



D35 Slovenia: Workshop Report
Identifying data/information gaps
For the Regional Spatial Plan
The Coast between Koper and Izola

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1 What is the main objective of preparing WP3? Data use and sharing at the level of the whole MSP MED project

The objective of WP3 is making use of the best available data and organize the sharing of information necessary for the preparation of maritime spatial plans and related spatial plans. WP3 will contribute to enhancing existing IT platforms/systems aimed to share data and information and MSP analysis tools.

Sharing information in an MSP requires, on the one hand, a strong commitment in adhering to and applying international and European rules and standard, to ensure that Member States can work together to establish a common approach and information base. On the other hand, it requires a customized approach, tailored to specific national needs, considering variable advancement levels in the implementation of MSP and different strategic goals.

Therefore, the WP3 is structured in two main blocks: one (3.1), supporting a common framework for cross-border data sharing, and the second (3.2-3.6), tackling national-specific needs.

Task 3.1 will work to build a common knowledge base and to support sharing and compatibility of MSP-relevant data at the Mediterranean scale by sharing and consolidating data and information needs, implementing a common knowledge catalogue of metadata on MSP-relevant information, and analysing the current data gaps and weaknesses.

Tasks 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 will focus on specific activities to support the implementation of MSP at national level in Italy, Malta, France, Greece and Slovenia.

This dual approach will support cooperation between Member States to achieve data gathering and homogenization at national and basin scales in order to have a common dataset and information framework for the coherent implementation of MSP in the Mediterranean.

In addition to activities aimed at data and information sharing, a strong emphasis in all the tasks will be put also on the improvement and testing of already existing tools (data catalogues, web portals, algorithms for data ingestion and processing) directly supporting Member States in the development of concrete products for both internal and dissemination purposes.

2 Why is this topic so important?

The municipalities of Koper and Izola are in the midst of preparing a Regional Spatial Plan for the coastal area between Koper and Izola. This document will be an opportunity for pilot-level testing of the implementation of the guidelines provided by the strategic document Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia, using available data and data management tools at the local/regional level and the professional basis needed to draft the Regional Spatial Plan.



The workshop will identify gaps in data and expertise in a participatory way. Contents that could be prepared within the SME MED project for the needs of the Regional Spatial Plan for the Koper - Izola coast area will also be identified.

The added value of this approach is as follows:

- using available data and organizing the sharing of information necessary for the preparation of lower level spatial plans harmonized with the Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia (Regional Spatial Plan),
- creating the data necessary for the preparation of a concrete plan of the implementation level (Regional Spatial Plan),

Slovenia started preparing its MSP in May 2019. By the end of December 2020, the draft document and the Environmental Report were ready for a public hearing, which was concluded at the end of February 2021. Opinions on the comments received at the public hearing were prepared in April 2021.

The Regional Spatial Plan for the Koper-Izola coastal strip is being prepared jointly by the Municipality of Koper and the Municipality of Izola. Preparations for the plan began in 2018. The preparation of the document is being coordinated by the Public Institute for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Development Projects of the Municipality of Izola.

The reasons for preparing the document are as follows: Thanks to its potential for the economy, blue growth, its attractiveness as an environment for living and recreation and its natural and environmental characteristics, the Slovenian coast is an area of great importance. It is also the most well-developed region in Slovenia in terms of tourism, as demonstrated by key indicators. An outstanding spatial context is one of the key conditions for the further development of tourism, which is an important pillar of the economy in the region. That is why one of the priorities of the Regional Development Programme for South Primorska (2014-2020) is the arrangement of the promenade along the entire length of the Slovenian coast, which will include projects related to tourism development, recreation, nature protection, sustainable mobility, urban renewal, harmonized within the principles of sustainable development and in the context of coordinated integrated coastal zone management. The coastal promenade in its new form will become a key element of the region's identity, which will have positive effects on the development of tourism, the quality of living, and establish a sustainable pattern of organizing living places in the (sub)region.

The conditions for the implementation of the arrangement of the coastal strip between Koper and Izola have finally matured with the construction of the Markovec tunnel and the closure of the coastal road for motorized traffic. The traffic-free coastal strip will undergo extensive changes and will be repurposed to incorporate various complementary activities. The new and improved coast can become



a key spatial feature and as such an important starting point for the reurbanization of the towns of Koper and Izola.

