

General Report

Conference

Green Paper on a future EU Maritime Policy

Brussels, 8 June 2006, 09.00-18.00

The very first Conference on the Green Paper on a Future EU Maritime Policy took place in Brussels on the 8th of June; just one day after the Green Paper was released. The Conference was organised by EBCD as the Secretariat of the European Parliament Intergroup on Sustainable Development (EPISD), with the support of the Committee of the Regions (COR).

The conference gave an overview of stakeholders' first impressions of the document (after the Commission's publication 7th June) in the presence of Members of the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and representatives of the European Commission. **The Green Paper "Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas" defines a new, holistic approach to the management of all human activities related to marine environment.**

During the whole day event **25 speakers** representing stakeholders from different sectors (fisheries and aquaculture, shipping and transport industries, regional bodies, trade unions, environmental NGOs and others) expressed their first reactions on the Green Paper. **Commissioners Joe Borg** (Fisheries and Maritime Affairs) and **Stavros Dimas** (Environment) gave also their presentations.

The conference, chaired by **Struan Stevenson (MEP)**, was divided into three sessions, covering **socio-economic aspects of the maritime sector, the impact of maritime industry on the environment, safety and competitiveness**; each concluded with a panel discussion chaired respectively by **Rosa Miguelez-Ramos (MEP)**, **Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou** and **Uwe Doering**, Minister for Justice, Employment and European Affairs of the Government of Schleswig-Holstein. Finally, the general discussion was moderated by **Dirk Sterkx (MEP)**.

Session 1 (9.00-10.55)

Michel Delebarre, President of the COR, rejoiced that the Green Paper, published the day before, evokes a great interest that proves its significance. With this document the Community has laid the foundation for a future policy with two objectives: **to stimulate**

growth and job creation and to do this in a sustainable way ensuring the protection of the environment.

Michel Delebarre considered that it is important to have an integrated approach to maritime policy at three levels:

- different EU policies must be complementary and sustainable;
- management of coastal areas should be done in a consistent manner;
- the use of marine resources should help to achieve the Lisbon Strategy.

Furthermore, environmental considerations cannot be forgotten: sea pollution or climate change.

About 100 members of the Committee of the Regions come from coastal areas.

Struan Stevenson, President of the EPISD, thanked the Committee of the Regions for the hospitality and welcomed Commissioner Borg, the guest speaker of the session. Joe Borg's role to coordinate all inputs from diverse groups and integrate the work of all commissioners and director generals was a difficult one, Struan Stevenson added.

He reminded that about half of the European population live in coastal regions and maritime activities are crucial to our life and societies. He found that the maritime sector constitutes a huge area for potential employment. He called for sustainable fishing and combating illegal fishing. Finally, he underlined that the Green Paper includes various innovative concepts like **marine thematic strategy, ecosystem based spatial planning, blue biotechnology or integrated coastal zone management**. It also contains interesting policies concerning such issues as illegal immigration and terrorism. He also found highly attractive the idea of mapping the oceans in detail.

European Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Joe Borg stated that the Green Paper aims to promote an integrated approach to the oceans and seas beyond the traditional sectoral manner of looking at sea-related activities. He thanked Members of Parliament who agree that the debate on the Green Paper and on a future maritime policy for the Union should continue in the Parliament in a cross cutting forum and the Committee of the Regions for the fruitful cooperation.

He underlined that this conference was held on **the World Oceans Day**, recently established. It aims to promote a change in perspective and to encourage people to look at the oceans as part of their lives. It should also provide the opportunity to increase learning about the wealth and diversity of the seas and to 'change our lifestyle' in order to benefit from the marine environment in a more sustainable manner. This is a call for an integrated and all-encompassing approach that can be found in the preamble to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and in the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit conclusions on sustainable development.

Commissioner Borg also mentioned **the environmental and economic importance of the oceans**: health of the oceans is a priority from which future generations will benefit as well, maritime regions already account for over 40% of Europe's GDP. Moreover, 90% of the European Union's external trade and 40% of its internal trade are transported by sea.

