



Sustainable Blue
Economy Partnership

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE SELECTED PROPOSALS

2025 Transnational Access Call to Research Infrastructures

“Piloting access to shared Research Infrastructures at pan-European scale to reinforce capacities and support the transformation of the blue economy”

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General information on the selected proposals

Contact info:
sbepcallresearchinfra@mur.gov.it



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ABOUT THIS CALL

In February 2025, the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership launched its first Transnational Access Call to Research Infrastructures (RI), marking a new step in supporting a more connected and innovative European blue economy. The initiative enables researchers, companies, and other stakeholders to apply for access to a portfolio of 49 facilities and services offered by the Partnership’s network of providers across member and partner countries.

Through this pilot call, the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership aimed to strengthen cooperation, optimise the use

of research infrastructures, and advance its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. The call invited proposals addressing one or more of the previous year’s intervention areas—Digital Twins of the Ocean, Multi-Use Infrastructures, Sea-Use Planning, and Blue Bioresources—across Europe’s sea basins.

Applications closed on 29 April 2025, and the three selected projects reflect the Partnership’s mission to foster open science, international collaboration, and impact-driven research for a sustainable blue future.

MACAROCONNECT

Proposal ID: SBEP2025RIs-379

Title: Is Macaronesia connected?
Linking physical oceanography with marine ecology

Principal Investigator (PI):

- Prof. Helena Calado – University of the Azores (UAc), Portugal
- Expertise: Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), coastal zone management, environmental planning and legislation, climate change impacts, and ocean governance. Over 25 years of experience in European and international research projects, with leadership roles in BlueConnect and MSP initiatives across Macaronesia.

Consortium Partners:

- **University of the Azores (UAc), Portugal – Faculty of Sciences and Technology** PI: Prof. Helena Calado Role: Project coordination, stakeholder engagement, MSP expertise, integration with EU and Macaronesian governance frameworks. Team: Bruna De Ramos (PhD), Débora Gutierrez (MSc), Natali Santos (MSc).
- **Fundação Maio Biodiversidade (FMB), Cape Verde – Environmental NGO.** PI: Janete Agues. Role: Field data collection, community engagement, biodiversity monitoring on Maio Island. Team: Thais Macedo (MSc).

Research Infrastructures (RIs)

requested: OSCM – Ocean Science Centre Mindelo (Cabo Verde, managed by GEOMAR) – Physical access (2×5

days).

Activities: deployment of drifters, zooplankton sampling, access to laboratory and data facilities.

Geographical focus: Atlantic Ocean, Macaronesian archipelagos (Azores, Madeira, Selvagens, Canary Islands, Cape Verde)

Project duration: Nov 2025 – Jun 2026

Keywords: Marine connectivity, Atlantic, drifters, ocean governance, MSP

Project description:

MACAROCONNECT addresses ecological connectivity in Macaronesia, a region of strategic importance for both the EU and neighbouring Atlantic partners. Despite its high biodiversity, there are knowledge gaps on how physical and biological processes link the archipelagos. The project integrates:

- Lagrangian drifter experiments (tracking ocean currents and dispersal).
- Particle tracking modelling (based on Copernicus Marine Service hydrodynamic data).
- Zooplankton sampling to assess biological connectivity.

Results will feed into the BlueConnect project and inform debates on a potential “blue corridor” across Macaronesia, bridging EU and non-EU governance. By combining in situ and modelling approaches, the project will provide new insights into connectivity patterns, supporting sustainable ocean governance, MSP, and marine biodiversity protection.

MARVEL

Proposal ID: SBEP2025RIs-130

Title: Multiple acoustic observing systems to investigate soundscapes and acoustic behaviour of marine fauna in relation to underwater noise from vessels in islands ecosystems

Principal Investigator (PI):

- Alice Affatati (MSc, PhD Candidate) – National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics (OGS), Trieste, Italy.
- Expertise: marine bioacoustics, underwater noise impacts on fauna, ecosystem acoustics, with extensive international experience (e.g., UN Ocean Decade, SONORA, SLIPSTREAM).

Consortium Partners:

- **OGS – Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale (Italy)**
- **JASCO Applied Sciences (Europe), Germany**
- **Morigenos – Slovenian Marine Mammal Society, Slovenia**
- **MediaLab APS, Italy**
- **Counting Whales, Martinique (France)**

Research Infrastructures (RIs) requested:

- **OSCM – Ocean Science Centre Mindelo (Cabo Verde, managed by GEOMAR)** – Physical access (approx. 15 days).
- **SOCIB – Balearic Islands Coastal Observing and Forecasting System, Spain** – Remote access to glider fleet (approx. 15 days).

