



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

DECISION

No _____, date _____

ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY¹

Pursuant to Article 100 of the Constitution and the Article 8, point 1 and article 101/1 of the Law No. 111/2012 "On the integrated management of water sources", upon the proposal of the Minister of Environment, the Council of Ministers,

DECIDED:

I. OBJECT

1. The object of this decision is the marine environment under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Albania, divided into marine regions and sub-regions and their environmental status.

II. PURPOSE

2. This Decision aims:

- a) To define a complete frame on protecting and preserving the water environment to all marine waters preventing its deterioration or, where practicable, restore marine ecosystems in areas where they have been adversely affected;
- b) To prevent and reduce the pollutants in the marine environment, with a view to phasing out pollution, so as to ensure that there are no significant impacts on or risks to marine biodiversity, marine ecosystems, human health or legitimate uses of the sea;
- c) To define the standard methodology for the preparation of the marine strategy;
- c) To integrate the environmental concerns into the different policies, agreements to administrative and legislative measures, which have an impact on the marine environment.
- d) To develop marine strategies in order to establish an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities, ensuring that the:
 - i. collective pressure of such activities shall be kept within levels compatible with the achievement of good environmental status; and
 - ii. the capacity of marine ecosystems to respond to human-induced changes is not compromised, while enabling the sustainable use of marine goods and services by present and future generations.

¹ **32008L0056** - This Decision transposes the 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).

III. SCOPE

3. This Decision shall apply to:
 - a) all marine waters taking into account all the transboundary effects on the quality of the marine environment of other countries in the same marine region or sub-region;
 - b) any area of sea within the limits of the exclusive economic zone and the sea bed and its subsoil in that area of sea;
 - c) the area of sea within the seaward limits of the territorial sea adjacent to the Republic of Albania, and the sea bed and its subsoil in that area of sea;
 - d) the boundary line between the terrestrial waters, coastal and sea waters as defined by specific legislation in power.
4. This Decision shall not apply to activities the sole purpose of which is defence or national security.
5. For the activities referred to in paragraph 4, the Ministry in cooperation with the Ministry responsible for defense, as provided in Article 5, letter b of Law "On Environmental Impact Assessment" take the necessary measures that the following activities are being carried out as much as possible in accordance with the purposes of this decision.

IV. DEFINITIONS

6. For the purposes of this Decision, the following terms shall have the following meaning:
 - a) "**NEA**" shall mean the National Environment Agency as it is provided in the Law No.10431, dated 9.6.2011 "On Environment Protection".
 - b) "**Regional cooperation**" means cooperation and coordination of activities between Republic of Albania and other countries sharing the same marine region or sub-region, for the purpose of developing and implementing marine strategies
 - c) "**Water resources**" has the meaning given by the Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 "On the integrated management of water sources".
 - ç) "**SEI**" shall mean the State Environment Inspectorate
 - d) "**Regional sea convention**" means any of the international conventions or international agreements together with their governing bodies established for protecting the marine environment of the marine regions referred to in Paragraph III, in which the Republic of Albania is a signatory party.
 - dh) "**Criteria**" means distinctive technical features that are closely linked to qualitative descriptors.
 - e) "**Minister**" shall mean the minister in charge of environment protection.
 - è) "**Ministry**" shall mean the ministry in charge of environment protection.
 - f) "**Marine environment**" has the meaning given by the Law No. 9251, dated 8.7.2004 "Sea Code of the Republic of Albania".
 - g) "**Pollution**" means the direct or indirect introduction into the marine environment, as a result of human activity, of substances or energy, including human-induced marine underwater noise, which results or is likely to result in deleterious effects such as harm to living resources and marine ecosystems, including loss of biodiversity, hazards to human health, the hindering of marine activities, including fishing, tourism and recreation and other legitimate uses of the sea, impairment of the quality for use of sea water and reduction of amenities or, in general, impairment of the sustainable use of marine goods and services.
 - gj) "**Environmental target**" means a qualitative or quantitative statement on the desired condition of the different components of, and pressures and impacts on, marine waters in respect of each marine region or sub-region. Environmental targets are established in accordance with Paragraph IX.
 - h) "**Marine region**" means a sea region, which is identified under paragraph III. Marine regions and

their sub-regions are designated for the purpose of facilitating implementation of this Decision and are determined taking into account hydrological, oceanographic and bio-geographic features.

