A Swedish maritime strategy – for people, jobs and the environment
Strategy for the development of the maritime industries

The Government has taken a holistic approach to promoting the maritime industries and has set out the following vision for future work:

**A competitive, innovative and sustainable maritime sector can contribute to increased employment, reduced environmental impact and an attractive living environment.**

The strategy is a policy document for socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development in the Swedish maritime sector, and in addition to a vision and direction for this work, it contains a structure for follow-up. By focusing on sustainability, innovation and development, the strategy also helps to promote the image of Sweden abroad. The strategy also has links to the Government’s work on special strategies for export, re-industrialisation and foodstuffs. Through dialogue with relevant actors, the Government has identified areas in which measures are needed to achieve the vision. The strategy for the maritime sector sets out the direction towards achieving the vision and is a process rather than an end product.

Public actors, such as government agencies, county councils, regions and municipalities, can join actors in the area of education and research to help realise the potential of the maritime sector. In order to succeed, the strategy requires continued commitment from the actors concerned, both public and private. Another prerequisite for achieving the vision the Government is presenting is continuous work in the areas affected by the strategy. The strategy represents a platform for continued development, which includes dialogue, knowledge exchange and opportunities for collaboration.
Good conditions for maritime development

Sweden has one of the longest coastlines in Europe and a strong tradition of maritime activities. Sweden’s maritime activities cover a broad spectrum and are conducted throughout the country. Sweden’s maritime sector has good prospects for growth and can benefit from the global expansion that is expected in the area. At the same time, the increasing demands on marine and coastal areas, use of marine resources and growth in the tourist industry mean increased pressure on our seas and coastal areas. With balanced development and an active policy for dealing with these challenges, the potential of the maritime sector can be realised.

“A balanced marine environment, competitive maritime industries and attractive coastal areas”

The Government’s vision for the development of the maritime sector presupposes environmentally, economically and socially sustainable growth and rests on three equal pillars: a balanced marine environment, competitive maritime industries and attractive coastal areas. Conditions must be in place to safeguard the ecosystem services that are needed for the continued development of the maritime sector. Market opportunities shall be utilised and the development of maritime industries needs to progress in a sustainable way. Swedish coastal areas must remain attractive places to visit, and to live and work in.

To make use of growth potential, the Government is presenting the direction of work in six areas for action, as set out below:

A healthy and safe marine environment

A sustainable business sector and attractive coastal areas require a balanced marine environment. Integrated action in marine and water management continues to be important. Deterioration of the marine environment needs to be actively combated and environmental and cultural values need to be restored. Eutrophication, emissions that affect climate and atmosphere, as
well as marine litter need to be dealt with at source. Other possible measures include the use of economic policy incentives that should be used in such a way that incentives for measures to improve the environment are clear and that forerunners are rewarded. This is important, not least for contributing to innovation and transition.

Knowledge and innovation

Knowledge about marine environments and marine resources is a prerequisite for management and for ensuring the long-term sustainable development of maritime industries. The knowledge that already exists needs to be made more accessible and disseminated actively. Innovation is the key to strengthening the competitiveness of companies. It is also important for meeting challenges in society that affect the maritime area, such as sustainable energy production, sustainable transport and sustainable resource use. Promoting innovation and strategic partnerships is therefore very important, as are measures to facilitate the commercialisation of the products that are developed.

Maritime spatial planning

The demands placed on Sweden’s marine and coastal environments are increasing. This, in turn, requires balancing of interests and good planning at all levels. The ongoing work with maritime spatial planning will be an important instrument for steering development. The main purpose of this planning is to clarify how various marine and coastal areas can be used, which will make things easier for actors that conduct or intend to conduct activities in these areas. The Government wants to update and renew the support that is available for municipal planning in the maritime areas.

Functional rules and efficient permit processes

Many maritime industries are affected by regulations in several different areas. It is therefore necessary to see the combined effect of different regulations on how industries conduct their activities. Moreover, the international regulatory framework needs to be simplified and, where possible, function-based and goal-based rules need to be developed to create better conditions for innovation and new technology. The Government wants to simplify application when several different rules affect the same entrepreneur. Regulatory development has to result in clear and long-term conditions, while safeguarding prioritised public interests, such as the environment and safety.

Simple permit processes reduce ad-
ministrative burdens for industry, and promote growth and job opportunities. The Government considers that municipalities, county councils and central government agencies need to harmonise, simplify and streamline their permit processes. Important are also measures to shorten processing times and to make use of the opportunities offered by new technical systems.