The crucial points of the Green Paper presented by the Commissioner were:

- **Potential for job creation and growth of Europe's maritime sectors;**
- **The role of European research in high technologies development in the maritime sector;**
- **Special role of coastal regions and the importance of the oceans and seas for the quality of life;**
- **Natural and man made threats for the maritime sector and coastal sides;**
- **Tools that could assist in improving the management of the oceans.**

The Commissioner also added that the consultation period with interested parties that started with the Conference will end in June 2007 and the Commission will report back on the conclusions of the consultation process to Parliament and the Council. This is likely to happen in the fall of 2007 and suggested steps forward will be presented at the time.

Finn Bergesen, Director General of the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and member of the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE), considered that European Maritime Industry clusters are among the strongest in the world and the Maritime policy must aim at increasing European competitiveness and at securing the sustainability and coexistence of diverse ocean-based activities. According to him the Green Paper should encourage further technological developments and clean, safe production. The industry is in favour of necessary measures to protect the environment. To reach these goals there must be a clear and unbroken chain of responsibility on enforcement and sanctions in management of the marine living resources.

He gave some examples of opportunities from marine related sectors:

- **Off-shore wind and tidal energy-production may benefit from the European competence from off-shore activities, which is the most advanced in the world;**
 - A European **infrastructure for capture and storage of CO²** from land based energy installations in the North Sea **has the potential to be a great success, but requires private-public-partnerships;**
 - **The High North is an important energy strategic area.** It is estimated by American geologists that as much as 25% of undiscovered petroleum resources will be found in the Arctic areas.

He also spoke about the main present problems such as over-fishing and ghost fishing. To combat the former a joint management of coastal neighbouring regions is needed, to stop the latter, the advice on prohibiting discards by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)'s should be implemented.

Eduardo Chagas, Secretary General of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and member of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) welcomed the Commission's initiative and added that sustainability has to be based on the improvement of the environment with the positive contribution to the creation of jobs, better working conditions and the reduction of social inequalities. To

respond to people's priorities the answer is “**not less Europe, but a different and better Europe**”.

With regard to the Green Paper he welcomed in particular the references made to the number of concerns shared by ETF such as the decline of EU workers in fisheries or maritime transport, the call for fight against IUU fishing, the need to improve working conditions, image of the sector and education. He also underlined the role of ports as a key element in the transport system.

In conclusion Mr Chagas assured that the trade unions will certainly continue to contribute to this crucial debate.

Carl Gustaf Lundin, Head of Marine Programme, in the World Conservation Union (IUCN) underlined in the first place how important this initiative is. It will get people around Europe to think about what kind of Europe they want and how they should use natural resources.

Concerning the Paper he found it very valuable, with a comprehensive approach, written in a very concrete and practical way.

He stressed issues that, according to him, should be strengthened in the Green Paper:

- **Marine environment protection:** most countries are not doing well with marine conservation;
- **Ocean governance:** the basis for the development of ecosystem management is promising but needs more concrete action;
- **Science and technologies;** an issue that should be underlined;
- **Tourism:** should be addressed more, in terms of workers it is a greater industry than fishing;
- **Spatial planning;** oceans should be approached from a three geographic dimensions perspective;
- **Marine Protected Areas:** more work on creating a representative network across the European waters is necessary;
- **The role of the Commission:** the belief that strong Europe requires a more extensive Commission may not be right: “improve what you do before you extend yourself into the other areas”;
- **Competition:** prosperity is not planned; it is created by entrepreneurs in a very large degree, people need the opportunity to be creative, there is no need to be afraid of competitiveness;
- **High seas:** should also be more addressed (issues like bottom trawling, IUU fishing), there is a role for Europe to take a worldwide leadership.

In conclusion Mr Lundin highlighted that the IUCN would be very happy to be engaged in this dialogue and hoped to be able to continue with a number of other events providing further technical input into the Paper.

José Ramón Fuertes-Gamundi, President of fisheries section of COGECA, member of EUROPECHE - COPA/COGECA pointed out that his organisation is in favour of

looking for synergies by integrated coordination of different sectors and activities which share the marine environment.