- i) **“Environmental status”** means the overall state of the environment in marine waters, taking into account the structure, function and processes of the constituent marine ecosystems together with natural physiographic, geographic, biological, geological and climatic factors, as well as physical, acoustic and chemical conditions, including those resulting from human activities inside or outside the area concerned.
- j) **“Good environmental status”** means the environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive within their intrinsic conditions, and the use of the marine environment is at a level that is sustainable, thus safeguarding the potential for uses and activities by current and future generations, i.e.:
 - i. The structure, functions and processes of the constituent marine ecosystems, together with the associated physiographic, geographic, geological and climatic factors, allow those ecosystems to function fully and to maintain their resilience to human-induced environmental change. Marine species and habitats are protected, human-induced decline of biodiversity is prevented and diverse biological components function in balance;
 - ii. Hydro-morphological, physical and chemical properties of the ecosystems, including those properties, which result from human activities in the area concerned, support the ecosystems as described above. Anthropogenic inputs of substances and energy, including noise, into the marine environment do not cause pollution effects.
- k) **“Marine strategy”** means the strategy to be developed and implemented in respect of each marine region or sub-region concerned as laid down in Paragraph IV.
- l) **“Marine waters”** means:
 - i. waters, the seabed and subsoil on the seaward side of the baseline from which the extent of territorial waters is measured extending to the outmost reach of the area where Albania has and/or exercises jurisdictional rights, in accordance with the specific legislation and
 - ii. coastal waters as defined by Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 “On the integrated management of water sources”, their seabed and their subsoil, in so far as particular aspects of the environmental status of the marine environment are not already addressed through that Law;

V. MARINE REGIONS OR SUB-REGIONS

- 7. The Ministry shall, when implementing its obligations under this Decision take duly into account the fact that marine waters covered by Albanian sovereignty or jurisdiction form an integral part of the Mediterranean Sea, which, due to the landlocked waters with limited tides and streams, is a fragile ecosystem.
- 8. The Ministry may, in order to take into account the specificities of this particular area, implement this Decision by reference to subdivisions at the appropriate level of the marine waters referred to in paragraph 8, provided that such subdivisions are delimited in a manner compatible with the balance of their ecosystem as well as with the marine sub-region in the Mediterranean Sea:
 - a. the Adriatic Sea;
 - b. The Ionian Sea and the Central Mediterranean Sea.

VI. MARINE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES

- 9. The Ministry shall:
 - a) Contributes to the integration of environmental issues into sectoral policies, agreements

and legal acts that may have an impact on the marine environment.

- b) Coordinates the cooperation with other countries that are part of the same marine region or sub-region and strives to provide and implement a common methodology for the preparation of:
 - i. marine strategy for the Mediterranean sea and the respective sub-regions as defined in paragraph 10 letters a;
 - ii. program of appropriate measures as defined in paragraph 10 letter b; Prepares program of measures as defined in paragraph 10 letter b.
- 10.** NEA to prepare the strategy referred to in paragraph 9.b.i performs:
- i. an initial assessment, to be completed, within two years after entry into force of this decision, of the current environmental status of the waters concerned and the environmental impact of human activities thereon, in accordance with Chapter IX;
 - ii. a determination, to be established, within four years years after entry into force of this decision, of good environmental status for the waters concerned, in accordance with paragraphs 27 and 28;
 - iii. establishment, within four years after entry into force of this decision, of a series of environmental targets and associated indicators, in accordance with paragraphs 32 and 33;
 - iv. establishment and implementation, within four years after entry into force of this decision of a monitoring programme for ongoing assessment and regular updating of targets, in accordance with Paragraphs35,36 and 37;
- 11.** The program of measures referred to in paragraph 9 letter c includes:
- i. development, within seven years after entry into force of this decision at the latest, of a programme of measures designed to achieve or maintain good environmental status, in accordance with Paragraphs 41,42,43,44 and 45;
 - ii. entry into operation of the programme provided for in point (i), within eight years after entry into force of this decision at the latest, in accordance with Paragraph 50.
- 12.** When the status of the sea is so critical that it requires urgent intervention, the Ministry strives to provide:
- a) Drafting of an action plan in accordance with paragraph 9.b.i and introducing entry into operation as soon as possible the program of measures set out in paragraph 11.i and / or;
Getting more stringent protective measures provided they do not prevent good environmental status from being achieved or maintained in another marine region or sub-region

