



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 28 February 2023
(OR. en)

6119/23

POLMAR 7
POLGEN 14
MARE 5
CONUN 36
COMAR 9
PECHE 40
SUSTDEV 26
TRANS 44

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	ST 5452/23
Subject:	List of commitments to be presented by the European Union at the Our Ocean Conference (OOC) (Panama, 2-3 March 2023)

Delegations will find in the Annex the list of commitments to be presented by the European Union at the Our Ocean Conference (OOC) (Panama, 2-3 March 2023) as approved by the Council (General Affairs) on 6 February 2023.

**List of commitments to be presented by the European Union at the 8th edition of the Our
Ocean Conference (OOC)
(Panama, 2-3 March 2023)**

Sustainable Fisheries

1. The European Union commits EUR 900 000 in the years 2023-2024 to support the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in the implementation of the decisions of the 35th session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (in September 2022) on the improved implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments and tools for sustainable fisheries. This covers 1) strengthening the implementation of the FAO Compliance Agreement; 2) promoting the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment; 3) promoting, disseminating and developing the series on Technical Guidelines on Methodologies and Indicators for the Estimation of the Magnitude and Impact of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing; and 4) convening the first session of FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management.
2. The European Union will finance actions to support Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and relevant International Agreements in the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Arctic and Antarctic Oceans and the Mediterranean and Black Seas, through voluntary contributions under the European Maritime, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) amounting to EUR 24 million during the period 2022-2023. The actions will include support to scientific research to underpin science-based management decisions, support to improved monitoring of fishing activities and compliance with RFMOs rules, to the fight against IUU fishing, to the undertaking of performance reviews and to ensuring the effective participation of developing Coastal States in the proceedings of these organisations.

3. The European Union commits EUR 1 million to the WTO funding mechanism on fisheries subsidies. The objective is to support developing countries, through technical assistance and capacity building for the implementation of the disciplines under the WTO agreement on harmful fisheries subsidies.
4. The European Union commits EUR 18 million of research funding in the 2023-2024 Work Programme of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation to support mitigation and adaptation solutions to minimise climate change impacts on fisheries and aquaculture.
5. The European Union commits EUR 17 million from Horizon Europe Framework Programme for research and innovation to support automatic species recognition and artificial intelligence to fight illegal fish discards reinforcing the EU fisheries control system, and to develop green and energy-efficient small-scale fishing fleets.
6. The European Union commits EUR 3 million to develop a global toolkit to integrate the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and community surveillance into the approaches of small-scale fishers and their representatives.
7. The European Union commits EUR 600 000 to develop by 2024 a web-based platform to register catches from marine recreational fisheries in the EU. This system will allow the collection of reliable data, contributing to ensure the sustainable use and management of marine biological resources. With this web-based platform, called Recfishing.eu, the European Union will contribute to put in place a technologically advanced and effective monitoring and control system for recreational fisheries. The European Union already invested EUR 428.000 since 2019 for a pilot scheme.

Climate change

8. The European Union commits EUR 12 million to facilitate the access to Copernicus data and products through a Copernicus Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean operated by Panama. This Centre will facilitate timely access to all Copernicus sentinel data for policy implementation, sustainable development and science specially in the frame of coastal and ocean related matters in a context of climate change and natural disasters.
9. The European Union announces a contribution of EUR 33.5 million in 2023 to strengthen marine environmental monitoring and forecasting, through its satellite-monitoring programme (Copernicus) and Wekeo service that allows the international research community to access through a one-stop-shop all products describing the past, present and future of the earth system together with online tools for environmental science on cloud computing facilities. In 2023, special emphasis will be put on developing coastal products for ocean monitoring such as coastal bathymetry and wind fields globally.
10. The European Union will issue through its Copernicus marine service the annual ocean state report by June 2023 (in the “Science” journal special issue on “State of the Planet”) to report on ocean state and ocean health over the globe (in terms of sea level rise, arctic monitoring, acidification or biogeochemical variations). Two SDG14 indicators will be produced by Copernicus and published by EUROSTAT on ocean acidification and eutrophication in Europe. The Copernicus Programme will also dedicate two new thematic hubs to better navigate in Copernicus: the coastal thematic hub and the arctic thematic hub.
11. The European Union will renew its satellite constellation with the launch as soon as possible of Sentinel-1C, the third unit of the Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) Sentinel constellation for a value of EUR 250 million. Sentinel-1C will be precious to continue the real time monitoring of icebergs and ice melting over the Arctic to monitor the effect of climate change but as well to ensure safe operations at sea. This capacity will be of interest as well to keep monitoring potential oil pollution at sea around the globe.

