

# EUROPEAN OCEAN DAYS

## WHERE NEXT FOR EUROPE'S SEAS? ● ● ● ● ●



### Venue: Sparks Meeting

(Rue Ravenstein 60, Brussels, Belgium)

This event, with a broad range of stakeholders who have a future perspective, aims to provide and harvest insights on what might be the collective pathways for Europe's Marine Future. In essence, the question to be addressed is:

*What, in this wider, evolving future landscape, might be the pathways for Europe's Seas, with a perspective to 2050?*

Such a reflection should not only consider policy needs, but also the wider global, economic, technological and social transformations that are occurring within Europe and beyond.

A key feature of the day is to have **interactive discussions**. Following the opening high-level, inspirational **scene-setting plenary**, there will then be **thematic breakout sessions** based around the following themes: **Global drivers; Economy; Society; and Innovation**, with guiding questions to structure the discussions. Each theme would look at opportunities, enablers and barriers, as well as the interlinkages between the themes, with a shorter-term perspective to 2030 and more longer-term to 2050. More details on the aspects that could be covered under these themes and the guiding questions may be found in the [Programme](#) (on pg3).

There will also be **Project Posters** to inform the reflections as well, coming from relevant Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, EMFAF, Interreg, Erasmus+ and other (EU programme) projects. These posters serve also as an opportunity to showcase projects that represent emblematic actions and future opportunities that could be scaled up in Member States. A **Fishing Net** to catch your views on the future of our seas will also be exhibited.

The day will **end in plenary** with the sharing of initial insights and main takeaways.

### Context

**Europe's seas and natural environment** are part of the **social fabric of our Union** and a source of great **natural and economic wealth**. At the same time, they also face a unique set of **complex, inter-related challenges**, from depleting fish stocks, to increasing environmental pressures, to

increasing competition for sea space. As emphasised already in the Mission Letter for Commissioner Sinkevičius, upon his nomination as Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, it is an **EU priority to preserve and protect our seas**, to make the **most of their potential** by **investing in their future** and **ensuring that future generations can benefit** from their beauty and the opportunities they create.

To inform the discussions, relevant **EU and international policy initiatives** relating to Europe's seas and maritime activities, include the:

- package of measures, published in February 2023,<sup>(1)</sup> to improve the sustainability and resilience of the EU's fisheries and aquaculture sector, also as part of the Pact for Fisheries and Oceans;
- recent revision and future implementation of the EU Fisheries Control System;<sup>(2)</sup>
- actions to develop the Sustainable Blue Economy;<sup>(3)</sup>
- objectives of the EU Mission Ocean and Waters;<sup>(4)</sup>
- Maritime Security, including in the framework of the revised EU Maritime Security Strategy;<sup>(5)</sup>
- potential impacts on Europe's seas of international commitments, like the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies<sup>(6)</sup> and the UN Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction,<sup>(7)</sup> as well as
- EU's involvement in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)<sup>(8)</sup> and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs).<sup>(9)</sup>

Discussions can also be informed by other reflections, such as those arising from the European Blue Forum, in particular the publication on "*What do we need from European Seas by 2030? Are we asking too much?*"<sup>(10)</sup>

Addressing all these aspects together, across and beyond silos with different stakeholders, is clearly challenging, given each has their own complexity. But, given the inter-related challenges that societies are increasingly facing today, this event provides an opportunity to at least start the discussion at European level in a multifaceted and multidisciplinary forum. Outcomes would then serve to at least identify main issues, as a starting point for further, more in-depth discussions and development.

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<sup>(1)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/%20en/ip\\_23\\_828](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/%20en/ip_23_828)

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/sustainable-fisheries-agreement-revision-fisheries-control-system-2023-05-31\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/sustainable-fisheries-agreement-revision-fisheries-control-system-2023-05-31_en)

<sup>(3)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_2341](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_2341)

<sup>(4)</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters_en)

<sup>(5)</sup> [https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/ocean/blue-economy/other-sectors/maritime-security-strategy\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/ocean/blue-economy/other-sectors/maritime-security-strategy_en). As stated in the strategy, maritime security is essential for the development of the sustainable blue economy, including the deployment of offshore energy installations, aquaculture facilities, data and electrical cables, energy pipelines etc., and for the implementation of relevant EU initiatives and policies in the maritime domain.

