



Systems and tools for monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU

Final Report

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Systems and tools for monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime
spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of
Directive 2014/89/EU

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Directive 2014/89/EU**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Definition
EU	European Union
IOC UNESCO	International Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO
MS	Member State
MSP	Maritime Spatial Planning
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
EEA	European Environment Agency
EMODNET	European Marine Observation and Data Network
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

Note that the abbreviation MSP is used for the process of Maritime Spatial Planning, not for the resultant maritime spatial plans. In this project, the developed tools and methods for assessment, monitoring and revision cover both MSP and maritime spatial plans.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) is an important policy tool for the sustainable development of marine areas and coastal regions, and particularly for the restoration of Europe's seas to environmental health. The high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space for different purposes, such as installations for the production of energy from renewable sources, oil and gas exploration and exploitation, shipping and fishing activities, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, the extraction of raw materials, tourism, aquaculture installations and underwater cultural heritage, as well as the multiple and cumulative pressures on coastal resources, require an integrated planning and management approach.

The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive was adopted in 2014. In Directive 2014/89/EU it is stated that Member States shall review their MSP 'as decided by them but at least every ten years' (Article 6.3). This is needed to deal with uncertainty and incorporate various types of change and requires a cost effective and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan. Yet this explicit attention given to evaluation is not mirrored by a large body of literature or studies on how to evaluate MSPs. It is within this context that this proposal seeks to develop a set of systems and tools that allow Member States and non-Member States to monitor, evaluate and, as appropriate, review their maritime spatial plans.

The objective of this study is to provide guidance to administrators in monitoring, evaluating and revising their maritime spatial plans, in particular in the context of the implementation of the Directive 2014/89/EU on Maritime Spatial Planning (or MSP Directive). To this end, the project provides a "guide" and a "toolbox".

This project was divided into six main tasks. The guide and toolbox were designed based on literature review and expert interviews, tested in case studies and revised subsequently. A review meeting was organised to validate the findings with external experts.

The guide aims to support EU Member States in developing an approach to monitoring, evaluation and revision. Key issues are identified that Member States could consider when establishing and executing their maritime spatial plans including, but not limited to, the requirement formulated in Directive 2014/89/EU and the intricate relations between Directive 2014/89/EU and other EU Directives.

The guide outlines the steps in monitoring and evaluation of an MSP, with a summary of suggested methods and tools that will be expanded on in each of the steps. It starts with a decision matrix for objectives outlined in Directive 2014/89/EU, designed to get Member States thinking about the reasons why they would pursue certain objectives within their national MSP. Step 2 maps out the minimum requirements identified under article 6 of Directive 2014/89/EU, and matches them to existing requirements and/or considerations in other relevant EU Directives and policy instruments. Step 3a outlines the process of identifying targets under the selected objectives. These targets are divided into governance, socio-economic and environmental. Step 3b is designed to assist Member States in choosing appropriate indicators that match the targets selected in Step 3a. Step 3c presents information on building baseline information for the indicators identified in Step 3b and includes data collection considerations. Step 4 in the process of monitoring, evaluating and revising MSP is not included in the guide: it needs to be decided on by Member States who select appropriate management actions that can achieve set objectives, and associated monitoring strategies to measure the impact of these management actions. Step 5 ties all the previous steps together and concludes the process on monitoring and evaluation of an existing MSP.

The toolbox is a comprehensive set of methods and tools that national administrations can draw upon when monitoring, evaluating and revising their maritime spatial plans. The Toolbox developed takes the form of a methods & tools decision support matrix in which each of the identified methods & tools is mapped across their purpose and stage of use (monitor; evaluation; revise). Depending on the needs (purpose and stage), practitioners can select the method or tool that best suits their needs. The methodology fiches provide the descriptions of the identified methods & tools, using the uniform format. Each methodology fiche provides the name, purpose, outcome, applicability, operationalisation, resource needs and pros & cons of the method & tool as well as additional considerations, further information and references.

1 INTRODUCTION AND STRUCTURE OF THE FINAL STUDY REPORT

1.1 Introduction

The present document is the final study report for the assignment "Systems and tools for assessment, monitoring and revision of maritime spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU".

This report is one of three deliverables of the project. Also made available are:

- The online "Guide to monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans"
- The interactive pdf document "Toolbox for monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans"

1.2 Structure of the study report

The interim report contains the following main elements:

- Chapter 2: An executive summary
- Chapter 3: Summary of work done
- Chapter 4: Report of the closing workshop

The report comes with 6 annexes:

- Annex 1: Schematic representation
- Annex 2: Ranking of best practices
- Annex 3: GAP analysis
- Annex 4: Case study fiche Bulgaria
- Annex 5: Case study fiche Greece
- Annex 6: Case study fiche Netherlands

2 SUMMARY OF WORK DONE

2.1 Monitoring and evaluation of MSP

Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) is an important policy tool for the sustainable development of marine areas and coastal regions, and particularly for the restoration of Europe's seas to environmental health. The high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space for different purposes, such as installations for the production of energy from renewable sources, oil and gas exploration and exploitation, shipping and fishing activities, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, the extraction of raw materials, tourism, aquaculture installations and underwater cultural heritage, as well as the multiple and cumulative pressures on coastal resources, requires an integrated planning and management approach.¹

The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive was adopted in 2014. In Directive 2014/89/EU it is stated that Member States shall review their MSP 'as decided by them but at least every ten years' (Article 6.3). This is needed to deal with uncertainty and incorporate various types of change and requires a cost effective and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan.² Yet this explicit attention given to evaluation is not mirrored by a large body of literature or studies on how to evaluate MSPs.³ It is within this context that this project seeks to develop a set of systems and tools that allow Member States and non-Member States to monitor, evaluate and, if appropriate, revise their maritime spatial plans.

2.2 Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to provide guidance to administrators in monitoring, evaluating and revising their maritime spatial plans, in particular in the context of the implementation of the Directive 2014/89/EU on Maritime Spatial Planning (or MSP Directive). To this end, the project provides a "guide"⁴ and a "toolbox".

The guide aims to enable EU Member States administrations to assess progress in the implementation of the EU MSP Directive. Key issues are identified that Member States could consider when establishing and executing their maritime spatial plans including, but not limited to, the requirement formulated in Directive 2014/89/EU and the intricate relations between Directive 2014/89/EU and other EU Directives.

The toolbox is a comprehensive set of methods and tools that national administrations can draw upon when monitoring, evaluating and/or revising their maritime spatial plans.

¹ Friess, B., & Grémaud-Colombier, M. (2019). Policy outlook: recent evolutions of maritime spatial planning in the European Union. *Marine Policy*, 103428.

² Douvère, F., & Ehler, C. N. (2011). The importance of monitoring and evaluation in adaptive maritime spatial planning. *Journal of Coastal Conservation*, 15(2), 305-311.

³ Carneiro, G. (2013). Evaluation of marine spatial planning. *Marine Policy*, 37, 214-229.

⁴ Note that the Terms of Reference used the term "template". During the expert meeting it was concluded that the term "guide" is more appropriate

2.3 Methodology

This project was divided into six main tasks. The guide and toolbox were designed based on literature review and expert interviews, tested in case studies and revised subsequently. A review meeting was organised to validate the findings with external experts.

- In Tasks 1 and 2, a review of existing data and methods was carried out while identifying potential knowledge gaps concerning monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans.
- In Task 3, a guide for monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans and MSP was developed, specifically in the context of 2014/89/EU. This guide addresses the linkages with other relevant EU Directives and policies. It supports Member States in identifying the most relevant topics for monitoring, evaluation and revision and provides guidance on formulation of evaluation criteria and indicators.
- In Task 4, a toolbox was developed, providing Member States and non-Member States with insight into relevant methodologies for monitoring, evaluating and revising maritime spatial plans.
- In Task 5, case studies from different sea basins were conducted to test and validate the robustness of the guide and the toolbox. The findings of the case studies were used to revise both guide and toolbox.
- Finally, in Task 6, a closing workshop was organised to review the results of the previous tasks and promote a discussion with stakeholders on the further developments of monitoring and evaluating MSP.

2.4 Task 1: Baseline review and State of Play

The structured literature review to comprehend the state of play of monitoring, evaluation and revision of MSP and/or of maritime spatial plans has taken into account relevant scientific literature retrieved from Scopus. A complementary part includes specific repositories, data portals and reports related to marine and coastal environments and MSP. This includes the reports available on the European MSP platform website, reports provided by IOC/UNESCO and reports available on the Commission's websites. The literature review was divided into six steps.

1) In the first step, we make use of specific search terms to retrieve available literature. As a result, a long list of scientific (from Scopus) and non-scientific documents (from the complementary part) was compiled containing 244 records.

2) All reports and scientific publications identified in step 1 were assessed by the Study Team, who read the abstract. Publications were scored according to their link with MSP, link to monitoring, evaluation and/or assessment and revision, and reference to tools and methods. For each criterion, publications received a score on a 1-4 scale (4= very clear, 3= clear, 2= likely, not clear, 1= uncertain). This exercise enabled us to identify the most relevant reports and scientific publications. Based on this exercise, we propose to include 17 reports and 26 scientific publications, with a minimum score of 11 points.

3) Once all relevant sources were identified and logged in a document database, the selected documents went through a process of coding (NVivo⁵ and QDA Miner⁶) to highlight extracts throughout the text that describe key aspects of the publication, such as methods, geographical scope, indicators, etc. This exercise allows the team to organise, store and process all relevant qualitative data in one central place to ease further analysis and compiling the inventory in Step 4.

4) All relevant documents, collected in the document databases were scrutinised to see what methods, practices and tools were used. This was reported in an Excel database that is the basis for further analysis in Step 5, as well as Task 2. The identified methods, practices and tools were collected in a database, indicating authors, source, year, geographical scope and links to full documents.

5) The methods, practices and tools compiled were critically evaluated by looking at quality and robustness. Quality is defined as the degree to which a study adheres to scientific standards for research, whereas robustness is defined as the degree to which methods used can be used under different conditions (e.g. different regions). In addition, critical remarks and comments, as reported in the reports and publication by the authors, were complemented by our own analysis of the quality and robustness of the methods used. The results were added to the Excel file compiled in Step 4 to include scores on quality and robustness.

6) In the last step, we make the findings reported in the Excel file available in a visually attractive format, by showing the number of publications on assessment, monitoring and revision of MSP, identified in step 1 and selected for further review in step 3 to 5; the frequency with which various methods for monitoring, evaluation and revision are used; and the geographic distribution of the methods used. See the illustration in Annex 1 ("schematic representation").

2.5 Task 2: Critical analysis of the 'Baseline review and State of Play'

An iterative process of desk study and expert consultation was conducted to evaluate methods and tools identified. This task was sub-divided into 4 different steps:

2.5.1 Expert interviews

Explorative, semi-structured interviews with experienced practitioners and evaluators of maritime spatial planning were conducted. Nine interviews were conducted by Skype and two experts gave written feedback on the questionnaire. The response from the expert interviews consisted of general remarks on the key elements of monitoring and evaluation, and feedback regarding guide and the toolbox. Key findings from the interviews include:

- In evaluation, it is a challenge to attribute changes to MSP as a policy intervention, given the fact that other interventions are made simultaneously.
- In MSP, the principles of democracy, participation and transparency are considered a mechanism to deal with power imbalances; to achieve equity and a fair distribution of costs and revenues.

