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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

Subject: Draft Council conclusions on International Ocean Governance
- Approval

At its meeting of 14 September and the informal videoconferences of 19 October and 15 November 2022, the Working Party on Maritime Issues - Integrated Maritime Policy examined the text of draft Council conclusions on International Ocean Governance prepared by the Presidency. The final text resulting from these discussions and endorsed by the Working Party on Maritime Issues by informal written consultation on 28 November 2022 is set out in the Annex to this note.

The Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to confirm the agreement reached on these draft Council conclusions on International Ocean Governance and to recommend to the Council to approve them as an “A” item at the meeting of the General Affairs Council of 13 December 2022.

Draft Council conclusions on International Ocean Governance
for safe, secure, clean, healthy and sustainably managed oceans and seas

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

- the Council conclusions on the Integrated Maritime Policy of 8 December 2008, 16 November 2009, 14 June 2010, 19 December 2011, 11 December 2012, 25 June 2013 and 24 June 2014¹;
- the Council conclusions on ‘International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans’ of 3 April 2017²;
- the Council conclusions on Indigenous Peoples of 15 May 2017³;
- the Council conclusions on the revision of the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) Action Plan of 26 June 2018⁴;
- the Council conclusions on EU action to strengthen rules-based multilateralism of 17 June 2019⁵;
- the Council conclusions on Oceans and Seas of 19 November 2019⁶;
- the Council conclusions on the EU Arctic policy of 9 December 2019⁷;
- the Council conclusions on ‘Building a sustainable Europe by 2030 - Progress thus far and next steps’ of 10 December 2019⁸

¹ 16503/1/08 REV1, 15175/1/09 REV1, 10300/10, 18279/11, 16553/12 + COR1, 10790/13 and 11204/14

² 8029/17

³ 8814/17

⁴ 10494/18

⁵ 10341/19

⁶ 14249/19

⁷ 14952/19

⁸ 14835/19

- the Council conclusions on 'EU Waterborne Transport Sector - Future outlook: Towards a carbon-neutral, zero accidents, automated and competitive EU Waterborne Transport Sector' of 5 June 2020⁹;
- the Council conclusions on the Farm to Fork Strategy of 19 October 2020¹⁰;
- the Council conclusions on Biodiversity - the need for urgent action of 23 October 2020¹¹;
- the Council conclusions on Climate and Energy Diplomacy - Delivering on the external dimension of the European Green Deal of 25 January 2021¹²;
- the Council conclusions on a sustainable blue economy: health, knowledge, prosperity, social equity of 26 May 2021¹³;
- the Council conclusions on forging a climate-resilient Europe – the new EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change of 10 June 2021¹⁴;
- the Council conclusions on maritime security of 22 June 2021¹⁵;
- the Council conclusions on Water in the EU's External Action of 19 November 2021¹⁶;
- the Council conclusions on EU Climate Diplomacy: accelerating the implementation of Glasgow outcomes of 28 February 2022¹⁷;
- the Council conclusions on 'European Missions' of 10 June 2022¹⁸;
- the Council Conclusions on the EU's new aquaculture strategic guidelines of 18 July 2022¹⁹;

⁹ 8648/20

¹⁰ 12099/20

¹¹ 12210/20

¹² 5263/21

¹³ 9153/21

¹⁴ 9419/21

¹⁵ 9946/21

¹⁶ 14108/21

¹⁷ 6120/22 COR1

¹⁸ 10124/22

¹⁹ 11496/22

- the Council Conclusions on the preparations for the 27th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 24 October 2022²⁰;
 - the Council Conclusions on the Convention on Biological Diversity of 24 October 2022²¹;
1. WELCOMES the success and outcomes of the 2nd UN Ocean Conference as well as the UN Resolution A/RES/76/296 of 21 July 2022 endorsing the Declaration entitled ‘Our ocean, our future, our responsibility’ adopted by the 2nd UN Ocean Conference (‘Lisbon Declaration’) which launches a new international chapter for ocean action; CALLS for its full implementation and UNDERLINES, in this regard, the list of voluntary commitments submitted by the EU and its Member States; WELCOMES also the ‘Brest Commitments for the Oceans’ made at the One Ocean Summit in February 2022, the organisation of the 9th Our Ocean Conference by Greece in 2024 and the proposal of France and Costa Rica to host the next UN Ocean Conference in 2025;
 2. REMAINS deeply alarmed by the global emergency facing the ocean and the collective failure to achieve by 2020 the targets of Sustainable Development Goal (‘SDG’) 14.2, 14.4 and 14.5 under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; WELCOMES the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2022 session of the UN Economic and Social Council and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which strongly reaffirms the commitment to conserve and sustainably use and manage the oceans, seas and marine resources and to act decisively and urgently, scaling up ocean action in order to accelerate implementation of all targets of SDG 14;

