



POSITION OF THE CHANNEL ARC MANCHE ASSEMBLY ON THE GREEN PAPER

“Towards a Maritime Policy for the Union: A European Vision of the Oceans and Seas”

Introduction

The Channel Arc Manche Assembly comprises five French¹ Regions and eight British² local authorities along the English Channel. The Assembly is a political authority for dialogue, ideas, making proposals and actions in the marine basin of the English Channel.

Our Assembly has two main objectives:

- To demonstrate the importance and specific nature of the English Channel as a coherent area for co-operation in Europe and to gain separate recognition for the Channel as a sea basin in its own right;
- To reinforce partnerships in Arc Manche through the development of common projects.

In recent years in particular, our work has produced the Channel area strategic vision, to lobby the European Commission to widen cross-border maritime co-operation over the whole coastal area of the Channel (the European Regional Policy Co-operation Objective), and to actively participate in the debate launched by the European Commission on the development of an integrated European maritime policy.

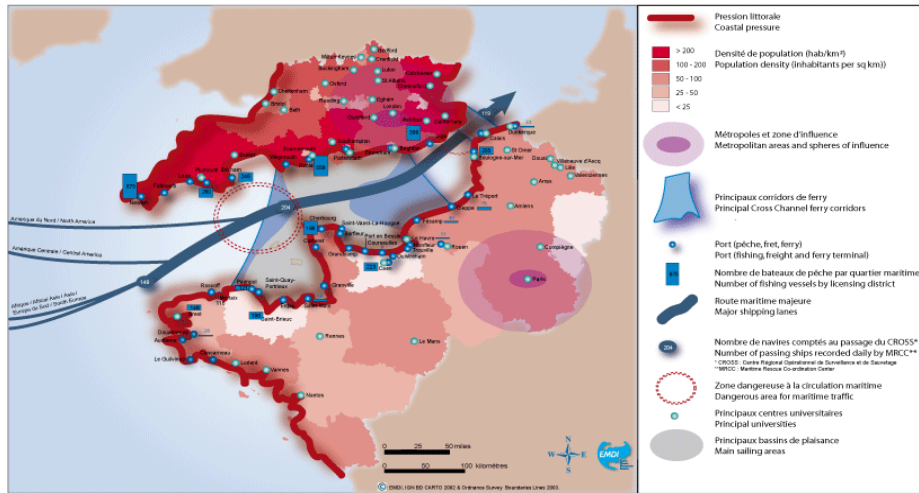
Our participation in the consultation has involved an initial contribution sent to the Maritime Policy Task Force in December 2005, followed by the involvement of our Assembly in numerous European meetings, and the organisation of a Conference in Rouen on 29 March 2007 on the importance of having an integrated maritime policy for the Channel area.

Our interest in this consultation is dictated by the special situation of the Channel, being a strategic maritime transport channel for the European Union as well as a marine basin for multiple and sometimes conflicting uses, presenting real opportunities and risks that must be considered and acted on in partnership.

¹ Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, Picardie Region, Haute-Normandie Region, Basse-Normandie Region, Bretagne Region

² Kent County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, West Sussex County Council, Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Devon County Council (Full members); East Sussex County Council and Isle of Wight Council (Associate members).

This interest is also dictated by the questions and acute problems raised by the Green Paper which affects the marine basin of the Channel and the regions which border it.



Our active participation in the depth thought being given by the European Commission to the development of an integrated European maritime policy can be clearly seen in the Assembly's objectives.

The first contribution of the Channel Arc Manche Assembly to the Maritime Policy Task Force (December 2005) highlighted some characteristics of the Channel area and expectations towards the Green Paper.

This contribution is based on the work carried out by our Members and by the Channel Arc Manche Assembly as a whole through many debates, discussions and consultations.

This contribution is also based on the work carried out within the Interreg IIIB Espace Manche Development Initiative (EMDI) project, which resulted in the development and approval of a Strategic Vision document for the Channel area with five strategic targets (see annex 2).

The main aim of this contribution is not only to draw the European Commission's attention to a range of concerns shared by Channel area stakeholders but also to identify possible actions, which could improve the management of the conflicting uses of the English Channel and enable its balanced development.

1. An integrated European Maritime Policy: a strong mobilisation from Channel area stakeholders

As many other Channel area stakeholders, in particular through their involvement in the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR) « Europe of the Sea » project, the Arc Manche Assembly has been involved in the European Maritime Policy debate since 2005.

1.1 First contributions to the Green Paper (prior to its publication)

As previously mentioned, our first contribution, which was sent to the European Commission in December 2005, focused on a few issues linked to the need for a spatial, and a by maritime basin approach to the European maritime policy, as well as the importance of the detailed knowledge and database of maritime and marine issues.

The contribution also mentioned the issue of the roles and competences of stakeholders and local authorities, both as public actors but also as the representatives of local citizens in coastal areas.

The contribution also pointed out the importance of European interregional co-operation at the scale of each basin, and between maritime basins.

