





### **D14**

### Greece: Workshops evaluation and lessons learned



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### **Table of contents**

1.	INTRODUCTION	4
2.	CRITICAL ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY MSP	5
2.1. 2.2. 2.3.	AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AT THE LOCAL LEVEL POLICY FRAMEWORK TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MSP	5 7 8
3.	KEY PARAMETERS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF MSP 1	0
4. IMF	STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT AND CHALLENGES TOWARDS THE PLEMENTATION OF MSP1	2





### 1. Introduction

This report aims to specify the main procedures and key parameters related to the preparation of Maritime Spatial Frameworks in Greece focusing on operational aspects, governance overlaps and stakeholders' concerns in order to overcome institutional gaps and integrate the local and supra-local interests. The main objective is to link the national level - which is the main decision making level in Greece - and the local level where particularities and complexities of place need to be considered. The identification of the main activities taking place in the coastal and maritime space is essential to manage the complex interactions that shape the national economy and directly affect the local communities and the environment.

In this context, representatives of the key economic sectors as well as institutional and non-governmental bodies covering both the national and local level have been invited to contribute to the identification of the critical issues for the implementation and monitoring of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Greece and the formulation of an active governance scheme linking the national, regional and local level.

More specifically, representatives from the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Institute of Greek Tourism Confederation, the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises, the Hellenic Wind Energy Association, the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, WWF Greece, the Region of Thessaly, the Department of Fisheries from the Regional Unit of Lefkada, Chambers of Magnesia and Lefkada were asked to participate in two technical workshops. The workshops were organized online on the 9th and 16th of May 2022 and included presentations on the main activities taking place on the coastal and maritime space and their relation to MSP and a round table discussion on critical issues for the effective implementation of MSP in Greece. The issues addressed included the coordination of policies, the plans' specifications, tools for implementing MSP at the local level, tools for monitoring and evaluating MSP and critical factors to ensure the active participation and coordination of stakeholders. In the same context and given the importance of the cruising and yachting industry for Blue Economy, a series of interviews were conducted with key stakeholders to further explore the relationship of the sector with MSP.

The present report builds on the outcomes of the workshops and targeted interviews and will feed D15: Guidelines for the implementation of MSP: (a) stakeholder engagement strategy, (b) Framework to monitor and evaluate plan implementation and performance.





## 2. Critical issues to be addressed by MSP

### 2.1. At the national level

MSP, as described in Law 4759/2020, aims to promote the sustainable development and spatial cohesion of the marine and coastal area by taking into account the interactions between them, the ecosystem approach and the principles of sustainability. At the same time, MSP works towards the sustainable, rational and integrated spatial development of activities in the marine space, the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment and the sustainable coexistence of all activities and uses ensuring the preservation of marine biodiversity and resilience to the effects of climate change.

The National Spatial Planning Strategy for Maritime Space (currently under development) identifies the key activities that take place in the maritime space (aquaculture, fishing, renewable energy, maritime transport and maritime tourism) and gives strategic guidelines to avoid or reduce conflicts not only in the maritime space but also between coastal and maritime area. Another priority set by the Strategy is the protection, management and promotion of the landscape and its integration in MSP.

More specifically, the landscape is composed by the interaction of the country's rich natural resources and significant cultural heritage, parameters that shape the potential of marine and coastal areas. However, the landscape is directly linked to the productive activities that take place in the coastal and maritime space as it affects but is at the same time affected by them. Some activities and especially tourism are more affected by this bidirectional relationship since coastal landscapes constitute a valuable tourist resource at the destination level. The unplanned development of productive activities – tourism included – leads to degraded landscapes which in turn undermine the development of tourism activities, decrease living standards, jeopardize the identity of coastal sites, and thus reduce tourist flows. Therefore, the protection, restoration and promotion of the landscape as a valuable resource and a comparative advantage of the country's tourism sustainable capital is also a priority for MSP.

