



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels
MARE/A2/CF

Subject: Reply to MEDAC Advice on Marine Spatial Planning and the Role of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean

Dear Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen,

I would like to thank you for having investigated and debated MSP and OECM interactions and mapping within the WG3 (“Green Deal” working group), and for coming up with recommendations. DG MARE took part in the MEDAC WG3 meeting to present the ocean pact and discuss next steps on MSP.

As you pointed out, the Commission will indeed propose an “Ocean Act” that will build on the revision of the maritime spatial planning (MSP) Directive. This is a flagship action on governance within the European Ocean Pact. I appreciate your contribution (current and past) to our reflection and I invite you and your members to reply to our [call for evidence](#), open until 9 February. It will be followed in spring by an open public consultation. In March, we will publish a report on the implementation of the MSP Directive, which will provide further insight on what works and what may need to be revised in the Directive.

While we cannot pre-empt the content of the Ocean Act at this stage, I can assure you that we are carefully looking at the topics you mention in your letter (stakeholder involvement, nature protection, data accessibility, cumulative impact assessment and sea-basin cooperation with third countries).

As regards the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive revisions, they are of course very much interlinked. We are working in close cooperation with DG ENV to identify a maximum of synergies with the aim to protect and restore ocean health, while boosting sustainable competitiveness of the blue economy.

For more information on the MSP Directive, I refer to our [European MSP platform online](#) and our reply of August 2024 to your opinion on the lack of engagement of MEDAC members in MSP processes (Ares(2024)5905609).

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Finally, as regards the OECMs in the Mediterranean, I can assure you that the Commission took good note of your suggestions in view of the ongoing discussions at GFCM level, where all Contracting Parties are encouraged to participate in the process of defining and identifying OECMs and to better understand the potential for reporting Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) as fishery-based OECMs.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours faithfully,

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