



## THE INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICY

The Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) is a holistic approach to all sea-related EU policies. Based on the idea that the Union can draw higher returns from seas and oceans with less impact on the environment by coordinating its policies, the IMP encompasses fields as diverse as fisheries and aquaculture, shipping and seaports, marine environment, marine research, offshore energy, shipbuilding and sea-related industries, maritime surveillance, maritime and coastal tourism, employment, development of coastal regions, and external relations in maritime affairs.

### LEGAL BASIS

The Presidency conclusions on maritime policy of the Brussels European Council of 14 December 2007;

Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC;

In accordance with the above, the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) should be implemented in a way that is consistent with other Union policies and, in particular, maritime policy (point 17 of the preamble) and Article 34(1)(e) requests that the Commission provide guidelines for integrating aquaculture activities into maritime, coastal and inland spatial planning.

Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

### MILESTONES

- March 2005: the Commission puts forward a communication on an IMP for the EU setting out the planned objectives for a Green Paper on the future of the EU maritime policy.
- October 2007: the Commission tables a proposal for an IMP for the EU known as the Blue Paper ([COM\(2007\)0575](#)), and a corresponding Action Plan ([SEC\(2007\)1278](#)).
- December 2007: the European Council welcomes the IMP and invites the Commission to report on progress achieved at the end of 2009.



- September 2010: the Commission puts forward its proposal for a regulation establishing a programme for continued financial support to the IMP for the 2011-2013 period ([COM\(2010\)0494](#)).
- December 2011: Parliament and the European Council adopt the abovementioned regulation, forming the present legal basis for the IMP.
- 8 October 2012: a Marine and Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs is adopted by European ministers for maritime policy and the Commission.

## OBJECTIVES

The IMP is a framework to facilitate the development and coordination of diverse and sometimes conflicting sea-based activities, with a view to:

- Maximising the sustainable use of the oceans and seas, in order to enable the growth of maritime regions and coastal regions as regards:
  - Shipping: improving the efficiency of maritime transport in Europe and ensuring its long-term competitiveness, through the creation of a European Maritime Transport Space without barriers, and a maritime transport strategy for 2008-2018,
  - Seaports: issuing guidelines for the application of environmental legislation relevant to ports and proposing a new ports policy,
  - Shipbuilding: promoting technological innovation and a European network of maritime multi-sectoral clusters,
  - Maritime jobs: enhancing professional qualifications to offer better career prospects in the sector,
  - Environment: reducing the impact and adapting to climate change in coastal zones, and diminishing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from ships,
  - Fisheries management: eliminating discards, destructive fishing practices (e.g. bottom trawling in sensitive areas) and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and promoting environmentally safe aquaculture.
- Building a knowledge and innovation base for maritime policy, through:
  - A comprehensive European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research ( Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC); the Seventh Framework Programme for Research contributed to its implementation through innovation resulting from research for an integrated approach to maritime affairs (2007-2013),
  - Joint, cross-cutting calls and opportunities for innovation in the blue economy under Horizon 2020, the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2014-2020),
  - Support for research on climate change and its effect on maritime activities, the environment, coastal zones and islands,



- A European marine science partnership aimed at dialogue among the scientific community, industry and policy makers.
- Improving quality of life in coastal regions, by:
  - Encouraging coastal and maritime tourism,
  - Preparing a database on Community funding for maritime projects and coastal regions,
  - Creating a Community Disaster Prevention Strategy,
  - Developing the maritime potential of the EU's outermost regions and islands.
- Promoting EU leadership in international maritime affairs, through:
  - Cooperation in maritime affairs under the Enlargement Policy, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Northern Dimension, to cover maritime policy issues and management of shared seas,
  - Projection of the EU's Maritime Policy based on a structured dialogue with major partners.
- Raising the visibility of maritime Europe, by:
  - Launching the 'European Atlas of the Seas' internet application as a means of highlighting the common European maritime heritage,
  - Celebrating an annual European Maritime Day on 20 May.
- Creating internal coordinating structures for maritime affairs and defining the responsibilities and competences of coastal regions.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

A number of specific actions have been launched in accordance with the Maritime Policy Action Plan:

