



Protecting our seas and ocean the EU framework

Conferenza finale SEA MARVEL - Dott. Fabio Pirrotta

Policy context for the protection of Europe's seas

Bathing water directive

Other environmental laws ...

Circular economy

Nature Restoration Law

Water resilience initiative

Urban wastewater directive

Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Zero pollution action plan

Global biodiversity framework

Habitats directive

Water framework directive

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Birds directive



Ship source pollution directive

Port reception facilities directive

Other sectoral legislation...

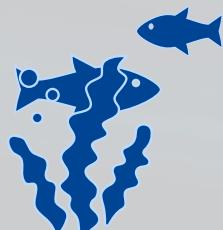
Re-Power EU

Common fisheries policy

CFP legislation...

Maritime spatial planning directive

Marine Action Plan





Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Directive 2008/56/EC



*Clean, healthy &
productive seas*

Sustainable use

*'Good environmental
status'*



MSFD 'descriptors'

Ecosystem-based
approach

Pressures & impacts

Non-indigenous species



Commercial fish & shellfish



Eutrophication



Hydrographical conditions



Contaminants (in environment)



Contaminants (in seafood)



Marine litter



Energy & underwater noise



State

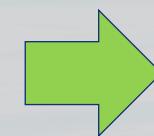
Biodiversity



Marine food webs



Seabed habitats (integrity)



Marine strategies



European
Commission



Decision on Good Environmental Status

Commission
Decision
(2017/848/EU)

Criteria &
methodological
standards

Specifications &
standardised
methods

To achieve
GES

Monitoring &
assessment

How we are making it easier to achieve the good environmental status of marine waters



More flexibility
to concentrate
on problem
areas



More accurate
way to measure
achievement of
environmental
goals



Increased
regional and
sub-regional
cooperation



Enhanced
synergy with
existing EU
nature, water
and fisheries
legislation



Better
understanding
of human
impacts on
marine
environment

Regional cooperation



Four regions

Baltic Sea

North-east Atlantic Ocean

Mediterranean Sea

Barcelona Convention
(UNEP-MAP)

Black Sea

Sub regions

Greater North Sea

Celtic Seas

Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Coast

Macaronesia

Subregions

Western Mediterranean Sea

Adriatic Sea

Ionian Sea & Central Mediterranean Sea

Aegean-Levantine Sea

Protecting Europe's Seas and Oceans

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Source: Commission report on
MSFD implementation
[COM\(2020\)250](#)
[SWD\(2020\)60](#)
[SWD\(2020\)61](#)
[SWD\(2020\)62](#)



A seagull's view

*4 marine regions
*5,720,000 km²

Ambitious, comprehensive, effective

The MSFD:

- provides a strategy for the **entire marine environment**
- protects **marine biodiversity**
- assesses the impact of **all human activities**
- drives new **research and legal initiatives**
- aims for **Good Environmental Status (GES)** for the EU's marine waters.

On the horizon

To reach GES for the EU's seas and oceans, we need:

- more ambitious and coherent definitions of '**good environmental status**'
- more **resources and collective action** to address key pressures
- coherent and effective **networks** of marine protected areas
- marine data that is **comparable** across regions.

North-east Atlantic Ocean

- 41% of assessed fish and shellfish stocks are within safe limits.
- Over 25% of marine bird species have declined.
- 93% of fulmar birds assessed had ingested plastic.

Mediterranean Sea

- Monk seal populations have stabilised.
- Around 40% of sharks, rays and skates are declining.
- 85% of turtles assessed had ingested litter.
- 87% of fish and shellfish species are overfished.

Black Sea

- Good cross-border cooperation between Romania and Bulgaria.
- 87% of fish and shellfish species are overfished.

Key and emerging challenges

- underwater noise
- unsustainable fishing
- climate change
- litter
- non-indigenous species
- eutrophication
- contaminants

Some facts & figures



The coastal sea bed disturbed due to **bottom trawling**.



From 32% to 53% of sharks rays and skates are threatened by-catch.



Coastal waters with poor **eutrophication** status.



