Maritime spatial planning

2013/0074(COD) - 12/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament made some amendments to the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management (ICM).

The matter was referred back to the competent committee for re-consideration. The vote on the legislative resolution was moved to a later plenary session.

The main amendments were as follows:

Purpose: Parliament wanted the framework for maritime spatial planning to involve integrated coastal management aiming at promoting the sustainable development and growth of maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources, in particular by supporting the priority areas identified in the Commission Communication of 13 September 2012 on Blue Growth Opportunities for Marine and Maritime Sustainable Growth .

Flexibility for Member States: in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, Members called for the new Directive to ensure **more flexibility for the Member States** to choose how to implement ICM. The provisions of the Directive must take into account **land-sea interactions** and enhanced cross-border cooperation on the basis of the respective UNCLOS provisions. It shall apply to all marine waters and coastal zones of the Union, in compliance with existing Union and national law.

- Member States may decide whether to follow an integrated approach or to establish maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies separately. They shall remain responsible for designing and determining the content of such plans and strategies, including the apportionment of maritime space to the different sector activities and maritime and marine uses.

- Maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies shall aim to ensure effective participation of the stakeholders and ensure effective trans-boundary cooperation between Member States.

Ecosystem-based approach and economic and social criteria: maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies shall apply the ecosystem-based approach and economic and social criteria at the same level to support sustainable development and growth in the maritime sector. They shall promote cross-border cooperation and the multiple use of the same maritime space by different sectors.

Common minimum requirements for the programmes and strategies: maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies should be based on **the best available data** and, on the other hand, guarantee the necessary flexibility to take future developments into account.

Maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies shall aim to contribute to **the following Union objectives**:

- promoting multimodal links and sustainability ;

- fostering the sustainable development of the fisheries sector and sustainable growth of the aquaculture sector,

- ensuring the preservation, protection and improvement of the environment through a representative and coherent network of protected areas and reduce and prevent marine and coastal areas pollution risks;

- protect vulnerable coastal areas.

Maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies may aim to contribute to **further national objectives**, such as:

- promoting the sustainable extraction of raw materials;

- promoting sustainable tourism;

- ensuring the preservation and protection of cultural heritage;

- guaranteeing recreational and other use to the public;

- preserving traditional economic and social characteristics of the maritime economy. **Public participation**: Members shall ensure that the relevant stakeholders, the authorities at the various levels and the public concerned are consulted on the draft plans and strategies and have access to the results once available.

Cooperation with third countries: Member States bordering a coastal zone or maritime area of a third country shall, in compliance with International Maritime Law and Conventions, consult that country and make every effort to cooperate and coordinate their maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies with that third country in the marine region or sub-region and the related coastal zone concerned.