<sup>(6)</sup> [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/rulesneg\\_e/fish\\_e/fish\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_e.htm)

<sup>(7)</sup> <https://www.un.org/bbnj/>

<sup>(8)</sup> [https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/regional-fisheries-management-organisations-rfmos\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/regional-fisheries-management-organisations-rfmos_en)

<sup>(9)</sup> [https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/sustainable-fisheries-partnership-agreements-sfpas\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/sustainable-fisheries-partnership-agreements-sfpas_en)

<sup>(10)</sup> Available from <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/european-blue-forum-publications>

## Programme, with guiding questions

<b>09:00</b>	Sparks meeting venue open
<b>09:00 - 09:30</b>	Registration
<b>09:30 - 09:40</b>	<b>Opening and welcome</b> by <a href="#">Charlina Vitcheva</a> , Director-General, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission
<b>09:40 - 10:30</b>	<b>Setting the scene on maritime and fisheries and the wider economic, social, technological evolutions and drivers of change that may occur.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Video message</b> by <a href="#">Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius</a>, European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries</li><li>• <b>Keynote address</b> by <a href="#">Manuel Barange</a>, Assistant Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</li><li>• <b>Moderated discussion</b> between <a href="#">Charlina Vitcheva</a> and <a href="#">Manuel Barange</a>.</li></ul>
<b>10:30 - 10:45</b>	<b>Introduction to thematic sessions, including practicalities</b> <p>For <a href="#">each</a> Thematic Session, participants will be divided into pre-defined groups to then discuss, in parallel, the same theme based on guiding questions. A moderator will lead the discussions in each group, along with a rapporteur to record the main outcomes.</p>
<b>10:45 - 11:15</b>	Pause café in communal area with Project Posters
<b>11:15 - 12:15</b>	<b>Thematic Session I: Global Drivers</b> <p>This session will serve also as the broader context for the other themes and would consider the influences, drivers and impacts of the broader global context, such as biodiversity, climate change, food and water security, UN SDGs, along with other geopolitical developments and international agreements, plus any future EU enlargements, which can impact significantly on Europe (and conversely Europe can influence globally).</p> <p>Guiding Questions for this session are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. What, from your context, are the main Global Drivers which can impact significantly on Europe and conversely Europe can influence globally?</li><li>b. Which activities in Europe's seas would you see these global drivers impacting the most, and how?</li><li>c. What opportunities would you see today and expected in the future?</li><li>d. What developments, including in policy, legislation, would we need, and at what governance level(s), to profit from these opportunities?</li></ol> <p><u>Moderators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Room 3 – Zeebrugge</a>: Humberto DELGADO ROSA (DG ENV)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 3 - Vigo</a>: Manuel PLEGUEZUELO ALONSO (DG MARE)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 7 - Genoa</a>: Alessandra ZAMPIERI (DG JRC)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 7 - Piraeus</a>: Stephen DAVIES (DG MARE)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 8A - Marseille</a>: Isabelle GARZON (DG MARE)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 8A - Bremerhaven</a>: Ghada EL SERAFY (Deltares)*</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 8B - Rijeka</a>: Rodrigo ATAIDE DIAS (DG MARE)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 8B - Klaipeda</a>: Mario DOGLIANI (SDG4MED)</li><li>• <a href="#">Room 2 – Burgas</a>: Charlotte GUGENHEIM (DG MARE)</li></ul> <p>* This Overall Session Moderator will liaise with the others and their Rapporteurs to gather a few key takeaways for a brief presentation in the final plenary session.</p>

**12:15 - 13:30**

*Lunch, in communal area with Project Posters*

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**13:30 - 14:30**

### **Thematic Session II: Economy**

With respect to, for example, a sustainable, profitable marine food supply for Europe, plus other maritime activities, in the context of transversal aspects impacting most blue economy sectors, such as integration of maritime activities/marine management, fisheries, aquaculture, regional (notably sea basin) governance, and ecosystem management, as well as of global trends and developments, e.g. with respect to EU / third-country fishing fleets.

Guiding Questions for this session are:

- a. What are the main economic activities in the coastal region you are most familiar with?
- b. How would you see these evolving in the future and on what timescale?
- c. How could Europe's marine food supply evolve to be sustainable, resilient and profitable, including with respect to third-country supply?
- d. What opportunities would you see, today and in future, and how could these be developed further?

Moderators:

- Room 3 - Zeebrugge: Ana PERALTA BAPTISTA (DG MARE)
- Room 3 - Vigo: Manuel PLEGUEZUELO ALONSO (DG MARE)
- Room 7 - Genoa: Riccardo BUT (DG MARE)
- Room 7 - Piraeus: Philip EASTHILL (European Boating Industry)
- Room 8A - Marseille: Isabelle GARZON (DG MARE)
- Room 8A - Bremerhaven: Edoardo CASAROTTO (DG MARE)
- Room 8B - Rijeka: Reka ROZSAVOLGYI (DG REGIO)
- Room 8B - Klaipeda: Susan STEELE (EFCA)
- Room 2 - Burgas: Christophe VANDE WEYER (DG MARE)\*

\* *This Overall Session Moderator will liaise with the others and their Rapporteurs to gather a few key takeaways for a brief presentation in the final plenary session.*

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**14:30 - 14:35**

*Movement of participants to other groups*

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**14:35 - 15:35**

### **Thematic Session III: Society**

To consider the evolution of societies in Europe's Coastal Regions and communities, including fisheries, aquaculture, other sustainable blue economy sectors, research and academia, etc., and within the broader context of the evolution of European society, value and challenges, e.g. with regard to impacts on coastal communities of climate change, tourism and offshore renewables; skills and training, notably on new technologies; on gender and inclusion; on youth for generational change, etc.