VII. REGIONAL COOPERATION

- 13.** In order to achieve the coordination referred to in Paragraph 9.b the Ministry shall, where practical and appropriate, use existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under Regional Sea Conventions, covering that marine region or sub-region as defined in paragraph 8.
- 14.** For the purpose of establishing and implementing marine strategies, the Ministry shall, for each marine region or sub-region, as defined in paragraph 8, make every effort, using relevant international forums, including mechanisms and structures of Regional Sea Conventions, where Albania is party, to coordinate actions with other countries having sovereignty or jurisdiction over waters in the same marine region or sub-region.
- 15.** In that context, the Ministry shall, as far as possible, build upon relevant existing programmes and activities developed in the framework of structures stemming from international agreements, which are ratified by the Republic of Albania.
- 16.** Competent authorities cooperate and coordinate with all the competent authorities of other countries within that marine region or sub-region, as defined in paragraph 8 and with all other

countries in the catchment area of a marine region or sub-region, including land-locked countries to meet their obligations under this Decision, using established cooperation structures prescribed in this Decision or in the Chapter II of the Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 “On the integrated management of water sources”.

VIII. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

- 17.** The competent authorities in charge of the drafting of marine environment strategy are the ones that prepare the National Strategy for Water Resource Management, as defined by article 8 and 10 of the Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 “On the integrated management of water sources”.
- 18.** The Ministry shall make a list of the national competent authorities as regards those international bodies in which they participate and which are relevant for the implementation of this Decision.
- 19.** The Ministry shall prepare a list of the competent authorities designated for the implementation of this Decision, together with the items of information listed in Annex II.
- 20.** The Ministry and the competent authorities shall undertake any possible action to ensure cooperation within the catchment area of each marine region or sub-region as defined in paragraph 8.
- 21.** All the public and private entities are obliged to provide to the competent authorities in charge of the preparation of the marine environment strategy the information needed for this purpose, as per request of the provisions of this Decision.

IX. ASSESSMENT

- 22.** In respect of each marine region or sub region defined in paragraph 8 NEA shall make an initial assessment of its marine waters, taking account of existing data where available and comprising the following:
 - a)** an analysis of the essential features and characteristics, and current environmental status of those waters, based on the indicative lists of elements set out in Table 1 of Annex III, and covering the physical and chemical features, the habitat types, the biological features and the hydro-morphology;
 - b)** an analysis of the predominant pressures and impacts, including human activity, on the environmental status of those waters which:
 - i.** is based on the indicative lists of elements set out in Table 2 of Annex III, and covers the qualitative and quantitative mix of the various pressures, as well as discernible trends;
 - ii.** covers the main cumulative and synergetic effects; and
 - iii.** takes account of the relevant assessments which have been made pursuant to existing Albanian legislation;
 - c)** an economic and social analysis of the use of those waters and of the cost of degradation of the marine environment.
- 23.** The analyses referred to in paragraph 22 shall take into account elements regarding coastal, transitional and territorial waters covered by relevant provisions of existing Albanian legislation, in particular the Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 “On the integrated management of water sources”.
- 24.** The analyses referred to in paragraph 22 shall also take into account, or use as basis, other relevant assessments such as those carried out jointly in the context of Regional Sea Conventions, so as to produce a comprehensive assessment of the status of the marine environment.
- 25.** In preparing assessments pursuant to paragraph 22, the Ministry shall, by means of the coordination established pursuant to Chapters VI and VII, make every effort to ensure that:

- a) assessment methodologies are consistent across the marine region or sub-region, defined in paragraph 8;
- b) transboundary impacts and transboundary features are taken into account.