Efforts to fight **chemical pollution** have led to reduced concentrations.



The accumulation of **plastics** in marine species is a growing risk.



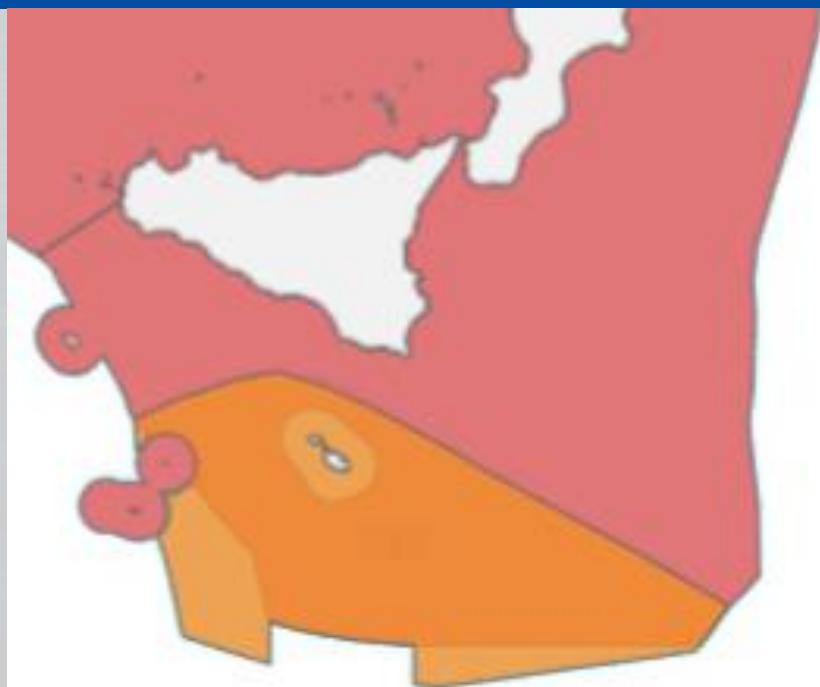
Share of beach litter from **single use plastic**.

Assessment of state



As reported by Member States 2018

Commission assessment & recommendations →
[C\(2022\)1392](#) &
[SWD\(2022\)55](#)



