

Republic of Latvia
Cabinet
Regulation No. 596
Adopted 2 August 2011

By-laws of the Marine Environment Council

*Issued pursuant to
Section 7, Paragraph three
of the Marine Environment Protection and Management Law*

I. General Provisions

1. The Marine Environment Council (hereinafter – the Council) is an advisory and co-ordinating institution, the purpose of the operation of which is to promote the co-operation of the State administration and local government institutions, associations and foundations, as well as entrepreneurs and other interest groups (hereinafter – involved parties) involved in the development and implementation of the marine strategy, and the co-ordination of their opinions.
2. The decisions of the Council are of recommendatory nature.

II. Functions, Tasks and Rights of the Council

3. The Council shall have the following functions:
 - 3.1. to promote the communication and co-ordinated action of the involved parties in issues, which are related to achievement and implementation of the purposes of the Marine Environment Protection and Management Law;
 - 3.2. to co-ordinate the co-operation of the parties involved in the development and implementation of the marine strategy;
 - 3.3. to evaluate the documents related to the development and implementation of the marine strategy;
 - 3.4. to co-operate in developing a programme of measures for improving the status of the marine environment (hereinafter – programme of measures);
 - 3.5. to promote the preparation of the information related to the protection of the marine environment and sustainable use of the sea, which must be submitted, within a specified time period, to institutions of the European Union, as well as to the Helsinki Commission and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in accordance with international conventions;
 - 3.6. to inform mass media and the public regarding topical issues of the protection of the marine environment, as well as to ensure communication on the abovementioned issues with mass media and the public.
4. In order to implement the functions referred to in Paragraph 3 of this Regulation, the Council shall perform the following tasks:
 - 4.1. during the course of development of the marine strategy evaluate the conformity of the documents with public interests and the guidelines for Integrated Maritime Policy of

the European Union and provide opinions and recommendations to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development on:

- 4.1.1. initial assessment of the status of the marine environment;
- 4.1.2. definition of a good status of the marine environment;
- 4.1.3. marine environment targets and indicators related thereto;
- 4.1.4. monitoring programme of the marine environment;

4.2. provide proposals to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development on measures to be included in the programme of measures (including in relation to marine spatial planning), and an opinion on priorities for attracting funding and other resources for implementation of the measures included in the programme of measures;

4.3. identify deficiencies hindering achievement of marine environment targets in Latvia and, if necessary, develop proposals to the responsible authorities for elimination thereof;

4.4. ensure regular exchange of information among the involved parties regarding development of draft policy planning documents and regarding measures for implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union in relation to the protection of the marine environment, preservation of maritime resources, scientific research of the sea, establishment of a uniform system for exchange of maritime information;

4.5. provide proposals to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development in order to ensure the conformity of the maritime strategy with the Action Plan for Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union, Action Plan of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, international obligations of Latvia within the scope of UN Environmental Programme, UN Economic Commission for Europe, International Maritime Organisation (IMO) (in relation to protection of the marine environment in the field of maritime and navigation safety), European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and other institutions of the European Union and international organisations.

5. The Council has the right:

5.1. to receive the information or opinions necessary for carrying out the functions of the Council available to the parties involved in implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union;

5.2. to establish working groups of experts in order to analyse specific issues and develop corresponding proposals, as well as to co-ordinate national interests, interests of the public and interests of entrepreneurs in implementation of the marine environment policy;

5.3. to invite officials of the State, local governments and other institutions or experts to meetings of the Council, to invite experts or sectoral specialists, in an advisory capacity, for evaluation of individual issues related to the development of the maritime strategy and programme of measures;

5.4. to provide recommendations to public persons and private individuals regarding protection of the marine environment on issues concerning use of the sea in accordance with the Marine Environment Protection and Management Law;

5.5. to submit proposals to the Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development on changes in the personnel of the Council (indicating a justification);

5.6. to place information in mass media and website of the Ministry regarding decisions taken by the Council;

5.7. to co-operate with other advisory institutions in order to solve issues related to the use of the sea and protection of the marine environment;

5.8. to review proposals regarding development of draft laws and regulations and policy planning documents in relation to the use of the sea and protection of the marine environment;

5.9. to provide proposals regarding draft policy planning documents and laws and regulations, which are related to the use of the sea and protection of the marine environment.

III. Composition of the Council

6. The Council shall consist of no more than 20 members of the Council:

- 6.1. representative of the Ministry of Defence;
- 6.2. representative of the Ministry of Economics;
- 6.3. representative of the Ministry of Education and Science;
- 6.4. representative of the Ministry of Transport;
- 6.5. two representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture (in the field of fishery and agriculture);
- 6.6. representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development;
- 6.7. representative of the State stock company "Maritime Administration of Latvia";
- 6.8. two representatives of the Association of Coastal Local Governments delegated by the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments;
- 6.9. representative of the Latvian Transit Business Association;
- 6.10. representative of the Latvian Port Association;
- 6.11. representative of the State scientific institute "Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"";
- 6.12. two representatives of the Environmental Advisory Council;
- 6.13. representative of the Fisheries Advisory Council;
- 6.14. representative of the Maritime Association.

7. The institutions referred to in Paragraph 6 of this Regulation shall delegate representatives for work in the Council, as well as inform the Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development regarding changing the delegated representative.

8. The chairperson of the Council and the vice-chairperson of the Council shall be the representative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

IV. Work Organisation of the Council

9. The work of the Council shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Council. In absence of the chairperson of the Council his or her duties shall be fulfilled by the vice-chairperson of the Council. The rules of procedure of meetings of the Council shall be approved by the Council.

10. The chairperson of the Council shall convene meetings of the Council no less than once in six months, sending an invitation no later than two weeks before the meeting. Extraordinary meetings shall be convened upon proposition of the chairperson of the Council or if it is requested by any of the members of the Council. An invitation to an extraordinary meeting shall be sent no later than five days before a meeting.

11. Members of the Council shall submit proposals to the chairperson of the Council regarding issues to be examined in the Council. The chairperson of the Council shall examine the submitted proposals within 20 days and take a decision to include the issue on the agenda of the meeting of the Council.

12. The representatives of the institutions referred to in Paragraph 6 of this Regulation have the right to invite a specialist of the respective field in work of the Council. In absence of the member of the Council the specialist shall have the right to vote. The chairperson of the

Council shall be informed regarding inviting a specialist at least three working days before the planned meeting.

13. The chairperson of the Council shall approve the agenda of meetings of the Council, chair meetings of the Council, sign minutes of meetings, give assignments to members of the Council, as well as represent the Council without special authorisation.

14. Meetings of the Council shall be open to the public. The Council shall have a quorum if not less than half of the members of the Council participate in a meeting thereof.

15. Decisions of the Council shall be taken by open ballot with a simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the vote of the chairperson of the Council shall be the decisive vote.

16. Minutes shall be taken at Council meetings. The issues on the agenda, participants of the meeting, persons who have expressed an opinion on the respective issue, and decisions taken shall be indicated in the minutes. Any participant of the meeting has the right to request that his or her objections are recorded in the minutes, and he or she has the right to inform the public regarding them.

17. Minutes of a meeting of the Council shall be sent to all members of the Council electronically within five working days after meeting of the Council. Members of the Council shall inform the institutions represented by them regarding the decisions taken by the Council.

18. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall fulfil the duties of the Secretariat of the Council and shall ensure the work of the Council materially and technically from the budget resources allocated thereto. Members of the Council shall not receive remuneration for work in the Council.

Acting for the Prime Minister – Minister for Justice,
Acting Minister for the Interior

A. Štokenbergs

Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development

R. Vējonis