



MSP-OR

Advancing Maritime
Spatial Planning
in Outermost Regions

D.2.1 REPORT ON NEEDS, BARRIERS AND ENABLERS FOR MSP AND CAPACITY BUILDING

April 2022

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
D	Deliverable
ES	Spain
EU	European Union
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FR	France
FRCT	Fundo Regional para a Ciência e Tecnologia
GA	Grant Agreement
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
M	Month
MarSP	Macaronesian Maritime Spatial Planning
MS	Milestone
MSP	Maritime Spatial Planning
MSP-OR	Advancing Maritime Spatial Planning in Outermost Regions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCTO	Open Communications for The Ocean
OR	Outermost Region
PT	Portugal
UAç	University of the Azores
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNESCO-IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO
VASAB	Vision and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package

INTRODUCTION

The MSP-OR project – Advancing Maritime Spatial Planning in Outermost Regions (GA n° 101035822 — MSP-OR — EMFF-MSP-2020) intends to support Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) competent authorities in Portugal (Azores and Madeira); and Spain (Canary Islands) on advancing the implementation of their MSP processes, launched with the previous MarSP project (Macaronesia Maritime Spatial Planning); and in France (French Guiana) advancing with knowledge, providing grounds to launching and adopting the principles of MSP.

Work Package (WP) 2 (MSP-OR Ocean Governance Platform) will create a common arena (platform) for discussion and sharing on MSP and ocean governance. The platform will be an umbrella to support the topics addressed by the different WPs activities, monitoring the main project needs, barriers, and enablers. It will provide the guiding lines on capacity-building development, and, most important, it will continuously monitor the outcomes of the following WPs, to integrate their outcomes and turn them into inputs of the platform.

This document corresponds to the Deliverable 2.1 “Report on needs, barriers and enablers for MSP and Capacity Building” (D.2.1) under Task 2.1. “Set the rules, structure, and use of the platform”, within the subtask SubT.2.1.1 – “Analysis of Needs, Barriers, and Enablers”. The report was built based on a work previously done by the UAc team on existing online platforms (in publishing process).

On this report some of the barriers and enablers in the existing platforms approaching Sea/Ocean themes are assessed and some criteria to analyze each one is developed. The second input of this deliverable is the processed results of the Virtual Workshop (MS5), considering the internal partners’ survey and external experts’ interviews. Both inputs supported the identification of the needs, barriers, and enablers in the context of ocean governance in the frame of MSP. This Deliverable also supports a diagnosis of the current situation, finding the common challenges and the opportunities to overcome them. At the same time, Deliverable 2.1 allows to identify the lack of knowledge to be covered during the capacity building process (Task 2.4) and that might be discussed and built together in the platform.

Towards Ocean Governance sustainability, a shift of paradigm from the sectorial strategy is necessary for a holistic integrated approach (von Thenen et al., 2021). The key to environmental stewardship will be balancing the complexity among institutional dynamics, economic, ecological and social aspects (Dawson et al., 2021). In outermost regions, the challenge is even greater with an under-researched area with unique features and vulnerability (Seijo et al., 2021). A potential pathway is to engage stakeholder dialogue transparently and inclusively to achieve biodiversity conservation (Weiland et al., 2021).

Communication and strengthening the network between countries is fundamental to the development of trans-disciplinary maritime spatial planning (UNESCO-IOC, 2021; Weiland et al., 2021). Platforms are being widely used as tools to safeguard the exchange between stakeholders and to ensure the recording and continuity of ocean governance activities across scales (Rudolph et al., 2020). Furthermore, platforms can gather data and facilitate solutions for future decisions (UNESCO-IOC, 2021; Rudolph et al., 2020). In this way, it is possible to create a set of information that assists the sustainable development of the region, facilitating the implementation and monitoring of MSP (Pınarbaşı et al., 2017).

REVIEW OF OCEAN GOVERNANCE IN MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING

NEEDS

Oceans systems are complex and require a worldview approach to be effectively managed (Rudolph et al., 2020). The Ocean complexity reflects in its governance, and another vision more integrated (including social and environmental) is needed towards sustainability (von Thenen et al., 2021; Rudolph et al., 2020). Apart from the different approach scales needed, the divergent regions, like outermost regions, also bring other governance challenges (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b). Outermost regions have specific features that requires even more careful consideration, including increased vulnerability to global warming effects (Seijo et al., 2021; Ribalaygua et al., 2019; Vergílio & Calado, 2016). Consequently, it is fundamental to have and to consolidate an adaptive management that supports new data inclusion in a constant learning process that considers both specific and wider contexts (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b; von Thenen et al., 2021).

Another driver for ocean governance is to have a science-based structure with compatible data for cross-border cooperation (Rudolph et al., 2020). Therefore, quality research and collaborative work is needed to support an appropriate MSP (Ansong et al., 2019). Towards an effective MSP implementation, cross-sectorial stakeholders must be involved since the beginning of the process, with the eminent need to translate the technical language into an appropriate and effective communication (Weiland et al., 2021). Moreover, most of the time the MSP process is related and integrated into a governance or policy instrument (Weiland et al., 2021), which makes the process not only smooth, but also more time consuming, struggling to build long-term trust and foster engagement among stakeholders (Weiland et al., 2021).

In sum, stakeholder engagement is crucial to develop an MSP process with an effective ocean governance approach (Weiland et al., 2021; Rudolph et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is important to take in account the social justice perspective (von Thenen et al., 2021), assuming that there are social imbalances and an unequal power distribution among environmental aspects and economic sectors (Weiland et al., 2021; von Thenen et al., 2021). To balance this deficit a transparent and accessible approach is required and constant capacity building is highly recommended (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b; Weiland et al., 2021).

BARRIERS

According to research conducted by Weiland et al. (2021), an efficient stakeholder engagement is identified as the main need to develop MSP governance. Furthermore, a meaning and stakeholder engagement strategy helps in overcoming the barrier of lack of capacity and awareness (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b).