²⁰ 13994/22

²¹ 13975/22

3. UNDERLINES the interlinkages and synergies between SDG 14 and other SDGs in particular SDG 2 on food security, SDG 6 on clean water, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate change, SDG 15 on life on land and SDG 17 on partnership for the goals; RECALLS the need for a cross-cutting approach to reach the assigned targets of these SDGs including the emphasis put on least developed countries and small island developing States;
4. WELCOMES the presentation of the joint Communication on the EU's International Ocean Governance agenda: 'Setting the course for a sustainable blue planet'²² in line with the European Green Deal, which demonstrates the strong engagement of the EU and its Member States to the ocean; HIGHLIGHTS that this agenda is part of the EU's response to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
5. RECALLS that sustainable, competitive and innovative blue economy is an integral part of a comprehensive and cross sectorial approach to ocean governance; ACKNOWLEDGES that innovative technologies are a vital driver for transition towards a sustainable blue economy and the creation of green jobs;
6. ACKNOWLEDGES that increased private and public investments are essential for transiting to a sustainable integrated ocean governance and blue economy in the EU and globally; STRESSES the importance of sustainable financing instruments in promoting and driving this transition; WELCOMES the work by UNEP-FI to build upon the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles as well as the launch of the second stage of the BlueInvest initiative, of the sustainable blue economy partnership under the Horizon Europe programme and of the new InvestEU Blue Economy initiative;
7. REAFFIRMS the strong commitment of the EU and its Member States to play a key role in the global effort to protect, conserve, restore, and sustainably and equitably use the global ocean through:

²² JOIN(2022) 28final

I. Strengthening the international ocean governance framework

8. REAFFIRMS that, as expressed in Resolution UN A/RES/76/72 of 21 December 2021, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out; and also REITERATES that international engagement through strong rule-based multilateralism is crucial to achieving meaningful results in improving international ocean governance;
9. TAKES NOTE of the decisive progress achieved during the first part of the 5th Session of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC-5) on an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdictions ('BBNJ'); COMMENDS the role of the High Ambition Coalition on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction formed at the One Ocean Summit and the Blue Leaders in mobilising for an ambitious treaty; CALLS on finalising swiftly the negotiations and REMAINS committed to use all the EU diplomatic leverage and outreach capacities with a view to reaching an ambitious and effective agreement without delay;
10. REAFFIRMS that one of the priorities for an efficient and effective international ocean governance is to strengthen and coordinate existing multilateral international and regional instruments under UNCLOS, aiming at better mutual cooperation and improved coherence; CONSIDERS that the EU and its Member States, notably through their diplomatic actions, should underline the need to improve monitoring and compliance with the measures agreed within the framework of the international ocean governance under UNCLOS;

11. CALLS on the EU and the Member States to take and support actions based on their respective competencies, to ensure at bilateral and multilateral levels that all States abide by their international obligations, in particular those acting as open registers, as laid out in relevant international conventions;
12. HIGHLIGHTS the role of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), built on an ecosystem-based management approach, to support the achievement of conservation and restoration targets, in mitigating and minimising the harmful impacts of human activities in coastal areas and offshore, as well as its contribution to a competitive and sustainable blue economy; RECOGNISES that the EU and its Member States have gained significant experience in this domain and TAKES NOTE of the progress achieved through the MSPglobal Initiative; in this regard, ENCOURAGES the Commission to launch a new joint five-year roadmap with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) to promote MSP worldwide;

Marine biodiversity protection and conservation

13. REMAINS very concerned by the limited delivery of the Aichi Targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity; RECALLS the messages of urgency for transformative change in the 2019 Global Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and WELCOMES its new report on Values Assessment, which underlines the necessity to integrate the diversity of nature values in political and economic decisions, and on Sustainable Use, asking for stronger efforts to manage wild species; INSISTS on taking into account the recommendations of these reports and on integrating the diversity of nature values in political and economic decisions;

