resilient seas and foster integrated marine governance. The sustainable changes that are required for the establishment of efficient, advanced training schemes that would be integrated with the challenges, goals and specificities of the scientific and social context and make the most of the untapped capacity of stakeholders to promote regional awareness in the field.

In view of the background and context described above, the four overarching objectives of RESPONSE are: 1) IDENTIFY and UNDERSTAND the institutional and societal gaps and needs for effective, integrated, transdisciplinary and multidisciplinary marine pollution training systems; 2) DEVELOP effective training programs by assembling, integrating, and improving the most promising approaches and results into a comprehensive framework that consists of a set of methodological training tools, databases, policy recommendations, and background information; 3) SUPPORT the implementation of the EU and Regional Strategies, by developing operational guidelines for effective application, updating, monitoring and management of training programs on marine pollution; 4) EMPOWER marine pollution training, monitoring and mitigation by involving, inspiring and influencing stakeholders through a broader vision of co-design, co-creation, co-



establishment, co-implementation and co-assessment of the training programs.

## Executive summary

This document describes the place and role of Milestone 10 “List of policy related entities” within the structure and contents of WP4 “Communication, dissemination and exploitation” and its set of interrelated tasks, specifically in providing the link between stakeholder involvement, empowerment and engagement in building networks that will serve for broadening the transferability of project outputs and engaging entities on all policy levels in the regional planning and recommendations process. Thus Milestone 10 supports the project structure of RESPONSE and the sharing and replicating of the project results.

The overall process is described in the Communication Dissemination and Stakeholder Empowerment Plan (CDSEP) elaborated in the early stages of the project. The Plan has helped guide, streamline and harmonize outreach and dissemination activities throughout the implementation period. The principal target groups have been identified and their active participation ensured through different activities of co-designing, elaborating, testing, improving, and implementing the RESPONSE training outputs.

The groups of stakeholders envisaged in the CDSEP serve as a basis for the identification, description and ranking of the policy related entities and for the outline of their roles and levels of engagement in the regional replication and planning process.

This document provides an account of the engagement of the policy-related entities in the preparation of the operational training plans and an assessment of their interest or readiness to be involved in a regional platform/framework for the exchange of information and expertise and to participate in the elaboration and endorsement of the RESPONSE Regional Action Plan.

Outreach and networking with stakeholders and policy makers are essential for the empowerment process. It is ensured through different activities of co-designing, elaborating, testing, improving, and implementing the RESPONSE training outputs. Apart from digital tools the process has been supported through regional and national workshops, training curricula on national level, as well as through the use and testing of the RESPONSE digital toolkit and replication guide for sustainable institutional participation.

The involvement of policy-related entities in that set of activities is the foundation of the joint planning process on regional level. The envisaged Regional Action Plan (RAP) of RESPONSE is intended to focus on achieving effective training for preparedness and emergency response, with the aim to mitigate the impacts of marine pollution incidents and consequently reduce marine pollution overall.

Having previously approved a set of general regional strategic goals for RAP ensuring the continuation of the process of knowledge and capacity building on training, contingency planning, coordination, and long-term institutional developments, the partnership now provides a list of policy-related entities that are capable of taking up the process and developing the further integration of a large number of pollution sources, including pollution from armed conflicts, in the monitoring and pollution management activities for the Black Sea.

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Table 1 Names and roles of contributors to this deliverable.

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## Introduction

Milestone 10 is part of Work Package 4: “Communication, dissemination and exploitation” with an aim of ensuring the sustainability of RESPONSE assets. The work package has four specific objectives that clearly relate to the engagement of key stakeholder groups and policy entities in the dissemination of the project training plans on marine pollution preparedness and response, in the elaboration of regional strategic action plans, in building networks to achieve project sustainability, transfer project results to the Black Sea communities and countries and provide relevant policy recommendations. The specific objectives are:

- communicate and disseminate RESPONSE training outputs to key stakeholder groups and the wider public in the BS countries;
- establish regional strategic action plans for driving institutional participation;
- build networks and transferability potential;
- streamline policy recommendations.

The preparation of the list of policy-related entities, with reference to T4.2 “Building networks and transferability potential”, is an element describing the networks envisaged to serve as an instrument to transfer and broaden the outreach of project outputs outside the consortium.

