

ROADMAP

TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	Ocean Governance: EU contribution to responsible oceans stewardship		
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	MARE B1/E1/C1	DATE OF ROADMAP	05 /2015
This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content and structure.			

A. Context and problem definition

- (1) What is the political context of the initiative?
- (2) How does it relate to past and possible future initiatives, and to other EU policies?
- (3) What ex-post analysis of existing policy has been carried out? What results are relevant for this initiative?

(1) Oceans are a key source of nutritious food, medicine, minerals and renewable energy. They produce half of the oxygen in the earth's atmosphere and absorb more than a quarter of CO2 emissions. They play a key role in climate regulation.

Oceans are a core asset for the EU. The EU maritime economy alone employs more than 3.6 million people with a high potential for further growth. Europe's security of supply of fish protein, minerals and renewable energy depends to a large extent on the long term availability of ocean resources. 75% of the EU's external trade and 37% of internal trade is carried on sea routes. With more than 20 million km², Europe's maritime zone is the largest on the planet

Population growth, global competition for raw materials, maritime security threats, climate change and marine pollution put **pressure on the oceans' ability to sustain the above benefits**. Providing the right framework to ensure long-term health and productivity of the oceans, and sustainable growth of Europe's ocean-based economy is crucial.

The existing international ocean governance framework is ineffective to ensure this sustainable use of oceans and their resources, notably in the 60 per cent of the oceans that are beyond national jurisdictions. This is mostly because of a lack of compliance and inadequate implementation of existing rules and policies, overlaps and lack of coordination between institutions, weak governance mechanisms in the high seas and ineffective regional cooperation.

A number of initiatives are taking place at the global and regional level with a view to improve elements of the existing ocean governance framework. Several global players have adopted national ocean policies (see, for example, the US' Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century, China's White Paper on the Development of Marine Programmes, Japan's Basic Act on Ocean Policy, the Russian Federation's Marine Policy Document for the period up to 2020 and Australia's Ocean Policy), which often set out objectives for shaping international Ocean Governance.

(2) The EU is a natural global player on the oceans and a key actor in international fora and negotiations. Building on the Commission's 2012 Blue Growth Communication, the EU has already established a lead in pursuing a "blue growth" policy that is internationally recognised. The international community undertook important commitments for the sustainable development of oceans and their resources at the 2012 Rio+20 Conference. Following up on this, the Commission Communication on a Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015 highlighted international oceans governance and foresees **a leading role for the EU**.

(3) Evaluation of existing policies has been done in the context of sectoral initiatives adopted recently by the Commission. These include initiatives on ocean energy, marine knowledge and innovation, spatial planning and marine tourism. In 2012, the "Blue Growth study - Scenarios and drivers for Sustainable Growth from the Oceans, Seas and Coasts" provided the Commission with a number of insights into the economic and environmental challenges. For instance, the study pointed out that More than 70% of the earth's surface is covered by oceans and seas, much of which is either underexplored or unexplored. It also underlined that where resources are explored, tensions often exist between different maritime economic activities directly, but also indirectly, for example if one activity puts pressure on the marine environment – thus compromising the potential of another activity. Whilst there is therefore a sound evidence base for particular policy area, no study or stakeholder input has been conducted by the Commission on the efficiency of global ocean governance structures.

What are the main problems which this initiative will address?
<p>The existing international ocean governance framework is ineffective to ensure the sustainable use of oceans and their resources, in particular in the 60 per cent of the oceans that are beyond national jurisdictions. Lack of compliance and inadequate implementation of existing rules and policies, overlaps and lack of coordination between institutions, weak governance mechanisms in the high seas and ineffective regional cooperation prevent the conservation and sustainable use of ocean resources.</p> <p>There is no coherent and targeted EU policy on how to improve ocean governance. This leads to inconsistencies and fragmentation in EU action at the international level.</p> <p>All of the above leads to lack of business certainty for Europe's maritime industries and risks creating a competitive disadvantage for them at the global level.</p>
Who will be affected by it?
EU Member States, international organisations, third country partners, economic operators, civil society.
Is EU action justified on grounds of subsidiarity? Why can Member States not achieve the objectives of the proposed action sufficiently by themselves? Can the EU achieve the objectives better?
The EU can achieve better results in international negotiations and cooperation through a coherent position than by each MS negotiating separately. In addition, one of the key areas where ocean governance needs to be improved is fisheries, where the EU has exclusive competence .