Below are the main points of the Channel Arc Manche Assembly's contribution:

- the need to add to the European approach to maritime policy through specific work relating to the European maritime basins with the aim of expanding the depth and extent of knowledge on each basin and identifying the real or potential infra-basin conflicts;
- clarifying the respective roles of the local authorities, States and European institutions in maritime affairs;
- the importance of Community support in favour of establishing and developing inter-regional co-operation in each European maritime basin;
- the support of the European Commission in encouraging the sharing of experience and the development of co-operation between the different European maritime basins;
- the participation of representatives of regional and local authorities along the coast in the existing areas of dialogue (Regional Advisory Councils for Fisheries, Channel Plan, Polmar-Mer and Polmar-Terre, etc.) as observers, which must be able to de-compartmentalise assignments and promote better dialogue and better governance of maritime matters with regard to the basins;
- The creation of a European Agency of the Sea facilitating co-ordination of European, national and local strategy and policy relating to the Sea, respecting the principle of subsidiarity and action at the most appropriate level. It should also allow the creation and management of databases at a European level and the co-ordination of maritime research;
- The European Union could contribute to the implementation of regional and inter-regional policies encouraging technology transfer in the maritime and marine areas (maritime clusters) in the Channel area.

1.2 Main Expectations expressed at the regional and local consultations

Throughout the consultation period on the Green Paper, the main stakeholders in the Channel area have actively addressed the questions put forward by the Green Paper. In most of the regional and local authorities in the Channel area, consultations or seminars have been organised at a regional level on one or more regionally relevant aspects of the Green Paper (see annex 1).

The involvement of the regions and counties of the Arc Manche area has also been marked on an inter-regional scale, in particular in Geographic Commissions of the CPMR (Atlantic, North Sea).

Generally, the argument advanced by the European Commission in its Green Paper met with wide agreement from local authorities and stakeholders in the Channel area, for which the sea is a combination of issues, hopes and fears.

Initially in the debate, expectations, claims and feelings were expressed about the future of the Channel Basin, the marine and maritime activities and their governance.

In addition, we think that the integrated approach proposed by the Green Paper has supported a better understanding of existing relations between maritime sector stakeholders, and the responsibilities in implementing an integrated maritime policy.

The main stakeholders in the Channel area are pleased at the European Commission's proposal, not only because of the relevance of the questions put forward, but also because of the open method suggested, which favours localised sharing of thoughts and points of view.

The Arc Manche Assembly shares the responses given to the European Commission by local authorities and stakeholders and the positions expressed by the CPMR on the Green Paper. This is not appropriate to give a full list here, but the main topics are as follows:

1.2.1 People at the centre of numerous debates

Some of the issues widely discussed during consultation events include maritime safety, the attraction of jobs at sea, respect for the marine environment, adherence to maritime rules, the skills and training of people at sea, the social conditions for their activities, the mix of coastal activities, the dialogue and participation of citizens through coastal forums.

Discussion on these matters has often shown the extent to which the "human factor" can be a major influence in implementing a policy and/or process of dialogue in favour of better regulation of the seas and European coastlines.

There are two different but complementary aspects concerned when considering the "human factor":

- its economic and social aspects,
- its democratic aspect.

Initial and continuous professional training, gaining knowledge and the development of qualifications for maritime professionals must be promoted. This will ensure that jobs relating to the sea will have greater attraction, positively impacting on the conditions of working at sea and prompting the creation of a possible response to the social dumping practised on an international scale.

One of the key aims of a European maritime policy must be an increased knowledge of and more effective control over the social and economic conditions for employment at sea.

European citizens are showing an increasing interest in their environment, its organisation and the actions that affect it, and they find compelling examples and lobby strongly when the sea and coastlines are involved.

In the same way as the Coastal Forums that co-ordinate and give a voice to the inhabitants and main players most directly concerned with the developments affecting the coastline of the south of England, similar platforms for information, dialogue and consultation will develop along the coastlines of the Channel and the seas of Europe.

Cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration work within the Channel area should be a successful means of implementing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

Effective planning and management frameworks of the marine and coastal environment should be based on a clear vision or goal shared between all stakeholders and the public in general. ICZM is an essential tool to maximise the quality of life of coastal inhabitants in Europe. It is about information and people skills identifying stakeholders and helping them to understand each others needs, aiming to achieve a democratic and representative planning system.

Whether carried out on a European, national or local scale, a maritime policy for the organisation of coastal areas must give due weight to the presence of these stakeholders and the participative approach involved.

In order to develop citizenship, any such policy should also develop initiatives linked to the education of citizens (and in particular young people) about the marine and coastal environment.

1.2.2 Knowledge and Observation

The debates about the Channel have shown the huge range of data and information to be considered when addressing questions related to the management of the marine environment, the management of coastal practices, the relation between the land and sea areas and the working conditions for professionals out at sea.

A better scientific appreciation of the phenomena will enable public and private stakeholders to better understand existing constraints.

