

Amendments from the MRFG to the maritime policy, discussed at their meeting 27-27 March

Here is one addition to the green-paper re the importance of the maritime regions for the economy as a whole, it could be placed after the section "**Coastal communities and economies**".

New headline after the headline: Coastal Communities and Economies:

Maritime services as a promoter of growth and quality of life but the maritime policy is not just important for the coastal regions.

Equally important is the role that maritime industries and services plays for the benefit for the whole economy and the well-being of citizens in general. 90 per cent of global transport is carried out by the shipping industry, and Europe alone represents 40 per cent of the global commercial fleet. The development of ports and inland transports from ports along the coast is a critical point in the flow of goods from production-sites to consumers. Thus, efficiency and sustainability in sea transportation is a crucial issue for economic growth as such.

Another example of the general significance of maritime regions is the fisheries sector, providing first-class food with high demand from the market as a whole. Although the significance of fish is more important in coastal areas, demand for sea-food from farmed or wild resources is rising continually and is a primary source of protein and other nutrients globally.

Also the qualities of the coast is not just something enjoyed and valued by the coastal communities but it is attractive for society and citizens generally. The growth in coastal tourism over the last century makes the sea-side a number one attraction in many European countries. The preservation of environmental quality and cultural life in coastal areas thus is a concern for all the citizens who appreciate the opportunity to return to the coast year after year.

Concluding, the interdependence of coastal regions and the national economy calls for greater coherence in policies for e.g. intermodal transport and policies for an efficient food sector. Furthermore, sustainable and integrative policies for coastal development are of fundamental value for all citizens, not just coastal populations.

Another addition re fisheries in the green paper. I believe that we could add the following under the headline Governance and management. It could then be repeated under the question 2.7g.1 to which Martin Brebner offered no reply. Another paragraph could be added to that question as well, see below:

Add to the section on Governance & Management, last paragraph + question 2.7g.1

The introduction of a maritime policy in the EU also offers an opportunity to bring the ecosystem approach more to the centre of fisheries management.

The ecosystem approach represents a holistic perspective on fisheries where the interest of the fisheries industry are integrated with the ecological concerns of the marine ecosystem as a whole. The ecosystem approach is already a part of the Common Fisheries Policy and the maritime policy provides a context where the approach can become operational within the CFP.

Add to answer on question 2.7g.1 How should the CFP be further developed to achieve its aim of sustainable fisheries:

The Common Fisheries should have a stronger focus on consumers and markets.

Fish-products provide the food-sector with top-quality products and it should be a primary objective for the maritime policy to ensure that the sea can continue providing the market with outstanding sea-food.

It is common knowledge that the market and consumer has a high demand for fish-products and greater effort should be put into the development of products that meet this demand. The consumer is looking for products which do not jeopardise the sustainability of stocks, and he also favours products with superior quality, nutritionally and otherwise. Strong stocks with fish that are rich in nutrients such as omega 3 are not always in highest demands. But with product development they could be processed into end-products which are better able to attract consumers at higher prices.

Support for the development of fisheries should be designed with consumer preferences in focus rather than pure supply-side concerns. With consumer objectives guiding the development of the sector, quality, sustainability and product attractiveness will come more to the fore in the industry.