

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Official reference	Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)	
Relevant dates	Document	17/06/2008
	Publication	25/06/2008
	Entry into force	15/07/2008
	Implementation by Belgium	23/06/2010
	Implementation deadline	15/07/2010
Policy level	European	
Type of instrument	Directive	
Geographical reach	EU Member States	
(Legal) coverage in the BNS	Territorial sea, exclusive economic zone	
European contact point	Directorate-General Environment (DG ENV)	
Competent authorities in Belgium	Federal authorities; FPS Health, Food chain safety and Environment; DG Environment; Agency Marine Environment	
Transposition on the federal level	Koninklijk besluit van 23 juni 2010 betreffende de mariene strategie voor de Belgische Zeegebieden	

// abstract:

The European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD; 2008/56/EC) is the environmental pillar of the *integrated maritime policy* (COM (2007) 575; p.66) of the European Union. The MSFD aims to obtain a good environmental status (GES) of the European marine waters by 2020. Another objective is the protection of the resources upon which socio-economic activities depend. Within this scope, the Member States need to develop marine strategies, taking into account their particular socio-economic and regulatory situation. In this context, regional cooperation has to result in cohesion of the measures required by the directive. These strategies should improve the process of integration of the environment into other policy domains. Thus the ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities (according to the precautionary principle) is embedded in a legislative framework, in which the concepts 'environmental protection' and 'sustainability' receive particular attention.

The GES is described in article 9 on the basis of 11 descriptors. The Member States have to develop indicators and associated target values for each of these descriptors. The European Union supports the Member States in the development of a methodology regarding the indicators by means of a technical report and scientific recommendations for each descriptor. On the basis of these scientific recommendations, Decision 2010/477/EU was published, which determines the criteria and the methodological standards with regard to the MSFD and the development of the integrated maritime policy.