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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.2.2025)

1. The Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive (2014/89/EU)¹ requires coastal Member States to adopt their maritime spatial plans by 31 March 2021. The Commission is committed to fostering enhanced coordination among Member States to ensure the sustainable management of maritime areas. This includes working towards coherent MSP across the EU, as required by the Directive.

Article 52 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and 355 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) define the territorial scope of the EU Treaties by reference to the territories of Member States. In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), it is for each coastal State to establish and delimitate its maritime zones (including with other States in case of adjacent waters). The EU has no competence regarding the establishment/proclamation and delimitation of maritime zones.

2. The Seville Charter is a regional map created by an external party, which holds no legal significance. The adoption of a 'European Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)' by the EU is neither planned nor possible.

While the delimitation of the EEZ is a matter falling under the competence of the Member States, in case of unilateral actions or provocations in breach of international law by a third country or countries, the EU will use all the instruments and the options at its disposal, including in accordance with Article 29 TEU and Article 215 TFEU, in order to defend its interests and those of the Member States².

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/89/oj/eng>

² European Council conclusions on external relations, 1 October 2020:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/10/01/european-council-conclusions-on-external-relations-1-october-2020/>