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## **The Integrated Maritime Policy: setting our sights ever higher**

*Check Against Delivery  
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi  
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort*

TRAN Committee of the European Parliament

**Brussels, 22 June 2010**

Mr Chairman, Madam Rapporteur, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
I would like to thank you - first of all for your kind invitation to this discussion - on Ms Meissner's draft report on the Integrated Maritime Policy.

This report is more than a stock-taking exercise: it reaffirms the European Parliament's cross-policy approach in setting out its position. Your involvement, confirms the democratic legitimacy of our policy. I am grateful for this.

Today more than ever, the concrete benefits of an integrated approach to maritime affairs, are more than clear. The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico or the rapid expansion of Piracy are just two examples that make the headlines. They are examples of a much bigger network of challenges.

The pressures that weigh on the marine environment – loss of biodiversity, climate change, increased exploitation of marine resources including overfishing – do not run parallel to one another. They combine to create a challenge that is greater than the sum of its parts. Likewise, our response has to be based on a coherent and balanced vision that cuts across policy lines.

Ultimately, this is the essence of the Integrated Maritime Policy: to develop positive interactions between existing policies, economic and social interests. To combine and coordinate the various sectoral efforts in order to increase their efficiency.

But where do we stand today? Let me briefly talk about the different main priorities I serve since I took office in last February.

First, I will start with EU2020, with sustainable and inclusive economic growth, employment and innovation. I firmly believe in the potential that different maritime sectors can offer, in particular in these economically difficult times. Last month we launched a study on the "Scenarios and drivers for sustainable growth from oceans, sea and coasts". This study will take us a step closer to our ultimate goal of establishing a cross-sectoral strategy for sustainable growth in coastal regions and maritime sectors. To new opportunities for jobs in coastal regions. For the traditional maritime professions like the seafarers or the fishermen - for whom I want secured and attractive careers. But also for the new professions which will emerge from the new maritime sectors like the renewable energies or the blue biotechnologies.

The results of this study will be available in 2012.

Second, another priority is to connect the protection of the marine environment to the development of our seas and coastal regions. We can do this by defining the limits of sustainability of all human activities with an impact on the marine environment. This finds its practical expression in the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and of the EU Climate change and Energy package.

The third priority I would like to mention relates to sea-basin strategies. The IMP's regional focus allows for tailor-made priority-setting that are adapted to specific regional needs, depending on the different political, socio-economic and natural situations. We have applied this approach to the Communication on the EU and the Arctic Region, the Baltic Sea Strategy and the Communication on the IMP in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, in line with the Conclusions of the June General affairs and external relations Council we will present an EU Strategy for the Atlantic by June 2011.

A fourth priority relates to cross-cutting tools of the IMP, namely maritime spatial planning, integration of surveillance and the networking of marine data and science. The work on these tools has progressed well.

We plan to issue a Communication on maritime spatial planning before the end of this year, reporting on the progress and setting out options including a legislative option, for shaping a common approach across the EU.

As for the integration of maritime surveillance, we are working with the Member States, in order to propose, by October 2010, a roadmap towards the establishment of a common information-sharing environment (CISE). The realisation of this project would enable the national authorities operating at sea, - whether they are fighting illegal immigration, other illegal activities or simply monitoring fisheries activities - to benefit from information generated by other sectors.

The forthcoming launch in October 2010 of the European maritime Atlas will improve awareness of the seas and oceans among the European citizens. The publication at the same time of the Communication on Marine knowledge will be a positive step towards the creation of the European Marine Observation Data Network (EMODNET).

Fifth, the development of the IMP's international dimension is another great challenge. This will involve building on Europe's leading role in improving global maritime governance, for example through a continued support for the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. We will also need to continue working to obtain a better role for the EU in international maritime fora, such as the International Maritime Organization.

Naturally, we also need the proper financial tools in order to achieve these ambitious goals. After the summer, the Commission will propose a draft Regulation on financing the IMP in the coming two years. We are proposing 50 Million Euros over the years 2011 – 2013, building on the amounts you have already granted as for pilot and preparatory projects.

We are counting on your support to ensure a timely entry into force of this regulation in 2011 and to make sure that the newly Integrated Maritime Policy finds a rightful place in the work on the next financial perspective.

Mr Chairman

I know that the work in this Committee is inspired by the spirit of cooperation. Working together and across a broad range of policies, we can identify together the synergies and ensure the coherence the IMP is aiming for.

As Jacques Cousteau has said: "the sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: we are all in the same boat. "I know that I will find in this committee an ally to steer that boat in the right direction.

Thank you.