He reminded that the EU is the third biggest fish producer in the world, more than half a million people work in the European fisheries sector and the average consumption of fish is about 25kg per person per year, which is much higher than the world average (16kg).

He pointed out that it is essential to find the right balance between the need to use the resources in a sustainable manner and the need to achieve socio-economic development. There is a need to consider environmental problems also caused by non-fishery activities.

In conclusion, the speaker pointed out that the sector is ready to accept the development of ecosystem based management but it is concerned about additional restrictions, which Natura 2000 can impose in terms of access to fisheries activities in certain areas.

Courtney Hough, General Secretary, Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) underlined that even if 60% of fish consumed within the EU is imported, European fish farming still provides about a million ton of fish mainly for the European market, with an estimated value of 3,5 billion euros. Marine aquaculture assures year round employment and it deserves to be truly recognised by the Green Paper.

He presented the situation in aquaculture, where tight competition for space is crucial, that is why Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) planning has to be promoted and implemented.

He also spoke about the need for investments for improved coordination of resources for research and development, which could give technical and financial solutions, making the best use of budget. The good plan is to develop clustering and to share off-shore technology and installations by different industries.

The panel discussion concluding the first session was chaired by **Rosa Miguelez-Ramos, Member of the European Parliament**, who considered that the Green Paper is a very good document despite some gaps, which can be filled through the consultations.

She agreed with Courtney Hough that competitiveness and sustainability can be reconciled if the regulatory aspect is simplified and entrepreneurship in Europe encouraged, but sustainability is a crucial element to maintain activities on the sea. She highlighted the need to bring young people into the equation and promote marine related professions.

Another point concerned the fragility of the border between politics and science: environmental criteria should be established on scientific rather than a political basis.

She pointed out that in the Green Paper there is no reference to natural pollution in the marine environment, which occasionally causes problems and can have a wide impact on coastal populations. She also wished to strengthen the external aspect of marine policy in the Paper by giving solutions to the recent phenomenon of African illegal immigration arriving via sea.

There were several voices from the floor concerning the Green Paper and European Maritime Policy. Aspects and postulates mentioned during discussion were as follow:

- **North-South dialogue** should be reinforced;
- **Using the maritime environment** should be perceived as a privilege rather than a freedom;
- **Common Maritime Policy**: is one of the options. Is it the best one? According to the fisheries sector a comprehensive policy at the European level is needed because business alone will neither be able nor willing to regulate everything;
- **Risks and security**: all stakeholders should take part in the debate to work out concrete solutions;
- **Structure of work in the European Parliament on the Green Paper**: there was a call for establishment of a special temporary horizontal committee but until now nothing has been decided;
- **IUU fishing** constitutes illegal competition on fisheries market and there is a need to take urgent action against it. On this issue the consumers' attitude is particularly important;
- **Climate change** is an increasing problem. Re-injection of CO2 is imperative;
- **Marine Protected Areas**: The fisheries sector is looking carefully at the issue (it is aware of the important role of the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO) in setting up guidelines for MPAs). The sector is also participating in the studies and is ready to work towards scientifically based MPAs.

Session 2 (10.55-14.30)

European Commissioner for the Environment Stavros Dimas, opening the session, pointed out that the Green Paper on Maritime Policy represents a milestone for this Commission.

He noted that Europe's marine environment is rapidly deteriorating and its protection must no longer be a mere side-effect of other policies, but there should be an integrated strategy at the European Union level. The Thematic Strategy on the Marine Environment is an attempt to reach this goal introducing the principle of "ecosystem based-management", to be implemented at regional level according to specific environmental characteristics. It proposes a new approach to marine monitoring and assessment and it will therefore benefit from the Green Paper, which proposes to set up a European Marine Observation and Data Network and which suggests a comprehensive mapping of European coastal waters.

The synergies created by the Thematic Strategy on the Marine Environment and the Green Paper on the Maritime Policy will allow to reinvigorate maritime economy and make it truly sustainable. This will be done in particular through data and knowledge, integration, and action at global level.

