

# Study on Integrating an Ecosystem-based Approach into Maritime Spatial Planning

*Black Sea: Integrating an ecosystem-based approach into maritime spatial planning*  
*Use of existing legislation:*  
*Overview of the regional sea workshop on 27 January 2021*



***Black Sea: Integrating an ecosystem-based approach into  
maritime spatial planning: Use of existing legislation***

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## 1 BACKGROUND

The framework established under the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive (2014/89/EU) is “aimed at promoting the sustainable growth of maritime economies, the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources” (Art. 1(1)). In preparing and implementing their plans, Member States should apply “an ecosystem-based approach” (Art. 5(1)).

Specific attention thus is given to supporting the application of ecosystem-based approaches (EBA) in MSP to ensure the functioning of ecosystems and biodiversity are well accounted for. However, the practical application of EBA remains challenging, with limited practical examples on how to make it operational in a European context. The Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME) on behalf of DG MARE (Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) has established a specific service contract to conduct a study on the concrete application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP. The main objective is to propose feasible and practical approaches and guidelines for applying the EBA in MSP with the presently available information and a practical method or tool for evaluating, monitoring and review the application of EBA in MSP. The study is coordinated by Milieu Consulting SRL with the following partners, ACTeon, Baltijas Vides Forums, Stichting Wageningen Research and Fresh-Thoughts Consulting GmbH.

Case studies focusing on different European regional seas are being carried out, including one case study on the Black Sea. The focus of this Black sea case study is to **investigate how the requirements and instruments of the existing legal framework address the management of (marine and coastal) ecosystems and resources**. It looks in particular at how the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), NATURA 2000 and biodiversity legislation (Habitats/Birds Directives), as well as Integrated Coastal Management (ICM), **can support and facilitate the application of EBA in MSP, including in a transboundary context**.

In this context, a **stakeholder workshop** on 27 January 2021 from 13.00 to 17.00 EET was **organised** to discuss **how best to seize the opportunities offered by the implementation of the existing policy framework to support the application of EBA in MSP in the Black Sea**. The detailed program can be found in the Annex.

## 2 KEY MESSAGES FROM THE SPEAKERS

The presentations given can be found at <https://msp-eba-black-sea.fresh-thoughts.eu/programme/>.

Based on the presentations given, the following key messages have been derived.

### 2.1 WELCOME

**Celine Frank (European Commission, DG MARE)** highlighted key elements that can be used when implementing the EBA requirements in EU Legislation, including the MSP Directive. These are for example: the use of sensitivity/pressure maps and sensitivity matrix and scores (each ecosystem components vs individual pressure), tools like ecosystem services assessments, cumulative Impact assessment (CIA) and scenario analysis.

She further highlighted the role of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet), a network of organisations that work together to observe the sea, process data according to international standards and make that information freely available as interoperable data layers and data products.

**Marijana Mance (European Commission, DG Environment)** highlighted the important links between MSFD and MSPD, which include:

- the value of the MSFD marine assessments when designing maritime plans;
- the use of maritime planning (both the plans and the process) as input for MSFD programmes of measures

She also highlighted the importance of "land-sea interactions" when developing MSP:

- Respect MS' responsibility for terrestrial ("town and country") planning
- Facilitate understanding of what "land-sea interactions" might mean in the context of MSP
- Acknowledge that coastal zones are environmentally sensitive, economically productive and socially / culturally / historically unique.

**Irina Makarenko (Black Sea Commission)** highlighted the importance of the Black Sea Commission for cooperation on the different policy processes of the bordering counties, including its role to promote and support ICM.

### 2.2 IMPLEMENTING EXISTING EU POLICIES RELEVANT TO MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING: STATE OF PLAY

**Angel Gyorev, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria** showed the status of the MARSPLAN Project, presenting an overview of the activities undertaken and those underway.

**Laura Alexandrov and Laura Boicenco, National Institute for Marine Research and**

**Development "Grigore Antipa"**, presented the use of ecosystem approaches in the MSFD and MSP in Romania. They made clear that there are MSP/MSFD areas of joint interest, namely more efficient & sustainable management of marine resources.

**Tanya Milkova**, Fresh Thoughts, presented the Bulgarian experience in WFD implementation and how each stage of this process reflects the ecosystem approach. She drew attention to the methodological framework and information base used in the characterization and assessment of impacts on aquatic ecosystems, and the planning of the necessary measures, emphasizing the importance of proper monitoring with an appropriate spatial and temporal resolution allowing for sufficient confidence of the status assessment.

