



The European Union's Marine Strategy Directive

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The marine environment is actually **90%** of the biosphere and constitutes the greatest source of biological diversity on the planet.

Marine ecosystems play a key role in weather and climate patterns affecting our livelihoods.

Oceans provide **99%** of the available living space on the planet

and

Cover **71%** of the earth's surface

Oceans have been estimated to produce more than **35%** of the primary production of the planet

Marine pollution is by definition a **transboundary issue**.

However this fact is not yet incorporated in the existing legal framework.

As a result the **effectiveness** of policies and measures is significantly limited

The European marine environment in particular is under an **increasing number of threats**, namely:

- Effects of climate change
- Impacts of commercial fishing
- Introduction/invasion of non native species
- Eutrophication

A photograph showing a river heavily polluted with trash and debris. In the background, there is a bridge with cars and tall apartment buildings. The water is dark and turbulent, with a large amount of garbage floating in it.

– Litter pollution

– Contamination by dangerous substances

– Microbiological pollution



VI International Symposium on Transboundary Waters Management, Thessaloniki, 15-18 October 2008

Europe's marine waters
cover over **3 million square kilometres**
an area equal
to the total european landmass

As Environment Commissioner
Stavros Dimas emphasized:

*“It is absolutely vital for the EU to protect its marine waters and to clean up its seas and oceans.
Doing so requires
an **integrated** approach
to managing seas and oceans.”*

This integrated approach,
expressed by the European Marine Strategy,
is one of the **7 thematic strategies**
resulting from the Communities
6th Environmental Action Programme.

Aiming to promote sustainable use of the seas and
to conserve marine ecosystems

[Decision 1600/2002, OJ L 242, 10.09.2002]

EU Marine Strategy

to protect Europe's oceans and seas



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The European Marine Strategy consists
of **3 documents**:

1. A Communication presenting the European Marine Strategy
[COM (2005) 504, 24.10.2005]
2. A proposal for the marine framework Directive
[COM (2005) 505, 24.10.2005]
3. A Commission impact assessment

A number of relevant commitments have already been made **before** the adoption of the European Marine Strategy including:

- The commitment to **halt biodiversity loss by 2010**
- Provisions to protect marine habitats and species under the **Habitats and Birds Directive** [92/43, OJ L 206, 22.07. 1992 and 179/409, OJ L 103, 25.04.1979]
- Targets to achieve good ecological status in coastal waters under the **Water Framework Directive** [2000/60 OJ L 327, 22.12.2000]

The member states are obliged
by the Marine Framework Directive:

- to ensure that EU marine waters are **environmentally healthy by 2020** at the latest and
- to provide a comprehensive framework for the protection of water throughout its full cycle alongside with the **Water Framework Directive**

In order to have
Environmentally healthy marine waters
member states
establish

Marine Regions and Sub-regions,
managed in an integrated manner

The coastal states in the EU
have to
develop a **maritime strategy**
for the European marine waters



Member states are obliged:

2.to assess the state of the environment

3.to identify the main pressures in their marine regions.

4.to determine what can be considered as Good Environmental Status

5.to establish:

- Targets
- Indicators and
- Monitoring programs

Good Environmental Status means [Art. 3]:
“the environmental status of marine waters
where these provide ecologically diverse and
dynamic oceans and seas
which are **clean, healthy and productive**
within their intrinsic conditions
and the use of the marine environment
is at a level that is **sustainable.**”

In drawing marine strategies for waters within each marine region member states are required **to cooperate closely**.

Each marine strategy consists of **an Action Plan** to be implemented in several stages.

Marine strategies will apply
an ecosystem – based approach
to the management of human activities
to ensure that the
collective pressure
of such activities
is kept with
sustainable levels.

Programmes and Measures:

Member States

(in respect of each Marine Region or Submarine Region)

shall identify the measures
which need to be taken in order to achieve or maintain
Good Environmental Status.

The **programmes and measures** must take into account:

- Directive on **urban waste-water treatment**
[91/271, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991]
- Directive on **bathing water quality**
[2006/7 OJ L 64, 4.03.2006]
- The **Water Framework Directive** [2000/60]
- **International Agreements**



Programmes of measures
must be drawn up
by 2015
to attain
the good environmental status
by 2020

Member States have to establish **marine protected areas**.

Member States **sharing a marine region** will need to **cooperate** to ensure that their marine strategies are **coherent and coordinated**.

Member States
must make every effort
to coordinate their activities
with **non-EU countries**
in the same marine region
including through
Regional Sea Conventions.

Marine waters covered
by member states sovereignty or jurisdiction
form an integral part
of the following Marine Regions:

- The Baltic Sea
- The North East Atlantic Ocean
- The Mediterranean Sea
- The Black Sea
- Including the waters surrounding the
Azores, Madeira and Canary Island

Member States shall establish and implement coordinated **monitoring programs** for the ongoing assessment of the environmental status.

Monitoring programs shall be **compatible** within Marine Regions or Sub-marine Regions and **compatible** with the relevant provisions for monitoring, as laid down by EU Legislation: Habitats or Birds Directive or by International Agreements.

Notifications and E. Commission's assessment

The E. Commission will **assess** whether in the case of each member state the elements **notified** constitute an appropriate framework to meet the requirements of this Directive.

The **E.Commission**

should present a **first evaluation report**

on the implementation of the Directive
within 2 years of the receiving all
programmes and measures

and by **2019** at the latest

Commission reports should be published
every 6 years

Public consultation and participation

Member states shall ensure that all interested parties are given early and effective opportunities **to participate** in the implementation of the Directive involving, where possible, existing management bodies or structures

Including:

- Regional Sea Conventions
- Scientific Advisory Bodies and
- Regional Advisory Bodies

Marine Strategy Directive is completed
by **6 Annexes**:

Annex I: Qualitative Descriptions for
determining Good Environmental
Status

Annex II: Competent Authorities

Annex III: Indicative lists of characteristics,
pressures and impacts (in each
marine region and sub-region)

Annex IV: Indicative list of characteristics to be
taken into account for setting
environmental targets

Annex V: Monitoring programs

Annex VI Programs and measures

A person in a green jacket is operating a small boat in a narrow canal. The canal is flanked by large, weathered concrete structures that form a V-shape. The water is dark and turbulent, suggesting a narrow passage or a lock. The person is positioned in the center of the frame, looking towards the camera.

Summarising:

The Marine Strategy Directive:

- Sets **common objectives and principles** at EU level
- establishes **Marine Regions as Management Unions** for implementation of the strategy
- Invites the member states to **cooperate** actively both among themselves as well as with third countries concerned

- Contributes to the fulfillment of the obligations of the EU and MS under several International Agreements:
 - -Convention for the Protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic [Decision 98/249]
 - -Convention for the Protection of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area [Decision 94/157]

- -Convention for the Protection of the marine environment and the Coastal Region of the **Mediterranean Sea against pollution from land based sources** [Decision 83/101 and 99/801]
- -Convention on the Protection of the **Black sea against pollution**
to which EU is not yet a party but it has an observer status

A group of seals swimming in the ocean. The water is a deep blue, and the seals are dark brown with lighter patches on their heads. One seal in the center foreground is looking directly at the camera with its mouth slightly open. Other seals are visible in the background, some looking towards the camera and others looking away.

Thank you for your attention

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