Another specific feature in ocean governance is the prevalence of a fragmented framework with multi-layered sectors and instruments (Weiland et al., 2021). This is especially important when cross-border MSP is in place (García-Sanabria et al., 2019). The fragmentation occurs also among stakeholders and within land-sea interactions and data knowledge (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b).

The ocean is a complex system that overcome to governance (includes environmental, political and legal issues) (Rudolph et al., 2020; Weiland et al., 2021). Additionally, the entanglement advances to scale as spatial, temporal and representation too (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b).

Rittel & Webber, 1973 define “wicked problems” as problems that “there are no straightforward solutions or definitive formulations and stakeholders groups often disagree on values, norms and goals, making adaptation difficult and requiring holistic and collaborative reasoning to address them”. The power imbalance among stakeholders and the lack of social justice are barriers that must be overcome as some of the “wicked problems” (Weiland et al., 2021; von Thenen et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2021b). Apart from that, the climate change effects, and many other emerging issues are prone to aggravate in the next decades (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b).

The barriers presented in the paragraphs above are synthesized in the **Figure 1** by UNESCO-IOC (2021b).

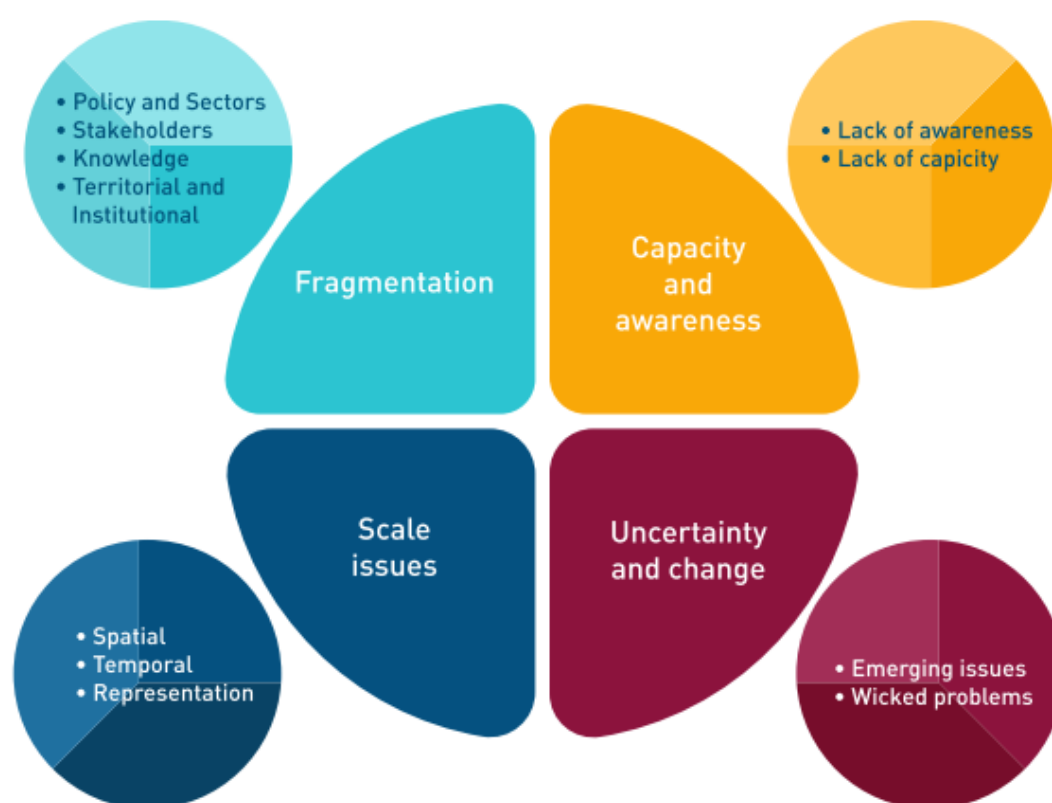


Figure 1. Barriers and Challenges in MSP Ocean Governance (Source: UNESCO-IOC/MSP-Global, 2021b).

The lack of resources is always a difficult barrier to overcome; these resources can be human, time or financial (Weiland et al., 2021). This challenge may undermine stakeholders trust, since it is hard to maintain a long term and trustful process (Weiland et al., 2021). The continuity of MSP projects is also threatened by political will and lack of evidence, being a barrier to implement an ecosystem-based approach towards the achievement of common goals (von Thenen et al., 2021).

ENABLERS

Collaborative projects such as MSP-OR are in the forefront towards a participatory and transdisciplinary ocean governance (Rudolph et al., 2020). The continuity of the work and its interactivity can enhance **trust building** among participants and stakeholders (Weiland et al., 2021). Maintaining the **dialogue** in such forums/ exchange platforms are good examples towards a collaborative knowledge sharing (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b; Weiland et al., 2021).

Weiland et al., (2021) explain that: *“multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation can provide a better understanding of what a marine region can deliver collectively, by taking into account the heterogeneous socio-economic, cultural, political and geographical characteristics, and implementing more realistic policy instruments through meaningful incremental progress”*.

The alignment with the international policies towards sustainable development can be leading enablers of MSP projects (von Thenen et al., 2021). Complementary studies can also help to build a differential MSP, such as **social impact and ecosystems services assessment** (von Thenen et al., 2021).

Moreover, **keeping in track the evaluation process and adaptation** will guarantee a sustainable approach to MSP governance (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b; Weiland et al., 2021). In that sense, **continually developing capacity building and fostering ocean literacy** will support the quality of MSP implementation (UNESCO-IOC, 2021b; Weiland et al., 2021).



OCEAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORM

OCEAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORMS RESEARCH

A previous desktop online research and analysis of current platforms available on “ocean related themes with a wide participation ambition” was performed by the UAc team. The basic information of each platform and defined criterion-based descriptors to assess them were compiled.

After this first step, seven platforms were selected as more suitable to be used as baseline examples applicable to MSP-OR objectives, as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Ocean Governance Platforms analysis (adapted from Calado et al., *in publication*).

