



North Norway comments on the:

Brussels, 21 September 2017

International ocean governance report: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs (2017/2055(INI))

The three northernmost counties in Norway would like to comment on the draft report on International Ocean Governance. We find the Draft Report to be very good and are happy with several of the points raised. Healthy oceans and seas are vital for local coastal communities in our region, and we are therefore glad to see that the European Parliament wants to accelerate the fight against marine litter and plastic, as well as strengthen international ocean research and cooperation.

We would like to draw your attention to a few clauses and amendments that concern us.

- First, we enthusiastically **support paragraph 8**, which appeals for an action plan for the Arctic that draws on the *Integrated EU policy for the Arctic* (March 2017).
- We therefore strongly **support Amendment 111**, which incorporates “*active dialogue with the Arctic Council*” into the paragraph, and would further suggest adding “*and with local communities*”.

Second, we in North Norway build our future on blue economy and sustainable use of marine resources, but part of our local livelihoods is still based on energy production from oil and gas.

- We are thus **concerned about amendment 94** proposing an “*imposition of an international moratorium on oil or gas extraction and on prospecting with a view to oil or gas extraction in the high seas*”.

Energy production in Norway is considered a vital national and regional interest. Particularly important are the developments in the Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea, which have contributed to an **improved economy in local communities, further reducing the depletion of inhabitants** from our sparsely populated region. We argue that a possible moratorium would have dire **consequences for European energy supply**. After all, Norwegian gas export covers over 20% of the total European consumption. Moreover, it would severely affect **the right of local communities to decide on their own development** and future.

Finally, we agree that we must achieve a just transition away from offshore drilling and thus contribute to the goal of a **low-carbon economy**, as proposed in amendment 181. However, this transition should be made **over time and led by local communities** with knowledge and expertise in the specifics. With regard to amendment 182, we would like to point out that in our region all licenses for oil and gas exploration must already follow **strict national safety and environmental regulations**.

Based on the abovementioned, we would highly appreciate if you would take these comments into consideration when finalising the report.

On behalf of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland counties,

Yours Sincerely,



Torjus Kleiven Kandal
Acting Director, North Norway European Office