

## Delegation of the European Commission to Canada

[EN] - FR

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June 7, 2006

## Oceans and seas: European Commission sets a new vision for Integrated Maritime Policy

*The European Commission is today publishing a Green Paper entitled, "Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas" asking citizens how they want to deal with oceans and seas and launching one of the largest consultation exercise in the EU's history. The audition responds to a growing awareness both of the vital role which the sea already plays as a driver of Europe's prosperity, and of its potential for providing more jobs and greater well-being. The results of this exercise will help the Commission define a new vision for an Integrated Maritime Policy.*

The main question asked by the Green Paper is: can Europe afford to manage its seas and oceans in a sectoral, unconnected, way? Or has the time come to establish a truly integrated Maritime Policy which will release untapped potential in terms of growth and jobs while strengthening the protection of the marine environment? And if so, how should we go about it?

Commission President José Manuel Barroso, who initiated the process said: "Europe has long benefited from its maritime activities. However, much more could be made of our seas and oceans to increase the prosperity and well being of European citizens. Today's Green Paper gives us all the opportunity to put our heads together to see how best to do it. I encourage everyone to have their say on how they see a future maritime policy for the Union which would boost jobs while protecting the marine environment".

"As our maritime activities increase and diversify so does the need for coordination and planning so as to avoid conflict and optimise our returns from the sea. An all-embracing approach would allow us to combine economic growth with effective protection of the marine environment and greater stakeholder participation. This is a project where Member States, regions, industry, NGOs and the public all have an interest in finding the best way ahead in our future relation with the sea" Joe Borg, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs said.

Transport, shipping, trade, coastal and port-based industries, off-shore, traditional and alternative energies, fisheries, aquaculture, marine research, tourism, – countless areas of human activity often affect one another and can have an impact on our oceans and the quality of the life they help sustain. Yet too often, the sectors which impact on the maritime environment operate independently – each has its own structures, embodies its own culture and vision, and is run according to its own rules. Yet they all depend on the same resource.

The Green Paper seeks to highlight the interconnections and interdependence of these different domains – the linkages which are often ignored by existing procedures. It points out how, for example, the development of port infrastructure has to be weighed against the protection of local ecosystems, the promotion of coastal aquaculture and tourism development, as well as on the benefits of economic growth through foreign trade. It shows how fishing vessels, container ships, pleasure boats, oil companies and wind farms, for example, have to jostle for position in our increasingly crowded waters. It also underlines the fact that this convergence of myriad different issues is not the exception, but the norm, for it reflects the underlying wealth and diversity of Europe's seas.

The question is asked: is it really possible to continue to manage and develop all these different and frequently overlapping activities independently of one another? Or has not the time now come for Europe to invest in a truly integrated policy approach, if we are to succeed in creating a vibrant and sustainable maritime economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and beyond?

The Green Paper comes from a Commission decision taken in March 2005 to launch a consultation on the future of Europe's seas. President Barroso asked Commissioner Borg "to steer a maritime task force with the aim of launching a wide consultation on a future maritime policy for the Union". The Green Paper is the result of a collective effort, based on intense and fruitful cooperation between seven Commissioners. In addition to Mr Borg: Mr Verheugen, responsible for Enterprise and Industry, Mr Barrot: Transport, Mr Dimas: Environment, Mrs Hübner: Regional Policy, Mr Potocnik: Research and Mr Pieblags: Energy. Other Commissioners also participated when the discussions dealt with subjects linked to their portfolios.

The issues raised in the Green Paper will be debated in a number of events organised in various Member States.

To find out more about the public events where these issues will be discussed, and about how to contribute to the debate, please go to:

<http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs>

See also [Memo/06/230](#)

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#### Archives:

[2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#)

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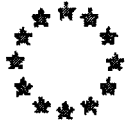
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TOP ▲

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## Delegation of the European Commission to Canada

[EN] - FR

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[EU & Canada](#) ▾

[EU at a Glance](#) ▾

[EU: Global Player](#) ▾

[Press & Information](#) ▾

### Press Releases



June 2, 2006

## European Commissioner Figel visits Canada to strengthen bilateral relations in higher education, training, culture and youth

Ján Figel', European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism, will be visiting Canada from 4 to 6 June. He will meet Canadian authorities to reinforce and renew Europe-Canada cooperation in higher education and vocational training, which, since it was launched in 1995, has involved over 200 institutions and 2000 students.