X. DETERMINATION OF GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

- 26. By reference to the initial assessment made pursuant to Paragraph 22, the Minister shall, in respect of each marine region or sub-region concerned, as defined in paragraph 8, determine by a Ministerial Guideline, for the marine waters, a set of characteristics for good environmental status, on the basis of the qualitative descriptors listed in Annex I.
- 27. The Minister, when determining the characteristics of good environmental status, shall take into account the indicative lists of elements set out in Table 1 of Annex III and, in particular:
 - a. physical and chemical features, habitat types, biological features and hydro-morphology,
 - b. pressures or impacts of human activities in each marine region or sub-region, as defined in paragraph 8, having regard to the indicative lists set out in Table 2 of Annex III.
- 28. NEA, except for the assessment made pursuant to Paragraph 22 shall also prepare the determination made pursuant to paragraph 27.
- 29. Within three months of completion of the assessment made pursuant to Chapter IX and of the determination made pursuant to paragraph 27, the Ministry shall notify the relevant European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies.
- 30. The Minister, by ministerial guideline, approves the criteria and methodological standards to be used for the assessment referred in Chapter IX.

XI. ESTABLISHMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS

- 31. To guide the progress towards achieving good environmental status in the marine environment the Ministry shall establish a comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated indicators for the marine waters of each marine region or sub-region defined in paragraph 8.
- 32. The targets and indicators referred in paragraph 31 shall be established:
 - a) on the basis of the initial assessment made pursuant to Paragraph 22; and
 - b) taking into account:
 - i. the indicative lists of pressures and impacts set out in Table 2 of Annex III;
 - ii. the indicative lists of characteristics set out in Annex IV;
 - iii. the continuing application of relevant existing environmental targets laid down at national or international level in respect of the same waters;
 - iv. relevant transboundary impacts and transboundary features, to the extent possible.
 - v. in a way that they be mutually compatible with the targets referred in paragraph 32/b.iii.
- 33. The Ministry within three months of the establishment of the environmental targets shall notify the relevant European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies.

XII. MONITORING PROGRAMMES

- 34. The Minister shall approve coordinated monitoring programmes for the ongoing assessment of the environmental status of the marine waters.
- 35. The monitoring programme referred in paragraph 34 shall be developed by reference to the environmental targets established pursuant to Chapter XI and based on:
 - a) the initial assessment made pursuant to Paragraph 22;
 - b) the indicative lists of elements set out in Annex III; and
 - c) the list set out in Annex V.

- 36.** Monitoring programmes shall:
- a)** be compatible within marine regions or sub-regions defined in paragraph 8, and
 - b)** be compatible with relevant provisions for assessment and monitoring laid down by:
 - i.** Albanian legislation, including the nature related legislation, or
 - ii.** international agreements.
- 37.** The Ministry, shall, in accordance with paragraph 35, draw up monitoring programmes for the shared marine regions or sub-region defined in paragraph 8 and shall, in the interest of coherence and coordination, endeavour to ensure that:
- a)** monitoring methods are consistent across the marine region or sub-region so as to facilitate comparability of monitoring results;
 - b)** relevant transboundary impacts and transboundary features are taken into account.
- 38.** NEA will implement the monitoring programme and assessment.
- 39.** The Ministry within three months of the approval of monitoring programmes shall notify the relevant European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies.

XIII. PROGRAMMES OF MEASURES

- 40.** For each marine region or sub-region defined in paragraph 8 concerned, the Ministry shall identify the measures, which need to be taken to achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine waters as determined pursuant to Chapter X.
- 41.** The measures referred in paragraph 40 shall be devised:
- a)** on the basis of the initial assessment made pursuant to Paragraph 22; and
 - b)** by reference to the environmental targets established pursuant to Chapter XI, and
 - c)** taking into consideration the types of measures listed in Annex VI.
- 42.** The Ministry shall integrate the measures devised pursuant to paragraph 41 into a programme of measures, taking into account:
- a)** relevant measures required under Albanian legislation;
 - b)** the relevant legislation on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy;
 - c)** international agreements to which Albania is a signatory party.
- 43.** When drawing up the programme of measures pursuant to paragraph 42, the Ministry:
- a)** shall give due consideration to:
 - i.** sustainable development and, in particular,
 - ii.** the social and economic impacts of the measures envisaged.
 - b)** may also identify or establish additional administrative frameworks and benefit from such interaction in order to assist the competent authority/ies referred to in this Decision to pursue the objectives in an integrated manner.
- 44.** Prior to the introduction of any new measure the Ministry shall:
- a)** ensure that measures are cost-effective and technically feasible, and
 - b)** carry out impact assessments, including cost-benefit analyses.
- 45.** Programmes of measures established pursuant to this Section shall include:
- a)** spatial protection measures that contribute to coherent and representative networks of marine protected areas. Such measures must adequately cover the diversity of the constituent ecosystems, such as special areas of conservation and special protection areas, pursuant to the legislation in force.,
 - b)** marine protected areas, as agreed by the Ministry in the framework of international or regional agreements to which they are parties.
- 46.** Where the Ministry considers that the management of a human activity at Albanian or international level is likely to have a significant impact on the marine environment, particularly in the areas addressed in paragraph 45, it shall, individually or jointly with the other interested

