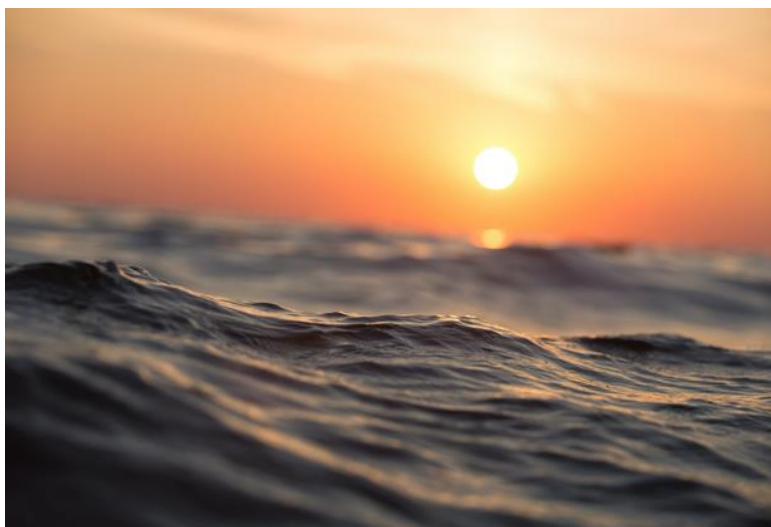




Boosting innovation for the future and sustainability of our ocean – The road to Lisbon



Tuesday 21 June 2022, 14:00 – 16:00 CEST

Co-hosted by MEP Catherine Chabaud & MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho

Speakers:

- **MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho**
- **Peter Thomson**, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean
- **MEP Catherine Chabaud**
- **MEP Peter van Dalen**
- **Virginijus Sinkevičius**, European Commissioner on Environment, Oceans and Fisheries
- **Gavin Allwright**, Secretary-General, International Windship Association
- **Georges Canal**, Industrial Director, Fil&Fab
- **Andreea Strachinescu**, Head of A1 Unit on "Maritime Innovation, Marine Knowledge and Investment", DG MARE, European Commission
- **Jorge Manuel dos Santos Gonçalves**, Senior Researcher, Centre of Marine Sciences of Algarve (CCMAR)
- **Minna Epps**, Head of Ocean Team, IUCN
- **Franck Jesus**, Senior Department Climate Adviser, European Investment Bank (EIB)
- **Kathryn Gavira-O'Neill**, Director of Science & Sustainability, Satlink
- **Lise Detrimont**, General Delegate, International Windship Association

Welcome Remarks

MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho

“One of the most important task in reaching ocean sustainability is building a sustainable ocean economy”.

MEP Ms. da Graça Carvalho stressed three points on the importance of research and innovation for ocean sustainability. First, the importance of **innovation, and holistic research for a science-based approach to sustainable oceans**. It will give a perspective of production and prosperity for coastal communities. Moving on, she highlighted that the EU should increase its capacities **to bring together all the sectors, integrate the economy and invest in several areas**. Second, **there is a need to improve cooperation**. As quoted *“our role is to make sure that the best knowledge that comes up from the scientific community is translated into the legislation and political agenda”*. Third, she mentioned **the need for a synergy of the financial framework for the sector**. To conclude, Ms. da Graça Carvalho stressed the need for synergy between the EU and the priorities within all Member States.

Keynote speech

Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean

“There can be no healthy planet without a healthy ocean”.

Mr. Thomson started by **listing the positive opportunities to take meaningful actions to protect oceans, particularly in 2022**. In February 2022, the UN Environment Assembly committed to the drawing up of a legally binding treaty to tackle issues of plastic pollution. On 17 June 2022, **the WTO agreed on a deal to end harmful fishing subsidies**. In this regard, **Mr. Thomson expressed his hope that the money spent annually on these subsidies would be diverted to ocean conservation and sustainable adaptation**. In addition, a treaty on the high seas is expected as well as promises from the CBD Conference and the COP27 in November 2022. Moving on, he stressed that **the issue of ocean acidification is equally urgent** which means tackling greenhouse gas emissions down to an acceptable level. To do so, **only a huge**

increase in financial resources will allow us to follow the zero-carbon pathway. On this note, the OECD has demonstrated that **SGD 14 is the most poorly funded**. Moving on, Mr. Thomson emphasised that **future decisions should be based on climate-smart and marine spatial planning, the precautionary principle, and sound ocean science**. To conclude, Mr. Thomson stated that the UN Ocean Conference will cover up all the major challenges and will provide a political declaration.

