

Press release #6

October 2018

NEPTUNE Blue Growth Accelerator Showcase Event celebrates the innovative projects led by SMEs

On October 17th, 2018, the NEPTUNE project organized its Showcase Event in Brussels. The final event of the Blue Growth Accelerator aimed to present the excellent results obtained and gave the opportunity to its beneficiaries to showcase their innovative projects through pitches, booths and networking sessions.

The event gathered in total 117 participants, of which:

- 74 SMEs;
- 4 large companies;
- 10 clusters;
- 7 associations;
- 14 governmental or public authority.

11 European countries were represented, showing the high interest for companies to search for new collaborations and ideas abroad.

After an opening speech from the lead partner Aerospace Valley represented by **Ms. Fabienne Daveran – European Desk Manager**, to provide an overview about NEPTUNE, **Mr. Felix Leinemann – Head of Unit Blue Economy sectors at DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission** and **Mr. Gunnar MATTHIESEN – Senior Project Officer at the Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME)**, were invited to share information about existing and forthcoming European funds available for SMEs and the potential of Blue Growth in the EU.

The following four thematic pitching sessions: **Environment & Marine Renewable Energies, Port Logistics & Maritime Transport, Environment** and **Water Management in Rural and Urban Areas** followed this introduction involving the presentation of 24 projects funded through NEPTUNE. The SMEs showcased the activities performed so far and the impacts of NEPTUNE on their organisations from improved sales to jobs creation.



Each session was introduced by key stakeholders in the topic, large companies' representatives and experts, who provided a panorama of the subsector and exposed their own strategy upon the domain as well as their interest for the innovations developed by SMEs and startups:

- [SBM Offshore](#), the market-leader in providing floating solutions over the full product life-cycle for the energy industry, represented by **Ms. Stéphanie St Hill – Business Development Manager**, presented the Marine Renewable Energies sector needs;
- [ADUR](#), a software developer company for Transport and logistics, represented by **Mr. Lander Tolosa – Service Manager**, introduced the Ports Logistics and Maritime Transport overall vision;
- [Veolia Group](#), the global leader in optimized resource management, which designs and provides water, waste and energy management solutions contributing to the sustainable development of communities and industries and represented by **Ms. Marie-Christine Huau, Market Business Development Director**, highlighted the actual and future issues addressed to coastal and maritime Environment;
- FARAL Consult, a water infrastructure and management company, represented by **Mr. Florin Iliescu – Water Management Expert**, presented the challenges in Water Management in Rural and Urban Areas.

Ms. Anna Sobczak – Policy Officer for Clusters and Emerging Industries at DG GROW, European Commission, concluded the event by stressing out the importance and the added-value of clusters in the innovative SME support, notably through the cascade funding scheme carried by INNOSUP-1 projects.

Two B2B sessions and a networking lunch gave the opportunity to participants to exchange with each other. At the end of the day, 81 formal meetings took place in order to envision new opportunities and create new business partnerships, not including the spontaneous ones occurring all day long.

NEPTUNE partners are staying at the disposal of the awarded SMEs in order to support them further in the next steps of their development.

The complete catalogue of solutions developed by SMEs supported by NEPTUNE are available [here](#).



NEPTUNE project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 691554

About NEPTUNE

Coordinated by Aerospace Valley, NEPTUNE which stands for New Cross Sectoral Value Chains Creation across Europe Facilitated By Clusters for SMEs' Innovation in Blue Growth is a European Union funded innovation action financed by the INNOSUP component of the HORIZON 2020 programme.

NEPTUNE targeted the support of 100 European SMEs (individual or in groups) and the creation of 10 new companies in 15-20 new or reconfigured cross-sectoral/-cluster/-border value chains for the development of around 40 impactful and innovative solutions to improve existing or develop new technologies, services or products, improve production processes replacing or reducing the use of critical resources and deploy large scale demonstrators. It was driven by the integration of new technologies and know-how, facilitated by clusters in Water, Maritime, Aerospace, ICT, Microelectronics, Agrifood, Logistics, Creative Industries, Energy, and Mobility to foster the development of Blue Growth industries in Europe.

Main achievements

- € 2.8 million of direct financial support;
- 41 innovative projects;
- 72 SMEs and 3 would be entrepreneurs beneficiaries;
- 15 Large scale demonstrators;
- 100+ coaching and mentoring services provided by the clusters partners.

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Neptune Blue Growth Accelerator group

NEPTUNE consortium



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