The eco-systemic approach favoured by the European Commission for its marine strategy and a future maritime policy means that European, national and local measures must be given greater support in order to promote improved observation of actions and interactions.

The ecosystem approach must be founded in science and based on an appropriate level of evidence and data. There is a wealth of expertise and excellence in the work already undertaken to understand the marine environment in the Channel. This knowledge could enable the Channel area to become a leading maritime space in exploring the challenges for managing Europe's seas.

Moreover, the Channel area would be an ideal pilot area for research into this aspect of sea management because of:

- Its geographical situation: the Channel area is, like the Baltic sea, a restricted area;
- Its physical character: geology, climate, important tidal and wave activity;
- Strong competencies and expertise on new issues (impacts linked to coastal erosion, movement of sediments and climate change, issues linked to estuaries and land-sea relations, etc...);
- The density of activities undertaken within it (the busiest seaway in the world handling around 70% of the EU's sea borne trade);
- Its political situation: two countries and local authorities active in maritime co-operation;
- The governance in the area (CIEM Atlantic division, European maritime cross-border co-operation programmes, European Marine Strategy areas), etc...

1.2.3 The Rules and Adherence to the Rules

The promulgation of rules on maritime activity, the application of those rules and the related controls do not fall directly under the competencies of regional and local stakeholders situated around the maritime basin of the Channel.

However, this topic has been regularly referred to in the debates on the Green Paper where the following questions are particularly considered:

- Maritime safety and risk prevention in the Channel,
- Economic and social dumping,
- Social conditions for sailors and people working at sea,
- Maritime pollution and respect for the environment,
- Sustainable exploitation of fishing resources.

For many observers, the establishment of a European Maritime Area could enable the implementation of suitable and harmonised regulations applicable to all European waters.

Globalisation has encouraged competition, leading at an increase in maritime trade and the associated economic, social, environmental and safety impacts that accompany this. The establishment of such a European maritime area would offer a platform to respond to these issues and the opportunity to tackle such challenges as climate change at an appropriate level.

Even if the sea is an area for freedom of initiative, Channel area stakeholders think that it should not be a lawless place. The reinforcement of a European law of the sea could, in adherence to the principle of subsidiarity, provide a useful basis for amending the Community regulations relating to the European maritime basins.

Whilst the British and French local authorities may have no influence in matters of maritime safety policy, they are the first to be affected by any major incidents (as proved recently, i.e. MSC Napoli).

As a result, they are asking for increased information and dialogue regarding the Channel sea basin. They would like the opportunity to participate in developing the rules governing maritime activities, in order to take account of the increase in conflicting maritime uses in the different European maritime basins.

2. Knowledge and Governance of the Channel Area : Issues relating to the Sectors and Space

The Channel is an extremely important area of the European continent and is an area of confluence and intense activity. Consequently, it is the site for numerous conflicts between economic activities generating considerable volumes of people and goods, and significant environmental concerns.

As a result, we are pleased at the thought being given by the European Commission in its Green Paper to an integrated maritime policy. In the line with the work done by our Assembly, this gives us the opportunity to see this area and its issues in its overall geographic and territorial context from a crosscutting perspective with all the participants involved. We ask for the Channel area to be recognised as a separate sea basin, by the EU.

We believe that policies relating to the sea require a multi-sector and multi-actor approach and we hope that the integrated approach taken by the European Commission will be followed up with effective and practical action at all levels of governance.

We believe that a European policy on this matter must complement national, regional and local policies, and we are looking for the full participation of our local authorities in defining and implementing an integrated maritime policy under the powers they possess. We are also counting on the full participation of all the stakeholders.

In addition, the work carried out by the Arc Manche Assembly in the framework of the EMDI project, which has enabled us to better understand the issues at stake (global, specific and sectoral), propose strategic orientations for future co-operations (see annex 2), and list the projects already implemented or emerging in the Channel allows us to respond to the proposals of the European Commission on two main aspects:

- Knowledge of the basins that can be used by the decision makers: the need for diagnosis;
- A new system of governance to be established for each maritime basin – dialogues and consultations – plans for action and experimentation.

2.1 Information and Observations

2.1.1 Mutual exchange and organisation of knowledge of the Channel – observation elements in the Channel

The Arc Manche Assembly fully shares the view of the Green Paper that “for a better understanding of the competing uses of the oceans, better information and data on maritime activities is needed, whether it be social, economic or recreational, and the impact of these activities on the resources base”.

To do this, the European Commission proposes the creation of a European observation and data network for the marine environment and the implementation of European programmes aimed at establishing detailed maps of the European coastal waters (a European Atlas of Coastal Waters) to allow better organisation of the area and greater safety.

These proposals address the concerns expressed by the Arc Manche Assembly on the importance of having information and data of good quality about the maritime basin.