## 1. The RESPONSE communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities - stakeholder empowerment and involvement of policy-related entities

The RESPONSE communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities have been designed in the early stages of the project in view of the specific characteristics of the Black Sea region and the countries involved in the consortium. The principal target groups, the beneficiaries/ users of project outputs, have been identified and their active participation ensured through different activities of co-designing, elaborating, testing, improving, and implementing the RESPONSE training outputs.

The project teams have identified, in the stakeholder mapping process (D1.1), a special category of targeted beneficiaries in each country: the key stakeholders. They are specifically targeted because of their key functions and responsibilities in the emergency preparedness and response to marine pollution. The key stakeholders of RESPONSE have been continuously engaged in dissemination and outreach activities to keep them informed about the progress of the project. Certain key stakeholders have been closely involved in the co-creation process and its development at national and regional level.

The key stakeholders in all Black Sea countries are primarily government agencies with clearly defined responsibilities in existing legislation. An additional but important role is played by research institutes and academia involved in monitoring, curriculum development, and training. A lesser role is played by business associations and NGOs with specific expertise. The key stakeholders have been identified by their institutional names and functions and the partner teams continued to work closely with them.

The RESPONSE Communication Strategy, used as basis for the Communication, Dissemination and Stakeholder Empowerment Plan (CDSE Plan), describes the project target groups and sets communication goals to ensure that the project information, messages, and updates reach the relevant target audiences through the most appropriate channels.

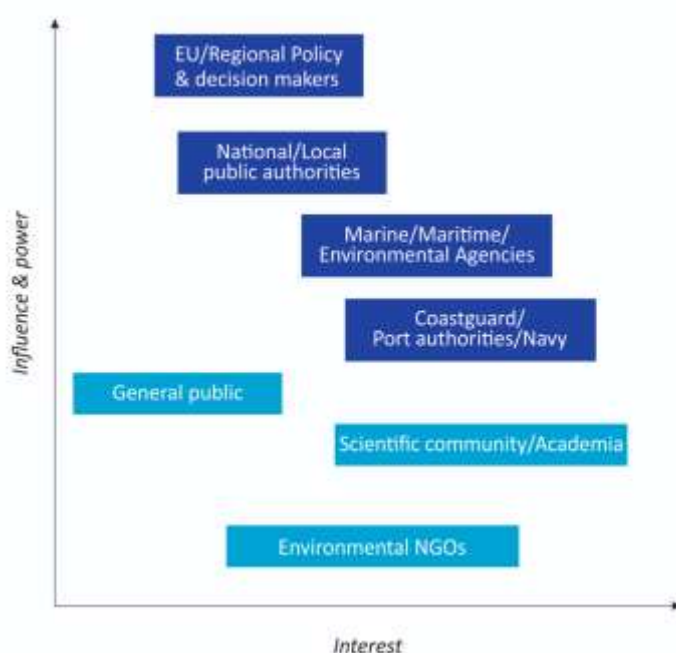


Fig. 1 Target groups and their relation in terms of Influence and power and Interest in the project

The Communication Strategy is set to support the stakeholder communication and empowerment process and the production of a strategic document, the Regional Action Plan (RAP) for training and capacity building and policy recommendations for Black Sea region stakeholders.

The empowerment of the project stakeholders is described in the CDSE Plan as an open and collaborative process of stakeholder involvement in communication and information dissemination, in the co-creation of curricula, and national operation training plans, and in the joint efforts aiming to influence regional policies. Starting with intensive communication, moving further to networking to extend project outputs and achieve sustainability, the empowerment leads to a planning stage on regional level. The preparation of the Regional Action Plan (RAP), based on collaborative decision-making, transparent communication, and capacity building presents a tangible stakeholder empowerment act with an aim to influence planning and policies affecting training in preparedness and emergency response for the Black Sea.

The CDSE Plan envisages active participation of all relevant stakeholders, including policy makers, administrations, scientists, experts, NGOs, and the public in outreach activities ensured through co-designing, elaborating, testing, improving, and implementing the RESPONSE training outputs. Policy-makers and policy-related entities are in the focus of special attention and are engaged with the provision of input to work during workshops, dedicated surveys, or one-on-one interactions. The engagement of policy-related entities in stakeholder empowerment can foster transparency, confidence building and sustainable outcomes.

