

Blue growth - Enhancing sustainable growth in the EU's marine, maritime transport and tourism sectors

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PURPOSE: second progress report on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy.

CONTENT: since its creation in 2007, the [Integrated Maritime Policy](#) (IMP) has sought to enhance the sustainable development of the European maritime economy and better protect the marine environment by facilitating the cooperation of all maritime players across sectors and borders. The potential for growth in the maritime economy is an opportunity that Europe, as a maritime continent, needs to seize.

Since 2009, the EU has launched key initiatives in all policy areas related to the seas in order to strengthen Europe's competitiveness. By avoiding duplication of spending and efforts, and encouraging the sustainable development of maritime activities, the IMP has brought concrete benefits to the European economy and maritime sectors in Member States.

In 2009, the Council and European Parliament welcomed the first Progress Report on the IMP and asked the Commission to present further developments in 2012. This second Report describes the progress of the EU's IMP and maritime sectoral policies between 2010 and 2012. It highlights their contribution 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 European Parliament adopted a [resolution on the IMP](#) in October 2010, which confirmed the validity of the integrated approach to maritime affairs and invited the Commission to develop a maritime dimension to the Europe 2020 Strategy. With the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU is seeking to get the European economy back on track to deliver employment, competitiveness and social cohesion.

Achievements: the report presents a coherent picture of achievements in all policy areas related to the seas. These include maritime transport, energy, shipbuilding, and fisheries and aquaculture.

The EU has launched **key initiatives** such as: (i) the [White Paper for Transport](#); (ii) the Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU's maritime domain to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of maritime surveillance; (iii) a Task force on Maritime Employment and Competitiveness; (iv) 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; (v) a Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic adopted in November 2011; (vi) the further implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the environment pillar of the IMP to achieve better environmental status for EU marine waters by 2020 and initiatives to promote Maritime Spatial Planning.

Cooperation across sectors: Europe is going through cuts in public spending, so delivering maximum results with limited means is crucial. Cooperation makes operations at sea more cost-efficient and optimise data usage. As new uses of the sea are being developed daily, the Commission considers that it is crucial that Member States put in place stable planning systems favouring long-term investment and cross-border coherence.

Research: the European maritime industry is characterised by innovation and high-quality markets. The Commission is strengthening this competitive edge by developing an ambitious marine research programme and making marine data more accessible for innovation. The EU financial contribution to marine related-research and innovation has amounted to **EUR 1.4 billion** through 644 projects over 2007-2010. Three joint calls of FP7, under the Ocean of Tomorrow label, have supported multidisciplinary marine and maritime projects for a total EU contribution of EUR 134 million. This effort was complemented with the launch of coordinated topics in 2012 in order to support the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, for a total EU contribution of EUR 42 million.

Blue Growth: in September 2012, 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.

- The Commission, in a 2010 study, 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.

Protection of the marine environment: the EU has the largest maritime territory in the world. Ensuring the health of marine ecosystems is necessary for the future of ocean biodiversity and to sustain maritime growth.

- The 2008 [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) is the environment pillar of the IMP. Its overarching aim is to achieve good environmental status (GES) for EU marine waters by 2020.
- Action must also be taken with respect to adaptation to and mitigation of climate change and addressing air pollution from ships.

The Commission 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.