Official Journal
of the European Union

EN
C series

C/2025/3173

20.6.2025

Outlook opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – The European Oceans Pact

(C/2025/3173)

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POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR),

1. welcomes the European Commission initiative to enhance the coherence of EU policies on oceans. Underlines that, in order to position Europe as a maritime power and to seize the opportunities of the oceans, the European Ocean pact should address the different dimensions of sustainability: ocean protection and restoration, sustainable blue economic development, marine knowledge and research, place-sensitive ocean governance, and the wellbeing of citizens in coastal and other territories with links to the oceans. Highlights that holistic ocean governance also depends on a multi-level governance framework, particularly the close involvement of local and regional authorities, as well as the need to cover land-based activities that impact ocean health;

2. highlights that these priorities must be inter-linked to protect ocean environments, support resilient and competitive economies and ensure the wellbeing of local and regional communities in coastal areas and beyond, recognising that the long-term wellbeing and prosperity of many of them depend on healthy oceans; in addition, it is necessary to ensure the active participation of coastal communities, small-scale fishing communities and other stakeholders in ocean-related decision-making, and to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and those fishing communities, which include potential sources of livelihoods for coastal populations, to the effects of ocean degradation, natural hazards and human-induced environmental damage;

3. stresses that achieving 'good environmental status' under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is essential, as a well-preserved marine environment underpins economic stability and helps mitigate the impacts of climate change on European coastal regions, as highlighted in the 2024 European Climate Risk Assessment by the European Environment Agency ([1]);

4. values the decision of the European Commission to initiate the new policy cycle by preparing the new European Oceans Pact. This demonstrates its willingness to adopt a strategic and holistic approach toward oceans. Calls for the European Commission to issue a regular communication regarding the implementation of the Pact as well as a roadmap of commitments that will accompany it;

5. highlights the funding gap affecting maritime activities and calls for the establishment of adequate financing for a just transition to a low impact and regenerative maritime economy and effective protection and restoration of marine ecosystems and scientific research. Considers that the Pact should contribute to facilitate the creation of innovative financing mechanisms and incentives to apply sustainable practices;

6. underlines that the next MFF should provide appropriate financing instruments which must correspond to the diverse local socio-economic fabrics; this requires the development of a holistic multi-level governance approach to the management of these instruments, with the participation of national, regional and local authorities;

7. recalling the experience acquired under the elaboration of the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas ([2]), stresses the need to ensure that mutually beneficial linkages between coastal and internal areas are integrated into all EU policies, by making the most of the strong interdependencies between coastal and internal areas;

([1]) EEA Report 01/2024, European Climate Risk Assessment.
([2]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – A long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, (OJ C 270, 13.7.2022, p. 18).

Holistic approach to ocean management

8. highlights that healthy oceans are fundamentally vital for the EU, its Member States, local and regional authorities (LRAs), and EU citizens, as they sustain biodiversity, drive economies, support wellbeing and are a prerequisite for the sustainable management of marine ecosystems, thereby contributing to food security. Considers that oceans interact with humans in multiple ways, and they are paramount from the environmental, economic, cultural, strategic and recreational perspectives;

9. welcomes the fact that the Commission is looking for a strategic evolution of its approach towards oceans that seeks to enhance coherence and synergy amongst different objectives, tools, policies and priorities, including:

(a) the overarching EU environmental goals, as described in the European Green Deal and as defined by compliance with the EU's and Member States' international commitments, the enhanced European competitiveness envisaged by the Draghi Report, and Europe's civilian and defence preparedness and readiness envisioned in the Niinistö Report;

(b) areas of European political leverage, including ocean diplomacy and the promotion of strengthened international and regional ocean governance;

(c) sector policies, such as the common fisheries policy (CFP), the Blue Economy, the EU Ocean Research and Innovation Strategy, and the Climate Adaptation Plan;

points out that the above holistic approach is adopted in a global context where oceans are treated by nations as land zones and are objects of territorial disputes. Thus, the COR emphasises that the Oceans Pact should also embrace a fourth element, namely:

(d) a stronger focus on disputed marine resources and the enhanced geostrategic importance of oceans in a multilateral and fragmented world. This is in line with the need to enhance the resilience of 'external land and sea border regions as geographical gateways to the European Union, for the security and resilience of the EU' ([3]). Highlights that these new geopolitical threats underpin the need to ensure proper maritime spatial planning between different activities and the need to avoid a 'spatial squeeze';

(e) improving management frameworks, together with coordinated mechanisms at global, regional and national levels, to ensure integrated ecosystem management and the protection of coastal populations;

10. emphasises that healthy oceans are the foundation for maximising the long-term economic potential of maritime industries. Protection and sustainable management of marine ecosystems must be at the core of the Pact, as healthy ecosystems are essential for ensuring productivity, resilience, and future development in sectors dependent on the sea;

11. points out that a holistic approach does not imply uniform blanket policies applied indiscriminately across all regions without careful consideration of local differences. Instead, it must reflect the diverse needs and interests of regional and local communities, recognising that a 'one-size-fits-all' model is neither effective nor sustainable. Calls therefore for maritime policies to be developed in close collaboration with local and regional authorities (LRAs) and citizens, building on the principles of multi-level governance, active subsidiarity and partnership, allowing for tailored, context-specific approaches that respect local specificities, and promotes the exchange of good practices and cooperation from maritime sectors;

12. emphasises the importance of ensuring that the management of the ocean is underpinned by robust policy coherence and legally binding targets that are monitored and, if necessary, enforced at certain intervals. This includes strengthening the connection between the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Maritime Spatial Planning objectives;

13. recalls the conclusions from the meeting of the EU Marine and Water Directors in June 2024 calling for further action to ensure good environmental status of marine ecosystems, and notably for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to grow into a 'European Law of the Sea' ([4]);

([3]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Shock-proofing European regions: Strengthening local and regional economic resilience in the strategic evolution of the Single Market (OJ C, C/2024/7061, 4.12.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/7061/oj).

([4]) Informal Meeting of EU Marine and Water Directors – Final conclusions 13 and 14 June 2024.

14. calls for the establishment, within the College of Commissioners, of a Project Group relating to the implementation of the Ocean Pact, under the leadership of the Commissioner for fisheries and oceans, to ensure a holistic approach is taken in the implementation;

Low-impact blue economy

15. highlights the need to support maritime activities affected by, or reinforcing, the triple environmental crises in a just transition towards a low-impact blue economy that respects planetary boundaries and our ocean's carrying capacity;

16. highlights the importance of Maritime Spatial Planning to ensure coherence between environmental, climate, socio-economic wellbeing and sectoral policies. Acknowledges the challenge of 'spatial squeeze' in EU waters and highlights that coexistence can be a strategic tool to support the achievement of EU and international biodiversity targets, while supporting local communities. Highlights that the co-location of offshore renewable energy with low-impact fisheries or low-trophic aquaculture must be explored within the framework of Maritime Spatial Planning;

17. recalls that the deployment of offshore wind energy is at the core of delivering the European Green Deal and ensuring Europe's competitiveness and security of energy supply. Calls for the development of cross-border offshore energy tenders to limit conflicts of use and rationalise energy infrastructures. Trusts local and regional authorities to develop appropriate energy strategies;

18. calls on the Commission to protect European offshore energy industries from unfair competition by establishing minimum prices and a requirement to ensure that the vast majority of the value chain remains European, establishing new criteria in offshore energy tenders, including by introducing mandatory non-price criteria on biodiversity, social aspects and circularity, and linking those projects to adjacent biodiversity restoration programmes;

19. recognises that the different activities can be synergetic or antithetic depending on their nature and location in space and time. Considers that the Oceans Pact should contribute to enabling local spatial planning to ensure that synergies are maximised between maritime activities and that trade-offs are reduced and/or managed. Highlights that Marine Protected Areas cannot be seen as an activity with possible trade-offs;