- A Commission communication on European marine and maritime research strategy ([COM\(2008\)0534](#)), proposing concrete measures and mechanisms to improve marine and maritime research;
- A Commission communication on offshore wind energy ([COM\(2008\)0768](#)), identifying the challenges to be tackled in order to exploit Europe's potential for offshore wind energy, and stressing the need for better industrial and technological solutions, the application of EU environmental legislation based on the realistic assessment of wind farms' impact, and improved electricity grids capable of balancing generation and demand, and of transmitting power to the consumption centres;
- A Commission communication on the strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy promoting safe, secure and efficient shipping ([COM\(2009\)0008](#)), as well as a communication and action plan with a view to establishing a European maritime transport space without barriers



([COM\(2009\)0010](#)), accompanied by a proposal for a directive on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of Member States ([COM\(2009\)0011](#)), all aiming to cut down on bureaucracy and facilitate maritime transport between EU ports;

- A strategy for the Baltic Sea region ([COM\(2009\)0248](#)), a first comprehensive strategy developed at ‘macro-region’ level, and a first step towards the regional implementation of the IMP, including a list of 80 flagship projects. In full coordination with the strategy, the Commission has adopted an EU Sustainable Blue Growth Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region (SWD(2014)0167), based on a consistent approach to innovation and increased sustainability;
- A Commission communication on IMP for better governance in the Mediterranean ([COM\(2009\)0466](#)), meant to complement the various sectoral actions that the EU promotes in the Mediterranean area;
- A Commission communication on the international dimension of the IMP ([COM\(2009\)0536](#)), complementing previous regional initiatives by exploring how the IMP should be extended into the wider international arena, and envisaging the creation of an EU framework for a global approach to maritime affairs, enhancing the role of the EU in international fora;
- A Commission communication on Marine Knowledge 2020 ([COM\(2010\)0461](#)), intended to improve the use of scientific knowledge on Europe’s seas and oceans through a coordinated approach to data collection and assembly;
- The EU Strategy for the Black Sea<sup>[1]</sup>, establishing an area of peace, democracy, prosperity and stability and providing for EU energy security;
- A Commission communication on a Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic ([COM\(2011\)0782](#)), intended to promote job creation and growth in the Atlantic area by enhancing its maritime potential. An Atlantic Forum identified priority actions through an Action Plan adopted on 13 May 2013, allowing the strategic use of EU structural funding to support maritime growth for the period 2014-2020;
- A Commission communication on Blue Growth ([COM\(2012\)0494](#)), launching a joint initiative with Member States, regions, and all relevant stakeholders to unlock the potential of the blue economy;
- Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013 establishing the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur), in order to detect, prevent and fight cross-border crimes and ensure the protection of the lives of migrants;
- Directive 2014/89/EU establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning to promote the sustainable growth of maritime economies and the use of marine resources, ensuring that proper planning is at the root of all marine-based activities, in order to allow for greater synergy between different maritime activities;
- A Commission communication on the Common Information Sharing Environment (COM(2014)0451), intended to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of

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[1]OJ C 136 E, 11.5.2012, p. 81.



maritime surveillance by enabling appropriate, secure and efficient data sharing across sectors and borders throughout the EU. These include coast guards, traffic monitoring, environmental monitoring, pollution prevention, fisheries, border control, tax and general law enforcement authorities, and navies;

- A joint communication on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic (JOIN(2016)0021), focusing on advancing international cooperation in responding to the impacts of climate change and on promoting and contributing to sustainable development, particularly in the European part of the Arctic.
- The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (COM(2014)0357), providing a framework for a coherent macro regional strategy and Action Plan, to address maritime challenges and opportunities, through cooperation between the participating countries;

## **ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

The integrated approach combining various policy areas broke new political ground. Maritime policy issues in Parliament are covered by several committees, while DG MARE at the Commission is organised to ensure better thematic coordination and at the Council the General Affairs and External Relations Council has competence on IMP. Parliament took a first step towards better synergy by launching the ‘Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas’ Intergroup, chaired by Gesine Meissner (ALDE) and bringing together more than 80 MEPs from six different political groups and 19 Member States in a working structure acting horizontally and across party lines.

