

BSAC recommendations on the Ocean Pact

Dear Commissioner Kadis,

The BSAC members highly appreciate the Commission's initiative and efforts to create a single frame of reference for all ocean-related policy actions.

The BSAC welcomes the European Oceans Pact as a crucial opportunity to strengthen ocean governance and policy coherence as well as address the challenges affecting marine ecosystems and coastal communities.

The BSAC welcomes the fact that the European Oceans Pact will seek to foster a broader, integrated and holistic approach to ocean governance across all sectors, including internal and external policies.

The BSAC has identified some key priorities that we think should be part of the Ocean Pact:

- **Governance and Coherence**
 - Strengthening regional and local implementation of EU legislation that affects the state of our seas.
 - Ensuring coherence across policies concerning the marine environment, , including land-based activities.
 - Addressing fragmentation and improving enforcement of existing policies and legislation, that will improve the marine environment, the species that live there and the livelihoods that depend on them, including recreational fisheries dependent businesses.
 - Ensure accountability and enforcement of all actors, to support sustainable regional growth
- **Biodiversity and Management of human activities in the ecosystem**
 - Implementing ecosystem-based fisheries management and enhancing research and mitigation efforts on climate change impacts.
 - Strengthening pollution control measures, particularly from land-based sources.
 - Restoring and rebuilding marine habitats and species to support biodiversity and fish stocks, aligned with the 30x30 targets agreed under the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework.
 - Establishing legally binding targets for environmental sustainability and resilience.
- **Sustainable Blue Economy**
 - Strengthening the seafood value chain and promoting circular bioeconomy principles.

- Supporting the rebuilding of fish stocks and sustainable fisheries management for long-term job creation.
- Encouraging a low-impact blue economy whilst rewarding and prioritising environmental sustainability efforts.
- Improve collection of recreational fisheries data, in particular socio-economic data
- **Marine Knowledge and Innovation**
 - Establishing an EU Ocean Fund to support implementing the EU Oceans Pact and its objectives, including ocean restoration and conservation as well as promoting and investing in environmentally sustainable marine technologies and solutions, as well as knowledge and efforts to restore the marine environment, whilst at the same time out-phasing activities that are environmentally harmful.
 - Improving the use and interpretation of marine science to enhance stock replenishment strategies.
- **Resilience and Sustainability of Coastal Communities**
 - Addressing climate change, water pollution and excessive eutrophication to ensure the sustainability of fisheries.
 - Supporting a just transition towards a 'regenerative blue economy' that benefits coastal communities and marine life on which communities depend.
 - Establishing a governance framework to resolve user conflicts and enable region-specific solutions.
 - Investing in local infrastructure to support coastal economic growth and generational renewal, in ways aligned with the wider policy framework and sustainability objectives. whilst at the same time prioritising long-term environmental sustainability.

With regards to the uniqueness and fragility of the Baltic Sea any efforts **on** and **in** the water must go hand in hand with efforts **on** land. This points to the need to include agricultural policies as well as the objectives of the Water Framework Directive in the Ocean Pact, to foster a broader, holistic governance approach needed for the sea and the marine environment and fish stocks in the Baltic region.

The BSAC strongly believes that the European Oceans Pact should provide a clear, comprehensive framework to integrate ocean-related policies, ensuring sustainable ocean governance, thriving coastal communities, and most importantly resilient biodiverse marine ecosystems.

Yours sincerely,

Jarek Zielinski,



BSAC Executive Committee Chair