Name	Format	Topic	Who/ What entities	Gaps	Governance enablers: how they can help to build MSP	Barriers
HELCOM	Website, newsletter page, database with publications and maps, meetings database, sign in to share point (interactive platform for authorized people). Social media: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr.	Serves as a regional platform for environmental policy making in the Baltic Sea region. The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission – also known as the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) – is an intergovernmental organization implementing the Helsinki Convention, signed in 1974 by the Baltic countries and amended over time to keep up with International Maritime Law modifications.	The ministerial representatives from membership countries and 8 working groups: gear, maritime, pressure, response, state & conservation, agriculture, fish, MSP. HELCOM makes recommendations of policies to be implemented by the contracting parties.	No inclusion on all levels of stakeholders, platform seems to target governmental agencies, academics, and high-level decision-makers.	* HELCOM includes agriculture in their workgroups, facilitating the dialogue among MSP and agriculture *The platform is very elaborate with all meetings and past activities archived and documents, just part of it accessible for authorized persons (log-in required).	*The platform is hard to navigate, too many layers. *Presentation of content is very plain, infographics and video content would make the content more accessible, especially if the target group involves non-governmental and non-academic agencies.
Sargasso Sea Commission	Newsletter sign up, social media: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and a mobile app, website with archives on past meetings, workshops on important themes.	Since there is no regional sea authority in the Sargasso Sea, the Commission works together to get international recognition for the importance of the sea and its ecosystems, working together with the fragmented jurisdictions, to forward proposals for protection and work with UNCLOS to develop better legislation for areas like this: advice and guide.	An advisory group of ocean experts representatives of allied states (stewardship role), work with the governments of Azores, Bahamas, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Monaco, UK and US.	No authority to act, therefore no outputs to be shown. The expert board has an advisory role and can bring forward important issues and conservation initiatives but has no authority. The platform does not show how proposals translate into action by respective authorities.	*Example of alliance dealing with ABNJ. *Collaborative aspect of the platform with a detailed list of partners. *YouTube channel with all presentations and videos, presence on several platforms. Not clear what does the app do.	*Platform straightforward to navigate, but like HELCOM, not very interactive (social media channels might be facilitating the interactive aspects). *Website serves mostly as an archive.
United Nations Decade	Website with platform 'Global Stakeholder Forum' powered by Hivebrite (signup required for access to content and participation) to access an interactive interface where you can connect, organize events, contribute, discuss and follow the other users. Newsletter with updates, social media: Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, website offers archive to publications and former events.	Networking platform for ocean stakeholders, connect, interact, exchange content, attend and promote events.	Created by the UN, accessible for everyone, forum accessible upon sign up request for stakeholders: early career ocean professionals, foundation, general public, government, media, NGO, private sector, research, United Nations entity.	UNESCO-IOC is behind the Ocean Decade structure, with proposal call for proposals to be coordinated by different States in a steering committee.	*Sign up form could serve as an effective filter to only give access to people genuinely interested in the platform. *Aimed at a broad stakeholder group related to ocean people. *Facilitates wide access to events. *Could be an example of how a community can interact and keep connecting after a project has ended.	*Privacy details such as location might discourage certain stakeholders to participate.

VASAB	Website, newsletters, events, workshops, extra portal for registered users, social media such as YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, website contains reports and recordings of past workshops as well as information videos.	Intergovernmental and regional collaboration for spatial planning and development of the Baltic Sea, works together with HELCOM. Deals specifically with the infrastructure around the Baltic and the physical planning and territory, and considers urban-rural divides and the lacking accessibility between the Baltic regions, recognizing historical and socio-economic aspects of this region.	Ministers from Baltic countries dealing with MSP (Commission), along with a VASAB secretariat, which is a permanent group of people who strengthen collaboration and organize meetings, produce reports and work to promote ideas.	*No interactive platform besides the social media channels.	*An example platform of building on existing structures and organizations and keeping the focus on just the planning task. *Mostly a training platform for planners. *Rural-urban areas are included in MSP considerations.	*Only accessible for registered users. *Platform layered in a difficult way.
MSP Global Forum	Website with portals to MSP global (international guidance plan and pilot project), MSP forum, with links to past forums and documents and videos archived and MSP roadmap with all the countries MSP profiles layered out and links to evaluation documents and MSP toolkit. Social media: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, News portal and event page.	MSP Global aims to help governments all over the world with their MSP processes so they can speed up and synchronize the MSP development in all countries. The forum is led by a team of MSP specialists who have worked to develop a joint roadmap and international MSP guide to support government's MSP processes. A third object is to organize MSP forums to exchange knowledge and information.	Group of experts and consultancy group of thematic experts, aimed to support MSP planners from all levels of governments.	*Mainly aimed at planners and to strengthen the planning process, not accessible (at this stage) for others stakeholder participation.	*An example of how new knowledge and research can be introduced into practice, by organizing workshops with new tools and studies to keep the planners up to date. *Platform well-structured, clear and straightforward.	*In this format, no interactive platform.
MSP EU	Newsletters, workshops, seminars, roundtable discussions, FAQ page, regional experts available for questions, databases of former practices and library available, links to training and funding opportunities. Social media: Twitter.	Gateway for information and communication about MSP development in the EU Member States.	A team of MSP experts, central and regional (Sea basins) for European MSP projects.	*Not all layers on the platform are easy to navigate, no interactive aspect.	*Example of a platform that helps the process, fills knowledge gaps, and overcomes barriers. Information and knowledge exchange and professional training.	*Only aimed at governmental level and projects. *Project library could be better presented to make it easier for projects to connect.
OCTO	Website, newsletters, workshops, seminars, mailing list, networking, interactive platform.	Ocean related topics. Marine conservation, training, and information. It facilitates networking between people working in the same topic. The goal is to connect people with questions to people who can help them.	OCTO connects ocean professionals to the knowledge and networks they need. Through programs and communities, empower conservationists and resource managers to apply best practices worldwide. Over 100,000 ocean professionals in 120 countries use OCTO programs each year.	The information and exchanges are not archived.	*Email lists is the best option to reach stakeholders. *Forums are simple (willing participating people involved). *Use of updates/notifications to engagement. *Use of Webinars for networking.	*Open channels are downsizing due to high expenses.

OCEAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORMS INTERVIEWS

A contact point for each one of the seven selected platforms (see **Table 1**) was interviewed online between December 2021 and January 2022. The general leading questions performed during the interviews were:

- What were the stated priorities of the platform when it was created?
- In what ways (if any) failed the platform to meet the priorities?
- In what ways has the digital platform been able to support the work of your organization?
- What difficulties do you encounter while interacting through the platform?
- What sort of input did you expect to generate through the interaction that is facilitated by the platform (digital forum or in the form of organized workshops or public discussion).
- What have you experienced as general gaps or limitations of using a digital platform?
- How can the platform facilitate collaboration and communication between working groups?
- In what ways can a digital platform enable transborder corporation between actors in the project?

All answers were compiled in **Table 2**, organized by the main **barriers** and **enablers** pointed out by the interviewees.

Table 2. Barriers and Enablers.

Barriers	Enablers
Log in to a platform takes too much time.	Push notifications to generate platform use.
Expensive to keep a platform going and moderate interaction and content.	Create network/ community to make interaction and collaboration easier --> effective collaboration.
'Dump library' with meeting documents can be uninviting to access : too long, too many, works counterproductively.	Platform as moderator, bringing together data from different working groups .
Data protection laws can make platform transparency challenging.	Non-governmental input can be generated through platform, by presenting documents and make it accessible.
Collaboration strands on checking compatibility of initiative, rather than collaborative project, sometimes published knowledge can also prevent interaction.	Platform as knowledge center , publish best practices. Tools and guidelines for future projects within the region and outside of the region.
Links, websites and videos expire after a while , to maintain content --> move it to a more permanent host.	Interactive PDF to present data in a concentrated but receivable way. Other formats of interaction, it does not always have to be new (e.g., YouTube).
Multimedia and innovative solutions can also exclude certain groups and areas (inaccessibility because of lacking internet).	Multiple languages can extend reach and generate more input.

Mailing lists can be useful during implementation phase, to highlight new inputs, after that, the tool is not so useful anymore.	Good to incorporate different levels of information , aimed at different type of users.
Usually, government platforms are more about information rather than communication .	Interactive aspects sought after by several projects. Implementation phase requires input from civil society and other non-governmental actors.
When introducing interactive aspects, think about vetting process , to fend off spam and robot accounts.	Online platforms can include hidden groups , where certain content stays private and other content can be public.
User engagement needed before it can be an effective tool.	

As mentioned by the interviewees, the **high costs of maintenance** are the main barrier that MSP-OR Platform will need to overcome. In that sense, the suggestions are to attach the platform to EU OR group for maintenance and permanent hosting. The interactive aspects and the multimedia attached to that is another barrier that the platform must deal with, especially on **islands/remote areas where the internet is not high quality**. To finalize, the **stakeholder engagement** will be a challenge that all MSP-OR partners will need to compromise to work on.

In another perspective, MSP-OR Platform has the incredible opportunity to enable effective ocean governance if it offers different rooms for each purpose and a dynamic, interactive and collaborative space. In that sense, everyone can follow the activities and contribute to the topic, creating an up to time networking.

OCEAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORM MSP-OR QUESTIONNAIRE

MSP-OR Consortium replied to an internal survey with the objective to establish some baselines and align expectations. Moreover, it identified the needs, barriers, and enablers in the context of ocean governance in the frame of MSP. The survey intended to develop the framework in which the arena (platform) will work, including consensual codes of conduct and actions that will remain after the lifetime of MSP-OR.

In total 16 questionnaires were answered, being 4 invalid and one incomplete. All 20 questions are featured below with a brief resume of the answers. The 7 extra questions (Annex 1) will be presented in the first MSP-OR Platform meeting, because its contents refer to other MSP-OR Work Packages and do not apply to the purpose of this Deliverable.

Questions

Q1 What Institution do you represent?

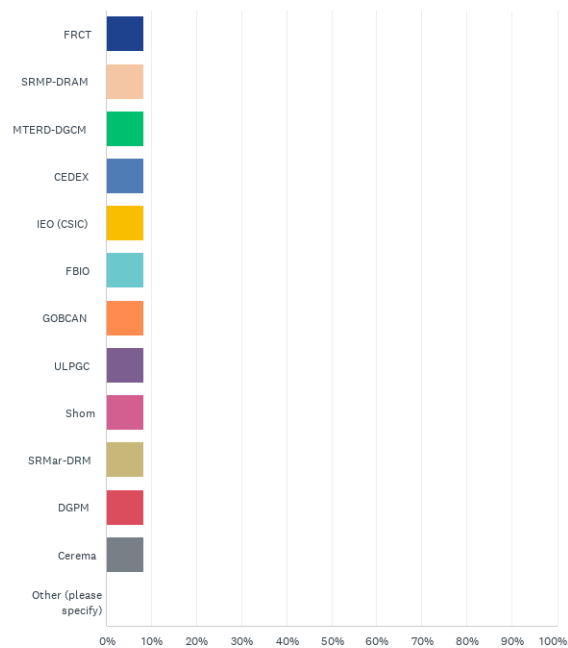


Figure 2. MSP-OR Consortium representation (Internal Survey).

Q2 - What do you consider to be the most significant challenges of cross-border governance in the context of MSP?



Figure 3. Word Cloud question 2 (Created by the internal Survey).

- Create Cross-border Commissions with regular meetings.
- Strong, close, and transparent cooperation from the beginning.
- Surveillance of maritime activities in the High Sea.
- Provide standards and tools to share data and meta-information regarding MSP.
- Identify practical issues and showcase success stories, "sell" which are the benefits of the specific cross-border governance arrangement.
- Working groups at the technical level are good starting points.

Q3 - What do you consider to be the most significant enablers of cross-border governance in the context of MSP?



Figure 4. Word Cloud question 3 (Created by the internal Survey).

