Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference
20 January 2015, Porto

Parallel Session D2: Blue Economy

Maritime Spatial Planning in the Atlantic: learning from experiences and future opportunities

This workshop aimed to contribute to the preparation needed for implementation of MSP in the Atlantic. It showcased good practice experiences for facilitating cross-border dialogue and cooperation – between countries and across the land-sea interface.

Organiser: Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)

Chair: Jorge Oliveira e Carmo, Deputy Director, DGPM Directorate General for Maritime Policy, Portuguese Government.

Speakers:

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Key messages

- Policy is mainly top-down initiated, but for plan preparation, implementation & enforcement **we need bottom-up processes** to involve stakeholders early in the process. The regions should be involved in the preparation of MSP at the national level for better integrated decision making. EC and Member States would benefit from increasing the capacity for coastal communities to engage as stakeholders in the MSP process.

- Consider the relevant scale(s) for facilitating stakeholder engagement in maritime spatial planning: from local communities to national stakeholders from sectors, scientists and governments at the regional seas level… is there a need for **the provision of additional capacity at 'nested' scales to engage all sectors**?

- Encouragement and promotion of **integrated approaches** to decision-making in MSP is needed. Continuous support for **sharing of experiences and learning from good practice** examples between Member States – including ICZM experiences **can help the MSP implementation process for land-sea interactions**

2. Summary

Margarida Almodovar

The Basis Law of Planning and Management of National Maritime Spaces and related regulations were approved and are part of national initiatives regarding the national maritime policy. It is aligned with the Integrated Maritime Policy are embodied in the governance pillar of the Portuguese National Ocean Strategy 2013-2020 (NOS) and its action plan.

This Basis Law embodies a new vision and a new practice, which intends to be integrated and aims to simplify the procedures. It is possible for any person interested in developing an activity in maritime space to start a plan, observing the general rule and the natural resources and remaining uses and activities. The approach should be focused on sustainable development based on a model that allows the best economic results without compromising a good environmental status. The development should be based on maritime resources, while providing a complete valorisation of the national maritime space. Simplification of the procedure and administrative components of licensing, adopting the one-stop-shop principle, for all stages of the licensing procedures are important, as well as the creation of a national Sea Data Policy to organize and ensure data and information collection.

Pauline Caumont

Planning of the coastal and maritime areas is essential for the delivery of maritime policies as well as for the development of offshore sea activates.

Better maritime spatial planning (MSP) and better integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) is necessary. At EU level, the choice was made to adopt a Maritime Spatial Planning Directive in July 2014, the main aim of which was to help improve MSP and ICZM by making it compulsory for Member States to develop maritime spatial planning.

If this Directive is to be successfully implemented, the Regions (i.e. Regional Authorities) need to be involved in developing the content of any plans drawn up by the Member States.

Indeed, in many cases, the regional authorities have competency for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) which is directly linked to activities at sea. As there is no maritime activity that is

not directly related to a land-based activity, Regions should also be involved in planning the maritime area.

In addition, Regional authorities have knowledge of all economic sectors due to permanent contact throughout the year, therefore have an essential role in linking terrestrial and maritime planning. For example, the development of marine renewable energies implies R&D, construction and maintenance activities as well as land-based grid connections.

Ensuring the link between MSP and ICZM is therefore a necessity. Regional Authorities can play this pivotal role between both dimensions in order to ensure a better development of the territories.

Natasha Bradshaw

Stakeholder engagement in Maritime Spatial Planning produces a better outcome. Engagement across sectors and countries is necessary to co-ordinate Member States plans. We need to consider how best to achieve this. What is meant by the need for *'intelligent cooperation'*?

Policy is typically top-down initiated, but we need bottom-up processes which involve stakeholders from the outset of the process. Member States may be responsible for *consultation* on their plans, but for effective plan preparation, implementation and enforcement we need the *participation* of coastal and marine stakeholders. Lowri Evans said in the opening session that *'transparency leads to mobilisation and better quality action'*.

