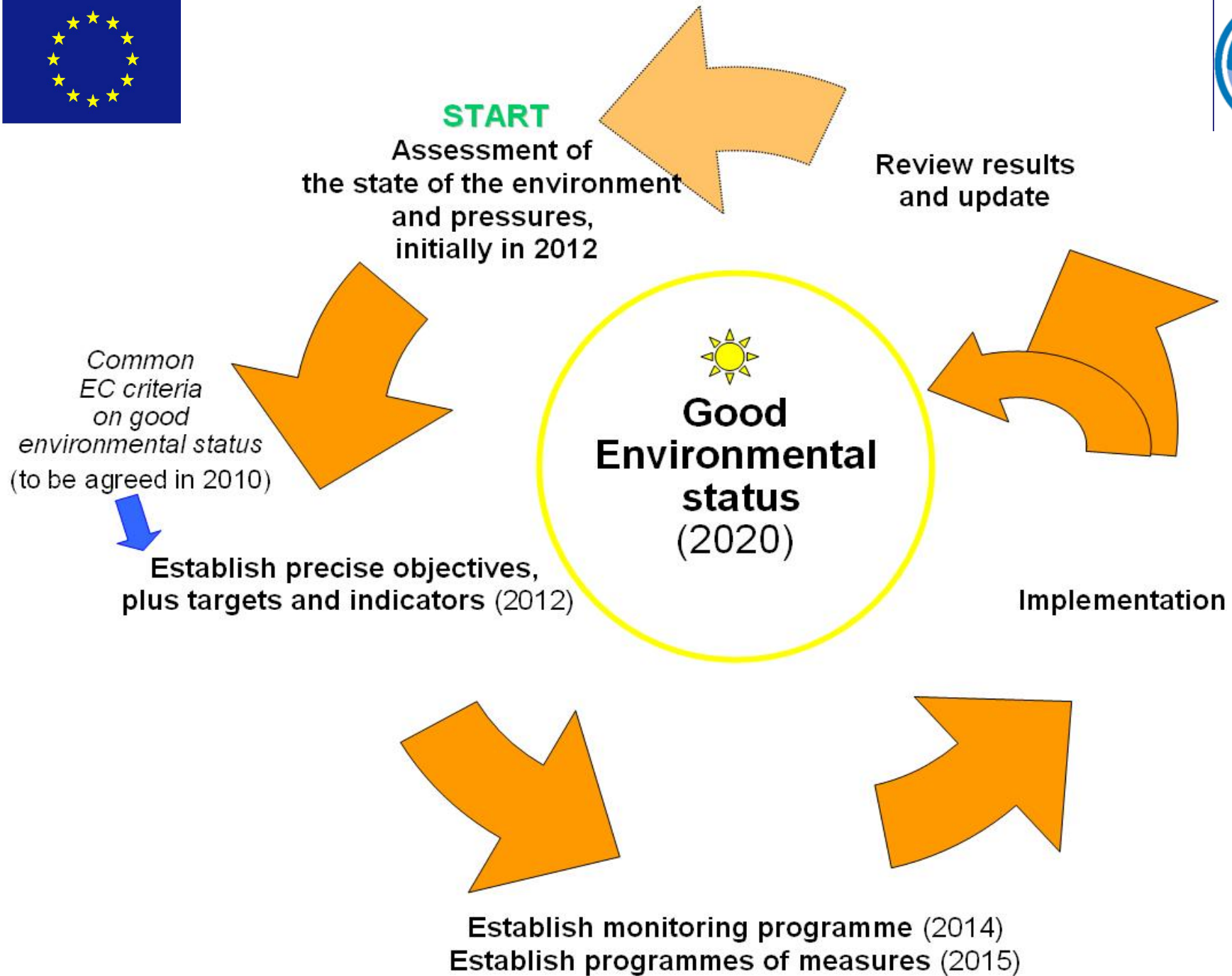




Gianna Casazza
DG Environment, Marine Unit (D2)



Good Environmental Status (GES)

DETERMINATION of GES (Art.9)

GES shall be determined at the level of Marine Region (or subregion),

on the basis of the “qualitative descriptors” in Annex I

taking into account indicative lists of Elements in Annex III:

Tab.1: characteristics: physical and chemical features, habitat types, biological features and hydromorphology

Tab. 2: pressure and impacts of human activities

Annex I

Qualitative descriptors

D 1 Biodiversity

D 2 Non-indigenous species

D 3 Fisheries

D 4 Food webs

D 5 Eutrophication

D 6 Seafloor integrity

D 7 Hydrographic conditions

D 8 Contaminants

D 9 Contaminants in seafood

D 10 Litter

D 11 Energy introduction
(noise)

Annex III

Characteristics

Physical and chemical

- Topography, bathymetry
- Nutrients, O₂

Habitat types

- Predominant seabed and water column habitat types

Biological features

- Phytoplankton, Zooplankton
- benthic flora and fauna
- Fish populations
- Marine mammals
- Birds

Others

- Contaminants in sediment and biota

Pressures / Impacts

- smothering, sealing
- physical damage
- underwater noise
- litter
- nutrients input
- introduction of non-indigenous species
- fishery

Art. 9. 3:

Criteria and methodological standards to be used by MSs, for the determination of GES shall be laid down, on the basis of Annexes I and III, by EC (regulatory procedure with scrutiny) by 15 July 2010, to ensure consistency and to allow for comparison between marine regions/subregions