The preparation of the document involves the following key steps:

- Executing the tasks necessary for the preparation of the draft document (only the most important ones are listed):
 - o Preparing the programme concept
 - o Preparing a geodetic survey of the area (sea and land with their natural and cultural heritage, underwater descents;
 - o Acquiring the preliminary guidelines from the spatial planning agencies (ZRSVN, ZRSVKD, ARSO),
 - o Preparing the amended programme concept and presenting it to the municipal councils or spatial committees,
 - o urban-architectural and landscape design of buildings and arrangements,
 - o Conceptual solutions for transport infrastructure and mobility,
 - o Conceptual solutions for bathing infrastructure (floating bathing platforms, jetties...),
 - o Expert groundwork for nature protection,
 - o Expert groundwork for cultural heritage protection
- Drafting of the Regional Spatial Plan
- Expert groundwork for the Environmental Report
- Flood Safety Study,
- Geological-Geomechanical Report,
- First opinion of spatial planning institutions and decision on comprehensive environmental assessment
- Environmental Report
- Supplemented draft Regional Spatial Plan,
- Public presentation and public display of the supplemented draft Regional Spatial Plan and Environmental Report,
- Drafting a proposed Regional Spatial Plan,
- Drafting a harmonised proposed Regional Spatial Plan,
- Adoption at the municipal council and publication of the Regional Spatial Plan.
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3 Workshop with the participation of stakeholders - Objectives

Based on the review of the available data at the national level and of the data management tools, identify any gaps in data availability for the purposes of preparing the Regional Spatial Plan for the coastal area between Koper and Izola.



Programme	
10:00 AM – 10:10 AM	RRC Koper: Introduction, agenda
10:10 AM – 10:20 AM	Presentation of the purpose and objectives of the implementation of the SME-MED project and WP3
10:20 AM – 10:40 AM	Presentation of the framework SME data support issues: available input, output data, content of the preparation of the Regional Spatial Plan
10:40 AM - 11:40 AM	Discussion by the participants: Data gaps, data infrastructure
11:40 AM – 12:00 PM	Conclusions

The workshop was conducted via zoom on April 2 and continued on April 15, 2021.

4 Invited participants

RRC Koper	Slavko Mezek, Karin Stibilj, Vanja Rener
Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning	Barbara Breznik
JPZ Izola	Iztok Škerlič
ZVKDS	Jaka Bizjak, Etbin Tavčar,
ZRSVN	Tina Centrih Genov
City Municipality of Koper	Tjaša Babič, Boštjan Krapež
Municipality of Ankaran	Andrej Stjepič Sambole
Municipality of Izola	Marko Starman, Aleksej Skok
National Institute of Biology, Marine Biology Station Piran	Vesna Flander Puterle
Slovenian Water Agency	Rok Velišček
Non-governmental organisations	Boštjan Bugarič, Borut Jerman
Mioko studio	Ljudmila Koprivec



5 Discussion by the participants:

The discussion by the participants was focused on identifying the available expert groundwork and the missing data or expert groundwork necessary for the preparation of the Regional Spatial Plan.

Mrs Babič, City Municipality of Koper, believes that the planned renovation of the area will first require geomechanical and geological studies and habitat mapping. The planned interventions will require preparing the appropriate expert groundwork. Mrs Babič expects that some of the necessary documents could be obtained in the course of the project.

Barbara Breznik (Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning - MESP) starts by saying that she is in charge of the implementation of the Marine Directive and the preparation of marine environment management plans at the MESP. The goal is to manage the sea in a way that ensures sustainable management, by only allowing interventions that can not worsen the situation.

Mrs Breznik proposes that the Slovenian Water Agency be included in the project partnership, as they already have some documentation or expert groundwork ready. She further explains that the contents of the Marine and Water Directives overlap in the case of preparing the Regional Spatial Plan in question. In addition to Slovenian inland waters, the Water Directive also deals with coastal sea waters and covers elements that the Marine Directive merely summarizes. She also points out that the MESP needs to prepare a new plan for the management of the marine environment by the end of the year. The first part of the plan covers the preparation of sectoral regulations. The second part focuses on the preparation of measures for the management of the marine environment and will focus more on spatial management. Spatial planning activities should be defined, specifying how and where they would take place.

