

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

DEVE-IV-010

**68th plenary session
13 and 14 February 2007**

**OPINION
of the
Committee of the Regions**

**TOWARDS A FUTURE MARITIME POLICY
FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION**

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

- considers that the overall objective of the future EU maritime policy is to recognise and preserve the great potential of Europe's seas and to design an active maritime policy in such a way that future generations can also share in the environmental, economic, biological and cultural wealth of the sea;
- requests the Commission to present a European Maritime Action Plan which is to include, among others, the following actions:
 - to set up a catalogue of existing national, regional and local best practice examples, particularly with regards to regional economic clusters, research networking, public-private sector cooperation, spatial planning and good governance and to promote existing best practise examples and their transfer to other regions or entities;
 - to create a European maritime platform in which a regular, efficient and resource-saving exchange of European, national, regional and local best practice examples can be supported and in which the Commission and the Committee of the Regions are included;
 - to support the use of the renewable sources of energy identified in the Green Paper, inter alia offshore wind energy and wave energy and including further research and innovation in this sector;
 - to work out in detail to what extent individual economy sections are currently supporting European competitiveness and innovation, especially in view of the goals and priorities established in the Lisbon Agenda;
 - to further clarify how the Thematic Strategy for the Marine Environment and the Marine Strategy directive will be integrated in the future overall maritime policy;
 - to examine the option of revising the EU financial system towards one single simplified system for all or most of the maritime issues within a European Coastal and Island fund.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS,

Having regard to the Communication from the Commission of 7 June 2006 - Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European Vision for the Oceans and Seas - COM(2006) 275 final;

Having regard to the decision of the European Commission of 7 June 2006 to consult it on this matter under the first paragraph of Article 265 of the Treaty establishing the European Community;

Having regard to its Bureau's decision of 25 April 2006 to instruct the Commission for Sustainable Development to draw up an opinion on the subject;

Having regard to Articles I-13 and I-14 of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe¹, which refers to aspects of maritime policy;

Having regard to the Communication from the Commission of 26 January 2005 on the Strategic objectives 2005-2009², which refers to the particular need for "an all-embracing maritime policy aimed at developing a thriving maritime economy and the full potential of sea-based activity in an environmentally sustainable manner";

Having regard to its own-initiative opinion of 12 October 2005 on the "EU maritime policy - a question of sustainable development for local and regional authorities"³;

Having regard to its opinion of 26 April 2006 on the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community Action in the field of Marine Environmental Policy (Marine Strategy Directive) COM(2005) 505 final - 2005/0211 (COD) and on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment COM(2005) 504 final⁴;

Having regard to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2002 concerning the implementation of integrated coastal zone management in Europe⁵;

1 [OJ C 310 of 16.12.2004, p. 1.](#)

2 COM(2005) 12 final.

3 CdR 84/2005.

4 CdR 46/2006.

5 [OJ L 148 of 6.6.2002, p. 24.](#)

Having regard to the agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982;

Having regard to its draft opinion (CdR 258/2006 rev. 1), adopted on 27 November 2006 by its Commission for Sustainable Development (rapporteur: Mr Uwe Döring, Minister for Justice, Employment and European Affairs of Schleswig-Holstein (DE/PES));

Whereas:

1. oceans and the seas constitute an important basis for life on earth, maintaining a high level of biodiversity, helping to regulate the climate, providing important resources such as food (fish, seaweed, seafood etc.), energy and minerals as well as serving as a main transportation carrier, especially for the intercontinental trade;
2. Europe is a maritime continent and needs an integrated maritime policy in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea stating, inter alia, that "issues relating to the law of the sea" are to be settled "in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation", that "the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole", that "international communication" should be facilitated, and that an "equitable and efficient utilisation of their resources" and "the conservation of their living resources, and the ... protection and preservation of the marine environment" should be promoted;
3. a good European maritime policy has to take into account the complex and often divergent realities existing within the different geographical areas of Europe, with special emphasis being given to the diversity in nature and the availability of resources, as well as the extent of the utilisation, sustainability and interaction thereof;
4. the seas and oceans represent a value for humanity in themselves and therefore their sustainable exploitation and environmental protection should be objectives towards which the European Union must work actively;
5. regional and local authorities in particular in coastal areas have a broad range of experiences resulting in a strong regional and local interest in the development of a future maritime policy;

unanimously adopted the following opinion at its 68th plenary session, held on 13 and 14 February 2007 (meeting of 13 February 2007):