14. CALLS for the adoption of an ambitious, comprehensive and transformational post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the second part of the fifteenth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity with a view to triggering urgent and transformative action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and achieve a nature-positive world by 2030, including the objectives of conserving at least 30% globally of oceans through effectively managed and equitably governed, ecologically representative and well-connected networks of marine protected areas (MPA) as well as other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM);
15. RECALLS Resolution UN 61/295 of 13 September 2007 adopting the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; ACKNOWLEDGES the important role that indigenous peoples have as holders of indigenous knowledge of marine ecosystems; REMAINS committed when taking action for conservation and sustainable use, to support and promote the participation and cooperation with, and involvement of, indigenous peoples and local communities;
16. STRESSES that the overarching instrument for marine protection within the European Union remains the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which is currently under review; UNDERLINES that relevant sectoral instruments should aim for a more effective and integrated implementation of the MSFD objectives as a matter of urgency in order to achieve Good Environmental Status as soon as possible;

17. SUPPORTS the important work done by EU Members States in the framework of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) to establish a sound regulatory regime on potential future deep sea-mining that is based on the precautionary principle as well as on the highest environmental standards and sufficient scientific knowledge, in order to ensure that such activity would not cause harmful effects to the marine environment in the Area, as defined by UNCLOS;
18. STRESSES the need to enhance scientific knowledge of the deep sea and especially SUPPORTS the ‘Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative’ to strengthen the scientific foundation of environmental protection and management in the vast deep-sea regions beyond national jurisdiction in line with the ISA Plan adopted in 2020 and the UN Ocean Decade’s Actions to advance marine scientific research in the Area; TAKES NOTE with satisfaction that this initiative is financially supported by the EU;
19. HIGHLIGHTS the updated policy on a stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic²³ and WELCOMES the entry into force of the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean; REAFFIRMS its commitment to fully implement the Agreement;
20. SUPPORTS the protection of Arctic marine biodiversity, including, among other tools, through the designation of MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures, that address the pressures in the Arctic Ocean by relevant organisations and instruments, such as the Arctic Council, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic;
21. REMAINS committed to make every effort to reach an agreement as soon as possible on the designation of three vast new MPAs in the Southern Ocean, notably in the Weddell Sea, East Antarctica and around the Western Antarctic Peninsula;

²³ JOIN(2021) 27 final

Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture

22. WELCOMES the successful results of the 12th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization related to important elements of the long-awaited conclusion of the historical Agreement on fisheries subsidies in line with the UN SDG 14.6, aiming at addressing harmful subsidies, and which marks a major step forward for ocean sustainability; INSISTS on ensuring its full implementation and CALLS on completing the Agreement as soon as possible with elements not yet agreed on in respect of subsidies on overcapacity and overfishing; SUPPORTS the Commission's efforts to conclude an ambitious agreement, while remaining in line with relevant EU policies ensuring sustainable fisheries;
23. UNDERLINES that public funding in the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy is a key enabler for sustainable fisheries and the conservation of marine biological resources and that it is defined and implemented in a way which does not contribute to overcapacity and overfishing;
24. REAFFIRMS the EU's zero-tolerance position regarding illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and its commitment to end IUU fishing in line with SDG 14.4; SUPPORTS in this regard the development of appropriate IT tools in support of the EU catch certification scheme and IUU fisheries dialogues with non-EU countries, strengthened international and multilateral cooperation, including promoting universal ratification and implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures, fulfilment of flag States' international obligations in particular by those acting as open registers, adherence to the FAO voluntary guidelines on transshipment, effective anti-IUU mechanisms across all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO), increased transparency and traceability, information sharing and enforcement, as well as stronger monitoring, control and surveillance;

25. EMPHASISES the importance of enhancing international cooperation in fisheries management by strengthening the key role of RFMOs in the framework of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and LOOKS FORWARD to the outcome of the UNFSA Review Conference in 2023; REAFFIRMS the EU's commitment to continue to push for the upgrading of Regional Fishery Bodies into RFMOs, notably the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission;
26. HIGHLIGHTS the need to support a level playing field as well as responsible and sustainable value chains at international level in both fisheries and trade in fishery and aquaculture products in order to maintain the competitiveness of the industry while maintaining the EU's food sovereignty in line with the new EU policy on an open, sustainable and assertive trade policy as well as with the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy;
27. ACKNOWLEDGES that sustainable aquaculture contributes to achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal and of the Blue Transformation initiative of the FAO 2022-2031 strategy as well as to EU food security; TAKES NOTE of the ongoing work of the FAO on Guidelines on Sustainable Aquaculture and CALLS on the swift finalisation of ambitious and comprehensive guidelines consolidating all available tools and best practices, and providing concrete pathways for the sustainable growth of global aquaculture which would complement the Commission's Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU Aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030; NOTES the publication of the Communication 'Towards a strong and sustainable EU algae sector'²⁴;