Commissioner Dimas emphasised that a future Maritime Policy of the European Union will help to identify needs for new international rules, and to implement them. It will also enhance the role of the European Union in major maritime agreements and organisations.

Protecting the marine biodiversity in the high seas beyond national jurisdiction is a priority for the European Union.

He also highlighted the economic dimension of the oceans and seas which are the resource base for maritime economy and he reminded that a dynamic maritime economy can thrive only if the marine environment is healthy.

Commissioner Dimas urged for preservation of the marine environment's functions and services essential to life on our planet such as climate regulation, food provision or solar energy distribution. He added that raising awareness on the importance of oceans and the crucial functions they perform for people lies at the heart of the United Nations' decision to establish the World Oceans Day celebrated on the 8th June.

François Desrentes, Director of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) was pleased that the Green Paper reflects the requests made by CPMR several decades ago. He underlined that the global integrated approach should

- 1) take into account the territorial aspects of policies;
- 2) take as the basis for all policies the principle of sustainable development;
- 3) work more on maritime governance improvement;
- 4) be more attentive to the maritime dimension within various sectorial policies.

He also expressed dissatisfaction in terms of:

- **Governance**: local and regional authorities are also concerned by the internal governance of the regional commissions and at the European Community level. However regional conventions OSPAR and Helcom do not give any room for the Regions in this matter;

- **Sustainable development**: social aspects are very important, more importance should be given for better livelihood of people working in the maritime sectors and their families, on-board life and immigration issue;

- **Legislation and cooperation**: balance between legislation and capacity of implementation is essential.

Mr Desrentes called for a faster decision making process and a quicker implementation rather than more legislation.

Alfons Guinier, Secretary General of European Community Ship-owners Association (ECSA) pointed out that maritime services are essential for Europe.

He underlined that the competitive position of shipping services is to be understood and regulated with a global competitive context and that this will be only possible if a proper legal framework is set up. He added that the legislation of the European Union (with a vital role of the European Maritime Safety Agency) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on safety and environment is very important. On the environmental field, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, ship transport perform better than the road transport. To improve results and reduce sulphur emissions, prices of good quality fuel should be affordable.

To solve the problem of ship scrapping, the IMO convention should become mandatory and working conditions in Asian yards must be improved. It is neither socially nor economically justified to recycle ships in the EU.

He concluded that the Green Paper has to be studied and ECSA looks forward to a constructive exchange of views with European Institutions and Stakeholders.

Isabel Blanco, Policy Director of European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), focused on the energy content of the Green Paper, especially on the role the off-shore wind energy can play in the development of coastal areas.

Her most important points were:

- **The wind energy sector is growing very fast** and it is already a significant source of electricity in many countries. A richness of resources combined with European leadership in the production of components can be a main source of employment in maritime regions;
- **Promising factors:** wind energy stays in line with new technologies and environmental protection. Growing oil and gas prices are putting the public opinion in favour of other options for energy production (like renewable sources), which also help to achieve the security of supply objective;
- **Efficient legislative framework is needed**, particularly in the form of an European Policy for Offshore Wind Energy and on measures that guarantee effective competition and transparency in the energy markets.

Mrs. Blanco concluded that the wish of the EWEA is to see more consideration for the wind-energy sector on the political agenda as an option for the development of local economies. Research and development funds should be channelled towards the sector and structural funds used for the maritime regions' restructure.

Mike Tholen, Director of Economics and Commercial of UK Offshore Operators Association Ltd. (UKOOA) which represents 37 Oil & Gas Companies exploring, investing and producing in the UK Continental Shelf, pointed out that much of the gas in Europe will be depleted over the next 20 years and thus, sustainable activities to explore new gas opportunities in the sea are urgently needed.

He reminded that a sustainable oil & gas industry is fully compatible with good environmental stewardship and that it is pro-active in introducing innovative technologies and new working methods to reduce its negative impacts. The sector supports 1 million jobs and satisfies ~50% of oil and gas demand in Europe.