Opening speeches by MEPs

MEP Catherine Chabaud

“The oceans’ challenges and the search for innovative solutions must be everyone’s business, as we are all individually and collectively responsible”.

MEP Ms. Chabaud emphasised that **there is a need to rethink the way we live and use the oceans**. Moving on, she considered that **all maritime infrastructures must contribute to the collection of data on the ocean in order to increase our knowledge**. She stressed that the oceans’ challenges and the search for innovative solutions **must be everyone’s business, as we are all individually and collectively responsible**. For this reason, Ms. Chabaud is **campaigning to introduce the notion of the ocean as a global common into the preamble of the future UN texts**. Moving on, she stressed that **innovation can be technological, collective management but also institutional**. To conclude, **Ms. Chabaud advocated for the creation of an Ocean Team within the European Commission led by a Vice-President in charge of maritime issues**. In addition, she stated the need to strengthen this integrating approach into the European Parliament by integrating the blue deal within the green deal (resolution to be voted in July).

MEP Peter van Dalen

“The EU needs to reconsider the implementation of pulse fishing toward sustainable fishing gear”.

MEP Mr. van Dalen emphasized on the need to better take into consideration the role of fisheries and aquaculture. He recalled that many sustainable fisheries techniques are existing and **acknowledged the work of fishing companies to improve the quality of the sea**. Moving on, he highlighted as quoted *“the need to reconsider the implementation of pulse fishing toward sustainable fishing gear”* is crucial as it reduces fuel consumption and reduces CO2 emission but also aims to target fisheries. Furthermore, Mr.

van Dalen **stressed the need for a fishing community in Europe and to work together with fishermen and fisherwomen** for cleaner and healthier oceans.

Intervention of Virginijus Sinkevičius, European Commissioner on Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

“The EU has to put innovation at the top of the implementation of the EU Green Deal marine objectives”.

Mr. Sinkevičius affirmed that the EU and the international community have the capacity and knowledge to do what it takes to protect and restore the oceans’ health. The WTO agreement on fishery subsidies shows that progress in the multilateral system is possible and is a clear encouragement for the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. The latter would be an opportunity to demonstrate that *“we walk our talk, that we are able to encourage science-based innovative solutions to address the threat to the health, economy, and governance of the ocean”*. Moving on, Mr. Sinkevičius considered that **the EU has to put innovation and sound science-based solutions at the top of the implementation of the EU Green Deal marine objectives.** He recalled that the Horizon Europe Research program remains the main funding tool for research and innovation. **One of the five Horizon Europe missions is to restore the oceans and to develop and promote innovative solutions to the major challenges faced by our oceans.** Moreover, the **need for better ways of cooperation with partners around the globe** to achieve the objective of Agenda 2030 including SDG 14 was highlighted. To make it fit for its purpose, the EU has to work to **update the EU international ocean governance agenda.** To conclude, Mr. Sinkevičius affirmed that the EU will do everything to reach an agreement on the protection of the high seas this summer as well as later on this year on a new post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Presentation of innovative solutions

Gavin Allwright, Secretary General, International Windship Association

“The EU needs to ensure level playing fields on all energy sources and prioritize renewable technologies”.