⁵ <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home>

⁶ <https://provalisresearch.com/products/qualitative-data-analysis-software/>

- The importance of the distinction between *ex ante* and *ex post* evaluations regarding impact assessment, process evaluation and evaluation of effectiveness/outcomes.
- Major learning takes place as a result of collaboration and interaction among Member States of a sea basin on best practices; not what to do; but how to do it.

With respect to the guide & toolbox, respondents stressed the importance of:

- An example of best practices in the application of each of the methods in the toolbox: how and when it was applied and for what purpose.
- Clarifying, in the toolbox, how one method connects to the other within a discipline and between disciplines. The challenge for stakeholders is to integrate models for conservation of natural resources with the socio-economic models, thus providing coherence and consistency between the different methods and tools from different disciplines and within a discipline (transdisciplinary approach).

2.5.2 Ranking of best practices

The list of methods and tools from Task 1 are scored considering their compliance with the MSP toolbox implementation. The score includes three main categories: data needs (i.e. describes if the method/tool applied is data intensive and if the data can be easily accessed, gathered or generated at low/affordable cost), resources required (i.e. the resources required describes how costly can be the process of data collection or method/tool development in MSP, which includes financial and human resources, and infrastructure) and technical complexity (i.e. describes the technical feasibility of a method/tool based on the amount of resources required and the status of data acquisition of given indicator). See the scoring Annex 2 ("ranking of best practices").

2.5.3 Gap identification

A gap refers to a situation where no applicable method or tool exists to evaluate MSP against one of the formulated objectives. To identify gaps, we created a confrontation matrix, confronting the objectives in 2014/89/EU and related Directives and criteria for the content of the document with the methods, tools and practices identified. With the confrontation matrix, we scored the relation of each method against each MSP-related objective. The scoring system in the confrontation matrix has five levels: 0 - this method does not provide relevant data; 1 - this method might at best provide some insights; 2 - method is useful but additional methods are surely needed; 3 - method is useful, but might need additional methods to get a full comprehension; 4 - method can be used and will provide enough info on its own. However, it should be noted that this scoring exercise requires coherence as some methods are only partially explored and presented in the reviewed publications, which may "under" or "over" estimate their real potential for addressing MSP objectives. Therefore, each method is scored against 22 objectives by five different researchers of the project team. Very discrepant scores among the referees were internally discussed in order to reach a consensus around a common score. The average of these scores is calculated and used as a final score to identify the overall compliance of the method with a given MSP-related objective. See Annex 3 ("GAP analysis") for the final confrontation matrix with the score averages.

2.5.4 Propose paths for bridging gaps

The GAP analysis illustrates that there are suitable tools and methods to evaluate if MSP contributes to the objectives formulated in Art 5 and Art 6 of Directive 2014/89/EU. Regarding the use of the best available data (art. 6.2.e), it should be noted that there is no specific method used to certify whether a given MSP is using the

best available data. That is why MSP evaluation requires an integration of an interdisciplinary technical committee to assess the data quality. In the situation where there is no clear method standing out for monitoring or assessing a particular objective, or if the objective is ambiguous and not clearly addressed by one specific method, our group of specialists choose a specific method that would better represent a particular objective when populating the Toolbox (see Task 4).

2.6 Task 3: Development of the guide for monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans, in particular in the context of Directive 2014/89/EU

The guide is an interactive tool which allows the user to follow through a series of steps in the process of monitoring, evaluating and revising a MSP (Figure 11). The user can select the most relevant options at each step to come to a tailored summary of key factors, targets and indicators to consider in monitoring, assessment and revision. The guide was originally designed in Microsoft Excel. Following the comments made in the review meeting, an online, user-friendly version was prepared which will be hosted on the website of the MSP Assistance Mechanism.

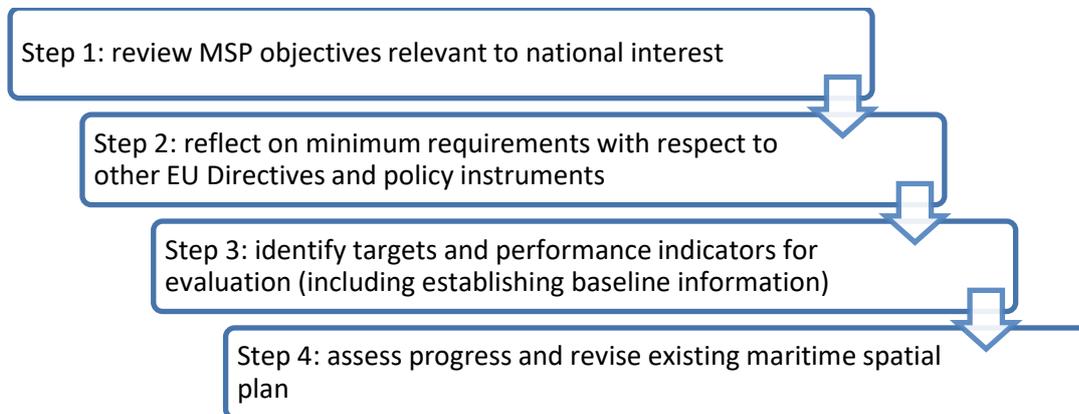


Figure 1: Visualisation of guide for assessment of MSP

Throughout the guide, methods and tools from Task 4 are also suggested to Member State representatives at each step to assist them in undertaking that particular step. Furthermore, an overview page is provided at the beginning of the guide so that Member States can skip ahead to the step that's most relevant to the stage of their progress without having to go through all the prior steps.

All in all, the guide provides clarity to Member State representatives on the following questions:

1. Which maritime sectors have become important to the national MSP objective since the last review or the establishment of the MSP?;
2. What considerations need to be made in order to comply with the minimum requirements set out in article 6 of Directive 2014/89/EU, as well as other relevant EU Directives and policy instruments?;
3. Which targets are appropriate based on the objectives selected and the indicators that are most relevant in assessing progress made to achieve those targets?; and
4. Which methods and tools can assist in carrying out points 1-3?

With regards to considerations relating to interactions with other EU Directives and policy instruments against minimum requirements set out under Directive 2014/89/EU, this is done through prompting leading questions. For example, the leading questions against the minimum requirement of land-sea interaction

considerations in developing a blue energy sector include: “What will be the impact on indirect land-use change from establishing blue energy?” (2015/1513/EU) and “Will the indirect land-use change occur in areas with high-carbon stock, such as wetlands and peatlands (impacting emissions)? Or biodiverse areas, that could threaten or endanger ecosystems or species?” (2018/2001/EU).

For the development of targets and indicators, core principles are outlined to assist Member States in selecting the most appropriate targets and indicators. For example, targets should follow a SMART framework, and indicators should embody characteristics of good indicators. More specifically, the SMART framework for targets is defined as:

- Specific: well-defined outcomes of an MSP sector;
- Measurable: can be quantified and measured by indicators;
- Achievable: realistic and attainable with reasonable means, in terms of both time and resources;
- Relevant: desired outcomes are relevant to other commitments made at the national, EU or international level;
- Time-bound: there is a deadline in which to achieve the targets.

And the characteristics of good indicators are as follows:⁷

- Relevant: to the objective or impacts of the management action it seeks to measure
- Measurable: observable and readily measured with existing tools and programmes in a timely fashion
- Specific: to the aspects that are intended to monitor and be separated from other responses or impacts of management measures
- Scientific: based on grounded evidence and not subject to biases
- Clear: easily interpreted by the target audience, especially for aspects of importance to the target audience
- Comparable: over time, i.e. consistently measured under the same principles and definition
- Responsive: sensitive to management measures and provides timely and reliable feedback to the impacts of management measures
- Cost effective: monitoring cost of indicator or data collection should not outweigh the benefits of monitoring.

Lastly, guidance is provided for efficient utilisation of existing databases and data sources that can provide the necessary information for some of the indicators developed.

2.7 Task 4: Development of the toolbox for monitoring, evaluation and revision

A toolbox was developed to identify, describe and map methods & tools that can be used to monitor, evaluate and revise maritime spatial plans. The toolbox builds upon the review of methods (Task 1) and critical evaluation (Task 2). The purpose of this toolbox is to provide practitioners easy access to methods & tools that they can use during the different stages of the maritime spatial planning process.

⁷ Based on https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/sub_landing/files/8_2-Intro-to-IndicatorsFMEF.pdf

In the development of the toolbox, the following approach was taken:

2.7.1 Identify, categorise and map relevant methods, practices and tools

The database of methods & tools developed in Task 1 and critically evaluated in Task 2, was the starting point for this task. It was used to identify the most relevant, robust and scientifically sound methods & tools that can be used for the monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans. To this end, the short-listed and reviewed papers (from Task 1 and 2) were read, and relevant methods & tools were categorised based on i) their purpose and ii) the stage of the maritime spatial planning process in which they can be used.

2.7.2 Formulate use instructions, including cross-links to existing sources and examples

The methods & tools selected for inclusion in the toolbox were described in further detail, to support EU and non-EU states in the application of the methods & tools. For each method & tool, a 'Methodology fiche' was prepared, using a uniform format with the following headings:

- Name (Common name/names of method/tool)
- Purpose (What does the method/tool aim to achieve?)
- Outcome (What information does the method/tool provide?)
- Applicability (When and where can the method/tool be applied?)
- Operationalisation (How does the method/tool work?)
- Needs (What resources are required for applying the method, in terms of time/data/costs/skills?)
- Pros and cons (What are the strengths and weaknesses of the method/tool?)
- Considerations (What issues should be considered when using the method/tool?)
- Further information (Any particular website or case study that is useful?)
- References.

2.7.3 Provide decision support in selecting the most appropriate method:

Finally, the methods & tools were mapped according to i) their purpose and ii) the stage of the maritime spatial planning process in which they can be used. Depending on the needs (purpose and stage), practitioners can select the method or tool that best suit their needs.

The considered purpose categories are Generic monitoring and evaluation methods, Methods on social impact, Methods on environmental impact, Methods on economic impact, Methods taking spatial approach and Legal. No additional categories for specific tools, such as for stakeholder participation and environmental valuation, were included as these are not MSP-specific and generally accessible through dedicated toolkits. In the Methodology fiches, included in the "Toolbox for monitoring, evaluation and revision of Maritime Spatial Plans" we refer to such toolkits when appropriate.

2.8 Task 5: Case studies

2.8.1 Objective and method

In each case study, we initially proposed a combination of desk research of relevant MSP documentation along with expert interviews (approximately 10) in each country with MSP competent authorities and local experts. The desk research includes the resources on MSP in the concerned sea-basis, as outlined on the European MSP

Platform⁸ and also go through the national and regional reports based on relevance to MSP or included sectors. Additionally, working sessions were conducted with local experts in the sectors that would be part of the MSP. In the proposal and the interim report, five case-study countries were proposed out of which three countries were selected after consultation with the steering group and the countries:

- **Greece:** Proposed to test the guide before drafting a MSP.
- **The Netherlands:** Proposed to test the toolbox for a recently developed MSP.
- **Bulgaria:** Proposed to test application of the toolbox during the MSP development.