12. The European Union commits EUR 36 million from Horizon Europe Framework Programme for research and innovation to support science on the ocean-climate nexus by closing the research gaps on Essential Ocean Variables in support of global assessments, improving ocean models for climate projections from seasonal to decadal timeframes and from regional to local scales, and advancing blue carbon knowledge and management solutions for ocean and coastal carbon- and biodiversity-rich ecosystems and habitats in Europe and the polar regions.
13. The European Union will continue its support to the EU4OCEANOBS action by allocating another EUR 4 million. Through EU4OCEANOBS, the European Union supports a sustained European and Global Ocean Observing System and GEO Blue Planet, in order to sustain the acquisition of Essential Ocean Variables, improve ocean models and develop user driven services.
14. The European Union commits to address climate change and human activities threats to marine biodiversity in the Atlantic and Arctic basins, by allocating EUR 16 million of Horizon Europe research funding, in the 2023 Work Programme of the Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”.

Marine Protected Areas

15. The European Union will commit EUR 8.5 million under the Horizon Europe programme for Research and Innovation to develop the NECCTON Research and Development project. This four-years project aims (2023-2026) at enabling the European Copernicus Marine Service to deliver novel products to monitor and forecast marine ecosystems that support marine biodiversity conservation and food resources management policies. NECCTON will inter link new models with new biological data in the Copernicus marine systems, thus building novel capacities to simulate high trophic levels of the food web, benthic habitats, pollutants, and deliver projections of climate change impacts on marine ecosystems.

16. The European Union will commit EUR 44 million from Horizon Europe Framework Programme for research and innovation (2023-2024) to science-based Marine Protected Areas, to hybrid blue-grey nature-based solutions for marine and coastal infrastructures, to protect and restore degraded marine and coastal habitats (including deep sea habitats) and to improve the knowledge of ocean and coastal carbon- and biodiversity-rich ecosystems and habitats.
17. The European Union commits EUR 12 million to protect biodiversity and fight climate change in Benin by strengthening the management of the Mono delta biosphere reserve and supporting the development of the contiguous marine protected area of Nazoumè-Bouche du Roy. It will promote efficient management measures and the enhancement of areas of high ecological value and will contribute to strengthening the sustainable port ecosystem.
18. Capitalising on previous EU support for mangrove protection and management in Guyana, the European Union commits EUR 4.62 million to support institutional inter-agency coordination leading to an integrated coastal protection plan (including establishment of marine protected areas). Coastal communities will be assisted with the development of value chains for such mangrove products as honey, shellfish, charcoal and eco-tourism.
19. The European Union commits to fully implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in view of achieving good environmental status of Member States' marine waters and aims to revise the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, in order to ensure the effective and efficient protection of the marine environment.
20. The European Union commits to effectively protect at least 30% of Member States' marine waters by 2030, including 10% under strict protection, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Marine pollution

21. The European Union commits to set targets by 2024 for reducing the number of litter items below 20 items for every 100 meters of coastline and to set additional regulatory thresholds at least for seafloor and floating marine litter, including plastic litter.
22. The European Union has in November 2022 endorsed maximum acceptable levels for impulsive and continuous underwater noise in Member States' marine waters, to ensure a good environmental status of the marine environment. Regional Sea Conventions will play a key role to implement these thresholds on the ground, taking into account regional specificities, to address the adverse effects of both impulsive and continuous underwater noise. The threshold values will be part of the set of characteristics to be used by Member States in their determination of good environmental status in 2024.
23. The European Union commits EUR 28.5 million from Horizon Europe Framework Programme (2023-2024) to fill knowledge gaps and develop solutions to monitor emerging pollutants in the marine environment and to address nutrient pollution in the landscape-river-sea system in the Mediterranean Sea basin. The action supports the objectives of Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.
24. The European Union commits EUR 5 million to enhance effective policy action in ASEAN and its Member States concerning plastic production, waste avoidance and waste management to prevent marine plastic pollution in line with environmental standards circular economy principles.
25. The European Union reiterates its commitment to improve the availability and use of adequate port reception facilities for the delivery of ship-generated waste by efficiently implementing the Directive on Port Reception Facilities. The Directive, adopted in 2019, aims at protecting the marine environment. In particular, it encourages bringing passively fished waste and used fishing gear to port taking advantage of the fact that no additional waste fee will be charged for it.
26. The European Union reiterates its commitment to decrease discharges of polluting substances into the marine environment, including by taking measures targeting polluters through a revision of the Directive on ship-source pollution to be proposed in 2023.