Ahead of his departure for Ottawa and Montréal, European Commissioner Ján Figel' said: *"Higher education has become an essential component of the Lisbon strategy, which calls for European Union education to become a world reference by 2010. This objective can only be achieved by keeping European education tuned to world developments and by testing approaches and standards against those applied in the world's most developed countries like Canada".* To conclude that *"the Commission is committed to renew and reinforce educational cooperation which plays an important role in EU-Canada relations"*.

The meetings of the Commissioner with the Canadian authorities will focus on the forthcoming renewal of the agreement and on the identification of innovative cooperation approaches. The renewed agreement will, for the first time, also contain a strong youth co-operation component.

The EU and Canada have been running a **joint cooperation programme in higher education and vocational training since 1995**. The programme's core activities are joint curriculum development and student exchanges in a wide range of disciplines such as International Education Development, Environment and Agriculture, Engineering, Health Science and International Business. **More than 200 institutions** have participated by drawing on their best resources to build transatlantic study programmes and **over 2000 students** have benefited from the resulting exchanges. The programme is now up for renewal.

The Commissioner's visit will also be the occasion to review education policy developments in Canada and in the EU and discuss the opportunities arising from the Bologna Process.

The Commissioner will also meet Ms Beverly Oda, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women and Mr Dick Pound, President of the World Anti-Doping Agency.

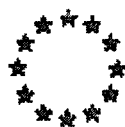
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#### Archives:

[2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#)

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March 3, 2006

## EU Fisheries Commissioner welcomes report on illegal fishing and meets with Loyola Hearn

European Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Joe Borg was in Paris today to attend the launch of the Report prepared by the High Seas Task Force (HSTF) on Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing. He also had bilateral meetings with Minister Loyola Hearn to discuss possible approaches to the follow up on the work of the Task Force, as well as matters of bilateral interest.

"The European Union has repeatedly led the way in international fora in terms both of developing the law of the sea so that it is able to effectively meet the challenge of IUU fishing, and of reinforcing practical deterrents such as monitoring, control and sanctions," Commissioner Borg said. "We continue to push for really effective measures to preserve marine resources, and the HSTF Report will provide a very welcome new impetus for advancing international cooperation in this area."

The HSTF was set up under the auspices of the OECD's Round Table on Sustainable Development in December 2003 to examine the phenomenon of IUU fishing in areas beyond national jurisdiction and to suggest ways of improving prevention and enforcement. Chaired by the UK, and with substantial funding from the EU, the Task Force has prepared a comprehensive report on IUU practices. They will also table nine concrete proposals which might make a major contribution to curtailing illegal practices which undermine fish stocks, damage the environment, and penalise the vast majority of honest fishers who work within the law. These proposals include measures to reinforce the International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MSC) Network, and to establish a global information system on high seas fishing vessels.

The Commission welcomes the work of the HSTF, which has done a great deal to raise the political profile of the fight against IUU fishing. The EU has always placed a high priority on cooperation with all concerned parties to advance joint actions and common advocacy in the relevant international organisations, in particular in the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), which are the essential backbone of the international community's fight against IUU activity. The Commission will be looking at the Report's proposals very carefully to identify specific measures which could be a focus for enhanced collaboration going forward.

Alongside the official launch of the HSTF Report, Commissioner Borg also held a bilateral meeting with Canadian Fisheries Minister Loyola Hearn. Their discussions covered the Task Force's proposals, as well as other issues of mutual interest, in particular continuing efforts to strengthen RFMOs, and the Commission's forthcoming Green Paper on an integrated European Maritime Policy.

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