

From November 16 to 19, 2026, the Blue Pavilion by Jean Nouvel, located within Genoa's new Waterfront di Levante, will host the inaugural edition of BEST – The Blue Economy Summit & Trade Show. Promoted by Blue Media (an MSC Group company), this landmark biennial event aims to gather the international elite of the sector – including institutions, experts, academics, ministries, and global corporations – to assess progress in research, public-private cooperation, digitalization, and the sustainable development of port cities. The initiative is part of a strategic three-year journey (2025-2027) named “Road to BEST.” Since May 2025, this roadshow has brought Blue Economy conversations to major Italian ports across eight regional legs, including a key 2026 calendar kickoff on February 20 in Catania, highlighting Italy's natural competitive advantage and central logistics role in the Mediterranean, backed by over 8,000 km of coastline and a national sector that generates €216 billion (approximately 11% of the national GDP).

Conceived as an integrated ecosystem where a 20,000-square-meter exhibition area and a high-level conference reinforce one another, the summit frames the sea not only as an economic asset but as a critical space for cultural exchange, technological experimentation, and sustainable development. The four-day programme balances institutional debate with actionable priorities, unfolding along the following thematic roadmap:

November 16-17 | Mediterranean Geopolitics and Ocean Protection/Regeneration

Following the opening ceremony on November 16, the first day sets the tone with institutional keynotes focused on ocean protection and the strategic value of the maritime economy. On November 17, the Plenary Conference Room will host the key session “*Blue Economy Driving Europe's Prosperity*”, a deep dive into the strategic importance of the Mediterranean sea space, alongside specialized CEO Panels examining the future of shipbuilding and global container shipping trends. Concurrently, the Arena Theatre will feature scientific seminars addressing ocean protection and regeneration, the evolving land-sea space synergy, and the strategic role of commercial ports within the Blue Economy.

November 18 | Regulations, Renewable Energy, and Multimodal Logistics

The third day will examine the latest international maritime regulatory evolutions and offshore renewable energy planning. The main hall will host the “*Forum Blue Media Blue Economy*”, focusing on the role of shipping in accessing strategic critical commodities, alongside panels on the involvement of banking institutions in financing coastal infrastructure systems. Meanwhile, at the Arena Theatre, researchers and port operators will delve into maritime safety and security protocols, cutting-edge industrial marine design, and innovative development models for “*The Future of Multimodal Transportation*” across urban waterfronts and sustainable marinas.

November 19 | Blue Tourism, Local Infrastructure, and Future Skills

The concluding day will focus on the economic potential of resilient coastal tourism and the infrastructural impact of connection networks on local territories. Sessions will examine risk assessment frameworks, innovative supply chain solutions for operational efficiency, and global procurement trends. The agenda will close with Confindustria Nautica’s specialized conference on the future of the nautical shipping industry and the academic panel “*Building the Future. Delivering Major Infrastructure Projects*”, dedicated to the successful delivery of major water-based infrastructure projects, maritime training frameworks, and the specialized skills required by tomorrow’s workforce.

The Expo Experience, Procurement, and Partnerships

The commercial and technological beating heart of the event will be the *Trade Show & Expo*, hosting more than 250 booths, presentation areas, and private lounges. This space features an integrated experience designed to turn networking into concrete, long-term partnerships. The initiative stands out for the cross-functional involvement of procurement departments, bringing together corporate buyers across major operational areas, ranging from maritime tech and IT to marine interior design, hospitality, food & beverage, and waterfront redevelopment, creating concrete business opportunities and shared projects across the entire value chain.

The event provides targeted opportunities for a broad, cross-sectoral audience: port authorities, coastal municipalities, shipyards, shipping lines, cruise companies, associations, NGOs, tourism bodies, foundations, ministries, maritime tech startups, terminal operators, universities, research centers, and training institutes.

BEST sits at the heart of the broader Blueconomy project, an initiative born to valorize the sea as a strategic arena for innovation, culture and economic growth, knowledge, experience and relationships across the maritime sector. The goal is to create a permanent hub for dialogue, promoting research and digitalization, fostering public private cooperation and investing in training and skills development. For Genoa, the summit is both a moment of visibility and a concrete opportunities to formalize partnerships where ideas, technologies and strategies for the sea can be shared, tested and scaled, as well as to promote new models of collaborations that will shape the Blue Economy's future.

More Information

<https://events.blueconomy.com/>