- Prior to the creation of this network, it would be beneficial for the European Commission to identify the existing data, their format and where they are held, as well the requirements for priority information relating to the issues identified for each sea basin. In the Channel area, data should be gathered in the following areas in particular:
 - Socio-economics: There are gaps in the available socio-economic data. Some sectors are well covered but others are not. Also, the collection and processing of this data is not very well co-ordinated. Some tools already exist, such as the work on the maritime economy by IFREMER [French research institute for exploitation of the sea], statistical data from ENIM [social security organisation for seagoing personnel], data from European agencies, etc. Two courses of action may be pursued: create a network of the existing data centres then identify and fill in the gaps;
 - Knowledge and Monitoring of Coastal Habitats: At the time of the implementation of the Framework Directive on Water, of Natura 2000 and the extension of the ICZM measures, it is essential for public decision-makers and scientists to have clear information on the fauna and flora of coastal areas, as

well as coastal change or coastal processes. This information is needed to draw up inventories, measure the impact of the facilities to be provided and to ensure follow up. In Brittany, data is being gathered in the REBENT network; in Europe, the MESH (Mapping European Seabed Habitats) project is pursuing a similar objective (a project financed as part of the Interreg III-B North-West Europe Programme). The Channel Coast Observatory at the National Oceanographic Center is also collecting data in relation to coastal monitoring (see www.channelcoast.org);

- Renewable Energies: The recent EU decision to adopt a firm 20% target in renewables by 2020 provides an impetus for full exploitation of every available source of renewable energy. Research on the potential for extracting energy from the waters of the Channel should be developed in order to contribute to this objective;
 - Sustainable fishing: Proposals have been made towards a better multi-disciplinary understanding of the marine ecosystem in the Channel and a more selective and energy saving fishing activity.
- The future European network for observation and data on the marine environment could hand over responsibility to the maritime and marine observatories in each basin for the gathering and dissemination of information to local, regional, national and European public decision-makers and maritime participants. **The Channel area could be chosen as a pilot area for the development of a complete tool for learning about the zone (an Observatory in the Channel Area network)**, that would integrate economic, social and environmental data. This tool would assess and use projects for gathering data in the existing sectors or those currently being studied (see box below) and interface with the European observation network. It would also allow data to be gathered for responding to specific issues in the Channel area and developing the diagnoses required to produce a definition of local public actions and policies, in the same way as the instigators of integrated management measures in the coastal areas. It would appear possible for such a tool relating to the Channel area to be exhaustive given that the territory is circumscribed, only involves two States and a limited number of local authorities meeting at the Arc Manche Assembly, and numerous centres of cutting edge research.

Some Examples of Initiatives/Projects:

In the Channel area, various projects for gathering information on maritime and marine activities in the Channel area have been carried out or are in progress, including:

- *Creation of a territorial intelligence-gathering tool developed as part of the Espace Manche Development Initiative (EMDI) supported by the Interreg III-B North-West Europe programme;*
- *Creation of an Information Centre on short-sea shipping, which would centralise information on commercial vessels in the Channel area (availability, geographic situation, size of vessel). The information would be available to the ports member of the network of regional and local Channel Ports to make better use of vessels;*
- *Project relating to the topography and erosion of the Channel coastlines by an airborne laser system (under development at the University of Caen) - Project on knowledge (cartography, SIG) of the marine eco-systems in the Channel area (under development by IFREMER);*
- *The Interreg Franco-British Beaches at Risk project that brings together coastal researchers and managers from both sides of the Channel could be extended to the whole of the Channel area. By sharing expertise and knowledge and with data from new research, this project is providing information that will improve the management of beaches for coastal defence, tourism and wildlife conservation;*

- The CHARM project that focuses on the conservation and evaluation of living resources of key species and their habitats in the Dover Straits. This project could be extended to the whole of the Channel area.

- The European Commission could play a supporting role in defining comparable indicators for providing information on each basin and making tools available for gathering and processing these data and maps.

2.1.2 From Knowledge to Governance

➤ Sector and Inter-sector Diagnosis

The Channel Arc Manche Assembly considers it particularly vital that the work undertaken by the European Commission for an integrated maritime policy should take account of the specific aspects of the territories of each of the European maritime basins, including the Channel, therefore specifically addressing the issues identified in the maritime basins.

Our approach on this point is highlighted in the positions taken by CPMR of which a large percentage of the members are part. This position has also been expressed in the notice of the Committee of the Regions (Mr Döring) adopted at the last plenary session on 13 and 14 February 2007 and in which the Channel appears and is referred to as a specific sea basin.

On the basis of the issues identified, the detailed data gathered and the diagnosis made of each maritime basin, new methods of governance may be developed and the choices for managing the marine and coastal areas may be taken most effectively with all the parties involved (European, national, regional and local).

Better observation and knowledge will enable decision-makers to take better decisions and stakeholders to participate in debates on the basis of shared information.

On the basis of the issues already identified and the strategic targets of the Channel area (see annex 2), and including the expectations expressed by Channel area stakeholders during the consultation period, we propose the development of diagnosis on the themes listed below, which could become important decision-making tools:

- Maritime safety in the Channel – current state and ways of improving it;
- Increase of maritime transport in the Channel - threats and opportunities at sea and on land;
- Renewable energy resources – potential and threats in the Channel;
- Effects of global warming on the environment and the economy of the Channel;
- Economic and social issues.

