



SUPPORTING THE BLUE BIOECONOMY AT THE REGIONAL SCALE

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27.09.2024



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PROJECT OVERVIEW



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BBC

12
PARTNERS

9
REGIONS

7
WORK PACKAGES

36
MONTH

2.3
M€ BUDGET



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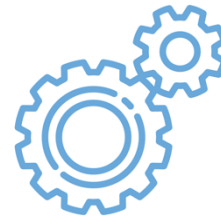
Project Outcomes



Stimulate the development of a **sustainable blue bioeconomy** by enabling **startups and SMEs** in the participating regions to realise their circular, eco-friendly business ideas



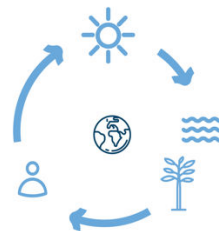
Showcase integrated and **circular blue bioeconomy value chains**, to serve as inspiration to European coastal communities



Develop tools for supporting businesses in integrating ecosystem services into novel ecology-driven business models and induce cross-sector collaborations along the value chains.



Foster **stakeholder engagement** through dedicated activities in the 9 project regions and beyond



Provide regional actors **access to the technologies** to realise their transition to blue bio-based solutions across their chosen value chains



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HOW DO WE SUPPORT BLUE BIOECONOMY AT THE REGIONAL SCALE?



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Coastal Regions in Transition to the Blue Bioeconomy

- CoPs
- Value Chain Facilitation Tool
- BlueBioMatch
- Business Support
- Case Studies
- Mission Arenas



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Communities of Practice (CoPs)

- CoPs are "*groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly*".
- Destination unknown- share knowledge, expertise.
- Open experimental learning environment.
- Shared sense of urgency, difficult issue- and the ambition to solve it.
- CoP activities include: knowledge exchanges and lectures, site visits, workshops...



CoP in Norway (Photo: ÅKP/Anne Marthe Vestre Berge)



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CoPs in the 9 project regions will:

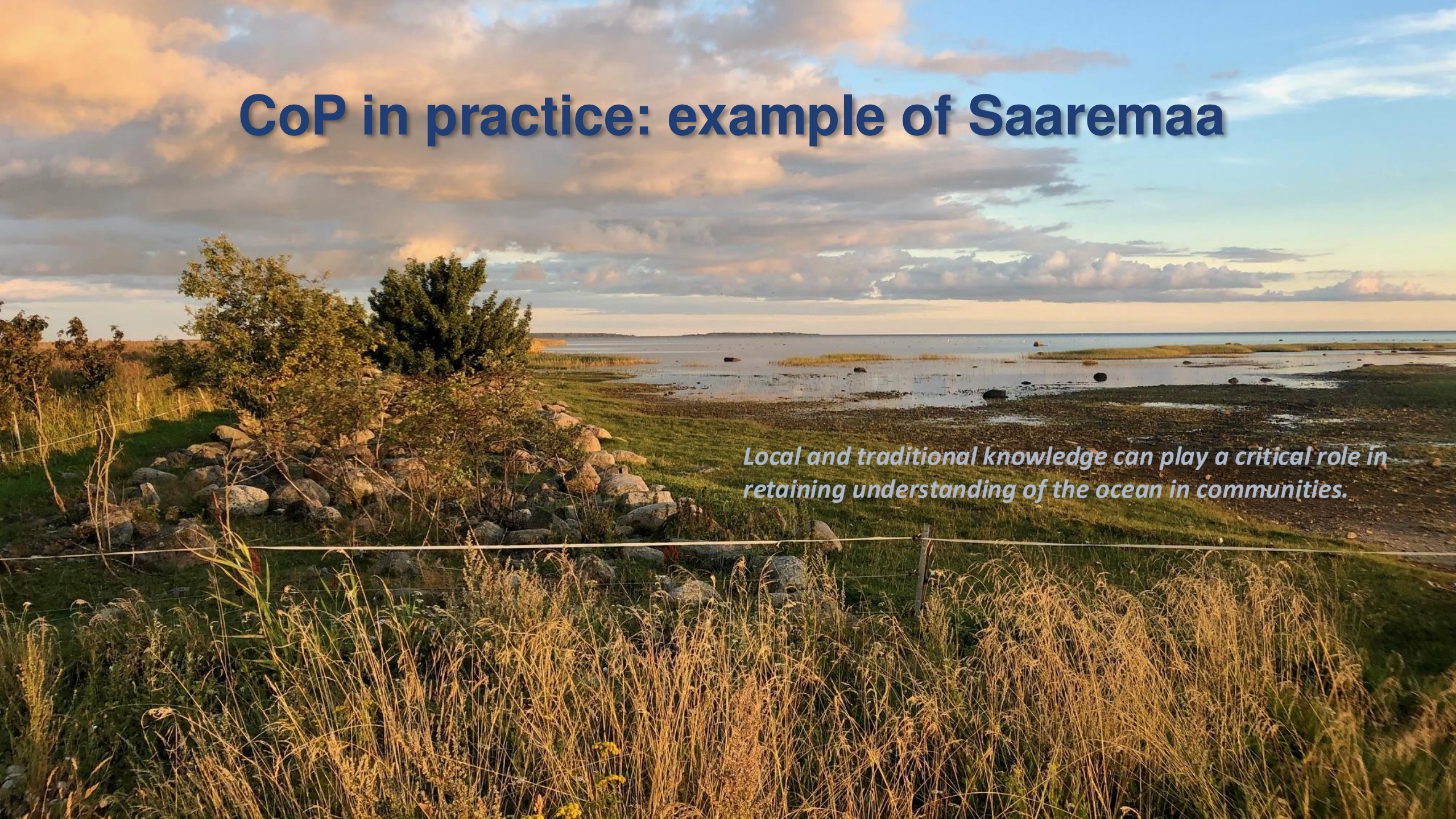
- Ensure **engagement** of local actors in innovative blue solutions
- Support the development of regional **Blue Visions**, including action plans
- Foster collaboration between **public and private** sector