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## 2. The project Communication, Dissemination and Stakeholder Empowerment (CDSE) Plan and the related project outputs

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The CDSE Plan supports the implementation of RESPONSE and the achievement of its key objective: to develop and test new training schemes and curricula for the monitoring, reporting, management, and mitigation of marine pollution, with particular attention to pollution caused by armed conflicts. The project is to combine existing knowledge and expertise, and develop the next generation, fit-for-purpose, multidimensional training schemes on marine pollution preparedness and response.

The tasks of the CDSE Plan within the RESPONSE project are integral to effectively disseminating training outputs to key stakeholder groups and the wider public in the Black Sea countries, as well as to establishing regional strategic action plans for driving institutional participation. Additionally, this plan aims to build networks comprising key stakeholders but also policy-related entities, to enhance transferability potential, and streamline policy recommendations.

The CDSE Plan (part of WP4) uses several project outputs and feeds into related Work Packages and Tasks. The review of the target groups and the envisaged communication and dissemination activities outlined in the Plan are based on the stakeholder mapping in WP1. The setting up of networks (T4.2) again is based on the outputs of the mapping process (D1.1), which has identified groups of key stakeholders - organizations, public and private actors - with important functions and roles in the preparedness and emergency response process.

The identified key stakeholders have been involved in the setting-up, co-creation and operation of advanced, long term and sustainable training schemes (Tasks 3.1. and 4.1). This is the essence of Stakeholder Empowerment, the open, collaborative, participatory and long-term process envisaged in RESPONSE. Stakeholder Empowerment also involves Co-Creation (Task 2.1) and Co-evaluation (Task 3.3.) activities that have been ensured from an early stage. The finale of the process is the Regional Action Plan driving institutional participation (T4.3).

The present Milestone 10 provides a list of policy-related entities that are engaged to create the conditions of building networks that will serve in broadening the transferability of project outputs. T4.2 will enhance the RESPONSE capacity to serve as a vehicle of networking between Black Sea countries that are not yet part of the EU but are in the process of integration and/or association (Ukraine, Georgia) or are already EU members (Greece, Bulgaria, Romania) with long-time functioning European platforms and initiatives such as the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

The policy-related entities reviewed in this milestone comprise both representatives of the key stakeholders identified on national level and other entities outside the project partner countries and their national structures. The interrelation between them is outlined further in this description.

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### 3. Stakeholder roles and involvement

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The RESPONSE project takes an inclusive and layered approach to stakeholder involvement. It recognizes that effective environmental governance in the Black Sea region requires the active participation of institutions that have legal mandates, technical expertise and the ability to engage with communities.

The main actors in all Black Sea countries are government agencies with clearly defined responsibilities in existing legislation. An additional but important role is played by research institutes and academia involved in monitoring, curriculum development, and training. A lesser role is played by business associations and NGOs with specific expertise. Throughout the project implementation period the partner teams have worked closely with them.

The key stakeholders of RESPONSE, identified in the stakeholder mapping process, have been continuously engaged in dissemination and outreach activities to keep them informed about the progress of the project and to involve them in the co-creation process and its development at national and regional level. The key stakeholders have also been directly involved in the mapping of the legislative, institutional, and operational context in the participating Black Sea countries. Their organizational structures, needs and training capacity have been assessed. They have been key actors in the co-creation of the training curricula on national level, the monitoring and evaluation activities, the production of national training operation plans.

The scientific knowledge and information from the RESPONSE studies, identifying and evaluating the types and impacts of marine pollution, including those from armed conflicts, and recognizing tools that are being used to address these impacts helped to involve key players and focus on real-life issues related to marine pollution and response and the elaboration of tailored training operational plans.

The RESPONSE Regional Action Plan will assign strategic goals but also specific roles to stakeholders in developing the Black Sea regional cooperation in the field of monitoring and management of marine pollution and will foresee ways to facilitate training, knowledge exchange, and cooperation actions among coastal countries.

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## 4. Networking and building common conceptual and cooperation platforms for transferability of project results

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The RESPONSE consortium will draw on their existing networks and continuously work on expanding these networks to new stakeholders among Black Sea marine pollution response entities. The advisory board, a group of renowned external experts, will provide valuable feedback on the RESPONSE communicating outcomes and will also be encouraged to spread information through their international networks.

