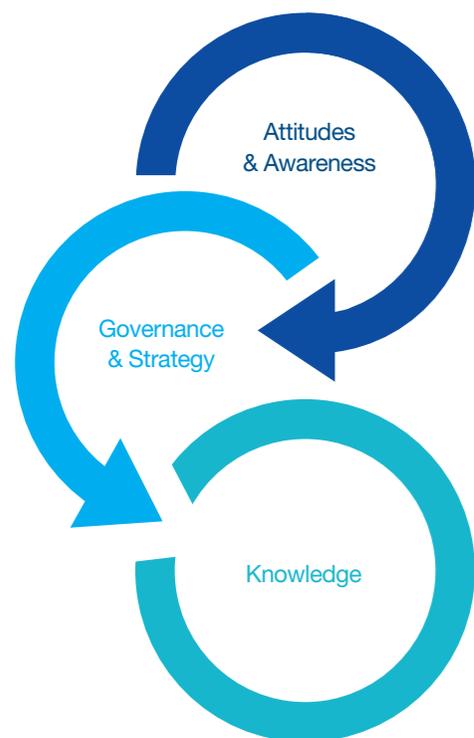


Giving a Voice to Citizens and Stakeholders

Stakeholders, whose livelihoods rely directly or indirectly on the Ocean, and Citizens, whose livelihoods were not linked to the Ocean, were invited to take part in a series of themed interactive sessions. Sessions with each group were held in nine EU countries between November 2013 and March 2014, and included communities on Atlantic, Baltic and Mediterranean coasts. Discussions focused on six Ocean-related themes: leisure and tourism, food, transport, human health, energy and “a place to live”.

Three key issues were identified; addressing any one of these has a positive effect on the others:



1. Unfounded negative attitudes relating to the Ocean, a lack of awareness of marine issues and a lack of positive initiatives, together had the greatest perceived influence on the ability to move towards a Blue Society.
2. The absence of a responsible or effective institutional framework for marine governance and inadequate strategies and policies to protect the marine environment, were offered as the second barrier to overcome in order to create a Blue Society.
3. Poor general public knowledge and insufficient scientific and technical knowledge about the processes and functions of the marine ecosystems constituted the third perceived major barrier to a Blue Society.

For full information on the consultation process visit:
<http://seaforsociety.eu>

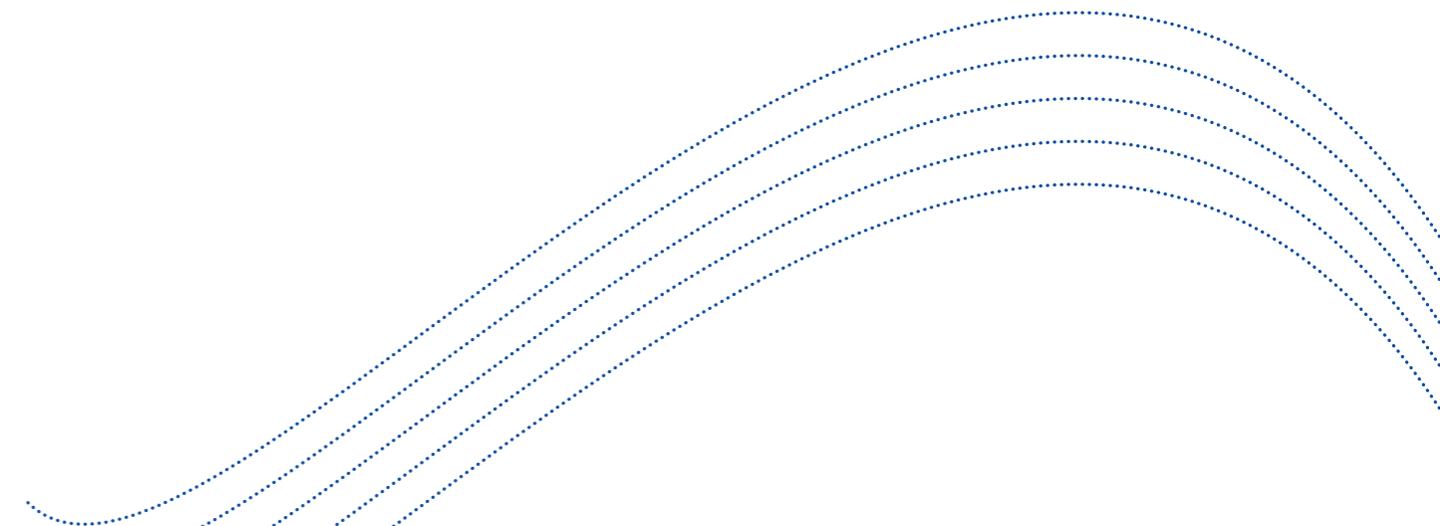
Outputs

776
Ideas
 to improve
 the human-Ocean dynamic

778
Benefits
 of a healthy Ocean

774
Barriers
 to sustainability

653
Solutions
 to perceived barriers



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"Your Ocean, your Future"

What is A Blue Society?

A Blue Society is one in which the marine environment is sustainably managed, giving future generations the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from the many services and resources provided by a healthy Ocean, while also preserving ecosystem integrity and functioning. The Blue Society Expert Group analysed the outcomes of the consultation and mobilization phases of the SFS project (below) to develop and enrich the Blue Society concept, and formulate recommendations for improved Ocean governance and research.

What is Sea for Society?

