



Elements relating to the preparation of maritime policies post-2020

CONTEXT

This note provides information concerning the preparation of EU maritime policies post-2020 from the perspective of the CPMR's priorities.

It puts into perspective the principles of the policy position "The Seas and Oceans, a key issue for the future of the European Union", adopted on 10 March 2017 by the CPMR Political Bureau, with those of the ministerial declaration on blue growth adopted by the EU's Member States on 20 April 2017 in Malta, and with the principal current developments concerning the EU's maritime policies.

The elements presented answer the questions:

- Will the Sea be a priority for the European Union after 2020?
- How are the EU's maritime policies post-2020 being prepared?

These elements, together with CPMR's priorities for action, will be updated for the CPMR General Assembly (Helsinki, October 2017).

1. Will the sea be a priority for the European Union after 2020?

Maritime issues represent a potential for growth, and are impacting many maritime and international policies.

If there is any uncertainty, it is not about whether maritime issues will be among the EU's priorities after 2020, but rather about the way in which they will be addressed and the role of the regions.

1.1. Maritime issues represent a potential for growth

The [policy](#) position adopted by the Political Bureau in March 2017 set out six key messages concerning the importance of the seas and oceans for Europe and its citizens. These included:

- The seas and oceans are essential to life on Earth. Threats to the marine environment directly impact the health and quality of life of people living in Europe and the EU economy.
- The seas and oceans represent a huge potential in terms of growth and jobs. The maritime economy is therefore a growth area in terms of the single market.

Together with the transnational nature of the maritime policies and issues at stake, these elements alone make it logical that the EU should continue to step up its action in this area.

1.2. Maritime issues are impacting the European and international agenda

The **impact of maritime issues on the EU agenda** is reflected in the [Report on the Blue Growth Strategy](#) published by DG MARE on 31 March 2017. This report reviews the EU's action in a large number of maritime sectors. The ministerial declaration on blue growth, adopted by the EU Member States on 20 April 2017 in Malta, provides an important policy basis on which to strengthen a maritime agenda at European level. The declaration refers to a number of maritime objectives, and urges future EU presidencies to take these into consideration.

At international level, maritime issues are also receiving increasing attention. Historically associated with maritime transport and fisheries, and addressed by specific bodies such as the International Maritime Organization, maritime issues are now linked with new challenges. Examples include negotiations on marine biodiversity that go beyond national jurisdictions, or the inclusion of a maritime dimension in international climate negotiations at the COP21.

Added to this is the process of exchange launched in the framework of the UN's 2030 agenda for sustainable development. This process is stimulating debate on the new maritime challenges at international level and in Europe.

Following its Communication on the global governance of maritime affairs, the European Commission has launched a number of initiatives to boost Europe's presence in international debates on maritime affairs. The [Our Ocean 2017](#) conference in Malta in October this year will be an important step forward here.

CPMR's priorities in this context¹ focus on questions which are of specific interest to the outermost regions, such as marine biodiversity in international waters, as well as other broader topics such as climate change, maritime spatial planning and marine protected areas.

1.3. What kind of Europe of the Sea?

In spite of the lively international and European debates on maritime issues, there is considerable uncertainty as to the kind of Europe of the Sea that will take shape after 2020. This relates to the possible changes in the architecture and budget of Europe of the Sea, as well as to Brexit.

The elements below highlight cross-cutting questions concerning the future of EU maritime policies. These will be clarified in greater detail over the coming months, as CPMR continues its work on the future of Europe.

What is the maritime dimension in the European Commission's scenarios for the future of Europe?

Each of the scenarios outlined in the European Commission's white paper on the future of Europe can include a maritime dimension. However, these scenarios have both positive aspects and limitations from the point of view of maritime policies. These are represented below.

SCENARIO 1: CARRYING ON	
Positive aspects	Limitations
Continuation of the positive boost given to the IMP and the maritime strands of other sector-specific EU policies	Limited capacity to provide appropriate responses to the major new challenges (climate change for example) and strengthen the governance of the IMP, for example with a Vice-President of the European Commission or a specific European Parliament and Council configuration
SCENARIO 2: NOTHING BUT THE SINGLE MARKET	
Positive aspects	Limitations
Maintenance of the EU maritime policies relating to the single market (e.g. fisheries and aquaculture; maritime transport)	No possibility for a new European maritime ambition, for example on managing maritime spaces or the marine environment, or an industrial strategy
SCENARIO 3: THOSE WHO WANT MORE DO MORE	
Positive aspects	Limitations
Continuation of existing reinforced maritime cooperation initiatives (e.g. Joint Programming Initiative on Oceans; Era-Nets maritime projects funded by Horizon 2020)	It would be difficult for the EU to address sector-specific policies, such as on fisheries or the marine environment, if only a limited number of Member States were committed