Local and central public authorities and national level authorities and policy makers will be recipients and final beneficiaries of the project outputs: new training schemes and curricula for the monitoring, reporting, management and mitigation of marine pollution.

Maritime, port, coastguard, interior etc. administrations, environmental protection and public health administrations etc. expect innovative solutions and sharing of experience on emergency response plans, protocols, activities in the Black Sea countries and in the EU; information on potential regulatory developments on national, regional and EU level; science-based evidence and information on types of pollution, familiar and emerging, including pollution from armed conflicts, pollution sources and impacts on the Black Sea environment and human health.

The scientific community has specific expectations from networking mostly related to the provision of information: information of the RESPONSE success stories in addressing emergency response pollution situations; information exchange on the types of pollutants of the Black Sea, familiar and emerging, including pollution from armed conflicts; information about all RESPONSE deliverables and expectations for further participation.

The general public can contribute to networking by understanding and supporting the establishment and operation of an advanced training system preventing marine and mitigating marine pollution. The environmental NGOs, though part of the same target group, are expected to be active in networking and advocacy. They will be informed of the new training schemes and curricula that would contribute to the improvement of the situation with the monitoring, reporting, management, and mitigation of marine pollution, with particular attention to pollution caused by armed conflicts, the latter being of particular interest to the public in the project area. NGOs also expect from the project information and science-based data that contribute to the transparency of communication.

The lists of policy-related entities cover the identified target audiences in the CDSE Plan and their correlation in terms of Influence/power and Interest in the project are grouped in the following section into four groups.

## 5. List of Policy-related entities to be mobilized in the policy recommendation process

### 5.1 Policy makers and decision-makers on local, national, Black Sea regional and EU level

Policy makers and decision-makers on local, national, Black Sea regional and EU level: local authorities, national authorities including ministries of environment, transport, interior, health, defence/navy etc., regional and international bodies like the Black Sea Commission, EU agencies like EMSA, Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea etc. The consortium is familiar with the numerous institutions at regional, European, and international level and acknowledges the difficulties in actively communicating and engaging them in networking on the project. Relations with institutions directly related to the Black Sea and those at national level in each of the partner countries are more successful.

Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (the Black Sea Commission or BSC) via its Permanent Secretariat – Istanbul, Turkey - <https://www.blackseacommission.org/> email: [secretariat@blackseacommission.org](mailto:secretariat@blackseacommission.org); regional policy entity; project contact - Pollution Monitoring and Assessment Officer, involved in regional co-creation workshop and supporting other related projects.

European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) – Lisbon, Portugal – [experts@emsa.europa.eu](mailto:experts@emsa.europa.eu) – contact provided by the project coordinator of NIMRD, Constanta, Romania, member in EMSA/IMS Correspondence Expert Group on “Drift Modelling”

EMSO ERIC — the European Multidisciplinary Seafloor and water column Observatory European Research Infrastructure Consortium – <https://emso.eu/> - Rome, Italy – project contact of IMPEER NASU, Ukraine, formalized through Memorandum of Understanding.

Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) for the Black Sea – EU sea basin initiative – <https://black-sea-maritime-agenda.ec.europa.eu/#> - Secretariat of the CMA, Coordinator maintains contacts with teams from Black Sea countries

Black Sea Assistance Mechanism (BSAM) – regional basin instrument - contacts through focal point and Secretariat of the CMA - <https://black-sea-maritime-agenda.ec.europa.eu/about/bsam>

European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) - The implementing agency managing EU funding streams — including EMFAF- [https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/index_en)

Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) <https://www.bsec-organization.org/>

Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC)– Brussels, Belgium - <https://cpmr-balkan-blacksea.org/>

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) - Brussels, Belgium – <https://cpmr.org/>

Intergroup on Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) at EU Parliament - <https://www.searica.eu/>

EEA Marine Litter Watch Programme (EEA citizen science programme) – Copenhagen, Denmark - <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en> coordinator and focal points for the Black Sea and the Mediterranean

Ministry of Transport and Communications, Bulgaria - [bma@marad.bg](mailto:bma@marad.bg), [www.marad.bg](http://www.marad.bg) – Executive Agency "Maritime Administration" Sofia, Executive director

