Technical Expert Group - MSP Data
TEG Follow-up work
23rd of November 2021
WEBEX meeting

All presentations given during the meeting will be available on the European MSP Platform.

1. Introduction:

MSP AM: Welcomed everyone to the meeting and recalled that it is an opportunity to present some of the progress of the individual subgroups which were launched shortly after the last TEG meeting. A presentation from IHO (International Hydrographic Organization) will also be provided.

Andrej Abramic (Co-Chair): Reminded participants that this is the 6th meeting of the TEG, after the 1st year of work the group published a set of recommendations that were presented to the Member States Expert Group (MSEG) on MSP as well as during the EMODnet Conference with a poster and a video. The idea is now to continue the work. The TEG recently submitted two abstracts for the Ocean Data Conference that will be held in February 2022. Further reminded participants that the Assistance Mechanism is available to support Member States (MS) in the harmonisation of their plans and that MS can ask for support.

During the previous TEG meeting in June, the group identified five different topics: MSFD & MSP Data Management; Metadata Standard for Marine Plans; Network Services for MSP; MSP Data Framework; and Socioeconomic Impact of MSP. Subgroups were created to address the challenges related to these topics and a presentation of each subgroup will follow to highlight the progress that has been made to date.

Finally, recalled that the next MSEG meeting will be held on the 29th and 30th of November and that a presentation of the group will be provided during the event.

Juan Ronco Zapatero (DG MARE): Reminded participants of the importance of this expert group for the future implementation of the Directive, but also for the future of the Directive itself. The Commission is now brainstorming about the future of the Directive in a post-COVID and Green Deal context. A Blue Forum will be established next year with a strong MSP dimension, and the TEG will be contacted to participate in the process as many subjects that have not yet been explored are developing within the TEG. The group might provide evidence for data for reflection on the future of MSP.

2. Presentation of the IHO BS-NSMSDIWG – Jens Peter Weiss Hartmann (see presentation)

Jens Peter Weiss Hartmann is the Chair of the IHO of the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC) and the North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC) Working Group on the Baltic Sea - North Sea, Maritime Spatial Data Infrastructure. The aim of this group is to: identify and analyse the current status of individual MS' MSDI implementation; consider MSDI policies within the related international projects; analyse how maritime authorities can contribute their spatial information and the necessary updates, so the information can easily be collated to provide a current overall picture for the region; focus on how Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission and North Sea Hydrographic Commission in the future can benefit from a regional approach and monitoring MSDI and marine-related initiatives, as well as more general geospatial developments relevant to the Baltic Sea.

As part of the work programme of the group, they are undertaking a pilot project relating to S-100 in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea and made an agreement with OGC. The work started at the end of August and they sent out a questionnaire to various stakeholders to investigate possibility of interoperability` and co-operation. The Baltic and North Seas have been proposed as a test bed for the IHO Universal Hydrographic Data Model S-100. The S-100 Standard is a framework document that is intended for the development of digital products and services for hydrographic, maritime and GIS communities. S122 – on Marine Protected Areas, is also being tested for the Baltic and North Sea region.

A second product in the project is looking at the new OGC API Standards with questions related to it: What are the routes if you want to use this new standard in order to make your data available? (If you want to distribute your data using it). How do you implement the process and then how should you deal with the data?

Q&A

Q: Juan Ronco Zapatero: What is the degree of compatibility or how can this be made compatible with what we have now? Are you aware of the eMSP project and are you involved in it?

A: Jens Peter Weiss Hartmann: The basic idea is to ensure that our data is available for everybody, so it should be compatible. Regarding the eMSP project, we would be happy to coordinate with them, so if you invite us to a meeting we would be ready to participate because I think that is the basic idea that we should try to coordinate our efforts and try to avoid duplication of work.

A: Adeline Souf: We are involved in the eMSP project and MSP-OR project. Our timeline of meeting organisation is not yet agreed but we would be happy to collaborate.

Q: Pascal Derycke: Do you foresee harmonisation between OGI API and ESRI ArcGIS Server?

Jens Peter Weiss Hartmann: The design of the API is mostly based on the ESRI products and so we expect it to be fully compatible.

3. TEG sub-groups progress, targeted result and expected output

Andrej Abramic (Co-Chair): Reminded participants that it is not too late to take part in the work of the subgroups by sending an email to the Assistance Mechanism or the co-chairs of the TEG group.

MSFD & MSP Data Management - Stefano Menegon (see presentation)

First of all, there is a need for transboundary coherence and harmonisation between EU MSPs and the identification of common data models to share and represent EU Maritime Spatial Plans (e.g., 2020-2021 TEG activities). Furthermore, the importance of MSFD data for incorporating an ecosystem-based approach into MSP processes should be considered (consider human pressures and environmental states) as well as the importance of MSFD data for supporting evaluation, monitoring and adaptive management.

