

## Statement on the hearing of the Commissioner-designate responsible for DG MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

### 1. The new Commissioner should continue to coordinate existing integrated marine and maritime policies in close collaboration with other DGs.

Coastal zone management is important for the successful implementation of Integrated Maritime Policy. This is relevant in particular with regards to fresh and marine water pollution by nutrients, micro-pollutants and (micro-)plastics. In addition, new developments in coastal zones and estuaries can result in morphological changes and prevent the achievement of the environmental objectives of the EU marine policy. The Water Framework Directive and Integrated Coastal Zone Management as well as Marine Strategy Framework Directive play an important role and need to be properly implemented in close collaboration with all Commission services.

### 2. The new Commissioner should ensure the reduction of the pollution levels in European seas as well as contributing to the efforts to improve fresh water quality in order to minimise riverine levels.

Reducing the pollution in rivers benefits both seas and water users in coastal and delta regions. Decreased pollution levels will provide a number of benefits, such as enhanced biodiversity and coastal tourism.

### 3. The new Commissioner should initiate the development of additional guidelines for coastal zone development and sustainable growth that builds upon opportunities and required asset management, underpinning the overall (economic) advantages for maritime spatial planning.

Coastal areas are used for numerous purposes. The Blue Growth Policy and Marine Spatial Planning are promising initiatives to improve coastal development. However, additional guidance is needed to enable sustainable development. Currently it is difficult to modify water-related infrastructure assets in the transitional and coastal zones. The guidance should address inter alia adaptation of the existing flood defences and harbours to climate change; new infrastructural developments for tidal and wave energy and salinity gradient power; the upgrading of waterworks and increasing aquaculture. All these and other changes provide opportunities for smart investment.