Food

20. recognises that fisheries resources are limited in volume and closely interconnected with the overall quality of marine ecosystems. Points out that the EU's long-term food sovereignty remains a key strategic objective of the Union which can only be achieved through sustainable management of marine ecosystems. Acknowledges the role of oceans and the traditional knowledge of maritime professionals in the production of high-value food sourced by fisheries and aquaculture as recognised by the communication on *A Vision for Agriculture and Food* ([5]). Highlights the impact of agriculture policy on the health of maritime ecosystems, and the challenges caused by nutrients run-off and eutrophication, both on achieving the Union's environmental goals and on the fisheries sector;

21. considers that sustainable managed fish stocks are critical to maintaining a profitable fishing industry able to ensure jobs in the fisheries sector and local supply chain depending on it. Considers that the small-scale segment of the fisheries sector is the one with the greatest benefit for local communities, and engages in more environmentally friendly practices, and should be supported for the long-term resilience of their activities. Recognises that fishing is a fundamental part of the culture and economy of many coastal communities. Highlights that overfished, depleted and recovering fish stocks should be replenished, while encouraging efforts to ensure that living resources are no longer exposed to overfishing practices in the oceans, taking into account the effects of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by third-country fishing fleets to support the long-term resilience of coastal fishers. Considers that the effect of the spread of invasive alien species should also be addressed;

22. highlights the need to shift consumption patterns in the EU to depend less on imported products and more on local production. Points to the potential for local and regional development to increase consumption of locally-sourced products with short supply chains. Highlights the detrimental role industrial aquaculture can have on our own resources and on third countries' resources when it drives overfishing for fishmeal production. Emphasises the necessity to strive for low-impact aquaculture, particularly algae and bivalves, as the most sustainable alternatives for aquatic protein production, in light of declining fish stocks and the necessity of their conservation;

([5]) COM(2025) 75 final.

23. points out that the marine biological resources not yet assessed in the outermost regions, whose ocean waters account for more than half the overall area of the EU's exclusive economic zones, could be managed effectively and sustainably, while being consistent with the objectives of generating economic, social and employment benefits and contributing to the availability of food products, not only for the benefit of the development of these regions, but also for that of the EU as a whole;

24. acknowledges the role low-trophic aquaculture development can play in food security and employment, not at least in rural areas, and the need to promote the development of sustainable aquaculture;

25. points out that the EU is the world's biggest market for seafood and recognises its large share of responsibility in the sustainable management of natural resources. At the same time, considers it critical to protect the European fishing fleet and fishing industry from unfair global competition and ensure a level playing field with imported seafood products, notably coming from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, or from environmentally destructive practices;

Tourism

26. values the role of sustainable tourism in coastal areas and its importance for ensuring thriving coastal communities. Recognises the risk posed by unbalanced tourism on sensitive areas with fragile ecosystems. Consider that the Oceans Pact should contribute to identifying tools and mechanisms to minimise the risk produced by the overexploitation and environmental and heritage degradation brought about by an uncontrolled and unregulated tourist influx concentrated geographically and temporally;

27. highlights the need for a clean ocean to ensure the long-term attractiveness of coastal tourism, through the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources, and the multiple benefits brought by Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to local tourism activities;

28. highlights that the European Union's goal of achieving 30 % coverage of MPAs, with 10 % under strict protection per region, is far from being met. Notes that over 80 % of the EU's MPAs only provide minimal regulation of marine activities;

29. calls for a ban on destructive fishing activities, such as bottom-trawling, in all MPAs. Highlights the detrimental impact of industrial pelagic trawling in some areas, particularly on coastal fisheries and local communities;

Sustainable and circular economy

30. stresses that regions have diverse potential closely dependent on their physical and geographical characteristics. Highlights the potential for sustainable energy production from the development of offshore wind farms, tidal energy and ocean thermal energy conversion;

31. recalls that the deployment of offshore wind energy is at the core of delivering the European Green Deal and ensuring Europe's competitiveness and security of energy supply. Points out that the EU strategy on offshore renewable energy proposes concrete ways forward to support the long-term sustainable development of the sector and highlights the need to further invest in grid and interconnector infrastructure needed to facilitate the development of offshore renewables;