- Cooperation and coordination.
- Political will.
- Cross border cooperation projects (common investments).
- Regular meetings and online platform.
- Permanent discussion forum integrating stakeholder knowledge, views and needs.
- Intensify the transfer of scientific and technical knowledge to decision-makers and NGOs.

Q4 - What do you consider to be the most significant barriers to cross-border governance in the MSP context?

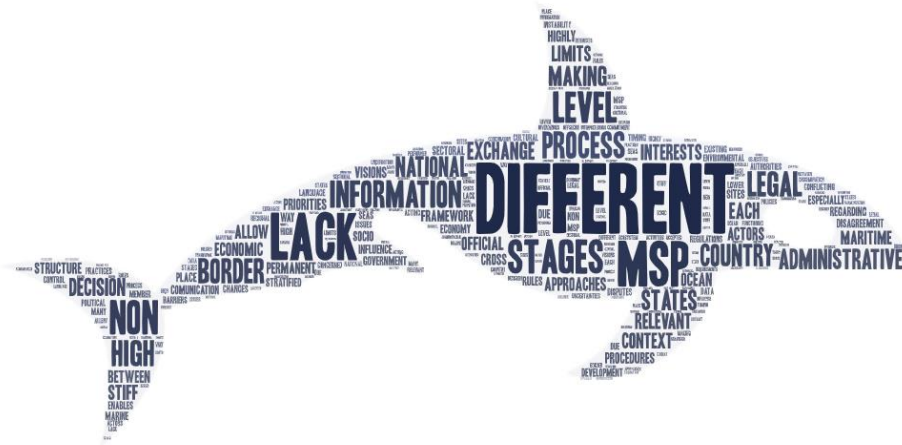


Figure 5. Word Cloud question 4 (Created by the internal Survey).

- Interests and priorities must be as aligned as possible.
- Supported by robust, up-to-date information.
- Promote common views, and strengthen participatory, transparent, and effective governance (strengthen cooperation mechanisms).
- Data harmonization.
- Capacity building at all levels (decision-making and stakeholders).
- Channeling resources to build governance bodies with a clear vision towards cooperative action.

Q6 - What do you consider possible to be the most significant challenges in integrating land, air and sea policies?



Figure 7. Word Cloud question 6 (Created by the internal Survey).

- More cooperation and coordination between authorities.
- Strengthen sectoral conferences.
- Work out a common Strategy under an Ecosystem Approach covering land-sea interactions.
- Stakeholders' consultations.
- Identifying needs and benefits of this collaboration.
- Designing and establishing a common governance framework.

Q9 - Where do you consider to be knowledge gaps in the social and interdisciplinary context of MSP?



Figure 9. Word Cloud question 9 (Created by the internal Survey).

- How to integrate the social context in the MSP.
- How to establish co-management and empowerment systems.
- Gap between the dominant economic perspective and a sociocultural-ecological system approach.
- Difficult to integrate the legal framework applicable to the different sectors.
- Stakeholder input is key to the successful planning and implementation of a maritime spatial plan.
- Challenging to predict the social impacts of implementing MSP.

Q10 - Where do you consider to be gaps in research on ecosystem services?



Figure 10. Word Cloud question 10 (Created by the internal Survey).

- Integration of ecosystem services in other concepts.
- Gap between science and practice.
- Lack of data on ecosystem services.
- Make them understandable for stakeholders and policy makers.
- Disparate methodologies and approaches for scenario analysis and trade-off analysis.

Q11 - What are the other two knowledge gaps within MSP can you think of and have experienced?

- Cumulative Effect and Impact Assessment (including emergent sectors).
- Lack of long-term vision and need for common strategies amongst stakeholders.
- Dealing with data gaps.
- Unclear aspects within the legal framework.
- Evaluation of land-sea interactions.

- Informative, simple and user friendly.
- Data exchange (raw and processed).
- Foster communication and collaboration between partners (dynamic, interactive).
- Common repository.
- Real-time monitoring of the MSP.
- Give representation to all sectors/stakeholders.
- Contact with other MSP communities across Europe and other regions.

Q16 - What topics should be included in the MSP-OR Governance Platform?

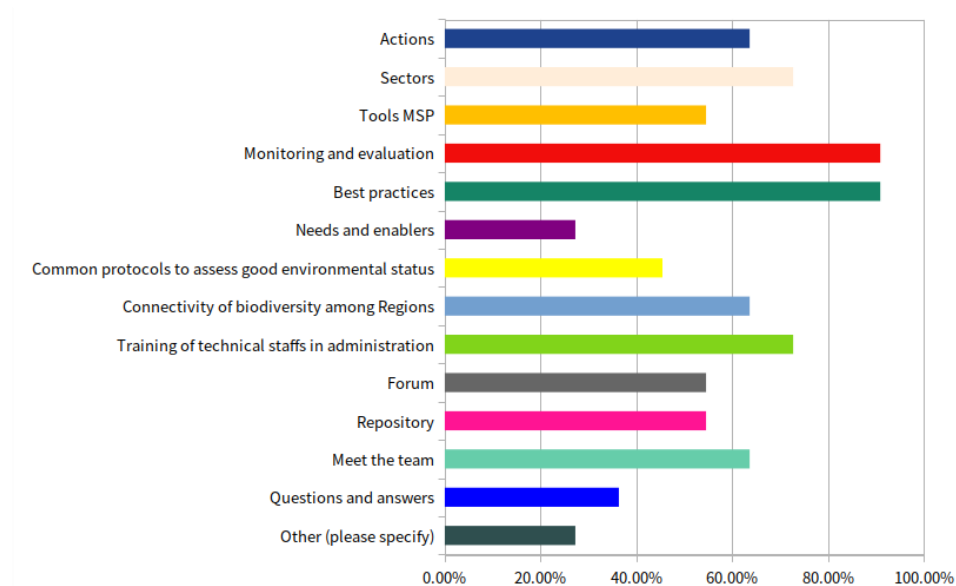


Figure 15. Topics to be considered in the MSP-OR Governance Platform (Internal Survey).