Mr. Allwright affirmed that one of the key existing tools for decarbonisation is wind propulsion 2021-2030. Wind propulsion can deliver 5 to 25% of the propulsive power and optimize it up to 30%. In this regard, wind energy is a pure zero-emissions energy source. Moving on, Mr. Allwright highlighted that “*by using wind propulsion, the fuel savings will accrue to 1.5 to 1.6 trillion dollars up until 2050*”. It has been estimated by the UMass and Energy transition commission that shipping will require 1.4 to 1.5 trillion to be fully decarbonized. Therefore, the decision to move toward wind propulsion within this decade can back the entire decarbonisation sector. In order to make that happen, **Mr. Allwright highlighted the need to ensure that a level playing field is in place on all energy sources and the need to prioritise renewable technologies**. Last but not least, **there is a need to ensure a just transition** specifically for developed countries. Mr. Allwright concluded with its ‘wind-win-win’ slogan, mentioning that even though the technology is not mainstream, many companies are involved.

Georges Canal, Industrial Director, Fil&Fab

“**Fil&Fab wants to add value to the work done by fishermen on the harbors and support our customers in adopting a sustainable approach**”.

Mr. Georges Canal highlighted that their field of work is wider than recycling fishing nets. **It also aims to coordinate and add value among different actors** as well as **to all the work done by the fishermen directly on the harbors**. Fil&Fab’s products can be used in various markets: not only the plastic industry as the main customer but also a lot of people coming from everywhere. To conclude, Mr. Canal mentioned that Fil&Fab works with different harbors in France and recycles solely one type of fishnet but aims to expand its project by 2025.

Panel discussion

Andreea Strachinescu, Head of A1 Unit on “Maritime Innovation, Marine Knowledge and Investment”, DG MARE, European Commission

“**To build solutions together, it is necessary to engage citizens, stakeholders, and regions, in order to identify what is needed**”.

Ms. Strachinescu kicked off the panel discussion by answering the questions “*Why is boosting innovation important? What is the future of our oceans?*” She stressed that **if we increase the level of ambition set**

for the future, innovation is necessary. Ms. Strachinescu emphasized three objectives of why innovation is needed. First of all, it is necessary to have reliable and regulated sources of electricity. Moreover, innovation is necessary to be able to cultivate and harvest what the sea is producing. Finally, innovation is also needed to be able to manage marine ecosystems in the context of carbon registration. Moving on, Ms. Strachinescu mentioned that **with Horizon Europe, the EU has already put in place projects and introduced the concept of associated regions.** To conclude, she stated that *“to build solutions together, it is necessary to engage citizens, stakeholders, and regions, in order to identify what is needed”*.

Jorge Manuel dos Santos Gonçalves, Senior Researcher, Centre of Marine Sciences of Algarve (CCMAR)

“Saving and maintaining the ocean is a basic mission for human civilization”.

Mr. Manuel dos Santos Gonçalves highlighted that it is necessary to improve and maintain the health of the oceans. He explained the benefits of the oceans for nature and human health and stressed that *“saving and maintaining the ocean is a basic mission for human civilization”*. In this regard, innovation is needed to reduce pollution and decrease overfishing. According to Mr. Gonçalves, **the most important innovation is not technological but social:** *“Innovation starts in our mindset, our behaviors, and actions”*. To conclude, he stressed that population growth, economic models, and top-down management are not compatible with the resources and capabilities of the planet.

Minna Epps, Head of Ocean Team, IUCN

“For a transformational change, a habit change in behavior is needed”.

Ms. Minna Epps started by reiterating that the oceans are in trouble and that *“progress is happening, however, not at the scale we want”*. By continuously using the same technologies and methodologies, different results cannot be expected. Therefore innovation is key. She emphasised the need to *“make use of the same technologies, but deploy them in a different context”* and that ***“for a transformational change, a habit change in behavior is needed”***. Moving on, she mentioned that **a bridge is necessary between conservation and sustainability, using a blended approach between new and existing models.** Furthermore, she stressed the **need for an innovative finance mechanism for a sustainable blue**

economy. As a final remark, she stressed that **innovation is not equally deployed on a global scale.** A difference should be made on the local level by working together with local entrepreneurs.