Bulgarian Port Infrastructure Company, Sofia - governing body of Bulgarian ports for public transport - <http://www.bgports.bg/bg/> - Strategic Development, Port Services and Ecology Directorate, Director

Romanian Naval Authority (ANR) – Constanta, Romania, [rna@rna.ro](mailto:rna@rna.ro) Pollution Research Department, General Director

Local authority – Varna Municipality, Bulgaria – [adm\\_obslyzhvane@varna.bg](mailto:adm_obslyzhvane@varna.bg) – Department of Civil Protection Activities – Directorate "Security Management and Public Order Control", Head of the department

Constanța County Prefecture, Constanta, Romania - [cancelarie@prefecturaconstanta.ro](mailto:cancelarie@prefecturaconstanta.ro) – government authority, responsible department official

Constanța County Council (CJC), Constanta, Romania [consjud@cjc.ro](mailto:consjud@cjc.ro), local county public administration

Tulcea County Council (CJT), Tulcea, Romania - [office@cjtulcea.ro](mailto:office@cjtulcea.ro) - local public authority, vice president and responsible officials for conservation and rapid response

State Environmental Inspectorate of the South-Western District (Mykolaiv and Odesa regions), <https://sw.dei.gov.ua/> - direct communication and work within RESPONSE. Face-to-face interviews, participation in meetings, in co-creation of training programmes

Department of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Odessa Regional State Administration - implements regional environmental protection and management policies <https://ecology.od.gov.ua/pro-departament/> - direct communication, co-creation, participation in training programmes

The following institutions in Georgia have been addressed with communication messages about the project. Further involvement will be on the basis of the advanced training curricula prepared by the project.

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) – central environmental authority

National Environmental Agency (NEA/MEPA), Georgia - is responsible for environmental monitoring systems, including marine and coastal waters

Environmental Supervision Department (ESD/MEPA), Georgia – enforcement of environmental legislation

Conventional Division of The Black Sea Protection (ESD/MEPA) – provides supervision for the protection of the Black Sea against pollution

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (MESD) – provides important maritime functions such as national spatial planning frameworks, maritime transport authority, State Hydrographic Service and maritime education.

## 5.2 Relevant marine and environmental protection departments and agencies/authorities/operators

Relevant stakeholders including: marine and environmental protection departments and agencies, including public health agencies, all of them responsible for marine pollution monitoring and protection; maritime administrations, coast guards, port authorities, interior authorities, naval authorities and other responsible authorities for emergency response and preparedness in case of marine accidents and pollution, especially pollution by armed conflicts; businesses affected by marine pollution, coastal businesses concerned by the state of the marine environment and the coast etc.

Maritime Administration Directorate – Varna, Bulgaria - [hm\\_vn@marad.bg](mailto:hm_vn@marad.bg) – director and experts on environmental policies involved in networking

Bulgarian Port Infrastructure Company, Varna, Bulgaria - <http://www.bgports.bg/bg/> - Strategic Development, Port Services and Ecology Directorate, Director

Naval authorities – Headquarters in Varna, Bulgaria - <https://navy.mod.bg/> - Liaison officer and experts contacted and involved.

Ministry of Interior Regional Directorates "Fire Safety and Civil Protection" and "Border Police" – Varna and Burgas, Bulgaria - [fire-varna@mvr.bg](mailto:fire-varna@mvr.bg), [rdgp-burgas@mvr.bg](mailto:rdgp-burgas@mvr.bg) – inspectors, experts

Black Sea Basin Directorate (BSBD) – Varna, Bulgaria - <https://www.bsbd.bg/> - director, experts

Dobrogea-Litoral Water Basin Administration (ABA-DL) – Constanta, Romania – Regional water quality monitoring, enforcement of EU directives on water and pollution – Technical Director

Constanța Emergency Situations Inspectorate (ISU Constanța) - Constanta, Romania - [urgente@isudobrogea.ro](mailto:urgente@isudobrogea.ro) – Chief inspector

National Environmental Guard – Constanța County Commissariat, Romania - [cjconstanta@gnm.ro](mailto:cjconstanta@gnm.ro) - Chief Commissioner

Constanța Maritime Ports Administration (APMC), Constanta, Romania - [apmc\\_mediu@constantza-port.ro](mailto:apmc_mediu@constantza-port.ro) - Sustainable Development Department (for environmental issues)

Ukrainian Sea Ports Authority: USPA <https://www.uspa.gov.ua/en/homepage-en> - state enterprise managing Ukraine's seaport infrastructure - direct communication, co-creation, participation in training programmes

The following key agencies and authorities in Georgia have been informed of project activities. Further efforts will be made to engage them in the promotion of the project advanced training curricula.