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CoP in practice: example of Saaremaa

Local and traditional knowledge can play a critical role in retaining understanding of the ocean in communities.



The blue bioeconomy conference: raising awareness and creating blue vision



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Blue Visions

- 2035: "to create a sustainable blue bioeconomy that supports communities, promotes circular economy, ecosystem benefits, carbon neutrality, nature conservation, and tourism, while encouraging knowledge transfer, education, innovation, and local purchasing power."
- Updating Saare County Development Plans action plan 2035



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+ TERVIKLAHENDUSED, NUTIKAD LAHENDUSED
+ TEADLIKUD JA AKTIIVSED KOGUKONNA-
LIHKMED • RINGMAJANDUS
+ TOIMIV TARISTU, N&P
+ TOOTEARENDUS
+ T&A KOOSTÖÖ- HÄRIDUS INNOVATSIOON,
KOOLIK-KKSU KÕN- EL-BIODIV-
STRAT
+ ÕKOSÜSTEEMI HÜVED, LIIGILINE MITMEK
+ SÜSINIKU NEUTRAALSUS N&P VOOD
+ TRADITSIOONIDE SÄILIMINE
+ KESKKONNAHOID
• SUUREM OTSUSTUSVÕUD
MAVALITSUSTELE

VISION 2035

KOGUKONDADELE KASU-
TOOV SUURE LISAND-
VÄÄRTUSEGA JÄTKU-
SUUTLIK? SINIBIOMAJANDUS
KESTLIK KKHIOID

Engaging Communities of Practice for the Development of the Sustainable Blue Bioeconomy



Key Messages

- ✓ **Communities of Practice (CoPs) in Blue Bioeconomy are essential** for stakeholder engagement, knowledge exchange, and collaborative learning.
- ✓ Effective CoPs should **set clear objectives, engage participants effectively, and design an inclusive agenda** to co-create blue bioeconomy strategies.
- ✓ **CoPs play a crucial role in identifying opportunities and challenges**, sharing best practices, promoting innovative approaches, and enhancing sustainable marine resource management.
- ✓ **CoPs can vary in structure, size, location, and formal recognition**, adapting to different contexts and needs.
- ✓ The experiences made in BlueBioClusters CoPs highlight the **importance of strategic planning, inclusive engagement, and effective communication** to organise successful CoPs in the blue bioeconomy sector.

