



**PRESS RELEASE
ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON FISHERIES AND BLUE GROWTH
Istanbul, 31 October – 1 November 2017**

BSEC PERMIS, in close cooperation with the Sariyer municipality organized the International Conference on Fisheries and Blue Growth in Istanbul on 31 October – 1 November 2017.

The Conference was attended by representatives of BSEC Member States (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, Turkey and Ukraine), BSEC Related Bodies (PABSEC), BSEC Observers and Special Dialogue Partners (Black Sea Commission and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions - CPMR) and International Organizations (European Commission, FAO and EUROFISH). Representatives from the Black Sea municipalities, academic communities, NGOs and private sector also participated in the Conference.

Participants discussed the main issues affecting fisheries management, assessed the environmental and socio-economic impact on fisheries and aquaculture and evaluated the perspectives of development of these sectors in the Black Sea area. Among others, it was agreed that Black Sea stocks are depleted due to various kinds of pollution, climate change and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; a strategy is required for the sustainability of fish stocks; acute lack of data on stocks is creating uncertainty for the fisheries sector and there is a necessity for an adequate regulatory framework and licencing in the sector.

In the opening statement, Ambassador Michael B. Christides, the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS pointed out that the BSEC Organization attaches special importance to the promotion of joint activities in the field of fisheries in the Black Sea region and stated that fishing and fisheries shaped the society and culture of the coastal towns and communities along the shores of the Black Sea. The Secretary General also draw the attention of the participants to the issue of unreported and unregulated fishing in the Black Sea area, stating that the national experts believed that BSEC Member States should consider joining the “FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing”.

In the course of lively discussions the participants made concrete suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of fisheries and aquaculture sectors.