



PRESS RELEASE

October 6th, 2023

Fundación Biodiversidad conducted two workshops to analyse the activities in the nautical-recreational and offshore wind energy sectors within the framework of maritime spatial planning in the Canary Islands.

The MSP-OR project has organized two sector-specific workshops at the headquarters of the Spanish Institute of Oceanography in Tenerife, with the primary objective of characterizing two activities related to the use of maritime space: nautical-recreational activities and the future development of offshore wind energy.

The increasing development of various economic activities related to the sea, the overlapping use of space by different sectors, and the pressure of human activities in maritime areas have created the need to plan the use of maritime space. As a result, the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Plans were approved in February 2023 for the five marine demarcations. These plans, based on a detailed diagnosis and analysis of current and future uses and their interactions, zone priority areas and high-potential zones for specific activities and uses. They also establish regulations and planning criteria, including coexistence criteria.

In this context, the MSP-OR project, aimed at promoting maritime spatial planning in outermost regions, seeks to identify and address information gaps and continue to advance the development of methodologies for a better understanding of the use of Canarian maritime space. These workshops aim to delve into the use of the nautical-recreational sector in the Canarian marine demarcation and identify new information needs arising from the future development of offshore wind energy.

On October 3rd, a workshop with the nautical-recreational sector was held, during which various methodologies developed to characterize recreational navigation and associated anchoring, as well as cetacean observation, were presented. Due to the growth of nautical-recreational activities in the Canary Islands and their mobile and seasonal nature, detailed characterization and distribution in space and time are complex. The methodologies presented were evaluated in collaboration with participants, considering their representativeness, suitability, and areas for improvement.

On October 4th, a workshop focused on the future development of offshore wind energy took place. The methodology for identifying high-potential zones from the Maritime Spatial Planning plans was shared, and additional information needs for this Canarian marine demarcation were identified.

Marine renewable energy is one of the developing sectors in the blue economy of the Canary Islands, given the favourable conditions for wind energy generation in the region. However, it is essential for these projects to be developed in a coherent and compatible manner with





the protection of environmental values and other uses and activities in the marine environment.

Social Participation

Administrative coordination and social participation are fundamental elements in the maritime spatial planning process. All these analyses within the framework of this project will contribute to a better understanding of the use of Canarian maritime space, facilitating access to information and public participation.

These workshops have involved the participation of more than 100 individuals from public administrations, the scientific community, specific socio-economic sectors, and partners of the MSP-OR project.

The results obtained will contribute to providing information for the maritime spatial planning process in the Canarian demarcation, subject to adaptive management and periodic reviews every 6 years.

The MSP-OR Project

The main objective of the MSP-OR project is to advance in the implementation of maritime planning processes and contribute to the development and improvement of marine spatial planning in the European Macaronesia and French Guiana. It supports the work of competent authorities in the establishment and adoption of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive.

The project involves 12 partners from three EU countries with outermost regions: Portugal, Spain, and France. It engages national and regional authorities responsible for territorial planning, other institutional entities, and partners with scientific and technical expertise.

The workshops were organized by the Fundación Biodiversidad and the Dirección General de Costa y el Mar del Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica y Reto Demográfico, in collaboration with the Gobierno de Canarias, through the Dirección General de Costas y Gestión del espacio marítimo canario, the Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO-CSIC), the Centro de Estudios y Experimentación de Obras Públicas (CEDEX) and the Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria, all of which are partners in the MSP-OR project.

