

PRESS RELEASE

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CORINNE LEPAGE LAUNCHES THE IDEA TO LEAD MULTI-LATERAL MARITIME TALKS

The Integrated Maritime Policy was at the heart of the discussions of the first public meeting of the **Seas and Coastal Affairs Intergroup** which took place on 24 March 2010 at the European Parliament at the invitation of its Chair, **Corinne Lepage**, and with the participation of the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs, **Maria Damanaki**. The meeting brought together over 130 people including almost 20 Members of Parliament.

The Intergroup includes over forty MEPs of different nationalities and represents six political groups.

"The objective of our Intergroup is to address maritime questions in a cross-cutting manner, and to be a source of proposals, through working in close collaboration with all stakeholders concerned such as representatives of regional and local authorities, trade unions, economic groups and NGOs. We hope to enter into dialogue with you on the implementation of the integrated maritime policy," maintained **Corinne Lepage** whilst addressing the Commissioner.

In her speech, **Maria Damanaki**, underlined the priority guidelines of this Commission on maritime issues: first of all, an integrated maritime governance, but then an approach for maritime basins, consideration of the external dimension and of sustainable economic growth for innovation and employment. *"Throughout these priorities, one constant remains: that is the need for cross-sectoral thinking to exploit synergies wherever possible. In doing so we will deliver the "blue growth" and jobs I personally have pledged to create and thus do our bit towards achieving the goals set out in the Europe2020 agenda."*

The Commissioner also mentioned the role of the regions and in particular was said to be open to *"a new form of cooperation between regions and member states"* that can contribute to the implementation of the integrated maritime policy.

The maritime regions were represented by **Eleni Marianou**, Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) who invited the Commissioner to be *"the innovative promoter of the Integrated Maritime Policy, but also, within the college of Commissioners, to be the ardent advocate of the integration of a maritime approach in other EU policies in support of smart, ecological and socially inclusive growth."*

In her conclusions, **Corinne Lepage** also launched *"an area for debate: we need more coherence and an ambition for maritime Europe, why not lead multi-lateral talks to ensure improved management of maritime issues during this mandate?"*

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