Maritime Transport Agency of Georgia (MTA/MESD), national maritime authority based in Batumi

Emergency Management Service (Ministry of Internal Affairs - MIA), Georgia – national disaster and risk management contact

Coast Guard Department (Border Police of Georgia/MIA) - responsible for maritime border control, maritime safety, and participation in marine incident response.

Government of Adjara Autonomous Republic, Georgia – Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Government of Apkhazeti Autonomous Republic, Georgia – Environmental Department

Regional Administrations of Guria and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (coastal regions of Georgia)

Kolkheti National Park Administration (KNP/Agency of Protected Areas/MEPA), Georgia

Ltd Batumi Water, Georgia – water company

Poti Free Industrial Zone (FIZ), Georgia – economic entity

### 5.3 Broader scientific community institutions and academic entities

Broader scientific community including researchers and academic entities with functions on marine pollution monitoring, prevention of pollution, environmental management, civil defence/emergency response have been involved in networking. Their main interest is information from RESPONSE and they can also support policy related activities and advocacy.

Institute of Oceanology at the BAS, Varna, Bulgaria - <https://io-bas.bg> – director, scientific secretary, researchers

Technical University – Varna, Bulgaria, Department of Ecology and Environmental Protection <https://www.eoos.tu-varna.bg/> Head of the EEP Department

National Institute for Marine Research and Development “Grigore Antipa” (NIMRD), Constanta, Romania - <https://www.rmri.ro/>, [rmateescu@alpha.rmri.ro](mailto:rmateescu@alpha.rmri.ro) – marine monitoring, scientific research, scientific policy advice

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration (ARBDD), Tulcea, Romania - [arbdd@ddbrra.ro](mailto:arbdd@ddbrra.ro) – national protected area – chief contact Governor

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – School of Biology – Department of Ecology (AUTH), Thessaloniki, Greece – <https://mazaris.net/> [amazaris@bio.auth.gr](mailto:amazaris@bio.auth.gr) - marine monitoring, modelling, scientific research, training, scientific policy advice

University of the Aegean – Department of Marine Sciences – Mytilene, Greece - <https://www.mar.aegean.gr/index.php?lang=en&pg=0> marine monitoring, modelling, scientific research, training, scientific policy advice

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens – School of Science – Department of Biology (NKUA), Athens, Greece - <http://en.biol.uoa.gr/> - marine monitoring, scientific research, training, scientific policy advice

State Organization "Institute of Market and Economic & Ecological Researches of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine" - <https://impeer.org.ua/> - direct participation and work within RESPONSE partnership.

Ukrainian Scientific Center of Ecology of the Sea (UkrSCES) – <https://sea.gov.ua/?lang=en> – direct communication, participation in meetings, co-creation of training programmes

Institute of Marine Biology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine <https://imb.odessa.ua/> - direct communication and work within RESPONSE; participation in meetings

Kherson State Maritime Academy (KSMA) [https://ksma.ks.ua/?page\\_id=284&lang=en](https://ksma.ks.ua/?page_id=284&lang=en) - direct communication and work within RESPONSE. Face-to-face interviews, participation in meetings, in co-creation of training programmes.

Odesa State Environmental University (part of the I.I. Mechnikov Odessa National University) <https://universities.studyinukraine.gov.ua/en/minedu/university/109/contacts/> - direct communication and work within RESPONSE partnership, face-to-face interviews.

The following academia and scientific institutions in Georgia have been addressed with communication messages about the project. Further involvement will be encouraged and the advanced training curricula of the project will be promoted to them.

Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU), Georgia - leading national university with expertise in marine ecology, hydrology, environmental sciences, and spatial analysis.

Iliia State University, Georgia - research-oriented institution active in biodiversity conservation, environmental governance, marine archaeology and applied environmental sciences.

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University (BSU), Georgia - regional university located in the Black Sea coastal zone with focus on marine and coastal environmental research, regional academic hub and potential implementation site for advanced marine pollution training schemes.