**Dimitrina Chakarova**, Executive Agency of Fisheries and Aquacultures, Bulgaria presented instruments ensuring the application of the ecosystem approach in the implementation of the CFP, including regulatory mechanisms oriented to biodiversity preservation and sustainable exploitation of marine biological resources, and the areas of interactions with MSFD.

**Nikolay Valchev**, Institute of Oceanology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, presented the EU MSP Platform, for which he is the focal point for the Black Sea, possible relations with MARSPLANII and the information and support that the Platform can offer those working on EBA and MSP in the region.

## 2.3 HOW CAN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORK HELP TO SUPPORT EBA IN MSP? STATUS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

**Tanya Milkova**, Fresh Thoughts presented some key findings of the case study underway. She made a brief overview of the relationships between individual policy elements, along with a summary of the findings of MSP progress for the two Black Sea Member States, bringing attention to the areas of integration necessary or already achieved through the implementation of the MSFD, WFD, BHD, and CFP. These findings will be further developed and will be enriched by the discussions of the workshop.

### 3 KEY FINDINGS

From the discussion, the following key findings relevant to the case study have been identified. The full reflection of the discussion held can be found on PowerPoint slides available here <https://msp-eba-black-sea.fresh-thoughts.eu/programme/>

#### 3.1 CAPTURING THE COMPLEXITY OF ECOSYSTEMS

- The **current monitoring data** that exist for marine ecosystems are insufficient to make representative assessments that help capture the spatial diversity of these ecosystems. Still, the use of **data for MSFD descriptors coming from existing monitoring programs** is recognized as an essential step in bringing the 'ecosystem approach' in the drafting of the MSP in Bulgaria and Romania.
- Strong links are required between the **MSFD and the MSP** in terms of data exchange on pressures on marine ecosystems, ecosystem functioning and relation to human activities.
- The complexity of ecosystems is not well understood by all – including by stakeholders mobilized in the MSP process. Thus, efforts are required to enhance “marine ecosystem literacy” for all stakeholders involved are relevant for both Romania and Bulgaria.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) can address EBA, including cumulative pressures. Therefore, it is a key instrument that can support the integration of EBA in the MSP process.

#### 3.2 GIVING ATTENTION TO THE HUMAN-ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIONS AND INTEGRATION

- Socio-economic data related to different sectors are gathered and kept by different institutions. There is no common practice to share these data or to publish it.
- The future of marine activities needs to be considered when designing an MSP, including in relation to the ambition of the Green Deal (which is expected to impact significantly the growth of “blue” power, aquaculture and potentially other marine activities). We need to better consider how sectors will want to develop in the marine environment (including when these developments are linked to sectoral directives and strategies) so we can allocate these future developments to areas where there is the lowest (no) negative environmental impact.
- More attention is required to set the interface between ICM and MSP and find ways to better address the land-sea interface. Information on land-based activities and pressures can come from the WFD and MSFD. However, information gathered for these Directives do not provide all relevant information, e.g. there is not enough information on litter (quantity and type) that is discharged from land.

#### 3.3 ORGANIZING THE MSP PROCESS

- Formal governance mechanisms are required for mobilising different sectors in the MSP process and supporting inter-sectoral integration. In Romania, for example, the sustainable exploitation of resources in the fisheries sector is defined by a common order for fisheries

developed jointly by the Agriculture and Environment Ministries, building on studies done by scientific institutes (endorsed by the Academy). The application of this common order is expected to lead to improvements in fish stocks and related MSFD indicators.

- It is important that professionals (fishers, tourism, maritime transport...) from all sectors are made aware of the MSP role and objectives.
- Stakeholder mobilization requires mechanisms for bringing up ideas from a wider group of people, including via small meetings at local levels with good facilitators and communicators, building e.g. on existing networks of facilitators and sectors in and across countries (such as FARNET). It is important that government officials have dedicated times to put the MSP stakeholder process in place, and that sufficient (human) resources are allocated to facilitation. It is essential to avoid putting in place a stakeholder process that (a) does not have any follow-up and feedbacks (e.g. explaining its results and implications) and (b) delivers a strategy that nobody applies!
- New mechanisms are required to better connect “terrestrial” and “marine/maritime” planning processes.

