

## **Bucharest Declaration**

### **on**

# **( the launch of ) the Black Sea Research and Innovation Agenda**

We, the participants to the “Sustainable Development at Black Sea” conference held in Bucharest, on 8-9 May 2019, under the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, with the support of the European Commission,

**Recalling** the Burgas Vision Paper „A Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea” issued on the occasion of the European Maritime Day held under the Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Council during 31 May – 1 June 2018,

**Commending** the joint efforts made by the scientific communities, business representatives and other stakeholders from the Black Sea coastal countries, namely the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, as well as the Republic of Moldova, together with experts from marine research institutes and organisations across Europe, greatly facilitated by the support of the European Commission,

**Underlining** the exceptional research and innovation potential of the Black Sea and its basin in fields such as the use of its biotic resources, maritime transport and wider connectivity, offshore renewable energy and alternative energy (such as seafloor hydrocarbons and algae biofuels) and tourism, due to its unique ecosystems and forms of life, influenced also by the major river-sea interactions, its culture and heritage,

**Noting** with preoccupation the emerging challenges posed by marine and coastal pollution, climate change, eutrophication, coastal hazards, unsustainable fishing practices, limited scientific understanding of the specificities/profile of the Black Sea and their impact upon social and economic decisions, as well as vice versa,

**Understanding** the unique opportunity of recent developments, including within the regional, European and global scientific marine communities, for research, technology development and knowledge transfer towards users, in a wide range of areas including alternative energy sources, in the Black Sea region, as well as in incentivizing innovative business approaches,

**Being** aware of the strategic importance of pan-European cooperation in research and innovation which includes cooperation and exchange of best practices between scientific partners from the Black Sea basin and their counterparts from other sea-basins from around Europe, as well as from the Global Ocean as a whole,

**Understanding** the utmost relevance of scientific diplomacy as a catalyst for more stability, prosperity and development and coastal safety of all Black Sea basin countries and of European countries,

**Considering** the potential for sustainable blue growth in the Black Sea area based on research and innovation, on promoting the knowledge triangle – education-research-innovation – and on evidence-based policy making in multiple marine and maritime areas,

**Agree** to consider the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda developed within a dedicated multi-annual collaborative process supported by the European Commission and by governments in the Black Sea region, annexed as an integral part of this Declaration, as a guiding document in elaborating research and research-related strategies and policies and in identifying, prioritising and implementing research projects at national, regional, and European level,

**Welcome** the Strategic Research and Development Agenda for the Black Sea as the research pillar in support of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea,

**Decide** to continue working together towards the implementation of activities and actions foreseen in the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda in an integrated and coherent manner, within the larger framework of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, to the benefit of our citizens, our societies and of a more cooperative regional environment,

**Reiterate** the determination to focus our efforts, at all levels on advancing the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for Blue Growth in the Black Sea Region, in close coordination with the efforts and relevant policies of the European Union, aiming in particular at:

- Addressing fundamental Black Sea research challenges;
- Developing products solutions and clusters underpinning Black Sea Blue Growth;
- Building of critical support systems and innovative research infrastructures;
- Education and capacity building.

**Encourage** all parties and particularly the governments of the Black Sea littoral countries and of the Republic of Moldova, as well as regional, European and international institutions that are willing to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, to commit to and engage in actions and projects foreseen in this leading document,

**Encourage** all relevant stakeholders to make full use of this agenda and to work in partnership with scientists, industry representatives, local communities and other parties on implementing its priorities and actions,

**Encourage** national, regional, European and international financial institutions, as well as the European Commission to align existing and future funding in order to support projects advancing the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda,

**Encourage** the regular update of this Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, to permanently keep pace with the latest scientific developments and challenges affecting the Black Sea basin, which are key to best preserve and promote the efficient use of the Black Sea resources,

**Ask governments** and the European Commission to facilitate the process of implementing the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda by setting up and support a technical Group of experts that will continue working on these aspects.