



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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DECLARATION

**Joint Tripartite Declaration
Establishing a "European Maritime Day"**

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Recalling that Europe is a Maritime Continent with almost 70,000 km of coastline,

Recalling that 22 of the European Union's 27 Member States are coastal or island States,

Recalling that the maritime regions of the European Union account for some 40% of its GDP and of its population,

Recalling that over two thirds of the Union's boundaries are maritime and that the maritime spaces under the jurisdiction of its Member States are larger than their terrestrial territory,

Recalling the economic importance of, and synergies between sectors as diverse as shipbuilding and shipping, ports and fisheries, offshore energy, tourism, environment and maritime heritage,

Recalling that Europe must enhance its capacity to deal with the major challenges it faces such as globalisation, climate change, energy sustainability and environmental pressures on the coasts and seas,

Recalling the importance of coastal regions, islands and the outermost regions and the relevance of regional and local authorities in shaping and implementing the future European maritime policy,

Recalling the importance of a healthy marine environment both for the sustainability of economic activities on the seas and for the quality of life in coastal regions,

Mindful of the common heritage and the common responsibility of Europeans for the oceans and seas,

Recalling the vastness of the world's oceans and the role which the EU can play in preserving them as a resource for the future of mankind,

Underlining the necessity to increase awareness and visibility of the importance of the oceans, of a vibrant maritime economy and of the rich European maritime heritage the benefits of which should be celebrated each year,

The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union

Approve the establishment of a "European Maritime Day" to be celebrated May 20th each year, around which awareness raising and networking activities will be organised.