This policy brief explores the establishment and operation of Communities of Practice (CoPs) for the blue bioeconomy. It discusses the role of CoPs in fostering stakeholder engagement, knowledge exchange, and collaborative learning. Case studies and regional experiences from specific CoPs are showcased, highlighting strategies for success tailored to local cultures. Practical tips based on regional experiences are provided, addressing challenges such as diverse opinion consolidation and participant motivation.

What is a Community of Practice (CoP)?

CoPs are increasingly utilised for broad stakeholder engagement. They are informal, collaborative groups that unite individuals

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.¹

with shared interests but with different perspectives to exchange knowledge and learn from each other, developing a common vision over a certain process or common asset.

By creating a learning environment in an open, non-contentious and non-political setting, CoPs foster a culture of cooperation. Furthermore, CoPs offer a platform for knowledge co-production, allowing members to share their insights and experience, and

roles in shaping the future of Iceland's blue bioeconomy. The session aimed to lay the groundwork for future discussions, introduce a diverse mix of people and build trust. New and innovative blue economy startups had the opportunity to pitch and share their annual highlights and challenges, which were then discussed collectively. The meeting

facilitated a collective discussion of these challenges and laid a solid foundation for the next CoP meeting, which will invite the same group. Where necessary, additional efforts will be made to include additional stakeholders in future meetings, e.g., research community members.



Policy Recommendations

- ▶ **Clear Communication and Engagement:** CoPs should clearly communicate their objectives and engage diverse stakeholders.
- ▶ **Effective Meeting Organization:** Plan diverse activities and manage time efficiently for productive discussions.
- ▶ **Fostering Collaboration and Vision:** Encourage members to contribute to a future vision and recognize common goals.
- ▶ **Identifying Synergies:** Collaborate with partners having similar goals for greater impact.
- ▶ **Local Engagement and Strategy Alignment:** Align CoP activities with local strategies and promote circularity in bioeconomy development.