Franc Jesus, Senior Department Climate Adviser, European Investment Bank (EIB)

“It is key to develop and put money into developing solutions that can go at scale rapidly in the coming

Mr. Jesus explains that the EIB is using a financial lens when dealing with innovation for sustainable oceans and a sustainable blue economy. He explained that it is **“key to develop and put money into developing solutions that can go at scale rapidly in the coming years”**. To conclude, Mr. Jesus stated that EIB is ready to **support the entire spectrum of technological innovation, ranging from early-stage innovation development to senior debt for mature technologies.**

Kathryn Gavira-O’Neill, Director of Science & Sustainability, Satlink

“Technologies and innovation hold the key to guaranteeing the future of the oceans in different aspects”.

Ms. Gavira-O’Neill echoed that **new solutions are needed to confront the challenges mentioned by previous speakers.** She highlighted the dependence on the ocean on many levels. **Moving on, she explained that detailed information can be retrieved due to technologies such as satellites.** Moreover, certain mechanisms are able to track vessels and identify their practices at sea. To conclude, she stated that **“technologies and innovation hold the key to guaranteeing the future of the oceans in different aspects”.** **Through collective innovation and creativity, Satlink will be able to protect the oceans and keep the oceans healthy.**

Q&A Session

On behalf of the EP Intergroup, **moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas** addressed the following question to **Ms. Strachinescu**: **“how can the EU catch up with the US which is dominating the scene of ocean conservation?”**

Ms. Strachinescu stressed that **to achieve transformation and a better state of the oceans, knowledge is necessary, and knowledge is based on observation.** Observation is something that Europe needs to enhance. **Two objectives need to be achieved: speaking with one voice and having the right capital.** As

to the first objective, it is necessary to have a coordinated position when it comes to observation. The European Commission will soon release an initiative on this. **Currently, ocean observation is done by different communities in the different Member States.** As to the second objective, **venture capital** is needed. It is necessary to change the way we are supporting innovation in this field. In her final remarks, she highlighted the important role of citizens in science that should not be neglected.

Moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas addressed the next question to Mr. Gonçalves: *“how do you think that the key issues related to fisheries and marine conservation can be addressed through innovation?”* **Mr. Gonçalves started by focusing on the sustainability of fisheries, where innovation offers choices to make a difference.** In this regard, he mentioned the increasing knowledge about small-scale fisheries, especially focusing on the solution to using real-time trackers on vessels and fishing gear. **This knowledge can be used to improve fishing management and ocean protection.** In terms of inclusivity, he stated that there are several levels of involvement in the interaction with the government and fisheries. **Co-management seems to be a step toward sustainability.** However, establishing effective, fair, and well-managed MPA’s seems to be dependent on the involvement of stakeholders at the beginning of each progress. **For fisheries, MPAs will benefit from co-management schemes focusing on strong scientific advice.**

Moving on during the Q&A, the following question was asked by **moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas to Ms. Epps:** *“what has IUCN been doing to ensure the sustainability of our ocean and to boost innovation?”* **Ms. Epps** underlined that **IUCN helps to address the global climate and biodiversity challenges by supporting nature-based solutions with financial longevity.** IUCN offers help to implement decisions, taken on a global level, on a national level. **IUCN builds business cases to invest in the oceans, working through projects on the ground.** As such, IUCN is offering a mechanism for entrepreneurs and developers to develop nature-based solutions that align with global standards.

Turning to Mr. Jesus from EIB, **moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas** asked the following question: *“How specifically the EIB supports innovations for the blue economy?”*

Mr. Jesus explained that EIB launched the Clean Ocean initiative with different partners and aims to support projects that reduce plastic pollution reaching the ocean through different means. **EIB has also been the main supporter of financing offshore wind projects in Europe.** In 2019, EIB launched the Blue Sustainable Ocean Strategy. Moving on, Mr. Jesus mentioned that a number of new technologies are developing **and that EIB is specifically investing in floating offshore wind** but is also looking at other marine renewable technologies. Moving on, he stressed that *“EIB does not only intervene with loans but*

with grant funding that help anticipate the risks of the innovation and brings fundings for the next developments of these innovations". Moving on, **Mr. Jesus** highlighted that there is strong competition from the US and Asia. Hence, **in Europe, it is necessary to have strategic autonomy and competitiveness. It is necessary to work together to build an integrated financial ecosystem.**