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1. Views of the Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions

General considerations

- 1.1 **welcomes** the Green Paper which attempts to provide a holistic outline of the main elements for establishing a common maritime policy;
- 1.2 **welcomes** the holistic approach, integrating major sectoral policies such as transport, industry, ports, fisheries, energy, environment and tourism in a common European Maritime Policy;
- 1.3 **acknowledges** the Commission's view that this holistic approach has to be mirrored in an integrated governance approach on the European, national, regional and local level;
- 1.4 **emphasises** that the various aspects of the European maritime policy must address the need for international coordination in this matter, in order to ensure the effectiveness of sustainable exploitation and environmental protection of the seas and oceans;
- 1.5 **supports** the Green Paper's determination that the future European maritime policy takes into account the criteria established through the Lisbon Agenda and the Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment;
- 1.6 **welcomes** the broad and long lasting Commission consultation process involving all relevant stakeholders and citizens, whose views should be taken into account in the formulation of the future European maritime policy;
- 1.7 **acknowledges** that importance is given to the collection and transparent dissemination of information as a precondition for the effective bringing together of diverse sectoral policies and interests;
- 1.8 **continues to offer** to play a significant partnering role in the ongoing consultation process launched by the Green Paper and **underlines** the utility of a long-term publicity campaign involving local and regional authorities thereby ensuring that the European citizens who will be most directly affected by such a new policy not only understand what is being proposed but are also encouraged to put forward their views, ideas and concerns;
- 1.9 **appreciates** the importance acknowledged by the Commission to the role of the regional dimension in the management of maritime activities and **underlines** the relevance of regional and local authorities in shaping and implementing the future European maritime policy;

- 1.10 **believes there is a need** to give due attention to specific local, regional and eco-regional factors within the European larger and smaller sea basins such as the Baltic, the Black Sea, the English Channel, the Mediterranean, the North Sea, and the Northern Atlantic as well as the seas which surround the EU's outermost regions: the Atlantic Ocean and its African coast, the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean, which are the seas which give the EU its global presence;
- 1.11 **welcomes with favour** the view of the Commission on the local and regional governments' role in the implementation of the principles and objectives established in the new maritime policy and **reaffirms** its willingness to be associated in the elaboration of the future policy priorities and be regularly informed on the developments of such a policy;

Time for a second step towards the European maritime policy

- 1.12 **underlines** that this draft opinion addresses two basic questions: “How can a new European maritime policy be implemented?” and “Is there an added value of a future integrated approach versus the present sectoral maritime policy?” that have to be answered with priority;

Implementing the new European maritime policy

- 1.13 **continues to consider** that the overall objective of the future EU maritime policy is to recognise and preserve the great potential of Europe's seas and to design an active maritime policy in such a way that future generations can also share in the environmental, economic, biological and cultural wealth of the sea;
- 1.14 **sees** the need for collecting and proper analysing sufficient data and ensuring the access to information thereby enabling policy makers and stakeholders to make sound decisions based on a steadily improving scientific understanding, drawing on excellence in marine research, technology and innovation;
- 1.15 **supports** the participation of the relevant players from the different sectoral policy areas concerned, and **welcomes** the Commission's efforts towards making the general public more aware of the importance of the maritime sector in general and of this policy in particular;
- 1.16 **considers** that the implementation of an integrated European maritime policy should not hinder the parallel progress of the individual sectoral maritime policies, which should be developed in an environmentally sustainable way;
- 1.17 **stresses** that a European maritime policy must be defined and implemented on the basis of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
- 1.18 **supports** the idea of European territorial pacts and **trusts** that these pacts will make it possible to deliver the EU's key political goals and priorities flexibly, effectively and on a

voluntary basis and to secure the effective management of tripartite contracts and agreements as initially proposed by the European Commission so as to arrive at solutions that reflect grassroots concern;

- 1.19 **favours** the development of concrete measures for the attainment of the major objectives described in the green paper such as the wellbeing of the people and communities, the sustainable use of the maritime resources, the development of good maritime governance and the increased awareness by Europeans of the European maritime heritage, while preserving the local and regional cultural diversity;
- 1.20 **considers** that a *European Maritime Action Plan* with a set of concrete bench marks including a three step approach should be set up: for each bench mark to define an objective, a detailed description and a proposal on implementation whereas the latter should be ideally taken by 2008, and the proposals for the financial measures by 2007.