Although the planning of coastal areas falls under the responsibility of the Special and Regional Spatial Frameworks, the tourism activities taking place in the coastal zone should be taken into account and considered a priority for MSP when organizing activities in the adjacent marine space. Given the demanding issues that the tourism sector is facing since 2020 (pandemic, energy crisis, travel restrictions) and the growing threat of climate change, the interaction between coastal and marine space is a key challenge that MSP is expected to address. Special attention should be given to the protection of the landscape and the preservation of the "open view", which is directly affected by the location of marine productive activities such as the installation of marine wind farms in close proximity to the coastal area.





In addition, industrial activities are inextricably linked to the maritime space since almost 80% of their facilities are located in coastal areas. At the same time, there is a growing interest in the expansion of the industrial sector to innovative activities that exploit the maritime space (mostly for energy resources). In this context, it is extremely important for MSP to take into account and provide clear directions for specific energy issues (such as energy storage) which will unlock new energy perspectives and promote investment opportunities in transport and networks. Moreover, MSP should provide a framework for the sustainable coexistence of productive activities, promote a new development model in accordance with the European priorities and policies for energy and climate and at the same time make use of the marine space without disrupting the relationship with the activities already developed on the coast.

In the same context, it is important to take advantage of the country's wind energy potential in order not only to achieve the national goals but also to increase energy production and its distribution to other countries. Among the main issues related to the exploitation of wind energy in Greece are the challenges raised from establishing offshore wind farms (such as licensing restrictions, political and geostrategic constraints), tracking and incorporating rapid technological advancements and overcoming zoning restrictions (such as maritime and fishing zones, protected areas etc.). MSP should emphasize on promoting the development of offshore wind farms by taking into account not only the marine areas designated for the siting of the power generating units but also the space required for the supporting facilities in the coastal zone (interconnection projects, temporary piers, port facilities, storage areas etc.). MSP should also foresee a minimum percentage of the marine space to be allocated for RES projects and infrastructures. It is also imperative that MSP is in line with the legislative Framework for the development of Offshore Wind Farms which is currently under development by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Special Spatial Planning Framework for RES (currently under revision).

Furthermore, MSP constitutes a valuable tool for the protection, conservation and restoration of the marine and coastal environment. To this end, MSP should take into account the spatiotemporal interactions among anthropogenic activities in order to highlight synergies and conflicts and at the same time assess the cumulative effects of these activities on the marine ecosystem. The assessment should be based on the best available spatial data and understanding of the complex relationships between pressures, effects and the capacity of the ecosystem.





### 2.2. At the local level

The local level constitutes the actual space for the implementation of MSP and the local communities are the key actors to implement its guidelines. Therefore, it is imperative to focus on operational aspects and on specific areas with complex relationships between activities and ecosystem functions. The dense development of the coastal zone which concentrates the vast majority of human activities and the still unknown factors of the marine space constitute critical issues for consideration in MSP, especially given the strong economic, ecological and social linkages between the two spatial areas.

The main activities that have already been identified raise important challenges at the local level which are mostly related to the uncontrolled development of the coastal infrastructure and the conflicts deriving from the simultaneous development of non-compatible uses. MSP needs to incorporate all the key activities taking place at the local level and consider both the interactions between them (either conflicts or synergies) and the cumulative pressures they generate on the local and broader ecosystem.

In the same context, MSP is called to prioritize activities, determine where and under which conditions they can be developed, define procedures for their implementation and adapt dynamically to external changes. Emphasis should be given on biodiversity conservation through the incorporation of marine protected areas, the establishment of ecological corridors and the management of human-wildlife conflicts. MSP also needs to harmonize and coordinate the tools and financial instruments provided by other relevant policies.

In addition, MSP needs to consider existing pressures from climate change that directly affect the local communities and the local economy. For example, sea level rising has direct impacts on coastal infrastructure and supporting facilities essential for the tourism, industrial and aquaculture sector while the invasion of alien species strongly affects fishing activities. Equally important is addressing the impacts of climate change and the impacts of land-use change on coastal landscapes.

At the local level, MSP needs to capitalize and integrate international good practices in terms of environmental protection, sea basin management etc. but also in terms of governance. The issues concerning the local community and the particularities of each area must be taken into account in planning and implementation of Maritime Spatial Frameworks, especially in insular communities where the interdependencies among society, economy and the environment are even more fragile and complex.