### 3.4 THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COMMISSIONS

- The Black Sea Commission needs additional resources for improving its capacity, impact and political ambition, including on MSP.
- The Black Sea Commission could strengthen its connections and collaborations with regional fisheries organisations.
- It can plan the role of international coordinator for the implementation of MSFD and MSP. In particular, it can support the adoption of a soft agreement among all riparian countries (including non-EU countries) that includes the key principles of both directives and that can drive collective actions including from non-EU countries.
- It is important that the Black Sea Commission supports all countries with the “sharing of experience” on concrete projects and for concrete learning possibilities.

## 4 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The following participants attended the workshop.

	Title	First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Member State
1	Ms.	Valeria	ABAZA	INCDM Grigore Antipa	Romania
2	Mr.	Paul	Adjin-Tetty	Fisheries Commission	Ghana
3	Ms.	Laura	ALEXANDROV	NCDM G.Antipa	Romania
4	Ms.	Ilze	Atanasova	Marine Cluster Bulgaria	Bulgaria
5	Mr.	Andrea	Barbanti	CNR-ISMAR	Italy
6	Ms.	Tatiana	Begun	GeoEcoMar	Romania
7	Mr.	Dimitar	Berov	IBER-BAS	Bulgaria
8	Ms.	Laura	Boicenco	NIMRD	Romania
9	Ms.	Cristina	Cervera Núñez	Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO)	Spain
10	Ms.	Dimitrina	Chakarova	EAFA	Bulgaria
11	Ms.	Anja	Detant	EASME	Belgium
12	Mr.	Boyko	Doychinov	Regional Cluster "North-East"	Bulgaria
13	Mr.	Mario	Doychinov	Blue Growth Society	Bulgaria
14	Ms.	Nadezhda	Drumeva	Black Sea Basin Directorate	Bulgaria
15	Mr.	Thomas	Dworak	Fresh-Thoughts Consulthng GmbH	Austria
16	Ms.	Natalia	Fedoronchuk	NorGeoEcoCentr	Ukraine
17	Ms.	Céline	Frank	European Commission	Belgium
18	Mr.	Tiago	Garcia	IOC-UNESCO / MSPglobal Consultant	France
19	Mr.	Guillermo	Gea	Milieu Consulting	Belgium
20	Mr.	Bogdan	Ghinea	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration	Romania
21	Mr.	Serge	Gomes da Silva	eellogic	France
22	Mr.	Mamuka	GVILAVA	BSC ICZM Advisory Group Member, ICZM National Focal Point for Georgia	Georgia
23	Mr.	Angel	Gyorev	Ministry of regional development and public works	Bulgaria
24	Ms.	Firdaous	Halim	IOC-UNESCO / MSPglobal Consultant.	France
25	Ms.	Yoanna	Ivanova	Association "Forum"	Bulgaria
26	Ms.	Kristel	Jurado	EASME - European Commission	Belgium
27	Ms.	Tamara	Kukovska	SSIMariGeoEcoCenter NAS Ukraine	Ukraine
28	Ms.	EVGENIA	LAGIOU	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY	Greece
29	Ms.	Gloria	Lazaro	Plan Bleu UNEP/MAP	France
30	Mr.	Dan	Lear	EMODnet Biology/MBA	United Kingdom
31	Ms.	Marina	Lipizer	OGS	Italy
32	Ms.	Iryna	Makarenko	Black Sea Commission	Turkey



