



2nd MED-MSP-CoP WORKSHOP

Monday, 21st October 2024

15:00 – 18:30 CET

Hybrid and in presence at Palais du Pharo (58 Bd Charles Livon, 13007 Marseille, France)

Participants List	
Martina Bocci	Elena Gutiérrez-Ruiz
Stelios Contarinis	Marilena Papageorgiou
Andrea Zanella	Ginevra Capurso
Abd El Rahman Khattaby	Cristina Cervera Núñez
Thanos Smanis	Patricia Cortegoso
Mónica Campillos-Llanos	Samir Bachouche
Emiliano Ramieri	Helena Calado
Max Willis	Carlos V.C. Weiss
Fabio Carella	Pierre-Maxime Giora
Dani Amir	Neil Alloncle
Viviana Grosso	Rossana Didonna
Anja Detant	Carole Martínez
Celine Frank	

Introduction

The co-chair of the MED MSP CoP, Emiliano Ramieri (ER; from CNR ISMAR), welcomed everyone and gave a brief introduction to the workshop. He then presented the agenda and swiftly gave the floor to the first speakers.

Challenges and solutions emerging from the analysis of co-analysed MSP projects and initiatives

Neil Alloncle and Cristina Cervera-Núñez (MED-MSP-CoP coordination team)

Cristina Cervera-Núñez (CCN, from IEO-CSIC) (coordination team of the MED-MSP-CoP) took the floor first, suggesting to all experts that they take notes, as for the workshop they would be asked to prioritise some challenges and suggest solutions, based on their experience. Proceeding the presentation, CCN explained how the team had carried out two parallel activities, analysing the important MSP topics for the Mediterranean and identifying challenges to their implementation of MSP. After the presentation, the participants were shown challenges and solutions already identified in the first 2024 workshop of the MED MSP CoP held in September. In total, 32 projects were screened, and the main results point out that many projects concern stakeholder engagement in MSP, data and tools for MSP, and to a minor extent the integration of the European Green Deal (EGD) in MSP, including climate change adaptation and mitigation aspects.

Niel Alloncle (NA, from CEREMA) (coordination team of MSP-MED-CoP) proceeded to explain that a position paper focusing on recommendations for the identified challenges will be produced as an output of the work of the MSP-MED-CoP. Six challenges were identified for the MPA and 7 for the SBE thematic areas. From the project-based analyses, the coordination team also identified some solutions for the challenges. NA concluded that the workshop objective is to discuss the identified challenges,

detail the proposed solutions and discuss the challenges not covered by solutions in terms of opportunities for future projects and development. He mentioned that this process is expected to be over by the end of the year/beginning of the next year. **For more details on the solutions and projects linked to the challenges, the presentation should be consulted.*

After discussing and evaluating how persisting challenges are covered, time was provided to vote on the 3 challenges to be prioritised for each subtopic. Voting was done in person and online through the Mural online application. The MED-MSP-CoP worked in 2023-2024 on two major topics focusing on the role of MSP in supporting **marine protected areas (MPA)** and **sustainable blue economy (SBE)**. To narrow down the work, one sub-topic per topic was selected by the MED-MSP-CoP in the course of 2023-2024: the **involvement of maritime sectors in environmental management (for the MPA topic)** and **MSP as a strategic framework for SBE (for the SBE topic)**. Within the Marseilles workshop, participants were asked to contribute to a cross-analysis linking the selected challenges and solutions with the projects analysed for the two sub-topics selected.

Maria Bas (MB) (from ICM-CSIC) commented that there might be some more projects linked to some of the solutions presented. For instance, on future scenarios for MSP, she mentioned the [FutureMARES project](#), which drafted different future scenarios and created some ecosystem models, examining how to reach targets on biodiversity conservation. She also mentioned that the WestMED initiative is developing a tool to conduct cumulative impact assessments. In all, she emphasised how more projects should be screened and linked with the solutions to these challenges. NA thanked her for the comment and responded that this is still a work in progress and for sure more projects will be included in the analysis.