### 2.3. Policy framework to be taken into account in MSP

MSP should be the common basis for the activities already developed or planned to be developed in the marine environment. An integrated policy should be developed, promoting the principles of subsidiarity and equal treatment and at the same time bringing together all sectoral policies, so that MSP can take them into account and formulate the appropriate guidelines. In this context, the European and national policies and strategies to be taken into account in MSP are stated in Table 1.

Table 1: Plans. Strategies and Policies to be taken into account in MSP

Policy/Strategy/Plan	Key points for MSP
MSFD DIRECTIVE 2008/56/EC	Framework to ensure that Member States shall take the necessary measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment
DIRECTIVE EU 2017/845	Directive amending Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the indicative lists of elements to be taken into account for the preparation of marine strategies
Barcelona Convention and Protocols	Appropriate measures to prevent, abate, combat and to the fullest possible extent eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Area and to protect and enhance the marine environment in that Area so as to contribute towards its sustainable development
Blue Growth Strategy	Focus on specific areas such as blue energy, aquaculture, marine and coastal tourism, blue biotechnology, seabed mining and extraction of oil and gas
European Green Deal	Measures for offshore renewable energy resources
COM(2021)236 EU - Guideline	Guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030
EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030	Inclusion of all maritime sectors and activities as well as ecosystem-based management measures
Multiannual National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture in Greece 2014-2020 & 2021- 2027	Guidelines on the coexistence of sustainable aquaculture with NATURA 2000 areas (depending on each area's management plan)
National Energy and	Development and organization of RES infrastructure
Climate Plan (NECP)	Transition to a climate neutral assists
2050	Transition to a climate-neutral society





National Strategy for Sustainable and Fair Growth 2030	Full use of the country's competitive advantage in maritime and coastal tourism
Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3) 2014- 2020	Emphasis on maritime sustainable tourism (water airports, cruise tourism, yachting, etc.)
National Transport Plan	Guidelines for the sustainable transport infrastructure and service development in Greece to increase the competitiveness of the transport sector of the country
Special Spatial Planning Frameworks	For aquaculture, tourism, industrial activities and renewable energy: spatial planning guidelines for land, coastal (near-shore) and maritime space for each sector





# 3. Key parameters for monitoring and evaluation of MSP

**Monitoring** is a mechanism for the continuous, systematic and methodical collection and processing of appropriate information, based on qualitative and quantitative indicators in relation to the intended objectives of the in force Maritime Spatial Plan.

**Evaluation** is a periodical process for assessing the implementation of MSP and the achievement of its objectives, identifying the failures and problems, initiating the necessary actions and institutional amendments to resolve them.

The inclusion of all relevant stakeholders (central administration, local government, representatives of productive sectors, local society) at all stages of planning and implementation is crucial for the formulation of a functional monitoring and evaluation system. To this end, the accumulated experience and good practices in MSP, especially at the EU level, must be exploited. The key parameters that should be taken into account are:

- the current and future conflicts (or synergies) of the various activities that take place in marine and coastal areas
- the existing threats (degradation of the marine environment, degradation of coastal areas, climate change effects etc.)
- the difficulties in studying the marine environment (e.g. degradation and its causes)

Given that MSP is developing in a constantly changing environment, the planning process must be flexible in order to adapt to these changes and allow plans to be revised in due course based on a transparent and efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Therefore, the objectives of Maritime Spatial Frameworks must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-definable (SMART) and the selected indicators corresponding to the objectives should be quantitative and qualitative in relation to the four pillars of sustainability: society, economy, environment and governance.

In this context, the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy evaluates the implementation of Maritime Spatial Frameworks every five years, by drawing up the relevant evaluation reports to document the need (or not) for their review. Each report is submitted to the Minister of Environment and Energy, forwarded to the co-competent ministries and regions and posted on the Ministry's website for dissemination. In any case, Maritime Spatial Frameworks are revised every ten 10 years at least. The report





provides an assessment of the plan's implementation progress, identifies the problems encountered and evaluates the integration of the plan's directions into local plans. The Maritime Spatial Frameworks are not reviewed before five years have expired. Modifications may exceptionally be conducted in order to improve and update them. The results of monitoring and evaluating the performance of the Maritime Spatial Frameworks is used in order to adapt them in the next review cycle.

