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EWEA position on the Commission proposal for a Directive establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management

EWEA welcomes the Commission proposal for a Directive establishing a European framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management.

This proposal could contribute to providing the European offshore wind industry with a stable and coherent policy framework, allowing the sector to plan forward investments, contributing to growth and job creation in the blue economy.

Furthermore, the obligation to cooperate on spatial planning will facilitate the development of transnational projects such the European offshore grid and consequently support the European Union in further integrating renewable energy.

Maritime spatial planning across Europe will contribute to the growth of the blue economy

- Maritime spatial planning is a **neutral** tool used to organise and optimise the sea space **in view of the different economic, environmental and social objectives defined at national or European level. Applying an ecosystem approach based on a national vision is an effective process involving stakeholders and leading to the development of spatial plans.**
- Increased activity within European waters has led to increased spatial demands and therefore growing competition between sea users. In 2012, 5,000 MW of offshore turbines were installed in Europe's seas, 60% in the North Sea. It provides electricity for 4.8 million households and employs 35,000 people directly and indirectly.¹ This is only the beginning of a major industrial development bringing growth and jobs. In 2020, offshore wind could reach 40 GW of installed capacity and employ 170,000 people. In 2030, 150GW will be installed, representing 300,000 jobs and providing electricity 145 million households.² From 2012 to 2030, €208bn total investment will be required.
- Offshore wind energy deployment is often caught between conflicting uses, interest groups and rules from different sectors and jurisdictions. This creates project uncertainty, increases the risks of delays in, or failure of offshore wind projects, and impairs the sector's potential for growth. Maritime spatial planning is therefore key to enhancing offshore wind development. It provides stability and clarity for investors, brings down the cost of wind energy through

¹ EWEA (2011) Pure Power

² EWEA (2011) Wind in our Sails

an optimum integration of the wind farms into the marine environment³ and will thereby help the European Union meet its renewables targets by 2020.

EWEA welcomes the European Directive proposal where all EU Member States are required to **develop binding national spatial planning**.

Finally, because maritime spatial planning must remain a neutral tool, EWEA welcomes the Directive as a specific Framework Directive. A stand-alone Framework Directive, oriented towards integrated maritime policy, will ensure that maritime spatial planning remains a sector-neutral tool facilitating the achievement of a wide range of different objectives covering energy, environmental, transport and fisheries policies.

Cross-border cooperation focusing on transnational issues is the main value of EU intervention

- There is an urgent need for Member States to cooperate on maritime spatial planning as the sea is an open space and because economic activities and environmental concerns cross and extend beyond borders.
- There are potential cross-border synergies between large-scale offshore wind projects and interconnectors that are not being exploited and taken into consideration in maritime spatial planning regimes. Without cross-border coordination, grid investments in particular risk being sub-optimal because they will be made from an individual project and national perspective, rather than from a system and transnational perspective.⁴ This harms both the development of offshore wind energy projects and the development of a well-functioning Europe-wide market for electricity. Cross border cooperation on maritime spatial planning would aid projects crossing several Economic Exclusive Zones such as large-scale offshore wind projects, and the interconnectors of the future pan-European grid.

EWEA welcomes the proposed Directive's **focus on cross-border cooperation and national planning and allowing for flexibility through updated plans**.

Because maritime spatial planning is a forward-looking instrument, EWEA would recommend Member States to **develop a common vision based on the analysis of existing sea uses and their potential growth by 2030**. This vision could be developed at regional level and would structure cross-border cooperation.⁵

EWEA would welcome further European **guidelines to help structure this cross-border cooperation as well as favouring the exchange of data information, based on common GIS data format**.

Data sharing is the basis of good planning and cooperation. EWEA however warns that the European Member States cannot wait for common data format across Europe before cooperating on planning.

³ Many attractive zones for offshore wind farms (shallow waters, good wind conditions, attractive sea bed) are already occupied by other sea users. Moving further away from shore and into deeper waters not only increases the capital costs of the offshore projects but also raises the need for an offshore grid. An up to date GIS data management system would allow the designation of the most efficient/best areas and therefore reduce offshore wind development costs.

⁴ As an example of cost savings, the Offshore Grid project has calculated that by clustering wind farms in hubs, around €14bn could be saved up to 2030 compared to connecting wind farms individually to shore.

⁵ EWEA supports the recommendations laid down in the BaltSeaPlan project