

Integrated maritime policy (IMP) - Evaluation of progress made and new challenges

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The Commission presents its second report describing the progress of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and maritime sectoral policies between 2010 and 2012. It highlights the contribution of these policies to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy by taking stock of concrete achievements that help create growth, enhance resource efficiency and save public money.

The report notes that the IMP was created to reaffirm the maritime dimension of the EU. The IMP has grown from this vision into a tool delivering concrete benefits for maritime growth and sustainability in Europe. The report presents a picture of achievements in all policy areas related to the seas. It examines actions taken under the following policy areas: transport, research, environment, tourism, shipbuilding, climate change adaptation, and regional policies. Among the initiatives launched are the following:

- the [White Paper for Transport](#), which further specifies the orientations of the Maritime Transport Strategy until 2018: the ability to provide cost-efficient maritime transport services; the long-term competitiveness of the EU shipping sector; and the creation of seamless transport chains for passengers and cargo across transport modes;
- the Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU's maritime domain to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of maritime surveillance;
- a Task force on Maritime Employment and Competitiveness;
- three joint calls of FP7 Research Programme under the Ocean of Tomorrow to support multidisciplinary marine and maritime projects, a first version of the European Marine Observation and Data Network to improve access to data and reduce costs to users;
- a [Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic](#) adopted in November 2011;
- a Decision to implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, laying down criteria and methodological standards for the assessment of Good Environmental Status.

The contribution of the maritime economy to growth and employment

Blue Growth: the Commission adopted a [Communication on Blue Growth](#), opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth. The objective is to launch a joint initiative with Member States, regions, and all relevant stakeholders to unlock the potential of the blue economy. A study launched by the Commission in 2010 has identified as **common bottlenecks** the lack of appropriate skills, access to risk capital, fragmented marine data, environmental challenges and difficult planning processes. Actions are underway in Member States to remedy the skills shortage — for example through encouraging clusters of industry and education. Integrated maritime policy initiatives are addressing the data and planning issues. However, certain sectors require a more targeted approach. Accordingly, **five areas with growth potential** —maritime and coastal tourism, ocean renewable energy, marine mineral resources, aquaculture, and blue biotechnology — have been analysed in more depth to suggest additional measures needed to increase growth and jobs.

Energy: offshore wind energy contributes to reach a 20% share of energy from renewable sources by 2020. In 2011, the Commission proposed guidelines to lay down rules for the development and interoperability of trans-European energy networks. Priority corridors were identified, including the North Sea Offshore Grid and the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan.

Shipbuilding: a new Framework on State Aid to Shipbuilding was adopted in December 2011 containing specific provisions in relation to innovation aid and regional aid for shipbuilding, as well as provisions on exports credits. Its extended scope now applies to inland waterway vessels and floating and moving offshore structures.

Fisheries and aquaculture: in July 2011, the Commission adopted a package of initiatives, including new legislative proposals, to reform the Common Fisheries Policy. The transition will be accompanied by a European Maritime and Fisheries Fund to improve sustainability, the performance of small-scale coastal fisheries, promote aquaculture, support job creation in maritime communities and deliver cost-efficiency in maritime affairs.

The report shows that the **strong contribution of maritime sectors to Europe's economy and the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy** are reinforced by coordinated action to lower costs, improve resource efficiency, reduce risks, support innovation and make better use of public money. By facilitating the cooperation of all maritime players across sectors and borders, and by avoiding duplication of spending and efforts, the IMP has enhanced the sustainable development of the European maritime economy, while contributing to a better protection of the marine environment.

The Commission considers it is setting the best possible conditions for sustainable economic development to come from the sea. Building on those achievements, Blue Growth is the objective for the coming years. During Cyprus's Council Presidency, an informal Ministerial Conference on IMP will be a major stepping-stone towards this goal. Blue Growth will drive a second phase of the Integrated Maritime Policy to achieve a healthy maritime economy that delivers innovation, growth and sustainability for European citizens.