Once the initial contact was established with the proposed contacts, additional experts were jointly identified to contribute towards the toolbox and the guide.

2.8.2 Working sessions for case study

In light of COVID-19 constraints, an alternative 3-step method of working sessions with MSP competent authorities from the country was used. This method was applied over the course of a few weeks to collect information and test the toolbox and the guide with the case study countries.

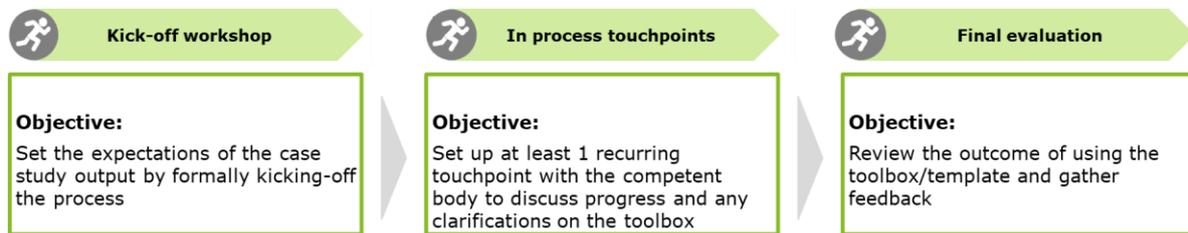


Figure 2: Working sessions to test guide and toolbox for case study

The kick-off workshop set the expectation of the case study by formally kicking off the process with the competent authorities and other experts, and was used to:

- Review the toolbox/guide to evaluate the MSP with the team.
- Walk through all the steps of using the toolbox/guide with the competent authorities and the experts.
- Clarify queries on the usage of the toolbox/guide from the participants.
- Gather feedback on the working session process and the first impression of the toolbox/guide.

As a second step, a duration of few weeks was provided to the experts to go through the toolbox and the guides. In case of queries, the expert and consortium interacted (on need basis) to clarify any queries regarding the toolbox, guide or the evaluation questions

In the final step, an evaluation session was conducted to review the outcome of toolbox/guide application and received detailed feedback from the participants. Additionally, this session was used to collect detailed feedback on the usage of the toolbox/guide and receive suggestions for improvement

⁸ <https://www.msp-platform.eu/>

2.8.3 Case study output

Through these sessions, the consortium was able to collect feedback and evaluation of the case study countries on;

- The overall usability of the guide (Greece) and the toolbox (Bulgaria and the Netherlands) for the local context
- The ease of understanding the guide and the toolbox to identify relevant information

As such, the case studies provided valuable information to improve the guide and the toolbox and make it better fit-for-purpose for all users, irrespective of their current phase of MSP.

Feedback received was used to revise the guide and toolbox, before presenting them to external experts (See Task 6). The main changes made include:

- Clarification of the objective of toolbox and guide
- Greater emphasis on social impact of MSP in guide
- Increased opportunity to add own objectives and indicators to the guide, allowing the user to tailor it to country-specific situation
- Adding an example of a method or tool being applied to the toolbox.

The detailed evaluation feedback received from the countries has been represented in country fiches. These fiches provide a more detailed account of the evaluation and the feedback received from each country.

The case-study fiches are available in the following Annexes:

- Annex 4: Bulgaria case-study fiche
- Annex 5: Greece case-study fiche
- Annex 6: Netherlands case-study fiche.

2.9 Task 6: Organisation of a closing workshop

2.9.1 Objective and method

This task featured the organisation and implementation of a workshop with the purpose of presenting draft findings and gathering feedback for incorporation in the final Study Report. The team designed and implemented the workshop. The workshop was held in English.

A detailed concept note for the workshop – describing our approach to organising the logistics of the workshop and its proposed planning – was provided as part of the offer and then refined as part of the inception report. In light of COVID-19, as part of the interim report, potential pathways to handling the situation were provided while keeping the possibility open to fully or partly (in a hybrid approach) organise the workshop as in-person event. Between the interim and final report a final decision was taken to organise the workshop fully online.

The original date proposed for the workshop was 15 October 2020. Due to delays in the project timeline it was decided to postpone the workshop to 10 December 2020.

This closing workshop was organised using the videoconference platform Microsoft Teams, given the recent switch of the European Commission IT framework that allows using this platform. Microsoft Teams was chosen over Webex due to its better functionality and connection stability.

To make the workshop more interactive and engaging, two additional tools were used: the interactive whiteboard platform MURAL⁹ (for breakout sessions) and the live polling tool Menti¹⁰ (to make panel sessions more interactive).

The final agenda, which was revised to take into account the online setting (including reducing it to a half-day workshop) is presented below.

Table 1: Agenda of the closing workshop

Time	Agenda item	Tools
09:15-09:30	Technical check, experts and participants log in	n/a
09:30-09:35	Welcome by DG MARE	Presentation
09:35-10:00	Presentation of the study by the project team <i>Team presents purpose, methods and findings/deliverables of the project</i>	Presentation
10:00-11:15	Discussion of feedback from expert panel experts. <i>Expert panel discussion, led by chair.</i>	Mix of presentation and online polling systems
11:15-11:30	Short break	n/a
11:30-13:00	Discussion of elements in breakout rooms <i>Two or more breakout groups, each led by the project team, in which main outcomes of the expert feedback are discussed and common solutions are sought together with all participants.</i>	Mural
13:00-13:30	Closing session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Summary of discussions by rapporteurs from each break-out session and the chair who will have listened in to each group discussion</i> ○ <i>Recap of main gaps of the study and way forward</i> ○ <i>Closing words by DG MARE</i> 	n/a

2.9.2 Experts and chairperson

As part of the offer, a selection of experts to be invited for the workshop was identified and then updated throughout the course of the project, based on feedback and availability of the experts (following the change of the date of the workshop).

Both the chair and the experts reviewed the project outputs (toolbox and guide) in written form following a review outline provided by the consortium, and attended the workshop to present and discuss their review. The chair synthesised the written feedback and presented the synthesis during the workshop. The experts and chair then discussed their feedback in more depth during the workshop.

Additional participants were invited to join the workshop, including:

- Relevant EC services
- Maritime spatial planners (practitioners)
- EU Monitoring & Evaluation experts

The consortium took detailed minutes of the discussions during the workshop (including the discussions in the breakout sessions) and together with the written

⁹ <https://www.mural.co/>

¹⁰ <https://www.mentimeter.com/>

statements from the experts this feedback was used to revise the guide and toolbox. The full report of the review meeting is available in Chapter 4.

2.9.3 Revision of guide and toolbox following the closing workshop

This section describes the main changes made to guide and toolbox to address the comments made during the workshop.

Table 2: Revision to guide and toolbox after the closing workshop

Comments	Changes to guide and/or toolbox
<p>Guide was difficult to understand and operate.</p> <p>Experts suggested an interactive online tool.</p>	<p>The Excel-based guide is converted into a more user-friendly interactive online tool.</p>
<p>The guide should assume that a maritime spatial plan is in place. This is not always clear.</p>	<p>This is made more explicit in the online version of the guide.</p>
<p>Guide appears to be "stiff", not accommodated to different planning cultures in Europe.</p>	<p>Member States have the opportunity to add objectives and indicators to accommodate for national preferences. In the online tool, this is made more clearly visible.</p>
<p>Equity is an important emergent issue in relation to maritime spatial planning and should be incorporated.</p>	<p>Equity is now explicitly addressed in guide and toolbox. In the guide, equity is added as one of the cross-sectoral requirements. In the toolbox, it is indicated which tools can be used for studying equity.</p>
<p>Various discussions on the appropriate terms and confusion in terminology.</p>	<p>A glossary is added to guide and toolbox.</p> <p>The "template" is now called "guide".</p> <p>The phrase "monitoring, assessment and revision" is replaced by "monitoring, evaluation and revision".</p>
<p>More attention should be paid to the skills and capacities needed in monitoring, evaluation and revision of maritime spatial plans.</p>	<p>A separate section on skills and capacities needed is added to the guide.</p>
<p>The level of specificity of tools presented differs.</p>	<p>This is acknowledged but considered inevitable by the study team. The differences in specificity are now acknowledged in the toolbox.</p>
<p>Participants suggested an online version of the toolbox with an option to submit new tools in order to create a growing database.</p>	<p>The toolbox is now made available through an interactive pdf file that can be made available online. The suggestion to update it regularly is welcomed but cannot be addressed in the scope of the project.</p>

3 REPORT OF THE CLOSING WORKSHOP

3.1 Objective

The objective of this workshop was to gather feedback from expert reviews to the draft final deliverables of the project mentioned in the title. These deliverables included the draft versions of the “template”¹¹ to guide the review process of Member States’ planning authorities and of the “toolbox”, which provides a collection of methods and tools to perform monitoring and evaluation of MSPs. The review collected during the workshop contributed to the further improvement of the deliverables.

3.2 Structure

Members of the expert panel had received the template and toolbox in advance to prepare their comments. These were presented and discussed among the panellists in the first main session. Subsequently, in two parallel breakout sessions, concerns, questions and suggestions from all participants were collected and structured. The table below summarises the workshop structure.

Time	Agenda item
09:30-09:35	Welcome
09:35-10:00	Presentation of the study by the project team
10:00-11:15	Discussion of feedback from expert panel experts.
11:30-12:50	Discussion of elements in breakout rooms 1. Template 2. Toolbox
13:00-13:30	Closing session

3.3 Participants

Expert Panel: Charles Ehler (IOC/UNESCO), Andrea Barbanti (National Research Council, Italy), Helena Calado (University of the Azores), Odran Corcoran (WWF), Wesley Flannery (Queens University Belfast), Javier Garcia Sanabria (Cadiz University), David Langlet (University of Gothenburg), Massimiliano Mazzanti (University of Ferrara), Tanya Savova (Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Bulgaria), Riku Varjopuro (Helsinki Commission Secretariat), Tom Woolley (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland)

Invited participants: Daniel Depellegrin, Tony Zamparutti, Triin Lepland, Elin Celik, Margarita Stancheva, Vesselina Troeva, Patricja Enet, Stella Kyvelou, Joacim Johannesson, Sagrario Arrieta Algarra, Goncalo Carneiro, Anestis Gourgiotis

¹¹ Note that the term “template” was replaced with “guide” after this workshop. For this reason, we use “template” throughout the workshop report.

European Commission and agencies: Anja Detant, Guido Schwarz, Monika Peterlin, Stephane Isoard, Javier Villar Burke, Jordi Guillen, Sarah Neehus

Project team: Wageningen University and Research: Sander van den Burg, Peter Roebling, Maggie Skirtun, Deborah Bakker, Olga van der Valk, Walter Rossi Cervi; Deloitte: Gurvinder Arora; Ramboll: Thomas Neumann, Jacob Steinmann

3.4 Meeting notes

After a short welcome by the European Commission represented by EASME and DG MARE, the project team presented the methodology, process and context of preparing the deliverables.

