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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Council conclusions on the Integrated Maritime Policy

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on the Integrated Maritime Policy as adopted by the Council (General Affairs) on 24 June 2014.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICY:
ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS OF
THE MARITIME AGENDA FOR GROWTH AND JOBS**

The Council of the European Union

HAVING REGARD TO

- the Presidency conclusions of the European Council on 21/22 June 2007 ¹;
- the Commission Communication on an Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union and Action Plan, presented on 10 October 2007 ²;
- the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council on 14 December 2007 ³;
- the Commission Communication developing the international dimension of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union of 15 October 2009 ⁴;
- the Commission Progress Reports on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy of 15 October 2009 and 11 September 2012 ⁵;
- the Council Conclusions on Integration of Maritime Surveillance of 17 November 2009 and 23 May 2011 ⁶;
- the Commission Communication on Blue Growth: opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth of 13 September 2012 ⁷;
- the Council conclusions on the added value of macro regional strategies of 22 October 2013 ⁸;

¹ Doc. 11177/1/07 REV 1, § 43
² Doc. 14631/07
³ Doc. 16616/07 §58
⁴ Doc. 14360/09
⁵ Docs. 14363/09 and 13715/12
⁶ Docs. 15176/2/09 REV 2 and 9250/11
⁷ Doc. 13908/12
⁸ Doc. 14926/13 + ADD 1

- the Council Conclusions on the Integrated Maritime Policy of December 2008, 16 November 2009, of 14 June 2010, of 19 December 2011, of 11 December 2012 and of 25 June 2013 ⁹;
- the Commission Communication on Blue Energy of 20 January 2014 ¹⁰;
- the Commission Communication on a European Strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism of 20 February 2014 ¹¹;
- the Joint Communication of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission for an open and secure global maritime domain: elements for a European Union maritime security strategy of 6 March 2014 ¹².

STRESSING that an innovative and dynamic agenda for maritime affairs can unlock the sustainable growth and job-creating potential of the blue economy and contribute to Europe’s economic recovery; RECALLING that the Limassol Declaration, a Marine and Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs signed on 8 October 2012 and endorsed by the Council, is a substantial component of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

RECALLING that all activities in the oceans and seas including those undertaken in the framework of the IMP, should be carried out in accordance with the legal framework set out by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other relevant international conventions;

STRESSING that the protection of marine ecosystems and the good environmental status of marine waters are essential for the sustainable and long-term uses of marine resources upon which marine-related economic, social and cultural activities depend;

⁹ Docs. 16503/1/08 REV 1, 15175/1/09 REV 1, 10300/10, 18279/11, 16553/12 + COR 1 and 10790/13

¹⁰ Doc. 5526/14

¹¹ Doc. 6875/14

¹² Doc. 7537/14

- 1) WELCOMES the important achievements made by Member States and the Commission in implementing the **Marine and Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs** since the signature of the Limassol Declaration; AGREES that the new economic policy directions and strong political visibility given to maritime affairs since the adoption of the Blue Growth strategy should be sustained in the coming years; INVITES the Commission to maintain the priority given to Blue Growth and to an integrated approach to maritime affairs that facilitates the sustainable use of the oceans, seas and coastal areas, with a healthy marine environment as a basis for blue growth;

- 2) WELCOMES the agreement of the co-legislators on a Directive establishing a framework for **Maritime Spatial Planning**, taking account of land-sea interactions, and applying an ecosystem based approach, taking into account availability of data and information to implement this approach, which will provide greater certainty for maritime investments and clarity on the intended use of marine space in Member States, supports sustainable economic development and coexistence of relevant activities and uses at sea, and stronger cross-border cooperation amongst the Member States; ENCOURAGES Member States to undertake preparatory action nationally and in transboundary coordination, including data, experience and knowledge sharing in order to transpose and implement the Directive according to the agreed timeframe to ensure rapid positive benefits;

- 3) STRESSES the importance of **ocean energy** in the context of the mandate given by the European Council in March 2014 to establish a new policy framework for energy and climate in the period 2020 to 2030 and the efforts to stimulate growth and job creation in Europe; LOOKS FORWARD to the implementation of the Commission's Action Plan to deliver on the potential of ocean energy in European seas and oceans and ENCOURAGES Member States, industry, knowledge institutes, NGO's and other stakeholders, to participate actively in the Ocean Energy Forum to tackle bottlenecks to full commercialisation of the sector, so that it contributes to the provision of cost-effective, sustainable, low-carbon energy as well as new jobs and economic growth for the EU economy;