Parliament’s working group to draft a report on the Green Paper on the IMP included the Committee on Transport and Tourism, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Committee on Fisheries (the latter two as associated committees for opinions), as well as the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the Committee on Regional Development (for opinions). A first resolution of 12 July 2007 on a future maritime policy for the European Union: a European vision for the oceans and seas<sup>[2]</sup> highlighted:

- Climate change as the greatest challenge to maritime policy, to be tackled through the reduction of gas emission from ships, an assessment of the feasibility of emission trading for shipping and the promotion of renewable energy;
- Better European shipping with better European ships by means of reducing emissions of air-pollutants while improving maritime safety and social legislation for workers;
- Better European coastal policy, including better European ports, through the use of cohesion policy instruments;
- Sustainable coastal tourism, in recognition of the vital role the environment plays in the sector’s survival;
- Sustainable marine environment, in recognition of the imperative to ensure its conservation and, in many cases, rehabilitation;

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[2]OJ C 175 E, 10.7.2008, p. 531.



- An integrated fisheries policy as a way of protecting small-scale fishing interests, putting an end to the problems of by-catches and discards, and recognising the increasing socio-economic significance of aquaculture;
- Marine research, energy, technology and innovation in order to provide a proper response to the sustainability challenge, properly supported through EU and Member State funding, and through a ‘European Marine Science Consortium’ and the pooling of knowledge;
- A common maritime policy aiming to create a common European maritime space that will contribute to the integration of the internal market for intra-EU maritime transports and services.

Parliament’s resolution of 20 May 2008 on an integrated maritime policy for the EU<sup>[3]</sup>, in response to the Commission communication on the subject, was based on a report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism, with opinions from the Committees on Fisheries and Regional Development.

Parliament drafted a report covering the October 2009 Commission package of communications on the IMP ([COM\(2009\)0466](#), [COM\(2009\)0536](#), [COM\(2009\)0538](#) and [COM\(2009\)0540](#)), with the Committee on Transport and Tourism as lead committee and with an opinion from the Committee on Fisheries under the association procedure (Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure). A resolution of 21 October 2010 on Integrated Maritime Policy — Evaluation of progress made and new challenges<sup>[4]</sup> confirmed Parliament’s fundamentally positive assessment of the IMP.

On 24 November 2011, and following the recommendation from the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as lead committee for the report, Parliament adopted its position on the Programme to support the further development of the Integrated Maritime Policy ([2010/0257\(COD\)](#)).

Adopted by the Council, the report, now Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011, has served as framework for the IMP to date

On 2 July 2013, Parliament adopted a resolution on Blue Growth<sup>[5]</sup> welcoming the Commission’s communication on Blue Growth, which points to the potential of the maritime economy to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and generate employment opportunities. This resolution seeks to revitalise and support the IMP, while stressing that the Blue Growth Strategy, as part of the IMP, will encourage the development of synergies and coordinated policies, thus generating European added value.

In its plenary vote of 16 April 2014 on the Regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), Parliament endorsed a budgetary allocation of 5% of the total volume of the EMFF for the IMP for the 2014-2020 period, representing a four-fold increase for the IMP.

On 16 January 2018, Parliament also adopted a resolution on international ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030

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[3]OJ C 279 E, 19.11.2009, p. 30.

[4]OJ C 70 E, 8.3.2012, p. 70.

[5]OJ C 75, 26.2.2016, p. 24.



Sustainable Development Goals<sup>[6]</sup>. Governance pertains to all human marine and maritime activities, both traditional and new, including fisheries.

On 27 March 2019, Parliament adopted a position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment<sup>[7]</sup>. In the framework of establishing a circular economy, it mentions the necessity for users of fishing gear containing plastic to consider re-usable alternatives and re-use systems.

On 4 April 2019, Parliament adopted a position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the minimum level of training of seafarers<sup>[8]</sup>. The aim is to improve the level of maritime safety and pollution at sea by developing maritime training and certification in line with international rules and technological progress.

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05/2019

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[6]OJ C 458, 19.12.2018, p. 9.

[7]P8\_TA(2019)0305

[8]P8\_TA(2019)0354

