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# **Official recommendations**

From Eurocean's Youth ambassadors

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# — **Blue careers** —

*Recommendation n°1* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Implement an EU-wide Maritime Surveillance and Enforcement Programme.**

All of the sectors related to the blue economy, however, we strongly believe that **fisheries** is the most unsustainable sector. While efforts have been made to reduce overfishing by implementing the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the lack of enforcement prevents the CFP from fulfilling its potential. The European Union needs to enforce the policy and update it regularly as data is collected. **The establishment of a Maritime Surveillance and Enforcement Programme will not only support the EU with its goals of encouraging sustainable fisheries, but also create new jobs related to the ocean.**

The **Maritime Surveillance and Enforcement Programme** will contribute to the success of CFP by reducing misreporting of bycatch and discouraging illegal fishing. Routine inspections on fishing boats, in ports and distribution centers will improve adherence to guidelines and create an opportunity for better data collection. Furthermore, the fish requisitioned from illegal fishing or fishing discards will be reused as aquaculture feeds and biofuels. Satellite data and data collected through surveillance will aid in the creation/alterations of fishing areas, marine protected areas, fishing quotas, and surveillance areas. In addition, a **Good Practices Program should be established to teach local fishermen how to implement new techniques regarding sustainability and ecology.**

The set-up of the programme will result in the creation of numerous blue jobs, including Law Enforcers, Port and Distribution Law Enforcement, Port and Distribution Centre Observers, Satellite Data Analysts, Fisheries Observers, Fisheries Educators, and Fisheries Scientists.

*Recommendation n°2* \_\_\_\_\_

**Invest in upskilling and reskilling of people employed in disappearing sectors to facilitate their transition to emerging sustainable jobs.**

Given the current economic and political context, including the EU and international environmental policy developments, the blue careers sector is bound to change, with some jobs disappearing and others emerging. To cope with the fast-changing reality of the sector, we expect that people will opt for flexible careers that are more integrated, spanning multiple disciplines (instead of having only one lifelong career path).

As many careers are expected to disappear, not only in fishing industry but also in other blue economy sectors such as the oil exploitation, there will be many people available for up- or reskilling in order to train for new jobs in areas such as green energy, algae farms, green logistics, research, coastal protection, reef restoring, etc.

In order to adapt to these changes, **flexible career paths and concepts such as lifelong learning should be well-embedded within societal structures.** Inclusiveness (age, gender, etc.) should also be promoted.

We propose that the **EU invests in upskilling and reskilling** of people currently employed in disappearing sectors of the blue economy. Upskilling and reskilling are important both from social and economic points of view: they mean making the most of talent of the already trained people; they mean creating a skilled labour force faster than if new generations are just trained from zero, and they are more economically viable than having to support people whose jobs were lost.

Upskilling and reskilling programmes could run, for example, in Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). **We call on the EU to start this process sooner rather than later**, given the urgency of the matter. This proposal can for example run in the 2022 Call for Proposals for the CoVE platforms.

*Recommendation n°3* \_\_\_\_\_

**Create a Marine Erasmus+ programme combining education, job and networking opportunities, to enhance knowledge transfer and raise awareness about maritime affairs.**

Science has proven that climate change is primarily caused by human activities (see latest IPCC Report). Given this scientific evidence, it is our global responsibility to ensure a sustainable future in harmony with nature and biodiversity. One of the main threats we are already facing is the incremental sea level rise. We need all hands-on deck to tackle this crisis – this refers both to those who are already witnessing the devastating effects of climate change in coastal areas and those living in landlocked areas.

These challenges, together with the EU Green Deal that will forever change the face of the EU marine world, mean that the next generation of young professionals and academics should be up for the challenge!

Education is one of the key tools in finding coordinated, holistic and cross-border solutions. Therefore, **we call on the EU to ensure that everyone has access to education and more particularly to Marine ERASMUS+ Programme.**

We are convinced that through the exchange of points of views and experience among young people, we could create the foundations for shaping the world of tomorrow. Moreover, there is a real **opportunity of knowledge transfer** between people living close to the ocean and those who do not.