¹ See Annex 2, "Actions of the CPMR in the area of international maritime governance", of the Policy Position on the Seas and Oceans adopted in March 2017

SCENARIO 4: DOING LESS MORE EFFICIENTLY	
Positive aspects	Limitations
Refocus on the EU's own competences, such as the Common Fisheries Policy	Europe of the Sea as an over-arching ambition would be weakened
SCENARIO 5: DOING MUCH MORE TOGETHER	
Positive aspects	Limitations
Possibility of strengthening an over-arching European maritime strategy with additional resources allocated	Member States' capacity for funding and political involvement

Towards the definition of a European maritime area?

The EU has intensified its action in recent years, and thanks to this, together with the force of the Community legal order and its funding capacity, it has developed an increasing capacity for action in maritime affairs. In key policy areas such as fisheries, the protection of the marine environment and the funding of marine and maritime research or innovation, the EU has the strongest transnational regulatory instruments in the world.

Two factors raise questions about the strengthening of this capacity:

- Globalisation. One of the criticisms of the EU's action on maritime affairs is that it has insufficient capacity to protect the interests of its territories with regard to global competition. These criticisms concern for example the lack of flexibility offered by EU regulations on state aid to public authorities, including the Regions, to enable them to support their economies, and in particular the emergence of innovative sectors such as marine energies.
- Brexit, which, as the position of the CPMR Political Bureau adopted in March 2017 underlined, implies that the EU "*protect its interests and avoid the emergence of a platform for social/ fiscal dumping and deregulation in the United Kingdom*".

These factors question the capacity of the EU to go further in defining its own priorities in line with the interests and values of its territories in the global context, and its regulatory and financing capacities to implement these priorities. The CPMR's policy position of March 2017 urged the EU to seize the opportunity of Brexit to "*deepen Europe's economic, environmental and social maritime model*".

Going beyond Brexit, the European Commission's reflection paper on globalisation² provides food for thought on the European model in a global context. It cites shipbuilding as an example of an industry hit by unfair global competition and questions the EU's capacity to protect its interests.

The notion of an economic, social or environmental "European maritime space", put forward in the Committee of the Regions' report on blue growth, could be an avenue to explore in defining the EU's future action in the global context.

² [Reflection paper on harnessing globalisation](#)

What about investment capacity?

EU funding to support the maritime economy is available through:

- The European Structural and Investments Funds:
 - The EMFF, which has a budget of €6.5 billion. This fund is principally the instrument of the Common Fisheries Policy, although it does now also fund actions under the Integrated Maritime Policy;
 - The ERDF. DG MARE estimates that more than €5.5 billion have been allocated to the blue economy via the ERDF for the 2014-2020 period;
 - The ESF and the Cohesion Fund.
- Several programmes including:
 - Horizon 2020. Over the 2007-2013 period, 1,258 of the projects funded by this programme, about 5% of the total, were marine and maritime research projects. For the 2014-2020 period, more than €260 million have already been allocated to marine and maritime research via this programme Horizon 2020;
 - NER 300;
 - Life+ environmental programme. With a budget of €3.4 billion for the 2014-2020 period, Life + has so far provided a total of nearly €34.6 million in funding for 32 marine environment projects;
 - The CEF (Connecting Europe Facility), which finances port infrastructure projects. Over the last two years, nearly €306 million have been allocated to such projects, generating total investment of nearly €965 million.

Thanks to these instruments, the EU now has a significant financing capacity. The challenges facing both traditional and new maritime sectors, such as fisheries and aquaculture, maritime transport, marine energies or blue biotechnologies, will however require significant support – notably in the form of regional policy grants – in the future. This raises the question of not only the volume but also the type of EU investment aid.

Among the observations to be made here is that there is a shortage of financing capacity for investment linked to the maritime economy, in particular with regard to the financing of pre-marketing and marketing phases. In sectors such as marine energies or blue biotechnologies, the investment needed for testing products before they are launched on the market are both significant and very risky.

The EFSI is one response to this need. In January 2017, 15 projects focusing on the maritime economy, 8.5% of the total, had been selected for EFSI support. The total amount of EFSI-linked financing available for these projects is around €3.3 billion. The leverage associated with this financing is supposed to generate investment worth more than €13 billion.