33	Ms.	Marijana	Mance	European Commission	Belgium
34	Ms.	Michaela	Matauschek	Fresh Thoughts Consulting	Austria
35	Mr.	Meth	Methodieff	FARNET	Bulgaria
36	Ms.	Otilia	Mihail	Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests	Romania
37	Ms.	Tanya	Milkova	Fresh-Thoughts Consulting GmbH	Austria
38	Ms.	Eolina	Milova	World Bank	International
39	Ms.	Mihaela	Mirea	Mare Nostrum NGO	Romania
40	Ms.	Leila	Neimane	University of Latvia	Latvia
41	Mr.	Oleksandr	Neprokin	Ukrainian Scientific Centre of Ecology of the Sea	Ukraine
42	Mr.	Florent	NICOLAS	HELCOM Secretariat	International
43	Ms.	Marina	Panayotova	Institute of oceanology - BAS	Bulgaria
44	Ms.	Monika	Peterlin	EEA	Denmark
45	Mr.	Alessandro	Pititto	EMODnet Human Activities	Italy
46	Mr.	Marko	Prem	UNEP/MAP Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC)	Croatia
47	Ms.	Fatima	RAHMANI	Département of fisheries	Morocco
48		JUAN	RONCO	EU COMMISSION	International
49	Mr.	Oleg	RUBEL	Institute of market problems and Economic-Ecological reserches of Ukraine	Ukraine
50	Mr.	Edmond	Sanganyado	Shantou University	China
51	Mr.	Siegfried A,	Schmuck	Pew Charitable Trusts	Belgium
52	Ms.	Dieynaba	Seck	Centre de Suivi Écologique	Senegal
53	Ms.	Zeljka	Skaricic	PAP/RAC - UNEP/MAP	Croatia
54	Mr.	Henrik	Skovmark	Danish Maritime Authority	Denmark
55	Mr.	Thanos	Smanis	CLIMAZUL	Greece
56	Ms.	Margarita	Stancheva	Center for Coastal and Marine Studies (CCMS)	Bulgaria
57	Ms.	Elena	Stoyanova	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works	Bulgaria
58	Mr.	CONSTANTIN	STROIE	NATIOAL AGENCY FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE - NAFA Romania	Romania
59	Mr.	Pierre	Strosser	ACTeon	France
60	Mr.	Adrian	Teaca	GeoEcoMar	Romania
61	Mr.	Obed	Timakata	Organic Fish + Farm Mariculture Enterprise	Vanuatu
62	Ms.	Vesselina	Troeva	National Centre for Regional Development	Bulgaria
63	Ms.	Natasa	Vaidianu	Ovidius University of Constanta	Romania
64	Mr.	Nikolay	Valchev	Institute of Oceanology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	Bulgaria
65	Mr.	Tom	Woolley	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Ireland
66	Mr.	Tony	Zamparutti	Milieu Consulting	Belgium
67	Ms.	Sofiia	Zherebchuk	National antarctic research center	Ukraine

## Programme

Time	Content
12.45-13.00	<b>Initiation of the virtual workshop</b> (Thomas Dworak, Fresh Thoughts)
13.00-13.25	<b>Welcome</b> Celine Frank (European Commission, DG Mare) Marijana Mance (European Commission, DG Environment) Irina Makarenko (Black Sea Commission)
13.25-13.30	<b>Setting the scene to the workshop</b> Tony Zamparutti, Milieu LTD & Pierre Strosser, ACTeon
13.30-14.15	<b>Implementing existing EU policies relevant to Maritime Spatial Planning: State of Play</b> Status of the MARSPLAN Project (Angel Gyorev, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria) Ecosystem approaches in the MSFD and MSP in Romania (Laura Alexandrov and Laura Boicenco, National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa") Ecosystem approach in light of the WFD - Bulgarian experience in coastal areas (Tanya Milkova, Fresh Thoughts) Ecosystem approaches in the CFP (Dimitrina Chakarova, Executive Agency of Fisheries and Aquacultures, Bulgaria) The EU MSP Platform and possible relation with MARSPLANII (Nikolay Valchev, Institute of oceanology -BAS)
14.15-14.30	<b>How can the implementation of the existing policy framework help to support EBA in MSP?</b> Status of the assessment of the current situation (Tanya Milkova, Fresh Thoughts)
14.30-14.45	<b>Break</b>
14.45-14.50	<b>Introduction to the Working session</b> (Thomas Dworak, Fresh Thoughts)
14.50-16.55	Three topics discussed guided by a set of key questions. The main aim of these discussions is to identify how best to seize opportunities offered by other policies for supporting ecosystem-based approaches in Maritime Spatial Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capturing the complexity of ecosystems:</b> including ecological integrity and biodiversity, ecosystem connections, the dynamic nature of ecosystems</li> <li>• <b>Giving attention to the human-ecosystem connections and integration:</b> consider cumulative impacts, identify ecosystem services and beneficiaries, account for global socio-economic changes, account for social/economic/environmental aspects in assessments carried out to define rules for sharing space and management, ensure interdisciplinarity in science that translate biophysical and human/decision-making processes....</li> <li>• <b>Organizing the MSP process:</b> stakeholder mobilization, science-policy interface, synergies with other (sector/environmental) policy processes to deliver “integrated management” of space, coherence between the governance established and the functioning and dynamics of the human-ecological system.</li> </ul>