states, request the competent authority or international organisation concerned, to consider and possibly adopt measures that enable the integrity, structure and functioning of the ecosystems that need to be maintained or restored, as appropriate.

47. Within two years after the entry into force of this decision, the Ministry shall make publicly available, for each marine region or sub-region defined in paragraph 8, relevant information on the areas referred to in paragraphs 45 and 46.
48. The Ministry shall indicate in the programmes of measures how the measures are to be implemented and how they will contribute to the achievement of the environmental targets established pursuant to Chapter XI.
49. The Ministry shall also consider the implications the programmes of measures may have on waters beyond the marine waters, in order to minimise the risk of damaging them and, if possible, have a positive impact on them.
50. The Ministry shall notify the programmes of measures, within three months of their establishment to the relevant European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies.
51. The Ministry shall ensure that the programmes are made operational within one year of their establishment.

XIV. EXCEPTIONS

52. The Ministry may identify instances within its marine waters where, due to any of the reasons a-d below the measures taken by it cannot achieve the environmental targets or good environmental status in every aspect, or where due to reasons referred to under point (e) such targets or status cannot be achieved within the time schedule concerned:
 - a) action or inaction for which the Ministry concerned is not responsible;
 - b) natural causes;
 - c) force majeure;
 - d) modifications or alterations to the physical characteristics of marine waters brought about by actions taken for reasons of overriding public interest which outweigh the negative impact on the environment, including any transboundary impact;
 - e) natural conditions which do not allow timely improvement in the status of the marine waters concerned.
53. The Ministry shall identify instances defined in paragraph 52 clearly in its programme of measures and shall substantiate its view to the European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies.
54. In identifying such instances, the Ministry shall consider the consequences for the other states in marine region or sub-region concerned defined in paragraph 8. However, the Ministry shall take appropriate ad-hoc measures aiming to continue:
 - a) pursuing the environmental targets,
 - b) to mitigate the adverse impact at the level of the marine region or sub-region concerned defined in paragraph 8, or in the marine waters of other countries.
55. In the situation covered by paragraph 52(d), the Ministry shall ensure that the modifications or alterations do not permanently preclude or compromise the achievement of good environmental status at the level of the marine region or sub-region concerned or in the marine waters of other countries.
56. The ad-hoc measures referred to in paragraph 53 shall be integrated as far as practicable into the programmes of measures.
57. The Ministry shall develop and implement all the elements of marine strategies referred to in Paragraph 11.
58. The Ministry shall not be required, except in respect of the initial assessment described in Paragraph IX, to take specific steps where:
 - a) there is no significant risk to the marine environment, or where

- b) taking account of the risks to the marine environment and provided that there is no further deterioration, the costs would be disproportionate.

XV. UPDATING

- 59. The Ministry shall ensure that, in respect of each marine region or sub-region concerned defined in paragraph 8, marine strategies are kept up to date.
- 60. The Ministry shall review, in a coordinated manner as referred to in Paragraph VI, the following elements of its marine strategies every six years after their initial establishment:
 - a) the initial assessment and the determination of good environmental status, as provided for in Paragraph 22 and 26 respectively;
 - b) the environmental targets established pursuant to Chapter XI;
 - c) the monitoring programmes established pursuant to Chapter XII;
 - d) the programmes of measures established pursuant to Chapter XIII.
- 61. Details of any updates made following the reviews provided for in paragraph 60 shall be sent to the European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies, within three months of their publication.