Sea for Society (SFS) is a three-year project funded by the European Seventh Framework Programme. The project brought together 28 partners from 12 countries to uncover citizen and stakeholder views of the Ocean, and identify solutions to promote the sustainable management of the marine environment. Sea for Society has engaged over 500 stakeholders and citizens in a dialogue on the future of our Ocean. Together they have developed ideas to improve human-ocean dynamics and solutions to address barriers to sustainability. Ultimately, putting these solutions into action will help us to build a Blue Society.



The Essential Ocean

The Ocean regulates the planet's ecological balance:

- Lowest estimates suggest that marine phytoplankton produce 50% of the oxygen we breathe,
- It is the main source of water entering the water cycle,
- It limits global warming by absorbing one third of the CO₂ produced by human beings.

The Ocean delivers essential goods and services:

- It provides protein-rich food, medicines and beauty products,
- It is a source of energy, both renewable and non-renewable,
- It is a source of rare metals and minerals,
- It is a source of recreation, well-being and health.

The Ocean supports our economy and societal needs:

- It supports jobs and economic growth in maritime transport and tourism,
- It offers new opportunities for aquaculture and sustainable fisheries.

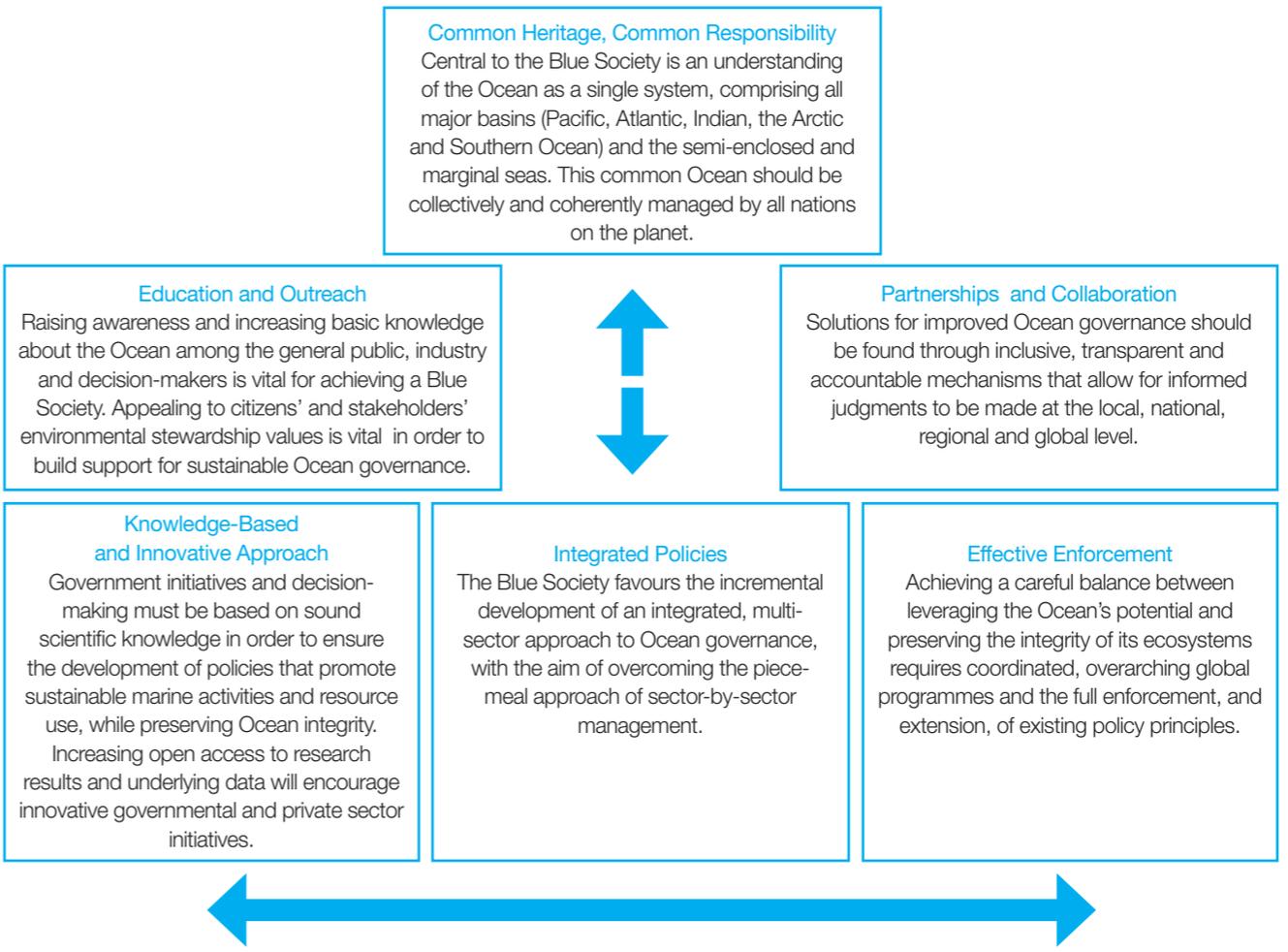
An Ocean of Opportunities

The Ocean offers enormous potential that can be developed sustainably, e.g. clean technologies such as "green" ships; tidal, thermal and wind energy; biofuels; new food sources such as edible algae; and sustainable jobs.

Being part of the Blue Society is to recognize that the Ocean provides us with many social, economic and environmental benefits and that the marine environment must be protected and managed sustainably if we want future generations to continue to reap these benefits.

Blue Society Components

The following components are interconnected, each playing a crucial role in facilitating the transition towards a Blue Society:



In 2014, the European Blue Economy represented ~5.4 million jobs and a gross value of almost €500billion.