Based on the results of the challenges prioritisation, the workshop focused on “**Challenge 3: Conservation through MSP implementation**”, of the subtopic “**Involvement of maritime sectors in environmental management**” and on “**Challenge 6: MSP cross-border collaboration to enhance the coherence of sectorial strategies at sea-basin scale**” of the subtopic on “**MSP as a strategic framework for SBE**”. NA clarified that the rest of the challenges would also be addressed in the work to follow the meeting, as this workshop was supposed to launch the process. He then presented each selected challenge in detail and the respective identified solutions and projects.

Challenge 3 (subtopic “Involvement of maritime sectors in marine conservation”) and related solutions and projects are presented below (also see the presentation).

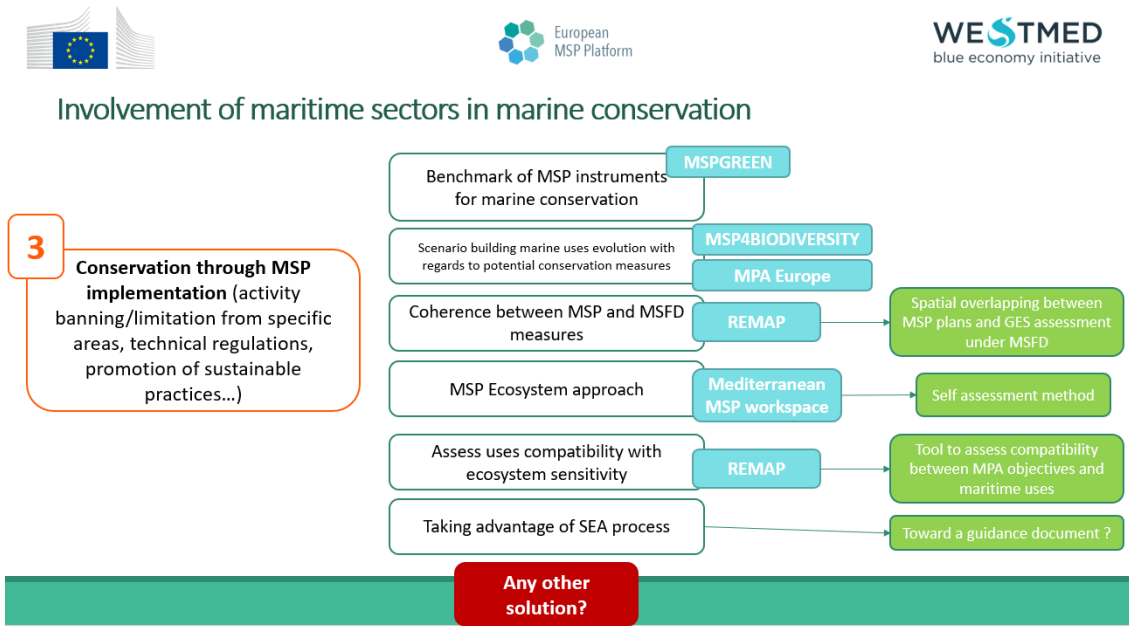


Figure 1. Most voted challenge for the subtopic “Involvement of maritime sectors in marine conservation”

The participants were asked to propose other potential solutions and assess and comment on the effectiveness of the solutions and the projects’ approaches.

In terms of coherence between MSP and MSFD measures, the [CrossGov Horizon Europe project](#) was mentioned. The interest in this project is the methodologies developed to assess the coherence between different policies and to assess the transfer from science-to-policy-to-society to improve policy coherence.

MB commented that in [MarinePlan](#) they are developing 3D planning, to prioritise conservation areas. 3D is very important to be able to consider the depth dimension in the conservation of marine ecosystems. They are also incorporating offshore wind farms and shipping in their modelling, considering climate change scenarios. The relevant work of AZTI was presented in the poster exhibition space of the European MSP week and on-site participants were encouraged to have a look

Carole Martinez (CM; from MedPan) indicated that is essential to scale up into OECM (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures). There is still room for growth in this area, as the identification of conservation measures still presents many gaps.

