

Integrated maritime policy: programme to support the further development

2010/0257(COD) - 29/09/2010 - Document attached to the procedure

The Commission presents a Staff working document conducting an ex-ante evaluation for establishing a Programme to support further development towards an Integrated Maritime Policy. This document accompanies the proposal concerning the establishment of a Programme to support the Integrated Maritime Policy (please refer to the summary of the initial COM(2010)0494.) This ex-ante evaluation gives, among other things, an overview of the proposed financing Programme. It pays particular attention to the political context, the problem definition, the Programme's core objectives, the added value of Community financial involvement and the main policy options/alternatives to be assessed. The three policy alternatives identified in the ex-ante evaluation are the following:

1. no further action;
2. a modest EU financial contribution, at a reasonably increased level compared to the preparatory and pilot projects so far, for further exploring options and steadily implementing the IMP as it develops;
3. fully fledged financing.

These three key policy options were considered for the following IMP strategic directions:

- integrated maritime governance on all levels;
- activities in relation to the sea basins;
- cross-cutting tools for Integrated Policy-Making;
- the definition of the boundaries of sustainability of human activities in the framework of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive;
- promotion of the international dimension of the IMP and Europe's leadership in this field;
- sustainable economic growth, employment and innovation;
- raising the visibility of maritime Europe;

Each available policy option was assessed against the following criteria: (i) the effectiveness of the option in achieving given objectives and the corresponding benefits; (ii) the feasibility of the selected options; (iii) the cost implication for the EU budget.

No further action (Option 1): Option 1 is clearly feasible and there would be no cost implication for the EU budget. On the other hand, taking no further action, in terms of not financing actions and activities on the Integrated Maritime Policy for the period 2011-2013, would mean failing to achieve the given general and specific objectives of the Programme. This, in turn, would imply that the Commission would not deliver on the policy objectives set out in its Blue Paper of October 2007, as confirmed in the Progress report of October 2009 and endorsed by the General Affairs Council conclusions of 16 November 2009. This failure is sufficient to rule out Option 1.

Modest EU financial contribution (Option 2): this does have an impact on the EU budget. On the other hand, Option 2 presents several advantages. It is a feasible and cost-effective option, which would contribute significantly to the achievement of the stated objectives. It would allow the EU to continue exploring options for the further development of the IMP and to begin implementing through concrete action in certain areas. It would thus ensure the sound and speedy implementation of the IMP in the short to long term.

Fully fledged financing (Option 3): this option would do a lot to help considerably the Commission achieve the given objectives and priorities for the IMP. On the other hand, Option 3 is not possible at this stage. It is not politically feasible because, at this stage of IMP development, it would not be possible to disburse substantially higher amounts than those already envisaged. This is because neither the Member States nor the Commission already have concrete policy options on which the extra money could be spent. Nor does the Commission have the human resources to manage this fully-fledged financing. Furthermore, it would be unwise to embark on a fully-fledged implementation without first testing the concepts on a more limited scale.

Consequently, taking into account the limitations of options 1 and 3 and the strong Community interest in achieving the IMP's objectives in the short to medium term, **the appropriate solution would seem to be a modest EU financial contribution to fund IMP activities** on the Integrated Maritime Policy for the period 2011-2013.