XVI. REPORTING - INTERIM REPORTS

- 62. The Ministry shall, within three years of the publication of each programme of measures or update thereof in accordance with this Decision, shall submit to the European institutions and, when deemed necessary, the Regional Sea conventions governing bodies, a brief interim report describing progress in the implementation of that programme.

XVII. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION

- 63. In accordance with relevant existing Albanian legislation, the Ministry shall ensure that all interested parties are given early and effective opportunities to participate in the implementation of this Decision, involving, where possible, existing management bodies or structures, including Regional Sea Conventions, Scientific Advisory Bodies and Regional Advisory Councils.
- 64. The Ministry shall publish, and make available to the public for comment, summaries of the following elements of the marine strategies, or the related updates, as follows:
 - a) the initial assessment and the determination of good environmental status, as provided for in Paragraph 22 and 27 respectively;
 - b) the environmental targets established pursuant to Paragraph 32;
 - c) the monitoring programmes established pursuant to Paragraph 35;
 - d) the programmes of measures established pursuant to Paragraph 42.
- 65. Access to environmental information will be given in accordance with the laws and by-laws in power. In particular:
 - a) Any legal or natural person is entitled to have and/or use the available information on marine waters.
 - b) The public is informed about the sources of information and integrated management of waters.
 - c) The public is provided the possible supplementary information on the river basin management plans.

XVIII. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

- 66.** The Minister is responsible for endorsing the secondary legislation requested by Paragraph 26, 30, 34 of this Decision
- 67.** The Minister is also entitled to issue other secondary legislation for the implementation of this Decision.
- 68.** Any other provisions conflicting with the provisions of this Decision shall be repealed.

Entry into force

This decision shall enter into force after publication in the Official Journal.

The legal effects shall start 1 year after the publication in the Official Journal.

**PRIME MINISTER
EDI RAMA**

ANNEX I

Qualitative descriptors for determining good environmental status

(Referred to in Paragraph II/f /26)

1. Biological diversity is maintained. The quality and occurrence of habitats and the distribution and abundance of species are in line with prevailing physiographic, geographic and climatic conditions.
2. Non-indigenous species introduced by human activities are at levels that do not adversely alter the ecosystems.
3. Populations of all commercially exploited fish and shellfish are within safe biological limits, exhibiting a population age and size distribution that is indicative of a healthy stock.
4. All elements of the marine food webs, to the extent that they are known, occur at normal abundance and diversity and levels capable of ensuring the long-term abundance of the species and the retention of their full reproductive capacity.
5. Human-induced eutrophication is minimised, especially adverse effects thereof, such as losses in biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, harmful algae blooms and oxygen deficiency in bottom waters.
6. Sea-floor integrity is at a level that ensures that the structure and functions of the ecosystems are safeguarded and benthic ecosystems, in particular, are not adversely affected.
7. Permanent alteration of hydrographical conditions does not adversely affect marine ecosystems.
8. Concentrations of contaminants are at levels not giving rise to pollution effects.
9. Contaminants in fish and other seafood for human consumption do not exceed levels established by specific legislation in force or other relevant standards.
10. Properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment.
11. Introduction of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment.

To determine the characteristics of good environmental status in a marine region or sub-region defined in paragraph 8 as provided for in Paragraphs 27, 28 the Competent Authority shall consider each of the qualitative descriptors listed in this Annex in order to identify those descriptors which are to be used to determine good environmental status for that marine region or sub-region.

ANNEX II
Competent authorities
(Referred to in 19)

1. Name and address of the competent authority or authorities — the official name and address of the competent authority or authorities identified.
2. Legal status of the competent authority or authorities — a brief description of the legal status of the competent authority, or authorities.
3. Responsibilities — a brief description of the legal and administrative responsibilities of the competent authority or authorities, and of its role in relation to the marine waters concerned.
4. Membership — when the competent authority or authorities acts as a coordinating body for other competent authorities, a list of these is required together with a summary of the institutional relationships established in order to ensure coordination.
5. Regional or sub-regional coordination — a summary is required of the mechanisms established in order to ensure coordination between the Republic of Albania and neighbouring countries whose marine waters fall within the same marine region or sub-region.

