



CIRCALGAE: Final Event

22 September 2026

Blue bioeconomy and biotechnology: The way forward

Nikos Zampoukas
Policy Officer
RTD.B4 - Ocean, Seas and Waters



Policy initiatives of the Commission (2024–2029) relevant for the blue bioeconomy (non exhaustive)

- **Strategy on Life Sciences** (Lead Commissioner Zaharieva)
 - New Strategic Approach to R&I for competitive, resilient and sustainable agriculture, forestry, rural areas and food systems
- **European Biotech Act I and II** (Lead Commissioner Várhelyi and Séjourné)
- **European Ocean Pact** (Lead Commissioner Kadis)
 - Strategies on Coastal Communities and Islands
 - EU Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture
 - Research and Innovation Strategy on Ocean and Waters (Lead Commissioner Zaharieva)
- **Bioeconomy Strategy** (Lead Commissioner Roswall)



Overview of recent EU-level developments in the blue bioeconomy and algae policy space

European Ocean Pact (2025)

- Provides a coherent EU framework for ocean governance and the transition to a regenerative blue economy that restores ocean health while generating economic and social value.
- Announces EU actions to **scale up European algae production**, launch of a **Blue Bioeconomy Innovation Initiative (BlueBIP) by 2027** and development of **voluntary EU-wide targets for algae production**.

New EU Bioeconomy Strategy (2025)

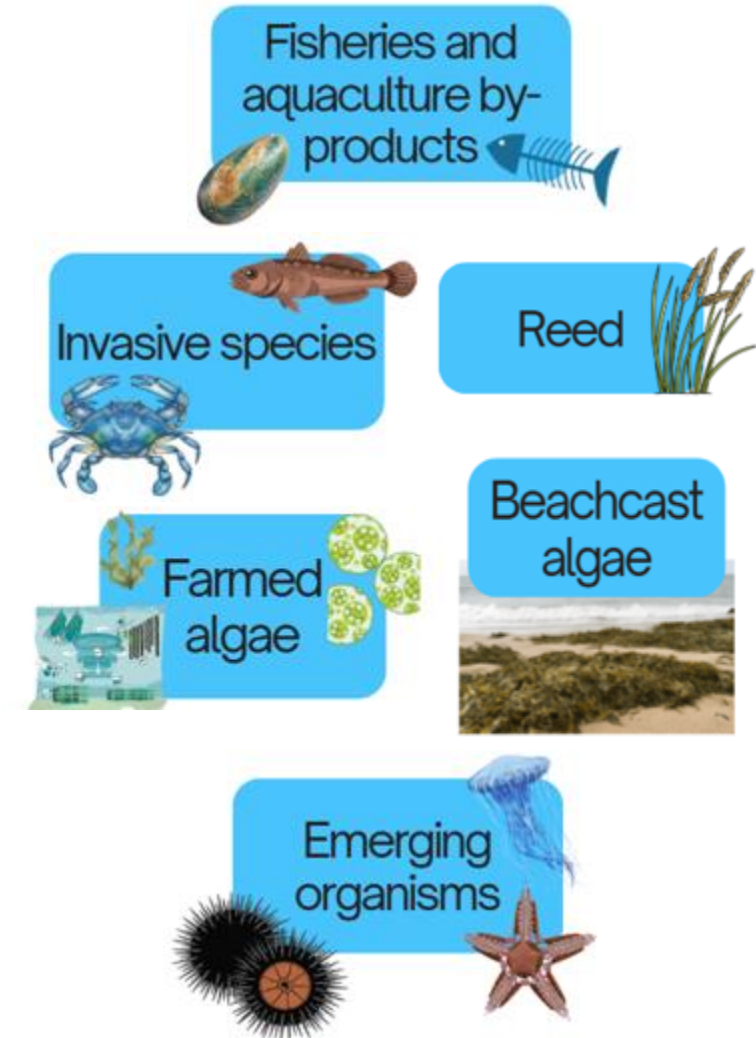
- Aquatic resources – will contribute to a more diverse and resilient biomass supply while protecting vulnerable ecosystems.
- **EU Algae Initiative** supports the production and valorisation of algae
- Launch of the **BlueBIP** to unlock **underutilized aquatic biomass** and **Horizon Europe calls** focused on the blue bioeconomy.
- The **InvestEU Blue Economy**, a blended finance instrument, supports venture capital and private investment in the blue bioeconomy



Blue Bioeconomy Innovation Partnership (BlueBIP)

To be established by end of 2027 - *work ongoing*

- Will create **EU added value** by systematically identifying and advancing the **most promising EU blue bioeconomy project results** towards market uptake
- Will unlock the valorisation of **underutilized aquatic biomass**
- Will support **innovation, piloting and scale-up** through targeted actions developed **in collaboration with stakeholders**
- Will facilitate the **development of value chains**, connecting producers, processors and end users across the EU Blue Bioeconomy





Overview of recent EU-level developments in the blue bioeconomy and algae policy space (cont.)