➤ Mapping and Spatial Planning Exercises

An exhaustive cartographic analysis of marine and maritime activities in the Channel area should be carried out. This would allow identification of the potential conflicts of use and better management of these conflicts together with new methods of dialogue and consultation between stakeholders.

2.2 Dialogue and Consultation: Plans for Action and Experimentation in the Channel Area

The development of a spatial approach in the European maritime policy seems to favour the development of integrated maritime governance for each maritime basin. It should also facilitate the development of experiments and pilot action with greater collective effectiveness in marine and maritime management of the European basins. In addition, as an experiment, a number of platforms for exchange and joint action could be set up in the Channel area, supported by the European Union, in particular in relation to the ports, marine spatial planning, the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and the safety of sea traffic.

2.2.1 Better Governance of Port Activities in the Channel Area

Major connections between maritime and land-based activities and the contribution of regional and local ports to the regional and local economy and coastal areas are essential. The port sites in the Channel area coastlines now face numerous challenges for the future. To face up to these challenges, they will have to implement a pro-active strategy and develop their port sites to increase their value on the national, European and international scene.

As a result, the existence of numerous commercial ports with a regional dimension in the Channel area will necessarily lead to strong links between them. However, competition between the ports must not hinder the development of co-operation between them that may be beneficial for all the main players. Co-operation between ports may then have two aspects: firstly, one relating to industry between ports that carry on the same activity, and secondly, a territorial aspect, that is, between ports that share certain common characteristics.

The Arc Manche Assembly deplores the low importance given by the European Commission to port activities in the Green Paper. It emphasises the importance of examining at a European level the distribution of activities in the regional and secondary ports, vehicles for rebalancing of methods and development of the regional and local economies. The importance of a network of secondary ports that are not only a source of employment and the creation of wealth in the coastal territories but are also able to contribute to attaining the objectives of the Union regarding the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, through the optimal use of existing boats and better intermodal balance.

This network of regional and local ports complements the main general ports on a European and international scale.

The establishing of a network of local and regional Channel ports (13 French ports and 17 British ports) does constitute a pioneering initiative of governance that could be supported by the European Commission and/or extended to the other ports in the Channel area.

The objective of this initiative in establishing a network, linked to the creation of a maritime identity for the Channel area, is to develop a coherent policy for the ports: identification of complementary aspects between the secondary port infrastructures in the Channel façade, increase in the value of potential developments in the secondary ports through maximum use of the fleet of available vessels, exchanges of good practice, etc.

It is essential that initiatives such as the creation of the network of local and regional Channel ports are supported as it is a unique opportunity to experiment the establishment of a port system at the Channel level.

Once consolidated, the secondary ports network in the Channel area could extend its co-operation to the three main ports of Southampton, Le Havre and Rouen that represent the hub of trade in the Channel area. Co-operation between ports of different sizes is also essential for promoting the reduction of risks and for harnessing the best part of the activity that passes through the Channel.

2.2.2 Management of the marine environment and ICZM

We believe that the difficulties linked to the sustainable management of the marine and coastal environment and management of conflicting uses of the sea are the result of the lack of dialogue between all key stakeholders, and of a clear vision/high level goals that are shared between these stakeholders; as well as the lack of clarity in responsibilities in the maritime space and the lack of data.

These long-term goals give planning a sense of purpose and direction and cannot be developed when governance structures are fragmented or when the information on the human and natural environments is incomprehensible to stakeholders. This is a problem for planning for the whole of Europe and the Channel area is no exception. We therefore believe that the Blue Book must properly address the issue of the governance of European's seas and oceans.

Existing planning frameworks have a territorial focus and often do not address how coastal developments may affect the seas and vice versa. They are most often sectorally based, which does not encourage an integrated approach. In this context, we believe that any plans and frameworks must set out how to identify where decisions and their subsequent delivery should happen. They must also ensure that decision-makers are adequately informed and advised about the full range of marine issues.

At all governance levels, adaptative management can provide a way to overcome uncertainties about the future and enable a rational planning framework.

ICZM and marine spatial planning are two tools that should be combined to resolve these difficulties:

- Many ICZM initiatives have been developed in the Channel area. ICZM implementation needs a coherent policy framework from the EU to sub-regional levels, including European long-term goals for regional seas, national strategies setting out clear operational targets. Such strategies need to:
 - Promote wide understanding of ICZM and its benefits;
 - Encourage partnerships and networks;
 - Promote integrated planning, land and sea based;
 - Provide adequate government support including funding, guidance etc.
- Marine Spatial Planning as set out in the UK Marine Bill and successfully implemented in many EU countries is a major tool that should be considered by the European Commission.

