



EU CONSULTATION ON BLUE GROWTH :

MAY 2012

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE EUROPEAN STRAITS INITIATIVE

In which country do you work?

The European Straits Initiative is associating local authorities from Albania, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and United Kingdom. This initiative called ESI has been signed on 23rd November 2010 in Calais (France).

The maritime economy consists of all the economic activities related to the oceans, seas and coasts. This includes the closest direct and indirect supporting activities necessary for the functioning of these economic sectors, which can be located anywhere, including in landlocked countries.

4) Do you agree with this definition of the 'blue economy'?

You may wish to comment (maximum 700 characters)

(695 characters):

The European Straits Initiative considers maritime economic activities found their most important concentration and mix potentials on the straits. The Straits are links between seas (Dover Strait: English Channel / North Sea) and between territories (Messina Strait: Sicilia / Italian peninsula). They are concentrating services, goods and people on one place, which is often a cross-border area (Gulf of Finland: Helsinki – Tallin – St Petersburg). Straits are linked to all sectors of maritime economy and its major future developments (mineral resources: Dover Strait; marine aquatic products: Dover Strait and Messina; maritime monitoring and surveillance: Dover Strait, Gulf of Bonifacio).

In the context of the Blue Growth study, marine and maritime economic activities have been sub-divided into three main categories. Below are examples of 'blue growth' areas for each category:

- *Pre-development sectors:*
(*In this stage of development, technological inventions for these sectors have been made, but most promising outputs are still to be defined. Much R&D is required.*)
Blue biotechnology; ocean renewable energy resources (wave, tidal, osmotic, ocean thermal energy conversion – OTEC); marine mineral resources (i.e. deep sea drilling for mineral resources).
- *Sectors that have seen strong recent growth:*
(*Growth sectors are considered as having strong economic and/or employment growth. In this stage, smaller sized companies can enter the market as prices are gradually going down.*)
Offshore wind; marine aquatic products; cruise tourism; maritime monitoring and surveillance.
- *Economically mature sectors:*
(*In this stage, economic activities remain stable at a relatively big size. Market positions of main players are clear and competition is fierce.*)
Coastal Tourism; offshore oil and gas; coastal protection; short-sea shipping.

Do you agree with the above sub-division?

You may wish to comment: (maximum 500 characters)

(486 characters):

The European Straits Initiative wishes to highlight the need of analyzing all those sectors all together and not separately because their major developments will take place in concentrated areas such as straits. On most European straits the three sectors shall grow on an integrated manner to remain sustainable and inclusive, and thus should be more innovative. This is questioning straits governance, i.e. maritime policy and cohesion policy and coherence between policies and tools.

Are you aware of any specific initiatives and partnerships currently underway in the Member States and regions to address these issues?
Please name these specific initiatives and express your views as to their effectiveness (maximum 500 characters)

(481 characters)

The MoU of the European Strait Initiative signed on 23rd November 2010 is aimed at “gaining recognition of the particular characteristics of European Straits within European policies and integrating these within European programmes and European Structural Funds”, and “working for the emergence of cooperation projects in order to promote economic development, coastal protection, transportation and logistics, intercultural working and tourism activities”.

<http://www.europeanstraits.eu>

The EU has strong marine and maritime scientific and academic competencies, but considerably less commercial spin-offs of such research.

Which of the following initiatives can bridge this knowledge-transfer gap in the following pre-development sectors? Please provide further explanation: (maximum 700 characters)

(699 characters)

The European Straits Initiative underlines difference between sectors' various capitalistic needs. The blue technology needs support in developing confidence and competencies in its long term sustainable growth potential. The mineral marine resources needs support in analyzing environmental long term impacts in the straits. The Initiative is expressing concerns about balance between blue biotechnology and traditional – but modernised activities. Fisheries for example may risk not to be given the right value versus their local particularities, fishing systems and fishing fleet. The fisheries should also be part of policies and tools in offshore wind, cruise tourism and maritime surveillance.

Which of the following initiatives can bridge this knowledge-transfer gap in the following growth sectors? Please provide further explanation: (maximum 700 characters)

(693 characters)

The European Straits Initiative is more concerned by cruise tourism and maritime monitoring. In those fields the requested initiatives might be the improvement of exchanges of experiences, and networking between concerned actors in Europe. For the whole blue growth perspective, the Initiative considers an increase of investments in infrastructures in order to develop intermodal transportation system from salted waterways to other waterways and to rail and road systems, as crucial. The Initiative considers the gaps between science, industries and the whole education system should be overcome thanks to substantial means. Awareness to blue growth and maritime economy should be supported.

European strategies for macro-regions, sea-basins (Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic, Arctic, Mediterranean and Black Sea) and for sub-sea basins (e.g. the Adriatic-Ionian) aim to foster synergies and align EU and national funding to specific growth objectives in relation to a specific geographical area.

Do you think the further development of the sea-basin approach, including cooperation with non-EU neighbouring countries, would benefit the maritime economy?

Please provide a brief explanation: (maximum 1000 characters)

(969 characters)

The European Straits Initiative considers the necessity of sea-basin approach when this approach is combined with a specific straits' approach. The straits are gateways between sea basins (for

example: English Channel – North Sea, North Sea – Baltic Sea, Black Sea – Mediterranean Sea, Mediterranean Sea – Atlantic, Mediterranean Sea – Adriatic Sea) and contact points between territories. This has to be taken into consideration for the relevance of any specific policy and tools for blue growth at EU level. This would in any case lead to a different consideration given to the straits, which are specific geographical areas, in terms of geography (sea sides and hinterlands), economy (land and marine). Straits are crossroads in a broad sense. This should reinforce synergies between cohesion and maritime policy but also for the crucial question of transportation. This should lead to specific EU and national funding to specific growth objectives to be determined.