2. **The Committee of the Regions' recommendations**

The Committee of the Regions

requests the Commission to present a European Maritime Action Plan which is to include the following actions:

2.1 **Regional expertise for the maritime policy**

- 2.1.1 to set up a catalogue of existing national, regional and local best practice examples, particularly with regards to regional economic clusters, research networking, public-private sector cooperation, spatial planning and good governance and to promote existing best practise examples and their transfer to other regions or entities;
- 2.1.2 to encourage and support regions in the development of such best practice examples and therewith to develop European centres of maritime excellence;
- 2.1.3 to strengthen the role of the coastal regions and islands as major defining, implementing and evaluating entities;
- 2.1.4 to create a European maritime platform in which a regular, efficient and resource-saving exchange of European, national, regional and local best practice examples can be supported and in which the Commission and the Committee of the Regions are included;
- 2.1.5 to evaluate and coordinate specific strategy plans, along the lines of those established within the Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment advocating the setting up of wider marine regions, the specific strategy plans for the European oceans, the North East Atlantic ocean and the Arctic Ocean and the semi-enclosed larger and

smaller sea basins such as the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the North Sea, the Black Sea and the English Channel, that are suggested by the Commission to be prepared by the Member States. HELCOM has already begun the work with an action plan for the Baltic Sea, an ambitious and extensive project that can be seen as a pilot-project or study for the Marine strategy, which is why such a plan should be carried out in cooperation with them;

- 2.1.6 to support thematic regional networks aimed at developing common projects in the field of transport, strengthening and re-qualification of infrastructures, environmental protection, coordination of the fisheries activities, and commercial cooperation and to take the already existing fisheries councils into account;

2.2 **Sound data basis and maritime research**

- 2.2.1 to especially improve the regional data basis at the regional and local level on the basis of GIS-related systems and to include spatially integrated land and sea based data from satellites, planes and buoys such as local sea levels, movement of ships or climate data resulting in Ocean Monitoring systems;
- 2.2.2 to raise data on the economic and environmental aspects of individual marine resources and the social impact thereof; to introduce a standardised European marine register system;
- 2.2.3 to monitor fishery stocks in Community waters and migratory species, and to apply a data collection model to the exploitation of fishery stocks by encouraging the construction of a telematics network for fish markets linked to databases;
- 2.2.4 to follow the proposal of setting up a European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODN) underlining the view that this Network should be used to integrate existing and new maritime data, thereby enabling a long-term monitoring and a high quality risk assessment process, particularly with respect to such issues as safety in maritime transport, natural resource exploration and exploitation and protection of the marine environment and its biodiversity;
- 2.2.5 to take the integrative approach within future research schemes much more in consideration;
- 2.2.6 to support closer linkages among the existing European research institutes towards a network of "European Oceans Research Institutes" in order to further encourage joint European maritime research. This would provide for top quality maritime research and make Europe a world leader in this field;
- 2.2.7 to pool research vessels and large-scale equipment within a European Maritime research network for uniformity of measuring systems, cost effectiveness and quality improvement and to support this approach by a joint procurement that could be promoted through the European Investment Bank;