The objectives for the Marine Spatial Planning system are:

- To articulate government policy for the marine environment and activities;
- To balance economic, social, cultural and environmental needs (and hence contribute to sustainable development goals);
- Adopt a strategic, plan-led approach to the management of the marine and coastal environment aiming to guarantee the sustainable exploitation of its resources ;
- To recognise natural not administrative boundaries

- Adopt a more strategic, efficient and cost-effective approach to information gathering and dissemination;
- Recognise important natural resources, heritage sites, and existing marine activities and uses;
- Plan for the development of new activities and emerging technologies;
- Create more efficient use of marine space;
- Enable better understanding of the cumulative effects of different activities;
- Provide stakeholders with opportunities to influence the formulation of policy.

We believe that Marine Spatial Planning should be a plan that is time-bound and regularly updated. It should be flexible and not rigid – the idea is not to create ‘zones’ of activity, but to ensure that the marine environment is regulated, managed and protected in a way that meets the multiple and potentially conflicting uses of the sea and coast. The plan should be hierarchical in nature (to be implemented at an international, national, regional and local level).

The Arc Manche Assembly proposes the creation of a Channel Coastal Forum, which would be a structure for dialogue where a large number of stakeholders could discuss the relevance and possible implementation of ICZM and Marine Spatial Planning principles in the Channel area.

The role of this Forum could be to:

- **List all planning and management frameworks existing in the Channel area;**
- **Identify key principles which could guide decision making at local/regional/maritime basin level or sectoral level;**
- **Discuss issues such as the creation of Natura 2000 areas in the sea or designation of dangerous transport corridors etc...**

Indeed ICZM/MSP plans developed in the UK will have impacts in France and vice-versa.

2.2.3 The Channel: a place of experimentation in navigational security

The channel is one of the busiest maritime areas in the world. Every day, 500 to 600 commercial ships pass through, added to which there are numerous ferry crossings (70 to 120 daily), and fishing and leisure activity. This density of traffic is a central factor to consider about the Channel. The Channel should be looked at from an overall perspective: from now on it is a question of thinking in terms of navigational safety, and no longer just maritime safety. At stake are the interactions between the many different uses of the same stretch of water and the risks this brings about. Dangers exist for the environment and for the coastlines arising from hazardous cargo transported by numerous ships, but also for mankind: collision between fishing and commercial vessels, risks presented by lost containers, dramatic consequences of a collision between a ferry and a commercial ship...

Considerations about navigational safety in a stretch of water of the scale of the Channel could focus on two major themes:

- Control of maritime traffic, in an area, which is bordered by consumers with very differing constraints and levels of knowledge. This is achieved, notably, by the development of technical means of surveillance and regulation and by improving the spatial organisation of the traffic. In the area of strategic vision for the Channel Basin, a project known as EMITS sets out action plans for the

development and integration of maritime information (data collection) with a view to preventative security;

- Information (collection of data) and adaptation to the particular risks that this stretch of water presents. In particular, this is happening through work on setting up and assuring that lookout is kept on board ships. For example, in project Interreg III-B EMDI, a project around the establishment of professional codes of practice to reduce the risk of collision between fishing vessels and commercial vessels is being prepared (project PECHABOR/SAFE FISHING).

This preventative principle needs to deliver cooperation on pollution control, which is already well under way. In fact, the local authorities have already undertaken initiatives, in the framework of the EMDI project, where a study on the response to a pollution incident on either side of the Channel has been carried out, as well as within the EROCIPS project.

EROCIPS - Emergency Response to Coastal Oil, Chemical and Inert Pollution from Shipping.

The aim of the EROCIPS Project is to enable our environment and communities to coexist safely and sustainably with all types of shipping traffic in Atlantic Area waters. The EROCIPS Partnership (consisting of 16 organisations from 6 different European countries) has been working to minimise the impact of future coastal pollution incidents. In order to strengthen our response to pollution incidents the EROCIPS Partners have been pursuing a trans-national integrated approach to emergency response for coastal pollution incidents through:

- *Developing an understanding of possible marine pollution scenarios and pollution risks;*
- *Drawing up effective clean up strategies;*
- *Creating regional modelling systems to predict the movement of the pollution;*
- *Collating counter pollution resources;*
- *Designing training manuals for response workers and volunteers;*
- *Providing information to response managers and decision-makers;*
- *Producing environmental protocols to determine the impact of an incident.*

The results achieved so far are in the form of guidelines, handbooks, maps and manuals, and are now available on the EROCIPS website www.erocips.org. All other Project outputs will be posted on the website by the 31st of October 2007 when the Project concludes.

It is worth highlighting that the focus and knowledge gained through this project enabled the emergency planning staff within Devon and Dorset County Councils to be more prepared and ready to respond to the challenges the MSC Napoli incident posed.

A preventative approach can be adopted to respond to a well-identified problem, but it can also be used to put in place a proactive approach to future developments. In fact, two potential developments of the sea to be considered more closely are:

- The development of coastal navigation and the putting into place of motorways of the sea, in the Channel, this will bring about a rise in the density of maritime traffic;
- The need for energy diversification and use of renewable marine energy could lead to the setting up of installations at sea which could be navigational hazards.