**International cooperation**

International cooperation is a prerequisite for tackling the challenges facing Sweden and Swedish regions in the form of increased global competition and environmental impact. The Government intends to make it easier for maritime industries to make use of the financing instruments that are activated within the framework of the EU's integrated marine policy – Blue Growth. Continued work with EU countries around the Baltic Sea and the North Sea will be a priority in order to create good conditions for maritime industries. Furthermore, Swedish government agencies and other actors should play an active role in work within relevant global bodies to monitor Swedish interests.

**Conditions for the business sector and industry-specific measures**

Competition-neutral conditions, harmonised rules and good terms are to contribute to the development of the Swedish maritime industries. For many companies, cooperation and clusters at local and regional level are also important conditions for growth and development. Clusters also play a key role in giving visibility to the potential of the maritime sector. In the context of the strategy, a number of industries are dealt with, as described below.

**Transport**

The Government’s long-term ambition is for the different modes of transport to compete on as equal terms as possible, both nationally and internationally. The fee structure therefore needs to support the use of transport resources in a way that is efficient for society and a higher degree of competitive neutrality between modes of transport than is currently the case. The transfer of goods from land transport to sea transport can help to reduce the overall environmental impact of the transport sector. Factors that could hinder this kind of transfer therefore need to be identified and remedied. Another aspect is that availability of travel opportunities in coastal areas and archipelagos has a strong impact on the conditions for tourism.

On the whole, it is important to strengthen the competitiveness of Swedish ports so as to contribute to a more developed transport system and ultimately so that Swedish industry can maintain and develop its competitiveness.

“Sweden is to strive to offer the best regulatory framework in Europe for shipping”
Equal competitive conditions are most important to Swedish shipowners in international traffic. The rules concerning cabotage and registration of vessels are being reviewed with the aim of modernising the rules and improving the conditions for registering vessels in Sweden. The Government intends to review possible changes to the rules in the shipping area and will present an overall approach to these. Sweden is to strive to offer the best regulatory framework in Europe for shipping.

**Maritime technology and production**

The maritime equipment industry covers a broad range of activities with close links to areas in which Sweden has a strong position. In many respects, the industry is highly export-oriented. Measures within the framework of export support are therefore important, such as the development of platforms for marketing and communication. To meet developments within areas such as energy, it is essential to give the industry good opportunities to test new technology and new processes.

**The sea as a natural resource**

**Marine foodstuffs**

Strengthening fish stocks and maintaining them at a sustainable long-term level is a priority for the Government. Long-term predictable conditions, including a balance between fishing fleets and fishing opportunities, are crucial for the continued development of the industry. Essential for the processing industry is access to quality fish materials that meet consumer requirements at competitive prices. The upcoming negotiations on a revision of the EU Regulation on autonomous tariff quotas\(^2\) is another example of a priority issue.

There is growth potential in aquaculture provided that the farming of fish and shellfish can be conducted with the least possible impact on the aquatic environment. However, there

is a need to identify suitable geographical areas and technologies. The farming of micro- and macroalgae also has strong development potential.

Energy
Marine-based energy supply is experiencing a growth and development period. A large number of development and demonstration projects are under way throughout Europe to advance new technology related to wind power, marine current power and wave power. There are several permits in Sweden for the extension of marine-based wind power. The Government considers that there is a need to continue investments in this area to achieve the goal of increasing the share of renewable electricity production.

Minerals and bioresources
The conditions for extracting minerals from the seabed are not always favourable and can entail risks for the environment. More needs to be known about extraction, so there is reason to review the prospects and consequences of marine-based extraction of sand, gravel and stone. Moreover, more needs to be known about the potential for using bioactive substances from various organisms in biomedicine and biotechnology.

Leisure and tourism
There is a growing demand for coastal experiences among domestic and foreign tourists. A unique maritime cultural heritage provides good conditions for maritime tourism. Benefit can also be had of maritime culinary tourism, using local culinary culture and maritime products. There is also development potential for angling and recreational boating, which could help to improve the opportunities for living and working in rural areas, coastal areas or archipelagos.

To make use of the potential offered by maritime tourism, product development is needed so as to prolong the tourist season. Greater collaboration between different actors is also needed.

Service
The established parts of the services sector within the maritime sector often operate on the international market. Rules that enable companies operating in Sweden to provide services are therefore very important. The services production put out by government agencies to private actors – such as in the area of hydrographic surveys – has historically also contributed to the development of companies.

Follow-up, evaluation and development
In order for the strategy to facilitate development in the maritime sector in line with the Government’s vision, a process for follow-up and evaluation is needed. The Government intends to begin a development project to establish a model for this. The aim is to have a dialogue with relevant actors on the need for measures and the continued development of efforts linked to the maritime sector.