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Blue Economy, an opportunity to explore

The Blue economy sector generates, develops and enhances ideas that contribute to the sustainability of a vitally important resource, the sea, and is inspired by contributions that a circular economy approach and a commitment to the environment offers today's society.

Cadiz, a history connected to the sea

Cadiz, the oldest city in Europe, has been closely associated to the sea ever since it was founded by the Phoenicians three thousand years ago. Its unique society, life and economy have been shaped by a marine environment that has both sustained and limited it, provided opportunities for expansion and been a source of wealth. Today, Cadiz must continue to look to the sea to provide it the opportunity to consolidate a new economic model, more responsible and more sustainable. The same sea that is visible from everywhere in the city must continue to drive its development. That is why the project GreenTecLab (GTL) and its local hub in Cadiz are collaborating with IncubAzul which focuses on the Blue Economy. In Spain and in Greece the Blue Economy is one of the target sectors of GTL.

IncubAzul

Cadiz is the birthplace of IncubAzul, a project intended to be a flagship model for the promotion of the Blue Economy throughout Spain. With its principal focus on the seas and oceans, it seeks to cultivate the conditions required to attract and foster talent and ideas. It is a response to the real need to attract entrepreneurs, create spaces to develop synergies, and facilitate the arrival of dozens of new and attractive initiatives.

IncubAzul aims to promote innovation and technology transfer to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Blue Economy sector in Andalusia, understood as a sector that is formed by different interdependent subsectors that are all intrinsically connected to the sea, and rely on common skills and shared infrastructure, as defined by the European Commission in its policy paper "Blue Growth opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth".

This sector encompasses subsectors as diverse as marine bioresources and aquatic products, aquaculture, fisheries, the extraction of marine mineral resources, long and short-haul shipping, maritime transport services for passengers or goods, coastal tourism, recreational ports and sailing, offshore wind energy, ocean renewable energies, blue biotechnology, desalination, coastal protection, and monitoring and surveillance.

The **IncubAzul Open Future Programme** (hereafter, the Programme) is a comprehensive acceleration programme in which **the participants will** share physical and virtual spaces with other promising startups. A collaborative work environment and support to develop a business project will be provided, **with the collaboration of *Telefónica*** which will lead, develop and drive Open Future for those projects selected to participate. The programme boasts a team of highly esteemed mentors and specialist advisors who will help elaborate and implement a tailored work plan for business promotion, sales and communication, media coverage, networking sessions and conferences.

A different space
(https://www.incubazul.es/en/audiovisuales/)
The technological business incubator will be located in a unique building made from disused containers and is financed with European funds within the framework of the *Feder Operational Programme of Andalusia 2014 – 2020*, through the *INCYDE* Foundation of the Chambers of Commerce. This incubator aims to be the seed of an industrial environment that will be seen in the blue economy as a way of development with enormous potential, as well as a commitment to the environment.

The building itself is a symbol of the circular economy: Its original and novel design is an example of sustainability since it is made from recycled sea containers, which usually have a life-span of ten to fifteen years.

Its innovative building concept promotes co-working thanks to its versatile distribution of space, involving large shared areas and an open design that integrates the outdoors with terraces on all floors. It makes excellent use of natural light sources and takes advantage of the sun to supply efficient energy in all areas.

Cooperation with GTL: An opportunity for international exchange in the Blue Economy
IncubAzul shares the values and beliefs that GTL stands for. Climate protection requires green, technical innovations in all areas of the economy. Innovations are created in collaborations. Heterogeneous knowledge is brought together to drive sustainability and progress. The cooperation of the projects carries these ideas across national and sectoral borders. Both projects (IncubAzul and GTL) share the objective to create a habitat where projects are developed, as well as resulting in ecological, economic and social development.

GTL supports new startups in the areas of blue and green economies to foster climate protection and sustainability, so it is an opportunity to generate synergies and complement efforts. One aspect of the added value GTL offers, is the international exchange of innovation and experiences. As well, in Greece the Blue Economy is one of the GTL topics. The project connects Spanish and Greek startups to foster blue innovation management in order to strengthen climate protection. The GTL experts support collaboration among startups to empower them to develop co-creatively ideas for the European Economy and to build up new research and business cooperations.

Another aspect that GTL brings to the collaboration is the development of structures for interdisciplinary cooperation between the startups. Here, too, there is a lot of potential in the Blue Economy that is to be implemented in cooperation with IncubAzul.