Moving to the next question, **moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas** asked how technology and innovation can help shape ocean sustainability? **Ms. Gavira-O'Neil** stressed that *"we cannot protect what we don't understand"*. Indeed, **technology provides opportunities for providing information on the oceans and species and increased monitoring.** Moving on, **she highlighted that traditional methods are expensive and difficult to coordinate, and time-consuming. These methods only cover a fraction of the area which needs to be monitored.** Technology can help to fill these gaps. In addition, she mentioned that *"the industry is the ones striving to find solutions"*. She illustrated this with examples of new technologies used by the industry. To conclude, she highlighted that sustainability depends on technology.

Moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas asked the panelists what the key takeaways are from this event, formulated in one word. According to Ms. Strachinescu: **collaboration.** Mr. Gonçalves answered **global action.** Moving on, Ms. Epps mentioned **innovation with caution** as it is necessary to consider the potential trade-offs of new innovations such as wind and offshore wind energy. Mr. Jesus stated **optimism** and, according to Ms. O'Neil, **encourage innovation.**

Moving on in the discussion, **MEP Ms. Chabaud and MEP Ms. da Graça Carvalho addressed the following questions:** MEP Ms. Chabaud asked Ms. Epps (IUCN) and Ms. Strachinescu (DG MARE), *"what are the obstacles in developing the innovations? How can we push these innovations in for example the climate package, biodiversity package, or circular economy package? How can we foster Blue carbon into our legislative work?"* In the same vein, MEP Ms. da Graça Carvalho asked: *"How can we agree on the fisheries sector to trust technology? How do we increase trust?"*

Ms. Strachinescu mentioned that in Horizon Europe, the focus is put on blue carbon. She highlighted that it is necessary to show how the technologies are functioning and how we can bring up the scale. Moving on, she stated as quoted *"An integrated approach must be at core"*. From the IUCN perspective, **Ms. Epps** expressed that **technical assistance and nature-based solutions are at the core.** However, nature-based solutions are at risk due to climate change. Independently, viable and cost efficiency are aspects IUCN is working on. **Mr. Canal** mentioned two difficulties Fil&Fab is facing. He stressed his concern to implement Fil&Fab models in other countries. Moreover, he expressed concerns about how to improve the price level

of the product since they have to compete with non-recycled fishing nets. **Ms. Detrimont** stated that there is a need to prioritise today's technologies as most of the focus currently is on alternative fuels which are expensive and infrastructure-heavy. Moving on, **she mentioned that there is a lack of measuring and monitoring renewable energy installations.** Hence, it is necessary to introduce these renewable technologies as mandatory in the RED directive. Moving on, **Ms. Gavira-O'Neil** responded by mentioning that **the industry feels that they do not have a voice.** She emphasised the need for the industry to be involved in building the regulations, and this involvement also needs to be initiated by regulators themselves.

Finally, **moderator Mr. Ilias Grampas** directed the final question to **Ms. Andreea Strachinescu:** *"What shall we expect in the upcoming joint communication regarding international ocean governance?"* **Ms. Strachinescu** answered that the challenges addressed today can be expected but at the same time quoted that *"We are trying to bring what we are doing well at the EU level, to another scale"*. **There is a need for collaboration** on how certain solutions turn out in practice.

Closing Remarks

MEP Catherine Chabaud

"I will push for more collaboration on ocean issues at the EU level"

As closing remarks, **MEP Ms. Chabaud** showed her appreciation to all the participants and echoed the key message shared by the panelist namely, **collaboration, global action, innovation with caution, optimism, and encouragement of innovation.** As for collaboration, Ms. Chabaud explained that she is trying to push for more collaboration on ocean issues at the EU level. Moving on, she highlighted that in July votes will take place to support the commission's efforts for better ocean governance at both EU and international levels. To conclude she stressed that there are a lot of challenges ahead.