²⁴ COM(2022) 592 final

II. Steering to ocean sustainability by 2030

The ocean and climate change

28. ACKNOWLEDGES that the ocean plays a vital role as a regulator of the planet's climate and temperature, and is the planet's main carbon sink and an important source of its biodiversity; and is also the main regulator of the planet's temperature as well as a buffer to the global effects of climate change; REMAINS deeply alarmed by the adverse and increasing effects of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions on the ocean and marine life human activities and coastal communities, including marine heatwaves, ocean warming, acidification and deoxygenation, ice-melting, thawing permafrost, global sea-level rise and extreme sea level events;
29. RECALLS the findings of the 2019 Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere (SROC) in a Changing Climate from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the contributions of all three Working Groups to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6); INSISTS on the necessity of taking stock of such projected scenarios of the IPCC that are consistent with the long term goals of the Paris Agreement in the development of policies and actions to mitigate climate change and to adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change;
30. RECALLS the 'Glasgow Climate Pact' adopted at COP 26 inviting relevant work programmes and constituted bodies under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to consider integrating and strengthening ocean-based action and the decision to hold an annual dialogue on the ocean and climate change to strengthen ocean climate change mitigation and adaptation action; WELCOMES the first annual dialogue held in Bonn in June 2022;

31. RECALLS the 2021 World Ocean Assessment (WOA II) as the major output of the second cycle of the United Nations Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the States of the Marine Environment;
32. STRESSES the climate-biodiversity-ocean nexus and the need to identify, assess and address cumulative impacts and feedback mechanisms on the biodiversity and marine ecosystems and their services, including tipping points, and develop measures and action which reduce and mitigate these impacts using the best available science;
33. STRESSES the need to develop and utilise nature-based solutions to mitigate climate change and strengthen the resilience of our oceans;
34. WELCOMES the launch and activities undertaken by the Mission ‘Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030’²⁵ as well as the Mission ‘Adaptation to Climate Change’, in particular its actions relating to coastal resilience relevant for ocean action; CALLS on the Member States and all stakeholders to engage with these Missions and join efforts to deliver on the Missions’ objectives by joining with concrete actions to the Missions’ Charters;
35. RECALLS the EU’s commitment to reach climate neutrality by 2050 including through sustainable and renewable offshore energy, decarbonising fishing, shipping and other maritime activities; EMPHASISES the commitment of the EU and its Member States to support the revision of the initial IMO Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) strategy with the view to phasing out GHG life-cycle emissions from international shipping by 2050 at the latest and consistent with the Paris Agreement temperature goals including the aim to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C;

²⁵ COM(2021) 609 final

36. SUPPORTS the energy transition leading to the decarbonisation of fisheries and the aquaculture sector; INVITES the Commission to propose appropriate measures, including carrying out a specific study for the fisheries and aquaculture sector to evaluate the impact of the GHG emissions by sector and to analyse the cost and opportunities derived from different available policy options for accelerating such an energy transitions at European level, taking into account its diversity and specific constraints as well as the potential to develop incentive schemes and adapt financial support including through amending the relevant legislation contributing to such an energy transition, while not undermining the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy;
37. STRESSES the importance of decarbonising shipping and maritime transport and moving towards the use of renewable energy sources, low and zero GHG fuels on a life-cycle basis to meet the objectives of the European Green Deal and the temperature goals set out in the Paris Agreement, including in the future for ships not covered by mandatory international and EU requirements, subject to an assessment of the benefits and possible impacts of such expansion; INVITES the Commission to consider possible measures for supporting energy transition and decarbonisation, in particular through promoting research, development and investment for efficient and innovative technologies;

Fighting marine and air pollution

38. WELCOMES the publication of the Commission communication, ‘Pathway to a healthy planet for all - EU Action Plan: ‘Towards zero pollution for air, water and soil’²⁶ which will contribute to the improvement of the marine environment in the EU and beyond;
39. UNDERLINES the importance of strengthening synergies between SDGs 6 and 14 to accelerate implementation of the related targets²⁷;