In your opinion, which are the main regulatory barriers to sustainable growth in marine and maritime economic activities? Please provide examples.
(maximum 750 characters)

(736 characters)

The European Straits Initiative considers the regulatory barriers are national borders when they split European policies (ERFD regional policies) without taking into consideration the straits as an integrated and often cross border territory. The EGCT and the ECT tools may not allow the concentration on the straits of the needed amount of investments for the whole future blue growth and address all their concerns. The need of integrated approaches for the straits, such as ICZM, should be at the agenda for any EU policy and tools to be developed. Regarding the importance of the straits as gateways to the world economy, the main regulatory barrier is still the lack of interface between human, economic and environmental policies.

In your opinion, what are the benefits to the economy of such data exchange? This in particular as regards: Preserving fish stocks / Preserving the marine environment / Preventing marine pollution (both land and sea borne) / Better understanding of sea level rise due to global warming and effects on coastal zones / Better safety at sea given that 90% of the EU's external trade is sea borne / Enhanced security for the EU and its citizens (from any type of sea borne criminal and terrorist threats) / Creating the framework conditions for business to safely exploit new opportunities of the maritime/marine domain in a sustainable manner / Less evasion of custom duties / Less illegal immigration /Others?
(maximum 1500 characters)

(1479 characters)

The European Straits Initiative analyses the benefits to the economy provided by data exchange as crucial. The straits as gateways between territories and seas are providing great economic potentials and major risks at the same time. The data exchange is crucial in preserving fish stocks, especially when straits are spawning places and fishery places. Common data would facilitate the good evaluation of structural needs. Data exchange on marine environment would allow better protection of marine areas and coastal zones, and facilitate the ICZM, in order to eventually create a unique ICZM for each strait. This would contribute to comprehensive spatial planning, on land and on sea.

Data exchange on marine pollution would assist the existing search and rescue coordination centres by the addition of environment oversee bodies. Sea level rise and coastline erosion are fundamental problems in the straits. They could be analysed, measures taken and investments done for each strait creating economies of scale. Regarding the costs of those works and their impact on local economic situation in short and long terms, the data exchange on straits might be essential for EU, national and local policies and tools. This is questioning the states' responsibilities for marine domain (national and international waters), as well as borders, migration and custom duties. They are essentially focused on straits, should they have tunnels, bridges or boats for commuting transports.

How would you measure such benefits?
(maximum 1000 characters)

(995 characters)

The European Straits Initiative would recommend the use for the straits areas of the same indicators as for the European territorial cooperation. Indeed the number of unique ICZM for both sides, the number of protected marine areas, the number of specific rescue and pollution surveys, the number and type of species and the specific recognition and protection of local species and traditions such as the "swordfish of the Strait of Messina" could be indicators. Following additional criteria such as number of transported people and goods, number of cross straits' services created and economic growth in the defined territory of the strait. This would mean furthermore the strait area is defined as such, on sea side and in the hinterland, which takes more benefits when transportation infrastructure are created and people prepared for job seeking and mobility. The condition for that is the establishment of statistics specifically dedicated for those areas and their relevant dissemination.

How would you measure the economic benefits of improved maritime awareness, safety and border control?
(maximum 1000 characters)

(469 characters)

The European Straits Initiative considers the economic benefits of maritime awareness, safety and border control could be measured through integrated territorial investments produced, and maritime local action groups established. Added value and jobs created in the three major categories identified in the blue growth could be analysed. A general analysis of the balance between risks, accidents and pollution and the costs dedicated for preventing them could be done.

How important is it for cross border investments in coastal regions and maritime areas that Member states co-operate across borders on maritime spatial planning issues? Please motivate your answer:
(maximum 700 characters)

(667 characters)

The European Straits Initiative strongly supports the co-operation across borders on spatial planning since the straits are gateways between territories and seas, and often between countries. The blue growth, whatever category identified, will provide more benefits for coast and hinterlands, regarding the EU 2020 strategy when common spatial planning tools will be set up. This is true between Member states and with other States, such as Albania, but also Tunisia and Morocco. The spatial planning tools, either on land or on sea, will ensure clear options for the economic development of the concerned area, and consequently good basic conditions for blue growth.

Our oceans, seas and coasts are valuable ecological assets. Healthy ecosystems are important for the growth of marine and maritime economic sectors as well as for the well-being of people living in coastal areas. However, the economic value of these "ecosystem services" and the cost of their loss are not fully taken into account when analysing overall economic benefits. Should policies also take into account the monetary value of ecosystems? You may wish to comment: (maximum 500 characters)

(497 characters)

The European Straits Initiative considers policies should take into account the monetary value of the ecosystems. While it considers necessary and appropriate to protect the environment and encourage the reproduction of marine wildlife, the imposition of restrictions and prohibitions must be accompanied by a real knowledge of the economic and social changes. The bio-ecological aim can not be separated from that one to maintain a balance of a long term employment and to ensure social welfare.

Which of the following framework conditions needs to be addressed most urgently for the sustainable development of emerging maritime activities? Please motivate your answer: (maximum 700 characters)

(543 characters)

The European Straits Initiative considers as full priority public acceptance and awareness of the specific situation, maritime areas and straits are facing in the new challenges of the blue growth. Their specific geographic situation, as nodal point between countries, territories and seas requests for good economic development a strong understanding of the straits being a unique space where most challenges may occur soon, from transportation collapses, maritime safety, environmental aspects, fisheries, migration and cultural melting pot.