Q17 - In your opinion, how can the platforms listed below exemplify addressing MSP-OR objectives?

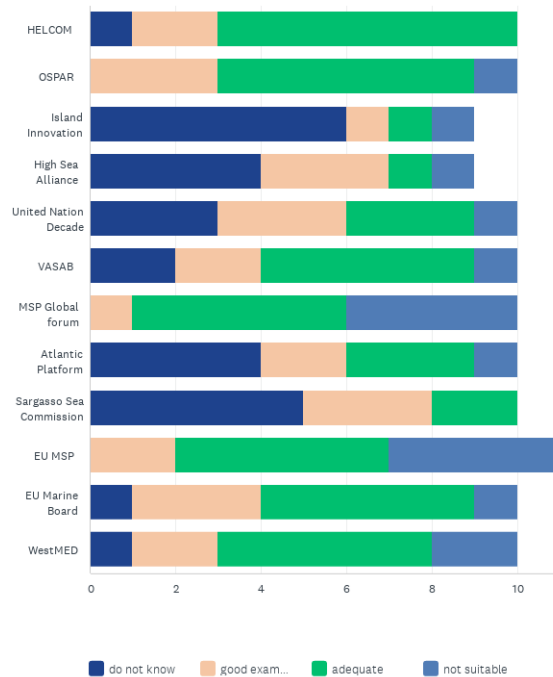


Figure 16. Identification level of selected platforms related to the MSP-OR objectives of the MSP-OR (Internal Survey).

Q18 - Who should be included in the discussions on the platform?

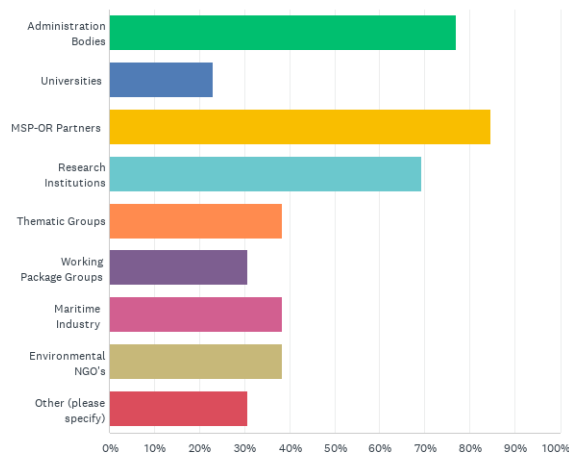


Figure 17. Stakeholder representation (Internal Survey).

Q19 - What are three codes of conduct that should be applicable to the MSP-OR Platform, in your opinion?

- Respect & ethics (neutral language).
- Collaborative and respectful.
- Fulfil commitments agreed.
- Free and Public Access to published datasets, reports, or publication.
- Maintain topic related (no spam).
- To be proactive.
- Science-based.

Q20 - Do you have a suggestion on how to keep the platform perennial after the end of the project?

- Entrust it to an organization with the capacity to ensure the follow-up of the work.
- MSP group dedicated to outermost regions.
- Stakeholders and entities will contribute and assume its longevity.
- Subscription of bilateral agreements between participant countries.
- Associating it to the EU MSP Platform.

Take home message

What's in store for today from MSP-OR Partners:

- Regular meetings/ Working Groups.
- Online Platform/ permanent discussion forum.
- Stakeholder engagement and participation.
- High-level involvement communication and cooperation.
- Capacity building.
- Data sharing and harmonization.

HIGHLIGHTERS FROM MARSP PROJECT EXPERIENCE

In the previous Macaronesia Maritime Spatial Planning (MarSP) project (2018-2019) some valuable insights were acquired and must be considered in this project. The extensive and descriptive report is available in ([MarSP Lessons Learned](#)) and should be consulted extensively in order to minimize/ prevent same drawbacks, and benefit from the best practices conquered (Cordero Penín et al., 2019). The resume of the main topics is listed below.

Best practices:

- Ecosystem-based approach;
- Communication;
- Participation;
- Information;
- Co-ordination and co-operation;
- Resources.

Themes:

- Analysis phase of present and future conditions;
- Process preparation and planning phase;
- Development and implementation of the process;
- Evaluation of results.

Within MarSP Project, European Macaronesia archipelagos had the opportunity to settle the bases to MSP implementation. At present, it is time to evaluate this effort and define how to improve the advances into tangible measures to the adjacent ocean (García-Sanabria et al., 2019). García-Sanabria et al. (2019) pointed out some paths that could be addressed by MSP-OR Project, such as:

- “address the adaptation of administrative structures as part of overall institutional mechanisms”;
- look at the emerging sectors and devise new and appropriate regulations to be applied in a practical manner;

- improve communication and the generation of an environment of trust conducive to cooperation;
- *“promote mutual learning from experiences developed in the archipelagos”;*
- the importance of an open channel of dialogue to coordinate and ensure compatibility of the MSP in neighboring countries;
- *“each management plan / strategy related to the marine environment (spatial or sectorial planning) should be assessed for compatibility with complementary decisions of the neighboring country”;*
- opportunity for cross-border cooperation;
- *“nurture the process of MSP with the inclusion of public participation”.*

The MSP-OR Platform will work as a channel of communication in different levels and will create a bridge between science and management.



VIRTUAL WORKSHOP (MS5)

The “Virtual Workshop” (MS5) was realized in February 2022 and an interactive panel has held with the MSP-OR partners suggestions as following:

RULES

In the Virtual Workshop (MS5), partners contributions in the internal survey were presented (see Milestone 5 report), and the accorded Rules of the platform are:

- Respect & ethics (neutral language);
- Collaborative and respectful;
- Fulfil commitments agreed;
- Free and Public Access to published datasets, reports, or publication;
- Maintain topic related (no spam);
- To be proactive;
- Science-based.

During the interactive panel the participants were invited to include any extra rules or constrains about the platform functionalities and the main suggestions are show in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Suggestions and Platform structure & content (from Workshop MS5).