We propose to :

- ▶ Set up a foundation programme providing students around the world with the opportunity to engage in marine-focused Erasmus+ opportunities.
- ▶ Update existing online platforms (and/or applications) summarizing all marine-related professional and academic opportunities.
- ▶ Update existing online platforms (and/or applications) with conferences or other networking events which would help newly graduated marine specialists compile a networking portfolio.
- ▶ Have a budget under Marine Erasmus+ which would provide funding opportunities for applicants to attend the above-mentioned conferences, as well as enroll in a Master, PhD programme, etc.
- ▶ Under Marine Erasmus+ provide the opportunity for marine specialists to engage with EU leaders to discuss priorities and drive changes.



*Recommendation n°4* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Create a European platform to advance ocean literacy.**

Our proposal is to create a **free online platform** where you can enhance your skills and knowledge, plan your learning, get qualifications and experience. The platform should build on the various ocean literacy resources that already exist (ex. the platforms by UNESCO, Surfrider Foundation Europe, etc.) by creating something more global.

The subscribers would have to complete **interactive challenges** or take part in events in the field in order **to obtain a certification**. The material needed for a certification would be adjusted depending on the age group. Based on their interests, the subscribers could choose among the different categories such as shipping, blue careers, energy production, sustainable fishing, etc. Also, the platform should provide a forum area, where subscribers create teams, give feedback, exchange opinions and information.

*Recommendation n°5* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Introduce an Ocean Certification for public authorities in the EU.**

As an example, every 3 minutes in France a new project begins that is co-financed by European funds – and we believe that it should be used as a lever for promoting better ocean protection.

We propose that the **EU introduces an ocean certification system**, which would be used as guidelines for local public authorities in 27 EU countries. It would include **good practices and actions in favour of ocean protection**, aimed at restoring and protecting our ocean and coastal communities. The certification's guidelines would need to be implemented in the internal functioning of the public authorities, their communication, their project grants, etc. The organization can be audited by an independent auditor who will evaluate and rate multiple criteria before delivering the certification to the local authority.

These criteria, which have yet to be defined, can be inspired by existing ocean-related labels (e.g. Ocean Approved label) which include, for example, the implementation of ISO standards, the management of coastal areas (access, controls, limitations), the safety of people in coastal and marine environments, etc. Naturally, the criteria will need to be **adapted to the type of the public authority** (the criteria may vary for a city hall, a metropolis, a region, a department, etc.).

**Access to most EU funds should be conditional on getting ocean certification**, which would have a direct impact on EU citizens and advance their ocean literacy.

— **Shipping** —

*Recommendation n°6* \_\_\_\_\_

**Implement a new rating system for zero-emission vessels combining the EU MRV regulation and the IMO rating system. By 2040, ensure that only vessels with A rating are allowed in European waters and ports.**

With this recommendation, we seek to tackle two broad challenges: multiple adverse environmental impacts on the ocean through commercial shipping, and the lack of concrete holistic regulations imposed on this growing sector.

The EU's Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) Regulation focuses on GHG emissions, requiring ships with 5000 Gross Tonnage and beyond to monitor and report their emissions when calling into EEA ports. The IMO Rating System is a mandatory data collection system based on the vessel's annual operational carbon intensity (from A to E), recently adopted to be able to gauge the environmental impact of maritime transport.

We propose that the EU **expands the existing MRV Regulation to cover any commercial vessel of 500 GT weight and higher, explicitly including cruise ships, and covering all relevant environmental aspects** reaching beyond GHG emissions. The updated MRV Regulation should be **combined with the IMO Rating System with an accordingly expanded scope** reaching beyond carbon intensity. Therefore, the following parameters should be included in this combined scheme and influence the rating: GHG-, particles-, sulphur- and nitrogen emissions; generation and discharge of grey-, black-, and bilge water ; generation and discharge of different forms of waste; underwater noise; coating; manufacturing of the ship; propulsion system ; handling of ballast water ; safety arrangements for hazardous goods and cargo loss.

