

VERA KELLEN

Associate Director



PROFILE

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Present position

Associate Director of *Poseidon Aquatic Resources Management Ltd.* and *Poseidon Aquatic Resources Management Europe Ltd.*, international consultancies specialising in fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic environment.

Education

2012-2014	M.Sc. Environmental Technologies and International Affairs, <i>Technical University of Vienna, Austria</i>
2009-2012	B.A. Translation studies (EN, FR, DE), <i>Leopold-Franzens University Innsbruck, Austria</i>
2010-2011	Erasmus exchange semester, <i>Institut supérieur d'interprétation et de traduction de Paris, France</i>
2011	Joint studies exchange semester, <i>University of Bangor, UK</i>

Key professional skills

- Over 9 years of experience with the European Commission's external relations in the Neighbourhood and partner countries, covering stakeholder coordination, programme management, and policy development.
- Technical expertise in waste management, climate resilience and sustainable natural resource management, focusing on circular economy models.
- Knowledge of fisheries policy, legislation, management (management plans, RFMOs, fishing rights, etc), and IUU.
- Expertise in climate policy implementation, including disaster risk management strategies.

Professional experience record

2025 – present	Associate consultant for ocean governance and circular economy, Poseidon Aquatic Resources Management Ltd
2022-2024	European Commission, Brussels (Belgium), <i>Programme manager and Policy officer for Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction</i>
2018-2022	European Commission, Monrovia (Liberia), <i>Programme manager and Policy officer for Climate change and Fisheries management</i>
2016-2017	European Commission, Tunis (Tunisia), <i>Junior Professional in Delegation in charge of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights</i>
2015-2016	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg, Vienna (Austria), <i>Political attachée to the Embassy of Luxembourg to Austria, Slovakia and Slovenia and the Luxembourgish Representation to the OSCE</i>
2014	Freelance assistance, International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) General Secretariat, Vienna (Austria)

Other skills

Language skills:	Reading	Speaking	Writing	(1 - excellent; 5 - basic)
Luxembourgish (mother)	1	1	1	
English	1	1	1	
French	1	1	1	
German	1	1	1	
Spanish	3	2	3	

Geographic experience

Europe (in country)	Austria, Belgium, France, Luxembourg
Central Asia (home based)	(+regional), Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, regional projects
Africa (in country)	Liberia, Tunisia, Rwanda
Africa (home based)	Nigeria, Ethiopia, regional programmes in West, East and Southern Africa
South-East Asia (home based)	India, Japan, Philippines, Thailand
Pacific (home based)	Fiji, Vanuatu, regional projects
Americas (home based)	Barbados, Belize, Guatemala, Jamaica, Brazil, Colombia, projects in the Caribbean

Previous and current stakeholders

National and local government	Liberia (NaFAA, Monrovia City Corporation, Paynesville City Corporation), Tunisia (ASPEN Cap Bon), Albania (Municipality of Durrës)
International	EU, UNDP, UNEP, IOM, UNOPS Cities Alliance, UNDRR, IMEO, WB GFDRR
NGO	Build Green Group Albania, Blue Seeds, APDRA, Environmental Justice Foundation, Welthungerhilfe, OMCT, Action Against Hunger, APDRA
Private sector and banking	Iberostar, ECOBANK, EBRD, EIB, World Bank

Experience record

Designing programmes and projects to support to delivery of key international instruments:

- **Tunisia.** Team Leader for technical assistance as part of the EU's Mission Ocean to a project promoting sustainable small-scale fisheries, restoring marine ecosystems and promoting socio-economic resilience. Assistance was provided in refining the project's financial strategy and in identifying funding opportunities, defining the baseline indicators and methodological approach to measure and track the environmental impact of the project, and developing a structured outreach strategy including a dissemination plan to ensure the project's effective external communication and future replication (April to October 2025)
- **Global.** Identification and formulation of global programmes for delivering on the EU's climate change commitments in overseas development aid (EU, 2022-2024).
- **Global.** Ensured compliance and delivery with key performance indicators for EU funded programmes on climate change at global scale. (EU, 2022-2024)
- **Global.** Processed of progress narrative and financial reports for EU funded projects in Africa, Pacific, Caribbean, and at global level, including review of logical frameworks and delivery on targets (EU, 2022-2024)
- **Liberia.** Project contract manager for a three-year fisheries management with responsibility for overseeing all consultant inputs and monitoring of project progress against the project's logframe, indicators and targets.
- **Liberia.** Overseeing the EU Delegation's input to the ex-post and ex-ante evaluation of the EU/Liberia Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Protocol (EU, 2020)
- **Liberia.** Supported Liberia's National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority in combating illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in the context of a yellow card identification from the EU (EU, 2020)
- **West Africa.** Participation in the Mid-term evaluation of the PESCAO project supporting improved fisheries governance, maritime domain awareness and combatting IUU fishing in ECOWAS countries (EU, Jan to Apr 2022).
- **Tunisia.** Evaluation of concept and full proposals for 5 different calls for proposals under the EU-Tunisia partnership agreement. Contracting of successful applicants (EU, 2016-2017)
- **Tunisia.** Identified, formulated and launched call for proposals in support of the EU-Tunisia partnership on the following topics: (1) agriculture value chain development, (2) transitional justice, (3) Human rights and rule of law, (4) civil society, (5) addressing root causes of migration (EU, 2016-2017).