3.4.1 Expert panel review

The presentation of the review carried out by the expert panel started with an introduction by the chair *Charles Ehler*. He stated that evaluation is often an afterthought and not considered at the initial stages of most planning processes. However, evaluation should be an essential part of all planning to ensure that achievements towards the objectives can be measured, a process called adaptive management. In this context, he emphasised the importance of this project and its deliverables. He also congratulated the project team on the comprehensive work done up to the draft report stage. In prior coordination with the experts, it was agreed to focus the main review comments on the template, as this has evoked most questions and concerns out of the two deliverables.

On this note, the chair invited the members of the expert panel to share their general remarks on the template in a first round.

Helena Calado commented that the template is difficult to understand and operate from a practitioner's perspective. In her view, the template would benefit from clear definitions of the underlying terms like "monitoring, assessing, reviewing", clearer instructions with real-life examples and an additional graphical abstract summarising the steps and their connection to the planning process.

Riku Varjopuro added that, indeed, the work was very comprehensive, but a problem is that there are so many different ways of performing MSP across Europe. Thus, it is impossible to capture all aspects, even with such comprehensive work and some level of generalisation needs to be adopted.

Matteo Mazzanti criticised the presentation of the material. In his opinion, they too often took the form of lists instead of a narrative to entice authorities to follow good planning procedures. For him, more connection between different indicators would be useful. This would facilitate to integrate different data sources and methods.

Wesley Flannery mentioned the different cultures of planning across Europe. The current form of the template might be too stiff to reflect this. In this respect, he calls for culture to be included in the considerations of benefits and trade-offs. Additionally, he was critical that equity is mentioned but that it is not shown how it could be integrated in the planning process. As a suggestion, he mentioned adding an E (equitable) to the definition of SMART objectives.

Javier Garcia Sanabria presented his view that the template has a sectoral approach, whereas MSP is meant to be cross-sectoral. Moreover, he called for stronger support on the assessment component. This should not be limited to compliance but focus on desired outcomes and why some have been achieved while others have not.

Andrea Barbanti shared the comments from his co-experts. In his opinion, the deliverables will be helpful to the Italian MSP process. To further improve the usability, he suggested adding an example of all steps of the template based on a virtual plan.

David Langlet also mentioned the equity dimension, which is introduced but not further defined, as are other terms in the template and toolbox. Overall, however, he congratulated all on the impressive work done, which only needs some improvement.

To complete the first round, *Tom Woolley* commented that the focus on quantitative indicators pulls decision makers away from cultural implications. More qualitative indicators around hard to monitor cultural criteria would be welcome to counteract this.

Charles Ehler then focused the discussion on the use of terms such as "assessment" and "evaluation". He asked the panel which wording would be more suitable. In his experience, planners do not like the strong implication of "evaluation". Along these lines, he also urged to retitle the "template" as a "guide" to avoid the impression of this being the only right way to follow.

Andrea Barbanti agreed that the terminology creates a grey zone. After reading the report and also underlying Terms of Reference, he preferred to use "assessment" over "evaluation".

Tom Woolley emphasised the importance of consistent terminology and specific indicators that need a stronger focus in the deliverables. In particular, process indicators that define the planning and evaluation approach need more attention in comparison context and outcome indicators that can be captured by factual data.

Riku Varjopuro pointed out that evaluations should take place to hold authorities accountable and create learning. This is his understanding of an evaluation and in this way, it adds value to society. For him an assessment has the connotation of an impact assessment. It can be practiced within an evaluation but is a distinct concept.

Charles Ehler concluded this discussion with the suggestion to include a glossary to define the important terms.

As another discussion point, the chair *Charles Ehler* led the discussion to focus on how the work performed could best be communicated. In his opinion, an Excel sheet is not very user friendly. However, a report would not be a better option. He recommended to focus on more and better graphical representations to offer guidance to practitioners that work under time constraints.

On this point, *Tania Savova* commented that she also prefers simpler communication forms than Excel sheets and suggests combining template and toolbox in one place to simplify the navigation.

Tom Woolley saw the need to take a step back and consider the message sent for the set-up of planning teams. Since maritime spatial planning is complex, it takes specific skills, time capacities and dedication. Guidance documentation therefore needs to ensure to point out that skills need to be in place in MSP teams.

Wesley Flannery added that also stakeholder capacities need to be evaluated to understand who is missing from providing input in planning processes and why this is the case. As an example of good practices, he mentioned the planning performed by the Department for Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in Canada.

Charles Ehler emphasised the existence of relevant best-practice examples beyond Europe, such as New Zealand. He followed up on the necessary skills for planning

teams, as in his experience, the skills for MSP are often inadequate. He asked what the most important skills would be.

Riku Varjopuro answered that any planning team needs to be multidisciplinary. However, he pointed out that evaluation of planning requires a different skillset than the planning itself. In any case he presented leadership of the team as crucial. He agreed that the project deliverables could give more ideas on how to build a team for planning and evaluation.

Helena Calado stressed that this needs to be taken into account from the beginning of the process. In her opinion, a specified planner is required in an MSP team. But as they can be biased, more people need to provide expertise from other perspectives such as biology, economy, society. Additionally, skills in communication, digital tools, and negotiation are necessary for successful planning.

Javier Garcia Sanabria commented that two different sets of skills are needed. First the topical knowledge and second the personal skills in leadership and communication.

Tom Woolley added that also political insights and legislative understanding are important to be able to position the planning in the legal context and political agenda.

Charles Ehler then concluded the first review session. He summarised that as important elements, details on equity and additional examples, also from outside of the EU are missing from the written deliverables.

3.4.2 Parallel breakout sessions

In the following session, more in-depth discussions on the two components, the template and the toolbox followed. For the parallel discussion, the participants were split in two groups, each switching topic after 40 minutes.

Template:

The first group discussed the template with positive comments on steps 1, 2, 3b and 3c. However, most steps also received comments to improve their usability. As a first point such comments concerned the interconnection between parts of the template such as different indicators in different steps, trade-offs and benefits. Second, there was confusion about the flow of the steps and their relation. A flow diagram or other figure as an overview was seen to be necessary. Third, participants called for more examples and potential data sources to support the understanding and reduce the perceived complexity when starting the steps. Fourth, certain indicators were questioned. For example, the number of issued licences does not include the purpose of these licences. Also, governance indicators were mentioned as missing.

Fifth, and important, the template was described as being too focused on compliance rather than instructing to set ambitious but relevant targets and evaluating their achievement.

As a remark on the communication and usability, experts suggested an interactive online tool instead of an Excel sheet.

The second group structured their discussion less around the steps suggested in the template. Instead, general features were commented on and discussed. First, again the equity dimension of objectives was emphasised by the participants. Second, a sectoral approach is not adequate for the overarching nature of maritime spatial planning and the multiple uses competing in the maritime space. Third, the participants commented on the lack of objectives and indicators for biodiversity and procedural aspects such as cross-sectoral communication. In conclusion, the

participants saw the need to include a broader set of considerations when designing the objectives.

Additionally, a stronger connection to the IOC/UNESCO MSP process was suggested that builds on the existing structure. The template could be developed to add more depth to the specific steps mentioned in the IOC/UNESCO framework.

Other remarks left by the members of this group were to name the steps for clarity, emphasise on the guiding nature, and to add more recommendations on how to mitigate and mediate conflicts arising from trade-offs between interests.

Toolbox:

The first group started by commenting that the toolbox is a useful collection of tools for the planning process. Positive remarks were that most tools are described in a flexible way and often include reference to real-life examples.

Asked about weaknesses of the toolbox, participants raised the issue of the heterogeneity of the tools. They were described as ranging from very specific to high-level, where the latter tools often can be achieved with different methods themselves (e.g. land-sea interaction). Moreover, tools for the reconciliation of trade-offs between interests and objectives were mentioned to be missing. Also, participants called for consistent definitions to be added across all tools.

Further comments on the toolbox included that a closer link to the monitoring and evaluation steps in contrast to the planning stages would add further clarity and that more practical examples would be helpful to practitioners when first using such tools.

Similar comments were raised in the second group. The participants also congratulate the team on the toolbox, its organisation and broad coverage. However, not all aspects are equally well covered. As examples, tools on negotiation, trade-off and mediation as well as communication and engagement are only represented in small numbers. Also, the focus on M&E is said to be missing for many of the tools. Participants remarked again that the level of specificity differs between the tools (e.g. capacity building compared to serious games) and that definitions of terminology would add clarity to the document.

As with the template, participants suggested an online version of the toolbox with an option to submit new tools in order to create a growing database. This online presentation should also include more visualisations of the interactions between tools, highlighting where they are complementary.

3.4.3 Closing session

The closing session started with a brief summary of the discussions in the two breakout sessions. For the template, the main topic is to include further details on how equity considerations can be strengthened in the MSP process. For the toolbox, more information on the interaction between the various tools will be useful.

In the following, *Charles Ehler* presented his conclusions from the workshop. He emphasised the importance of monitoring and evaluation in the process to achieve successful planning and policy action. In this context equity is a rather new concept that has come to the equation. It is, however, crucial to ensure political support from a wide basis of stakeholders and the public in general.

He reiterated that the two deliverables – the template and the toolbox – are valuable resources. Improvement in the communication and attractiveness of the documents would further increase their value. Additionally, the number of enumerations should be