Sustainable blue economies

27. The European Union reiterates its commitment to support a thriving European sustainable blue bioeconomy through its Horizon Europe Framework Programme for research and innovation (2023-2024) and the allocation of EUR 60 million to support international partnerships such as the European Partnership for a climate-neutral, sustainable and productive blue economy.
28. The European Union commits EUR 4 million to support the implementation of the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance (AAORIA) and the priorities identified in the AAORIA Declaration signed in Washington in 2022, including the coordination of marine and maritime research and innovation activities with Atlantic Ocean stakeholders and the integration of newcomers to AAORIA, including low- and middle-income countries. The activities will contribute to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
29. The European Union commits EUR 65 million from Horizon Europe Framework Programme for research and innovation (2023-2024) actions to develop selective breeding programme for organic aquaculture, and to develop new biotechnology applications from aquatic organisms. The action supports the objectives of Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.
30. The European Union commits EUR 12 million to step up the development of the Digital Twin of the Ocean (DTO) to deliver actionable ocean knowledge to all ocean actors. Under the Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”, it will keep developing a core infrastructure, the EU DTO, conceived as a public good, and building on the data assets from EMODnet and the ocean modelling capacities developed by the Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service as well as other from other sources. The EU commits to cooperate internationally on digital twin interoperability through the UN Ocean Decade.
31. The European Union commits EUR 5.9 million under the Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030” to support new solutions for offshore renewable energy, including research for nature-inclusive design and practices, and for repurposing offshore infrastructures under decommissioning, with an initial focus in European waters.

32. The European Union announces a contribution of EUR 2.5 million to contribute towards an inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development of Kiribati through the construction of a multi-purpose port in Kiritimati in line with the EU’s Global Gateway strategy. The specific objective of this action is the completion of feasibility studies and the preparation of a detailed engineering design for a multi-purpose port in Kiritimati.
33. The European Union announces a contribution of EUR 1.5 million to increase scientific capacity and create opportunities for ocean science to feed into decision making and bridge the gap between science and policy. This three-year intervention aims at establishing a larger ten-year programme “Pacific Solutions for a healthy Blue Pacific Continent: integrated ocean management to sustain livelihoods today and into the future”, which has been endorsed as a UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development Programme.
34. The European Union announces a contribution of EUR 10 million to the IMO’s Global Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCC) Network project – Phase 2. Phase 2 will support countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific in meeting the energy-efficiency and greenhouse-gas targets of the IMO. It will target MTCCs in these regions, while maintaining strategic links with MTCC-Asia and MTCC-Latin America (based in Panama).
35. The European Union announces a contribution of EUR 110 million to support the development of a sustainable blue economy in Tanzania. It will focus on (i) the environmental protection and a climate-resilient sustainable management of coastal ecosystems, (ii) the support to sustainable and job-intensive businesses in blue economy, including the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal ecosystems, and (iii) a transformative governance and policy reforms.
36. The European Union commits EUR 7 million to the development of the Port of Cotonou. In line with the EU’s Global Gateway strategy, this action will support the governance of the port sector and contribute to improving the performance of the port sector and its competitiveness, by targeting the supply chain. The action will ensure the systematic integration of environmental and climate considerations.

Maritime security

37. The European Union announces a EUR 5 million programme (GoGIN II) aimed to improve maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea to favour a sustainable blue economy economic development of the countries in the region. GoGIN II's objective is that the Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information System (YARIS) – a maritime domain awareness and coordination platform – is operational, handed over to the Gulf of Guinea region, fully used and sustainable. The programme will be implemented over 2 years (2023-2025).
 38. The European Union commits EUR 10 million to extend CRIMARIO II (Critical Maritime Routes Indo-Pacific project) to the Pacific, with a duration extended until April 2025, to counter maritime threats and encourage inter-agency, cross-sectorial and interregional approaches.
 39. The European Union commits EUR 5 million to strengthen the cohesion of the EU's efforts in enhancing maritime security and economic prosperity in the Gulf of Guinea. The ENMAR programme will be implemented over 3 years (2023-2026).
-