- 2.2.8 to support the use of the renewable sources of energy identified in the Green Paper, inter alia offshore wind energy and wave energy, provided that they are compatible with other socio-economic and environmental activities and interests, and including further research and innovation in this sector;
- 2.2.9 to explore CO₂ sequestration in exhausted marine oil and gas fields;
- 2.2.10 to strengthen efforts in respect of the development of scientific and technological breakthroughs in the field of marine research, such as blue biotechnology, navigational guiding systems and tourist activities, thereby addressing present and potential future threats particularly with regards to climate change, dwindling fish stocks, unsustainable tourism and the changing demographic patterns within coastal populations, and consequently to formulate and promote easily accessible incentives promoting research and development in such spheres of activity;
- 2.2.11 to formulate incentives to promote research and development in the field of sustainable fish farming, laying down production protocols to which producers must adhere, in the conviction that fish constitutes a key basic foodstuff and in view of the fact that fish farming is a highly resource-intensive process;
- 2.2.12 to intensify the analysis of potential threats to the European marine environment particularly through climate change and the ensuing rise in sea levels as well as in monitoring the tectonic activity beneath sea level, and to identify adequate responses thereto;
- 2.2.13 to encourage the implementation and development of production protocols for organic aquaculture;
- 2.2.14 to encourage and promote research to identify parameters to help define the level of environmental and social sustainability of all human activities (fisheries, aquaculture, sport, tourism and leisure, transport, energy etc.) involving use of maritime resources;
- 2.3 **European excellence in maritime economy to be further developed**
 - 2.3.1 to put forward a strategy on how the European Union will hold and extend market shares within individual maritime economy sections in the world wide competition taking sustainability, cost and technology factors into account;
 - 2.3.2 to work out in detail to what extent individual economy sections (e.g. energy, transport, tourism, fisheries and blue biotechnology and shipbuilding) are currently supporting European competitiveness and innovation, especially in view of the goals and priorities established in the Lisbon Agenda;

- 2.3.3 to present scientific data on whether and to what extent these individual economy sectors will contribute
- a. to increase the European competitiveness in the future,
 - b. to create more jobs in the future European labour market,
 - c. to use resources and to enhance efficiency of this use,
 - d. to the further integration of these economic sectors;
- 2.3.4 to encourage the further development of the interface between research and industry, in particular maritime clusters. The establishment of a European maritime cluster conference could serve as an ideal forum in which marine scientists and industry can meet and interact on a regular basis;
- 2.3.5 to strengthen the role of transport in the framework of the future maritime policy, against the background that transport is one of the most important and cross-cutting maritime activities;
- 2.3.6 to support the notion of the identification of motorways of the sea, noting that this ambitious project will increase the volume of maritime traffic in European seas and oceans by their completion in 2010. For this reason, asks Commission to spur Member States to implement a more attentive environmental monitoring of the state of pollution on the main maritime routes and thinks that the new GMES technology could be successfully employed for this purpose;
- 2.3.7 to reinvigorate the efforts for completing the sea terminals, starting from those with clear inter-modal characteristics against the background that the realisation of some TEN-T projects affecting the maritime dimension are lagging behind;
- 2.3.8 to improve port infrastructure and transport links with the islands, specifying and implementing the necessary measures so as to include the outermost regions, and to ensure their access to continental markets, whilst ensuring that the frequency and pricing of maritime goods and passenger transport services, both with the continent and between islands within the same archipelago, are acceptable, and to step up the development of secondary networks in such a way that islands and, in particular, the outermost regions are fully connected to the "motorways of the sea" without unnecessary delays;
- 2.3.9 to continue to work together with Member States and marine regions to strengthen, improve and develop shipping routes and to ensure that they are given proper consideration as part of the trans-European networks;
- 2.3.10 to forward a study on the advantages and disadvantages for the setting up of a common European flag;
- 2.3.11 to strengthen the role of the strategic ports as a priority for the development of the future maritime policy and in parallel to commission a study on the inter-connections between major

and secondary ports and on the possible delocalisation and de-concentration of certain port activities towards smaller centres;

- 2.3.12 to set up a network of European maritime vocational schools for improving training and education of seafarers and formalising career paths as a tool for ensuring that Europe is equipped with a professional and qualified workforce and to forward a proposal for education and life long learning in all maritime sectors not only on sea;
- 2.3.13 to ensure the existence and enforcement of Europe wide minimum standards for employment and working conditions in maritime transport and all other maritime sectors and to prevent any abusive practices;
- 2.3.14 to develop a new framework for the establishment of a coordinated approach towards a sustainable maritime tourism in the EU, especially reflecting the needs of the regions, noting that maritime tourism is one of the strongest contributors to maritime economies with excellent growth potentials but which is also a contributor to the increase in coastal pollution, the unsustainable use of resources and the deterioration of the natural coastal environment;
- 2.3.15 to facilitate the further development of off shore wind farms in the EU. i.e. to foster projects showing up solutions dealing with the difficulties of multiple responsibilities on the national, regional and local level especially for the cable lines or with combined uses e.g. wind turbines and mussel farms;
- 2.3.16 to urgently forward a proposal on the development of new technological breakthroughs in the field of other renewable ocean energy sources, such as tidal flows or oceans streaming in which spheres of activity the EU could develop a strategic leadership at the global level;
- 2.3.17 to regulate the extraction activities of traditional maritime energy resources such as oil and gas on the basis of well defined environmental security standards and to implement effective monitoring of such activities;
- 2.3.18 to develop scenarios for coastal protection measures that may be necessary, based on the various forecasts for the rise in sea levels and changing weather conditions; existing scenarios like those set up from the Wadden Sea Forum should be considered;
- 2.3.19 to foster international agreements to ensure sustainable exploitation of shared fishery stocks (migratory species);
- 2.3.20 to implement research projects to develop anchoring systems which, in areas of particular value, can prevent the destruction of *Posidonia oceanica* plantlife;