The objectives of this subgroup are to share experiences on using MSFD outcomes to support MSP processes to identify a coherent approach to facilitate the connection between MSFD outputs and MSP process for EU MS (e.g., mapping registries/vocabularies, data models, spatial representation) including considerations on Land Sea Interactions (LSI). The group is composed of 13 Experts from 5 countries and a Regional Sea Convention.

Regarding the timing and work plan of this subgroup, they will review and provide an assessment on how the MSFD has supported the MSP Processes with identification of experiences in November 2021 and a final review should be ready for January/February 2022. The group will proceed to MSP-MSFD Alignment by May 2022 with mapping of MSP and MSFD human uses classifications and enriching existing code lists with land and coastal elements and pressures from MSFD. The results of the work should be ready for September 2022. To prepare a publication the group wants to try to answer a number of possible questions. For example: Are MSFD and MSP processes linked/connected? How? Which MSP stages have been affected? Which MSFD outcomes have been considered: qualitative (e.g., reports, descriptions), quantitative (e.g., raw datasets), pressure and state descriptors, criteria; Describe the spatial and temporal scales and representation units including monitoring cycles; Have common registries/vocabularies, data models been used? Describe how Land Sea Interactions (LSI) have been included; Describe the reasons that haven't allowed (or have limited) inclusion.

Following this, relevant experience will be identified. Starting from the MSP national processes, the work will try to identify information that can give some initial suggestions on the way that the MSFD has been used in the national marine spatial planning process. Work will also try to include some specific case studies on pilot sites or local and regional initiatives that show connections between MSP and MSFD but also ICZM processes. They will collect examples from three national processes: Italy, Spain and France. They propose to MS and participants involved in national planning processes to contribute to the draft document "Review of experiences on using MSFD datasets and outcomes to support MSP processes"[1]by the 6th of December to include national information on MSP processes

[1] https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b_p_fDKvIB4F6fWhG2Lw0qNS3cBRySOY33pRy5y7ecU/edit#heading=h.frjodebp5so

Q: Would you like to have experiences from different countries? If so, what would be a good number?

A: Stefano Menegon: Having as many as possible regarding the MSP's process would be good. If we are able to include over 10 examples of experiences with case studies, it will be enough.

Metadata Standard for Marine Plans – Adam Leadbetter (see presentation)

The work plan of the group will be as follows, to identify use cases and requirements (October 2021), to review existing metadata standards and profiles (November 2021), to identify target schema (December 2021), to produce metadata guidelines (May 2022) and to design and develop a tool (September 2022). The results are expected to be disseminated at the end of September 2022. A collaborative working area has been developed on Google Drive and the group has identified 16 key use cases as well as looking at location and spatial hierarchy, temporal and spatial extent, relevant organisations and their roles, (who is creating the plan? Who is enforcing the plan? Who's feeding into it?), connections with EMODnet HA and MSFD, policy and legislation links, data links (input and output). Moreover, the group submitted an abstract to the IOC-IODE Ocean Data Conference that will be held in February 2022. Next working steps will be the next meeting of the group on the 10th of December with a review of the existing message profiles against cases that have been identified and to discuss targets schemas (ISO 19115, OceanInfoHub).

Ellen Vos: In the Netherlands, we have this spatial data infrastructure organisation, and they are currently doing some research on the OGC API standards and Jonathan Pritchard of IIC Technologies is doing some metadata work and he will report his work in January 2022 so I could connect you to Jonathan Pritchard if you would like.

Network Services for MSP - Pascal Derycke (see presentation)

The first kick off meeting was held at the end of September and the objectives of this subgroup were discussed with the identification of two questions:

- Are the network services fit for purpose? The group has designed a machine learning use case based on the data available in the Baltic Sea region and as soon as it works, the group will be able to draw some conclusions about this. Moreover, there will probably be something published on submarine cable routes and path planning because the group have been contacted by a team in connection with this. They were participating in an event on Blue Economy in the spring, but they were not able to make it operational because of a lack of technical knowledge, so I've proposed to include them in this MSP exercise.
- What about socioeconomic data? The group plan to have an interview with someone who is responsible for the establishment of a National Network for socioeconomic activities at sea. They would like to present the solution they have implemented along the French coast. They have used the semantic Web to collect information and to build indicators. This might be a solution to address the concerns of not having sufficient socioeconomic data for MSP.

Jose L. Santiago: You are more than welcome to take part in our group that I will present after, this type of work is much appreciated and it's something that we would try to develop in the framework of the subgroup on the socioeconomic impact of MSP.

MSP Data Framework – Andrej Abramic (see presentation)

The MSP Data Framework subgroup is a small group of four experts. The group will try to define what type of input data will be used by planners and what information needs to be considered for existing and future conditions.