Marko Starman (Municipality of Izola): before starting the preparation of the expert groundwork or obtaining new data, we should define the programme content for the area, as the expert groundwork also depends on the intensity of interventions in this area. In the case of minor interventions, reviewing the current state should be significantly less demanding. The municipality of Izola has conducted an extensive study for the floodplain, including the sea, which will make for an important contribution to the Regional Spatial Plan. He also points out that the municipality of Izola has a geodetic survey for the portion located in the municipality of Izola. He also mentions an issue related to the Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia, namely that the draft document does not provide for transport, as it covers only footpaths and bicycle routes. This was also pointed out during the public discussion of the draft Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia.

Further data are needed on the sea (habitats, organisms), which is a demanding task. When asked whether these data are contained in the existing study by the National Institute of Biology (NIB), Mr Starman explains that the study is incomplete, as it covers only a certain part of the area.



Borut Jerman (PINA): explains that PINA coordinated the Let's Draw the Coast campaign, gathering the thoughts of over 1000 local residents, citizens and visitors of the area. If the analysis is not available to everyone, Mr Jerman will provide everyone with a copy. He points out that from their point of view, it is important to incorporate the wishes and guidelines proposed by the users of the area. He confirms that the programme guidelines presented today are in line with the wishes and guidelines given by the users of this area during the Let's Draw the Coast campaign.

Boštjan Krapež (City Municipality of Koper): introduces himself as the person in charge of technical support at the Office for Spatial Development and Real Estate (Tjaša Babič). He references the data that were discussed and explains that the area between Izola and Koper is one of the best or most frequently recorded areas. The data in the field are recorded very accurately.

Slavko Mezek suggests that the discussion continue and focus on the goal of the meeting, which is to record a set of potential topics that could be addressed within the MSPMED project within the DS3. The next important issue in connection with the preparation of the Regional Spatial Plan, as well as one of the activities of WP3, is the rendering of the area in 3D. He asks those present whether it would be sensible to revive the GIS, which was prepared for the Slovenian coast area by the company Harpha. The project was implemented within the SHAPE project; training in the use of the GIS was organized and carried out. The idea is to revive the GIS and supplement it with up-to-date data. This could represent an important contribution of the SME-MED project.

Slavko Mezek moves on to the next steps to be taken. Spatial planning authorities should be invited to the next round of communication, especially the Institute for Nature Conservation, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Environmental Agency and the Water Directorate, in order to discuss the existing expert groundwork, as well as any documentation that needs to be obtained. Mr Mezek asks those present whether they require the finalized elements from the programme concept for the planned meeting. Given that the discussion will take place in the long run, the first meeting can take place without the programme concepts.

Marko Starman responds, explaining that having a concrete proposal or concept would be better, but some may be discussed without any concrete programme concepts.

An approximate date is set for a meeting with the stakeholders who do not necessarily require programme concepts prepared in advance in order to discuss the topics in question. The Institute for Nature Conservation, the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage will be invited. Everyone present agrees.

Conclusions:

1. Overview of the expert groundwork: the municipalities and spatial planning authorities review the available expert groundwork and identify the missing documents or data;



2. The preparation of the elements for the programme concept of the area needs to be better synchronized.
3. The participants assess the potential of the tool developed in the course of the SHAPE project - the GIS of the coastline. It should be determined whether the GIS can be used for maritime spatial planning at lower levels - for the coastal zone, which includes the land strip and the sea strip.
4. The discussion will continue in mid-April, via the zoom app.

Below is a summary of the continuation of the discussion that took place on April 15, 2021.

Jaka Bizjak (Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia). He explains that the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of Cultural Heritage is not competent institution for spatial planning, but the Ministry of Culture, while the Institute is in charge of preparing the expert groundwork. As for the expert groundwork for the preparation of the Regional Spatial Plan, he states that they do not have any available. However, they have the expert groundwork for the Maritime Spatial Plan of Slovenia and this area (the coastal strip between Koper and Izola) is included. The groundwork available would be a good starting point. Data on cultural heritage are publicly available in the EVRD application on the GIS portal. Specific expert groundwork should be done for the level and area of the Regional Spatial Plan, but we would need a programme concept as a basis for the expert groundwork as a starting point.

