



Marine Strategy Coordination Group (MSCG) sub-groups and participation of MEDAC



Co-founded by the
European Union

Disclaimer - This advice reflects only the MEDAC's view and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information that it contains



BACKGROUND

The Marine Strategy Coordination Group ('the group') **coordinates the joint activities between the European Commission and the EU Member States** to support the implementation of Directive 2008/56/EC1 ('Marine Strategy Framework Directive' or '**MSFD**') as laid down in the Common Implementation Strategy ('CIS'). The group was established on 09/12/2010.

Abbreviation – MSCG;

Policy Area - Environment

Lead DG **ENV** - DG Environment

Associated DG:

- JRC - Joint Research Centre
- MARE - DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
- RTD - DG Research and Innovation



TASKS

The group's tasks shall be:

1. to establish **cooperation/coordination between the Commission and Member States or stakeholders** on questions relating to the implementation of Union legislation, programmes and policies in the field of marine environmental protection.
2. to bring about an **exchange of experience and good practice** in the field of marine environmental protection.
3. to prepare and agree on the **CIS work programme**, and review its functioning.
4. to **monitor the work progress of the activities under the CIS**.
5. **to co-ordinate activities**, including those of the sub-groups, to establish links between the different activities and sub-groups and **discuss cross-cutting issues.**



TASKS

6. to **agree on outcomes and deliverables from the CIS work programme** and to provide guidance on questions emerging from the activities.
7. to develop the CIS further, where necessary.
8. steer the development of and **adopt criteria and methodological standards** to be established at Union level as a follow-up to the **GES Decision**.
9. monitor and support the development of criteria and methodological standards **to be established at regional or subregional level as a follow-up to the GES Decision**.



TASKS

10. the group shall also **assist in the preparation of the informal meetings of the Marine Directors, senior officials of the EU Member States, EEA and Candidate Countries** responsible for marine environment policy, which are organised by the Council Presidency every six months. [...]

11. **to assist DG Environment (“DG ENV”) in the preparation of legislative proposals/policy initiatives in the field of marine environmental protection.** [...]

13. **to assist DG ENV in the preparation of delegated acts.**

14. to assist DG ENV in the early preparation of implementing acts, before submission to the committee in accordance with Regulation (EU) N°182/2011.



MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be Member States' authorities responsible for the implementation of the MSFD at national level. [...]

OBSERVERS

Organisations and public entities other than Member States' authorities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules, as a result of a call for applications.

MEDAC has an observer status in the group as stakeholders' European organization with a policy profile and relevance in relation to the implementation of MSFD.

*“Observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to **take part in the discussions of the group and sub-groups and provide expertise**. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group and sub-groups.”*

MEDAC increased the interactions with DG Environment on the basis of the **EU Marine Action Plan** and the **COM DELEGATED REG. (EU) 2022/204** of 8 December 2021 laying down detailed rules on the functioning of the Advisory Councils under the CFP

TG Data : TECHNICAL GROUP ON MARINE DATA AND IT

TG Marine Litter: TECHNICAL GROUP ON MARINE LITTER

TG Seabed: **TECHNICAL GROUP ON SEABED HABITATS AND SEA-FLOOR INTEGRITY**

TG Noise: TECHNICAL GROUP ON UNDERWATER NOISE

WG Pomesa: WORKING GROUP ON PROGRAMME OF MEASURES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

WG Ges: **WORKING GROUP ON GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS**

WG Dike: WORKING GROUP ON DATA, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



For further info
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What the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is

The EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) was put in place to protect the marine ecosystem and biodiversity upon which our health and marine-related economic and social activities depend.

To help EU countries achieve a good environmental status (GES), the directive sets out 11 illustrative qualitative descriptors.

The joint communication on international ocean governance proposes concrete measures at international level, for example to address environmental, fisheries and climate issues.

Research efforts are needed to better define the descriptors to achieve GES.

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ANNEX I

Qualitative descriptors for determining good environmental status

(referred to in Articles 3(5), 9(1), 9(3) and 24)

- (1) Biological diversity is maintained. The quality and occurrence of habitats and the distribution and abundance of species are in line with prevailing physiographic, geographic and climatic conditions.
- (2) Non-indigenous species introduced by human activities are at levels that do not adversely alter the ecosystems.
- (3) Populations of all commercially exploited fish and shellfish are within safe biological limits, exhibiting a population age and size distribution that is indicative of a healthy stock.
- (4) All elements of the marine food webs, to the extent that they are known, occur at normal abundance and diversity and levels capable of ensuring the long-term abundance of the species and the retention of their full reproductive capacity.
- (5) Human-induced eutrophication is minimised, especially adverse effects thereof, such as losses in biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, harmful algae blooms and oxygen deficiency in bottom waters.
- (6) Sea-floor integrity is at a level that ensures that the structure and functions of the ecosystems are safeguarded and benthic ecosystems, in particular, are not adversely affected.
- (7) Permanent alteration of hydrographical conditions does not adversely affect marine ecosystems.
- (8) Concentrations of contaminants are at levels not giving rise to pollution effects.
- (9) Contaminants in fish and other seafood for human consumption do not exceed levels established by Community legislation or other relevant standards.
- (10) Properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment.
- (11) Introduction of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment.

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To determine the characteristics of good environmental status in a marine region or subregion as provided for in Article 9(1), Member States shall consider each of the qualitative descriptors listed in this Annex in order to identify those descriptors which are to be used to determine good environmental status for that marine region or subregion. When a Member State considers that it is not appropriate to use one or more of those descriptors, it shall provide the Commission with a justification in the framework of the notification made pursuant to Article 9(2).