ANNEX III
Indicative lists of characteristics, pressures and impacts
(Referred to in Paragraph 23; 27; 31; 32; 35)

Table 1 - Characteristics

<p>Physical and chemical features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topography and bathymetry of the seabed, - annual and seasonal temperature regime and ice cover, current velocity, wave exposure, mixing characteristics, turbidity, residence time, - spatial and temporal distribution of salinity, - spatial and temporal distribution of nutrients (DIN, TN, DIP, TP, TOC) and oxygen, - pH, pCO₂ profiles or equivalent information used to measure marine acidification.
<p>Habitat types</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The predominant seabed and water column habitat type(s) with a description of the characteristic physical and chemical features, such as depth, water temperature regime, currents and other water movements, salinity, structure and substrata composition of the seabed, - identification and mapping of special habitat types, especially those recognised or identified under the relevant Albanian legislation on Biodiversity or international conventions as being of special scientific or biodiversity interest, - habitats in areas which by virtue of their characteristics, location or strategic importance merit a particular reference. This may include areas subject to intense or specific pressures or areas which merit a specific protection regime.
<p>Biological features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A description of the biological communities associated with the predominant seabed and water column habitats. This would include information on the phytoplankton and zooplankton communities, including the species and seasonal and geographical variability, - information on angiosperms, macro-algae and invertebrate bottom fauna, including species composition, biomass and annual/seasonal variability, - information on the structure of fish populations, including the abundance, distribution and age/size structure of the populations, - a description of the population dynamics, natural and actual range and status of species of marine mammals and reptiles occurring in the marine region or sub-region, - a description of the population dynamics, natural and actual range and status of species of seabirds occurring in the marine region or sub-region, - a description of the population dynamics, natural and actual range and status of other species occurring in the marine region or sub-region which are the subject of Albanian legislation or international agreements, - an inventory of the temporal occurrence, abundance and spatial distribution of nonindigenous, exotic species or, where relevant, genetically distinct forms of native species, which are present in the marine region or sub-region.

Other features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A description of the situation with regard to chemicals, including chemicals giving rise to concern, sediment contamination, hotspots, health issues and contamination of biota (especially biota meant for human consumption),- a description of any other features or characteristics typical of or specific to the marine region or sub-region.
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Table 2
Pressures and impacts

Physical loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smothering (e.g. by man-made structures, disposal of dredge spoil), - sealing (e.g. by permanent constructions).
Physical damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in siltation (e.g. by outfalls, increased run-off, dredging/disposal of dredge spoil), - abrasion (e.g. impact on the seabed of commercial fishing, boating, anchoring), - selective extraction (e.g. exploration and exploitation of living and non-living resources on seabed and subsoil).
Other physical disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Underwater noise (e.g. from shipping, underwater acoustic equipment), - marine litter.
Interference with hydrological processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant changes in thermal regime (e.g. by outfalls from power stations), - significant changes in salinity regime (e.g. by constructions impeding water movements, water abstraction).
Contamination by hazardous substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of synthetic compounds (e.g. priority substances under Law no.111, dated 15.11.2012 “On the integrated management of water sources”, which are relevant for the marine environment such as pesticides, pharmaceuticals, resulting, for example, from losses from diffuse sources, pollution by ships, atmospheric deposition and biologically active substances), - introduction of non-synthetic substances and compounds (e.g. heavy metals, hydrocarbons, resulting, for example, from pollution by ships and oil, gas and mineral exploration and exploitation, atmospheric deposition, riverine inputs), - introduction of radio-nuclides.
Systematic and/or intentional release of substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of other substances, whether solid, liquid or gas, in marine waters, resulting from their systematic and/or intentional release into the marine environment, as permitted in accordance with Albanian legislation and/or international conventions.
Nutrient and organic matter enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inputs of fertilisers and other nitrogen — and phosphorus-rich substances (e.g. from point and diffuse sources, including agriculture, aquaculture, atmospheric deposition), - inputs of organic matter (e.g. sewers, mariculture, riverine inputs).
Biological disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of microbial pathogens, - introduction of non-indigenous species and translocations, - selective extraction of species, including incidental non-target catches (e.g. by commercial and recreational fishing).

