

SUSTAINING INTERNATIONAL WATERS COOPERATION

MSPglobal- Supporting Internationally Accepted Marine Spatial Planning

In the context of the LME20 and the IWC9, IOC-UNESCO organized the sessions on Marine Spatial Planning in the context of the large marine ecosystems with the support of the Government offices of Sweden. These events highlighted the needs of MSP in the majority of active large marine ecosystem projects to accomplish the objectives of national and transboundary strategies towards a sustainable blue economy.

A networking event dedicated to International Marine Spatial Planning was organized where all participants interacted and shared experiences in preparation of the technical workshops with specific questions related to marine spatial planning where more than 80 participants promoted sustainable practices to develop further the large marine ecosystem community and action programme.



The technical workshops on transboundary Marine Spatial Planning used the format of round table discussions, invited experts shared their experience on international cross-border and transboundary marine spatial planning in the regional context and in large marine ecosystems (LME), the process and the lessons they can extract from these experiences, whether the experience could be replicable (or not) in other contexts.

The tables discussed on topics related to MSP governance levels, synergies and conflicts amongst sectors, data and information, capacity development, communication and consultation and challenges. Each table of discussion reported back to plenary identifying key messages and recommendations for the MSPglobal Joint Roadmap, a list of good practice and fit-for-purpose solutions that were reported during the MSPglobal session at the IWC9.



Within the context of the IWC9 Conference, IOC-UNESCO and the European Commission jointly organized the MSPglobal session with the participation of experts from the Government of Sweden (Ms. Eva Rosenhall), Morocco, (Mr. Aomar Bourhim), Kenya (Dr. Jennifer O’Leary – TNC), from the Nairobi Convention (Mr. Dixon Wauringe and Ms. Lucy Scott) and from the Caribbean Region (Mr. Patrick Debels).

The objective of this session was to highlight how large marine ecosystems are developing in different regions marine spatial planning initiatives in the transboundary context, the challenges and obstacles they are facing in installing MSP as a viable initiative, and the ways in which meaningful dialogue can be initiated, maintained and encouraged.



The invited experts answered the following questions:

Question 1: How do you practically initiate and develop dialogue between different governmental levels?

Ms Rosenhall: In Sweden, there is an issue regarding the overlapping in between the national and local planning geographical boundaries, which calls for a good coordination. The local authority has the mandate up to 12 nm. In relation to the other countries in the Baltic Sea, HELCOM's guideline support the coordination between them. Ms Rosenhall highlighted the relevance of developing draft plans to improve visualization and dialogue.

Mr Bourhim: There are different governmental agencies in Morocco dealing with distinct topics related to MSP. The Department of Marine Fisheries is in charge of coordinating actions with stakeholders, supporting bottom-up initiatives. At the regional level, Mr Bourhim explained that there is collaboration between the countries through different initiatives developed in parallel in the region. He mentioned that they are collaborating with the MSPglobal project.

Dr. O'Leary: Having Kenya as case study, the country has a participative approach for beach management. However, there is a tension between different planning initiatives because they have different methods and sometimes the projects overlap. The country has not a MSP plan but the need exists and Ms O'Leary suggested that the management of the coastal areas keeps with local authorities, which are already developing a good engagement process.

Ms Scott: At first, it is important to have MSP legislation in place. Regarding to challenges, the mismatching in scales can be an issue. On the other hand, focusing in suggestions, it is important to pay attention in the selection of an appropriated management unit, as well as to keep the neutral role of those in charge of engaging different stakeholders.

Mr Waruinge: It was highlighted the importance of having a mandate when initiating a dialogue about transboundary MSP, which needs to concentrate in transboundary issues. In the context of the Nairobi Convention, the discussion is centred in "how MSP can be used to enhance Blue Economy". According to Mr Waruinge, one of the main challenges for MSP

implementation in his region are the differences of development between the countries, while it is important to keep all of them interested on the topic.

Mr Debels: In the case of the CLME+ project, it is more into TDA-SAP than MSP, although there are similarities between these processes. One of the issues in the region is related to “How to bring homogeneity in an heterogeneous region?”. There are different regional conventions already in place, as well as different geopolitical initiatives. Mr Debels also defended that those with current mandates in the region are the ones who could start the dialogue about transboundary MSP, which needs to be strengthened.

Question 2: How do you coordinate sectors?

Mr Bourhim: It is important to have focal points responsible to communicate to their parties.

Question 3: Synergies and conflicts between sectors

Ms Scott: Conflicts need to be creatively transformed in synergies. Sometimes, conflicts are only a matter of management. As example, Ms Scott mentioned a case where fishing landing activities became also a tourism activity, avoiding conflict and creating synergy between these two sectors.

Question 4: Challenges for stakeholder engagement

Ms Rosenhall: Sweden launched the consultation of their MSP plan this year and although there were many meetings with stakeholders, they kept claiming about sectoral issues during the consultation. Ms Rosenhall highlighted the relevance of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) including both environmental and socio-economic issues as a base document to support the discussions.

Mr Debels: According to his perspective, ICZM and MSP can be seen as a tool to achieve the SAP vision. Mr Debels shares the opinion that there is a need to focus on opportunities instead of conflicts and complemented that MSP might be a way of providing opportunities. A regional challenge to be overcome is that many organizations acting in the region have different approaches, what causes confusion among the stakeholders.

Question 5: Data needs

Dr O'Leary: The challenges regarding data in a transboundary context are related to language issues and lack of harmonization. A potential solution is the development of a shared platform, which is good for both visualization and to have available the results of the different projects in a same source.

Mr Bourhim: The Union for Mediterranean has an initiative called “Virtual Knowledge Centre (VKC), which has focal points to compile the data.

Question 6: How do we develop capacity building?

Ms Rosenhall: In the context of the European Union, it was highlighted the importance of the EU projects, regional working groups, regional guidelines and also the opportunity of participation in the consultation process of other countries.

Mr Bourhim: The regional initiatives in the Mediterranean provide opportunities for capacity building. However, Mr Bourhim has a personal concern about the lack of clarity in relation to which tools are needed.

Mr Iglesias-Campos: It was explained that MSPglobal aims to provide capacity building opportunities at national and regional level.

Ms O'Leary: People need to understand what is MSP and Ms O'Leary emphasized the role IOC is taking to improve it. There is a need for courses related to technical challenges to support the process and Natural Conservancy, for example, is helping Seychelles on it. Concerns about financing and capacity building to implement the plan are common. It is recommended to engage institutions instead of individuals to bring sustainability to the initiatives.

Ms Scott: Again it was emphasized the role of IOC in terms of capacity building through courses, as well as the GEF LME:LEARN program through the development of the MSP toolkit.

Mr Waruinge: The recent transboundary and national projects to demonstrate the potential of MSP are relevant for capacity building.

Mr Debels: First it was questioned the meaning of capacity building. Training people or creating enabling conditions? In terms of enabling conditions, MSP could facilitate the joint adoption of key regional principles and aspirations.

Questions from the audience

For all

Q: Are telecommunication cables included in MSP plans?

A: Ms Rosenhall explained that the inclusion or not of a sector in the MSP plan depends on the legal framework supporting the process. Mr Bourhim complemented that although telecommunication cables are under the UNCLOS, it is important to empower communities to defend their interests when the local of the installation is conflictive with local interests.