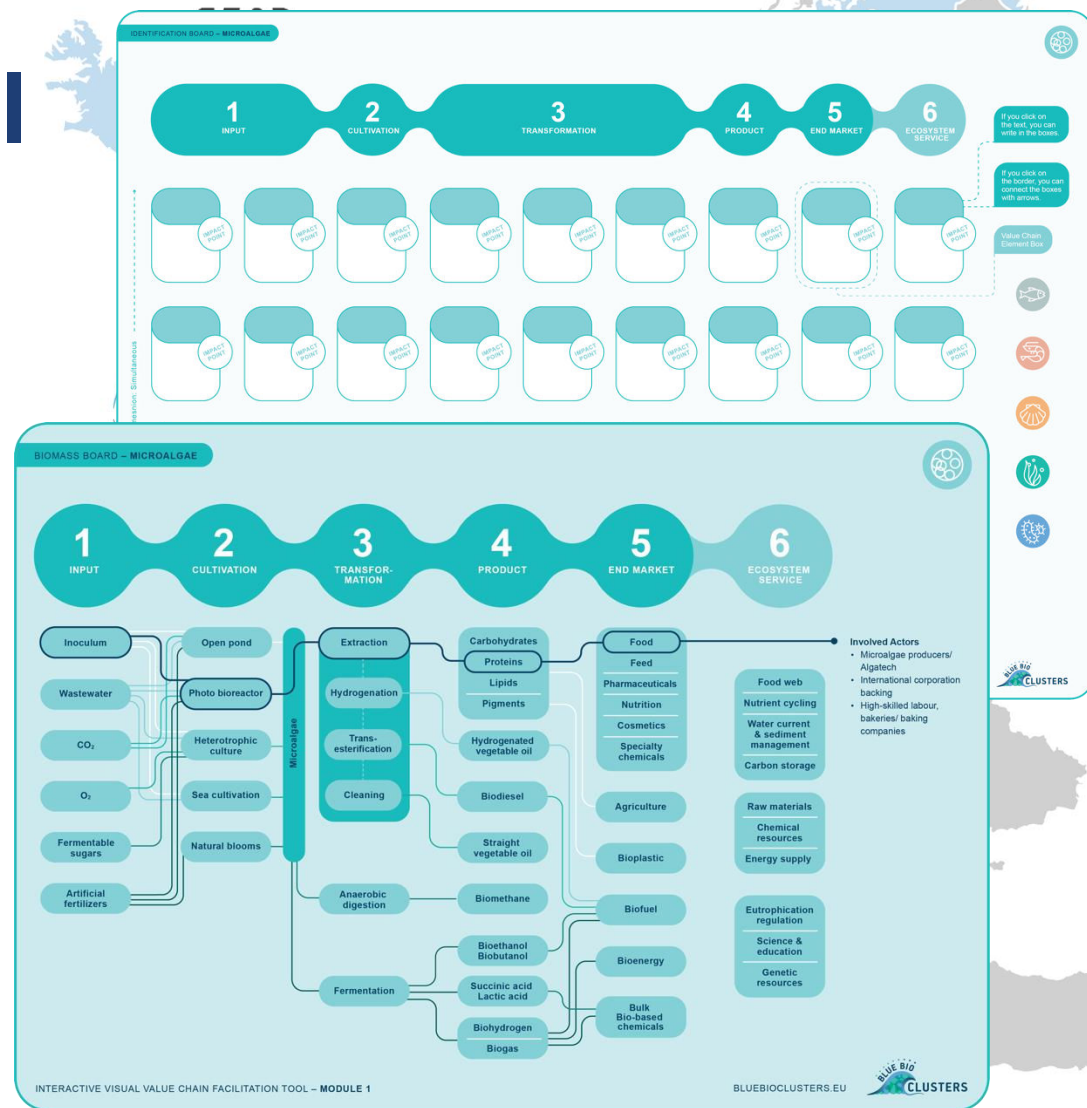
¹ Wenger-Trayner, E. and Wenger-Trayner, B. (2015) An introduction to communities of practice: a brief overview of the concept and its uses. Available from authors at <https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice>.

Value Chain Facilitation Tool

A tool to support the discovery of blue bioeconomy value chains and their business potential.

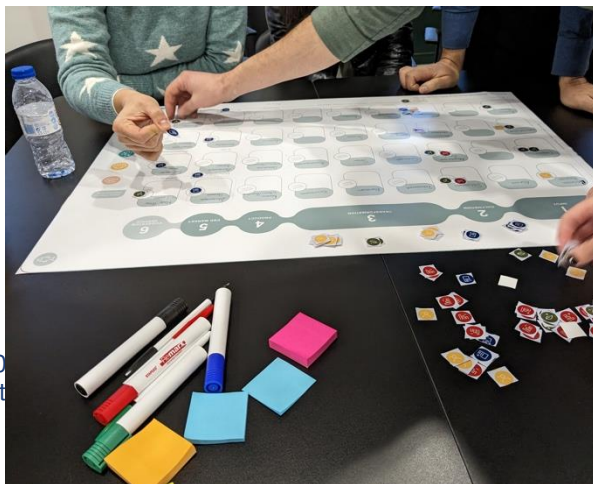
With the aid of 6 biomass boards and comprehensive identification boards, stakeholders can dive deep into the nuances of value chain analysis, identification, and optimization.