ANNEX IV

Indicative list of characteristics to be taken into account for setting environmental targets

(Referred to in Paragraph 32)

- 1.** Adequate coverage of the elements characterising marine waters under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Republic of Albania within a marine region or sub-region defined in paragraph 8.
- 2.** Need to set
 - a) targets establishing desired conditions based on the definition of good environmental status;
 - b) measurable targets and associated indicators that allow for monitoring and assessment; and
 - c) operational targets relating to concrete implementation measures to support their achievement.
- 3.** Specification of environmental status to be achieved or maintained and formulation of that status in terms of measurable properties of the elements characterising the marine waters of the Republic of Albania within a marine region or sub-region as defined in paragraph 8..
- 4.** Consistency of the set of targets; absence of conflicts between them.
- 5.** Specification of the resources needed for the achievement of targets.
- 6.** Formulation of targets, including possible interim targets, with a timescale for their achievement.
- 7.** Specification of indicators intended to monitor progress and guide management decisions with a view to achieving targets.
- 8.** Where appropriate, specification of reference points (target and limit reference points).
- 9.** Due consideration of social and economic concerns in the setting of targets.
- 10.** Examination of the set of environmental targets, associated indicators and limit and target reference points developed in light of the environmental objectives laid down in Chapter II, in order to assess whether the achievement of the targets would lead the marine waters falling under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Republic of Albania within a marine region to a status matching them.
- 11.** Compatibility of targets with objectives to which the Republic of Albania has committed itself under relevant international and regional agreements, making use of those that are most relevant for the marine region or sub-region concerned with a view to achieving the environmental objectives laid down in Chapter II.
- 12.** When the set of targets and indicators has been assembled, they should be examined together relative to the environmental objectives laid down in Chapter II to assess whether the achievement of the targets would lead the marine environment to a status matching them.

ANNEX V
Monitoring programmes
(Referred to in Paragraph 35)

1. Need to provide information for an assessment of the environmental status and for an estimate of the distance from, and progress towards, good environmental status in accordance with Annex III and with the criteria and methodological standards to be defined pursuant to Paragraph X.
2. Need to ensure the generation of information enabling the identification of suitable indicators for the environmental targets provided for in Paragraph XI.
3. Need to ensure the generation of information allowing the assessment of the impact of the measures referred to in Paragraph XIII.
4. Need to include activities to identify the cause of the change and hence the possible corrective measures that would need to be taken to restore the good environmental status, when deviations from the desired status range have been identified.
5. Need to provide information on chemical contaminants in species for human consumption from commercial fishing areas.
6. Need to include activities to confirm that the corrective measures deliver the desired changes and not any unwanted side effects.
7. Need to aggregate the information on the basis of marine regions or sub-regions in accordance with Paragraph V.
8. Need to ensure comparability of assessment approaches and methods within and between marine regions and/or sub-regions.
9. Need to develop technical specifications and standardised methods for monitoring at national level, so as to allow comparability of information.
10. Need to ensure, as far as possible, compatibility with existing programmes developed at regional and international level with a view to fostering consistency between these programmes and avoiding duplication of effort, making use of those monitoring guidelines that are the most relevant for the marine region or sub-region concerned.
11. Need to include, as part of the initial assessment provided for in Paragraph IX, an assessment of major changes in the environmental conditions as well as, where necessary, new and emerging issues.
12. Need to address, as part of the initial assessment provided for in Paragraph IX, the relevant elements listed in Annex III including their natural variability and to evaluate the trends towards the achievement of the environmental targets laid down pursuant to Paragraphs 32, 33, using, as appropriate, the indicators established and their limit or target reference points.

ANNEX VI
Programmes of measures
(Referred to in Paragraph 41)

1. Input controls: management measures that influence the amount of a human activity that is permitted.
2. Output controls: management measures that influence the degree of perturbation of an ecosystem component that is permitted.
3. Spatial and temporal distribution controls: management measures that influence where and when an activity is allowed to occur.
4. Management coordination measures: tools to ensure that management is coordinated.
5. Measures to improve the traceability, where feasible, of marine pollution.
6. Economic incentives: management measures which make it in the economic interest of those using the marine ecosystems to act in ways which help to achieve the good environmental status objective.
7. Mitigation and remediation tools: management tools which guide human activities to restore damaged components of marine ecosystems.
8. Communication, stakeholder involvement and raising public awareness.