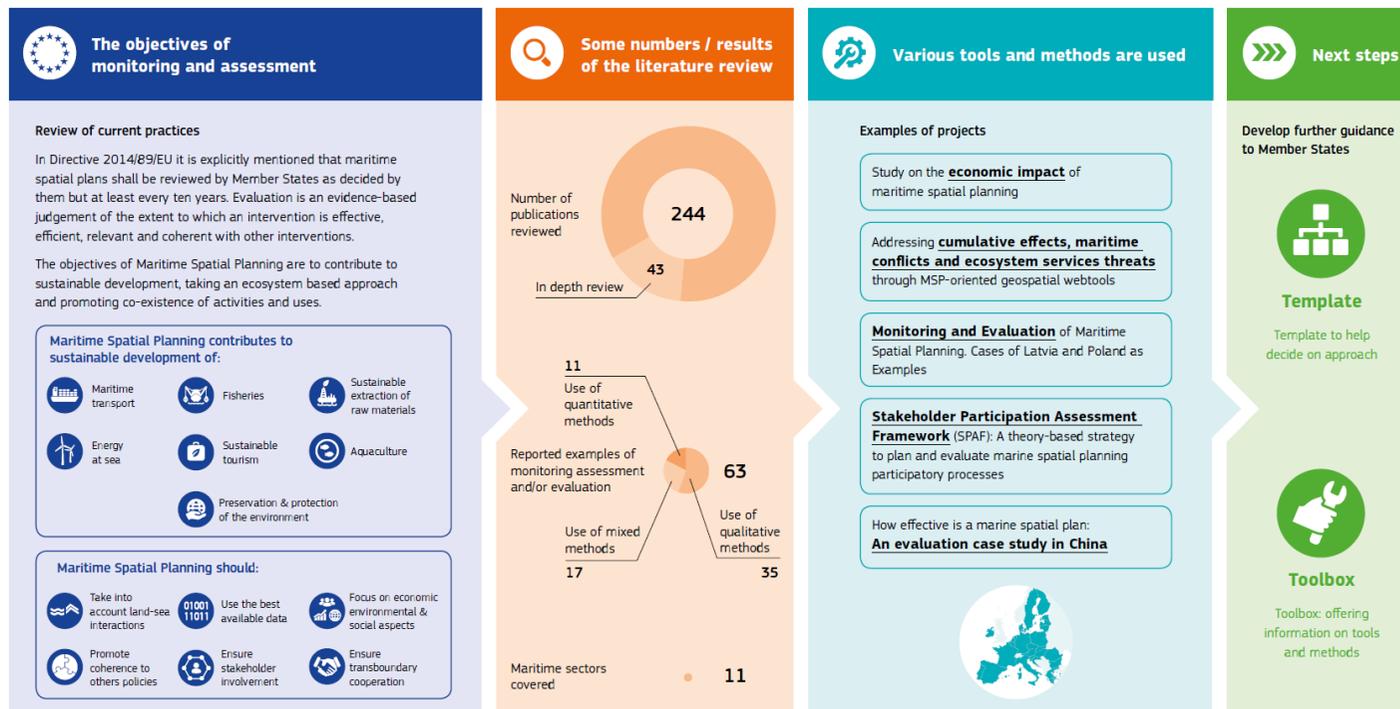
reduced and instead interconnections between steps, tools and other existing structures need to be strengthened according to the chair of the expert panel. With these changes, the project deliverables we described as strong support in guiding Member States' authorities in the process of assessing, monitoring and revising MSPs.

Ultimately, *Anja Detant* closed the workshop on behalf of EASME and DG MARE. She thanked all participants for the valuable comments that will contribute to the re-thinking of the work and further improvement of the documents to be used by Member State planners.

ANNEX 1: SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION



Systems and tools for assessment, monitoring and revision of maritime spatial plans



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ANNEX 2: RANKING OF BEST PRACTICES

Criteria applied for methods selection. compliance: 1 (low), 2 (medium), 3 (high)

No.	Methods	Category	Data Needs ^a	Resources required ^b	Technical complexity ^c
1	M&E framework	Generic M&E methods	**	**	***
2	Model-based decision support	Generic M&E methods	***	***	**
3	Sustainability Indicators	Generic methods tailored for MSP	***	**	**
4	Open Standards	Generic methods tailored for MSP	**	**	**
5	MSP Quality Assurance	Generic methods tailored for MSP	*	**	*
6	Integrated Assessment	Generic methods tailored for MSP	***	***	***
7	Input output analysis	Methods with focus on economic impact	**	**	*
8	Monetary impact of MSP	Methods with focus on economic impact	**	**	**
9	Analysis of legal framework	Methods with focus on social impact	*	*	**
10	Stakeholder Participation Assessment Framework	Methods with focus on social impact	**	**	*
11	Quantification of sea use intensity and sea use conflict value	Methods with focus on social impact	**	**	**
12	Ecosystem services concept to involve indigenous communities	Methods with focus on social impact	***	**	***
13	Actor oriented approach	Methods with focus on social impact	*	**	*
14	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Methods with a focus on environmental impact	**	**	**
15	Quantification of sea use effect on ecosystem services	Methods with a focus on environmental impact	**	***	**
16	Cumulative impact assessment	Methods with a focus on environmental impact	***	***	***
17	Guidance for implementing EBA	Methods with a focus on environmental impact	*	***	***
18	WebGIS/Interactive maps	Methods taking a spatial approach	**	**	*
19	GIS and Boolean algebra	Methods taking a spatial approach	**	***	**
20	INSPIRE Standards	Methods taking a spatial approach	*	***	*

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No.	Tools	Category	Resources required	Technical complexity
21	Interview experts	Tools for data collection	*	*
22	Literature and reports review	Tools for data collection	*	*
23	Serious game	Tools for data collection	**	***
24	Case studies	Tools for data collection	**	**
25	Systematic sampling for in-depth analysis	Tools for data collection	**	**
26	SWOT analysis	Tools for data analysis	*	*
27	GAP analysis	Tools for data analysis	**	*
28	Statistical analysis	Tools for data analysis	**	**
29	Bowtie analysis	Tools for data analysis	***	***

- ^a Describes if the method/tool applied is data intensive (***) or if the data can be easily accessed, gathered or generated at low/affordable cost (*).
- ^b The amount of resources required describes how costly can be the process of data collection or method/tool development in MSP. That includes financial and human resources, and infrastructure. Resource demanding methods are given ***, low resource demand methods *
- ^c Describes the technical complexity of a method/tool based on the amount of resources required and the status of data acquisition of given indicator, where high complexity is represented by ***, low complexity by *.

ANNEX 3: GAP ANALYSIS

	Methods													
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Art 5.1	3.8	4	1.5	1.8	2	2.5	1.5	2	2.5	3.5	3.5	3	2.7	3.5
Art 5.1	2.3	2.3	1.3	1	1.3	3.3	1.5	1.8	3	3	3	1.7	2	4
Art 5.1	3.5	3.5	2	2.3	1.7	2.3	4	2.8	2	2.5	3.5	2.7	3	3.3
Art 5.2	3.5	3.3	2.3	2.3	1.3	1.8	2	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.5
Art 5.2	3.3	3.3	2.3	2.3	1.3	1.8	2	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.8
Art 5.2	3.3	3	2.3	2.3	1.3	2	2	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.8
Art 5.2	3.5	3	2.3	2.3	1.3	2	2	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.8
Art 5.2	3.3	2.8	1.5	1.3	1.7	3.3	2	1.8	3.3	3	2.5	2	2	2.5
Art 5.2	3	2.8	2.3	2	1.3	2	2	1.8	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.3
Art 5.2	3	2.8	2.3	2	1.3	1.8	2	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.5
Art 6.2.a	2	2.5	2.3	1.8	1.3	2.3	1	1.5	3	2.5	2	1.7	2	2.3
Art 6.2.b	3.5	3.8	2.3	2.3	2	2.3	1.5	1.8	2.8	3	3	2.3	2.3	3.3
Art 6.2.c	2	2.8	1.3	1	2.3	1.8	1.5	2.3	2.3	3	2	1.7	2.7	3.5
Art 6.2.d	2.3	2.8	1.3	1	1	1.5	3	4	2	1.5	3	1	3	2.8
Art 6.2.e	3	3.5	1.5	2.5	1	2	1	1.5	2	1.5	2	2	2	2.5
Art 6.2.f	2.3	2.3	1	1.5	2	1.5	2	2.5	2	2	2	2	1.7	2.5
Art 6.2.g	1.8	2.3	0.7	1.5	2.3	1.5	2	2.5	2	2	2.5	1.7	1.7	2.5
COD 1	1.7	1.7	2	0.3	3	1.3	2	2.3	1.3	2	1.5	1.3	1	1.7
COD 2	0.3	0.3	1	0.3	3	0.3	0.5	2.7	1.3	2	1.5	1	0.7	1.7
COD 3	1.5	1.5	0.5	0.5	3.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1.5	1	1	1.5
COD 4	2	2	2	1	2	1.3	2	2	1	1.5	0.5	1.3	1	1.7
COD 5	0.3	0.3	3.3	0.3	0.5	1.3	1	1.7	1	1.5	1.5	1	0.7	1.7

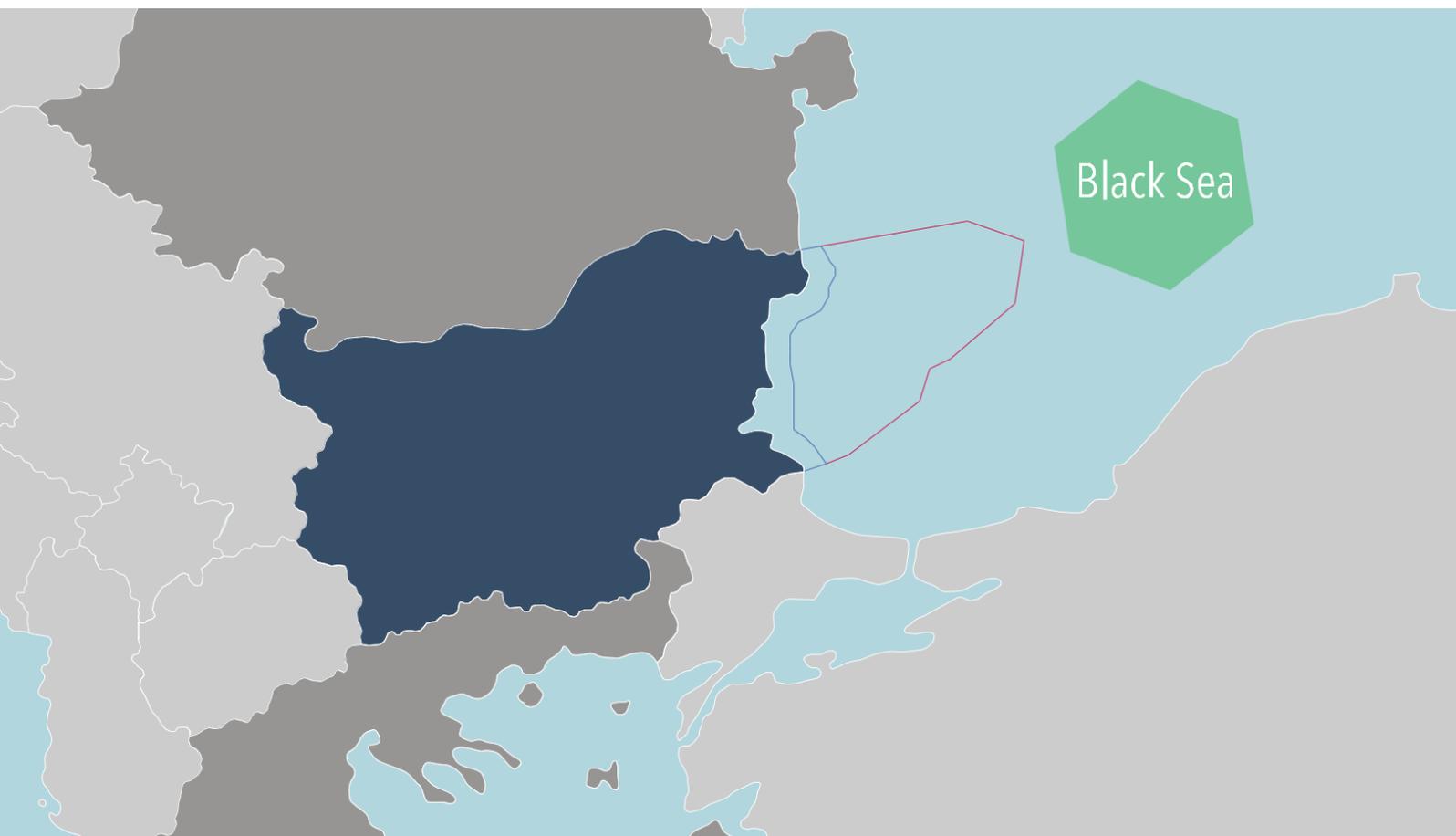
Notes: Method A: Sustainability Indicators for evaluation; Method B: Integrated socio-economic and environmental assessment; Method C: Evaluate monetary impact of MSP; Method D: Economic input-output analysis; Method E: Evaluation of legal framework; Method F: Evaluation of ecosystem services provided; Method G: quantification of sea use intensity and conflict value; Method H: Stakeholder participation assessment framework; Method I: Cumulative impact assessment; Method J: Strategic environmental assessment; Method K: Generic monitoring and evaluation frameworks; Method L: Spatial mapping (GIS based); Method M: Interactive maps; Method N: Guidance for Ecosystem Based Approach.