Mr. Tholen highlighted that the Maritime Policy must add EU value to the governance of all human maritime activities, be effective for its purpose, based on the best evidence and support wider policy goals (Lisbon, Climate Change, Security of Energy Supply, Sustainability). He wished that the environmental pillar was science-based, avoiding over-reliance on the precautionary principle, addressed the real threats, balanced all environmental, social and economic factors and defined clearly its relationships with existing regimes and programmes.

Tor Fjaeran, Senior Vice President for Environment of STATOIL Norway presented his firm as the largest Norwegian oil&gas company, which puts sustainability and environmental care high on the agenda and has an important role to play in that respect, i.e. within the last 10 years it stored in the North Sea 1 million tonnes of CO² captured from gas. He emphasised Statoil's wish to coexist with other users of the marine environment, to create a common understanding and an open dialogue.

As far as the Green Paper is concerned Tor Fjaeran stressed that for the gas&oil sector it is important to have in the EU a fully integrated Action Plan with an ecosystem approach, covering all sectors. An effective cooperation across borders is also desirable, especially with Russia, which has a great potential with the hard recovered resources. The sector would welcome the establishment of common environmental, technical and other standards in all European countries.

He concluded that it is essential to have a predictable, long term fiscal, legislative and operational framework. A long term planning horizon and favourable investment climate is also needed.

Carol Phua, Fisheries Policy Officer from WWF underlined that the EU needs a Maritime Policy that could integrate all existing regulations and policies. Priority should be given to the protection of biodiversity, since a healthy marine environment implies healthy related sectors.

In terms of the Maritime Policy Mrs. Phua gave several recommendations:

- Investment and drivers for growth and competition should be firmly based on environmental sustainability;
- The quality of the oceans needs to be safeguarded in order to protect potential future biotechnological prospects;
- All marine and coastal activities and clashes need to be identified and areas of use and non use marked and mapped;
- Immigration has to be solved in the developing countries by fighting local poverty;
- To monitor the implementation of policies, socio-economic-environmental indicators are necessary;

Then Mrs. Phua presented shortly the Marine Strategy NGOs Coalition Report and its proposals concerning the introduction of objectives for achieving Good Environmental Status (GES) by 2021.

A panel discussion that followed was chaired by **Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou**, Member of the European Parliament. After thanking all organisers she remarked that the Maritime Policy should promote the heritage of the oceans for the Europeans. She summarised all presentations and noted that there seems to be a consensus of satisfaction on the Green Paper and a general awareness of the need to take a global approach to marine ecosystems and to integrate research in Maritime Policy.

During the short discussion, the main debated issues raised were:

- Integration of environmental concerns with the activities of the wind energy sector and the reduction of its impact on the countryside;
- Methods of dealing with illegal fishing and pollution in the fisheries sector;
- Complementarities of the Maritime Policy and the Marine Strategy;
- Possibilities for the establishment of specific assistance programs for the sake of the marine environment.

Session 3 (14.30-16.15)

Zoltan Kazatsay, Deputy Director General of the Directorate General for Energy and Transport in the European Commission gave a presentation on "Options for combining maritime safety and competitiveness", two EU priorities for the maritime transport chain.

He focused on the main issues addressed by the Green Paper:

- **Ensuring the competitiveness of the maritime transport sector in Europe:** to achieve this goal the Commission proposes to create a “Common EU maritime space”, governed by the same rules on safety, security and environmental protection; to achieve transparent, open market organization of port services and to keep bilateral relations with third countries and recognition of the strategic importance of EU shipping companies.
- **Promotion of quality shipping:** With this objective in mind, the Commission presented last November the Third Maritime Safety package with 7 legislative proposals in the field of maritime safety that will complete the measures taken so far. The European Maritime Safety Agency is the cornerstone of the Community maritime safety policy.
- **The maritime professions:** As the human element is crucial in the functioning of the shipping industry, the Commission took specific initiatives to attract people to the maritime professions.

Mr. Kazatsay concluded that the reinforcement of the competitive position of the EU fleets, the improvement of maritime safety and safeguard of employment for EU seafarers are not contradictory objectives.

