



European Economic and Social Committee



Europe and the Global Blue Economy Oceans, New Frontier, Sustainable Use

December 2nd, 2011, 09:00 – 16:30

Venue: Jaques Delors Building, Rue Belliard 99, 1040 Brussels, Room JDE63

The Laboratory is:

Hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee

Facilitated by the Resource Efficiency Alliance ¹

Sponsored by the European Commission; the European Water Partnership; and the Union of Greek Shipowners.

Oceans will be high on the Rio+20² and EU political agenda with issues as:

- (i) Conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including the establishment of protected areas in the high seas. Leaders EU and now also G-77. Including a new agreement under the Montego Bay Convention
- (ii) Sustainable fishery and aquaculture
- (iii) Emerging opportunities, including renewable energy and biotechnology
- (iv) Growing concerns, including marine litter.

¹ An initiative of European Partners for the Environment, the European Water Partnership, EUCETSA, the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment Culture and Sustainable Development.

² A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability. An inter-agency paper towards the preparation of Rio+20.

All of the issues above, including the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, are major issues discussed at UN Level, and the Rio + 20 conference provides a political opportunity to move forward substantially the international agenda. The same applies to marine litter.

A UN Group of Countries is considering to launch a group "Friends of the Oceans" (relating to the Global Oceans Forum) and many are now requesting to address 'A Blue Economy' (a concept which started with Pacific island states and has now spread).

The European Commission communication on Rio + 20 addresses among its themes marine resources, oceans and seas, as follows:

*To strengthen protection of the **marine environment and oceans**, those states which have not yet done so should be encouraged to ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). There is a need for new initiatives for the protection and conservation of areas beyond national jurisdiction (the "high seas and the deep sea bed") for instance through an implementing agreement under UNCLOS. To help conserve marine biodiversity in these areas, an agreement should establish multi-purpose marine protected areas and ensure access to the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilisation of genetic and other resources. It should also establish surveillance and enforcement mechanisms. Special attention should also be given to develop a global action programme to combat marine litter and pollution.*

Rio 1992 initiated 3 major processes: the climate change convention, the biodiversity convention, the desertification convention. Should an Ocean and Marine "Agreement" be the legacy of Rio + 20?

The European Commission prepares:

- A Report on international commitments related to the Marine Directive 2008 (art 20§2) for spring 2012 (DG ENV)
- A Communication on Blue Growth for December 2012, which means after the Rio + 20 Conference. (DG MARE)
- An EU initiative on Maritime Spatial Planning (DG MARE), currently undergoing an impact assessment of available options.

Europeans have a role to play, including around European seas but also beyond. This even applies to the Pacific Region, which is not covered by EU Directives, but where EU Member States have major overseas territories. For example, Japanese researchers say they have discovered vast deposits of rare earth minerals, which are used in many high-tech appliances, in the seabed (78 locations) of the Pacific Ocean floor. Analysts say the Pacific discovery could challenge China's dominance (China produces 97% of the world's rare earth metals). The minerals were found at depths of 3,500 to 6,000 meters in international waters east and west of Hawaii and east of Tahiti in French Polynesia. Marine Litter is also a crucial issue as far as the Pacific is concerned for which new forms of partnerships should be explored.

In terms of marine biodiversity, according to European Protection Agency Director General, only 10 % of marine habitats protected by the Habitats Directive are in good condition.

The EU Fisheries Policy is still facing major challenges, but the problem is global, as shown by the last annual FAO publication on the state of world fisheries.

Oceans are a major 'resource efficiency issue' which concern major regions of the world. One major message to be delivered is that oceans are the new frontier, and that the international community should avoid replicating now at sea the wrong approaches developed in-land, and aim at resource efficiency from now on.

The think tank meeting will address

- Which role for Europeans in shaping the 'Blue Economy' of the XXIst Century?
- How to prepare Rio + 20?
- What steps after Rio + 20?

The meeting which will focus on Finance, Blue Growth, Integrated Maritime Planning, EU partnerships and will follow the Conference hosted by the Principality of Monaco on November 28-30, focused on three themes: Energy, Food security and Tourism.