As a result, it is vitally important to take an overview of the organisation of Channel traffic as a whole with immediate effect.

Marine safety is the remit of national authorities, within the framework of international and community law. Without going over the reasons for this distribution of responsibilities, local authorities consider themselves able to offer real added value in the overall understanding of navigational safety, in this regard, the French authorities have expertise in port and training matters. Moreover, the interests of the local authorities in taking strong action in this area cannot be disputed: it is their coasts and their populations who are often the first victims of the maritime incidents and accidents.

It is clear that cooperation between states and between authorities is desirable. History shows that at Channel Basin level, it works particularly well (Manche Plan, EMDI project)

The specificity of the Channel, the high level of cooperation are two points that show the EU could put in place innovative solutions for regulating maritime traffic: technical means of detection and tracking, regulations about equipment, strengthened means of intervention, specific training...

Annex 1: List of work and consultations organised around the Channel basin

- South West Region: Since the publication of the Maritime Policy Green Paper last June, the South West has engaged in a detailed and constructive consultation process to develop a regional response. In October 2006, more than 100 stakeholders interested in the future of the South West's maritime resources and coastline attended a conference in Weymouth hosted by Dorset County Council. The event was attended by John Richardson, Head of the Commission's Maritime Policy Task Force. A key outcome from the Weymouth conference was the establishment of the South West Maritime Task and Finish Group, coordinated by South West Brussels Office, tasked with drafting the regional response. The group organised a technical seminar on 15 March 2007 at the Marine Skills Centre in Plymouth aimed to draw out the South West key messages on the consultation document. The first draft response was then developed and finalised in April at a second large-scale regional conference hosted by Devon County Council in Exeter. A South West delegation officially submitted the final response endorsed by the South West Regional Development Agency and the South West Regional Assembly to Commissioner Borg on 14 June 2007 in Brussels.
- Southampton City Council: Southampton has decided to respond to the consultation via the NEW EPOC project partnership. The NEW EPOC project – Renewing the Economic Prosperity of Port Cities – is a 4-year project (2004-2007) part-funded by the Interreg IIIC programme. The partnership represents a cross-section of Europe's medium-sized port cities – Bilbao, Bremen, Cherbourg, Gijon, Kaliningrad, Patras, Southampton, Trieste and Taranto. The project has addressed the following topics in relation to the port/maritime sector (urban challenges, maritime cultural heritage, social inclusion and working toolset/data exchange).
- Hampshire County Council: Hampshire County Council compiled a response to the UK consultation from the Department of Transport. This document was used as the basis for the general consultation on the Maritime Green Paper. Although no events were arranged, Hampshire County Council used its links with the CPMR to obtain further support for the great importance of the Channel as a major maritime region. This opinion is now reflected in the CPMR's position.
- Haute-Normandie: The Haute-Normandie response, sent to the European Commission focused on the role played by French coastal regions in the port economy and governance. This issue might be considered in the framework of the follow-up of the work undertaken by the Poseidon group.
- Bretagne: On 9 March 2007, the Bretagne Region organised a daylong debate on the social aspects of a European maritime policy. In addition to its other forms of involvement in the consultation following publication of the Green Paper by the Commission, the Bretagne Region insisted on discussing this central issue that has not received much attention. In the presence of Chairman Jean-Yves Le Drian, Mr John Richardson (Maritime Affairs Task Force) and Lenia Samuel (DG Employment), the day brought together more than 150 leaders of the maritime world: the European Commission, the European maritime regions, trade associations and contractors, central administrations, research and education, associations and so on. The debate focused on training, life styles, working life and international standards. The main events of the day will soon be available online. The Bretagne Region drafted a report on the social aspects of a European maritime policy that it sent to the European Commission. This report is available on the European Commission's website.
- Basse-Normandie : Co-ordinated by the departments of the Regional Council, the contribution of Basse-Normandie is the fruit of the work of all the sea stakeholders based in Basse-Normandie who met on 16 March 2007 in Cherbourg in support of this contribution. It is therefore not the contribution of the Regional Council of Basse-

Normandie but that of all the ports, all the local authorities, economic development organisations, research laboratories, consular organisations, Government departments, union organisations, professional groups, in fact everyone in Basse-Normandie with an interest in the development of the maritime economy.

- Assembly of the Regions of the Arc Manche: A conference was organised on 29 March 2007 in Rouen on the subject "The challenges of an Integrated European Maritime Policy". What governance for marine and maritime activities in the Channel area? After a presentation of the main positions of the regional, inter-regional (Arc Manche and CPMR) and national (Britain and France) leaders, the conference was organised into two round tables: (1) The Channel, maritime areas: shipping and maritime safety; (2) The Channel, a marine area to be improved and protected. In total, 125 French and British people took part in this conference.

Annex 2: A Strategic Vision for the Channel area: Summary



Why a strategic vision?