Batumi State Maritime Academy (BSMA/MESD), Georgia – provides training in sea-going professions, having a major subunit Poti Maritime Training Center

Laboratories (Batumi, Poti), Georgia – monitoring of pollution activities

## 5.4 The general public and environmental NGOs

This target audience can involve policy-related entities such as influential informal groups and platforms, pressure groups for policies support, and different mostly environmental NGOs, focal points, think tanks etc.

Marine Cluster Bulgaria - <https://www.marinecluster.com/bg/> - national hub for CMA/BSAM for Bulgaria

Mare Nostrum NGO, Constanta, Romania – <https://www.marenostrum.ro/en> - national hub for CMA/BSAM for Romania

International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) - Athens, Greece – <https://icbss.org/> - think tank international policy NGO

Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO ECSDE) – Athens, Greece – <https://mio-ecsde.org/> expert environmental and policy support NGO, network

## M10 LIST OF POLICY-RELATED ENTITIES

Black Sea Branch of Environmental Academy Science of Ukraine – <https://www.facebook.com/blackseabbranch/> – national Sea and CMA oriented NGO; direct involvement with RESPONSE partnership, project partner.

The following NGOs in Georgia are active in the environmental sphere and will be engaged in the extension of project outputs and the promotion of the advanced training curricula prepared by RESPONSE.

Greens Movement of Georgia / Friends of the Earth – Georgia (GMG/FoE-GE) – national and international activities

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) – Caucasus Programme – based in Georgia

CENN – Caucasus Environmental NGO Network – based in Georgia

SABUKO – Society for Nature Conservation – based in Georgia

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## 6. Regional Action Plan and advanced and new training scheme and curricula

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The Communication Dissemination and Stakeholder Empowerment (CDSE) Plan elaborated in the early stages of the project has helped guide, streamline and harmonize outreach and dissemination activities throughout the implementation period. Outreach and active participation of stakeholders and policy makers will be ensured through different activities of co-designing, elaborating, testing, improving, and implementing the RESPONSE training outputs. The final product of the joint planning process on regional level is the envisaged Regional Action Plan (RAP) of RESPONSE. The purpose of RAP is to create a common background- a conceptual and co-operational umbrella for all Black Sea coastal countries to:

- (a) ensure that they all have contingency planning and coordination / operation mechanisms,
- (b) support institutional developments for sustainable and long-term joint response training activities,
- (c) integrate a large number of marine pollution sources in the monitoring and management scene, supported under specialized advanced training courses.

The RESPONSE partnership has set two strategic goals for the Regional Action Plan aiming to develop the Black Sea regional cooperation in the field of monitoring and management of marine pollution and facilitate training, knowledge exchange, and cooperation actions among coastal countries.

The two strategic goals approved by the partnership are:

- 1) encourage the regional cooperation and advanced training in monitoring and management of familiar and emerging marine pollution sources, specifically pollution from armed conflicts
- 2) facilitate training, knowledge exchange, and cooperation actions among coastal countries with particular attention to marine pollution incidents resulting from armed conflicts.

The Action Plan will create the circumstances for the establishment of a regional platform and a framework for the exchange of information and expertise on operational, technical, scientific, legal, and financial matters and will promote spaces for dialogue in conducting coordinated action at the national, regional, and global levels for the implementation of the prevention and emergency responses, including those from armed-conflicts.

The networking activities and the involvement of policy-related entities on all levels will support the co-development and sustainable implementation of the Regional Action Plan activities. To seal the sustainability of these processes, RESPONSE will ensure a continuous interactive process with evaluation and fine-tuning well beyond the project, and the introduction of incentives for further participation and uptake.

A detailed description of the networking activities and their implications for involvement with policy-related entities will be elaborated in D4.5.

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## 7. Recommendations

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Networking on RESPONSE issues is an important element ensuring the sustainable exploitation and replication of project outputs. Networking involves communication between various policy-related entities in the Black Sea countries and outside the region. It supports not only project implementation but the overall policy process and the open participatory stakeholder empowerment as well.

All relevant EU legislation and their follow-up established mechanisms require that EU and neighbourhood countries should set up systems that are compatible with each other so that countries can share data and the EC can monitor that the rules are respected. In terms of the project area, not all Black Sea countries share the same legal status (EU, non-EU), with Ukraine currently in the process of entering the EU, nor they endorse same institutional cultures or access and familiarity to technological advances.