PROGRAMME

Chair: Mr. Tom Vereijken, President of the European Water Partnership and European Partners for the Environment (confirmed)

9:00 Welcome Address

- *The Chair (confirmed)*
- *Mr. Richard Adams, the European Economic and Social Committee, EESC member (confirmed)*

9:30 - 11:00 Session 1

The Global Blue Economy. Europe's strengths and weaknesses.

Mapping European champions and front runners for a sustainable Blue Economy and jobs. Which sectors ?

Which players ?

Mapping European initiatives around the world to support sustainable development in relation to the seas.

Panel:

Mr. Ernesto Penas Lado, Director DG Mare.

Mr. Gustaaf Borchart, Director DG Environment (confirmed)

Mr. Ronan Huhel, European Environment Agency (confirmed)

Mr. Raphael Billé, IDDRI (confirmed)

Prof. Michael Scoullou, University of Athens (confirmed).

Mr. Richard Delaney, Director of the Center for Coastal Studies in Massachusetts, Global Ocean Forum (confirmed)

Mr. Derek Osborn, Stakeholder Forum (confirmed)

Debate with participants

11:00 - 11:20 Coffee Break

11:20 - 12:50 Session 2

Oceans, the New Frontier and Responsible Investments.

The Financial Community and the Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI) and its specific implementation in the field of Oceans exploitation and new uses of the Seas. The session should address which financial needs and priorities, which investment guidelines, which public and private funding, which financial tools in relation with

Investments sectors to be considered:

1. Sustainable fishery and aquaculture, blue economy in the context of poverty alleviation.
2. Ecosystem approach, conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction
3. Sustainable Shipping
4. Marine litter
5. Emerging uses (renewable energy and biotechnology)
6. Offshore safety
7. Seabed mining (i.e. rare materials) and environmental impacts

Panel:

Mr. J.C. Lyras, Union of Greek Shipowners (confirmed)

Mr. Paris Sansoglou, European Dredging Association (confirmed)

Mr. Nicolas Guichoux, Marine Stewardship Council (confirmed)

Mr. Stefan Hart, European Investment Bank (confirmed)

*Dr. Michaela Popovici (Technical Expert Water Management - ICPDR Secretariat),
DABLAS expert (confirmed)*

Mrs. Joanna Fiedler, consultant, RENA expert (awaiting confirmation)

DG DEVCO (awaiting confirmation)

Debate with participants

12:50 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30 Session 3

Blue Economy, New Types of Partnerships with non-EU Countries and Integrated Maritime Planning.

Which partnerships between EU, Member States, Overseas Territories and/or non Union Countries?

Which new governance mechanisms for integrated maritime planning?

Which partnerships initiatives in place or to develop and to be presented at Rio + 20 related to specific regions of the world?

Panel:

Mr. Damien Perisse, the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions CPMR (confirmed)

Mrs. Maria-Luisa Silva, Barcelona Convention, the Mediterranean Depollution Programme, Horizon 2020 (Greece) (confirmed)

Mr. Paolo Nunes, CIESM on the November 2011, Marine Economics and Oceans Wealth, a Mediterranean Partnership (confirmed)

Mr. Andrew Reid, Ecologic, the CALAMAR project, cooperation across the Atlantic for Marine Governance Integration (confirmed)

Mr. Mario Alves, FTNIA, Euro-Latin America Partnership on Ocean (Portugal) (confirmed).

Mrs. Kathrine Angeli-Hansen, JPI Oceans, the Baltic Sea (Norway) (confirmed)

Mrs. Kaisa Kononen, BONUS. Science for a better future of the Baltic Sea Region (confirmed)

Mr. Bernard Merkx, Waste Free Oceans (confirmed)

Debate with participants

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 - 16:30 Session 4

European Initiatives. Next steps. Conclusions.

Europeans Initiatives

- Before Rio + 20
- At Rio + 20
- After Rio + 20

Main elements having emerged from the meeting

Mr. Raymond Van Ermen, EPE (confirmed)

Panel:

Mr. Fritz Barth, UNDP, EWP Vice-President (confirmed)

Prof. Michael Scoullas, GWP-MED (confirmed)

Mr. Carlos Berrozpe , DG Environment (confirmed)

-----, DG Mare (confirmed, name will be given)