²⁶ COM(2021) 400 final

²⁷ In particular SDG 6.3 and 14.1

40. UNDERLINES the need for effective regional collaboration within cooperation bodies such as the Regional Seas Conventions for the protection of the marine and coastal environment; REAFFIRMS the EU's intention to join the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution;
41. WELCOMES the decision of the 78th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) approving the establishment of a Sulphur Oxides Emission Control Area (SECA) in the Mediterranean as a whole, for adoption in December 2022 at the 79th MEPC session and entry into force by 2025; ENCOURAGES further work within the United Nations Environment Programme- Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP-MAP) Barcelona Convention on establishing a possible future Nitrogen Oxides Emission Control Area (NECA) in the Mediterranean based on appropriate research feeding into an in-depth impact assessment study and in accordance with the IMO rules;
42. UNDERLINES the determination of the EU and its Member States to work on the successful completion of IMO work on reducing underwater noise emissions which have a serious impact on marine biodiversity; and SUPPORTS the establishment of a future Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSA) in the North-Western Mediterranean Sea, in the waters under the jurisdiction of France, Italy, Spain and Monaco, in order to prevent and reduce collisions between large cetaceans and ships;
43. EMPHASISES the need to further improve mandatory international and EU requirements for commercial vessels to prevent and further reduce air and marine pollution by continuing to work on, among other things, the establishment of possible future NECAs based on impact assessment studies in accordance with IMO rules, by restricting the discharges of wash waters from open-loop scrubbers in certain areas and by improving sewage discharges requirements;

44. WELCOMES the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) Resolution 5/14 to end plastic pollution through addressing the full lifecycle of plastic and creating a circular economy of plastic, including its production, design, consumption and environmentally sound management of waste; REITERATES the commitment of the EU and its Member States to engage actively in negotiations with the aim to conclude an ambitious international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment and where feasible, existing plastic pollution, within the set time;
45. WELCOMES the ongoing work conducted under the IMO Strategy and Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships with zero plastic waste discharges to sea from ships by 2025 and REMAINS committed to actively engage in working on measures addressing the desired outcomes of the Plan including to enhance reporting on lost fishing gear and the mandatory marking of fishing gear under the MARPOL Convention in cooperation with the fisheries sector, the RFMOs and the Regional Seas Conventions;
46. STRESSES on the need of Member States undertaking scientific exploration and developing Best Environmental Practice (BEP) as well as Best Available Techniques (BAT) to tackle the issue of conventional, chemical and explosive munitions dumped at sea and CALLS for active cooperation between Member States and international organizations in order to establish systematic management of dumped hazardous materials that pose a threat to the marine environment, as well as for exploring possible sources of EU funding;

III. Ensuring maritime security and safety at sea

Maritime security

47. IS deeply concerned with growing geopolitical tensions and their detrimental effect on maritime security as demonstrated by the Russian aggression against Ukraine, which has aggravated instability and insecurity in particular in the Black Sea, the Azov Sea and the Baltic Sea regions with spill-over effects that could affect bordering basins of the Mediterranean Sea as a whole, the North Sea and the Atlantic;

48. ACKNOWLEDGES that Member States have specific maritime requirements of national security and defence that must be taken into account;
49. RECALLS that maritime security is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to ocean governance and that the EU is strengthening its role as a global maritime security provider within and beyond its borders; in this regard, also RECALLS that the partnership with NATO remains essential including in the maritime domain, and in accordance with the EU Strategic Compass, that our mutually beneficial cooperation and common work on enhancing maritime security will continue to take place following the principles of inclusiveness, reciprocity, openness and transparency, as well as the decision-making autonomy of both organisations; RECALLS also that the partnership with the IMO remains one of the key elements for the prevention of the threats of intentional unlawful acts which could affect ships and port facilities; and UNDERLINES in this regard the importance of the contribution of national authorities on enhancing ship and port facility security;
50. RECALLS the importance to facilitate, as appropriate, the communication and coordination between EU and Member States' regional maritime initiatives with cross-cutting objectives and to make full use of all available EU civilian and military policies, tools and instruments;
51. STRESSES the importance and urgent need to enhance the resilience of EU critical maritime infrastructures, such as in particular sea cables and pipelines, as well as to increase efforts to tackle cybersecurity issues in the maritime domain; in this regard, WELCOMES the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach by the Union to strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure²⁸, and which in this context CALLS on the Member States to take urgent and effective measures, and to cooperate with each other, the Commission and other relevant actors;