32. calls on local and regional authorities to develop appropriate energy strategies with a focus on supporting cross-border tenders and rationalising the use of energy infrastructures;

33. considers that the Oceans Pact should insist on a science-based and precautionary approach towards ocean mining, to avoid any potential irreversible impact on marine ecosystems and biodiversity, also considering the likely trade-offs with other economic activities such as fisheries, aquaculture and tourism. In this regard, the Committee also stresses the importance of raising public awareness about the integration of offshore wind farms and their essential role in the energy transition;

34. emphasises the need to tackle pollution of the marine environment in all its forms, including chemical and plastic pollution, in a 'source-to-sea' approach;

35. calls the EU to play a leading role to ensure the adoption of an ambitious Global Plastic Treaty that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics, including single-use plastics, microplastics and fishing gear, as well as hazardous chemical additives and upstream measures focusing on plastic production and reduction;

Maritime transport

36. acknowledges that the EU has a key role to play as an international leader where the vast majority of maritime transport is regulated at the International Maritime Organization (IMO);

37. stresses the importance of the ship-building industry for many coastal regions and of a European ship-building industry for Europe's strategic autonomy; calls on the European Commission to support innovation and sustainability in ship-building;

38. points out that the EU transport acquis ([6]) governs the shore-side waste management process through provisions ensuring the availability of port reception facilities (PRF) and the delivery of waste to those facilities. Highlights that air pollution coming from shipping, both when at sea and in ports, also needs to be tackled;

39. points to the importance of adopting the recommendations put forward by the CoR ([7]), in particular on the need to create incentives to deliver waste from ships to the ports including through the adoption of a single fee;

40. emphasises the importance of international maritime transport for European port cities and regions and points to the opinion issued by the CoR ([8]) that recommended that 'EU policies in the areas of transport and the maritime economy and protection of the marine and aquatic environment take account of the development challenges of ports and port cities'. Welcomes the upcoming adoption of an EU Port Strategy in 2026 and calls for this strategy to address the need to decarbonise shipping, adapt port infrastructure to climate change, and ensure the transitioning of EU ports to a model that fits planetary boundaries. Reiterates that energy is a major cost to the sector. Challenges for switching to renewable and low-carbon energy sources include funding and the fleet capacity ceilings, as new technologies require more weight than conventional diesel engines;

Protection and restoration of the environment, marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity

41. recognises the intimate intertwining between ecosystem preservation, protection of marine biodiversity and marine-related socio-economic activities and food production. Highlights the role of the ocean in the fight against climate change. Acknowledges the role of marine ecosystems, including wetlands and coral reefs, as natural buffers against storm and coastal erosion and emphasises their role in protecting infrastructure, lives and livelihoods from extreme weather and slow-onset events;

42. requests that, in addressing the reduction of air pollution generated by maritime transport, the absolute dependence of some regions on maritime transport to guarantee their supply of essential materials be taken into account through balanced measures;

([6]) Directive (EU) 2019/883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, amending Directive 2010/65/EU and repealing Directive 2000/59/EC (OJ L 151, 7.6.2019, p. 116, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L0883).

([7]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Local and regional authorities protecting the marine environment (OJ C 300, 27.7.2021, p. 36).

([8]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Regeneration of port cities and port areas (OJ C 207, 30.6.2017, p. 25).

43. points to the extent of EU legislation and acquis on the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, and to the need to achieve 'good environmental status' of oceans ([9]), which stresses the need for a balanced-science- and ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities at sea and requires the expansion of protected marine and coastal areas that are impeded by poor implementation ([10]);

44. reaffirms its concerns over the fact that the EU's marine environment did not achieve good environmental status (GES) by 2020, as expressed in 2021 CoR opinion ([11]);

45. points out that the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 aims to protect at least 30 % of EU seas, with 10 % under strict protection, and to restore marine ecosystems by reducing pollution, overfishing, and habitat destruction. Points out that the Nature Restoration Law sets legally binding targets to restore at least 20 % of degraded marine ecosystems by 2030, enhancing biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and climate resilience (see also the targets of the CFP and the new European Commission's overarching objectives on food security – Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029);

