# Las Palmas de Gran Canaria host the Joint Atlantic-WestMED Stakeholder Conference 2026

● Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain | September 15-16, 2026 ●

The public University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria will host the first-ever *Joint Atlantic-WestMED Stakeholder Conference*. This summit marks a significant milestone in advancing European ocean governance, bringing together the Atlantic Maritime Strategy and the WestMED Initiative within a single transnational forum on September 15 and 16, 2026. The event aims to boost inter-basin cooperation, streamline efforts, promote the transfer of good practices, and contribute to reducing fragmentation across EU funding instruments, thereby strengthening their collective contribution to the European Union's sustainable blue economy priorities.

The conference builds on the robust political foundations of the WestMED Initiative, which stems from the European Commission's roadmap (adopted in April 2017) and developed within the framework of the "5+5 Dialogue" uniting five EU Member States (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Malta) and five Southern partner countries (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia). The summit will connect policymakers, public authorities, researchers, NGOs, investors, and maritime clusters to transform global environmental and logistical challenges into concrete opportunities for cooperation and investment.

The conference proceedings and side events will be structured along the following thematic tracks:

**Side Events, Youth Engagement, and Project Development**

The opening day will be entirely dedicated to a series of scheduled *(Interreg) back-to-back side events*. Technical working groups will focus on building synergies between territorial cooperation programmes, exploring funding opportunities, and fostering active engagement with maritime youth organizations, setting the operational groundwork for the next day's sessions.

**Plenary Sessions, Thematic Tracks, and Green Transition**

The main conference features high-level plenary discussions, a broad institutional participation and thematic sessions dedicated to shared priorities across the different sea basins, including blue skills, climate adaptation, maritime connectivity, and decarbonisation.

**Solution-Oriented Laboratory: Cross-Basin Hackathon**

A key element of the program will be the dynamic and interactive basin hackathon. Participants will collaborate in multidisciplinary groups to transform dialogue into concrete, potential cooperation projects. The sessions offer hands-on experience and practical guidance to co-create solutions to real maritime challenges and explore future funding pathways.

**Celebrating Blue Economy Excellence: Atlantic–WestMED Project Awards 2026**

The summit will host the presentation ceremony of the first unified, joint award scheme recognizing outstanding projects that deliver innovative and replicable solutions for the blue economy in the four scientific categories are: *Blue Skills and Ocean Literacy*; *Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)*; *Biodiversity, Healthy Oceans and Resilient Coasts*; *Maritime Transport, Green Ports, Energy Transition*.

The congress is tailored for public and ocean policy makers, port and coastal authorities, universities, maritime research centers, small and medium-sized enterprises, tech startups, and project promoters specialized in trans-Mediterranean and Atlantic environmental initiatives.

**More Information**

https://www.atlantic-westmed-stakeholder-conference-2026.eu/en