



## Conference on “The interlink between MSFD and MSP”

LIFE+ Biodiversity project “MARMONI – Innovative marine biodiversity indicators and monitoring and assessment of conservation status of nature values in the Baltic Sea” (Project no. LIFE09 NAT/LV/000238)

Estonia-Latvia Programme project “Coastal and maritime spatial planning in Pärnu Bay area in Estonia and coastal municipalities of Latvia”

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**Report**

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## **Goals of the workshop:**

- To identify and analyse the relationships between MSP and MSFD as well as to assess if MSP can function as a tool to implement MSFD;
- To listen to first experiences and considerations for an integrative approach of implementation of the two directives by institutional setup in MS;
- To highlight differences and similarities for data and information needs in MSFD and MSP;
- To discuss the role of stakeholders in data and information supply and management for MSFD and MSP.

**Opening: introduction to the MARMONI; objectives of the workshop, participants of the event,** by *Heidrun Fammler, Baltic Environmental Forum, MARMONI project manager*

Heidrun Fammler introduced the MARMONI project (activities and results so far, relation to MSFD and MSP) and gave an overview on the goals, participants and agenda of the conference.

More information on the MARMONI project can be found at <http://marmoni.balticseaportal.net>.

**Welcome of the participants and a brief about to the project “Coastal and maritime spatial planning in Pärnu Bay area in Estonia and coastal municipalities of Latvia”,** by *Kristiāns Godiņš, Kurzeme planning region, Head of Administration, Estonia-Latvia project*

Kristiāns Godiņš welcomed the participants from the side of the Estonia-Latvia Programme project “Coastal and maritime spatial planning in Pärnu Bay area in Estonia and coastal municipalities of Latvia”. He introduced the Kurzeme planning region and the Estonia-Latvia project.

Latvia is divided in 5 planning regions of which Kurzeme planning region has the longest coastline - 350 km. Estonia-Latvia project (July 2012 – June 2015) is carried out in Kurzeme and Pärnu regions. The objective of the project is to carry out pilot projects for resolving conflicts between different sector-based activities and plan the future use of sea space in Pärnu Bay area and develop Latvian coastal areas towards better accessibility, sustainable usage of terrestrial and marine resources and mitigation of climate changes. More information on the project can be found at <http://coastalandmaritime.wordpress.com/>.

The project activities include preparation of a maritime spatial plan and a strategic environmental assessment for Pärnu Bay area; development of methodologies on maritime spatial planning and functional linkage between marine and coastal areas, guidelines for minimisation of coastal erosion, management plans for Natura 2000 areas in Latvia and pilot actions in Latvian coastal municipalities (Pāvilosta, Roja, Engure).

K. Godiņš stressed the importance of transboundary co-operation and having common vision and common strategy for managing the Baltic Sea that is our common value. The Estonia-Latvia project is contributing to that by joint work, experience exchange and development of methodologies and guidelines that can be used also by other countries.

## ***Session I: Analysis of the interlink between MSP and MSFD***

**The interlink between MSFD and MSP.** *Key-note by the European Commission*

*Sylvain Gambert, European Commission, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries*

Mr. Gambert introduced the Blue Growth Strategy and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) forming the background for the new Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD), and gave an overview on the obligations, timing and objectives of maritime spatial planning set by the MSPD.

The Blue Growth Strategy - the maritime pillar of the Europe 2020 - was endorsed by the Member States with Limassol Declaration in 2012. The MSP Directive (Directive 2014/89/EU) entered into force in September 2014. The Directive requires Member States to transpose it into national legislation and establish relevant competent authorities by 2016 and to set up the maritime spatial plans for all marine waters (coastal, territorial and EEZ) by 2021.

The objectives of MSP should be consistent with GES. The objectives include applying ecosystem approach and contributing to protection of environment as well as to sustainable development of sea-use sectors (energy, transport, fisheries & aquaculture etc.).

MSP can be part of MSFD programmes of measures if it contributes to achievement of GES. Mr. Gambert stressed that there is no hierarchy between MSFD and MSPD but they are interlinked, also there is interlink to Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

The Member States should co-operate to ensure coherence of maritime spatial plans and use the best available data and organise the sharing of information.

*Rhona Fairgrieve, European Commission, Directorate General for Environment*

Mrs. Fairgrieve informed about the current status of implementation of the MSFD and the results of the summary evaluation of the Member States' initial assessments. She also explained the joint interests and interlinkages of documents regulating management of marine and coastal areas: MSFD, MSPD, WFD, ICZM.