46. points to the 2021 CoR opinion on the *Sustainable blue economy and aquaculture* ([12]) setting the sustainable management of oceans and seas as a priority and calling for the blue economy to be implemented within ecological boundaries, according to the concept of planetary boundaries. It also emphasises the compatible economic use of the seas with respect of marine habitats as the compass for public and private investments;

47. reaffirms that a true circular economy based on responsible production, reduced consumption, reuse, repair and recycling is essential to create the conditions for a successful restoration of biodiversity and the reversal of environmental degradation;

48. also emphasises the importance of preventing pollution and the leakage of hazardous chemicals to avoid any interaction with other environmental stressors that can have long-term and large-scale environmental impacts on the terrestrial and marine environment, as referred in the CoR opinion *Towards a resilient water management to fight climate crisis within an EU Blue Deal* ([13]). Highlights the need for the upcoming Oceans Pact to be supported by other upcoming policy developments, such as the revision of the REACH Directive, to take into account novel threats, such as PFAS pollution;

Prevention, preparedness and climate change adaptation

49. recognises that although the worst-case scenario of climate change can still be avoided, the effects of already embedded climate change will be felt by local communities, particularly in coastal areas. Points to the role of LRAs as first responders in more frequent climate change-induced extreme weather events. In addition, adaptation strategies should be developed to address the impacts of climate change on the oceans, such as rising sea levels, acidification and pollution from plastics, nutrients and chemicals;

([9]) Namely: the Marine Strategy Framework Directive [Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) (OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19)], and its review, the Water Framework Directive [Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1)], the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (2020) and the EU Nature Restoration Law [Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869 (OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.7.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1991/oj)], which includes a specific target on oceans to restore 20 % of sea areas by 2030, the Zero Pollution Action Plan (2021).

([10]) ECA, Special Report 26/2020, Marine environment: EU protection is wide but not deep.

([11]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Local and regional authorities protecting the marine environment (OJ C 300, 27.7.2021, p. 36).

([12]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Sustainable blue economy and aquaculture (OJ C 97, 28.2.2022, p. 36).

([13]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Towards a resilient water management to fight climate crisis within an EU Blue Deal (own-initiative opinion) (OJ C, C/2024/5367, 17.9.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/5367/oj).

50. points to the CoR's proposal to the European Commission to work on strengthening the resilience dimension in its policy tools with the aim of bolstering LRAs' disaster response capabilities as well as their economic resilience and long-term growth across the EU;

51. considers that the Pact should encompass building local climate-change adaptation plans, including appropriate disaster response plans in coastal areas, which, by taking into consideration local specificities, enable effective prevention, preparedness and response to sudden crises, particularly linked to extreme weather events as well as slow-onset processes;

52. highlights the need to strengthen food systems based on local supply chains to ensure long-term resilience and robust societies;

53. believes that the Ocean Pact must ensure a just and fair transition that supports outermost regions, island and coastal communities by ensuring their socio-economic sustainability, job protection, social wellbeing and active participation in shaping policies that affect their livelihoods, and by upholding the principle of the 'right to stay' for outermost regions, island and coastal communities by enhancing access to, and the quality of, public services, housing, connectivity, transport, education and jobs;

Specific regional needs and requirements

54. recalls that outermost and island regions are particularly reliant on oceans to guarantee connectivity, ensure the provision of supplies and develop economic activities. They have specific needs and require ad hoc measures to ensure viable logistics for citizens' lives and livelihoods, including in relation to their reliance on air and maritime transport, to ensure their connectivity and supplies;

International ocean governance

55. acknowledges the key importance of governance structures established at global ([14]) and EU ([15]) level, enabling the management of oceans and the use of their resources in a sustainable way;

56. notes that the outermost regions are of great geostrategic value to the European Union due to their unique location, their cross-border nature and the fact that they are spread over a wide area on the world ocean map, as well as having free movement in their waters unrestricted by security threats;

57. moreover, given the considerable size of the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the outermost regions, which contribute significantly to the EU having the largest EEZ in the world, more importance must be attached to these regions and they must be given the operational resources to effectively be the EU's frontrunners in integrated ocean management;

