Conference Conclusions: adoption of a joint roadmap

Joint Roadmap
to accelerate Maritime/Marine Spatial Planning processes worldwide (MSP)

Introduction

Oceans have an essential role for life on earth, sustainable development, employment and innovation. However there are increasing pressures facing oceans: climate change, acidification, eutrophication, biodiversity loss, pollution, over-exploitation and illegal activities. Many countries have undertaken the transition to move towards a more integrated and ecosystem-based management of the marine environment, in the pursuit of sustainable development of the ocean and seas.

The Joint Communication on International Ocean Governance by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission identifies priority areas for EU action; in particular action 10 on maritime spatial planning.

The objectives and programme of work of the IOC/UNESCO are aimed at promoting ecosystem based management, including through the development and dissemination of the marine spatial planning approach and building of related technical capacity within Member States.

There are different levels of implementation of marine/maritime spatial planning (MSP) processes in the world, including areas where MSP is in its infancy and where joint learning, improved cooperation or capacity building is needed, or areas where arrangements for MSP may exist but a strategic approach to facilitate coordination would be beneficial.

The Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission, (DG MARE) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) are committed to support the implementation of the universally agreed Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, and in particular the dedicated goal SDG 14, in a comprehensive, consistent and holistic way, both within the EU and beyond at the international level, and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

In the interest of both sides to move forward the global agenda on the oceans - in particular promoting maritime spatial planning at global level - this Joint Roadmap defines priority areas and strategic objectives for mutual cooperation. It will contribute to sketching out a vision and a role for MSP in implementing Agenda 2030.

Within UN agencies there is already important experience regarding marine spatial planning to build further on. In order to accelerate MSP globally, we believe that we should join efforts together towards protecting the oceans and seas, in particular promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources.

Priority areas and key actions

Priority area 1: Transboundary maritime/marine spatial planning

Strategic Objective:

In the European Union, a key requirement of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP Directive) and one that should contribute to the overall coherence of ecosystem-based MSP is the obligation for the EU Member States to cooperate within a sea-basin. It is a very challenging requirement implying coordination within a sea-basin between Member States and cooperation with relevant third countries. In the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the next logical step for the EU is to encourage and strengthen transboundary MSP globally. This is also convergent with the efforts of the international community and various UN agencies to promote the development of strategic action plans at transboundary to scale to achieve long-term sustainable use of ocean resources.

Action I: Developing guidance on transboundary MSP

Ongoing MSP transboundary initiatives, especially cooperation between responsible national agencies, have contributed to increasing knowledge, experience and data sharing among neighbouring countries. They have helped building capacity or even triggered a political drive in certain countries.
Based on these experiences, IOC-UNESCO and DG MARE will aim at developing, together with the involvement of their Member States and other UN agencies, guidance to facilitate the implementation of transboundary MSP.

Action II: Transboundary projects

DG MARE supports the establishment of lasting mechanisms for cross-border cooperation by providing grants covering all EU sea-basins until 2020. However cooperation between EU Member States and third countries should be strengthened. In that context, DG MARE will launch a pilot project in 2018 to test practices of cross-border cooperation with non EU Member States.
At global level, IOC-UNESCO will act as the technical support agency for Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) partnerships aimed at establishing transboundary management frameworks at regional level. In particular, through the GEF/UNDP/IOC LME: Learn Project, and in collaboration with other UN agencies, IOC will implement pilot activities in 2 or 3 LME projects in Africa, South America/Caribbean region, and South East Asia.

Action III: International conference

The final output of the cross-border projects as well as the final guidance document on transboundary MSP will be presented at an international conference on transboundary MSP foreseen end of 2020/early 2021.

Priority area 2: Blue economy

Strategic objective:

Most countries and regions are currently rethinking their ocean ecosystem based economies. The ocean economy is the sum of the economic activities of ocean based industries, and the assets, goods and services of marine ecosystems. Preliminary analysis and evaluations are being developed on the impact of MSP to increase the stability, transparency and predictability of the investment climate.

MSP processes are expanding worldwide. EU Member States are gradually advancing in their implementation of the EU Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP). Investment in ocean-based businesses becomes less risky with proper maritime spatial planning.

Action IV: Studies on MSP and Blue Growth

In 2017, DG MARE will launch two studies on MSP and Blue Growth. The first study will focus on how MSP processes and plans may underpin Blue Growth. The second study will focus on the economic benefits of having MSP processes.
IOC-UNESCO will build on the results of these studies to review their common set of principles to design and implement MSP processes for Blue Growth, with emphasis on end-users knowledge needs in terms of science, data and information requirements.

Action V: MSP and Blue Growth Conferences

In October 2017, DG MARE will organise its first conference on MSP for Blue Growth to share best practices on how MSP can lead to certainty and sustainability of our ocean economies and can facilitate cross-sector integration. Thematic sessions will focus on vision development processes, current needs, conditions and conflict resolution between sectors, opportunities for environmental/social/economic enhancements, synergies via colocation of uses and the inclusion of future developments in MSP processes. A manual could be developed for possible indicators to assist maritime spatial planners in meeting their sustainable blue economy planning objectives and support MSP review processes.
IOC-UNESCO will contribute to the organization of this conference, by facilitating the participation of non-EU Member states and will promote the use of science-based approach and decision support tools to facilitate MSP implementation and Blue Growth approach.

