

The Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (MOP) of Slovenia hosted an online presentation of the Maritime Spatial Plan - a strategic document that introduces strategic planning for the sustainable development of activities and uses at sea in Slovenia for the first time since independence. In his address, State Secretary at the Ministry of the Environment Robert Rožac said that Slovenia was the first EU member in the Eastern Mediterranean to prepare and adopt a Maritime Spatial Plan, for which it also received praise from the European Commission.

Rožac emphasized that with the adopted Maritime Spatial Plan, Slovenia has established a legal basis for achieving sustainable growth of the maritime economy, sustainable development of the maritime area and sustainable use of marine resources.

The MESP prepared the Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia as a strategic, spatial development document, which sets goals and guidelines for further development of activities at sea, defines the spatial and temporal distribution of relevant existing and future activities and uses and provides a framework for their mutual coordination. As a rule, all the discussed activities and uses are already carried out in the Slovenian sea; they are mostly not in conflict with each other and operate within the framework determined by individual sectoral regulations. As a rule, the Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia does not interfere with existing regulations, legal regimes and legal relations, as well as strategic and implementing acts.

According to State Secretary Rožac, the plan is made for the sea, which is defined in the land cadastre as water land and is owned by the state. In line with the requirements of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean, it further defines the baseline coastal zone on land and includes guidelines on how local communities by the sea should define it in their municipal spatial plans.

Head of the Sector for Strategic Spatial Development at the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning Lenča Humerca Šolar said that the process of preparing the plan was designed in a modern, inclusive way, which enabled open discussion, mutual confrontation and verification of various substantive and interest points of view, and above all the preparation of a harmonized document. All relevant participants contributed to the spatial planning in the area of the sea and the coast at the national and local levels. "In the process of preparation, we confronted and balanced all sectoral development and protection goals at sea", she emphasized.

"In the discussion, Marko Starman from the Council for the Slovenian Adriatic Sea highlighted the efforts to harmonize the positions of all coastal municipalities and to connect the interests related to the sea and the coast. In his opinion, it is important they

approached the harmonization of this document in this way, and in the process of preparation, they came to several important findings - what we are already doing today and what plans we have for the future. He expressed the expectation that such cooperation would continue in the implementation of the plan", said the government in a press release. The Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia, which follows the requirements of the European directive on the establishment of a framework for maritime spatial planning, is a binding starting point for the implementation of all activities, regimes, uses and measures at sea. It is a mandatory starting point for the preparation of sectoral development documents for individual activities at sea, as well as for the preparation of strategic and implementing acts at the national, regional and local levels.

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