Sustainable Blue Economy Roadmap

Introduction

The CPMR welcomes the new EC approach to promote a sustainable Blue Economy, contributing to the Green Deal objectives. Maritime regions are at the forefront of the growing and worsening impacts of climate change and play a fundamental role in developing dynamic and sustainable blue economy ecosystems, as they facilitate the creation of clusters which foster innovation and jobs.

Regions at the heart of EU investments for the blue economy

Maritime regions are vital actors in terms of the delivery of EU funds supporting investment, such as the ESI\(^1\) funds which play a vital role in fostering the blue economy. Regions must therefore be involved in the preparation and implementation of Next Generation EU. The CPMR is concerned by the lack of territorial governance of the RRF and REACTEU which could hamper the contribution of the Blue Economy to a sustainable recovery.

Regions are contributing to the interconnection of value chains to answer the challenges of specific sectors e.g., between shipyard companies and marine energies, between shipbuilding and fisheries. Regional and interregional clusters possess precious know-how and should be supported with adequate financing. The RIS3 framework must facilitate synergies between investments co-financed by the regions and EU centrally-managed programmes.

A blue dimension to EU Industrial Policy

The CPMR calls on the EC to develop a holistic policy framework that embraces the interconnection of value chains in blue economy sectors as expressed in the CPMR Declaration on bringing a blue dimension to the EU Industrial Policy. Maritime industries have major challenges ahead which also represent enormous opportunities for the contribution of the blue economy to climate mitigation.

A place-based approach to address different sea-basin realities

The Blue Economy corresponds to different geographically dependent realities. A macro-regional and sea-basin approach paired with the involvement of regions will be key to enhance EU funds’ efficiency in support of a sustainable blue economy. The transnational dimension of macro-regional and sea-basin strategies, inclusive of EU and non-EU countries, is important to share common standards for the sustainable development of activities, to better integrate sectors in each sea-basin and to support regional approaches. Complementarity with INTERREG programmes should be strengthened via better

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\(^1\) European Structural and Investment Funds
coordination with the regions in the definition of priorities to promote the blue economy. This approach, empowering local competencies in a transnational context at sea-basin level, should be paired with special care for islands, outermost regions and non-EU countries.

A framework at European level to support a sustainable blue economy

The CPMR considers that the future Blue Economy Strategy is an opportunity for Europe to assert itself as a global leader on the decarbonisation of the maritime economy, including maritime transport. It should support European interests via appropriate State Aid and competition rules. It should train and attract workers across genders, avoid social dumping, innovate for more sustainability and competitiveness of maritime sectors, while safeguarding and strengthening a healthy marine environment. It must also foster sustainable maritime tourism and rebuild its value chain differently.

Integrating fisheries and aquaculture

Fisheries and aquaculture - challenged by the current COVID-19 crisis, climate change, biodiversity loss, digitalisation knowledge gaps and Brexit - should be integrated in the Blue Economy Strategy. Such challenges hamper the attractiveness of the fishing sector and lower employment in coastal regions. This social dimension should be taken into account within the Sustainable Blue Economy Strategy and the CFP Review in 2022. In that regard, the EMFF should better support life on board and the modernisation of boats to attract young generations of fishermen.