Ocean and Water Research and Innovation Strategy (Q4 2026)

- Aims:
 - improve the current governance of R&I by overcoming the fragmentation of initiatives, including research infrastructures
 - address the financing for further development and deployment of new knowledge and solutions
 - address knowledge and innovation gaps to support achieving the objectives of both the Ocean Pact and the Water Resilience Strategy
- The strategy will take a **source-to-sea approach** to addressing pollution and resource management issues
- **Call for Evidence:** around 300 individual responses
 - [CfE focusing on Ocean](#)
 - [CfE focusing on Water Resilience](#)



Open and upcoming calls for proposals relevant for the blue bioeconomy

Please note that the listed topics are not exhaustive. You are encouraged to explore the Work Programmes of other Clusters (e.g. CL5) and EU Partnerships to discover additional opportunities that may be relevant to your interests





Horizon Europe Main Work Programmes

Horizon Europe Cluster 5 ([link](#))

- HORIZON-CL5-2027-03-D3-09: Co-funding SET Plan **renewable fuel** value chains at EU, national, regional, and local level

Horizon Europe Cluster 6 ([link](#), **CL6 Info Days on 13-14 Jan 2027**, **DL: 8/4/2027**)

- HORIZON-CL6-2027-01-BIODIV-04: Living Labs for the eradication and/or management of **invasive alien species** (EUR 8 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-02: Increasing mitigation of GHG emissions and feed efficiency through **feed additives** (EUR 6 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-06: Unleashing the potential of sustainable **small-scale aquatic food production** and recreational fisheries for prosperous local communities (EUR 5 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-01-CIRCBIO-06: Towards a Europe of **Bioeconomy Places** (EUR 6 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-01-CIRCBIO-07: **Improving biomass flows** for a sustainable and circular bioeconomy (EUR 7 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-01-CIRCBIO-09: Increasing the **circularity of bio-based sector**: upcycling and recycling for higher value and environmental benefits (EUR 6 M)
- HORIZON-CL6-2027-01-ZEROPOLLUTION-04: Europe-wide benchmarking system of the **industrial bioeconomy sectors** (EUR 3 M)

Horizon Europe Mission Ocean and Waters ([link](#))

- HORIZON-MISS-2026-03-OCEAN-02: Addressing **aquatic pollution** and biodiversity loss through nature positive solutions from source to sea (EUR 31 million, **DL: 23/9/2026**)



European Innovation Council

EIC Work Programme 2026 ([link](#); Deadlines: 4/11/2026 and 25/11/2026)

- Accelerator Open
- Accelerator Challenge V.2.3 Biotech for Regenerating Agricultural Soils
- Accelerator Challenge V.2.4 Boosting the European Critical Raw Materials value chain
- Accelerator Challenge V.2.5 Deep Tech for Climate Adaptation
- STEP Scale Up call for scaling up strategic technologies for Europe (EUR 10-30 million/proposal, DL: 4/11/2026)

↑ **Grant component:** under EUR 2.5 M for innovation activities (TRL 6 to 8)
↓ **Investment component:** EUR 1-10 M for scaling up and other activities)

EIC Work Programme 2027 ([link](#); not yet adopted, Deadlines: various across 2027 depending on the call)

- Accelerator Open
- Accelerator Challenge V.2.1 Advanced in-situ ocean observation technologies for scalable, high-resolution marine monitoring
- Accelerator Challenge V.2.4 Carbon removal and circularity for climate change mitigation and EU industrial resilience
- STEP Scale Up call for scaling up strategic technologies for Europe (EUR 10-30 million/proposal)



Circular Biobased Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU) Work Programme 2026 ([link](#), DL: 22 September 2026)

- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IAFlag-04: Diversification of **nutritional food ingredient** sources for increased EU resilience and strategic autonomy
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IA-01: Biotech routes for valorisation of **residual biomass**
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IAFlag-01: Boosting biorefinery competitiveness through biotech
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IAFlag-02: SSbD bio-based alternatives for **fertilising** and/or **crop protection** products
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IAFlag-03: SSbD bio-based solutions for **home and/or personal care**
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IA-02: Bio-based additives as alternatives to unlock and increase recyclability and/or biodegradability
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-IA-05: **Films** and **coatings** for circular packaging
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-RIA-01: Addressing **separation and purification challenges** in biorefineries
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-RIA-02- SSbD bio-based **polymers** from alternative sources
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-RIA-03-Develop breakthrough and sustainable **bio-based textile fibres**
- HORIZON-JU-CBE-2026-CSA-01: Supporting industry in the switch to sustainable and circular biobased products

!!! The CBE JU WP 2027 is expected to be published in December 2026 !!!



Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP)

Fourth Joint call ([link](#), First stage DL: 16 November 2026, second stage DL: 14 June 2027)

The call aims to support transnational research and innovation projects of 36 months duration, addressing one of the four priority areas

- Priority area 1: Transitioning the blue economy sectors for sustainability and strategic autonomy
- Priority area 2: Managing sea-uses by advancing digital and ecosystem-based approaches
- Priority area 3: Promoting sustainable blue bioresources through innovation in marine production and harvesting
- Priority area 4: Building resilience in coastal communities with infrastructure and businesses

The proposals are recommended to consider **a minimum of two European sea basins** and to assess the project proposal's impact on various basins. Proposals can target European regional seas such as Adriatic Sea, Aegean Sea, Arctic, Barents Sea, Celtic Sea, etc. however the recommended sea basins to address are: the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.



Thank you!

Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe Cluster 6: Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership