

*Expresso Conference on Maritime Affairs*

*Cascais, Portugal, 25 November 2011*

*Key-note speech by President Barroso*

## **Como vai a política Marítima Europeia Integrada refletir-se na política financeira do Quadro pós 2013?**

Ministro, Presidente, authorities, ladies and gentlemen,

As I just said, in this particular moment of time we must use all available resources in the most effective way in order to boost economic growth. This is what drives me to deal again with the sea, which is also the reason why we are gathering here today.

The sea was always a matter of great appeal to me. In my own way I have a special bond with the sea that makes me feel a true Portuguese. When I was Prime Minister of Portugal I conceived an integrated policy for the sea. Later, I took these ideas to Brussels. In my first term as President of the European Commission I redefined the portfolio of the Commissioner that until then was exclusively dealing with fisheries policy. So the role of the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries came into existence, reflecting my integrated vision of maritime issues. Moreover, the dedicated Directorate-General was accordingly reformed. The change of name provides a clear evidence of this: from DG FISH it became DG MARE!

So let us not overlook one of the biggest resources of all: our oceans and our coasts. These can be invaluable sources of wealth and growth. They can give us the innovation and the jobs that Europe needs to help us on the road to recovery.

I was closely involved in the launch of the Integrated Maritime Policy during my previous mandate – and I'm quite proud of that. Since then, this policy has set in motion an irreversible process, changing people's attitude and view of Europe's maritime dimension. It has shown that all maritime players need to work together across sectors and across borders if we are to develop a healthy, affluent and environmentally-sound maritime economy. It has shown that the Integrated Maritime Policy can be a powerful means towards smart growth, high-quality jobs, and the general goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Have no coordination and you are bound to miss synergies and opportunities. Instead, look at the larger picture of all maritime sectors together, interconnect them, and you will maximise the value and effectiveness of each of them.

This is the added value that we policy-makers are entrusted to create: a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Through cooperation, public money is better spent; the value of each investment is maximised; and costly duplications are avoided.

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Today you want to hear about public financing. What will happen to the Integrated Maritime Policy under our new financial rules?

Let's see. So far, in the years 2008-2010, through preparatory actions such as the projects for an integrated maritime surveillance or the feasibility studies for maritime spatial planning, it has received a total volume of just over 20 million euro.

For the period from 2011 to 2013, a new Regulation has been approved by the European Parliament and the Council just two days ago. This will provide a "bridge" for the implementation of actions from now until the next financial

perspectives. As you can see it is now undisputed that maritime policy must rely on stable and uninterrupted support.

The next step is adopting the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This is scheduled for next week, but I can give you a sneak preview.

The new Fund will explicitly recognise the added value of the Integrated Maritime Policy. It will put emphasis on the need for integrated maritime governance at sea-basin level and promote new sources of sustainable blue growth.

The Fund will also support the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which is the environmental pillar of the IMP. This will help us define the boundaries of sustainability of the activities that have an impact on the marine environment.

Naturally, the *Maritime and Fisheries* Fund will underpin the new Common Fisheries Policy in its entirety. But it will also set out to boost up employment, territorial cohesion and social inclusion in fisheries-dependent communities. Fishing communities are facing extremely difficult times: we will help them diversify into other sectors of the maritime economy, such as tourism or de-pollution, for instance, so as to keep coastal areas alive and teeming with employment opportunities.

Most importantly, support will mainly go to those projects and tools that span across sectors – across the maritime board, as it were –, bring collective benefits to those sectors, but cannot be accomplished within one individual policy area.

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Such projects are essential to rationalise available resources. Let me give you a couple of examples.

First: in a situation of growing competition for space, there is an undeniable need to coordinate the different uses of the sea. Maritime Spatial Planning will provide a stable framework for the sustainable management of marine areas, resources and ecosystems. This in turn will lower the legal and administrative costs for enterprises, provide for better legal certainty – and foster and accelerate investments.

Second: the integration of Maritime Surveillance activities will enable public authorities to share data and cope in real time with problematic situations at sea – be it to combat crime or carry out rescue operations. By joining resources they will be able to do more, for less – and once again integration will mean that public money is used better.

Third: we have an important knowledge issue that we can't neglect. There is still a lot we need to learn about the state of the seas, marine life, sea-beds and so on. The 1.5 billion euro that EU Member States spend every year on monitoring seas and oceans is still sub-optimally used. This is why for three years now, our Marine Knowledge 2020 initiative has been putting together Europe's fragmented marine data into a knowledge base that is freely and publicly accessible.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

In all our organisations, be it at supranational, national or regional level, the policies affecting the sea tend to fall under the remit of different policy departments: transport, energy, environment, fisheries... As a consequence, funding is also dispersed over several instruments.

This is going to change under the new system. The new Maritime and Fisheries Fund will fall under the umbrella of a new Common Strategic Framework,

which will see to it that all the various existing funds work consistently with each other. Maritime-related projects will be mainstreamed into all other cohesion funds.

A particularly important aspect in promoting coherent decision-making is the development of sea-basin strategies. Maritime projects and actions are often related more to sea basins than to individual Member States. Being region-specific, sea-basin strategies can provide a useful structure for cooperation and better use of public money. I cannot overstate the importance of this tailored approach for all Member States – including of course Portugal.

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In Lisbon, three days from now, Commission Maria Damanaki will launch an important strategy of this kind – and one that is particularly dear to me. The people present here who have helped the Commission prepare the launch of the Atlantic Strategy have my warmest thanks.

There are at least two things we need to do for the Atlantic.

First, we need to find the right combination of EU funding and legislative mechanisms – such as those for regional development or research – to help coastal States reap the benefits that the specific oceanographic, economic and cultural features of the Atlantic can offer. The Atlantic coast's geographical challenges are now turning into assets for smart growth: the strong winds, tides and waves can contribute to energy production at zero emissions; provide a natural washing facility for sustainable aquaculture; and so on. Environmental sustainability represents business opportunities and guarantees at the same time long-term employment opportunities.

Second, we need to collaborate with all States of the Atlantic, not just EU ones, for an enlightened stewardship of the planet's second largest ocean.

Adopting the Atlantic Strategy is a solid step forward, but it is only the beginning: the real work starts now.

The real work consists in having the Atlantic Member States devote regional funds to maritime projects that reach across to other States: this country must work with Ireland, France, Spain... Sea-basin strategies are a vehicle of territorial cohesion that spans across countries. But they are economic engines, and they can be the medicine that our fragile economy needs right now.

Portugal is well-positioned for this. We have an Atlantic tradition. We have always looked at this shore of the Atlantic as well as the American one. So I expect the government to be really engaged in the strategy. I expect it to bring its expertise and innovative ideas into the 'Atlantic Forum' that we will set up.

Nor should the representatives of the private sector think the Strategy does not concern them. It concerns you too. We need your know-how and investments. If the Strategy creates a new political awareness, it is the full force of your weight that will make it a political reality.

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To continue about funding: throughout the years, coastal areas and maritime activities have featured prominently in EU spending. Between 2000 and 2008, over 70,000 maritime-related projects received almost 15 billion euro. And in the past twenty years, 42 ocean energy projects received around 60 million euro, equally split between research and pre-commercial demonstrations.

This maritime-related investment will be further pursued in the next financial period, which will contribute in no small measure to the sustainable development of coastal regions.

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I'd like to mention now another area that is crucial for maritime policy and that we can't neglect to support: research and innovation. Next week, the Commission will table its proposal for Horizon 2020, which will bring together all existing EU research and innovation funding strands into one single instrument.

I was saying earlier how, perhaps more than other policies, Maritime Policy requires *knowledge*. Seas and oceans are like an immense iceberg of resources: what we know is just the tip. The hidden part is the potential for blue growth that we must unlock with research and innovation.

So we need an EU strategy for marine and maritime research. This has been clear to us from the outset of the Integrated Maritime Policy. We need to develop a scientific and technological knowledge base that is able to stimulate growth, protect the marine environment, optimise the allocation of marine space and adapt to climate change.

In the next financial period we will take the strategy forward and sharpen its cross-cutting edge. We will do so by working with the sixteen Member States and associated countries which have decided to pool research capabilities into an initiative called "Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans". The aim is fostering sustainable growth and adapting the maritime economy to climate change. Our research has a precise duty to respond to the needs of society. The maritime world *can* get us closer to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.

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To conclude, ladies and gentlemen,

Europe's oceans are telling us a new story today.

The seas of Europe can produce food, support jobs, provide our energy, safeguard our climate and make us a leading economy in the world – if we

abandon an outdated, compartmentalised view of the sea and embrace interconnection.

The Integrated Maritime Policy has triggered this new awareness and throughout the EU, countries are now shifting to integration.

This new awareness has, in turn, also strengthened the Commission's own commitment to make coherent policies and match them with coherent investments.

Thank you.

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