Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 21 May 2021
(OR. en)

8959/21

ESPACE 58
MARE 16
RECH 231
COMPET 381
MI 369
IND 139
ENV 325
EU-GNSS 27
TRANS 313
TELECOM 217
ENER 196
EMPL 214
CSDP/PSDC 268
CFSP/PESC 502

NOTE

From:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
To:	Council
No. prev. doc.:	8631/21+COR1
Subject:	Conclusions on "Space for People in European coastal areas" - *Adoption*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Council Conclusions on " Space for People in European coastal areas" have been prepared in view of the Competitiveness Council to be held on 28 May 2021. The conclusions follow on the Council Conclusions on “Space solutions for a sustainable Arctic” adopted on 29 November 2019 and on the Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy from February 2021 and recall the importance of the Space Programme for the monitoring of these ecosystems.

2. The Presidency has put forward these draft Council Conclusions in order to underline the vital role of Earth Observation in monitoring the human activity impacts and the changes on seas, oceans and coastal areas and the need for dedicated data, services and products to achieve a better understanding of climate change consequences.

II. STATE OF PLAY

3. The Space Working Party examined the draft Council Conclusions on four occasions since 13 April 2021.

4. The text presented in the Annex to this Note reproduces the text set out in the Annex to doc. 8631/21 agreed in the Permanent Representatives Committee on 19 May 2021. The Committee agreed to forward the draft conclusions to the Council (Competitiveness) of 28 May 2021 for adoption.

III. CONCLUSION

5. The Council (Competitiveness) is therefore called upon to adopt the conclusions set out in the Annex.

ANNEX

Draft Council Conclusions on "Space for People in European coastal areas"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING

A. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union that establishes an EU competence in Space[1];

B. The Commission's Communication on a Space Strategy for Europe, presented on 26 October 2016[2] and especially the strategic goal of maximising the benefits of Space for Society and the EU economy and the role of the New Space;

C. The Council Conclusions on "A Space Strategy for Europe" of 30 May 2017[3], stressing the need to increase the use of space technologies and applications to support public policies and provide effective solutions to societal challenges, and the importance of reliable continuity and sustainable user driven evolution of the EU flagship programmes Galileo, EGNOS and Copernicus, supporting research and innovation, as well as the establishment of European industry-led services platform to aggregate Copernicus data and offer appropriate long-term dissemination and access to data as well as online processing capabilities;

D. The interim evaluation of Copernicus of July 2017[4], that confirmed the relevance of the programme in delivering services in the environmental and security field, responding to the operational needs of its users and of European citizens in general, recognising that there were few areas where products should be added, such as for the coastal areas;

[1] In particular Articles 4(3) and 189.
[2] Doc. 13758/16.
[3] Doc. 9817/17.
[4] Doc. 13599/17 + ADD1.

E. The Council Conclusions on "Space Solutions for a sustainable Arctic" of 29 November 2019[5], stressing that many of the challenges and needs of the Arctic are similar to those of other coastal and remote areas, seas and oceans and that synergies and coordination are to be enhanced with other initiatives, including those for integrated maritime management, and recognising the role of Copernicus thematic services, recalling the importance of synergies with Galileo for safe transport operations, economic activities and environmental monitoring;

F. The findings of the EU blue economy report 2020, notably the need to recognise and acknowledge the value of ocean and seas, be it economic, social, environmental or cultural; the European blue economy as part of the Union's Integrated Maritime Policy can and must be a central and solid pillar which contributes to the European Green Deal Agenda by the green recovery of the European economy and resilience of our society;

G. The EU and ESA joint statement from 2016 and the letter co-signed by the Commission and ESA on 17 March 2021, both recognising that Europe should benefit from its space solutions for its public policies and prosperity to the benefit of European citizens through, among others, the enhancement of the performance of the EU flagships Galileo and Copernicus;

H. The Court of Auditors' Special report 07/2021 on 'EU Space programmes Galileo and Copernicus: services launched, but the uptake needs a further boost';

1) ACKNOWLEDGES the worldwide recognition of Copernicus as a well-established and leading Earth observation programme, providing means for supporting the conservation of our planet and its biosphere, thus supporting policy development to improve the quality of life of European citizens in particular, and that the programme is key to provide solutions for the global societal challenges and is instrumental to the green and digital transitions, also through the development of downstream applications;

2) HIGHLIGHTS that the full potential of Copernicus, Galileo and EGNOS for the Union's society and economy should be fully unleashed, including user and market uptake measures to stimulate growth, job creation and knowledge transfer, as well as capacity building and skills development;

[5] Doc. 14603/19

3) STRESSES that the EU Space Programme Regulation includes a Copernicus Service devoted to marine environment monitoring, having among the actions to be undertaken the provision of information on the state and dynamic of ocean, sea and coastal ecosystems, and states the need for new missions to address global challenges such as climate change, marine hazards, live marine ecosystem monitoring, as well as advanced and more targeted services to new and current user communities; STRESSES that it also includes a Copernicus service devoted to land monitoring (including the coastline) providing geospatial information on land cover and its changes, land use, vegetation state, water cycle and Earth's surface energy to a broad range of users, in the field of environmental terrestrial applications; and STRESSES that Copernicus services and applications provide an invaluable contribution to the green transition and for decision-making and planning tools for the ultimate benefit of citizens;

4) ACKNOWLEDGES the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy from February 2021 identifying the coastal dimension and users as a Copernicus priority, continuing the current coordination of marine and land Copernicus services and extending it to other core services, and taking into account the requirements of organizations for coastal national services based on the Med7 countries[6];