Finally, the collection and continuous update of the necessary geospatial data – especially data related to human activities, marine ecosystems, society, economy and culture - is crucial to effectively monitor the implementation of Maritime Spatial Frameworks. Mapping the collected data as well as evaluating and visualising representative indicators with the use of appropriate methodological tools can significantly assist the monitoring process, especially when assessing the cumulative effects of human activities on the marine ecosystem (ecosystem-based approach, land-sea interactions assessment, etc.).





# 4. Stakeholders' engagement and challenges towards the implementation of MSP

The active participation of all key actors and local societies is a necessary condition for the effective implementation of MSP. This process requires the substantial involvement of stakeholders in every stage of the MSP process and at different spatial levels (cross-border, national, regional, local) through appropriate and officially established participatory and consultation procedures. Capitalizing on international best practices such as the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group can significantly assist the process for joint planning and implementation. In order to ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, it is essential to consider the following:

- Carry out a systematic inventory and analysis of the stakeholders as part of the state-of-the-art analysis.
- Involve stakeholders in early stage participatory processes and also at different stages of planning and implementation with sufficient time to understand and contribute
- Form a specific and multi-level governance scheme focusing not only at the national but also the local level
- Create a special permanent sub-committee on Maritime Spatial Planning within the framework of the National Spatial Planning Council
- Activate the Insular Policy Council to connect and interact with local communities, regions and central government agencies
- Establish forums to promote dialogue and provide feedback on a regular basis

Among the basic conditions for the participation of stakeholders is to highlight the benefits of planning for everyone, invest in time and communication channels and reduce the administrative burden and constraints. Specifically regarding the participation of the public as well as the non-scientific representatives of various public and private bodies, the following considerations can significantly assist their active engagement:

 Standardization of the Maritime Spatial Framework to facilitate the understanding of the context





- Popularized presentation of the Marine Spatial Framework (in plain terms)
- Dissemination of information to the public through online means and social media
- Provision of scientific support where needed (e.g. angling clubs) to facilitate understanding, increase contribution to the plans and implement the plans' actions at the local level

The following table presents the main stakeholders' concerns and challenges for the implementation of MSP in Greece in relation to the key productive activities identified in the maritime space.

Table 2: Stakeholders' concerns and challenges for the implementation of MSP in Greece

Activity	Challenges
Reusable Energy Resources	<ul> <li>Transferring the power from offshore windfarms to the mainland</li> <li>Cost of offshore windfarms compared to onshore systems</li> <li>Cost and impact of supporting infrastructure (ports, shipyards etc.)</li> <li>Licensing restrictions</li> <li>Political and geostrategic limitations</li> </ul>
Tourism	<ul> <li>Addressing the interactions between coastal and maritime space</li> <li>Studying the effects of the development of offshore RES on tourism in economic and social terms</li> <li>Managing conflicts in case of ad-hoc developments in the marine space until the implementation of Maritime Spatial Frameworks</li> <li>Implementing MSP guidelines in practice</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul> <li>Avoid reproducing problems of terrestrial spatial planning in MSP (conflicts, contradictory guidelines, significant delays in the evaluation/revision of plans etc.)</li> <li>Completing the digitization of institutional lines, zones and data of the maritime space in a single database</li> <li>Timely implementation of planning (collective responsibility, public administration support)</li> <li>Strengthening research in the marine environment (funding research projects and interdisciplinary study programs)</li> <li>Strengthening cross-border cooperation in marine planning</li> </ul>
Cruising/Yachting	<ul> <li>Specifying achievable goals that can be monitored, evaluated and improved when necessary</li> <li>Managing the increased competition for marine resources and waterways</li> <li>Acquiring information and charts on other uses that can impact navigation or visibility</li> <li>Understanding the needs and operational requirements of other uses and stakeholders</li> </ul>





	-	Consulting and engaging a wide range of maritime shipping stakeholders
Fishing/Aquaculture	-	Managing conflicts and synergies among different uses Addressing environmental degradation of the marine space and identifying its causes/investing in research Addressing climate change effects on fisheries and aquaculture (such as alien species invasion) Strengthening cooperation and taking advantage of the opportunities for soft multi-uses

