THE GREEN DEAL COMPONENT OF MSP PLANS

As part of the MSP-GREEN project, partners from Bulgaria, Finland, France, Italy, Germany, Latvia, and Spain, assessed whether and how their national Maritime Spatial Plans consider the European Green Deal (EGD) objectives and identified which are the major gaps, the challenges encountered, and the trade-offs accepted in mainstreaming EGD into MSP.

The complete study is included in the *MSP-GREEN Deliverable N°2.1: The Green Deal component of the EU MSP Plans.*

EGD

MSP

Climate change mitigation

The plans mostly address climate change mitigation, in particular by promoting energy transition at-sea, through offshore wind energy.

Some plans also approach energy transition from the perspective of promoting efficiency and new fuels in the maritime sectors and ports.

Example

The German EEZ plan includes both spatial and energy production provisions for offshore wind development. The plan dedicates a total of 16.5% of the EEZ to offshore wind in order to achieve federal targets of 20 GW by 2030 and 40 GW by 2040.

Circular Economy

The way the plans incorporate blue circular economy varies greatly based on the national scope and mandate of MSP and cover a wide range of maritime sectors.

This is also influenced by the relationships established with other national policies, e.g. regarding circular economy or recycling.

Example

All French plans include blue circular economy at a strategic and operational level with provisions targeting for example the ship industry (eco-design , repair, sustainable decommissioning, and recycling) but also citizens for instance through ocean literacy.

Climate change adaptation

The plans often include indirect provisions to support climate change adaptation.

Some plans provide measures concerning nature-based solutions to strengthen coastal resilience to erosion and floods or to improve fisheries adaptation.

Example

In Spain, Marine Green Infrastructures (including protected areas) occupy 32.8% of the total planning area of the plans contributing to climate change mitigation.

Fair and Just Transition

Example

In Finland, Stakeholders were engaged in the co-creation of future scenarios for the marine areas included in the MSP plan, from the early stage of the process. This approach has increased the stakeholders capacity to influence planning decisions.

Whether and how MSP addresses the Fair and Just Transition is mostly linked to stakeholders engagement. All analysed MSP processes widely engaged stakeholders to find the best possible balance among sea uses and related area allocations. Regardless, further exploration of the role of MSP in supporting the topic is strongly needed.

Working groups, knowledge co-creation, inclusive communication and online data services are common engagement actions. Challenges were identified in reaching the local scale actors.

Biodiversity and ecosystem protection

Example

The Latvian MSP plan includes the existing Marine Protected Areas (15.4%) and 5 new investigation zones of nature values (4.8% , which is a good basis to move closer to the 30% target set out in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 with support of the LIFE REEF project

Biodiversity and ecosystem protection are cross-cutting or overarching objectives in all plans. While the designation or extension of MPAs is generally considered outside of the scope of MSP, its supports extended conservation in several ways.

Some plans include biodiversity-oriented zoning measures, such as the identification of priority and reservation areas for nature conservation. Provisions on OECMs and marine connectivity are less common.

Zero Pollution

Example

According to the MSP vision and objectives, the Italian plans shall guarantee the achievement and maintenance of the Good Environmental Status of marine waters (ex MSFD). All sectors should reduce polluting emissions, waste and introduction of alien species: specific measures are foreseen e.g. identification of marine areas with high pressures generated by maritime transport.

Several plans consider pollution issues from the perspective of achieving the Good Environmental Status therefore referring to the MSFD implementation.

While all plans consider pollution drivers and pressures, zero pollution provisions mostly focus on prevention and remain sector-specific.

Sustainable seafood production

Example

In line with the Common Fisheries Policy implementation, the Bulgarian plans sets up measures for effective control on fishing areas, science-based definition of quotas for exploited species and control on unregulated fishing.

All plans incorporate sustainable food production, through provisions relating to fisheries and aquaculture (fish and shellfish farming), and more rarely to seaweed production.

Some plans do not regulate fisheries per se but include provisions supporting sustainable fisheries. Others include measures that more directly regulate fishing, for instance on bycatch, licensing or fight against illegal fishing.

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EGD elements in MSP plans

The inclusion of EGD elements has been assessed for each project country in objectives and measures (excluding Germany*), based on the screening of the MSP plans.

Are EGD elements considered in the MSP plan?

- YES
- PARTIALLY
- NO

OBJECTIVES		MEASURES*
Climate change mitigation	Renewable energy production, storage and transportation	Climate change mitigation
	Clean energy transition in maritime sectors	
	Transformations in ports	
	Blue carbon sinks	
Climate change adaptation	Green Infrastructures to enhance coastal-resilience	Climate change adaptation
	Protection of climate-sensitive marine and coastal biodiversity/ecosystems, and landscapes	
	Anticipation of climate change-related effects	
Sustainable seafood production	Sustainable fisheries: management, including area and time-based measures	Sustainable seafood production
	Sustainable aquaculture and shellfish production	
	Sustainable algae production	
Biodiversity and ecosystem protection	A coherent network of marine protected areas	Biodiversity and ecosystem protection
	Restoring marine and coastal ecosystems	
Circular Economy	Circular design	Circular Economy
	Waste prevention	
	Re-use, repair, upgrade, recycle	
Zero pollution	Pollution prevention	Zero pollution
	Pollution remediation	

*The German EEZ Plan does not present measures

Key challenges for MSP to work as an enabler of the EGD

- Implementing the EGD may result in or reinforce spatial competition among uses at sea.
- The implementation of some EGD objectives through MSP faces obstacles relating to data gaps, fragmentation or lack of interoperability.
- Uncertainties stemming from difficulties to project into the future and unclear planning principles can hamper action from EGD stakeholders.
- The geographic scope, approach and mandate of MSP define its capacity to address the EGD.
- Contrasting policy objectives can make it difficult to articulate EGD within MSP.
- Process limitations such as lack of resources, time or participation can limit the ability of MSP to address the EGD.

Deliverable N°2.1 The Green Deal component of the EU MSP Plans
Annexe 3 Infographic with synthetic elements
Graphic project: Soffietti F.- IUAV

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