Despite increasing co-operation, particularly within the framework of Arc Manche and the INTERREG programmes, awareness of the particularity of the Channel area in Europe and the importance of the stakes at issue still remains weak. This is why a coherent approach to developing this area is required to ensure that it is recognised at a national and European level. In particular, it is necessary to demonstrate why new European policies should be fully tested out in the area.

Creating a strategic vision for an area with such complex issues at stake but also rich in opportunities, must be undertaken with an open mind, aiming to meet the needs of its inhabitants, in particular the young.

Consequently, the strategic issues at stake in this area need to be better identified and shared so as to create a common vision and appropriate policies, but also a shared governance between the different stakeholders of the English Channel.

The regions of the Channel area

Shared history and maritime trade have created a common heritage. The English Channel should not merely be viewed as a maritime thoroughfare, one of the busiest in the world, as it also constitutes a common Franco-British sea with particularly varied and multiple uses. The proximity of two major global cities, London and Paris, is another shared characteristic.

However, there are also many areas of asymmetry generating different flows and exchanges. In this respect, the Channel represents a growing locus for European integration between the British Isles and the Continent. The Channel tunnel and the development of transport links have contributed to this, by modifying time-distance within the area.

The Channel area can be defined geographically in different ways, but always occupies a central strategic position at the heart of maritime North West Europe, as a maritime gateway to the North sea, the Baltic sea and part of the continent.

Localised impact of global issues

A number of global-wide issues impact on the Channel area:

- globalisation resulting in the growth of maritime trade and greater competition,
- development of the knowledge economy in which growing innovation becomes the vector of future growth,
- increasing pressure on marine environments and importance of maritime co-operation for the sustainable management of resources,
- growth in the flows of goods which necessitates greater intermodality and short sea shipping to produce greater positive benefits,

- increasing challenges presented by questions of energy, climate change and preservation of the coastal and marine environment,
- the growth and ageing of coastal populations in Europe.

Specific issues

The Channel is also facing several issues, which are specifically European:

- the busiest maritime thoroughfare in the world, and gateway to North West Europe for commercial traffic, with the particular challenge of co-habitation between competing maritime and coastal activities,
- a greatly coveted area (in landscape terms) offering a high quality environment in proximity to nearby densely populated regions, namely Paris and London, but which itself also generates opportunities for further growth,
- the potential for increasing a real "crossroads" effect rather than a simple "corridor" effect, so as to be able to add economic value and new employment across the regions of the Channel area,
- a common history, source of a common cultural heritage to be both revived and developed.

Sector-based issues

These arise out of the global and specific issues already identified:

- **tourism**: the rich natural, cultural and architectural heritage can be further exploited through cross-Channel co-operation.
- **fishing and fishing resources**: the challenges facing the fishing sector, the importance of this activity for coastal areas, increasing pressure on the marine environment demand increased co-operation.
- **maritime safety**: because of the increase in maritime traffic and its great diversity in the Channel area, this is a particularly crucial issue, the responsibility for which lies firstly with the relevant international, European and national authorities, but which also strongly impacts on local authorities when they are affected by maritime disasters.
- **transport intermodality**: continued improvement is essential for increasing the positive economic benefits of goods traffic while minimising its negative impacts for the environment. Co-operation between regional and local ports of the Channel is essential in helping develop a more sustainable and balanced transport system.
- **integrated coastal zone management**: the combined effect of large scale maritime activity and intense pressure on coastlines makes the development and pooling of resources and common approaches essential.
- **higher education, R&D and transfer of technology**: a better positioning of the Channel area in the knowledge economy in conjunction with a widening sphere of influence at a European level, will clearly drive more co-operation activities.

Implementing a shared vision

Co-operation between the regions of the Channel area will provide a more effective response to the various issues raised than actions pursued separately. It will also help to forge a wider vision with greater depth and coherence concerning the future of this area. This is why a genuine strategy must be implemented which responds clearly to problems at the scale at which they occur.

Five strategic directions of co-operation in response to the major issues:

- **Strengthening the cohesion of the Channel area**
→ so that the inhabitants and stakeholders recognise this cross-border region, as an area of opportunity and mutual benefit;

- **Exploiting and strengthening the territorial position of the Channel area in Europe**
→ to make the most of the strategic position of this area in Europe for commercial traffic so as to guarantee a balanced development of both sides of the Channel;
- **Contributing to safe navigation in the Channel area**
→ to reduce the risks of accident in this area and thus to ensure the long-term viability of its multiple uses;
- **Ensuring the sustainable development of the Channel area**
→ to affirm its place as a region of excellence in the context of globalisation and the knowledge economy and to seek joint response to common environmental and social problems;
- **Promoting integrated coastal zone management**
→ to respond in more appropriate ways to different challenges facing coastal areas, engaging the different actors involved, and utilising the multiple areas of expertise available.

Further details of the strategic directions and areas of co-operation are presented in the full document, a Strategic Vision for the Channel area.

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