- 4) WELCOMES the Athens Declaration of the European Maritime Transport Ministers on the Mid-Term Review of the EU's **Maritime Transport Policy** until 2018 and Outlook to 2020 and STRESSES that competitive, efficient, sustainable, safe and secure EU shipping in global markets on a level playing field, is fundamental for maritime growth, the development of EU trade and a significant provider of quality employment opportunities on-board and ashore;
- 5) STRESSES that the sustainable growth of **coastal and maritime tourism**, Europe's largest maritime job provider, is essential to the wealth and well-being of coastal and insular regions and Europe's economy; RECALLS the Communication of the Commission on a European Strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism presented on 20 February 2014, which invites the Commission, Member States, Regions and stakeholders to follow its recommendations, aiming at stimulating performance and competitiveness, promoting skills and innovation, improving environmental performance and strengthening sustainability of the sector and optimising the use of available EU funding;
- 6) HIGHLIGHTS that the blue economy faces challenges that require a maritime approach to innovation to deliver its full potential, and WELCOMES the Commission's initiative to support **innovation in the blue economy** in terms of research, skills, knowledge, environmental protection and sustainability; in that context WELCOMES the priority given to Blue Growth by the Commission in the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020, and LOOKS FORWARD to the implementation of the **Marine Knowledge 2020** Roadmap by increasing synergies between the European Marine and Observation Data Network, the Copernicus Marine Service and data collection in fisheries and Wise Marine, involving the private sector and helping Member States reduce administrative burden and strengthen their observation networks in order to complete a high-resolution map of the European seabed by 2020;

- 7) HIGHLIGHTS the role of **sustainable aquaculture** in meeting the EU demand for seafood while reducing pressure on wild stocks; ENCOURAGES the Member States to finalise and implement their Multiannual National Plans for the development of sustainable aquaculture and LOOKS FORWARD to the organisation by the Commission of an exchange of best practices from Member States on the reduction of administrative burdens for EU aquaculture producers; INVITES Member States to take note of the potential of aquatic product cultivation in delivering marine food and other benefits;
- 8) LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission initiatives on the **development of blue biotechnologies** and their sustainable use. LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission initiatives on the assessment of the impacts of and potential for the safe and sustainable extraction of minerals from the seafloor in 2014; HIGHLIGHTS the importance of these avenues for blue growth in maintaining EU competitiveness, creating new jobs taking into account the supply of raw materials, food security, marine environmental sustainability and healthcare and NOTES that many of the skills technologies and expertise required in these new areas can be developed from those of traditional maritime sectors;
- 9) WELCOMES the Commission Report on the first phase of implementation of the **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**; STRESSES the importance of taking necessary measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status of European Seas and Oceans by 2020 and INVITES the Commission and Member States to take the necessary action and to strengthen coordination and cooperation in order to reach this goal and to mobilize existing Community financial instruments in accordance with applicable rules and conditions for the implementation of further steps; TAKES NOTE with interest of the outcome of the Healthy Oceans, Productive Ecosystems Conference held in Brussels on March 3-4 2014; WELCOMES the outcome of the discussions on the marine environment as a basis for blue growth at the informal meeting of EU Environment ministers in Athens on 14-15 May 2014; SUPPORTS THE WORK of the United Nations Regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects and LOOKS FORWARD to the first global integrated marine assessment this year;

- 10) CALLS ON the Commission and Member States to increase the attractiveness of **marine, maritime and coastal employment** in Europe , including seafaring and maritime related industries, and to cooperate by bringing education and industry closer in ensuring relevant training and job opportunities, in promoting labour mobility and the transferability of skills between maritime sectors, and in ensuring effective implementation of relevant international Conventions such as the STCW, as well as in encouraging the networking of marine and maritime academies and institutes; STRESSES that the economic potential of Blue Growth needs to translate into new opportunities for employment in coastal regions, reflecting the benefit for local communities and workforce in peripheral and outermost regions and RECALLS the objectives of the Limassol Declaration regarding maritime careers and their attractiveness; In that context, in order to enhance living and working conditions of seafarers on board ships and increase the attractiveness of working in the maritime sector for young people; WELCOMES initiatives such as the "Vasco da Gama" project aiming at the further promotion of seafarers' professions;
- 11) STRESSES that the Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs should be targeted to the specific opportunities and challenges of Europe's **sea basins** and REAFFIRMS its support, where applicable, for the appropriate development and implementation of integrated sea basin and macro-regional strategies to drive sustainable growth in marine and coastal regions, enhance connectivity of islands and coastal regions with the hinterland and promote social and territorial cohesion; WELCOMES the Commission and Member States' initiatives to support Blue Growth and maritime affairs in Europe, through current initiatives of cooperation in the Mediterranean, Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic and Black Sea;

