Basic information

2017/2055(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs **Subject** 3.70.05 Marine and coastal pollution, pollution from ships, oil pollution 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	FARIA José Inácio (ALDE)	29/11/2016
	Shadow rapporteur WÖLKEN Tiemo (S&D) GERICKE Arne (ECR) MEISSNER Gesine (ALDE) OMARJEE Younous (GUE/NGL) ENGSTRÖM Linnéa (Verts/ALE) GODDYN Sylvie (ENF)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism (Associated committee)	MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR Cláudia (PPE)	02/05/2017
PECH Fisheries	WAŁĘSA Jarosław (PPE)	05/12/2016

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	VELLA Karmenu

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
10/11/2016	Non-legislative basic document published	JOIN(2016)0049	Summary
18/05/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/05/2017	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
28/11/2017	Vote in committee		
18/12/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0399/2017	Summary
15/01/2018	Debate in Parliament		
16/01/2018	Decision by Parliament	T8-0004/2018	Summary
16/01/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		
16/01/2018	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2017/2055(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/09724

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE605.942	31/05/2017	
Committee opinion	PECH	PE602.837	08/06/2017	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE607.955	06/07/2017	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE606.174	26/09/2017	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0399/2017	18/12/2017	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0004/2018	16/01/2018	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2018)139	24/04/2018	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	JOIN(2016)0049	07/03/2017	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
ECHR	Joint document from the Commission and the High Representative (JOIN)	JOIN(2016)0049	10/11/2016	Summary

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
European Parliament	Study	

International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs

2017/2055(INI) - 10/11/2016 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: presentation of a joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the EU for foreign affairs and security policy.

BACKGROUND: oceans play a key role in regulating the climate system. They produce half our oxygen and have absorbed most of the world's extra heat and around 25 % of CO2 emissions.

Some of the most pressing global challenges – including climate change, poverty, safe, nutritious and sufficient food for a population projected to reach nine billion by 2050 – can be addressed effectively only if the oceans are safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed.

However, oceans are under threat from over-exploitation, climate change, acidification, pollution and declining biodiversity. Access to maritime routes is sometimes impaired by illegal behaviour, increasing levels of piracy, armed robbery and other forms of maritime crime at sea.

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development identified conservation and sustainable use of oceans as one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14) and as part of a highly inter-connected agenda. For the first time, the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans are addressed with the **world's other most pressing sustainability challenges** in an overarching global policy agenda, and reflected as such across several SDGs and targets.

It is for this reason that the global community must now turn these commitments into action.

The actions set out in this Joint Communication are an integral part of the EU's response to the 2030 Agenda. This is also a priority in the Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy.

CONTENT: the proposals referred to the in the Joint Communication combine a series of measures ranging from the promotion of good governance at sea, to strengthening the **sustainability of ocean management**, in particular by addressing illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing.

Other measures are aimed at enhancing **safety at sea** with a more 'joined-up' approach – between the internal and external aspects of policies, across external policies and between Member States and EU institutions.

In order to ensure that the oceans are safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed, the Commission and the High Representative propose 14 sets of actions in 3 priority areas, which can be summarised as follows

I. International ocean governance: measures focus on the following actions:

- **Action 1: filling the gaps in the international ocean governance framework** in particular by implementing multilateral instruments that have been agreed but have not entered into force;
- **Action 2: promoting regional fisheries management and cooperation in key ocean areas to fill regional governance gaps** by supporting a multilateral agreement that prevents unregulated high seas fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean;

- **Action 3: improving coordination and cooperation between international organisations and launching Ocean Partnerships for ocean management** through ad hoc cooperation agreements;
- **Action 4: capacity building** in particular as regards maritime security with other countries and regional organisations - notably in the Gulf of Guinea and the Indian Ocean;
- **Action 5: ensuring the safety and security of seas and oceans** through targeted actions tackling piracy, trafficking and the smuggling of human beings, arms and narcotics, and through cooperation and information-sharing between civilian and military authorities and the UN fora, the G7 and the G20;