- GES achieved by 2018
- GES not achieved by 2018
- Not stated
- Mixed results

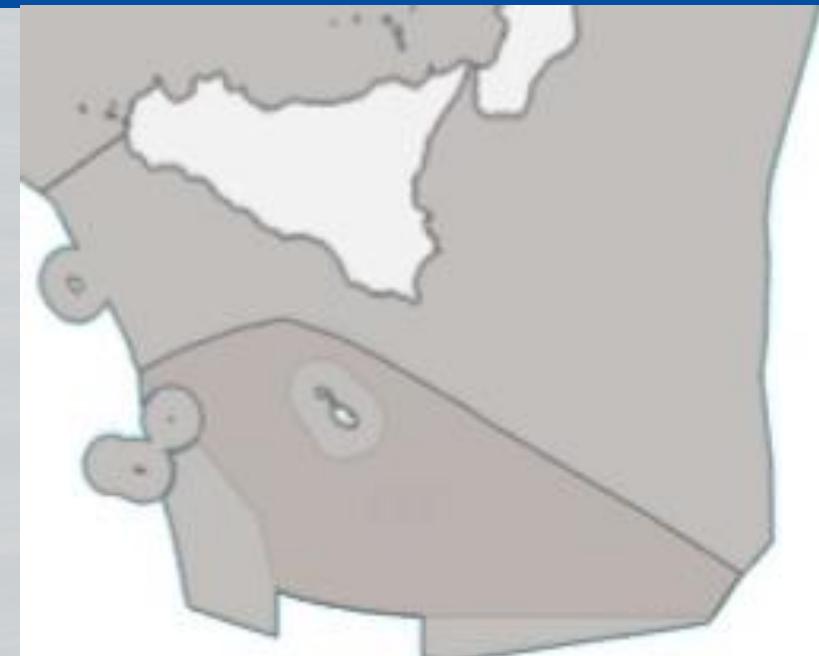
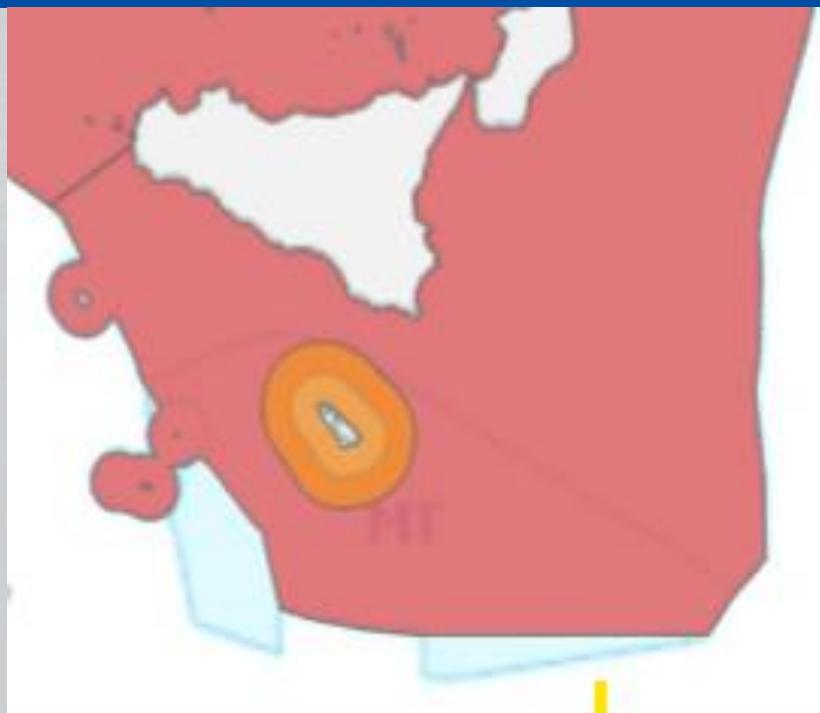
Source: [Wise marine dashboards](#)

Assessment of state



Member States had to report in 2018

Commission assessment & recommendations → [C\(2022\)1392](#) & [SWD\(2022\)55](#)



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Source: [Wise marine dashboards](#)

MSFD review → objectives

To contribute to protection and preservation of the marine environment & enable sustainable use

1. Improve the regulatory framework
2. Improve implementation and enforcement
3. Improve regional cooperation and coordination
4. Improve policy coherence
5. Improve data management



Zero pollution action plan

Reduction targets for 2030

55% → health impacts from air pollution

30% → Reduce chronic transport noise disturbance

25% air pollution threats to biodiversity

50% → nutrient losses, use and risk of chemical pesticides, use of more hazardous pesticides, sale of antimicrobials for farmed animals & aquaculture

50% → plastic litter at sea

30% → microplastics release

Significant reduction of total waste generated

+ 33 actions

Biodiversity strategy for 2030

PROTECT NATURE

- Legally protect **at least 30% of the European Union's sea area**.
- **Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's marine protected areas.**
- **Effectively manage all protected areas**, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
- **Fisheries management measures must be established in all MPAs** according to clearly defined conservation objectives and on the basis of the best available scientific advice.

RESTORE NATURE

- **Nature Restoration Law with legally binding restoration targets**, including for the marine environment.
- Achieving good environmental status of marine ecosystems, including through strictly protected areas, must involve the **restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems** as well as important **fish spawning and nursery areas**.
- **Reduce bycatch** of sensitive species and the impact of bottom fishing **on the seabed**.
- *Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems*

Marine action plan – What's in it?

- Improve gear selectivity and address bycatch of sensitive species 
- Protect the seabed 
- Transition and knowledge 
- Governance 

Concluding thoughts....

Marine waters →

ecologically diverse and dynamic

clean, healthy and productive

used at sustainable levels

safeguarding their potential use by current & future generations

Thank you



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