bluebioclusters.eu/visual-value-chain-facilitation-tool/



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BlueBioMatch

BlueBioMatch: A Platform for the Blue Bioeconomy



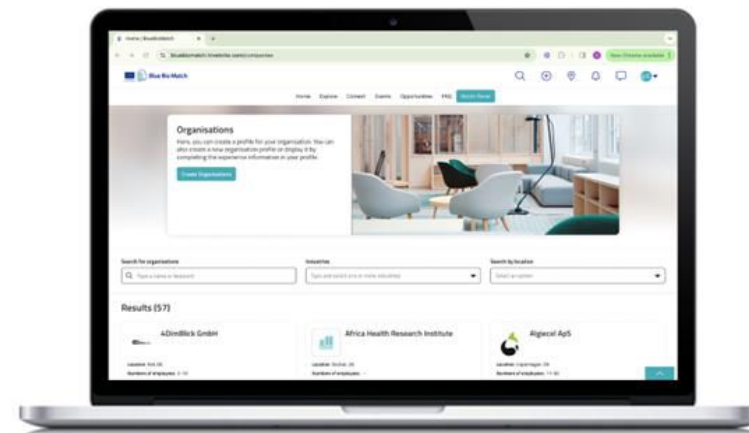
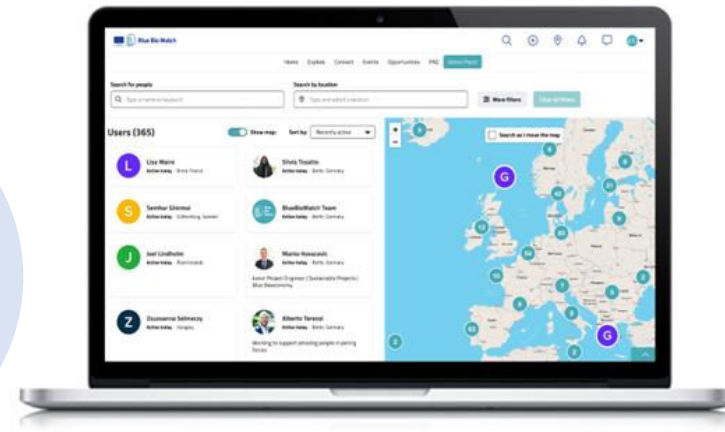
Matching the right people with the right network.

Are you a startup, an SME, a researcher, a policymaker, or a funder in the Blue Bioeconomy? Then join us to engage with a diverse spectrum of stakeholders, promote your products, share insights and access unique opportunities!

BlueBioMatch is a digital platform that connects the Blue Bioeconomy community, creating opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and growth.



~ 600
users!



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Matchmaking, Acceleration and Business Support

- **Matchmaking** events, **co-creation** workshops and **mentoring**
 - April to July 2024: **Regional Bootcamps** in each Basin selected 30 companies eligible to receive funding to pay for mentorship.
 - July – October 2024: Matchmaking! Selected companies look for mentors.
- **Ongoing engagement** of investors, funders, mentors/coaches, regional ecosystem stakeholders and industry.

WP4: BlueBioStartups and SMEs Support



Mapping Startups & SMEs



Network & co-creation



Funding

Bootcamps methodology



1 Stage: **Online Webinars** for mapped startups/SMEs
Topics: Business planning | Marketing and Communication | Market | Product development | Scale-up | Finance | Network Mentoring

2 Stage: **Call for applications** to the BlueBio Startups and SMEs Support program

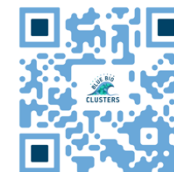
Criteria: Team | Market potential | Value proposition



