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**NOTE**

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Subject: List of commitments presented by the EU on the occasion of the  
"Our Ocean Conference" (Malta, 5-6 October 2017)

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Delegations will find herewith the above-mentioned list of commitments presented by the EU on the occasion of the "Our Ocean Conference" (Malta, 5-6 October 2017), as adopted by the Council (General Affairs) on 25 September 2017.

**List of commitments presented by the European Union**  
**at the 'Our Ocean' Conference**  
**(Malta, 5-6 October 2017)**

*Background:*

The European Union hosts the fourth high-level Our Ocean Conference in Malta on 5 and 6 October 2017. In the spirit of the previous editions in 2014, 2015 and 2016 and of the 'Oceans Meeting' 2017 held in Lisbon on 7-8 September 2017, on oceans and human health, the aim of the conference is to identify solutions and commit to actions in order to address some of the most important challenges facing the oceans: marine protection, marine pollution, climate change impact and sustainable fisheries. Two new themes have also been added this year by the EU: the blue economy and maritime security.

## *Commitments:*

### Marine protection

1. The European Union announced that it will invest EUR 1.5 million to analyse ecosystems and economic activity on the mid-Atlantic Ridge and the Rio Grande Rise, in order to support the definition of a coherent set of Areas of Particular Environmental Interest.
2. The EU announced that it will commit EUR 20 million to support the management of marine protected areas in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries through BIOPAMA II (Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme).
3. The EU announced its intention to support the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean in establishing a Fishing Restricted Area (FRA) of at least 2 700 km<sup>2</sup> to protect demersal stocks in the habitat recognised as essential nursery and spawning ground for a number of marine species outside territorial waters of Italy and Croatia of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit area of the Adriatic Sea. The creation of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA will be for decision at the annual session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) on 16-19 October 2017.
4. The EU and Germany announced that they will support the establishment of a cross-sectoral and cross-boundary multi-stakeholder platform for regional ocean governance by 2020. This platform will be developed under the Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance (PROG), initiated in 2015 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales – IDDRI) and the Think Tank for Sustainability (TMG). The development of the platform has been announced by Germany as a voluntary commitment on the occasion of the UN Ocean Conference for their implementation of SDG14 (5-9 June 2017). The PROG forum will provide new knowledge on integrated ocean governance at three different levels: (1) within regions; (2) between regions; and (3) between the regional level and the global level. Building on a collaborative process with international partners in 2018, Germany and the EU will organise the first meeting in 2019.

## Marine pollution

5. As part of its upcoming plastics strategy, the European Union announced draft measures to reduce the leakage of plastics into the environment by the end of 2017.
6. The European Union announced draft measures in 2017 to reduce the discharges of ship-generated waste and cargo residues into the sea.
7. The European Union announced that it will contribute EUR 2 million in 2017 to support the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive by the Member States. The EU law aims to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) of the waters of EU Member States by 2020 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend.
8. The European Union announced that it will invest nearly EUR 2.3 million in order to support regional and inter-regional cooperation in working towards Good Environmental Status of the waters of EU Member States.
9. The European Union announced the launch of WISE-Marine, a gateway to information on European water issues for the general public and stakeholders to promote better ocean governance and ecosystem-based management. The platform will be expanded and integrated further in the years to come.
10. The European Union announced that it will commit EUR 2.85 million to marine pollution prevention and preparedness projects and EUR 2.5 million to marine pollution exercises, to support and complement the cross-border cooperation efforts between EU countries and with selected countries in the EU's vicinity.

## Sustainable fisheries

11. The EU has committed EUR 15 million under the PESCAO programme for the improvement of regional fisheries governance in Western Africa with the aim of developing a regional fishing policy, putting in place a regional coordination against illegal unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing and improving fish stock management at regional level.