Ocean governance and fisheries

- **Africa.** EU support to blue economy and oceans programmes in Africa. Development of 5 regional oceans' initiatives in 5 regions of the African continent (EU, 2023)
- **Global.** Data collection and consultations for the updating of the IUU Fishing Risk Index, requiring the updating of 40 indicators of vulnerability, prevalence and response indicators of IUU fishing risk for 152 coastal countries. Preparation of a report presenting the 2025 update of the Index highlighting key drivers of change since the last update in 2023. (Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, 2025)

- **Poland.** Technical assistance as part of the EU's Mission Ocean to a project for strengthening the fisheries and aquaculture sectors by restoring endangered salmonid populations, ensuring sustainable fish stocks, and enhancing genetic diversity (EU, 2025).
- **Liberia.** Institutional capacity building and support in policy implementation and development for the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (EU, August 2021 – August 2022)
- **Liberia.** Technical input and support to consultant activities focussing on the development of a business plan for the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority, developing fisheries management plans, enhancing stock assessment, improving capacities of the Fisheries Monitoring Centre, enhancing fisheries enforcement capabilities. (EU, 2019 – 2020)
- **Liberia.** Technical input and support to project “Communities for Fisheries” implementation by Environmental Justice Foundation on small-scale fisheries in the coastal region of Liberia. Monitoring of the development of improvement of the integration of women in the fisheries value chain, notably through a village-savings-and loans programme. Supported communication activities, events, and press releases around the efforts in community fisheries regarding combating and reporting on illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities. (EU, 2019-2022)
- **Liberia.** Technical monitoring and support to the roll-out of the “FishLib” project implemented by APDRA including carrying out collective fish farming trainings and provision of individual advisory services, increase productivity of existing ponds and number of new fish farmers based on agro-ecological technics and as commercial activity (EU, 2019-2022)

Circular economy and waste management strategies

- **Albania.** Technical assistance as part of the EU's Mission Ocean to a project addressing the issue of plastic and microplastic pollution in the Mediterranean. Support was provided in areas related to water testing and mapping of hotspots, and developing a sustainable action plan to reduce plastics pollution (March to Oct 2025)
- **Liberia.** Participated in research and development of a climate-resilient integrated solid waste management systems supporting community-based enterprises in Monrovia and Paynesville. Development of a Greater Monrovia Urban Development Strategy (EU, 2018-2022)
- **Liberia.** Development of a Greater Monrovia Solid Waste Management Baseline, including development of Terms of Reference for a waste characterisation study, and identification of key hotspots of pollution as well as drivers and sources of pollution. (EU, 2018, 2022)
- **Liberia.** Supported the development, establishment, monitoring and evaluation of a micro-loans facility for community-based enterprises in the waste sector in Liberia. Horizontal and Vertical expansion of the community-based enterprise system for primary waste collection in greater Monrovia (EU, 2018-2022)
- **Liberia.** Research and technical input to the development of feasibility models and action plans for composting and recycling. Roll-out of a pilot for grants to support the implementation of the action plan. (EU, 2018- 2022)
- **Liberia.** Feasibility study on Waste-to-Energy (W2E) in Greater Monrovia: overseeing the technical rollout of the feasibility study and monitoring the implementation of the selected product. (EU, 2018-2021)
- **Liberia.** Overseeing capacity building programmes on financial management for community-based groupings and enterprise for small-scale fisheries and for waste management sector delivery. (EU, 2019-2022)
- **Liberia.** Delivered capacity building training in support of improving waste management system at community-level in coastal communities in Monrovia and Paynesville in the context of the EU Beach Clean Up (EU, 2019, 2020, 2021)
- **Global.** Preparation of a paper on Unwanted Pathways: A Material Flow Analysis of Plastics from Production to the Ocean (Technical University of Vienna, 2014)

Climate Change Policy and Disaster Risk Management

- **Global.** Supported development and formulation of projects for spatial planning for climate change induced disaster risk reduction as well as marine spatial planning. Technical inputs to the delivery on science-based decision making in disaster risk management.
- **Global.** Monitoring and technical support into global programmes with ACP countries on disaster risk reduction, and post-disaster needs assessments, including build-back-better programmes.
- **Caribbean.** Supporting research and monitoring of pilots in support of identifying key activities in the coastal areas (coral reef restoration) around risk areas in the Caribbean to reduce the impact of natural disasters on the islands' populations. (EU, 2023-2024)
- **Global.** Ensuring delivery of EU financial commitment to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, with a key focus on the EU Methane emission reduction strategy and the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA, GCCA+ and ACP GCCA) (EU, 2018-2024)
- **Global.** Identifying and developing the EU support to the global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, the largest global alliance for city climate leadership across the globe. (EU, 2022-2024)
- **Africa.** Monitoring and technical inputs into the EU Support to the Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa, including development of climate action plans and review of technical investment portfolio (EU, 2018-2024)

Soft skills and cross-cutting competencies:

- Human Rights & Social Inclusion: Solid foundation in human rights, social inclusion, and ethical project design, built through sustained collaboration with civil society and human rights defenders.
- Civil Society Engagement: In-depth experience facilitating civil society participation in rule of law and governance processes.
- Public Speaking & Moderation: Regularly engaged as keynote speaker, technical expert, moderator, and facilitator in international and public events.
- Event Coordination: Skilled in organizing both large-scale conferences and grassroots activities, from multi-day panels and training seminars to community-driven events such as beach cleanups.
- Editorial & Media Communication: Experienced in editing reports and publications (e.g. Tunisia activity report), writing press releases, and managing social media communication campaigns.
- Information Delivery: Able to present complex information in a clear, concise, and audience-appropriate manner.
- Facilitation of Multistakeholder Dialogue: Strong ability to lead and moderate multi-actor discussions, including high-level and technical groups, fostering consensus among diverging viewpoints.
- Multilingual Communication: Capable of working fluently across multiple languages (EN, FR, DE), including native proficiency in Luxembourgish.
- Team & Stakeholder Management: Proven leadership in managing teams and navigating diverse stakeholder landscapes across sectors and regions.