

## PRESS RELEASE

### MSP-OR Project Launches a Virtual Platform to increase Participatory Process on Maritime Spatial Planning in the Outermost Regions of Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands and French Guiana

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- **The MSP-OR project launches the [OR's Ocean Governance Hub](#) at the [3rd International Conference on Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning](#); a common Ocean Governance Platform to provide Member States and stakeholders with a virtual arena for discussion, knowledge generation & sharing, and capacity building on Maritime Spatial Planning.**
- **The ORs Ocean Governance Platform aims to be a perennial virtual space where the ORs can advance on cooperation actions and contribute to the [EU Green Deal](#) to achieve climate neutrality and a sustainable blue economy in the EU.**

The MSP-OR project launched a common Ocean Governance Platform with an innovative approach to provide planners, policymakers, and stakeholders of the EU's Outermost Regions a virtual arena to facilitate discussion, knowledge generation/sharing, and capacity building.

The ORs Ocean Governance Hub presents a dynamic user-friendly design resembling a 'house' with separated interconnected rooms with different purposes that will not only allow ORs to consult and store data but facilitate the interaction and align these regions to frame the process of ocean governance and MSP.

Since September 2021, the Outermost Regions of Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands and French Guiana, with the support of their Member States' national authorities (Portugal, Spain and France), joined cooperative efforts to support the implementation of the European Maritime Spatial Planning Directive in their maritime territories.

Communication between countries is fundamental to the development of transdisciplinary MSP and 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. 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 the MSP,



explained Natali Santos, the MSP-OR coordinator, of the Regional Fund for Science and Technology (FRCT).

Helena Calado, Professor at the University of the Azores and scientific consultant for the project, conceptualized the platform from the following premise "Ocean is freedom, and we wanted to assume that by organizing a very loose free space that will provide a place for all to debate on Ocean themes. That is why we created the OR's Ocean Governance Hub as a "stilt home" organized in thematic "rooms". Some of them are Working Groups to facilitate collective work, and development and monitor the outcomes of the MSP-OR Project. Furthermore, we want this platform to have a long life after the project and be hosted by the ORs". The "home" also includes a "Library" for document storage, a "Theatre" for team meetings, and a "Ball Room" for public events. The administrative, organization and dynamization challenges will be conducted and launched from the "kitchen".

Natali Santos added that this hub represents progress beyond the status quo as it builds a new collaboration and cooperation mechanism that integrates all sectors and agents in the ORs, which promote a progressive discussion on ocean governance, addressing contents developed and shared by all MSP-OR partners.

Vincent Favrel, Head of Unit Sustainable Blue Economy of CINEA - European Climate, Infrastructure and Environmental Executive Agency, says "with the launch of the Ocean Governance Platform, the MSP-OR project team has reached a major milestone. It has created an innovative tool integrating all stakeholders from the public and private sectors and academia in the Outermost Regions to support them in the implementation of their Maritime Spatial Planning processes. As the European Executive Agency funding this project, CINEA is very much pleased-with this important achievement."

The MSP-OR project, co-funded by the European Commission, invites all the MSP stakeholders to research, discuss, bring your questions and share your thoughts about this integrated ocean governance system that supports our project and the MSP implementation in the ORs.

## Media inquires:

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## Note to editors:

Access the ORs Ocean Governance Hub here: <https://platform.misp-or.eu>

Know more about the project here: <https://misp-or.eu/>