II. Reducing pressure on oceans and seas and creating the conditions for a sustainable blue economy: the following actions are provided:

- **Action 6: implementing the COP21 Agreement and mitigating the harmful impact of climate change on oceans, coastlines and ecosystems** for **instance by reducing** shipping emissions and strengthening the future development of renewables;
- **Action 7: fighting illegal fishing and strengthening the sustainable management of ocean food resources globally**: at least 15 % of fish catches worldwide, worth EUR 8-19 billion a year, are illegal. The EU cooperates with other countries to initiate structural reforms of their fisheries management systems. The objective is to strengthen this action over the next 5 years;
- **Action 8: banning harmful fisheries subsidies** by 2020 (those that contribute to overcapacity, overfishing and IUU fishing);
- **Action 9: fighting marine litter and the 'sea of plastic'** through proposing a new strategy on plastics, addressing issues such as recyclability, biodegradability, the presence of hazardous substances in certain plastics, and marine litter, with a clear international component against leakage of plastic to the environment;
- **Action 10: promoting maritime spatial planning (MSP) at global level**;
- **Action 11: achieving the global target of conserving 10% of marine and coastal areas and promoting the effective management of marine protected areas (MPAs)** by promoting the exchange of best practices and by supporting the efforts towards coherent networks.

III. Strengthening international ocean research and data: through the following actions:

- **Action 12: developing a coherent EU strategy on ocean observation, data and marine accounting** building on EMODnet;
- **Action 13: strengthening investment in 'blue' science and innovation** by maintaining the current level of investment (approximately EUR 2 billion a year on marine research);
- **Action 14: strengthening international ocean research, innovation and science partnerships** in particular with the US and Canada.

The Commission and the High Representative will report on progress on the above actions at regular intervals and for the first time within two years of the adoption of this Communication.

International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs

2017/2055(INI) - 18/12/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the own-initiative report by José Inácio FARIA (EPP, PT) on international ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Committee on Transport and Tourism, exercising its prerogative as an associated committee in accordance with Article 54 of the Rules of Procedure, also gave its opinion on the report.

The environmental health of the oceans is under significant threat and at risk of being irreversibly damaged unless targeted and coordinated efforts are undertaken by the world community.

Members welcomed the joint communication on international ocean governance and the actions proposed, which highlight the EU's commitment to achieving the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and seas and marine resources as identified in **SDG 14 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

Reiterating the strong maritime dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for Goal 14, Members called on the Commission to:

- put forward legislative proposals where appropriate, and work with Member States in order to improve cooperation in areas such as ocean research;
- follow up the joint communication on ocean governance by publishing a progress report on the measures reviewed and a precise timetable for future measures;
- promote international action to monitor the impact of the warming of the oceans, rising sea levels and **acidification** of water;
- develop ocean partnerships with key players in the form of multicultural cooperation mechanisms or bilateral dialogues aimed at ensuring better coordination and cooperation for the successful implementation of the ocean-relevant SDGs, the promotion of sustainable blue growth as well as the preservation, conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems and biodiversity, while also reducing pressure on the oceans and seas and creating the conditions for a sustainable blue economy;
- support the stepping-up of international initiatives to combat trafficking in human beings by maritime routes;
- support an **international moratorium on commercial deep-sea mining exploitation licences** until such time as the effects of deep-sea mining on the marine environment, biodiversity and human activities at sea have been studied and researched sufficiently and all possible risks are understood;
- help set up pilot projects to collect **marine litter** through beach clean-ups and fishing for litter campaigns, and to provide financial support to fishermen in Europe for the collection of marine litter;
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- propose new legislation to address **microplastic pollution** in all its forms, and specifically by **banning microplastic ingredients** in all personal care products and by ensuring that all businesses that handle plastic production pellets implement proper protocols for minimising pellet leakage;
- consider introducing a Europe-wide system of **deposits on non-reusable drinks containers**, on the German model;
- continue the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in all regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and other relevant fora.