Art. 5.1: Consider environmental, social and economic aspects; Art. 5.1: Apply an ecosystem-based approach; Art. 5.1: Promote coexistence of relevant activities and uses; Art. 5.2: Contribute to the sustainable development of energy sector at sea; Art. 5.2: Contribute to the sustainable development of maritime transport; Art. 5.2: Contribute to sustainable development of fisheries; Art. 5.2: Contribute to sustainable development of aquaculture; Art. 5.2: Preservation, protection and improvement of the environment, including resilience to climate change impacts; Art. 5.2: Promotion of sustainable tourism; Art. 5.2: Sustainable extraction of raw materials; Art. 6.2.a: Land-sea interactions; Art. 6.2.b: Environmental, economic and social aspects (incl. safety); Art. 6.2.c: Coherence between MSP and other processes, such as integrated coastal management; Art. 6.2.d: Involvement of stakeholders; Art. 6.2.e: Use of the best available data; Art. 6.2.f: Trans-boundary cooperation between MS; Art. 6.2.g: Cooperation with third party countries; COD 1: Contents of the planning document - Internal coherence; COD 2: Contents of the planning document

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- External coherence; COD 3: Contents of the planning document - Conformance with planning systems; COD 4: Contents of the planning document
- Plan format; COD 5: Plan implementation - Adequacy of resources.

ANNEX 4: BULGARIA FICHE



Stakeholders consulted

Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works

Directorate General "Strategic Planning and Programmes for Regional Development"
Maria Georgieva

National Centre for Territory Development

Prof. Vesselina Troeva
Stoycho Motev
Maria Novakova
Plamen Cenov

Center for Coastal and Marine Studies

Margarita Stancheva, PhD
Hristo Stanchev, PhD
Georgi Parlichev, PhD

Note

The information contained in this document is part of the case studies for the project "Systems and tools for assessment, monitoring and revision of maritime spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU". The case studies were conducted for Bulgaria, Netherlands and Greece to test the template and the toolbox developed as part of the assignment. The purpose of the case study was to engage the local experts to evaluate the toolbox and the template. The outcome of the evaluation was then used to update the template and the toolbox.

1 Background Information

Section below summarizes the current status of MSP process for Bulgaria. As per the contacted authorities, the most recent update of detailed background can be obtained from [msp-eu platform](#).

Maritime Spatial Planning at national level

Bulgaria transposed the MSP Directive at the beginning of 2018 by an amendment of the Maritime Spaces, Inland Waterways and Ports of the Republic of Bulgaria Act. Since then, the Competent Authority under MSP Directive – the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) together with the Advisory Council on Maritime Spatial Planning has been working on the development of the Plan. The draft of the plan is ready and published for consultations in Bulgarian on the website of the National Center for Regional Development to the ministry. The draft plan is in the process of EIA. Bulgaria has had a National Maritime Strategy since 2016 related to the MSFD.

National MSP authority

Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works

Planning at regional level

Some general measures, that cover Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, are mentioned in the Development Strategies of the coastal districts (Burgas, Varna and Dobrich), in the National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture in Bulgaria (2014-2020) and in the National Regional Development Strategy (2012-2022). Pilot plans have also been developed as part of cross-border projects (e.g. PlanCoast, MARSPLAN- BS).

Regional MSP authority

There is no appointed regional MSP authority

Existing Maritime Spatial Plans

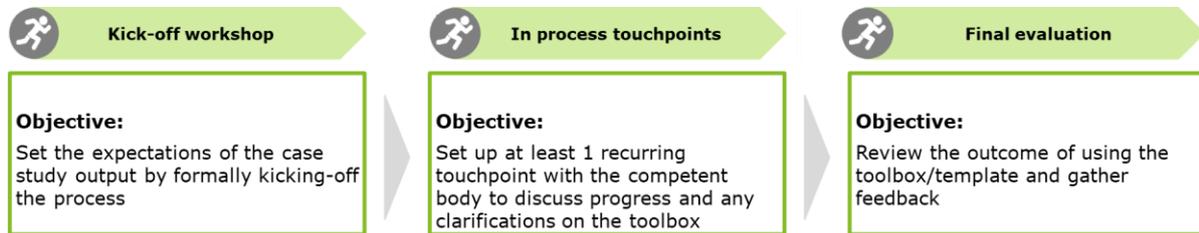
There are currently no legally binding maritime spatial plans in Bulgaria.

Pilot plans or projects

- [MARSPLAN – BS II](#) (2017-2020)
- [MARSPLAN - BS](#) (2015-2018)
- [Improvement of ICZM in Black Sea](#) (2014)
- [COCONET](#) (2012-2016)
- [PERSEUS](#) (2012-2015)
- [The MISIS project](#) (2014)
- [The project CREAM](#) (2011-2014)
- [PEGASO](#) (2010-2014)
- [SRCSSMBSF project](#) (2011-2013) [SYMNET](#) (2011-2013)
- [The project MESMA](#) (2009-2013)
- [The PlanCoast project](#) (2006-2008)

2 Consultation process

The consultation process with the case study country was conducted using a 3 step approach as indicated below.

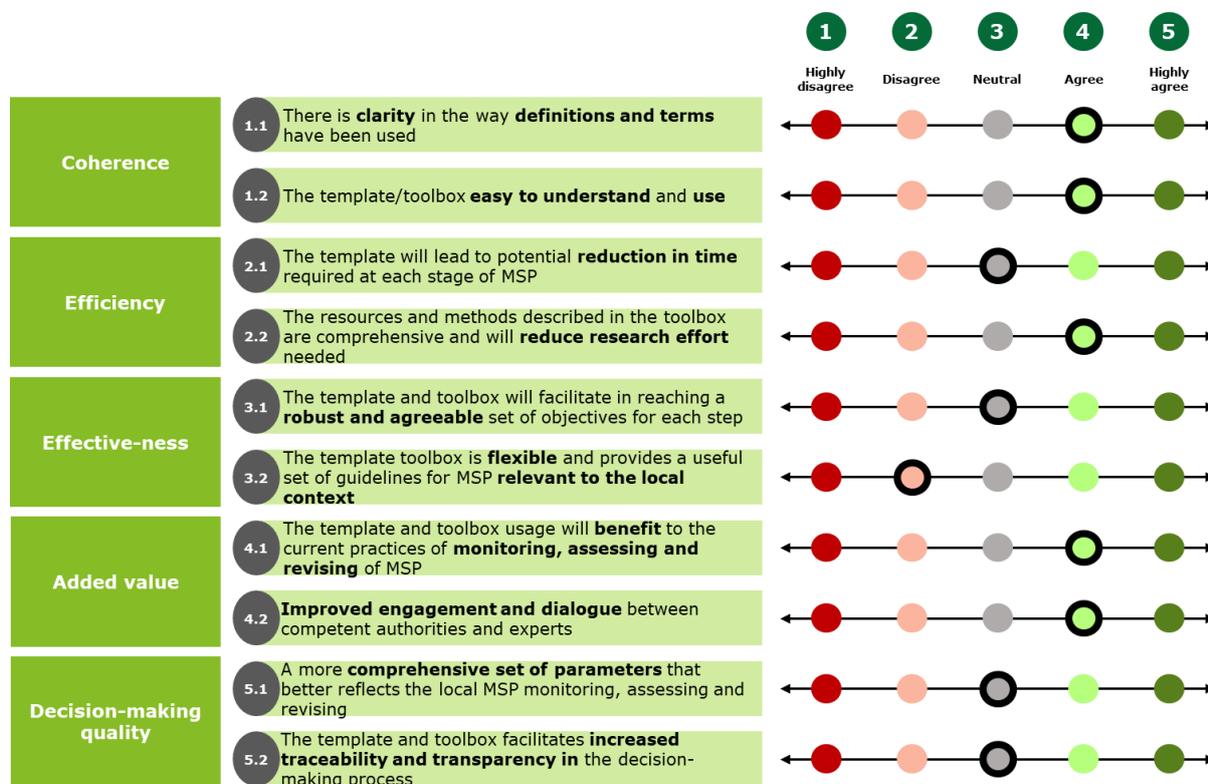


After establishing initial contact with the MSP competent authority and the local experts, the kick-off session for Bulgaria was conducted (in person) on 22 July 2020. After introduction during the kick-off session, detailed walk-throughs of the template and the toolbox were conducted. The queries of the experts on the usage were addressed and an evaluation form was provided to the experts to gather the feedback.

The experts were provided 6 weeks of time to interact with the toolbox and provide their detailed feedback. In process-touchpoints and clarifications were handled through emails, as jointly agreed with the participants. During the in-process touch-points, the authorities clarified that due to COVID-19 and other internal commitments, they will not be able to attend a final sessions. Therefore, the experts and the authorities submitted their feedback on the toolbox and the template via email on 6 October 2020.

3 Evaluation of the toolbox

The evaluation scores below represent the average of the overall feedback received by the MSP competent authority and the regional experts.



The evaluation included a scoring of the toolbox and template on the dimensions of *coherence*, *efficiency*, *effectiveness*, *added value* and *decision making quality*. The results were accompanied by remarks on the assessment that have been described in the next session. The overall assessment of the experts ranged from *Neutral to Agree*, with indications to further refine and improve the template.

The participants were impressed by the level of thought and detail that went into creating the toolbox and the template structure. However, they expressed concerns over the exhaustive nature of the template and the toolbox as it would be difficult to navigate the tools without any external help. A suggestion was provided to provide more detailed step-by-step guide to for self-usage of the toolbox and the template.

4 Key Remarks

Based on the assessment, below are some of the remarks provided by the Bulgarian authorities and experts. The changes incorporated in the toolbox or the template have also been highlighted in the table.