NA highlighted that regarding linking the implementation of the MSFD and MSP process, one of the challenges mentioned concerns the provision and sharing of relevant information on the environmental stakes and their status. It is currently quite complicated to provide this kind of information to guide the planning process, but it should be resolved in the future, by providing particularly maps and visualised information.

Martina Bocci (MBC, from t-Elika) highlighted that the MSP GREEN project analysed the role of MSP in marine conservation, and more in general for the implementation of EGD objectives. Despite all countries implementing the same EU Directives and strategies, the implementation and reporting differ from country to country. It would be beneficial to cross-analyse the different implementation methods

and highlight the best asset of each implementation of the different MSP plans, to share best practices and harmonise the implementation. However, in certain sea basins it should be noted how there are also non-EU countries involved, where the EU directives implementation plans differ more.

The discussion then moved on to the second sub-topic, regarding SBE. Challenge 6 and related solutions and projects are summarised in the figure below.

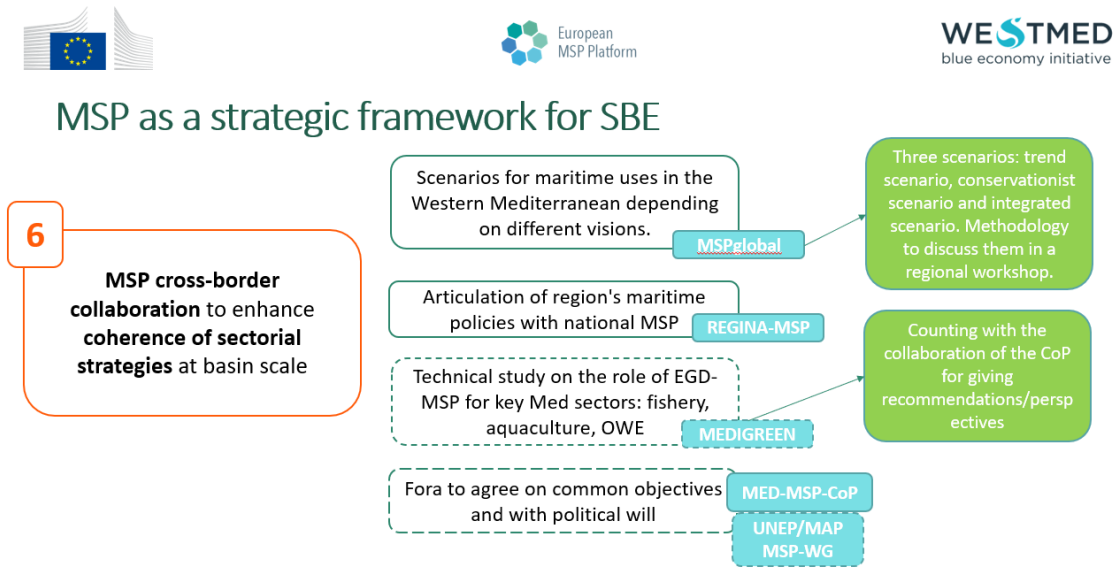


Figure 2. Most voted challenge for the subtopic “MSP as a strategic framework for SBE”

ER commented about a national project running in Italy (called MSP4BIODIVERSITY, funded by the Next Generation EU program), concerning future scenarios for improving marine conservation through MSP. For each of the three pilot areas of the project, there is a co-development process with experts and local stakeholders for the alternative scenarios, addressing different levels of improvement of biodiversity conservation. The methodology implemented, which includes a wide model analysis, could be interesting in understanding the consequences of the scenarios on various fields and uses, other than conservation.

Another remark emphasised how, even in previous projects that were implemented in the Mediterranean, partners had difficulty sharing a common view on the demands and the stakes of each sector. Moving forward, stakeholders and experts should take stock of such gaps and co-develop some guidelines on how to achieve this common vision and shared objectives.