Engagement for MSP is most challenging across borders as there are no formal mechanisms for Member States to co-ordinate their MSP. There are few mechanisms in place to secure strong 'togetherness' or involve stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Informal networks do exist. The Celtic Seas Partnership (UK, Ireland & France) is an EC Life+ funded project (2012-16) offering new opportunities for stakeholders to engage more directly in cross-border marine management. It is showing how voluntary participation can be facilitated alongside the statutory consultation requirements for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. It also revealed how stakeholders are more interested than they were able to influence the implementation of new measures. Therefore mechanisms to engage terrestrial & coastal stakeholders in marine planning are important and lacking.

The establishment of Partnerships with a (neutral) Secretariat to bring people together has proved valuable at the local and project-level over recent decades (e.g. engaging coastal communities through Local Coastal Partnerships in England). We therefore need to consider how to more effectively encourage a user-led approach to MSP across borders.

Maria Ferreira

There are potential synergies and benefits of land - sea interactions (Integrated Coastal Management) in MSP that can ensure a more integrated decision making process and coherence between potentially competing sector policies. The two processes are both multi-sector oriented and aim to achieve economic, social and environmental goals. They also rely on very similar key principles such as stakeholder involvement, transparency, the ambition to implement the ecosystem approach and decision-making based on good data and information. The land-sea interactions planning and management will therefore benefit from joint implementation of the ICM and MSP. This is particularly relevant for renewable energy developments and aquaculture which requires closely linked and co-ordinated planning and management activities both at sea and land (e.g. the construction of offshore wind farms has an impact on the coast and requires the connection of the grid from the sea to the land part). But also for other activities land-sea interface planning is relevant, for instance, planning new shipping lanes connecting ports or providing tourism facilities in function of cruise ship routes and

landing stages. Examples have been presented based on the OURCOAST initiative (http://ec.europa.eu/ourcoast/) that identify MSP case studies as well as potentially there are cases of MSP that evolved from preceding efforts of ICZM planning. The land-sea interactions engagement will strongly contribute to synergetic benefits related to the organisation of stakeholder consultation, development of best practices, cross-border cooperation, data management and information (exchange) systems and lead to increased economic efficiency following integrated approaches of connected activities and to reduced costs and administrative burden due to streamlined processes for both business operators and authorities.

3. Questions and answers

Q by Catarina Grilo, Gulbenkian Oceans Initiative:

i) How can local coastal partnerships (UK example provided by Natasha) connect to cross-border engagement opportunities?

- Natasha commented that no strong or formal mechanisms exist to facilitate local engagement beyond Member State boundaries. Some (other) informal examples do exist such as the Irish Sea Maritime Forum, the Wadden Sea Forum and the Cross-Channel Forum (England/France) but perhaps we need stronger mechanisms to secure bottom-up engagement in MSP which needs to be considered at the cross-border scale.

ii) How did the Portuguese government factor in stakeholder engagement to their MSP process?

- Margarida commented that the framework legislation observes the right for participation from the beginning of the procedure. However it does not establish any obligatory stakeholder consultation beyond the public discussion period. This should be combined with an informal procedure along the planning timeline and bring the stakeholders on board to ensure they take part in the discussions. Regarding cross-border participation, we don´t have too much experience. From the TPEA project we have learnt how important is to get stakeholders engagement from the beginning, however is difficult to find a common platform for dialogue namely because of the language. It can be easier if we start by sectorial engagement.

4. Follow up

The organizers and speakers of this workshop had a very positive experience both in the preparation and during the all-day conference. All are willing to follow-up with bilateral discussions in order to continue sharing expertise and practical information, as well as and most importantly to prepare for the next platform conference and discuss concrete project ideas to help implement the key messages, e.g INTERREG programme funding opportunities. Some follow-up discussions planned with other stakeholders include: Mathew King (EC DG Mare); Ben Drakford (Focal Point – UK for EU Atlantic Action Plan), Catarina Grilo (Gulbenkian Oceans Initiative); Jorge Graca (Focal Point – Portugal for EU Atlantic Action Plan); Ramon van Barneveld (EC DG Mare); Haitze Siemers (DG Mare - Maritime policy Baltic and North Sea); Isabelle GARZON C/3 - Structural actions :Ireland, Spain, France, Portugal and United Kingdom; Horizontal management of data collection.

5. Next Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference

Would you be interested in reporting back on the progress made since Porto at the next Atlantic Stakeholder Conference, which is to take place towards the end of 2015 (date and place TBC)?]

YES.