"The effort put into developing template and making its instructions as clear as possible is commendable. That being said, there is a need for additional explanations about the idea behind it and instructions"

Key Improvement Suggestions	Changes incorporated
Uncertainty about the efficiency of the tools because of the amount of data needed to implement them	Added discussion on the data need to the fiches and link to available EU data sources
There is a mixture between a toolbox for MSP making and MSP evaluating. Despite the fact that some of the tools could be applied in both stages of the maritime spatial process, this should be clearly stated at the beginning in order to avoid confusion, or at the beginning of each tool sheet.	True, this because there are also tools for revision of MSP – which is very similar to setting up a first MSP. We have added an overview linking methods to the different phases of MSP
It is clear that the idea is to keep the presentations of the tools very brief, but 3 pages text is too short for such a comprehensive complicated and dynamic matter	By providing links to examples, scientific and professional literature more info has been available
Template is not easy to understand and "for step 3b there are governance and some environmental indicators that have to be additionally elaborated and provided, which will need financial and human resource	Requires extra efforts from our side to make it more practical The examples listed in Steps 3a and 3b are purely examples of possible targets and indicators. The idea is for the indicators to reflect the targets selected. That is the point we want to get across. Ideally, Step 3c provides a summary of existing data sources that might be readily available. Of course we cannot make the call on how much financial or human resources that should be dedicated to the MSP review process, that is a decision that needs to be made at the national MS level
The general approach is a bit too academic and doesn't account for some of the intricacies of the MSP process. It seems not very practical – it would be better placed in an academic setting for teaching students about the tools.	The detailed nature of the toolbox through the academic treatment was an implicit goal of the exercise.
The expert is also generally confused about the purpose of the template – is it for revision of the MSP or for setting it up	See above, confusing because of the term revision. The tools overview clarifies that there are tools for monitoring, assessment and revision

ANNEX 5: GREECE FICHE



Stakeholders consulted

Ministry of Environment and Energy

Head of Directorate of Spatial Planning,
Foteini Stefani

Directorate of Spatial Planning

Head of Special Spatial Frameworks Department
Anna Spyropoulou

Directorate of Spatial Planning

Head of Department of National Spatial Planning Strategy
Evgenia Lagiou

Department of National Spatial Planning Strategy

Ms Elena Lalou

University of Thessaly, Greece

Harry Coccosis
em. Professor of Spatial Planning

Note

The information contained in this document is part of the case studies for the project "Systems and tools for assessment, monitoring and revision of maritime spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU". The case studies were conducted for Bulgaria, Netherlands and Greece to test the template and the toolbox developed as part of the assignment. The purpose of the case study was to engage the local experts to evaluate the toolbox and the template. The outcome of the evaluation was then used to update the template and the toolbox.

1 Background Information

Section below summarizes the current status of MSP process for Greece. As per the contacted authorities, the most recent update of detailed background can be obtained from [msp-eu platform](#).

Maritime Spatial Planning at national level

There is currently no legally binding national MSP plan in Greece. MSP issues are addressed in Special Frameworks for Spatial Planning covering specific sectors. Sectoral plans have been elaborated so far for aquaculture, renewable energy sources, and industry, which include spatial planning guidelines for the land-based and coastal segments of each sector. Moreover, the Special Frameworks for aquaculture and RES include guidelines for marine segments of each sector. Specifically, the Special Framework for Renewable Energy sets the strategic guidelines for offshore wind parks. The special framework for RES and industry are under amendment.

National MSP authority

Directorate of Spatial Planning of the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Planning at regional level

The modification of all regional spatial plans is underway; an MSP approach will be taken in the general outline. Only 1 out of 13 regions in Greece is not coastal or insular. Moreover, the region of Attica (which encompasses both coastal and insular areas) falls under the Metropolitan Planning and the metropolitan plan was issued in 2014 (Law 4277/2014, GG A' 156). The "New Regulatory Plan for Athens" sets up the regulatory provisions for the planning and development for the Region of Attica on one hand, and the Athens metropolitan area on the other.

MSP authority

According to Greek legislation the competent authority for the implementation of MSP is the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The Maritime Spatial Frameworks due to particularities and complexities of Greece (insularity and extended coastal zone) focusing at an operational scale (regional, sub regional or interregional scale) where particularities and complexities of place need to be considered.

Existing Maritime Spatial Plans

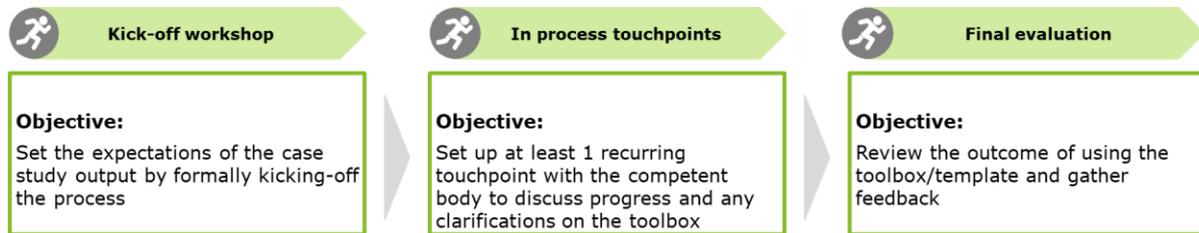
Greece has not yet produced or officially adopted a national MS plan. However, Greece has elaborated sectorial Special Frameworks for Spatial Planning for aquaculture, industry and renewable energy which include provisions for the coastal and marine segments of each sector.

Pilot plans or projects

- MSP- MED project (2020-2022)
- [THAL-CHOR 2](#) project (ΘΑΛ-ΧΩΡ 2) (2018-2021)
- [THAL-CHOR](#) project (2014-2015)
- [SUPREME Project5](#) (2017-2018),
- [ECOAST Project](#) (2016-2018)
- [ADRIPLAN](#) project (2013-2015)

2 Consultation process for toolbox and template

The consultation process with the case study country was conducted using a 3 step approach as indicated below.

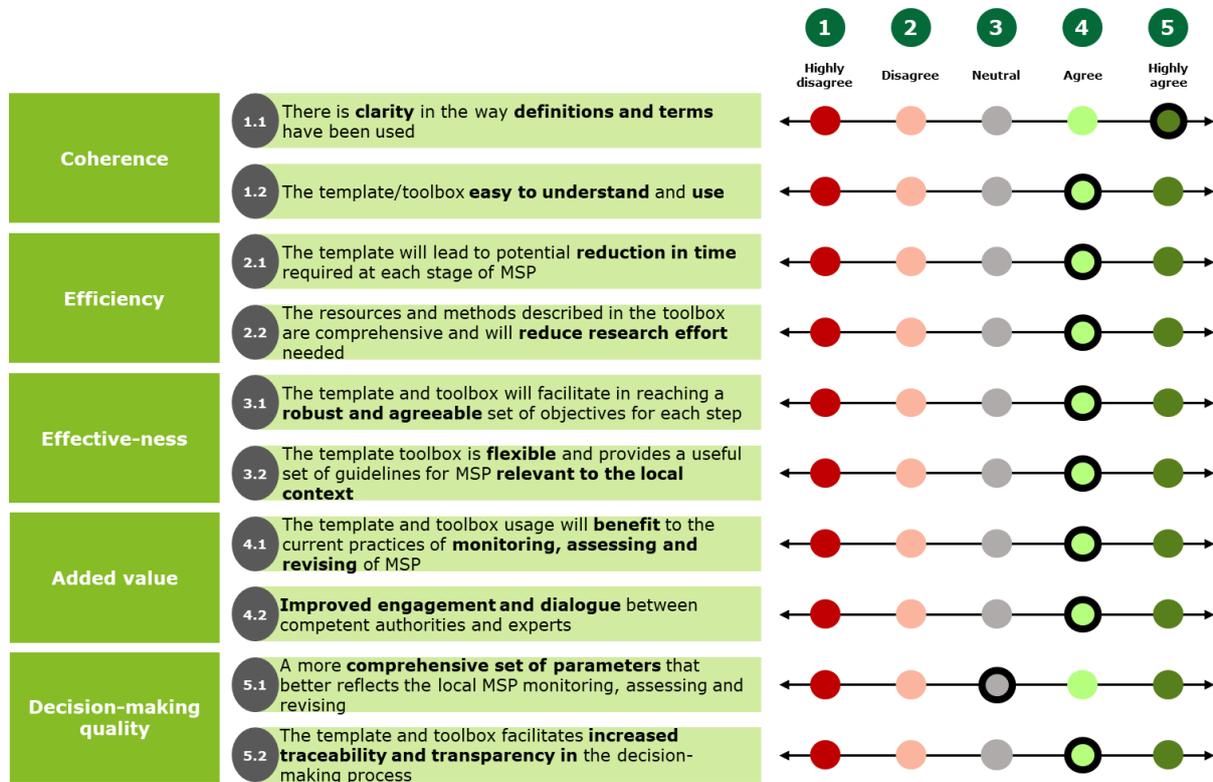


After establishing initial contact with the MSP competent authority and the local experts, the kick-off session for Greece was conducted on 27 July 2020. After introduction during the kick-off session, detailed walk-throughs of the template and the toolbox were conducted. The queries of the experts on the usage were addressed and an evaluation form was provided to the experts to gather the feedback.

The experts were provided 6 weeks of time to interact with the toolbox and provide their detailed feedback. In process-touchpoints and clarifications were handled through emails, as jointly agreed with the participants. After the allotted time, a final evaluation and feedback gathering session was conducted on 5 October 2020. The feedback from the participants was used to improve the template and the toolbox.

3 Evaluation of the toolbox and the template

The evaluation for both the template and the toolbox was jointly conducted by the Greek MSP competent authority and the regional experts.



The evaluation included a scoring of the toolbox and template on the dimensions of *coherence*, *efficiency*, *effectiveness*, *added value* and *decision making quality*. The results were accompanied by remarks on the assessment that have been described in the next session.

The experts provided an overall positive score to the evaluation with suggestions to refine the template to better capture the local context for different member states. In case of Greece, the presence of islands and under water cultural heritage is a challenge that was particularly highlighted.

4 Key Remarks

Based on the assessment, below are some of the remarks provided by the Greek authorities and experts. The changes incorporated in the toolbox or the template have also been highlighted in the table.

"The template and the toolbox are expected to be very useful for the local MSP process"

Key Improvement Suggestions	Changes incorporated
<p>The template and tools are very well grounded in literature and academic research. However, they seem to be missing some practical guidelines and tips that could also be useful in the MSP process</p>	<p>All the steps in the template have been added with more relevant reference indicators</p>
<p>A unique character of Greece is the large number of islands. Does the template account for such complexities?</p>	<p>Emphasized in template</p>
<p>Social impacts of MSP should be more explicitly highlighted in the template (add more social impacts)</p>	<p>Added discussion on the data need to the report and link to available EU data sources where possible</p>

ANNEX 6: NETHERLANDS FICHE



Stakeholders consulted

Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management Directorate General Water and Soil

Lodewijk Abspoel

Senior policy advisor Integrated Maritime Policy, MSP and North Sea

Rijkswaterstaat - Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management

Leo De Vrees

Senior advisor

Wing – partners in ruimte en ontwikkeling

Ronald Lanthers

Managing Partner

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Advisor

Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences

David Goldsborough

Lecturer-Researcher Marine Policy

Aalborg University

Paulina Ramírez-Monsalve

Assistant Professor CBG – Centre for Blue Governance

Note

The information contained in this document is part of the case studies for the project "Systems and tools for assessment, monitoring and revision of maritime spatial plans, including in the context of the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU". The case studies were conducted for Bulgaria, the Netherlands and Greece to test the template and the toolbox developed as part of the assignment. The purpose of the case study was to engage the local experts to evaluate the toolbox and the template. The outcome of the evaluation was then used to update the template and the toolbox.

