

ROADMAP	
TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Committee of the Regions, and the Economic and Social Committee on Integrated Maritime Policy for the North Sea
TYPE OF INITIATIVE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CWP <input type="checkbox"/> Non-CWP <input type="checkbox"/> Implementing act/Delegated act
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	DG MARE E1
EXPECTED DATE OF ADOPTION	Month/Year: first half of 2011
VERSION OF ROADMAP	No: 2 Last modification: Month/Year: October 2010

A. Context, problem definition
<p>(i) What is the political context of the initiative? (ii) How does it relate to past and possible future initiatives, and to other EU policies? (iii) What ex-post analysis of the existing policy has been carried out and what results are relevant for this initiative?</p>
<p>(i) One of the objectives of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) is to develop and contribute to the development of integrated maritime governance mechanisms across the EU. This should be seen in conjunction with the regional component of the implementation of IMP: the need to manage seas and oceans in an ecosystem context, and the very specific needs and characteristics of the various sea basins around the EU.</p> <p>In their contributions to the consultation on the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy¹, stakeholders and coastal regions have pointed out the need to take into account regional specificities in developing the IMP². Member States have recognised this aspect in European Council conclusions in December 2007³. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive⁴, which is currently being implemented, works on the basis of a regional approach. The European Commission has made organisational changes to ensure that IMP implementation can be done on a regional basis, and has begun developing specific approaches to this implementation for sea basins around the EU.</p> <p>The 'Europe 2020' strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Europe's strong maritime tradition; - Targets set for action cannot be "one size fits all"; - The need to prioritise cross-border sections in strategic projects; - Maritime policy as one of the policies to address climate change; - Social, economic and territorial cohesion at the heart of Europe 2020. <p>The Commission's Progress Report on IMP of 15.10.2009⁵ confirms the development of a sea-basin approach as one of the six priorities for IMP development over the next years. The Conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 16-17 November 2009 acknowledge this⁶, based on demand and added value.</p> <p>The North Sea is a prime candidate for the development of a more specific approach to implementation of IMP in a sea basin: it is geographically clearly defined, and its characteristics are very specific to this particular sea area.</p> <p>In comparison with the Atlantic or the Mediterranean Sea, the North Sea is a shallow sea. It hosts a large range of human activities. It is also surrounded by heavily industrialised states, which brings particular problems such as pollution and overfishing, but also advantages and opportunities such as economic potential and competitiveness and the financial, administrative and technical capacity for new initiatives.</p> <p>Both coastal regions and stakeholders around the North Sea recognise specific characteristics and requirements of the North Sea and the need for intensive cooperation and coordinated approaches in managing it.</p>

¹ [COM\(2006\) 275 final](#) Green Paper - Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union : a European vision for the oceans and seas - "How inappropriate to call this planet Earth when it is quite clearly Ocean" attributed to Arthur C. Clarke

² Contributions to the consultation: http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/contrib_rc_en.html

³ Doc 166616/07 Para 58

⁴ [Directive 2008/56/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

⁵ [COM\(2009\) 540 final](#) Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Progress report on the EU's integrated maritime policy

⁶ 2973rd General Affairs council meeting Brussels, 16 November 2009

(ii) a: see above.

b: The proposed Communication aims at being complementary to lines of action and achievements in many maritime sectors, with a multiple perspective (economic - environmental - social). It will take into account the objectives of different policies dealing with maritime affairs, and includes main IMP policy objectives and instruments. The Commission has already presented a Communication on IMP in the Mediterranean Sea⁷, and a macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea⁸ with a strong maritime component.

(iii) N/A: there is no North Sea Strategy for the EU at present. The objective of the proposed Communication is to take stock of existing issues, challenges, and actions, and contribute added value by improving transparency, coherence and constructive approaches to resolve pending challenges.

What are the main problems which this initiative will address?

The North Sea is a very intensively used sea as regards to fisheries and other important maritime interests in the region are: oil and gas exploitation, renewable energy, extraction of mineral resources and maritime transport (some of the largest ports in Europe, including one of the world's largest in Rotterdam, are situated around the North Sea).

The North Sea also faces specific environmental issues and challenges as regards maritime spatial planning, coastal management and climate change adaptation, many of which are not limited to one specific area, such as the management of an environment under pressure from extractive uses (oil, gas, sand and gravel) and fisheries, as well as the protection of specific nature habitats (birds, shallow sand habitats etc.)

These challenges point to the following potential areas of work:

- The need to develop possibilities and proposals for closer cooperation and a more integrated approach to governance of and human activities management in the North Sea.
- The need to strengthen the balance between economic growth and environmental requirements.
- The need and capacity to develop innovative strategies that contributes to growth and jobs in the region. This needs to be coherent with environmental requirements.
- Need to develop further the coherence of individual maritime policies and (legal and other) instruments affecting the North Sea, and to reflect on the most appropriate governance mechanisms affecting the North Sea.

Who will be affected by it?

Seven Member States (United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and France) and their North Sea Coastal Regions, economic stakeholders in the North Sea and environmental stakeholders in the North Sea are affected. The proposed Communication is also relevant for the European Economic Area (EEA), i.e. Norway.

(i) Is EU action justified on grounds of subsidiarity?

(ii) Why can Member States not achieve the objectives of the proposed action sufficiently by themselves?
(Necessity Test)

(iii) Can the EU achieve the objectives better? (Test of EU Value Added)

(i) Yes. The Treaty of Lisbon provides for EU action on a number of issues which are relevant to maritime policy for the North Sea (e.g. territorial and social cohesion, action against climate change; greening the economy; development of energy resources; maritime and coastal tourism, administrative co-operation etc.). The issues affecting the North Sea concern all Member States. They require in many cases joint and integrated, cross-border solutions. The EU's IMP provides the necessary integrated approach and the policy framework that allows for the cooperative development of such solutions.