Giuliano Gallanti, Chairman of European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO) welcomed the Green Paper and appreciated the recognition of European Seaports as multifunctional areas combining commercial and public functions.

With regard to the Green Paper two points were relevant for ESPO in its content:

- **Sustainable maritime development and spatial planning:** ESPO welcomed the fact that the Green Paper identifies the close relation between ports capacity and shipping trade. It is crucial to modernize the infrastructure. Thus ESPO deplors that all investment projects currently suffer from unacceptable delays because of frequent environmental pressure and NIMBYSM (*Not In My Backyard* attitudes).

- **Improvement of the regulatory framework for the maritime economy:** ESPO welcomes the consultations of all stakeholders on the Green Paper. Mr. Gallanti warned that an interventionist approach or artificial interference can destabilise the liberalisation process and is unnecessary.

Mr. Gallanti was also very pleased to see that the Green Paper recognises the importance of maritime heritage and identity. Seaports can play a key role in making citizens more aware.

Philippe Alfonso, Political Secretary responsible for Fisheries, Dockers and Maritime Transport of European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) which covers 250 national representations, pointed out that the role of ETF is to promote efficient transport working and safety conditions for workers and respect to the environment, which is also one of the aims of the Lisbon Strategy and the Maritime Policy.

He brought up the problem of discrimination with regard to European seamen by certain boat owners and the complicity of some MS allowing Community sailors to be employed on the basis of the criteria of residence rather than using that of the country of the flag. Any Community sailor working in any country of the European Union has right to equal treatment with no exception to his rule.

Mr. Alfonso concluded that regulations at global level (through IMO or ILO) should not discourage Community regulations, especially regarding the promotion of quality in the maritime sector.

Terje Staalstrøm, Senior Vice President of Det Norske Veritas; Council member representing International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) highlighted that there is no contradiction between safety and competitiveness.

The presentation focused on four main points:

- **The global aspects of maritime safety and environmental protection:** Oceans are interrelated: transport, quality shipping, pollution, regulations are all international issues;

- **Importance of Classification Societies to the success of maritime clusters:** Clusters breed winners and share knowledge about maritime environment. Classification societies are their technical competence centres;

- **Importance of Flag States and Recognised Organisations:** All IMO members are responsible for ensuring compliance of ships registered under their flag. Flag States may delegate compliance control to Classification Societies;

- **Regulatory development reflecting the risk reality:** Holistic approach means setting priorities based on transparent, socially accepted and scientific parameters.

Mr. Staalstrøm concluded that the Classification Societies have competence, resources and are ready to assist the European Union in reaching the goals from the Green Paper in aforementioned issues which the IACS fully support.

Simon Bennett, Secretary, International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) noted that the objectives of his organisation are to promote properly considered international regulation of shipping, to oppose unilateral and regional action and to support industry guidance on best operating practices.

With regards to the Green Paper ICS welcomed:

- **The high profile given to maritime sector by the European Union**, efforts to improve competitiveness of shipping, commitment to global regulation for global shipping industry, not least through IMO and ILO;

- Recognition that regional and **local shipping regulation leads to technical and commercial inefficiencies** that undermine competitiveness;

- Recognition of the need for maritime skills and for laws that reconcile environmental and economic interests;

- **Commitment to codification of liberal shipping trade practices** through inclusion of maritime services in the new WTO agreement.

Simon Bennet welcomed the high level given to shipping in the Green Paper.

Kristian Fuglesang, Assistant Director, the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO) was satisfied that lots of Intertanko's previous suggestions have been taken into account in the Green Paper. He was satisfied to see the recognition of the need for universally acceptable international regulation, its faster ratification and implementation.

However Intertanko does not agree with the suggestion the introduction of penal sanctions for ship source pollution as a method to improve the maritime safety in the EU. Intertanko fully supports the investigation and prosecution of illegal discharge of oil from ships but strongly objects to criminalisation of accidental oil pollution.