MBC suggested developing case studies, on a cross-border bilateral level, considering one to two sectors, on how coherency could be achieved through MSP. Starting by identifying some best practices on cross-sectoral coherence could lay a good foundation as case studies can share different experiences in different countries through their blue economy strategies.

Celine Frank (DF, from EC DG MARE) commented that if we want to take a further look at how non-EU countries implement MSP and other related policies, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the UNEP MAP would be useful channels in this regard. Also, she welcomed the recommendation of working on case studies and suggested that looking at international goals and objectives would clarify

a bit the scope of implementation by other countries, as the 30% biodiversity protection target, which is not mentioned just in the European Green Deal.

CM suggested that to go beyond EU member states, we should go beyond the gap. Regarding case studies in cross-border collaboration, she suggested thinking about different collaborations for finding space and conducting analysis to go further at a cross-border level.

Carlos V.C. Weiss (CV, from IH Cantabria) explained his experience in climate change projects and scenarios, focusing on wind energy and aquaculture sectors. He mentioned that currently, they are evaluating the pressures to species or habitats, and a multiuse approach. They also use digital twins to assess the socio-economic value of marine activities.

Samir Bachouche (SB, from the National Research Centre for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, Algeria) emphasised specific topics, like ecosystem conservation, aquaculture and sustainable fishing practices, all of which need to be considered as sectors of cross-border cooperation, to achieve better management of protected areas.

Fabio Carella (FC, from IUAV) mentioned the importance of area-based management tools (including MPA, OECMS, etc.) in a cross-border perspective, as considered in the case of a project focusing on the strait between Albania and Italy. In addition, he mentioned that in the REMAP project, there is a case study between Spain, France, and Monaco focusing on the new PSSA.

Presentation of the draft study by *Martina Bocci (t-ELIKA)*.

MBC started by commenting how for this study, she is representing the MSP Assistance Mechanism, providing support to the MED MSP CoP by gathering all the disaggregated work it has conducted in the past into one common point of reference. She informed everyone that the study was not yet finalised.

The study aims to compile a brief compendium of the CoP achievements so far and it can be a useful tool for the whole MSP community, with which CoP interacts and collaborates. The objectives focus on reviewing and summarising the results of the CoP activities to date while highlighting key findings such as knowledge needs, existing resources, and gaps, particularly around priority topics. The study also aims to explore how the exchange of expertise can advance a regional perspective on MSP in the Mediterranean, as well as to identify feasible activities to guide the continuation of the CoP's work effectively. The information of the study derives from the Terms of Reference, the information produced by all the CoP's workshops and webinars, the reports and presentations drafted, projects databases as well as the recently published study of the MSP Assistance Mechanism "[Maritime spatial planning through the years: Insights of a decade of EMFF and EMFAF funded projects](#)".

The study highlights key topics, challenges, and solutions discussed in the workshop, focusing on compiling and analysing projects and tools while identifying gaps and opportunities. MBC emphasised the need to map existing tools more effectively and prioritise them based on their relevance and impact. Capacity building for planners is essential to maximise these tools' potential. The study underscores the added value of the MED MSP CoP in fostering knowledge exchange, creating shared regional databases, and strengthening MSP planning capabilities. Priorities include targeting knowledge exchanges in sectors like fisheries and aquaculture, assessing the social and economic impacts of MSP plans, and aligning efforts with EGD objectives.

Some comments stressed how the operationalisation of the social and economic impact assessment still needs effort and investment to yield some tangible results, as well as the fact that these priorities should be viewed in the broader context of MSP. It was also noted that priorities related to the impacts and achievements of EGD objectives probably refer to EU countries, but they should be broadened to non-EU countries, particularly North African ones.