Priority area 3: Ecosystem-based maritime/marine spatial planning

Strategic objective:

Coherent planning at the (sub) regional sea scale should require sharing of MSP-relevant information. National authorities face the double challenge of measuring cumulative effects on ecosystems and assessing the needs of interconnected ecosystems (including relevant EU and international legislation) across borders. In Europe, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive requires the Good Environmental Status of marine environments in Europe's regional seas. The MSP Directive requires the use of an ecosystem-based approach, which should ensure that the collective pressure of maritime activities is kept within levels

compatible with the achievement of good environmental status. Yet, maritime activities, including sources of marine degradation, are diversifying and intensifying worldwide. By resolving conflicts and regulating maritime activities, MSP can make a significant contribution to achieving Good Environmental Status.

Action VI: Strengthen knowledge on environmental pressures across borders

DG MARE has been launching projects and collecting a series of good practices on ecosystem based MSP. It will pursue its work with its Member States and the Regional seas conventions to translate this into practical decision making. In particular DG MARE will launch a study in 2018 to strengthen knowledge on cumulative impacts, on levels compatible with the achievement of good environmental status, on the valuation of ecosystem services.
IOC-UNESCO will contribute through the provision of indicator-based assessment tools focusing on ecosystems health, socio-economic impacts, and governance processes, building on the results of the Transboundary Water Assessment Programme and work on SDG 14 indicator development.

Priority area 4: Capacity building

Strategic objective:

Whilst the concept of MSP is relatively recent, several countries in the EU and beyond have embarked in the development of marine/maritime spatial plans within their national waters, and are starting to work across borders as well. However the degree of implementation of MSP is not uniform, nor is the level of institutional, technical and human capacities at national level. In order to accelerate MSP implementation around the world, a demand-driven training programme on MSP is required taking into account regional and socio-cultural contexts as well as existing training activities from other UN agencies.

Action VII: Training for planners around the world

With a view to building the technical and institutional capacities of nations around the world, the IOC-UNESCO has documented international MSP practices around the world. DG MARE has achieved similar work in the EU with the creation of the EU MSP Platform. Lessons learnt and technical guidance on various aspects of MSP design and implementation have been synthesized.
IOC-UNESCO and DG MARE will join efforts and complement each other in providing training worldwide, in cooperation with other UN agencies. To identify specific training needs, a global survey will be implemented as a first step of this activity with a view to tailor MSP training to regional needs. IOC-UNESCO will make available its training platform, the Ocean Teacher Global Training Academy, to deliver training in all regions.

Action VIII: Pilot project to build capacity for MSP

DG MARE will launch a pilot project in 2018 in the Pacific region to kick off MSP between non EU MS and start building capacity for MSP in that region.
IOC-UNESCO will propose that a 'Twinning programme' is put in place with a view to facilitating the exchange of MSP expertise between European institutions and those from

other parts of the world. This could be modelled on the IW: Learn twinning approach that IOC-UNESCO is currently implementing.

Priority area 5:	**Building Mutual understanding and communicating MSP**

Strategic objective:

With the objective of achieving overall coherence of ecosystem-based MSP in our seas and oceans, it is crucial to obtain a better mutual understanding of maritime spatial planning processes undertaken in the world and to learn from each other's experience through exchange of views and best practices.

Action IX: Creation of an international forum for MSP

DG MARE and IOC-UNESCO will launch the creation of an international forum for all stakeholders involved in MSP. The platform's overarching objective would be to empower a new generation of planners, sectors, businesses and civil society to identify solutions and commit to cross-sectoral actions to conserve our ocean and to use its resources in a sustainable way. The first workshop will be held the course of 2018.

Action X: Developing communication strategies for MSP

Building on existing initiatives to communicate better on MSP and on the MSP Communication workshop held in March 2017 in Paris, IOC-UNESCO and DG MARE will support and develop further communication tools and materials on MSP.

Way forward: MSP for implementing Agenda 2030

There is a growing recognition that MSP is an important means to achieve global ocean governance goals and Agenda 2030. Healthy seas which are sustainably managed will contribute to economic growth.

This Joint Roadmap brings a clear forward looking and global perspective towards 2030. All the above-mentioned actions integrate the perspective that MSP should be a means for implementing Agenda 2030 and should demonstrate how MSP deliver on economic, social and environmental values in that context.

In order to highlight the contribution of MSP to the implementation of the Agenda 2030, IOC-UNESCO and DG MARE will submit this roadmap as part of a joint voluntary commitment to the UN Conference on the SDG 14, 5-9 June 2017. It is proposed to hold a special joint side event on MSP at the Conference.