

Feedback from European Marine Board to [European Commission's roadmap for EU 2030 biodiversity strategy](#) (17 January 2020)

Do not forget about the marine biodiversity! Europe's seas cover more than 11 million km², and range from shallow, semi-enclosed seas to vast expanses of the deep ocean. They host a wide, highly diverse range of coastal and marine ecosystems with a large variation of habitats and species (EEA Biodiversity in Europe's seas, 2019). Despite occupying the largest habitable space on Earth, known marine species make up only 13% of the current described world biodiversity largely due to our lack of knowledge of the depths of the ocean and of marine microorganisms. With only 270,000 marine species described to date, we need to increase research effort on marine biodiversity to make sure we can continue to discover important products and services they could provide, and their important role in maintaining a healthy ocean.

Recent figures from the IPBES regional assessment (IPBES 6th plenary) show negative biodiversity trends for all available marine indicators for all sea basins in Europe. The European Commission also highlighted the lack of effort from several EU Member States in protecting the marine environment from pollution, biodiversity loss and unsustainable fishing (COM/2018/562). Coastal areas are zones of concentrated biodiversity and natural productivity and will be particularly affected by multiple human stressors because this is where most human activities take place and where pressure accumulates due to the migration of humans to the seashore. In addition, the upcoming Strategic Research Agenda on Oceans and Human Health (March 2020) highlights that marine biodiversity is essential for human health.

Europe's economic prosperity and well-being is underpinned by its natural capital, which deliver ecosystem services essential for human activity, as promoted in the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the priority objective of the 7th Environment Action Programme. The EU has the world's largest maritime territory (including outer regions), which is larger than the land it holds, houses almost half of its population and accounts for almost half of its GDP. So it makes sense that marine biodiversity is pivotal to the EU's ambition for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted in October 2020 at the UN Biodiversity Conference.

Detailed recommendations on what to do to halt biodiversity loss in the marine environment are listed in the EEA's European Topic Centre on Inland and Marine Waters report from 2019 (Vaughan et al. 2019) and WWF's Climate, Nature and our 1.5°C Future: A synthesis of IPCC and IPBES reports (WWF, 2019). We also call for more interlinkages between other EU directives, policies and strategies (Common Agricultural Policy, Common Fisheries Policy, Clean energy for all Europeans package, etc.) to avoid institutionalized biodiversity loss.