B. Objectives of the initiative

What are the main policy objectives?
<p>The main objective of the initiative is to set out a coherent EU policy on improving the international ocean governance framework.</p> <p>The policy would define specific objectives that the EU should pursue at the global, regional and bilateral level, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas, improve the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction. • Ensure sustainable global fisheries and prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. • Strengthen Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (e.g. by improving compliance and enforcement rules, improving scientific advice, capacity building); • Promote international standards for marine management and offshore resource use (e.g. promoting the EU's unique maritime spatial planning model, working towards more comprehensive international standards for the exploitation of mineral resources from the seabed). • Building "ocean partnerships" with third countries (e.g. to share information on the marine environment, to cooperate more closely in maritime research and maritime security, to align positions on responsible fisheries management in international waters). • Improve Maritime Security (e.g. follow-up actions to combat threats and risks such as piracy, pollution and other illegal activities at sea).
Do the objectives imply developing EU policy in new areas?
The initiative will work through existing policies, where there is room for better coordination among different levels of governance inside the EU. Depending on the results of public consultation, the Commission will consider what new EU actions or approaches are needed in order to improve the global governance processes.

C. Options

<p>(1) What are the policy options (including exemptions/adapted regimes e.g. for SMEs) being considered?</p> <p>(2) What legislative or 'soft law' instruments could be considered?</p> <p>(3) How do the options respect the proportionality principle?</p>
(1) In order to improve ocean governance, two basic policy options are considered. i) Continuing the business as usual in the context of ongoing policies and processes (including meetings of relevant Member States expert

groups and coordination efforts in the context of relevant Council formations). ii) More systemic EU approach to have a coherent and targeted EU policy on ocean governance

(2) Depending on the results of the public consultation and other stakeholder inputs, the Commission may decide between various types of initiatives. These may include a Staff working document summarising the stakeholder input, or a "chapeau" Communication with an Action Plan for certain policy sectors or a Communication outlining a new policy approach. (3) The Commission will propose only such actions for which a coherent and targeted EU policy would bring a significant added value compared to the business as usual.

D. Initial assessment of impacts

What are the benefits and costs of each of the policy options?

There are no direct budget implications.

The initiative should allow to limit inconsistencies and fragmentation in EU action at the international level in discussions on improving ocean governance. It would also allow improving business certainty for Europe's maritime industries.

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?

All options would have an impact on the EU external action in the area of ocean governance at bilateral, regional and global level.

- (1) Will an IA be carried out for this initiative and/or possible follow-up initiatives?
- (2) When will the IA work start?
- (3) When will you set up the IA Steering Group and how often will it meet?
- (4) What DGs will be invited?

(1) Depending on the results of the stakeholder consultation and identification of policy gaps that could be addressed at the EU level, an Impact Assessment may be necessary for the initiative. Impact assessment work would also be undertaken for any possible follow-up initiatives, as appropriate.

(2) If necessary, the IA work would start in the 2nd half of 2015, on the basis of the public consultation, additional stakeholder input, consultation of member states in the context of relevant expert groups and inputs from various studies available to the Commission.

(3) The first inter-service steering group was convened in May 2015 in order to steer the public consultation process and it will be summoned again to discuss its results. It will continue to meet in the 2nd half of 2015 and in 2016 in order to discuss the form and the content of the follow up action.

(4) DGs ENV, MOVE, RTD, HOME, DEVCO, GROW, REGIO and TRADE as well as SG, LS and EEAS.

- (1) Is any option likely to have impacts on the EU budget above € 5m?
- (2) 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.

(1) No.

E. Evidence base, planning of further work and consultation

- (1) What information and data are already available? Will existing IA and evaluation work be used?
- (2) What further information needs to be gathered, how will this be done (e.g. internally or by an external contractor), and by when?
- (3) 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.)?
- (4) Is any particular communication or information activity foreseen? If so, what, and by when?

(1) There is a large evidence base established on sectoral basis linked to recent Commission initiatives or reports on ocean energy, maritime spatial planning, maritime security, innovation, knowledge sharing and seabed mining. This will be complemented by input from numerous ongoing work streams including ocean monitoring action by the Euro-agro research infrastructure, study on realising the potential of EU's Outermost Regions for Blue Growth, a study on the future perspectives of the EU rules to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing or a study on the importance of immigrant work in the EU fisheries sector. The Commission will also build on the analysis conducted in various international fora, such as the Global Ocean Commission.

(2) A general public consultation is to be carried out by September 2015 in order to gather input from

stakeholders on the efficiency and appropriateness of the existing global institutional ocean governance. The particular focus of the consultation will be on identification of possible areas for action, where an EU involvement can provide a significant added value compared to continuation of the business as usual. (3) N/A

(4) Commissioner Vella will participate in a series of conferences (e.g. The Economist World Ocean Summit in June 2015 in Portugal, the "Our Ocean" Conference in October 2015 in Chile) where he could raise awareness to the initiative and increase the interest and the number of contributions from stakeholders

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

All stakeholders that have an interest in the oceans and blue economy (industry, academia, R&D, civil society) will be consulted via web-based consultation and by means of stakeholder events in different stages of the initiative, starting with stock taking. Informal consultation of Member States and third country actors as well as international institutions will take place in parallel.