



Blue Economy
Cluster Builder



European Union



EUROPE & SCOTLAND
European Regional Development Fund
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

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Press Release

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BLUE ECONOMY CLUSTER BUILDER PROGRAMME LAUNCHED IN SCOTLAND

Aquatera Ltd and Scottish Enterprise are excited to launch the Blue Economy Cluster Builder. The Blue Economy Cluster Builder will communicate and raise awareness of the benefits of the Blue Economy (BE) in Scottish SMEs and enable these organisations to take advantage of new opportunities to grow and diversify their work and to boost innovation, both within Scotland and internationally. This will increase the work of Scottish companies operating in the BE and, in turn, support the sustainable growth of the BE in Scotland.

Scotland has around 19,000 km of coastline and 462,263 km² of ocean area— approximately six times the size of Scotland’s land area (Scotland’s Marine Atlas, 2011). This represents 61% of UK waters and 10% of Europe’s coastline (MCS, 2020).

The Blue Economy (BE) can be described as all economic activities relating to oceans, seas and coasts and covers a wide range of interlinked sectors, both established and emerging (European Commission, 2018). In 2010, the BE’s global output was estimated at US\$ 1.5 trillion in Gross Value Added (GVA) and this is projected to increase to US\$ 3 trillion in 2030 (OECD, 2016). In Scotland, there are currently about 84,500 jobs within the top nine sectors of the BE (Aquatera, 2019). This is predicted to grow to up to 99,000 jobs by 2030 (Aquatera, 2019). For the industry in Scotland to continue as a leading example for sustainability, excellence and growth in the international BE, there is broad recognition that ambitious, co-ordinated action that prioritises the management and protection of our seas and oceans is required (FCO, 2020).



Figure 1 The top twelve established and emerging Blue Economy sectors in Scotland according to GVA and jobs

As the foundation of a strong, sustainable, and diverse BE in Scotland, SMEs will be targeted within this programme to increase connectivity and engagement with other SMEs and with key agencies, industries and academia, both in Scotland and internationally. The three-year Cluster Builder, a tool for increasing economic opportunity among a group of interconnected industries, will provide an inclusive and free-of-charge service to ensure that Scotland’s SMEs are



positioned to gain the optimum share of market growth and compete with other international BEs. It will also aim to create a self-sustaining service beyond the three-year period.

The objectives of the Blue Economy Cluster Builder will be achieved through three tasks:

- Task 1: Building a sustainable Scottish Blue Economy Cluster and raising awareness of the Scottish SMEs BE capabilities
- Task 2: Hosting BE events for SMEs to further develop the BE and increase connectivity between SMEs, business sectors and clusters. The events will invite key speakers and experts in relevant and emerging fields and provide networking opportunities for the SMEs
- Task 3: Provide market intelligence for SMEs through a biweekly newsletter/bulletin and periodic targeted market intelligence reports keeping all cluster members up to date with the latest news and opportunities within the BE.

The Cluster Builder will focus on those key established and emerging BE sectors in Scotland. Smaller-scale BE sectors will not be excluded but instead will have access to cross-sectoral market intelligence, including the exploration of emerging technologies and innovation that may have a significant impact on these smaller sectors. These technologies could include marine sensors, internet of things, new materials, robotics and advanced automation, 3D printing, digitalisation, big data, and energy storage.

To find out more about the Blue Economy Cluster Builder programme, please contact Jennifer Fox at Jennifer.fox@aquatera.co.uk.



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Note to editors:

- The Blue Economy Cluster Builder project is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- The Scottish Government is the Managing Authority for the European Structural Funds 2014-20 Programme. For further information visit our webpages or follow @scotgovESIF.



1.1 REFERENCES

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