The Clean Ship concept was also in the centre of Mr. Fuglesan's interest. He criticised the lack of holistic, integrated approach and the existence of many isolated regulations (especially on ballast water). The consequence for the ship owners is a conflict of interest in the implementation of all requirements in many instances resulting in an environmental loss.

Manfred Zachcial, Director of Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics tried to find in the Green Paper a certain compromise between competitiveness, safety, and environment.

He noted that safety depends on many factors, one of which is the age of fleets. The EU container ships are on average quite new and highly efficient but already the tanker fleet is relatively old (even if it will probably be renewed in the coming years with the lifting out single hull tankers).

The question of accident prevention was also discussed by the speaker; four relevant aspects were mentioned: the need for global harmonisation and standardisation of legislation, well chosen priorities, the necessity of taking into account the human element (failure) and national responsibility of control.

Mr. Zachcial underlined that in the oncoming years an evaluation and cost-benefit analysis of actions taken in terms of prevention should be carried out.

The panel discussion was moderated by **Uwe Doering, Minister for Justice, Employment and European Affairs of the Government of Schleswig-Holstein** who assured that the Committee of the Regions' would like to be engaged in the future consultations on the Maritime Policy concerning elaboration of benchmarks, guidelines for financing networking and good governance issues.

He pointed out that the panel showed points of view about maritime policy that can differ, but also that two contradictory areas like competitiveness and safety can be brought together if organized properly.

In the discussion that followed there was a difference of views between representatives of the ship-owners association (ECSA) and the workers' federation (ETF). According to **Mr. Guinier** (ECSA) the employment market for European seafarers is global and Europe labour's protectionism measures, if applied, would have the opposite effects rather than the expected ones. He argued that the residence criteria have to be taken into account, as on the one hand the main employment created in the maritime sector is indirect (in the clusters) and, on the other hand, living conditions of seafarers and their families depend on their state of origin.

This met the opposition of **Mr Chagas** (ETF) who submitted that the quality of work of seafarers does not depend of their nationality and that there is no basis for such discrimination. He also raised the problem of ships under Flag of Convenience where employees are neither allowed to unionise nor to contact trade unions and do not benefit from social protection.

However both parties agreed that their objectives are the same: attracting young people to the profession related to sea and creating employment for them.

General discussion

Dirk Sterckx, (MEP) chairing the general debate stated that his impression was that all speakers welcomed this Green Paper as a very good initiative, most of them however questioned the competence of the EU versus global and regional initiatives.

In the opinion of **Eduardo Chagas** there is also room for regional regulation and European rules concerning i.e. access to the market, clear conditions for state aid, and requirements for ships to join a fleet.

Terje Staalstrøm added that there is not much contradiction between the regional European and the global IMO levels. Moreover stakeholders can have much influence on the decisions of IMO through Member States.

Alfons Guinier stressed that the priority should be given to the implementation of existing legislation and its enforcement. As far as the creation of jobs is concerned, he

remarked that shipping is an indirect creator of employment in the clusters. The number of jobs created on ships is marginal compared to those created on land.

Going back to the IMO's decision making process, **Zoltan Kasatzay** pointed out that voting constitutes there a very sensitive issue, as Member States are entitled to represent the interest of the European Community, which sometimes does not match their national interests. He also highlighted the important role of IMO in competitiveness and safety matters.

Philip Embiricos from BIMCO (Danish private shipping organisation) supported efficient implementation of rules already passed before establishing new ones. He admitted that his organisation is submerged with paper work and stressed that IMO is good at making rules and that EU should be implementing them.

Responding to the question on the issue of coastal states and flag states rights, **Mr Bennet** wished to have more consultations and discussions at an international level, as there are some strategic implications and the whole context is very sensitive.

Mr. Chagas added that it is better to avoid attempts to change UNCLOS, which constituted the result of long negotiations and difficult compromises.

Saskia Richards from Greenpeace raised questions on future plans and the shape of consultations as well as the possible plan of action. John Richardson, Head of Maritime Policy Task Force answered that the Commission is very open on how consultations will be carried out; there is no specific action plan in the Green Paper, but the Commission expects a number of events throughout Europe. There will also be a web based system of questionnaires for citizens and stakeholders.

