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Resolution adopted by the NSC Annual Business Meeting on June 16th 2006.

Maritime Policy Challenges in the North Sea Region.

- 1. The CPMR North Sea Commission welcomes the opportunity to comment on the EU Green Paper on a Maritime Policy. The NSC appreciates that there is great potential for future economic growth in the North Sea Region if resources are managed in a concerted, innovative & sustainable way. There is a need for long – term thinking on global changes, both in economic and environmental terms.**
2. The North Sea is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Norwegian Sea, with ecosystems crossing EU borders. A future European Maritime policy must include close co – operation with countries outside the European Union. Therefore, it is positive that other countries, for example Norway, have been contributors to the Green Paper process.
3. Our common maritime resources must be managed in a competitive, innovative and sustainable way. Maritime transportation, fisheries and fish – farming, energy production etc must be carried out in harmony with the marine environment, supported by research and innovative actions. In this way, a common Maritime Policy can successfully support both the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas.
4. Also in the future it will be necessary to intensify initiatives for a cleaner North Sea. For example: clear concern has repeatedly been expressed from the North Sea Commission about discharges of radioactive waste to sea, particularly from the reprocessing plants in Sellafield. The British Government must fulfil the promised moratorium on discharges at the earliest possible date. The THORP plant, which was closed after a heavy leakage last year, must not be put in operation again. The leakages from Sellafield are categorised as serious by the International Measuring System for Nuclear Accidents (INES). The Sellafield issue has been presented to the EU court by Ireland.
5. The North Sea Commission welcomes the commitment made by North Sea Ministers in Gothenburg at MM06 to progress the “clean ship initiative” but it is important that future work on reducing the environmental impact of shipping is seen as a priority. It remains a matter of real concern that ships’ fuel remain unregulated and we call on the EU to start work on drafting a new directive on the quality of marine fuels.
6. More generally, initiatives targeting pollution from shipping and maritime fuels would contribute to achieving a cleaner North Sea.
7. Sustainability also means supporting the livelihoods of the coastal population. In this context, the further development of maritime clusters is important – linking businesses to research and training.
8. A successful Maritime Policy must also recognise the importance of culture, heritage and local identity as essential assets for a sustainable tourism industry and regional development policies in supporting sustainable and competitive coastal communities.



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9. The debate on the Green Paper will provide an opportunity to review a number of sectoral policies. From a regional and democratic perspective, it is important that local communities, and especially people living in coastal areas, are being invited to take an active part in the consultation and policy shaping process.
10. However, policies should not be developed purely along sectoral lines. Sectors such as transport and the environment are interdependent; therefore potential for synergy between sectoral policies should be incorporated into the Maritime Policy. A flexible approach to marine management involving regional actors will be crucial to the success of the Policy.
11. The expected development in north-west Russia is important also for the North Sea Region. The logistic pattern, for example, will undergo fundamental changes. Therefore, the establishment of a Northern Maritime Corridor is also important for areas outside the North Sea.
12. In the interest of maintaining and promoting maritime safety it is proposed that the immediate steps be taken to introduce an Automatic Identification System (AIS) across the North Sea and the waters of the proposed Northern Maritime Corridor. It is further proposed that the model, currently being tested in Norwegian waters, be used as the basis for such a system.
13. It is noted that the European Commission, under the Trans – European Transport Network, has proposed to establish a Motorways of the Sea (MoS) network in several areas, but not yet in the non-EU parts of the North Sea. The North Sea Commission will urge Member States Governments to raise this issue within EU, with a view of extending the MoS corridor all the way up to the Barents Region, as proposed by the High Level Group report on the extension of the TEN-T to neighbouring countries and regions. The expected increase in goods volume means a sharpened focus on better sea transportation and intermodality in the future. Efficient ports and good hinterland connections in a multi-modal chain will be required to support this development.
14. A comprehensive and effective Maritime Policy must also take an active role in improving maritime safety.
15. Up to now, the INTERREG programmes have been a useful instrument to support maritime policy in the North Sea Area, resulting in a number of important projects. In the new Objective 3 North Sea Programme (2007-2013), the maritime dimension should be emphasized. The Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation, initiated by the INTERREG North Sea Region, should be developed into a pan – European instrument.
16. In order for the Maritime Policy to fulfil its aims and objectives it must support the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas. Furthermore, there is a need for co – ordination with a number of EU initiatives, like the Motorways of the Sea, Short Sea Shipping, the Maritime Safety Packages and the Marine Environmental Policy. Finally, common actions between all levels of administration are necessary to secure sustainable development in the North Sea Area.