2.3.21 to establish a coastal public structure integrating tasks such as environment inspectorates, frontier control, sea rescue services, fisheries inspectorates, health assistance, civil protection, for people working at sea;

2.4 **Marine environment to be protected for future generations**

2.4.1 to show how the existing environment can be successfully protected and restored as well as to define and to implement protection criteria at a common European level and to ensure the quality of coastal and off shore ecosystems and habitats;

2.4.2 to further clarify how the Thematic Strategy for the Marine Environment and the Marine Strategy directive will be integrated in the future overall maritime policy, keeping in view the revised time frames suggested by the Committee of the Regions. In order to be as efficient as possible, these time frames should be coordinated with other major EU programs like the structural and the agricultural funds;

2.4.3 to coordinate and assist the marine regions in identifying ways for the successful protection of the existing environment and in particularly in establishing trans-regional and/or trans-national marine protection zones and developing concrete proposals for the significant reduction of radioactive discharges, of pollution caused by ships (in particular the gases emitted, discharges and ballast water, as the latter can contribute to the introduction of alien species) and of the damage caused by human activity to marine habitats of special interest referred to in the Habitats Directive, and to support efforts ensuring the quality of coastal and off shore ecosystems and habitats, also keeping in view the significant impact which economic activity can have on the state of the marine environment, particularly through the discharge of nutrients into the sea;

2.4.4 to work out in detail where and how environmental friendly technology can replace standard technologies and to provide financial incentives and assistance programmes encouraging and facilitating such a shift;

2.4.5 to intensify the pressure on, and to seek legal sanction against, those who are in breach of legal requirements and standards particularly with respect to the illegal dumping of waste at sea, illegal fishing, or the illegal transportation of persons or goods;

2.4.6 to better secure maritime routes and investigate the possibility to introduce mandatory pilotage for oil tankers and other ships with dangerous cargo and to investigate the possibility to introduce general mandatory pilotage in narrow shipping passages;

2.4.7 to support initiatives aimed at upgrading or improving port facilities for reception of oily waters and to favour technological innovations in shipping and the handling of oil, also in order to prevent the introduction of invasive exotic species;

- 2.4.8 to support and encourage international agreements to conserve commercially viable fish stocks of highly migratory species, in the awareness that applying conservation measures to Community fleets alone has no appreciable effect for the purposes of protection;
- 2.4.9 to facilitate the establishment of a network of protected European maritime zones and of a monitoring network, particularly between the Member States of the European Union and neighbouring countries, in order to promote exchanges of experience and best practices in the management field;
- 2.4.10 to support initiatives for the establishment of protocols for the management and handling of ballast water from ships, as this can be a source of the introduction of alien species, which can contribute to a loss of marine biodiversity;

2.5 **Funding and legal instruments**

- 2.5.1 to prepare a catalogue of existing individual funding instruments for maritime policies at European level, i.e. the structural funds, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development Regulation, the European Fisheries Fund, the lifelong learning fund or the 7th Community Framework Programme for Research & Development and to study their effectiveness with a view of determining whether such instruments need to be simplified or better advertised;
- 2.5.2 to present a compendium of those projects in the maritime sector already funded by the Commission;
- 2.5.3 to take the integrative approach within future funding schemes (from 2014 onwards) much more in consideration;
- 2.5.4 to examine the option of revising the EU financial system towards one single simplified system for all or most of the maritime issues within a European Coastal and Island fund;
- 2.5.5 to provide financial support for areas of particular biological, environmental and architectural value experiencing severe problems, whose economies depend largely on maritime activities;
- 2.5.6 to review the existing EU legal framework from a more maritime perspective and to address bottlenecks and missing links in the integration potential of policies, and the better regulation of the existing legal framework;
- 2.5.7 to devise and apply specific financial instruments in areas of high environmental and cultural value, typified by small-scale inshore fishing, sometimes combined with family-type farming, where existing financial instruments cannot be applied because their economic and size-related requirements are not met by such small-scale undertakings;