It is still too soon to judge how successful the selected projects will be, or what added value the EFSI will provide to the maritime sector. However, one way of increasing the EFSI's impact would be to strengthen effective mechanisms for project identification, as well as fostering closer partnerships with the public authorities, including the regions. It is in response to this that the March 2017 ministerial declaration on blue growth encourages the development of "Public Private

Partnerships and similar platforms with the aim to allocate capital from EIP/EFSI to address financing needs for Blue Growth”. CPMR is exploring this avenue with a view to the post-2020 period.

2. How are the EU’s maritime policies post-2020 being prepared?

In parallel with the debates taking place in Europe on the future of the European Union in general, a number of processes have also been set in motion concerning the future of key maritime policies.

The points below present the calendar relating to the policy areas in which CPMR is active.

2.1. Towards greater EU support for funding knowledge of the seas and oceans?

Work on the future of Horizon 2020 has begun with a consultation and the setting-up of a “[high level group](#)”. A [conference](#) on 3 July 2017 will provide an opportunity for the European Commission to present the initial options regarding the future of Horizon 2020. A proposal concerning the future Framework Programme is then expected during the first six months of 2018.

2.2. What future for the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)?

The CFP undergoes a reform every ten years. The next reform will take place in 2023.

At this stage, it is too soon to anticipate the outlines of the reform. However, CPMR will be particularly vigilant concerning the CFP in the context of Brexit, given the particularly important impact Brexit could have on this policy.

The process to define the future of the EMFF post-2020 will be launched at the European conference “[Beyond 2020: Supporting Europe’s Coastal Communities](#)”, to be organised in October 2017 under the Estonian presidency of the EU. CPMR will express its opinion on this topic at its 2017 General Assembly.

2.3. Managing and protecting the maritime and coastal areas as close to the territories as possible

The future of EU action in this area is linked to the implementation of key Regulations including:

- The 2008 Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). Under this Directive, Member States should by March 2016 have adopted a programme of measures aiming to achieve or maintain the good environmental status of marine waters. This very lengthy process is under way but is facing difficulties. Nevertheless, the MSFD is a powerful regulatory instrument which is naturally intended to continue after 2020.
- The 2013 Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, currently being implemented, which will lead the Member States to adopt plans concerning the utilisation of maritime spaces by 2020.

It is too soon to anticipate the potential evolution of these Regulations in the future. However, an analysis of their effectiveness will be important in guiding the EU's future action in organising its relations with non-EU countries in such strategic policy areas as the utilisation of maritime space and the protection of the marine environment.

2.4. Education – Vasco da Gama: towards an EU policy for maritime education and training?

CPMR's activities in the field of education and training are grouped together under the Vasco da Gama initiative. The aim is to develop a maritime strand within the New Skills Agenda launched by the European Commission in June 2016 to boost human capital, employability and competitiveness in Europe.

The launch of this strategy is in itself an important element in the preparation of EU policy post-2020 in this field. CPMR will contribute through a number of specific initiatives, including projects or the Youth Mobility initiative, as well as through specific investment in the "Blueprint" initiative. Launched by DG EAC and DG MARE, this aims, from September 2017, to directly contribute to the development of a maritime strand in the European Skills Agenda, with a focus on maritime technologies. This will have a very direct impact on EU policies post-2020.

2.5. Towards a European maritime industrial policy?

CPMR made a major contribution to the development of future-oriented ideas concerning European maritime industrial policy during the preparation of the LeaderShip 2020 report in 2013. Since then, CPMR has focused on the implementation of the report's proposals, in particular concerning regional investment, through the CLIPPER project.

Looking ahead to EU policies post-2020, it would be useful to restart work on bringing forward proposals which would encompass:

- Elements linked to key sectors of interest to CPMR, including shipbuilding, marine energies and maritime technologies. Processes are already under way regarding the preparation of sector-specific policies post-2020, for example the roadmap on ocean energies.
- Cross-cutting elements concerning the EU's industrial policy. The proposals the European Commission will present in Spring 2018 concerning the future of EU industrial policy will comprise an important step in the preparation of the post-2020 period in this field.

2.6. What future for the European maritime and coastal tourism strategy?

The European strategy on maritime and coastal tourism was launched in 2014. The EU's action focuses on concrete topics such as nautical tourism, cruise tourism, and underwater cultural heritage.

An essential part of the EU's action in this field is concerned not so much with the adoption of Regulations, but rather with the funding of projects or "soft" actions which can lead to the definition of labels or standards. For this reason, the future of the EU's action on tourism depends above all on the future of the major European funding programmes.



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The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond.

Representing about 200 million people, the CPMR campaigns in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory.

It operates both as a think tank and as a lobby group for Regions. It focuses mainly on social, economic and territorial cohesion, maritime policies and accessibility.

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