The resulting rating category and **certification would be issued by the EU institutions** and could also be awarded by accredited flag states.

The parameters would include one-time verification aspects and regular monitoring, reporting, and verification aspects.

To bring the new rating system into action, we propose to gradually **phase-out rating classes below A by 2040**. Consequently, vessels that are not verified with an A rating should be prohibited to call to EEA ports, as well as to sail in European Waters by 2040. **The compliance shall be controlled by digital monitoring and mandatory verification through AIS**, as well as **through port control measures. From 2050 only zero-emission commercial vessels** should be allowed in European waters and ports for which the **new comprehensive rating system** should be implemented.

To achieve an efficient energetic transition, a **technical guide** developed by the European Environment Agency before 2025 could be proposed to the shipowners, including different measures which will simplify the process of shifting towards a higher label. These would include using low-carbon alternative fuels; hull cleaning to reduce drag; cleaning of fuel injectors, propeller, blades, etc.; speed and routeing optimization and slow-steaming; installation of solar/wind auxiliary for accommodation services; installation of low energy light bulbs; improving ship's balance/weight (trim); recovering and using waste heat, etc.

The priority action remains **the transition to low-carbon fuels and renewables, such as wind propulsion**. The EEA must speed up this process, by providing financial and technical support to shipowners for an efficient transition in 2030 in order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

However, to prevent deflagging that leads to old ships ending up in shipbreaking yards in third countries, the recycling of ships must be regulated within the EU. **Low-cost European shipyards must be set up** to counter these recycling practices which threaten the health and safety of workers and pollute the environment far from the eyes of consumers.

*Recommendation n°7* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Improve monitoring of water quality in the EU ports.**

Shipping pollution is significantly affecting the water quality and the marine life, as well as the health of the seawater sports practitioners and professionals working in the marine environment. For example, Surfrider Europe carried out a survey among its community during the summer of 2020. Based on this survey in which 1 803 seawater sports practitioners took part, 38% indicated that they had suffered health impacts. A decline in specific species (i.e Tricellaria inopinata, meiofauna) directly linked to shipping pollution has also been identified. Considering these facts, the EU should ensure qualitative water monitoring, as certain points of the regulation still need to be improved.

First, most of the time, regulations are adopted with an anthropocentric approach. For example, water quality of recreational sites is already being controlled under the Bathing Water Quality directive. However, the directive provisions are very partial: they only concern the "bathing sites" that were designated by Member States, only during the summer period, only using two bacteriological indicators, etc. Also, despite the ambitious legislations put into place to protect marine life - especially the Marine Strategy Framework Directive - there is a lack of systematic and large-scale monitoring to achieve this particular purpose.

The cause of this non-systematic monitoring can be explained by the difficulty to transpose the directive into national measures for the Member States. Most of the monitoring parameters are still not defined and most Member States have not even submitted the initial reports assessing the state of their seas. These reports were supposed to serve as a basis for achieving "good environmental status" of the EU seas by 2020.

Regarding the quality of marine waters, States are not equal in research and development. These inequalities must be compensated by the EU, which is responsible for supporting the deployment of this directive through technical, economic, and regulatory levers.

For this reason, **we urge the EU to adapt its legislation in order to ensure that regular mandatory water quality tests are conducted all year round in the EU ports, on public beaches, as well as in the vicinity of underwater archaeological parks and other diving sites.** Expanding monitoring beyond ports will allow a better understanding of the impact that shipping pollution has on the EU waters.

By improving water quality monitoring, scientists will finally be able to carry out studies with more precise data and then potentially **establish clear correlations between the shipping sector and the declining sea water quality.** It seems necessary to **implement a systematic, detailed, and long-term monitoring scheme targeting shipping pollution** that would generate all the needed data to adopt policies that will support greener shipping, cleaner ports and consequently safer waters for marine life and humans.