Vesna Flander Putrle (National Institute of Biology, Marine Biology Station). The *Posidonia oceanica* area, which is the northernmost location of this species in the Mediterranean, is very well-mapped. There has been no mapping of habitat types in this area, which is essential for physical interventions in the sea and the placement of various activities in the sea. In addition to *Posidonia oceanica*, the brown algae of the genus *Cystoseira*, which is located between Izola and Koper, is also a problem. This algae is susceptible to various human interventions in the marine environment. It is important to note that all types of brown seaweeds are classified as endangered species in the Mediterranean under the Barcelona Protocol, and are also important habitats according to the Habitats Directive, which means that they are being monitored by the IUCN, the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and by the Marine Protected Areas managers in the Mediterranean. Any any interventions in the marine ecosystems require prior mapping of the habitat types.

Iztok Škerlič (Municipality of Izola, JZP) asks whether the mapping had not already been commissioned from the National Institute of Biology, adding that this should be verified.

Barbara Vidmar (Institute for Nature Conservation of the Republic of Slovenia). Mrs Vidmar agrees with Vesna Flander Putrle and notes that she is also not aware of any mapping of habitat types already done or currently being done. However, she hopes that any interventions in the sea will be minor and environmentally and nature-friendly. She agrees that mapping is absolutely necessary. Regarding the



nature conservation status of the cliff and the tree-lined avenue, she believes that the *Posidonia oceanica* meadows are a more pressing matter. She explains that the cliff has no protected geological and botanical elements, is inactive and has no contact with the sea, but it is nevertheless a natural valuable feature and does require protection. Regarding the status of the tree-lined avenue, the situation is similar.

Tina Centrih Genov (Institute for Nature Conservation of the Republic of Slovenia): Mrs Centrih Genov explains that mapping was done for the *Posidonia oceanica*, but not for all habitat types. Additional mapping is warranted. When planning interventions in the sea, we should observe the 'the smaller the better' principle.

Iztok Škerlič mentions that the brown algae was also discussed during the Slovenian Coast Weeks event. He notes that given the importance of the brown algae for both fish and other sea organisms, the Ministry might possibly agree to finance the study or mapping of the algae from the Fisheries Fund, which would provide additional data for the Regional Spatial Plan.

Rok Velišček (Slovenian Water Agency): Starts off with some introductory words on flood safety in the area. He further explains that flood safety issues are being handled appropriately on the area's boundaries and that the flood maps are published in the Environmental Atlas and Water Atlas. The intermediate area between Izola and Koper is not classified as an important flood area, as there has been no damage potential and it was therefore not mapped as such. However, the area's vulnerability will increase with the planned interventions in the area. He explains that there is a wave study from 2014 that encompasses the entire Slovenian coast, which will need to be upgraded with a hydrological study to identify the flood hazard in the area, as well as any interventions needed for the constructions according to the Flood Regulation and then assess the situation in the form of expert groundwork.

Slavko Mezek invites those present to elaborate on the expert groundwork in the municipalities of Koper and Izola.

Marko Starman states that the Municipality of Izola shares a Regional Spatial Plan with the Municipality of Koper, which is still governed by the former law. There is a project task with content related to each individual area, both on the side of Izola and on the side of Koper. The interventions issue is key and will be addressed in the programme concept. A land surveying plan was made for the Izola part. It is important to determine what expert groundwork is still needed. He suggests that the municipality of Koper could commission a landscape design with the municipality of Izola.

Tjaša Babič (City Municipality of Koper) states that the municipality has adopted a location plan and that an inventory of habitats has been done at two locations, the documentation is from 2004. She agrees, therefore, that a habitat inventory should be redone and in more detail. She agrees with Marko Starman regarding the programme concept. Under the Regional Spatial Plan, this should be made as one of the expert groundwork needed.



Conclusion

Conclusion 1: Based on the discussion so far and additional discussions with individual spatial planning authorities (if necessary), the RRC prepares a summary - a list of missing expert groundwork and a proposal for expert groundwork to be implemented within the SME-MED project,

Conclusion 2. Based on the existing material (workshops, expert groundwork,...), the external contractor (Ljudmila Koprivec, MIOKO studio) prepares a draft programme concept. The deadline is May 20, 2021. A meeting will then be set up to discuss the programme concept.