Suggestion	Platform structure /content
Set rules on what discussions can be displayed; must be aligned with MSP content (no spam).	Platform content will be focused on MSP topic.
Trained moderator to ensure full time commitment to the task.	The platform will be moderated by: MSP-OR Coordination; UAc team and Focal Points.
Organize the platform considering the MSP stages.	The platform is organized by topics (WGs) and all regions can benefit and support the activities from all MSP stages.
Instigating and maintaining dialogue - via forum.	The central room will propose themes to be discussed with the WGs, and the results will be presented in the ‘Theatre’.
Keeping the attention from the audience.	The central room will propose themes to be discussed with the WGs, and the results will be presented in the ‘Theatre’.
The moderator.	The platform will be moderated by: MSP-OR Coordination; UAc team and Focal Points.
Quality check.	Platform content will be focused on MSP topic.
Moderator supported by partners according to the issue at stake.	The platform will be moderated by: MSP-OR Coordination; UAc team and Focal Points.
Have a search engine and/or a repository of resources to facilitate finding information.	The main library and WG shelves will be a repository, with an easy search mechanism.
1 - Moderator? Changing through time? 2 - Or different? 3 - Not changing the moderator but focus on MSP; Vision always from the lens of MSP.	The platform will be moderated by: MSP-OR Coordination; UAc team and Focal Points. Platform content will be focused on MSP topic.

English could be useful for all users. Easy use of the platform for final users, intuitive.	The platform will have translations to the four working languages of the project: English, Portuguese, Spanish and French when specific stakeholders are envisaged; google translator is also highly recommended.
Exchanges and integration of regional/local knowledge on MSP practices, challenges and lessons learned.	Exchange meetings will be held in 'Theatre' monthly, and the focal points will make the connection with the central room and try to clarify specific questions or needs.
English with option to translation.	The platform will have translations to the four working languages of the project: English, Portuguese, Spanish and French when specific stakeholders are envisaged; google translator is also highly recommended.
Data? Applying recommended standards proposed by Technical Expert Group on MSP data for MSP plans.	It will be a specific Working Group on data.
Language: Depending on users' needs. Always collaborative; moderator to make sure the code of conduct is respected.	Every communication will be transparent and respectful.
Discussions focused on MSP.	Platform content will be focused on MSP topic.
Specific spaces allocated to stakeholders.	The stakeholders can be consulted in the chill out space from each WG. And the Ball Room is dedicated to general public activities.
Transparent and trackable information and data.	Every communication will be transparent and respectful.
Specify how the information is intended to be used.	The information inside the WG rooms is only available for WG Members and partners. In the main library will be only public documents.
Information would be agreed by all partners before posting.	The information inside the WG rooms is only available for WG Members and partners. In the main library will be only public documents.
Provide feedback to the participants on how their opinions are considered.	An example is this table. And future work will be communicated to the focal points, that have the mission to maintain the WGs informed.

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

The 'Virtual Workshop' participants were invited to list the Strengths and Weaknesses of the MSP-OR Platform and the synthesized answers are listed in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Strengths and Weaknesses of the MSP-OR Platform identified on MS5.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Ensuring support to another WP.	Not all stakeholders are familiarized with online tools, some of them might be underrepresented.
Distributing roles among the participants.	Channeling/ highlighting useful and effective contents to the MSP processes in ORs.
Establishing a clear vision and set of rules.	Information raised within the project is not necessarily useful in terms of institutional MSP process.
Working from a shared purpose.	Being sure that all stakeholders understand their role and are able to contribute effectively.
Good initial study!	Keep this platform alive after the project duration is a challenge!
Establishing clear backbone to the platform and assigning thematic areas.	Managing the languages: English is not enough to share with everyone.
Having a history of close cooperation.	Finding a shared approach due to the different stages in MSP.
Number of regions involved.	Working groups might present stratified information.
Making sure there is an efficient search engine within the platform.	Integrating stakeholders acting at different scales and make them work aligned.
This platform can be used on each region on a regional scale.	Different agendas/priorities.
Good overview of requirements in each site.	Not be clear on the goals of the platform.
Way of presenting data in a non-raw form, to make it more accessible.	Allocating time and resources to creating quality content.
We count with the annual Conference of Presidents of the European ORs.	Standardize/ harmonize results for each site.
Share experiences.	Different marine governance frameworks, i.e., maritime issues under one institution vs spread among different ones.
It can reach a broad audience.	Solely scientific based information, might make it inaccessible for all levels of stakeholders.
We share similar needs and challenges.	Instigating and maintaining dialogue, especially with stakeholders.

Mapping/ identification of relevant and up-to-date stakeholders to collaborate on common issues.	Difficult to manage different topics/ levels of discussions/ groups of stakeholders. Can generate overlaps.
Need to have facilitators to have the platform alive.	Human and economic resources needed in order to maintain it.
Sharing data.	Cultural issues.
Opportunities to link the platform to monitor actions in support of the EU Green Deal and Agenda 2030, including targets for sustainable management, sustainable blue economy, etc.	Not all the ORs have direct competencies in MSP processes.

SUGGESTIONS

Some suggestions were made by the participants during MS5 to improve the MSP-OR Platform.

Table 5. Suggestions to improve the MSP-OR Platform (from Workshop MS5).

Suggestions	Enact/ Solutions/ Path
Effective participation during the project implementation is a challenge in itself. I suggest giving priority to this now rather than to the long-term maintenance. For example, through returns to the participants (e.g., documents and reports on how contributions are being integrated, infographics, etc.) and updated information on what is going on.	The lobby entrance will have an open space to the public to interact and make questions that will be addressed directly to any competent WG. Besides, the Ball room will host some side events to communicate relevant public documents released. All MSP-OR partners will have the challenge to amplify the events on their social media and to the stakeholders.
The replies to the survey indicate the need to include stakeholders since the beginning.	The stakeholders, with the contribution of the MSP-OR Partners, will be informed about the launch of the platform, and will be able to access public rooms. All Working groups should use the methodology applied in MarSP (Vergílio et al., 2018) project to develop a catalogue and engage stakeholders.
Specific map viewer.	The main maps will be hosted by the website.
Make the information trackable.	In the external documents, the links will be available in libraries. The working documents from MSP-OR Activities will be registered in the blog format within the WGs.
Serve to orientate the knowledge generation towards the MSP technical and institutional needs.	The main work will be performed in the working groups and facilitated by the focal point.