Member States are urged to:

- make further efforts for the timely implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in order to achieve good environmental status for marine waters for 2020;
- swiftly implement the Framework Directive establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management, in order to permit the full and harmonious development of the various maritime activities;
- support innovative technological and financial initiatives addressing ocean and sea pollution, so as to promote efficient recovery systems for waste from shipping, in particular plastic waste, in ports and harbours, to raise awareness within the shipping sector of the consequences of disposing of plastic waste in the sea, and to overcome the major obstacles existing to the implementation of MARPOL;
- respect their duty under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to protect and conserve the marine environment and its living resources and their duty to prevent and control marine pollution.

International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs

2017/2055(INI) - 16/01/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 558 votes to 25, with 83 abstentions, a resolution on international ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The environmental health of the oceans is under significant threat and at risk of being irreversibly damaged unless targeted and coordinated efforts are undertaken by the world community.

Current pressures on the marine environment include damage to habitats and ecosystems, persistent hazardous substances in sediments and waterbodies, degradation of coral barrier reefs, invasive species, pollution and nutrient enrichment and maritime traffic, as well as exploitation of raw materials and overexploitation of marine species, acidification, and warming of waters induced by climate change.

Parliament welcomed the joint communication on international ocean governance and the actions proposed, which highlight the EU's commitment to achieving the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and seas and marine resources as identified in **SDG 14 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

Reiterating the strong maritime dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for Goal 14, Parliament called on the Commission to:

- put forward legislative proposals where appropriate, and work with Member States in order to improve cooperation in areas such as **ocean research**;
- follow up the joint communication on ocean governance by publishing a **progress report** on the measures reviewed and a precise timetable for future measures;
- promote **international action** to monitor the impact of the warming of the oceans, rising sea levels and acidification of water;
- propose initiatives to the Council to develop **ocean partnerships** with key international partners to promote the goal of better global governance;
- promote **equal conditions on the labour market** in the field of the sea by establishing a harmonised social framework for maritime activities in Community waters;
- support the stepping-up of international initiatives to combat **trafficking in human beings** by maritime routes;
- support an **international moratorium** on commercial deep-sea mining exploitation licences until such time as the effects of deep-sea mining on the marine environment, biodiversity and human activities at sea have been studied and researched sufficiently and all possible risks are understood;
- help set up pilot projects to collect **marine litter** through beach clean-ups and fishing for litter campaigns, and to provide financial support to fishermen in Europe for the collection of marine litter;
- propose new legislation to address microplastic pollution in all its forms, and specifically by banning microplastic ingredients in all personal care products and by ensuring that all businesses that handle plastic production pellets implement proper protocols for minimising pellet leakage;
- consider introducing a Europe-wide system of **deposits** on non-reusable drinks containers, on the German model;
- support international efforts to protect **marine biodiversity**, in particular in the framework of the ongoing negotiations for a new legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- continue the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in all regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and other relevant fora;
- propose measures to **reduce nitrogen oxide emissions** from the existing fleet, including an impact assessment on the possible introduction of a nitrogen oxide a system of funds to obtain considerable, rapid and effective reductions.

Member States are urged to:

- make further efforts for the timely implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in order to achieve good environmental status for marine waters for 2020;
- swiftly implement the Framework Directive establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management, in order to permit the full and harmonious development of the various maritime activities;
- increase the number of marine protected areas in compliance with SDG 14 to ensure the preservation of at least 10% of marine and coastal areas;
- support **innovative technological and financial initiatives** addressing ocean and sea pollution, so as to promote efficient recovery systems for waste from shipping, in particular plastic waste, in ports and harbours, to raise awareness within the shipping sector of the consequences of disposing of plastic waste in the sea, and to overcome the major obstacles existing to the implementation of MARPOL;
- respect their duty under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to protect and conserve the marine environment and its living resources and their duty to prevent and control marine pollution.