58. recalls the CoR opinion on *Boosting lasting and effective cross-border cooperation with our neighbours* ([16]) in which the CoR stressed the 'need for maritime cross-border cooperation to be better structured';

59. considers that the EU can lead by example and inspire other areas to follow similar approaches. Stresses that the Pact should contribute to enhancing at the same time effective internal governance as well as establishing participatory collaboration with cross border regions outside the Union, building on and reinforcing the EU's multi-level governance approach which ensures close involvement of local and regional levels in policy design and implementation. Proposes to leverage EU ocean diplomacy to contribute to the sustainable use of ocean resources worldwide;

([14]) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

([15]) The 'Integrated Maritime Policy', the 'Marine Strategy Framework Directive', the Joint Communication on 'the EU's International Ocean Governance agenda', the 'EU biodiversity strategy 2030'.

([16]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Boosting lasting and effective cross-border cooperation with our neighbours (OJ C, C/2024/1038, 9.2.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/1038/oj).

Human Capital, Research and Innovation

60. considers that the Pact should contribute to promoting increased investment in marine research to address knowledge gaps, particularly in biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate impacts and the protection of underwater cultural heritage, as well as on new technological and business opportunities, following the principle of 'do no harm'. Suggests leveraging local knowledge and networks to enable coastal areas to become hubs for research and innovation. Proposes to facilitate an adequate role for LRAs in the new global governance, starting from the representation of the CoR in the UN Ocean Conference in Nice in June 2025. Recommends strengthening cooperation with international organisations and third countries to address global ocean challenges. Calls for policy coherence, transparent impact assessments and strengthened implementation of existing measures. The implementation of existing instruments and measures should be strengthened and the EU's role as a legislative leader in these areas consolidated. Advocates integrated coastal zone management, cross-sector collaboration and dialogue platforms for scientists, policymakers, industry and civil society. Emphasises the importance of a sustainable blue economy for coastal communities and aligning EU policies and budgets with sustainability objectives. In addition it is necessary to promote the collection and sharing of scientific data to inform policy decisions, reinforce the role of research and innovation to support decision-making and strengthen overall science-based knowledge and capacity-building for ocean management. Likewise, the need for ocean observation infrastructure should be addressed, including capacity-building in oceans and coastal areas, and an integrated global assessment should be carried out of the condition of the marine environment, including its socioeconomic aspects;

61. calls for maritime regions to consider developing 'Blue Smart Specialisation Strategies' to complement existing regional Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3);

62. stresses that in order to improve the effectiveness of the EU's internal governance, it is necessary to adopt a comprehensive approach to maritime policy, involving all public bodies and authorities specialised in maritime governance. It also highlights the need to foster coordination between the actors involved, thus facilitating knowledge management;

63. welcomes the legislative proposal adopted by the European Parliament on 'sustainable maritime fuels' in particular the establishment of an Ocean Fund to improve the energy efficiency of ships and support investment aimed at helping decarbonise maritime transports, and draws attention to the CoR's opinion of 2024 on 'The Common Fisheries Policy on the ground: towards sustainable and resilient coastal communities in the EU', which highlights the need to support the just transition to low-impact fisheries. Highlights the need for a just transition for all maritime economic activities to ensure their long-term resilience and competitiveness; welcomes the proposal adopted in November 2024 on Fuel EU Maritime – Sustainable maritime fuels;. Emphasises that, for the fishing fleet to adopt renewable energy sources, it is essential to overcome existing barriers through coordination and cooperation among stakeholders, bridge knowledge and technology gaps through research and innovation, develop the necessary skills and workforce for the energy transition, and enhance the business environment, including access to financing;

64. supports the idea that the Oceans Pact should be the first step in the development of a coherent legislative and non-legislative framework for the oceans with an Ocean Act, as well as coordinated revisions of existing legislation such as the Marine Strategy Framework and the Maritime Spatial Planning Directives to follow.

Brussels, 3 April 2025.

The President
of the European Committee of the Regions
Kata TÜTTŐ