MARINE ENERGY AND ITS PLACE IN THE NEW EUROPEAN MARITIME ECONOMY

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For thousands of years the oceans have been highly prized and have provided us with efficient transport and a plentiful supply of food. Therefore, it seems obvious that our modern society should continue to use the oceans and maximize the benefits. There might be great treasures of valuable materials, new bio-compounds and endless wind wave and tidal energy. This opportunity was explored in the EU H2020 MARIBE project (www.maribe.eu) and the key findings are reported in this poster. Further details are given in the free ebook by Johnson et al. (2018).

The Blue Economy is the synthesis of established and growing industries at sea. We define nine sectors: established blue economy (fisheries, offshore oil and gas, shipping and shipbuilding, tourism and recreation), blue growth (aquaculture, blue biotechnology, seabed mining, wave and tidal, offshore wind). More than 40% of the European population inhabits coastal areas, with approximately 5.4 million jobs and almost €500 billion of GVA from the Blue Economy. There are limits to growth for land based sectors, while blue growth is seen as an opportunity for jobs and socio-economic development. The European Commission therefore includes Blue Growth as part of the Europe 2020 strategy (2014), which aims to create long-term and sustainable socio-economic growth, while safeguarding the natural resources provided by the sea.

Various ocean economy sectors may benefit from the use of multi-use marine platforms that combine industries in a single location for the sharing of infrastructure and facilities or might, in the case of renewable energy, enable activities in areas which were otherwise impractical. In addition, the focusing of activities into common platform areas will save the use of marine space and reduce environmental harm. Results of the Maribe project, found that many types of combination simply add complexity and hence reduce profitability. However, the right combination, operating in the right niche market, enables the development of technologies that would be less viable when developed alone. Nine such businesses were identified and shortlisted for the MARIBE business development process, and the resulting business plans are explained on the project website. Following the review of these existing companies, we concluded that a carefully structured Blue Growth multi-use business can create a profitable operation and provide jobs and value.

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