3 Stage: **Co-creation Bootcamps** | 2-days regional support program
Regional contacts | pitch event



4 Stage: **International networking events** | 2-days international program - Winners of pitch event



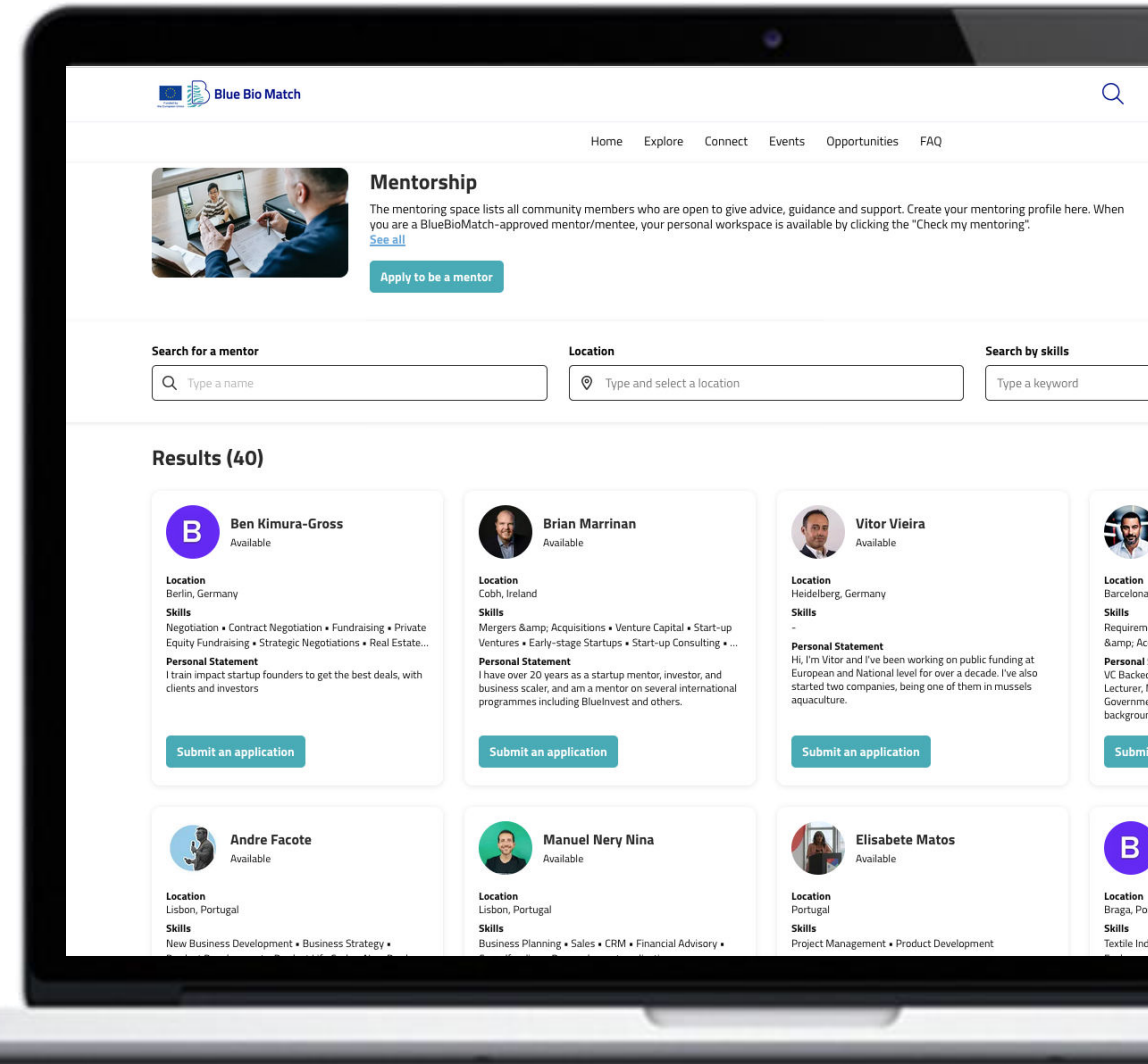
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BlueBioBootcamps

Mentorship on BlueBioMatch

- An **open community platform** designed to **empower blue bioeconomy actors** (researchers, companies, public authorities, technology providers, NGOs, entrepreneurs and others) to **connect and find opportunities for collaboration**.
- Users can access **projects, products, working groups and openings** in the blue bioeconomy sector.
- A space dedicated to **Matchmaking** between Mentors and Mentees working in the Blue Bioeconomy.



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Vetik

Vetik is an Estonian-based start-up founded in 2017. The company focuses on discovering innovative ways to valorise a local wild red seaweed *Furcellaria lumbricalis*. This unique stock of wild seaweed is growing between the two biggest islands of Estonia - Saaremaa and Hiiumaa, in the West Estonian Archipelago. The company aims to utilise its full potential by developing the production of high value products, e.g., a new plant growth promoting bio-stimulant and a red colourant for food and cosmetic applications. While Vetik is only a young startup, it has high ambitions of establishing new value chains in Saaremaa Island to create new job opportunities and even start a large-scale seaweed cultivation in the Baltic sea.



