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'I' ITEM NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)
Subject: Implementation of EU macro-regional strategies - organisation of work in the Council
- Information note

1. Since 2009, the Union has initiated four macro-regional strategies, namely the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) in 2009, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) in 2011, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) in 2014 and the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) in 2015¹.

¹ Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (doc. 13744/09), Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (doc. 8388/11 + ADD 1 REV 1), Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (doc. 13503/14) and Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (doc. 14613/15).

2. In its conclusions on each of these Strategies², the Council tasked the Commission to report back to the Council on their implementation. In 2015, in its conclusions on EUSALP, the Council took note of the Commission's intention to draft a single report every two years, starting end 2016, describing the progress made towards the implementation of all macro-regional strategies, presenting recommendations on possible developments of the Strategies and their Action Plans and/or on how to improve or optimise their implementation³.
3. In follow-up to the commitment made, the Commission submitted to the Council on 16 December 2016 the first single Report on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies⁴.
4. On the basis of the Commission Report the Maltese Presidency prepared Council conclusions⁵, which called for another single implementation report of the Commission by the end of 2018.
5. The Friends of the Presidency (FoP) Working Party on Macro-regional Strategies needs to be convened in order to elaborate Council Conclusions on this implementation report of the Commission to reflect the views of the Council and to give political guidance for the further development of the strategies.
6. The composition of the FoP Working Party will be Brussels-based for reasons of flexibility and in accordance with previous practice.
7. The FoP Working Party will not have interpretation.

² See footnote 1.

³ Doc. 14613/15, p. 11.

⁴ Doc. 15792/16 + ADD 1.

⁵ Doc. 8461/17

8. All Member States are invited to participate in the work of the FoP Working Party.
 9. The indicative dates of the FoP meetings for the examination of the Report and the preparation of draft Council conclusions on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies are as follows: 24 January, 21 February, 5 March and 28 March 2018. The draft Council conclusions will be later on submitted to Coreper and Council, as appropriate, for final adoption.
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