Jan Kappel from European Anglers Alliance pointed out that in the Green Paper there is 'a strange emotional judgement' expressed by the Commission by the statement that 'it is understandable that fishermen demand that restrictions on capturing certain fish for conservation purposes are also applied to sport fishermen, particularly when the latter use similar fishing gear to professional fishermen. These issues require further study and consideration'.

It is not accurate, he continued, that 'Sport fishers' -recreational anglers- are using similar fishing gear to professional fishermen. He did not agree on the same treatment of anglers and the professional fishermen in terms of conservation purpose restrictions. He referred to the Green Paper's background document 11, which has the information that recreational angler's share of the total fish take in Sweden in 2004 was as little as 0,24 %. This combined with the fact that recreational angling generates a huge socio-economic value and thousands of jobs should be born in mind when conservation measures are discussed. He finally highlighted that in particular the two sectors should not be tarred with the same brush with regards to Marine Protected Areas due to recreational angling's low pressure on fish stocks.

On this issue **Caroline Mangalo** from French Comité National des Pêches Maritime et des Elevages Marins emphasised that both professional and sport fisheries should have possibilities to be present in the coastal regions. **John Richardson** from the European Commission (DG Fisheries & Maritime Affairs) added that this is an excellent topic for a workshop which could be organised in the framework of the consultation process.

Dirk Sterkx concluded that the discussion showed how general and how specific, globally and locally, the debate on Maritime Policy will be.

Concluding **Struan Stevenson** summarised the main outcome of the Conference. To begin with he was very happy to see that the Green Paper was welcomed by all participants and that there was a general positive reaction.

There was a wide recognition that the holistic approach to managing all human activities at sea proposed in the Green Paper was very much in need. However it is important to implement all existing regulations before bringing into force new ones. According to several stakeholders the Commission should rather improve what it does before remitting itself elsewhere.

It was also recognised that a dynamic maritime economy can thrive only if seas are healthy. To this effect the idea of mapping the oceans in detail was a priority.

Concerning the environmental aspects the sustainable utilisation of marine resources has to be a top priority. Therefore more action is needed to reach ecosystem based management of European waters and to increase the number of Maritime Protected Areas. IUU fishing, discards and ghost fishing are serious problems and need urgent action. Pollution and other environmental problems have global dimension, Europe along with other continents, should move towards an integrated oceans policy.

It was stressed that the maritime policy adds value and generates economic and lifestyle benefits.

The issue of employment was given high priority. The need to maintain and to enhance employment opportunities for seafarers was emphasised and particularly the importance of winning young people to the maritime professions.

The need for ensuring further research for the maritime environment was mentioned throughout the Conference. More financial support for further studies and new technologies to prevent accidents in the sea should be implemented. Investments are also needed to enable sustainable development and profits in all related sectors, to support clustering initiatives, port developments, to improve the competitive position of the European maritime transport.

Concerning specific problems related to maritime sectors it was stressed that penal sanctions for those responsible for oil spills is not a good solution and will not improve maritime safety. More attention should be paid to the sea transport industry. Europe must not become a weak link in the global transport chain. More attention should be given to the tanker industry as most of industrial sectors are dependent on it. It is important to facilitate port planning and development as it is at present very slow. Quality shipping should be considered in a global context.

The High North as a potential energy source must be developed in a sustainable way and short-term unsustainable growth is not acceptable. To this regard, cooperation with third countries, mainly Russia, is necessary. The wind energy sector is developing very fast, is environment friendly and may become a main source of employment in coastal regions.

Mr. Stevenson concluded that the conference was a unique gathering of stakeholders who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to meet. He suggested that it would be a good idea to establish a forum where various stakeholders could get together throughout

the consultation period of the Green paper to exchange views. He also suggested that the consultations of the European Parliament on the Green paper were going to be rather complicated, giving the number of committees being involved and he would strongly support the idea of creating a special temporary committee in the European Parliament, which would deal with the Green Paper.