Simple and easy access to information on MSP processes from the 4 ORs.	There will be specific libraries to each WG with content from the 4 ORs. The platform will be developed with an easy user-friendly layout and will include some sketcher to explain each room functionality.
Keep links with wider MSP initiatives (EU, UNESCO-IOC, other) and also with MSP national processes (FR, PT, ES).	The main library will host all those links.
Regular updates and news on OR's MSP processes.	Some pop-up (e-mail) will be available every time a new document is uploaded in the platform.
Be sure to share the best available data.	There is a specific working group (Data Knowledge) to support this task.
Easy and free access for the general public.	The platform will be developed with an easy user-friendly layout and will include some sketcher to explain each room functionality. Some of the rooms (lobby and ball room) will be available for general public at any time.
Connections with other OR initiatives.	The link to others MSP Projects will be available in the library. And some side events can be hosted in the theatre and lobby room.
Separated from the MSP OR website, but linked to it (self-identity).	It will be an external host with self-identity and the website will have a link to it.
Establishing clear roles from the very beginning among MSP-OR Partners.	The living report D2.2 "Platform Manual" will specify each activity and duties among MSP-OR Partners.
Based on existent platforms to ensure financing.	This is the formal proposal to end of the MSP-OR Project.
Guide the process or inform of the requisites to enable formal consideration of data and information (e.g. stakeholders' inputs) in the required institutional format and manner.	The Working group on Data Knowledge has the challenge to support all others WG in terms of the best inputs format.
Open Landing page. Possibility for users to add links for relevant content.	All MSP-OR Partners will be able to upload content in the library and the WG blogs.
Accessibility: Different profiles with/ without log in credentials.	Each person will have access to different rooms, depending on your role.
Platform host and future host to be in the EU, for privacy regulation purposes and ensuring open access to information paid with public funds.	The intention of the Platform is to be under EU host.
For multimedia products and maintenance: YouTube for videos and repository of publications in PDF as suggested.	The platform will host operational links to YouTube and others document. It will have a blog with shared folders and documents in the WG rooms.
Although mailing lists can be useful for public officers, the exchange and transfer of information is higher on social media.	All MSP-OR partners will have the challenge to amplify the events on their social media and to the stakeholders.

Use co-design tools for the stakeholder engagement section of the platform.	All MSP-OR partners will have the challenge to amplify the events on their social media and to the stakeholders. The rooms will have different tools to support stakeholder engagement, such: questions box, chill out spaces, event area (ball room).
Cultural events.	The cultural events can be organized at any time in the ball room (public) or Theatre (private).
Create a dynamic to arrive to a joint ocean governance vision at the end of the project.	The different WGs have the role to support the Ocean governance vision, in special the Governance agencies that will have the challenge to bring a common view to the platform.
Prioritize feedback to any interactions with the platform.	The questions and interactions will be forwarded to the specific WG, and afterwards a proper answer will be re-directed to the person that interacted.
Be referenced in all Atlantic organizations or networks websites (not only EU and OSPAR).	All MSP-OR partners will have the challenge to amplify the events on their social media and to the stakeholders.
Allow a notice/alarm system (probably email) to let participants know when new inputs are posted.	Some pop-up (e-mail) will be available every time a new document is uploaded in the platform.
Make regular polls on the platform about key topics no MSP and divulge the results.	The central room will be in charge of promoting the discussion of common questions that will be developed in each WG tailored to their specific subject the results will be presented on the Theatre room regularly.
Allow a suggestions channel once the platform goes live.	The lobby entrance will have an open space for the public to interact and make questions or suggestions. Besides, each 4 months periodic meetings will happen amongst ORs' focal points to discuss the progress and propose adjustments, if needed.

CONCLUSION

The proposed MSP-OR Platform “The ORs Ocean Governance Hub” will support and enable an ocean governance approach for the four Outermost Regions (Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands, and French Guiana). Most of the challenges and barriers were considered to address the best solution options. In a collaborative way, it will be possible to overcome most of the barriers and perform a practice example.

The main need identified as priority is the **development of capacity building and literacy** to be promoted and hosted in the platform public spaces.

Some themes were identified to be further developed in capacity building/ocean literacy activities:

- Stakeholder engagement;
- Transdisciplinary education;
- Data Knowledge generation and standardization;
- Interactive and adaptive plans;
- Ecosystem services;
- Social impact assessment;
- Emerging sectors;
- Monitoring and evaluation phase of an MSP process;

The work performed on this report will support Deliverable 2.2 “Platform Manual” and will be translated into practice through the lifetime of the platform, starting with the **capacity building/ocean literacy** themes identified to be priorities in streamlining the Platform WG.

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ANNEX 1

MSP-OR OCEAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORM

Questions from the partners

In previous correspondence, partners were asked if there were any questions to the Consortium (at this stage of the project) regarding the work others partners are developing. These are the questions:

- What is the state of play of MSP in your country?
- What kind of governance arrangements are essential for the proper integration of other EU policies (habitat's and bird's Directives, MSFD and WFD) in MSP?
- Are there any guidelines/methodology/good practices document for the development of OWE (offshore wind energies) and for the assessment of their impact (including cumulative impacts) on biodiversity and fisheries in your country/region?
- How do you implement the strategic environmental assessment of your MSP?
- Is your country considering Marine Green Infrastructure (MGI) in MSP (at legal and/or operational level)? At what phase? How? Which are the data sources? If not, is it planning to do it in the future?
- How do you tackle the issue of dealing with many different authorities (at different scales) in your country/region?
- Which type of information do you expect to see in the Governance Platform, i.e. which type of information will be useful in the framework of MSP monitoring and evaluation?



MSP-OR
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