12. As a follow-up to the Medfish4Ever Declaration, a 10-year pledge to save the Mediterranean's fish stocks and protect the region's ecological and economic wealth that was signed on 30 March 2017, the EU announced that it will commit EUR 5.7 million in 2017 to support the work of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in improving the sustainability of fishing resources in the Mediterranean.
13. The European Union is committed to reaching a multilateral agreement on fisheries subsidies at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference that is to take place in Buenos Aires in December 2017. With this objective, the EU put forward a revised proposal in July 2017 at the World Trade Organisation to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, to eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and to refrain from introducing new subsidies of this kind. The proposal, aimed at implementing SDG 14.6, also contains provisions on enhanced transparency and guidelines on special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries. Furthermore, the EU will do its utmost to further this agreement and to support it through the stages of negotiation and implementation.
14. The European Union announced that new rules are expected to enter into force by the end of 2017 to better and more sustainably manage the external fishing fleet. The new rules will allow the European Union to better monitor and control its fleet and efficiently address the problems of reflagging and chartering, thus enhancing efforts to combat IUU fishing.
15. The fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing is a priority for the European Union. This is why the EU announced that it will contribute a minimum of EUR 1 million in 2017 to the FAO global programme to support the implementation of the landmark Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. The programme provides policy, legal and technical assistance and capacity-building to strengthen enforcement of the Agreement. Furthermore, the EU announced that it will host the international conference to assess and review the Port State Measures Agreement in 2020. Finally, the EU announced that it will contribute EUR 225 000 in 2017 to FAO for the development of a global record that is to register fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels worldwide.

## Climate change

16. The European Union announced a EUR 10 million project with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) concerning climate change mitigation in the maritime shipping sector. The project aims to establish five Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCCs), one in each of the target regions – Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific – thereby forming a global network. The network's task is to enable developing countries in these regions to develop energy-efficiency measures in maritime transport.
17. The European Union announced that it will commit EUR 1.5 million to reducing black carbon emissions in the Arctic. The project is intended to reinforce international cooperation to protect the Arctic environment.
18. The European Union announced that it will contribute EUR 600 000 over the next two years to an integrated Arctic project focusing on the three priority areas of EU Arctic policy: Climate Change and Safeguarding the Arctic Environment; Sustainable Development in and around the Arctic; and International Cooperation on Arctic Issues.

## Sustainable blue economy

19. The European Union announced that it will invest EUR 23 million in the marine environment monitoring service of its satellite monitoring programme (Copernicus) in 2017 and 2018. The service focuses on climate change, fisheries and marine protection. It was also announced that Copernicus will, for the first time, create Ocean Monitoring Indicators, including on biochemistry. These indicators, important for measuring ocean health, will be published in the Ocean State Report that will be available online by the end of 2018.
20. The European Union announced that it will finance the testing of the first wave and tidal array deployments in Europe in 2017 by contributing EUR 1.5 million to support administrations and project developers involved in environmental monitoring.
21. The European Union announced that it will provide EUR 3 million to support projects in EU countries to set up cross-border cooperation on maritime spatial planning. Maritime spatial planning works across borders and sectors to ensure human activities at sea take place in an efficient, safe and sustainable way.

22. The European Union announced that it will provide more than EUR 250 million to fund marine and maritime research in 2017. This includes EUR 40 million to support low-emission and advanced waterborne transport and over EUR 30 million for marine energy. Furthermore, the EU announced that it will provide EUR 12 million to support two new innovation projects on cleaning actions to combat marine litter and other pollutants. Finally, the European Union announced to support the BlueMED Initiative for cooperation on a healthy, productive and resilient Mediterranean Sea through science and research with over EUR 50 million.
23. The European Union announced its intention to develop the Pilot Blue Science Cloud, which is to modernise the process of accessing, managing and using marine data, with the goal of improving the handling of large quantities of different marine and maritime data using cloud technologies. Furthermore, the Blue Cloud is intended to further foster work between EU scientists and their international partners. Cloud technologies can improve global and regional ocean observations and forecasting, as promoted in the framework of the G7 Future of the Sea and Oceans initiative and as part of the worldwide effort to build an improved Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).
24. The European Union announced that it will contribute at least EUR 1 million to support the World Bank's Global Fisheries Programme (PROFISH). The aim of the programme is to improve environmental sustainability, human wellbeing and economic performance in the world's fisheries and aquaculture, with a focus on the welfare of the poor in fisheries and fish farming communities in the developing world.
25. The European Union announced the launch of the Pacific – European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme, worth EUR 45 million. Sweden announced that it will contribute EUR 10 million to the programme. The purpose of the programme is to support sustainable management and development of fisheries for food security and economic growth, while addressing climate change resilience and conservation of marine biodiversity.
26. The EU announced that it is to further strengthen its work on the All-Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance by fostering enhanced cooperation frameworks with Atlantic partners such as Brazil and South Africa on marine science, research and innovation under the Belém Statement, and will allocate over EUR 60 million in the period 2018-2019 to fulfilling this objective. The EU will also continue to implement the Galway Statement on Ocean Research Cooperation with the USA and Canada. The European Union reported that the number of research teams working in international consortia on the challenges facing the Atlantic Ocean will exceed 500 by 2019.