The MEDIGREEN project and its connection to the MED-MSP-CoP *Cristina Cervera-Núñez (MEDIGREEN Coordinator, IEO-CSIC)*

CCN presented the MEDIGREEN project, starting with a brief overview of the consortium, including partners from Spain, Italy, France, Greece, Algeria, Tunisia and Malta, plus PAP-RAC from UNEP-MAP. The project focuses on advancing the EGD in the Mediterranean through transnational MSP, emphasising key activities and uses (in particular, offshore renewable energy, fishing, aquaculture, and nature protection) while strengthening cross-border cooperation between EU and non-EU countries. All the work packages are interlinked, looking at the MSPGREEN project results and taking them one step further. The project will expand beyond the EU, disseminating how MSP can support EGD objectives, with actions focusing on non-EU countries. This will also involve the MED MSP CoP to enable EDG in the Mediterranean through MSP. Communication and cultural exchange will also be pursued, among dissemination and communication activities, as well as knowledge sharing through communication around data in MSP.

It was also noted that the project has some resources allocated to mobilise experts of the CoP and invite them to 2 face to face workshops of the MED-MSP-CoP that MEDIGREEN will organise (WP3).

Open discussion on the CoP's governance

The co-chair, ER, opened this segment of the workshop by reaffirming that the MED MSP CoP will liaise with the Working Group on the MSP of the UNEP MAP. Even though there is still little information on that, the CoP will monitor progress in the next month. Then, he opened the floor to ideas about the topics included in the agenda under this segment.

NA commented that the current format of information exchange has been successful in creating a pool of information, tools, best practices etc, by mapping projects and solutions. Taking it a step further and delivering effective solutions and materials, more detailed and consistent work would be required. Some kind of focus could be placed on specific contributions, even by creating factsheets to capitalise on the developed solutions. Therefore, the creation of MED-MSP-CoP working groups (WGs) would be beneficial for this line of more detailed, specific and valuable output production. MEDIGREEN can support that. It was also suggested that, apart from position papers and recommendations, the CoP should think also of other ways to disseminate the results of the CoP's work, by way of workshops and capacity building.

WGs also need leadership. On that front, the co-chair, ER, suggested sharing a survey, to engage all the CoP participants, requesting their interest in leading and participating in a WG, and then following up on that. MBc asked about a potential timeline, to which the response was that the soonest possible date for the WGs to be established is the 2nd quarter of 2025. Trying to align the CoP WGs with the ones of MEDIGREEN, the CoP should aim to have operational WG in line with the project, so that the WG can head a couple of years of work.

Helena Calado (HC, from the University of the Azores) turned the discussion towards the WGs to be held under MEDIGREEN and volunteered to lead a WG on nature conservation.

The ER then continued on other topics, speaking of how the CoP needs to involve experts from other countries in the eastern Mediterranean and engage them in the core team. Chairing the CoP is also a topic open to discussion for anyone interested in chairing it.

It was stressed that the WG on MSP from UNEP MAP will involve national representatives of UNEP MAP convection, going through the UNEP MAP formal channels, like ministries of environment. The WG will be linking to policy processes in the countries, working in a formalised and institutionalised manner. Representatives will be providing representation of their own countries, which is very different from what CoP participants do. This will provide good complementarity with the MED MSP CoP. The CoP will monitor the process and liaise with them to figure out how the UNEP MSP WG and the MED MSP CoP can work together, with the CoP even providing some technical support through the knowledge shared and built up this far.

Anja Detant (AD, from CINEA) referred to a new call for INTERREG NEXT MED is foreseen to open by the end of November, focusing on coastal resilience and perhaps also capacity building. She urged the CoP to monitor the call and try to develop a concrete activity/action for capacity building between EU and non-EU countries. In the analysis of the [Maritime spatial planning through the years: Insights of a decade of EMFF and EMFAF funded projects](#) study, she focused on one of the main points, which is the uptake of some of the study recommendations by relevant authorities and bring their attention to the results of the CoP. Both ER and NA affirmed that disseminating CoP's solutions and enhancing the uptake of project results and recommendations by policymakers will be enhanced, as it is an objective of the CoP.

Closing the meeting, the co-chair, ER, mentioned that the presentations and the mural link will be shared with the participants, and that work will begin on a simple structure of the position papers. For the WG, the survey to engage MED-MSP-CoP will be circulated. MEDIGREEN will kick off in November and the CoP will be supported by the project, so participants should expect to hear more about the project in the new year.