The objectives of this subgroup are: the development of the MSP data framework, to define INPUT data clusters for the MSP process. A first step forward on the data harmonisation, is to define what type of input data will be used in the MSP process and is required for the continuous evaluation and monitoring of the plans, what type of information needs to be considered within the MSP on existing and future conditions, to define clusters that cover data needs with requirements, to identify "ready to use" products of the EU data initiatives (Copernicus, EMODNet, EEA SDI…) , that fall within the clusters of the framework – support the harmonisation, iterations of the framework, mapping data collections of MSP processes, and report with descriptions of the MSP data framework

The starting point was actually in 2017 within the PLASMAR project. It was established as a framework for collection within five clusters: MSFD Good Environmental Status, Marine Protected Areas, (Coastal) Land Use, Oceanography and Maritime activities/uses. Considering again the MSP data framework (with TEG), it was understood that socioeconomic information should be included. as governance information.

The first draft of the MSP data framework developed within the subgroup has seven clusters, including one on socioeconomic and governance parameters. It collects information to see how it could be mapped and if there is something that is missing.

The group had the opportunity to consult the data collection for Greece which includes nine topics, and they saw that within their first draft there was information missing such as: Reference Geospatial layers, coastlines and islands, topography, river basins, WFD water bodies, monitoring networks, climatic data, rainfall, onshore wind potential on the land. In addition, there is the "Pressures and Threats / Protected Areas" topic, which includes volcanoes, maritime accident risk areas, marine pollution incidents and coastal floods.

The subgroup also considered the Italian framework, which has about 15 topics and includes coastal risk and coastal erosion. It should be noted that in the east Adriatic there is no erosion at all, but in the west, it is a very significant and relevant topic, this is why it should be included within the framework.

Finally, the subgroup had access to the MSPMED project questionnaire. They saw that the cluster includes activities/uses, physical, chemical, biological information, socio economic data and boundaries, and that these were well represented. One country also mentioned maritime security and safety.

From tested data collections, we understand that the coastal component considered in the first MSP data framework (coastal land use) should be extended, with coastal conservation, coastal climate, coastal environment, coastal planning.

Socioeconomic Impact of MSP - Jose Santiago (see presentation)

It is nice to hear that the socioeconomic aspects start to be relevant for the other subgroups and for other participants of this meeting. The participants of this group are my colleague Marta from CETMAR and also other colleagues from IEO, MaREI and CNR and also starting from today maybe Pascal Derycke because the technical solution that was mentioned is quite useful.

The objectives of this subgroup are to deliver practical approaches to integrate the economic and social dimension into MSP, to advance knowledge and methodological approaches for gathering socioeconomic data linked to MSP and to reinforce the provision of evidence-based decision-making by integrating the socioeconomic dimension. There is a list of specific activities which is currently under discussion because the work plan is still under discussion. We would like to work on peer-review articles, grey literature and current initiatives in Ireland, Italy and Spain (other countries can be included if there is interest). We plan to carry out a survey to identify the main challenges for the implementations of the socioeconomic aspects of the MSP processes. If applicable, we would try to use some pilot case studies to find out how to integrate quantitive and qualitative socioeconomic data into the MSP process or in specific use included in a MSP. The subgroup would like to provide examples of data and data sources with socioeconomic indicators. Finally, we will produce a summary, results and updates in the report, and if possible aim for a publication.

The tentative timing to complete the activities is still under discussion, but we would like to have the review by February next year, the survey of socioeconomic challenges for June 2022 and the pilot case study in July 2022, and the summary and results in September of next year. The output or the deliverable that we foresee is guidelines, or maybe a roadmap to provide some recommendations or lessons on how to integrate and visualise the socioeconomic impact of MSP.

4. Discussion, Questions & Answers on TEG topics

Pascal Derycke: I already made a proposal to work on a new Inspire Directive for the semantic web. I think maybe it's relevant, but maybe the Commission is already working on this. I'm considering that what is interesting for me is processing data and producing knowledge from existing data and you see the issue with the socioeconomic data is that this kind of data is missing.

Andrei: It's not that this kind of data doesn't exist, it's just not available because it is often held 'privately' and you need to contact the relevant people to gain access. I think that the ideas that you have are very valuable and it would be very interesting to see what the final result of this subgroup will be.

5. Conclusion, wrap-up and next steps

Joni Kaitaranta (co-chair): There was one request from the MSFD & MSP Data Management Subgroup to ask Member States or those of you involved in your national processes to participate in a survey by the 6th of December - it will take a maximum 15 minutes.

There is the Ocean Data Conference, in February 2022 in Poland and the TEG submitted two abstracts and presentations for the conference. It is recommended that all members of the TEG follow the event and participate physically or remotely if at all possible.

There is a suggestion on having a joint meeting with International Hydrographic Commissions and the TEG group on MSP.

The next meeting of the TEG should be in spring next year (March/April) in order to monitor progress made by the subgroups.

MSP AM: As a reminder, the Assistance Mechanism is here to support all the Member States, so if any of the Member States would like support in implementing the recommendations on data harmonisation, the group is available. To clarify the support that is available please reach out to the Assistance Mechanism. For example, the AM can find mechanisms to try to mobilise some experts to provide that support, they could also consider the organisation of a dedicated training to make use of the data models that are available. This offer will be reiterated at the MSEG meeting next week on the 29th and 30th of November 2021. The various presentations and meeting summaries will be disseminated when they are available.