(ii) The concerned Member States/regions can achieve more synergy and together set the basis for maritime policy development for such a wide ranging number of stakeholders and areas. This is particularly relevant in the context of ecosystem approaches to management of sea areas, management of activities that have more often than not a cross-border dimension, cross-border economic development issues (i.a. renewables), and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive⁴.

(iii) Yes. The Commission can assist by developing a coordinated and integrated Maritime Policy perspective; develop proposals for streamlining action on common cross-border maritime issues and ideas and instruments that support joined-up governance of the North Sea, respecting subsidiarity.

B. Objectives of the initiative

⁷ [COM\(2009\) 466 final](#) Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Towards an Integrated Maritime Policy for better governance in the Mediterranean

⁸ COM(2009) 248 final

What are the main policy objectives?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute synergy to existing national and regional strategies and plans by aggregating these at sea-basin level and making use of cross-border advantages. - Identify maritime commonalities and specificities to North Sea stakeholders. - Set the basis for further development for IMP policy in the North Sea, in conjunction with Member States and stakeholders. - Raise awareness on common risks and potential for development, including on overlapping maritime activities and common grounds for cooperation on maritime affairs.
Do the objectives imply developing EU policy in new areas?
No, but the Communication and the work leading up to its adoption may lead to the identification of possible new actions. The Communication only aims at streamlining IMP general objectives, and sectoral maritime policies pursued at EU level, to the particular needs of North Sea stakeholders. It could signal new potential activities for which an individual impact assessment will be carried out, if necessary.

C. Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What are the policy options being considered? (ii) What legislative or 'soft law' instruments could be considered? (iii) How do the options respect the proportionality principle?
<p>(i) We are now only in a final inventory stage of all the issues that need attention in the North sea basin as already mentioned, as further discussions and consultation with stakeholders on specific options and actions are carried out.</p> <p>(ii) At the moment, no legislation is considered for this action, but the document may contain suggestions for action, including to Member State, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Encouraging Member States to cooperate and jointly undertake actions, and to further develop integrated maritime governance of the North Sea, at all levels. 2) Proposing innovative strategies that contribute to sustainable economic growth in an eco-efficient way. The North Sea, being one of the most intensely used seas, needs to be most innovative in order to combine functions, and exploit its resources most efficiently. Innovations in for instance energy functions, fishing, transport, are likely to be applicable in more than one country. <p>(iii) As the specific options are still being defined, the proportionality of the content of each option will be addressed in due course.</p>

D. Initial assessment of impacts
What are the benefits and costs of each of the policy options?
Impacts that we currently assume include: greater transparency of the activities taking place in the maritime context in the North Sea, including on the implementation of EU legislation, the management of sea areas an activities by Member States etc. We would also expect efficiency gains both in the private sector and in public administrations, because of increased coherence of action in the North Sea. Further specific impacts could include better stakeholder involvement and the acceleration of economic activity.
Could any or all of the options have significant impacts on (i) simplification, (ii) administrative burden and (iii) on relations with other countries, (iv) implementation arrangements? And (v) could any be difficult to transpose for certain Member States?
(i) – (v) The Communication could have an impact on simplification, reduction in the mid- to long term of administrative burden, and on relations with third countries, notably Norway. Since policy integration may lead to more streamlined and coordinated maritime policy development by Member States and/or regions.
(i) Will an IA be carried out for this initiative and/or possible follow-up initiatives? (ii) When will the IA work start? (iii) When will you set up the IA Steering Group and how often will it meet? (iv) What DGs will be invited?
(i) – (iv) As the document will not directly propose any new actions, no impact assessment is foreseen.
(i) Is any of options likely to have impacts on the EU budget above €5m?
(ii) If so, will this IA serve also as an ex-ante evaluation, as required by the Financial regulation? If not, provide information about the timing of the ex-ante evaluation.

(i) This Communication will not have an impact on the EU budget.

(ii) N/A

E. Evidence base, planning of further work and consultation

(i) What information and data are already available? Will existing impact assessment and evaluation work be used?

(ii) What further information needs to be gathered, how will this be done (*e.g. internally or by an external contractor*), and by when?

(iii) What is the timing for the procurement process & the contract for any external contracts that you are planning (*e.g. for analytical studies, information gathering, etc.*)?

(iv) Is any particular communication or information activity foreseen? If so, what, and by when?

(i) Relevant data already exists (i.e. of a regulatory and non regulatory nature, in economic, social, environmental terms; and at Member States' and regional level). Information is gathered from national maritime policy plans from Member States and relevant organisations such as the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and the North Sea Ministers conferences. Also information from NGO's and other stakeholders (industry) is used.

(ii) Relevant data will be gathered internally, making use of existing documents and information from other DG's. and if needed data will be asked from Member States and stakeholders.

(iii) No plans for external contracts at the moment.

(iv) The Member State Expert Group on IMP will be used as platform for information and consultation. A citizen's summary, press release and related communications activities will also be undertaken.

Which stakeholders & experts have been or will be consulted, how, and at what stage?

All relevant stakeholders: Member States, NGOs, Coastal Regions, economic stakeholders, relevant regional seas conventions, EEA (Norway).

A formal stakeholder consultation will be carried out in the course of 2011.

Other relevant actions:

- The Member States Expert Group on IMP will be consulted at regular intervals during the process.

- A stakeholder event was organised by the North Sea Commission on 17-18 March in Newcastle.

- The Committee of the Regions, and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) - North Sea Commission have developed own initiative proposals for a North Sea Strategy.

- The Commission will on a regular basis participate in events on this topic organised by relevant stakeholders.