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MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING AND EU PORTS: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

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Abstract Summary :

Ports represent significant challenges for maritime spatial planning, particularly as rapid changes in the port industry shape specific requirements, constraints, and opportunities. Ports occupy extensive areas and involve intensive use. While they generate many positive impacts, they also exert negative environmental effects on the regions they are part of. Moreover, ports attract transport flows and associated activities, as well as the establishment of other enterprises, which further influence and reshape the surrounding space. The role of the state is critical in this context, as it must establish a robust framework for MSP as a public policy and governance tool, ensuring rational and effective use of space while promoting the coexistence of often competing activities. This paper examines ways to address environmental sustainability in port areas within MSP frameworks and identifies enablers and barriers to the effective incorporation of ports into MSP processes. It argues that MSP facilitates rational strategic planning and decision-making and has the potential to deliver multiple benefits for all stakeholders. MSP can initiate key processes to enhance the environmental dimension of port activities, contributing to the reduction of their environmental footprint. Particular emphasis is placed on participatory planning and the active involvement of all stakeholders in achieving sustainable outcomes.