



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Impact Assessment Board

Brussels,
D(2012)

Opinion

Title **DG ENV/MARE - Impact assessment on an EU initiative on Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management**

(resubmitted draft version of 20 March 2012)

(A) Context

The purpose of this Impact Assessment is to assess EU action towards an integrated approach to the governance of our coasts, seas and oceans. This means moving away from a sectoral approach on how European waters are managed to a more integrated and coherent decision making process using the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) governance tools. As this concerns an integrated policy approach it is not about creating a new policy as such, but aims at better exploiting synergies and increasing resource efficiency among the existing policies affecting coasts, seas and oceans.

(B) Overall assessment

The report has been improved following the recommendations issued by the Board in its first opinion. It more transparently acknowledges the absence of reliable empirical data, for instance with respect to the scope of spatial conflicts in European seas, or the expected benefits and administrative costs for Member States. However, some issues still need to be further strengthened. Firstly, the report should better demonstrate the need for, and value-added, of legislative EU action to remedy the identified problems, including an explicit discussion of the synergies expected to result from integrating/combining the MSP and ICZM policy tools within a legislative instrument. Secondly, it should more illustratively portray the measures Member States will be expected to implement under the different policy options. Thirdly, the report should further strengthen the impact analysis by providing greater detail on the underlying evidence, assumptions made and methodologies used. Finally, it should distinguish more clearly between the economic, environmental and social impacts for the different policy options, including an indication of their magnitude.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

(1) Better demonstrate the value added of legislative EU action. The report should better explain the need for and value added of EU legislative action to remedy the identified problems. This should include a more explicit discussion of the synergies between the integrated application of MSP and ICZM in an EU context.

(2) Better present the concrete measures for the different policy options. In describing the options, the report should present a more in-depth description of the concrete measures that Member States will be expected to implement under the different policy options, e.g. by adding some more concrete and illustrative examples. In addition, the report should clarify if (and how) the proposed measures will be applicable to Member States without coastal areas (including an estimation of potential administrative costs).

(3) Improve the assessment of impacts. The report should further strengthen the impact analysis, by presenting more explicitly the evidence used, the underlying assumptions and the applied methodologies. It should be more precise on concrete environmental and social impacts, and better distinguish them between the different options. Furthermore, the report should more clearly corroborate the different impacts (particularly their magnitude) for all policy options. The report should demonstrate more explicitly that a higher administrative burden would be (over-) compensated by potential cost savings. The expected synergies arising from an integrated application of MSP and ICZM should be presented and analysed in more detail, particularly as regards the comparison of the options.

(D) Procedure and presentation

Most of the information currently found in Annex 2a (Detailed problem definition and underlying drivers) should be moved to the corresponding section(s) in the main text. However, the readability of the report should be improved by shortening and streamlining the main text, e.g. by moving some tables and figures to the annexes.

(E) IAB scrutiny process

Reference number	2011/MARE/017 + 2011/ENV/013
External expertise used	No
Date of IAB meeting	Written procedure The present opinion concerns a resubmitted draft IA report. The first opinion was issued on 16 December 2011.