5) RECALLS that Earth Observation plays a vital role in monitoring the changes to geophysical parameters and impact of human activity on seas, oceans and especially in coastal areas, which constitute important ecosystems; RECOGNISES that coastal areas are not fully addressed neither by the land nor the marine services in an integrated way, and need to be object of dedicated data, services and products, as recommended by the Copernicus interim evaluation, to achieve a better understanding of climate change consequences based on contributions and interactions between climate, oceans, seas and land surfaces; ACKNOWLEDGES that these coastal monitoring services should be based on users' needs and, where possible, be built in complement to existing private and public monitoring systems;

[6] Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Malta and Portugal

6) HIGHLIGHTS that coastal areas are mainly constituted by highly populated regions, centres of intense economic activities fostering blue economy, which are ecosystems facing serious challenges and risks due to climate change and other human-caused and natural phenomena and that those areas are key assets to the EU's Blue Economy for Europe's growth and green transition to the benefit of citizens;

7) RECALLS the role of Copernicus in better strengthening our knowledge of changing coastlines; and that its services and applications are suited for addressing climate change and contributing to a sustainable development of human activities in a balanced approach towards long-term preservation of coastal ecosystems and related marine and land biodiversity;

8) NOTES that the six Copernicus thematic services answer to the public and private user needs in the fields of atmosphere monitoring, marine environment monitoring, land monitoring, climate change, emergency management and security; RECOGNISES, however, that there are still gaps in measuring key variables in the coastal ecosystems and that coordination and cooperation efforts are needed to produce data in a routine manner and with homogeneity and interoperability, WELCOMES data from our international partners to enhance the Copernicus products; and SUPPORTS initiatives in the multilateral international frameworks on monitoring of coastal areas with space based data;

9) RECALLS that coastal areas' services require a multi-dimensional approach in the variables to be measured and on the services and activities to be developed in order to have a reliable and comprehensive information system based on Earth Observation data and modelling. The dimensions to be considered might include safety and security of the people and infrastructures, as well as protection and management of land and urban areas and of coastal ecosystems, including water and energy management and protection of cultural heritage and maritime infrastructure. Measurement of pollution, erosion, land cover and land use, floods and sea level rise will facilitate the monitoring and forecast to support climate mitigation and adaptation; ENCOURAGES wider use of satellite data to complement national and statutory environmental monitoring which currently is often based mainly on in situ data;

10) CONSIDERS that good coordination among the relevant entities is required in order to provide combined services in multiple domains of interest to coastal ecosystems satisfying user needs in an optimal way, such as between marine environmental monitoring security services, emergency services, land monitoring, or meteorological and climate data and weather forecast;

11) STRESSES that such approaches would benefit from knowledge-sharing, including data produced by national and regional coastal systems, both public and private, to provide added value to existing information and sharing of user requirements in coastal areas to plan the development of dedicated coastal services and products; and CALLS on the Commission to develop a concerted and coordinated approach to mainstreaming satellite-based services, notably Copernicus products and services, in addition to market stimulation activities for companies, including SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups, to create solutions, tailored for coastal users, integrated with tools developed and in use by Member States;

12) WELCOMES the Commission's initiative to entrust the Copernicus Entrusted Entities in charge of the Copernicus Marine Service (CMEMS) and the Copernicus Land Service (CLMS) with improving the combination of both services, together with the in-situ component of Copernicus, and to consolidate the interfaces with other relevant services, to deliver data products especially geared towards coastal areas in the EU; and CALLS on the Commission and EUSPA for the development of an implementation plan for the uptake of space services and data in the downstream sector, in close cooperation with user fora, enhancing and integrating marine and land services contributions, together with other relevant services, alongside capacity building activities; ENCOURAGES that the modelling of coastal ecosystems be developed in a phased approach, starting with pilots in smaller ecosystems such as in the Arctic and the Mediterranean Basin, EU Atlantic areas, or Baltic, Black and North seas;

13) REAFFIRMS that New Space, if well-tuned to users' needs and to market opportunities, can provide space-enabled services and solutions that are needed for the European coastal areas; and CALLS on the Commission and EUSPA to actively exploit such opportunities which can generate additional economic growth and benefit society in general;

14) ENCOURAGES the further exploitation of synergies with Horizon Europe, including the Horizon Europe Missions, namely the Mission on healthy oceans, seas coastal and inland waters, the Mission on climate-neutral and smart cities, and the Mission Adaptation to climate change including societal transformation towards enabling innovation processes that bring together Earth observation technologies with satellite positioning and other ground-based or air-borne technology platforms; and RECALLS the important role of Horizon Europe in enabling and developing innovative space solutions and supporting European space industry;

15) RECOGNISES that Earth observation satellites and in situ data sources provide vast quantity of valuable data for shaping complex modelling tools which can be used in of initiatives such as the Destination Earth initiative; HIGHLIGHTS that data sharing and a more widespread use of innovative digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence and high performance computing, enhances the application of Earth observation data to coastal areas;

16) CONSIDERS Copernicus data and Copernicus Services essential contributions to Destination Earth, as shown in the "Digital Twin Ocean" component to be based on the Copernicus marine service, and expects Destination Earth to contribute as well towards Copernicus objectives, therefore ensuring a close coordination;

17) ACKNOWLEDGES the significant contributions which will be offered by the Galileo Emergency Service to relay civil protection authorities' warnings to the population of coastal areas in the event of natural disasters and hazards, and by the Galileo Search and Rescue (SAR) service that is currently the reference in marine SAR applications to assist in locating people in distress worldwide.