5 Background Information

The section below summarizes the current status of MSP process for the Netherlands. As per contacted authorities, the most recent update of detailed background information can be obtained from the [msp-eu platform](#).

Maritime Spatial Planning at national level

The Central Government's North Sea Policy sets out a framework for the spatial use of the North Sea in relation to the marine ecosystem (as part of the governance structure for integrated maritime policy). The North Sea Policy document applies to the Dutch EEZ and includes the non-administratively classified Territorial Sea. Special attention is paid to the land-sea interaction¹².

National MSP authority

Interdepartmental Directors' Consultative Body North Sea led by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

Existing Maritime Spatial Plans

Policy Document on the North Sea 2016 – 2021 includes a framework vision map, which currently constitutes the Netherlands' Maritime Spatial Plan. The Netherlands is presently in its third cycle of MSP and is preparing the program for 2022-2027. As the current MSP will expire in 2021, a new MSP is being developed.

The '2030 North Sea Strategy' will give direction to the extensive developments in the North Sea, now and in the decades ahead. Finding a good balance between energy, ecology and food (both fisheries and aquaculture) is the biggest challenge for the new strategy. The 2030 strategy process has resulted in a North Sea Agreement, which balances offshore wind development, environmental protection and foresees in a sustainable future for fisheries. The North Sea Agreement from 2020 has been discussed in parliament in January 2021 and will guide the next Maritime Spatial Planning Program for 2022-2027.

The new program will be part of the new National Water Plan, as were the previous Policy Documents. It includes an ecosystem-based spatial development plan incorporating WFD and MSFD measures.

The plan is reviewed in an SEA and the whole draft program should be ready for national and international consultation by March 2021. The new program should enter into force by March 2022.

Pilot plans or projects

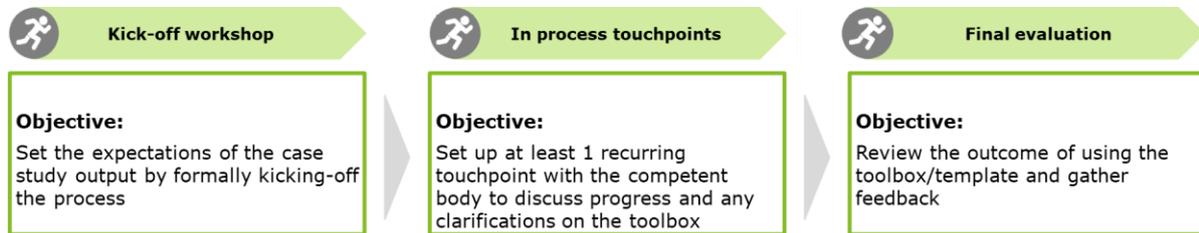
Not legally binding:

- MASPNOSE: DG-MARE funded project (2010-2012) with pilot cross-border MSP case studies:
 1. Thornton Bank (focus on wind energy) (Netherlands and Belgium)
 2. Dogger Bank (focus on fisheries plan) (Netherlands, Germany, UK, DK).

¹² Chapter 6 and appendix II of the [National Water Plan 2016-2021](#)

6 Consultation process

The consultation process with the case study country was conducted using a 3 step approach as indicated below.



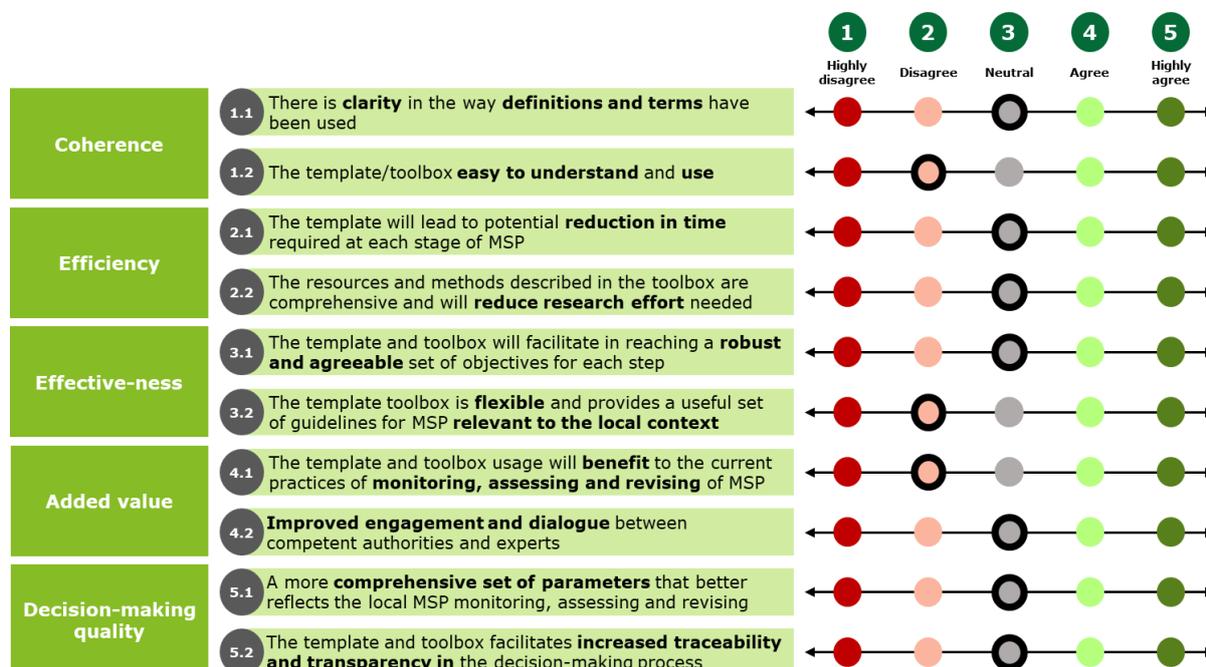
The consultation with the Dutch stakeholders was conducted in parts. The initial contact was established with the governmental stakeholders Mr. Lodewijk Abspoel and Mr. Leo de Vrees. Based on their availability, the kick-off session for the evaluation was conducted on 21 July 2020. After introduction during the kick-off session, detailed walk-throughs of the template and the toolbox were conducted. The queries of the experts on the usage were addressed and an evaluation form was provided to the experts to gather the feedback.

The experts were provided 6 weeks of time to interact with the toolbox and provide their detailed feedback. In process-touchpoints and clarifications were handled through emails, as jointly agreed with the participants. After the allotted time, a final evaluation and feedback gathering session was conducted on 26 August 2020.

After the consultation with the Dutch competent MSP authority, an additional consultation was conducted with private and academic MSP experts. The evaluation below is a joint output of all the feedback received from all experts.

7 Evaluation of the toolbox and the template

The evaluation scores below represent the average of the overall feedback received by the MSP competent authority and the regional experts.



The evaluation included a scoring of the toolbox and template on the dimensions of *coherence*, *efficiency*, *effectiveness*, *added value* and *decision making quality*. The results were accompanied by remarks on the assessment that have been described in the next section. The overall assessment of the experts ranged from *Disagree* to *Neutral* with indications to further refine and improve the template.

Both groups of participants expressed concerns over the exhaustive nature of the template and the toolbox as it would be difficult to navigate the tools without external help. A suggestion was provided to improve the description provided in the template and to make it simpler.

Another key challenge highlighted by all the expert groups was the missing distinction between the applicability of the tools for different stages in the MSP process (e.g. ex ante and ex post evaluation). It was suggested to create a toolbox taxonomy that clarifies the applicability of the tools at different stages in the MSP process and for implementing the plan.

8 Key Remarks

Based on the assessment, below are some of the remarks provided by the Dutch authorities and experts. The changes incorporated in the toolbox or the template have also been highlighted in the table.

Key Improvement Suggestions	Changes incorporated
<p>The toolbox contains tools which may be handy when developing a Marine/Maritime Spatial Plan. For instance, a DSS may be helpful to analyze what if questions. But it is a planning tool within the MSP process and not for assessing or reviewing the plan.</p>	<p>Linked to MSFD but the toolbox does not replace tools for assessing if MSFD objectives are met. This has been made clear.</p>
<p>The Ecosystem Based MSP process is a requirement for MSP. The toolbox gives a very generic description which may not be helpful in practice. And already many books have been written on this topic and guidance developed (by HELCOM/VASAB for instance). But still I miss for instance here the requirements of the MSFD as the guardian of the ecosystem and at which descriptors (and the impacts on these) the plan should be analysed.</p>	<p>Yet the literature shows they are used for monitoring and assessment.</p>
<p>An Input-Output analysis may be helpful during the analysis process. This may also be true for the spatial data infrastructure and parts of the socio-economic analysis. These tools are nice to have for a planner. But all these tools miss the requested assessment, monitoring and review of the MSP PROCESS.</p>	<p>A detailed overview has been created for tools applicable at different stages of MSP</p> <p>The updated template also clarifies which methods are available to collect and interpret data</p>
<p>The excel sheet (template) seems much more appropriate. In this, the user is assisted (especially with the examples) in the thinking to formulating SMART objectives, targets and indicators. This will help to post-evaluate if the MSP process has reached these objectives by analyzing the targets and using the indicators. But I don't see how the tools from the toolbox fit in this scheme.</p>	<p>See above, confusing because revision is explicitly mentioned</p> <p>A detailed overview has been created for tools applicable at different stages of MSP</p>
<p>Is the aim to assess, monitor and review the MSP process AFTERWARDS (and therefore it is helpful to think of the elements mentioned in the excel sheet during the process to facilitate the evaluation). For this, I see only two tools suitable.</p>	<p>MSP cycle has been used as a way to structure methods. The methods are divided per stages of the cycle and making the applicability of the methods more explicit.</p>

Key Improvement Suggestions	Changes incorporated
<p>Or is the aim to provide tools which could be helpful when one is IN the process of developing a spatial plan (which is a little bit late because by March 2021 all countries should already be finished with their plans and according to me not in accordance with the EC objective of this project).</p>	<p>But describing how it is done in practice is not straightforward, if only because differences between countries</p>
<p>If you want to offer a method to evaluate an MSP process, you'd first need to describe such a process from practice (not theory in published papers). Only if such a process aligns with the way MSP is done in EU Member States it makes sense.</p>	<p>The template links to the EU methods and requirements</p> <p>The template does not describe how to make a MSP but how to monitor, assess and revise it. This has been clarified in the template</p>
<p>Some of the studies look at MSP in general globally and try to advise on how MSP could be done. In the EU with have the method and the requirements described in legislation. Governance of an MSP process and the way national and regional competent authorities make decisions cannot be described in general, so a generic template seems odd</p>	<p>More practical guidance added in the tools/method description</p>

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