



Federal Ministry
of Transport, Building
and Urban Affairs



Bremen Declaration on The Future Maritime Policy of the EU

Conclusions of the European Conference
on „The Future Maritime Policy of the EU:
A European Vision for Oceans and Seas“ in
Bremen from 2 to 4 May 2007

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I. The Conference

- welcomes the Green Paper’s integrated approach and the Commission’s objective of developing for the first time, together with the Member States, the framework for a cross-sectoral and holistic maritime policy.
- recognises the need to anticipate future challenges related to the seas and coastal areas, including those posed by climate change, energy and demographic change. The integrated approach is the right one if we want to tap the enormous economic potential of the seas and coastal regions while preserving them for the long-term.
- recalls that the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality also have to be observed in an integrated maritime policy. The possible proposals have to be formulated in such a way that their implementation can take account of the distinctive regional features of different geographical areas and existing conventions governing the various maritime and coastal areas of Europe.
- believes that a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of the status quo is a prerequisite for suggestions for improvements in a coherent integrated maritime policy. This evaluation should be carried out taking account of existing competencies and include a comprehensive, transparent description of the EU funding flows to support maritime objectives.
- underscores the importance of the integration of the Thematic Strategy for the Marine Environment and the Marine Strategy Directive as the environmental pillar of the future maritime policy for the EU.
- supports a continuation of the initiatives for better regulation by means of better coordination within the Commission, between the Member State and European levels and by including all stakeholders in a transparent manner.
- invites the Commission to come forward with a European action plan for maritime policy to be presented in early October which
 - takes forward the issues raised in the Green Paper, in particular those which the Conference – being a milestone in the ongoing public consultations process – has identified as being consensual,
 - makes targeted proposals for action for an integrated maritime policy and
 - includes the stakeholders, especially the governments, the regions and the social partners, to a greater extent in the development of a positive framework for an integrated maritime policy, while observing the principle of subsidiarity.

II. For the ongoing process, the Conference has identified the following issues and possible actions that it considers consensual in Europe:

Boosting employment and competitiveness

- The EU has a major interest in the global competitiveness of maritime transport, shipbuilding, the marine equipment industry, component suppliers, maritime services and the port industry. The Conference thus considers that enhancing competitiveness and the capacity of the maritime economy to create more and better jobs coupled with an optimized and coordinated use of the economic potential of its maritime areas, while safeguarding the marine environment, are outstanding objectives of an integrated maritime policy.
- Shipping should be placed in a position to perform its task as carrier of world trade and fully deliver its potential as an environmentally friendly and, at the same time, energy efficient mode of transport in a globalized economy. To this end, shipping needs infrastructure improvements in the EU, the development and deployment of innovative technologies (ICT) and an improvement to the interfaces in the transport chains. This includes connecting it to and interlinking it with inland transport infrastructure and continuing to evolve the concept of motorways of the sea and short sea shipping. These functions must also be reflected appropriately in the TEN-T. Shipping between Member States must be possible without unnecessary bureaucracy.
- The Conference believes it is necessary to promote the creation of maritime clusters in and between the maritime industry and the scientific community and to support efforts to link maritime clusters in the EU.
- The importance of maritime and coastal tourism in Europe should be recognized and promoted sustainably as these activities make a major contribution to Europe's economy, providing millions of jobs and significant value added.
- An integrated maritime policy must reflect the great economic importance of the sea as a source of energy, including renewables, and as a transport route through vessels and pipelines.
- Well-trained and dedicated personnel are a key to economic development in order to maintain and build on Europe's competitive advantage. The objective of an integrated maritime policy has to be to create an optimum framework for high-quality training that is responsive to requirements and produces a high level of skills. The maritime industries can offer attractive jobs and good employment prospects. This message has to be highlighted to a greater extent. The Conference invites the social partners to submit concrete proposals as to how the framework for growth, employment and investment in the maritime sector can be improved in a sustainable way.
- The Conference invites Member States to vigorously work towards the ratification and transposition into national law of international conventions and decisions. This is especially true of the Convention on Maritime Labour Standards adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in February 2006. Member States should also bring the supplementary ILO Convention on work in the fishing sector to a successful conclusion as soon as possible and ratify and implement the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) and the Torremolinos Protocol. Social partners are also encouraged in their negotiations with a view to further harmonization.