*Recommendation n°8* \_\_\_\_\_

**Ensure strict implementation of dredging rules with an ambition to introduce a dredging ban in the upcoming years.**

Sediment dredging is a regular operation in harbour maintenance that is defined as the removal of material from the seabed aimed at improving the drainage, navigability, and commercial use of ports. Indeed, port areas and facilities are often located in the heart of river estuaries, so the tides and the flow of river water constantly carry sediments which are deposited on the floor. The rhythms are variable, but the deposit is constant and can disrupt navigation. Its extraction facilitates access to the port in complete safety.

Dredging can have numerous effects on the environment, causing physical, chemical, and ecological changes. It leads to resuspension of molecules accumulated at the bottom of ports in the water column. This directly affects water quality and therefore the development of marine fauna and flora which becomes contaminated. The rock removal (breaking the rocks on the seabed with explosives) can threaten the populations of marine macrofauna dependent on the hard substrate and cause its high mortality.

Despite its considerable environmental impact, the existing regulations on dredging are scarce. Therefore, **we propose that the EU :**

- ▶ **Creates a new law on dredging**, taking into account the existing legislation on the environment and the underwater cultural heritage. This new law should also differentiate recoverable and non-recoverable waste and fill in the gap in the EU regulation when it comes to recycling and reusing dredging waste material.
- ▶ **Applies the highest standards of corporate responsibility**, using the OECD and UNESCO guidelines as the explicit basis for corporate policies.



**The EU public authorities should also ensure that the information** about potential social and environmental risks regarding any new project **is open and accessible to all relevant stakeholders**, and work to foster public awareness about the topic.

We need the EU to lay down administrative and technical requirements to regulate the management of dredged material. It is needed to differentiate recoverable and non-recoverable waste (ex. by defining the selection criteria for levels of certain pollutants, grain size, etc.).

At the same time, the marketing of dredged materials could contribute to a common European fund on a larger scale. Pooling resources would ensure sustainable and integrated management of dredged materials (contaminated and non-contaminated). However, the EU must ensure that **the companies involved in this European market are held to the highest standards of corporate responsibility** and are respectful of the environment and human rights.

*Recommendation n°9* \_\_\_\_\_

**Provide EU subsidies for training in autonomous vessels technology and promote this specialization in maritime schools EU-wide.**

There is no doubt that autonomous vessels have a place in the maritime sector's future. Currently in Europe we are still in the beginning stages, but with more interest, faster technological development will be conducted. As the use of autonomous vessels for different purposes will be increasing, it can potentially be beneficial to human and environmental safety, but also bring various risks related to cybersecurity, piracy and safety at sea, as well as environmental hazards. Accidents can lead to significant damage to ocean and coastal wildlife and ecosystems.

Today, only a few schools offer programs to train students for this specialty – ex. Aboa Mare in Finland. Financial aids are needed to prepare the new generation of employees and assist companies who want to train their current staff. **We propose that the EU should provide subsidies** which, combined with partial private funding, would be used **for the training of maritime sector employees to master autonomous vessels and promoting this specialization in maritime schools**, and as part of dedicated vocational training programmes. This training could namely encompass :

- ▶ Crisis management with the specificity of autonomous vessels.
- ▶ Functioning and driving of an autonomous vessel.
- ▶ Driving without advanced technologies.
- ▶ Safety in extreme situations.
- ▶ Using Galileo satellites for coastal control and piracy threats.

Financial aid would reinforce the European maritime sector and would be an incentive to strengthen autonomous vessels' development. Furthermore, the European maritime sector could better face international competition

with high-quality employees. These subsidies could also encourage companies to invest in this field and in R&D. Moreover, they could motivate the EU governments to revise their maritime law regarding the new needs for these vessels. And finally, the more people are trained, the lower the risk of accidents and errors.

In addition to that, we urge the EU Member States, as well as a broader international community, to foster cooperation and fight together against the above-mentioned security challenges. We propose promoting autonomous ships training on 2 levels :

1. European institutions, EEA countries and EU close partners (ex. Switzerland, USA, Canada, South Korea, Australia, etc.)
2. **International level:** neighbour and third countries (and their national authorities), mainly least developed countries that face massive challenges regarding modern piracy and new hybrid threats.