Regional Context

Estonia's marine strategy and regulatory framework are evolving to support emerging marine industries, with a focus on eco-friendly and economically sustainable practices, as outlined in a recent study of shellfish and algae farming business plan issued by the Estonian Climate Ministry. The regional context of Estonia, particularly in relation to the blue bioeconomy and commercial activities in the macroalgae value chain, is marked by growing interests and investments in seaweed, as well as shellfish farming. Estonia's coastal areas, notably the West Estonian Archipelago,

offer a conducive environment, particularly for seaweed farming, given the presence of several native seaweed species like the red seaweed *Furcellaria lumbricalis*. The sector is gaining traction due to its multiple food, biotechnology, and environmental applications. Moreover, the potential of aquaculture as nitrogen and phosphorus removers from seawater is particularly relevant for Estonia due to the high levels of eutrophication that characterise the Baltic Sea.¹

¹ Riigi Tugiteenuste Keskus, Klimaministeerium, [Karbi-ja vetikakasvatuse är plaani uuring tegevuse majandusliku otstarbekuse väljaselgitamiseks](#). Accessed 31 January 2023.



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C Food Norway

C Food Norway, one of NCE Blue Legasea's regional partners, is a world-leading enterprise that commercialises by-products from whitefish to promote a more sustainable seafood consumption that utilises all parts of the catch. The company has established close collaborations with regional producers and international partners in Europe and Asia. C Food Norway purchases raw materials from Norwegian fishing fleets and aquaculture providers and uses regional facilities like slaughterhouses, canning factories, fillet, and dried fish industries to process their products. Their international partners facilitate further processing and product sales inside and outside Europe.



Regional Context

C Food Norway is based in Ålesund, a town on the West coast of Norway, in the Møre og Romsdal County and considered the heart of Norway's fishing industry. The region is characterised by an active marine industry with several companies occupied within sectors such as fishing, technology, aquaculture, raw materials processing and marine ingredients and engage with international partners working on both traditional and novel seafood products. Activities in the field have also been supported by the work of BlueBioClusters' project partner NCE Blue Legasea, a collabora-

tion and innovation network dedicated to promoting new sustainable and commercially viable uses of seafood and seafood waste products.¹

Value Chain

C Food Norway's operates in the fish value chain, and strives to contribute to a better utilisation of existing catch and farming through the development of innovative

¹ Møre and Romsdal County Council, [Cooperation for Growth - Research and Innovation Strategy for Møre og Romsdal 2021-2024](#). Accessed January 10, 2024



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OCEANIUM

OCEANIUM is a Scottish-based company established in 2018 that uses sustainably sourced seaweed to create natural and innovative products. Their mission is to help the world, as they aim to integrate seaweed into our daily lives to benefit our health and the planet. With decades of experience in marine science, they can extract the maximum value from the seaweed using innovative refinery technology. This allows them to produce high-demand products, such as high-purity bioactives for nutrition and cosmeceuticals, plant-based food ingredients, and innovative materials. The company is involved in several EU-funded projects that support the development of a sustainable seaweed industry in Europe.



Regional Context

OCEANIUM is located in Dunbeg, a small town on the west coast of Scotland, within the Argyll and Bute Council. The company shares its R&D centres with the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), one of Europe's leading marine science research organisations and Scotland's largest and oldest independent marine science organisation, which has specialist expertise in the Scottish blue economy, including aquaculture, marine biotechnology, marine renewable energy, oil and gas, industrial impacts and social-ecological

systems.¹

The region is characterised by a diverse range of sectors, including aquaculture, fisheries, seafood processing, marine energy and renewables, marine biotechnology, and marine environmental services, which play a critical role in Scotland's economy and in the livelihood of many local communities. A strong focus on leveraging the region's natural marine resources, such as seaweed, for sustainable development in fields like marine biotechnology and bioprocessing has grown

¹ Scottish Association for Marine Science, [Research to enable a sustainable blue economy](#). Accessed 29 January 2024.



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1st Mission Arena – Gothenburg



2nd Mission Arena – Riga



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