- 12) WELCOMES the adoption by the Commission of the EU Strategy for the **Adriatic and Ionian Region** on 17 June 2014, streamlining the objectives of the Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Seas in a new macro-regional Strategy as requested by the European Council of 14 December 2012; WELCOMES the progress made in implementing the **Atlantic** Action Plan and SUPPORTS the current development of an Atlantic Stakeholder Platform to provide a forum for interested parties, for regular dialogue, feedback and exchanges of views; WELCOMES dedicated Blue growth agenda in the **Baltic** presented on 16 May 2014 and CALLS for an establishment of a Maritime stakeholder platform to facilitate its implementation; WELCOMES the enhancement of maritime cooperation in the **Black Sea** following the stakeholder conference of 30 January 2014 on driving the blue economy in the Black Sea, a first step to regional maritime and marine cooperation which called for designing and supporting concrete projects between Black Sea Coastal States;
- 13) STRESSES the need for Member States and the Commission to cooperate and coordinate with the Regional Sea Conventions for implementing an ecosystem approach to the management of human activities in marine waters;
- 14) STRESSES that connectivity, especially through sea links, constitutes an integral part of the economic and social cohesion of **peripheral and outermost regions of the European Union and remote islands**; POINTS OUT, that it is of crucial importance to deal with the difficulties facing island areas in the EU, with regard to the transport of persons and goods, in order to bridge existing gaps, prevent isolation and offer equal growth opportunities; ENCOURAGES Member States and the Commission to make the best use of existing instruments such as the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) to address connectivity and INVITES the Commission to undertake the necessary initiatives for introducing a European approach to insularity;
- 15) WELCOMES the adoption of the **EU Maritime Security Strategy** for a cross-sectorial approach to maritime security and looks forward to its implementation through the elaboration of its action plan by 2014;

- 16) ACKNOWLEDGES the results of the Cooperation Project on **maritime surveillance** which assessed the quantitative benefits over costs and benefits of further information exchange and developed proposals for a common information exchange interface; REITERATES its support for the further development of a Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission Communication on CISE;
- 17) CALLS on the Commission and Member States to continue to support the European **Coast Guard Function Forum** in order to facilitate and encourage voluntary cooperation across sectors and borders between bodies participating in Coast Guard functions, build upon mutual knowledge, synergies, experiences and best practices, fostering effective and coordinated action at sea; WELCOMES the intention to promote the development of projects aiming at bringing Coast Guard training closer to operational challenges under initiatives such as the "Coast Guard Functions Academies Institutions and Training Centres EU network project (ECGFA NET)", developed under the auspices of the European Coast Guard Functions Forum; APPRECIATES the regular meetings of regional Coast Guard Fora and INVITES Member States to continue actively the dialogue with third countries in each sea-basin;
- 18) SUPPORTS the work of the Commission and Member States to valorise the Union's and Member States' experience in sustainable **ocean governance** by promoting international dialogue, enhancing bilateral and regional cooperation and exchanging best practices; INVITES the Commission and Member States to continue its support for capacity-building on marine and maritime affairs for Southern Mediterranean partner countries, including through the Union for the Mediterranean and the further development of a Virtual Knowledge Centre on marine and maritime affairs;
- 19) RECALLS the Foreign Affairs Conclusions of 12 May 2014; INVITES the Commission and the High Representative to present proposals for the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy by December 2015; As part of this exercise, ENCOURAGES the Commission to ensure effective synergies between the various EU funding instruments in the Arctic region;

- 20) ACKNOWLEDGES that maritime activities are increasingly taking place in areas beyond national jurisdiction with consequent increased impact on the marine environment; RECOGNISES the need for stronger **international ocean governance** and REITERATES the commitment of the EU and its Member States to the launching, as soon as possible, of negotiations in the framework of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) of an United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Implementing Agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- 21) HIGHLIGHTS that maritime activities can be an essential source of innovation, sustainable growth and employment for European regions and REITERATES its encouragement to support their inclusion in the national and regional smart specialisation strategies and their development through the implementation of the Operational Programmes of the **European Structural and Investments Funds**, taking account of relevant sea-basin and macro-regional strategies as appropriate; WELCOMES the adoption of the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)** that will provide support for the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy until 2020 in shared and direct financial management, and LOOKS FORWARD to continued dialogue between Members States and the Commission on the adoption of Implementing Acts for the EMFF on IMP annual Work Programmes so as to ensure well-targeted funding on common maritime policy priorities;
- 22) CONGRATULATES Germany on holding a successful **European Maritime Day** Conference in Bremen on 19-20 May 2014 and LOOKS FORWARD to the next Conference in Piraeus, Greece in May 2015 as well as the following European Maritime Day Conferences in 2016 in Turku, Finland; in 2017 in Poole, United Kingdom; in 2018 in Burgas, Bulgaria and in 2019 in Lisbon, Portugal.
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