Practising joint responsibility for the seas

- A healthy marine environment is indispensable for people's quality of life. The sustainable protection and preservation of the ecosystem of the oceans and seas are prerequisites for the economic use of marine resources and the development of economic dynamism. Moreover, the findings of climate change research show that it is essential to act resolutely and proactively to ensure that the oceans do not exceed critical system limits.
- The Conference supports the objective of sustainable management of fish stocks and other natural resources and stresses the need to make more systematic efforts than in the past to counter overfishing, the damage caused to marine organisms and habitats by destructive fishing practices such as deep sea bottom trawling and existing shortcomings in the monitoring and enforcement of fishing quotas. In addition, the Conference calls for an intensification of the efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) and for the use of sustainable fishing methods.
- The Conference welcomes the fact that the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is addressing the issues of air pollution and CO₂ reduction at sea and in ports and urges that they be given high priority, since both issues require a global solution. The EU should promote this initiative as part of its coordinated maritime policy.
- The Conference expects an integrated maritime policy to seek the complete interlinking of environmental policies for land and the seas, given the reciprocal influence of land and sea. The Conference therefore invites the Commission to consolidate EU rules that are relevant to marine protection, especially the Marine Strategy Directive, and the rules governing fishing and agriculture, in a coherent, integrated maritime policy.
- The sustainable stewardship of marine resources in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has to be an integral component of the EU's foreign and neighbourhood policy and of its development cooperation. The EU should do more regarding the protection of biodiversity on the high seas.
- The Conference expects an integrated maritime policy to result in better coordination of Member States' international activities and a better exchange of information and cooperation between the European and national levels. In view of international competition, care must be taken to ensure that European rules do not have an adverse impact on European competitiveness. Europe needs an international level playing field for shipping and maritime activities that ensures that relocation does not allow companies to evade high European standards. This needs to be the aim of all European players in this globalized industry. In particular, the Conference considers it absolutely essential that there be internationally binding rules governing environmental and safety provisions that are addressed to ships and their crews.
- Maritime safety and security are politically important tasks. Close coordination among the players responsible is imperative. For this reason, an approach to promoting interaction between and the integration of maritime policy areas must also include security policy aspects.

Boosting research and innovation

- Research and innovation are essential prerequisites for growth and employment in the maritime industry and for tackling global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. As it heads towards an integrated maritime policy, Europe therefore needs both excellence in the individual disciplines and greater interdisciplinary and cross-border networking between the natural sciences, technological applications and the social sciences.

- European excellence in the field of marine research and the innovative potential inherent therein has to be enhanced by means of better cooperation between research institutions and a better transfer of knowledge between the research community, industry and government.
- The Conference requests the Commission to ensure the coordination of European marine research and to consider the establishment of a one-stop shop ("European Maritime Research Secretariat"). In this context the benefits of mapping and collecting data in the marine and coastal waters and regions of Member States and the seabed for marine sciences, commercial uses, raw materials exploration, environmental protection and the implementation of European regulations (especially the future Marine Strategy Directive, Water Framework Directive, Natura 2000) should be examined.
- The permanent regular monitoring of the marine environment is an indispensable basis for the protection of species and ecosystems and for the provision of support to economic decisions. To this end, it is necessary to expand and harmonize the operational oceanographic monitoring systems. The consolidation of data from in-situ measurements, remote sensing information and model data has to be improved, while measuring methods and numerical models have to be further evolved.
- Data on the marine environment have to be made available by means of a uniform data management system.
- The Conference believes it is important that consideration be given to the establishment of a regular interdisciplinary conference to enhance the interdisciplinary link-up between the research community, industry and governments.

Improving life on the coast

- Coastal regions and towns are highly attractive places to live, in terms of history, culture, environment and landscape, and are places with which individuals who live there, work there or who go there in search of relaxation can easily identify. Many port cities face the challenge of exploiting the opportunity presented by economic structural change in a positive way, for instance by transforming former docklands into modern urban neighbourhoods, connecting docklands to cultural and social centres, preserving the maritime heritage and promoting tourism.
- Sustainable high quality of maritime and coastal tourism makes coastal regions more competitive, creates jobs, makes the regions more attractive to businesses and can help to define the identity of a given region. The Commission is requested to further promote the regional and supraregional exchange of experience, examples of best practice and cooperative models for sustainable coastal tourism, urban development projects and the protection of the maritime heritage.
- Coastal regions are interfaces between the competing interests of use and protection. Spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) on land and at sea have to be coordinated internationally on the basis of uniform principles and implemented primarily at the local and regional levels. The Conference requests the Commission to support the regional and national players in implementing the Member States' ICZM strategies. Given the rising need for supra-regional coordination, the added value of a European platform for an informal exchange of information between Member States in the field of spatial planning should also be examined.