- 2.5.8 to introduce financial instruments for coastal regions and islands to help offset the costs incurred in actions carried out by such regions in upholding the general interest of the European Union, particularly in tackling drugs and people trafficking, illegal immigration and marine pollution and supervising Exclusive Economic Zones;
- 2.5.9 to develop further international cooperation and implementation of international law on the basis of UNCLOS;
- 2.6 **Integration of the maritime space including islands, the hinterland, peripheral and outermost regions**
- 2.6.1 to explore how spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management can be successfully applied, highlighting the special case of islands, to support the integration of sectoral policies in areas that might be required for different uses;
- 2.6.2 to develop a strong geography-related tool for the maritime sector of an instrument similar to the land-based INSPIRE spatial information system;
- 2.6.3 to urgently address the need for the setting up of a European coastguard service, identifying the particular needs with the different marine regions;
- 2.6.4 to identify ways for the better use of EU financial instruments towards (i) in the short term assisting those Member States or Regions that are directly affected by the ever-growing wave of illegal immigration, and (ii) in the longer term to assist third countries to attain a level of political and economic development thereby stemming the demand for their nationals to seek illegal entry into EU territory. In this context, **supports** the European Parliament's Budgets Committee proposal for the setting up of an Agency specifically responsible for tackling the issue of illegal migration and asylum seeking by third country nationals, which is to be situated in Malta;
- 2.6.5 to offer greater levels of support to regional and local authorities in addition to the national authorities in managing new migrants once they are on their territory;
- 2.6.6 to take into consideration the inland dimension and the interactions between inland areas, inland waterways and rivers, coastal areas and the sea, thereby making the various existing linkages transparent;
- 2.6.7 to ensure further development and implementation of the highest standards of ship safety in European waters to avoid shipping accidents on the high seas, in coastal areas and in ports;

- 2.6.8 to include specific programmes and measures for outermost regions and islands, given their particular conditions and difficulties, particularly in such spheres of activity as
- a. the preservation of the fishing industry, through the sustainable management and exploitation of its reserves, by adopting measures aimed at renovating and modernising its fishing fleets and by promoting actions in support of small-scale and coastal fishing;
 - b. the strengthening of the tourism economy through alternative forms of high-quality and sustainable "maritime tourism" to help overcome the seasonable nature of their economies; these would include cultural tourism, nautical tourism, social tourism or rural tourism, amongst others;
 - c. and the management and control of the environmental pressures associated therewith, by implementing environmental management plans in order to preserve islands' coastlines and the quality of their waters and to improve the management of their waste;
 - d. and the better establishment of communication and transportation links with the mainland;
- 2.6.9 to develop short- to medium-term strategies to curb the increasing abuse of Europe's oceans and seas, not least with respect to the illegal trafficking of human beings into Europe;
- 2.6.10 to analyse the operational disadvantages arising from the varying degrees of remoteness of maritime regions, drawing up maritime transport policies based on the concept of cohesion, in order to improve the integration of these regions into Europe;
- 2.6.11 to promote practical trials of integrated management of coastal areas through which organisational structures and procedures can be set up and promoted involving mechanisms for coordination between governments, as well as to promote social participation in the adoption of decisions affecting coastal areas;
- 2.7 Public awareness and maritime heritage**
- 2.7.1 to include a proposal to systematically raise public awareness of the maritime issue within an ongoing process including aspects of the common maritime tradition, culture and identity in Europe;
- 2.7.2 to forward a proposal on how the maritime dimension could be integrated within the upcoming European year of the intercultural dialogue 2008;

2.7.3 for the purpose of improving public awareness, to develop a systematic strategy for a modern maritime policy in order to have it firmly embedded at grassroots level and to ensure its actual implementation.

Brussels, 13 February 2007.

The President
of the
Committee of the Regions

The Secretary-General
of the
Committee of the Regions

Michel Delebarre

Gerhard Stahl