²⁸ 13713/22

52. HIGHLIGHTS that strengthening interoperability and interconnectivity of national and EU-level maritime surveillance systems as made possible by the Common Information Sharing Environment project ('CISE') is a constant and key-goal to enhance maritime situational awareness and thus for a better maritime governance;
53. UNDERLINES the contribution of the coast guard functions to the EU maritime security; ENCOURAGES further development of initiatives for enhanced cooperation, exchange of experiences and best practices among EU Member States in this framework and WELCOMES the adoption of the Commission Recommendation on a practical handbook for coast guard cooperation²⁹;
54. LOOKS FORWARD to proposals by the Commission and the High Representative on updating the EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan;

Safety at sea and promoting decent working conditions worldwide

55. STRESSES that the fishing and maritime as well as marine research at sea sectors are characterised by challenging, hazardous and high-risk working conditions;
56. RECALLS that the EU promotes decent work in fisheries in line with the objectives of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); WELCOMES the publication of the Communication on decent work worldwide for a global just transition and a sustainable recovery³⁰;
57. WELCOMES the codification of the provisions on the minimum level of training of seafarers in the EU legislation³¹ following the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention) of the IMO;

²⁹ C(2021) 5310 final

³⁰ COM(2022) 66 final

³¹ Directive (EU) 2022/993 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2022 on the minimum level of training of seafarers, OJ L 169, 27.6.2022, p. 45-90

58. CALLS on accelerating the ratification of the IMO's 2012 Cape Town Agreement setting safety standards for fishing vessels;
59. CALLS on Member States to swiftly ratify the ILO Convention 188 on work in the fishing sector, which allows for inspection and control by the flag State of social standards on fishing vessels, as well as of the IMO STCW-F Convention on standards of training and watch keeping for fishermen; INVITES also the Commission to consider the transposition into the EU legislation of the inspection and social certification measures of the ILO Convention 188;

IV. Building up ocean knowledge

60. WELCOMES the signature of the new All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance Declaration which sets a common path forward for ocean research cooperation in the Atlantic, from Pole to Pole, for the next decade;
61. SUPPORTS the development of the core infrastructure of the European digital twin ocean by 2024 as a contributor to the global ocean governance and sustainable blue economy, resilience to climate change and biodiversity conservation, including through EU support by the Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030', the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODNet), the Copernicus and the Galileo space programmes, in order to bring together ocean knowledge, model the ocean, test scenarios for actions and make ocean knowledge readily available to policymakers, scientists, private stakeholders and citizens;
62. RECALLS that the European ocean science contributes to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (UN DOS) led by the IOC-UNESCO and to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration in supporting and guiding the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular for SDGs 13, 14 and 17;

63. HIGHLIGHTS the need for research vessels in Europe, and a transnational access mechanism for European researchers on such vessels, as well as for autonomous observation systems and platforms, in view of the multiple roles they play in supporting marine science and ocean observing; CALLS on Member States to support such infrastructures through long-term investments;
64. LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission's initiative on ocean observation aiming at achieving a coherent approach to European ocean observation;
65. CALLS for stepping-up efforts to increase closer cooperation in Europe and beyond between researchers, stakeholders, decision-makers and the citizens on building up ocean knowledge; SUPPORTS the mobilisation of the public and in particular the youth, through co-creation and co-design, citizen science, education, literacy and awareness actions as well as the promotion of active stewardship and volunteering to engage the public and to help catalyse the necessary transformative change for the restoration of the ocean and waters; WELCOMES the continuation of ocean literacy efforts in Europe through the EU-wide initiative EU4 Ocean coalition still in place and the Agreement in place between the Commission and the IOC-UNESCO for the support and promotion of the EU-wide ocean literacy initiative (EU4 Ocean coalition) as contributing to the UN DOS;
66. UNDERLINES that a transdisciplinary science to policy interface is valuable for assessing knowledge and supporting policy making to promote ocean health and sustainability; INVITES the Commission to explore the feasibility of a transdisciplinary science-policy interface for ocean sustainability entitled 'Intergovernmental Panel for Ocean Sustainability' (IPOS), taking into account existing relevant expertise, inter alia ocean related work of the IPCC and IPBES and acknowledging the overarching work developed under the UN Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment.
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