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Advancing Blue Innovation: From UNIDO Projects to Global Solutions

UNIDO ITPO Italy

Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026 · 29 September – 2 October · La Nuvola, Rome

KEY INFORMATION

Date	30 Sept 2026
Time	14:30 – 16:00
Room	Nilo Room
Format	Presentation & Panel discussion
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

Exploring global cooperation, technology and innovation in the Blue Economy, with the UNIDO ITPO Network and the winners of the Global Call 2026.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
[14:30]	Dino Fortunato, Deputy Head	UNIDO ITPO Italy	Moderator
[14:35]	Luomei Shu, Director	UNIDO GLO/ITP	Panelist
[14:40]	Diana Battaggia, Head	UNIDO ITPO Italy	Panelist
[14:45]	Fumio Adachi, Head	UNIDO ITPO Japan	Panelist
[14:50]	Rolf Steltemeier, Head	UNIDO ITPO, Bonn	Panelist
[14:55]	Olaf Deutschbein, Head	UNIDO ITPO Berlin	Panelist
[15:00]	Rita Wang, Expert	UNIDO ITPO China	Panelist
[15:05]	Hashim Hussein, Head	UNIDO ITPO Bahrain	Panelist
[15:10]	Igor Kozhin, Head	UNIDO ITPO Russia	Panelist
[15:15]	Cristina Sbaizero, Director and CEO	World Trade Centers Association WTC Trieste	Moderator
[15:20]	Priya Pansare, Senior Director – Trade, Investment & International Relations	World Trade Centers Association WTC Mumbai	Speaker

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
[15:25]	Shana Fatina, Founder & CEO	Komodo Water	Speaker
[15:30]	Luis Alberto Moreno Meléndez, CEO	Suplitutto Agrocomodities	Speaker
[15:35]	Fabio Bignolini, Co-Founder & CEO	Northern Light srl	Speaker
[15:40]	Nermin Sena Özger, Founder & CEO	Nesea Bio-Material and Marine Technologies	Speaker
[15:45]	Yanik Nyberg, Co-Founder & CEO	NARA Climate Ltd	Speaker
[15:50]	Na Yung Roh, Co-Founder & COO	Marine Innovation Co., Ltd	Speaker
[15:55]	Rubén Hernández, Head & Strategic Development And Official	Blue Tech Port of Barcelona WTC Barcelona	Speaker

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The ocean covers 71% of the Earth's surface, encompasses approximately 90% of the planet's biosphere, provides food security and livelihoods for more than three billion people, enables the transportation of over 80% of global goods, and hosts submarine cables carrying approximately 98% of international Internet traffic. If considered as a country, the ocean economy would rank among the world's largest economies, with an estimated annual growth rate of 2.8%. These figures illustrate the fundamental role of the Blue Economy as both a pillar of sustainable global development and a powerful driver of economic growth, innovation, employment, and resilience. Against this backdrop, supporting developing countries and emerging economies in building, transforming, and greening their industries is at the core of the mandate of UNIDO, the specialized United Nations agency dedicated to inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Through its Investment and Technology Promotion (ITP) Network, UNIDO facilitates the mobilization of investment, resources, knowledge, and technologies to foster a fairer global economy—one in which industry, innovation, and local value addition contribute to progress and inclusive growth while decoupling economic development from emissions and the overexploitation of natural resources.

The participation of the Heads of the UNIDO ITPO Network represents a unique opportunity to explore the projects, strategies, and initiatives shaping the future of the Blue Economy across different regions and markets. The discussion will examine how international cooperation, investment, technology transfer, and North-South as well as South-South partnerships can contribute to inclusive and sustainable industrial development, while unlocking the economic and social potential of the sector, particularly in developing economies. Particular attention will be given to the role of technology as an enabler of sustainable growth and innovation.

In this context, UNIDO ITPO Italy, in partnership with the World Trade Centers Association (WTCA), implemented the UNIDO–WTCA Blue Economy Global Call 2026, a global initiative aimed at identifying, supporting, and scaling innovative solutions and companies across key Blue Economy sectors. The initiative serves as a concrete example of how international networks can connect innovation, investment, and technology to accelerate sustainable industrial development and turn the potential of the Blue Economy into tangible opportunities. The panel will conclude with pitches from the six winners of the Global Call, showcasing innovative technologies, business models, and processes that advance a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient Blue Economy.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 – Discuss and compare ongoing projects, strategies, and initiatives by ITP Network to advance the sustainable development of the Blue Economy.

Objective 2 – Explore disruptive technologies and approaches that support the sustainable development of the Blue Economy.

Objective 3 – Present the winners of the UNIDO-WTCA Blue Economy Global Call 2026.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The panel is intrinsically flexible in terms of its target audience. Policymakers, utilities, financial institutions, civil society organizations, youth, and technical experts can all draw valuable insights and takeaways from the discussion. This broad appeal stems from the panel's cross-cutting nature and its ability to bring together economic, political, technological, and social perspectives. By addressing the Blue Economy through these complementary dimensions, the panel offers a multidisciplinary perspective that is both relevant and adaptable to a diverse range of stakeholders.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Panel aims to explore strategies and initiatives that bridge technologies and projects, connecting concrete challenges with innovative and scalable solutions. Its core objective is to foster stronger synergies among the diverse actors contributing to the sustainable development of the Blue Economy. By sharing best practices, technical know-how, and success stories, the Panel will facilitate cross-sectoral and cross-regional knowledge exchange, strengthen cooperation among stakeholders, and raise awareness of the potential of the Blue Economy to drive sustainable and inclusive development.