Guiding Questions for this session are:

- a. What general trends do you see in European societies as a whole and how are these affecting coastal communities?
  - b. What are the specific challenges and opportunities for coastal communities, today and expected in the future?
  - c. If you picture the coastal community that you are most familiar with in 2030 and in 2050, what would it look like in terms of, for example, the population, the economic activities being done, impacts of climate change?
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- d. What would you consider is needed to support the future sustainability of Europe's coastal communities?

Moderators:

- Room 3 – Zeebrugge: Céline FRANK (DG MARE)
- Room 3 - Vigo: Isabel SOUSA PINTO (Univ. Porto)\*
- Room 7 - Genoa: Irene VECCHIATO (DG MARE)
- Room 7 - Piraeus: Rodrigo ATAIDE DIAS (DG MARE)
- Room 8A - Marseille: Rémy DÉNOS (DG MARE)
- Room 8A - Bremerhaven: Nathalie VAN ISACKER (SeaScape Belgium)
- Room 8B - Rijeka: Stephen DAVIES (DG MARE)
- Room 8B - Klaipeda: Riccardo BUT (DG MARE)
- Room 2 – Burgas: Jann MARTINSOHN (DG JRC)

\* This Overall Session Moderator will liaise with the others and their Rapporteurs to gather a few key takeaways for a brief presentation in the final plenary session.

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**15:35 - 16:00**

*Pause café in communal area with Project Posters*

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**16:00 - 17:00**

**Thematic Session IV: Innovation**

What would be needed for the next decade and in a 2050 timeframe; what are the existing technologies that would need to be further exploited; what are the new and emerging technologies; what could be the impact of and benefits from developments like digitisation, artificial intelligence, blockchain, robotics, dual use technologies; what are the current obstacles in taking full advantage of these technologies in the public and private sector and how to overcome them? Other issues to consider include where EU is in terms of technological competitiveness on global fisheries, aquaculture and other maritime sectors; how our innovation system compares with others; how the implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies could be an enabler; what measures could be done to develop further the EU's position; and how innovation can play a role to reduce the administrative burden for the authorities and operators.

Guiding Questions for this session are:

- a. What, from your context, are the emerging and new technologies that can help to develop further Europe's maritime and fisheries activities?
- b. Where does Europe stand compared to other world regions and what could be done to develop further Europe's position?
- c. What are the current obstacles in taking full advantage of these technologies, in the public and private sector, and how could we overcome them?
- d. Bringing together all your discussions today, and reflecting on the four themes, what would you now propose as a way forward?

Moderators:

- Room 3 – Zeebrugge: Marta MOREN ABAT (DG MARE)
- Room 3 - Vigo: Joana PATRICIO (DG MARE)
- Room 7 - Genoa: Alessandra ZAMPIERI (DG JRC)\*
- Room 7 - Piraeus: Charlotte JAGOT (CINEA)
- Room 8A - Marseille: Rémy DÉNOS (DG MARE)

- Room 8A - Bremerhaven: Veronica MANFREDI (DG ENV)
- Room 8B - Rijeka: Riccardo BUT (DG MARE)
- Room 8B - Klaipeda: Isabelle GARZON (DG MARE)
- Room 2: Burgas: Raül JIMENEZ AICART (DG MARE)

\* This Overall Session Moderator will liaise with the others and their Rapporteurs to gather a few key takeaways for a brief presentation in the final plenary session.

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**17:00 - 17:15**      *Movement back to auditorium*

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**17:15 - 17:45**      **Plenary: Where next for Europe's Seas?** with Kęstutis Sadauskas, Deputy Director-General, DG MARE

**Initial insights and takeaways** from the different thematic sessions will be presented briefly by:

- Global Drivers: Ghada EL SERAFY (Deltares)
- Economy: Christophe VANDE WEYER (DG MARE)
- Society: Isabel SOUSA PINTO (Univ. Porto)
- Innovation: Alessandra ZAMPIERI (DG JRC)

followed by **closing remarks**, outlining also next steps.

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**17:45**      *Drinks Reception in communal area with Project Posters*

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