Preparation of the scientific basis for the development of criteria and methodological standards for GES: EC commissioned JRC and ICES to set up and coordinate Task Groups

+ consulting with MSs, stakeholders and Regional Sea Conventions
(WG GES)

COMMISSION DECISION
of 1 September 2010
on criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status of marine waters
(notified under document C(2010) 5956)
(Text with EEA relevance)
 (2010/477/EU)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to the Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) ⁽¹⁾, and in particular, Article 9(3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The criteria for the achievement of good environmental status are the starting point for the development of coherent approaches in the preparatory stages of marine strategies, including the determination of characteristics of good environmental status and the establishment of a comprehensive set of environmental targets, to be developed in a coherent and coordinated manner in the framework of the requirement of regional cooperation.
- (2) The Commission has consulted all interested parties, including regional sea conventions, in particular on the scientific and technical assessment prepared by the Task Groups set up by the Joint Research Centre and the International Council on the Exploration of the Seas to support the development of criteria and methodological standards.
- (3) One major finding of such scientific and technical work is that there is a substantial need to develop additional scientific understanding for assessing good environmental status in a coherent and holistic manner to support the ecosystem-based approach to management. An improved scientific knowledge needs to be developed, in particular through the Communication 'A European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research. A coherent European Research Area framework in support of a sustainable use of oceans and seas' ⁽²⁾, in the framework of the Communication 'Europe 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' ⁽³⁾ and in coherence

with other Union legislation and policies. It is also appropriate to integrate later on in the process the forthcoming experience to be developed at national and regional level in the implementation of the preparatory stages of the marine strategies listed in Article 5(2)(a) of Directive 2008/56/EC.

- (4) It is therefore appropriate that the Commission revises this Decision in the framework of Article 25(3) of Directive 2008/56/EC. In addition to revising criteria, the further development of methodological standards is required, in close coordination with the establishment of monitoring programmes. This revision should be carried out as soon as possible after the completion of the assessment required in Article 12 of Directive 2008/56/EC, in time to support a successful update of marine strategies that are due by 2018 pursuant to Article 17 of that Directive, as a further contribution to adaptive management. This is coherent with the fact that the determination of good environmental status may have to be adapted over time, taking into account the dynamic nature of marine ecosystems, their natural variability, and the fact that the pressures and impacts on them may vary with the evolution of different patterns of human activity and the impact of climate change.
- (5) The criteria for good environmental status build on existing obligations and developments in the context of applicable Union legislation, including Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy ⁽⁴⁾, which applies to coastal waters, as well as Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ⁽⁵⁾, Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds ⁽⁶⁾, and a number of instruments developed in the framework of the common fisheries policy, taking also into account, where appropriate, the information and knowledge gathered and approaches developed in the framework of regional conventions. As this Decision contributes to the further development of the concept of good environmental status of marine waters, it supports in relation to marine ecosystems the process to revise the biodiversity strategy of the European Union beyond 2010 and the Biodiversity Action Plan.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19.

⁽²⁾ COM(2008) 534 final.

⁽³⁾ COM(2010) 2020 final.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, p. 7.

(3) One major finding of such scientific and technical work is that there is a substantial need to develop additional scientific understanding for assessing good environmental status in a coherent and holistic manner to support the ecosystem-based approach to management. An improved scientific knowledge needs to be developed, in particular through the Communication 'A European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research.



Annex I

Descriptors for GES determination



Biodiversity

Non-indigenous species

Fish populations

Food webs

Seafloor integrity

Eutrophication

Hydrographic conditions

Contaminants

Contaminants in seafood

Litter

Energy introduction (noise)



COM Decision on GES

Criteria for biodiversity descriptors

BIODIVERSITY

Species distribution

- Population size
- Population condition

- Habitat distribution
- Habitat extent
- Habitat condition

- Ecosystem structure

NON-INDIGENOUS SPECIES

- Abundance of non-indigenous species
- Impact of invasive species

FISH POPULATIONS

- Level of pressure of fishing
- Reproductive capacity of the stock
- Population age and size distribution

FOOD WEBS

- Productivity of key species / groups
- Proportion of selected species at the top of food webs
- Abundance/distribution of key groups/species

SEAFLOOR INTEGRITY

- Physical damage and substrate characteristics
- Condition of benthic community



COM Decision on GES

Criteria for descriptors more related to water quality

EUTROPHICATION

- Nutrients levels
- Direct and indirect effects of nutrients enrichment

HYDROGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS

- Spatial characterization of alterations
- Impacts of hydrographical changes

CONTAMINANTS

- Concentrations
- Effects

CONTAMINANTS in seafood (human consumption)

- Level, number and frequency of contaminants



COM Decision on GES

Criteria for descriptors requiring further development



LITTER

- Characteristics: amounts trends (ashore, water column, seafloor) and composition of microparticles
- Impacts on marine life

ENERGY INTRODUCTION (noise)

- Distribution (temporal/spatial) of loud, low and mid frequency impulsive sound
- Continuous low frequency sound

Themes requiring further development in relation to GES

Common issues across all descriptors

- how to integrate the different criteria within each descriptors
- development of methodological standards where not yet available
- research needs for some indicators

How to aggregate the findings on all descriptors to obtain an overall assessment of the status

Gaps and Research needs for specific descriptors

Different levels of scientific background, knowledge and development between descriptors and also within the different marine Regions

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

achieving good environmental status
for all European marine waters

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine/index_en.htm



Thank you
for your attention !