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) would be instrumental to carry out the recommendation. Ideally, the European Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) would be the entity to bring in transversal competences, contributing to listing the requirements that autonomous vessels should meet to cope with the threats of cybersecurity and modern piracy. Finally, **ENISA should produce recommendations for cybersecurity in European ports.**

*Recommendation n°10* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Make government, private and EU funding available to the environmental transition of the shipping sector.**

Maritime shipping is often left out of emissions reduction talks and frameworks. This discourages the private sector from investing in the implementation of sustainable practices and greener technologies. Despite these nuisances, shipowners pay almost no taxes thanks to very accommodating legislation. For example, Swiss-Italian shipowner MSC makes 22 million euros in profits a year but only pays 18,000 euros in corporation tax – a ridiculous rate of 0,08%. Moreover, companies in the sector are successfully fighting attempts to introduce more restrictive environmental regulation, in the name of maintaining “competitiveness” of the sector.

**We urge funders** (the EU and its Member States, banks, investment funds, international organizations, etc.) **to prioritize funding and incentives for the environmental shift of shipping by 2035.** Investments, incentives, as well as sanctions should aim at **a multi-target shift** (GHG emissions, pollution, noise) and **integrate marine biodiversity protection and conservation objectives.**

- ▶ We encourage banks and private funds to create low-interest loans for ship owners to seek cost-saving solutions, such as more efficient and green fuels, and the EU Environment Agency to provide environmental guidelines for it (e.g Green Marine Europe label).
- ▶ Funders may also fund environmental assessment of autonomous vessels to have an overview of their environmental footprint and be able to consider if they are a relevant proposal for the future.

- ▶ States and EU institutions should develop calls for innovative applications and proposals for the purpose of energy transition of the fleets.
- ▶ Support research and development on carbon-free hydrogen as a future energy source
- ▶ We urge the EU to implement the Maritime Transport Decarbonisation (MTD) fund, as per the European Parliament 2020 vote on reforming the regulation on maritime transport emissions monitoring, reporting and verification system. This fund would improve the energy efficiency of ships by supporting investment, and help facilitate retrofitting of the fleet, renewal, and recycling of oldest vessels. We recommend the MTD fund does not only rely on ETS revenues, and further looks for other income such as penalties for non-compliance with the EU regulations.
- ▶ We encourage Member States to create incentives motivating shipowners to initiate ambitious transitions (on energy consumption and reducing all types of pollution, including noise pollution), such as tax exemption on specific material and equipment.

*Recommendation n°11* \_\_\_\_\_

**Facilitate the accession of shipowners to the Green Marine label by providing financial support to its certified members.**

Shipping is responsible for 90% of the global trade. It represents 3% of the world's anthropogenic GHG emissions contributing to climate change. Moreover, it is associated with different types of pollution, such as air pollutants, ship dismantling, ballast waters, containers' loss at sea, collisions etc. Therefore, a fast transition towards a greener sector is urgently needed. However, such transition should be supported economically since it will generate significant costs.

**We recommend the EU to facilitate the accession by shipowners to the “Green marine Europe” label** by funding its members with the budget provided for by the European Green Deal Investment plan. The ecological transition of the shipping sector would be framed within a label system. **The EU should recognize the Green Marine Europe label system as a source of authority in ascertaining how green and non-polluting a company's fleet is.** The ratification by shipowners of such a label would be promoted with subsidies and/or fiscal advantages depending on the level of commitment within the label system. As a result, shipowners would be **encouraged and financially assisted to commit to a monitored ecological transition.** We believe that this financial assistance could come from the European Green Deal Investment plan. Finally, the label would offer a green public image to the shipowner.

This financial aid would be intended for companies which have chosen a European Flag State. This would enable Flag States, together with the Port States, to control that the companies effectively respect the criteria of the label.

As these measures do not impose any constraints on the shipowners, but create an incentive for a fast transition, it is possible to implement them as soon as they are adopted by the EU. This would encourage shipowners to pursue a regular progression in their efforts for the ecological transition.