Geographical focus: Mediterranean Sea

(Ibiza Channel) & Atlantic Ocean (Mindelo, Cabo Verde)

Project duration: Feb 2026 – Nov 2026

Keywords: Marine soundscapes, underwater noise, low-noise MPAs, stakeholder involvement, acoustic behaviour

Project description: MARVEL investigates marine soundscapes and the impact of vessel and offshore infrastructure noise on biodiversity in two island ecosystems (Ibiza Channel, Western Mediterranean; Mindelo, Cabo Verde, Eastern Atlantic). Soundscapes (biophony, geophony, anthropophony) are vital for marine species' communication, navigation, and behaviour, but are increasingly threatened by anthropogenic noise.

Building on the SBEP BluEcho project, MARVEL addresses knowledge gaps identified by the EU Technical Group on Underwater Noise through three objectives:

- OB1: Characterise marine soundscapes across ecosystems.
- OB2: Assess acoustic behaviour of selected taxa (e.g., cetaceans, fish).
- OB3: Promote open science, stakeholder engagement, and harmonised conservation strategies.

MARVEL will contribute to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, Descriptor 11), EU Biodiversity Strategy, and the design of low-noise MPAs/OECMs. It will also build capacity in Cabo Verde by engaging local fishers, MPA managers, and government authorities to balance tourism, fisheries, and biodiversity protection.

MOOSE_GE2026

Proposal ID: SBEP2025RIs-626

Title: Mediterranean Ocean Observing System on the Environnement – 2026 Cruise

Principal Investigator (PI):

- Dr. Laurent Coppola – CNRS, Laboratoire d’Océanographie de Villefranche (LOV), France.
- Expertise: Marine biogeochemistry, oxygen and carbon cycles, air-sea CO₂ fluxes, autonomous platforms (gliders, Argo, USVs). Coordinator of the MOOSE network since 2019, long-standing experience in multidisciplinary observing systems and European infrastructures (EMSO, Euro-Argo, JERICO, OceanGliders).

Consortium Partners:

- **CNRS – LOV, Sorbonne University (France).**
Lead organisation. Coordinator of the MOOSE program and long-term GE cruises. Provides expertise in biogeochemical cycles, carbonate chemistry, and platform integration.
- **EMSO ERIC – European Multidisciplinary Seafloor and Water Column Observatory (Italy).**
PI: Simo Cusi (Engineer, Rome). Expertise: ocean monitoring technologies, AUV operations, logistics. Responsible for testing and validation of GEORGE project technologies (TRL 7–8) and coordinating EMSO’s Ligurian node.

Research Infrastructures (RIs)

requested: RV Gaia Blu (CNR, Italy) – dedicated research vessel for a 10-day cruise in May 2026 (alternative window July 2026).

Geographical focus: Northwestern Mediterranean Sea, specifically Ligurian Sea and Gulf of Lion

Project duration: 20–30 May 2026 (10 days at sea)

Total self-funded costs: €210,366

Keywords: Northwestern Mediterranean, observing systems, carbon flux, multiparameter platforms, cross-ERIC collaboration

Project description: MOOSE_GE2026 is the 2026 edition of the MOOSE-GE cruise, a flagship multidisciplinary campaign in the northwestern Mediterranean. Conducted aboard the RV Gaia Blu, the mission will cover 75 stations across the Ligurian Sea and Gulf of Lion to assess the physical, biogeochemical, and biological state of regional waters. Activities include:

- Mooring maintenance (EMSO ERIC).
- CTD casts with water sampling for nutrients, oxygen, carbonate chemistry.
- Biological sampling (zooplankton, environmental DNA).
- Deployment of autonomous platforms (gliders, Argo floats, USVs).

The project will act as a demonstrator for cross-ERIC collaboration between EMSO, ICOS, and Euro-Argo, validating novel sensors (Lab-on-Chip, carbonate

chemistry) and interoperability tools for carbon cycle monitoring.

Results will feed into climate models, Digital Twin Ocean (DTO), MSFD Good Environmental Status (GES), and Mission Ocean targets. The cruise also contributes to MEGASCOPE, monitoring marine megafauna and marine litter. All data will be open-access, shared via SISMER, SEANOE, and European portals, following FAIR principles and IOC-UNESCO OBPS standards.