Networking toward stakeholder empowerment involves building of professional relationships and advocacy, as policy increasingly moves from hierarchical decision-making to complex, interdependent network governance.

The following recommendations are related to networking with policy-level actors:

- Improve policy alignment, operational capacity and stakeholder coordination across the Black Sea region;
- Establish a dedicated regional platform for data exchange, expertise sharing, and coordinated response planning with support from stakeholders (e.g. maritime authorities, environmental agencies, scientific institutions, and emergency response administrations);
- Encourage integration of marine pollution modules in national civil protection curricula
- Harmonize emergency protocols and standard operating procedures (SOPs), early-warning protocols, and notification chains across countries;
- Prioritize stakeholder co-creation in policy development. Planning for national or EU policy issues should adopt participatory and not be top-down approach.
- Strengthen links between science and policy-makers and engage scientists in the policy assessment process
- Ensure continuity and ownership of project outputs beyond project lifetime. The outputs of the RESPONSE project, especially the Regional Action Plan and training curricula, should be embedded within existing national frameworks.

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## Conclusions

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Building networks is regarded as an instrument for broadening outreach and transferability of project outputs. The RESPONSE networks will serve as vehicle for new opportunities for the regional Black Sea stakeholders. They will enhance contacts of partner stakeholders from EU and candidate countries and regional actors and important policy-related entities. The transferability potential will also be constructed in terms of applying the project's outputs in areas other than the project area.

The networking process will be supported by long-time functioning European platforms and initiatives such as the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). Links will be established with other EU projects and networks of excellence. Contacting policy-related entities, engaging key persons of important institutions, organizing joint coordination and discussions are the instruments of engagement and commitment to engagement with new generation advanced training schemes and curricula, for driving sustainable institutional participation, and an exploitation strategy for the project resources.

All relevant EU legislation and their follow-up established mechanisms require that EU and neighbourhood countries should set up systems that are compatible with each other so that countries can share data and the EC can monitor that the rules are respected. In terms of the project area, not all Black Sea countries share the same legal status (EU, non-EU), with Ukraine currently in the process of entering the EU, nor they endorse same institutional cultures or access and familiarity to technological advances.

RESPONSE is working to improve the situation and provide the regional Black Sea community and stakeholders with new training schemes and curricula for the monitoring, reporting, management and mitigation of marine pollution, with particular attention to pollution caused by armed conflicts.

In the field of preparedness and response to marine pollution this means that in some cases incompatible and incomparable data and methodologies are applied for monitoring, training, and assessment purposes. Lack of modern equipment and ICT tools to provide relevant platforms for data exchange is hindering harmonized operations.

The stakeholders' societal needs and requirements will drive the co-creation of the framework for the establishment and operation of an advanced training system. Towards this direction the project has explored and addressed the challenges, resources, needs and structure of these authorities/organizations aiming to provide tailored training schemes which will be performed, but also updated, on a regular basis for a long period. To seal the sustainability of these processes, RESPONSE will develop specific Regional Action Plans to ensure a continuous interactive process with evaluation and fine-tuning well beyond the project, and the introduction of incentives for further participation and uptake. Setting the strategic goals is the start of the Regional Action Plan, for driving sustainable institutional participation, and an exploitation strategy for the project resources.

Their attention will be drawn to the need to conduct sustainable training activities on marine pollution monitoring and emergency response. There is an urgent need that preparedness and response mechanisms on marine pollution should align with conflict resilience frameworks e. g. strengthening of decision-making processes for taking mitigation actions after attacks similar to strengthening after accidental oil spills from shipping activity.

Effort will also be applied to engage regional stakeholders with the idea of integration of the Action Plan within any future update of the Strategic Action Plan for the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation of the Black Sea or similar strategic documents.

Policy recommendations will be channelled to the competent state authorities of the Black Sea countries at the Regional Workshop that implement legislation on monitoring and management of marine pollution and the need for further initiatives such as developing policies on statutory, regulatory, or technical issues that emanate from the applicable legislation. During the implementation of the RESPONSE project, these needs will be brought to surface, as many opportunities for feedback mechanisms will arise.