27. The EU commits EUR 8.5 million to the preservation of marine and coastal biodiversity in the Caribbean Sea Basin for the benefit of communities that depend on these ecosystems. This action targets in particular natural areas that are threatened by misuse, overexploitation, pollution and the effects of climate change.
28. The European Union announced that it will launch a EUR 14.5 million investment initiative in 2017 to promote a sustainable blue economy in the European Union. Around EUR 8 million of the fund is to provide start-up grants for high-potential projects in emerging blue economy sectors across the EU. In order to better monitor and combat marine litter, a further EUR 2 million will go towards providing support for innovative technologies to monitor and/or combat marine litter in waters around the European Union. Furthermore, EUR 3 million will go towards facilitating twinning projects in the Mediterranean Sea Basin, such as between maritime training and education institutes, businesses operating in the blue economy and local fishing communities. Finally, EUR 1.5 million is to be allocated to restoring marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mediterranean.
- ~~29.~~ The European Union announced that it commits to further progressing Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with coastal states. These agreements already assist countries in the development of sustainable fisheries, the effective management of monitoring and control systems and the fight against IUU fishing. The new generation of agreements are to have a more integrated approach, including promoting a sustainable blue economy as well as advancing investment in the fisheries sector. This new approach should allow partner countries to gain more value from the ocean economy in a sustainable manner.
30. The European Union announced that it will commit EUR 5.9 million in 2017 to supporting projects in EU countries to set up cross-border cooperation on maritime spatial planning. Maritime spatial planning works across borders and sectors to ensure human activities at sea take place in an efficient, safe and sustainable way.



31. On 24 March 2017, the Union has committed, in cooperation with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), to work on accelerating Maritime/Marine Spatial Planning processes worldwide. Maritime spatial planning (MSP) works across borders and sectors to ensure human activities at sea take place in an efficient, safe and sustainable way. Building on the Joint Roadmap, the EU will provide a grant of EUR 1.4 million to IOC-UNESCO to develop international guidelines for MSP. As part of this venture, two MSP pilot projects will be launched in early 2018: one in the Mediterranean and another in the South Pacific. Furthermore, an International Forum for MSP will be created to facilitate discussions on how MSP, including cross-sectoral actions, should be applied globally. The first workshop is to take place in spring 2018.

### Maritime Security

32. The European Union announced that it will invest EUR 4 million in its satellite monitoring programme (Copernicus) in 2017 to support EU agencies and EU Member States in monitoring oil pollution and large-scale commercial fisheries (including the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing) in the Northwest Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the North Sea, the Black Sea, the Pacific Ocean and around the Canary Islands. Copernicus will also introduce new services to support law enforcement and navigation safety in ice-infested areas.
33. The European Union announced that it will provide EUR 1 million in 2017 to support the upgrading of the ICT systems of EU maritime authorities and facilitate cooperation between them. Furthermore, the European Union announced that it will contribute EUR 80 000 to facilitate cooperation between coastguard authorities in Europe.
34. The European Union announced that will continue supporting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, including through the Gulf of Guinea Inter-Regional Network and the launch of two new programmes: the SWAIMS programme (Support to West Africa Integrated Maritime Security), worth EUR 29 million, and the programme to improving port security in West and Central Africa, worth EUR 8.5 million.

35. The EU committed EUR 37.5 million to ensuring maritime security and countering piracy along the south-eastern African coastline and in the Indian Ocean. The funds are to be implemented by four regional organisations (IGAD, COMESA, EAC and IOC) in cooperation with UNODC, INTERPOL and FAO. The programme supports alternative livelihood initiatives in the coastal pirate areas of Somalia, investigation capacities at national and regional level, prison reforms, prosecution and judicial capacity, disruption of illegal financial flows, combating money laundering, and various other maritime tasks, in addition to a regional mechanism for the coordination and exchange of maritime information.
36. The European Union announced the launch of a prototype surveillance tool in September 2017 which detects ships to reveal the extent of human activities at sea. The 'Search for Unidentified Maritime Objects' tool, or 'SUMO' for short, is a piece of software that automatically analyses data from radar imaging satellites to find vessels as small as 1 metre long, even in cloudy conditions or at night. The SUMO tool is open source, to promote uptake by users and developers and facilitate international cooperation on mapping of ship routes, monitoring shipping intensity, identifying polluting ships, monitoring fishing activities, countering piracy and smuggling, and controlling maritime borders.
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