MSFD is the environmental pillar of the Integrated Maritime Policy that sets the time table to achieve GES. Now the Member States have reached the stage of taking action – initial assessments of marine waters and monitoring programmes are done; the programmes of measures under preparation. The European Commission has assessed the assessments of Member States and the results show that in general EU marine waters are not in GES. Also it was concluded that there could be better public consultation, better integration of other policy documents (WFD, Habitats Directive, and Common Fisheries Policy) and more co-operation in Regional Sea Conventions.

MSFD, MSPD, WFD are all seeking for more efficient and sustainable management of marine resources based on ecosystem based approach. Comparison of MSFD and MSPD shows that they both mention use of existing/best available data, involvement of all interested parties and need for co-operation of Member States. The data gathered for one directive can be used also for others. Spatial planning measures are mentioned under MSFD Art. 13 on Programmes of Measures.

Maritime spatial plans can and should contribute to GES and at the same time the sea uses also depend on/benefit from GES. MSFD is framework legislation; MSPD is too but for a very specific point. MSFD can influence what planning decisions should deliver.

To fulfil the requirements of different directives with limited resources of Member States it is recommended to use the synergies – e.g. draft MSP so that they deliver GES as well as balance the sea uses; undertake public participation and stakeholder engagement to explain linkages between policies.

Discussion:

- The different timelines of MSFD and MSPD were pointed out. How can MSP contribute to GES if GES must be achieved by 2020 but maritime spatial plans developed by 2021?
  - MSP should support GES. 2021 is the latest deadline for MSP but some Member States are more advanced and some maritime spatial plans are developed already. MSP is part of MSFD Programmes of Measures but not the only measure.
  - The draft Scottish MSP (plan for offshore wind in Scottish waters) was mentioned as a practical example on how MSP can contribute to GES. It shows that it is possible to combine GES and Blue Growth objectives. Development of Scottish MSP started in 2009 but it is still not confirmed.
- National MSPs will be submitted to the European Commission, how the review process will be?
  - EC will not review the substance of plans but the process, cross sectoral coordination etc.
- A lot of data are produced by different projects but there is still always the problem that there is not enough data.
  - Best available data should be used. There is a need for new, good data but the existing data should be made more accessible.
- It has been said that research is not a part of Programme of Measures. At the same time it has been emphasized that it should be highlighted if this is a problem.
  - Research is not a measure but EC needs to be informed if there is really not enough data for making the Programmes of Measures

**MSP and MSFD processes in Germany: the current situation and ideas for integration, by Holger Janßen, The Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research, Warnemünde, Germany**

Holger Janßen informed about the current situation in Germany concerning MSP and MSFD; explained the differences in concepts of MSP and MSFD; highlighted the challenges related to MSP and proposed some potential solutions.

There are 4 MSP laws, 5 maritime spatial plans (the first one from 2004), 4 major MSP authorities and 9 MSFD authorities in Germany. The federal government is responsible for guiding principles for spatial planning, general planning law and maritime spatial planning in the EEZ. The States are responsible for MSP in their waters.

The difference of the MSP and MSFD concepts is that MSP is seen as a tool to find compromise/balance between environmental, social and economic issues (environment is seen as one sector) while the MSFD concept says that environment is the basis that cannot be compromised.

However, MSP can contribute to MSFD goals and an MSP, which is against MSFD goals will not be successful in long-term.

The main challenges include low quality of existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs); integration of MSP and MPA designation and management; integration of environmental conditions, processes and impacts in MSP processes; low quality of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA); integration of ecosystem services in MSP, and transboundary planning

Many studies say that MPAs have a wrong focus, Natura 2000 network should be reformed because it does not work. To achieve the goals of MPA network, it should be integrated it in larger management networks like MSP and ICZM.

Also, it is problematic that SEA is done too late when it cannot influence the plan outcome. Ecosystem services (e.g. filtration capacity of sediment or macrophytes, spawning areas etc.) should be considered already in the planning phase.

MSP is more likely to have cross-border effects than terrestrial planning, so it is important to involve the affected stakeholders also in other countries.

Discussion:

- Integration of MSFD and MSP implementation in Germany?
  - There is no official integration but there are some unofficial working groups.

**Linking MSFD and MSP in Sweden, by Jan Schmidtbauer Crona, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management**

Jan Schmidtbauer Crona presented the links between MSFD and MSP implementation in Sweden, analysed the relevance of different MSFD descriptors for MSP, informed about preliminary Swedish Programme of Measures and the challenges faced as well as stressed the importance of considering GES objectives in MSP.

Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) is responsible for implementation of both, the MSFD and MSPD (however, there are different units). There is a lot of potential for integration.

In spring 2015 public participation for both, MSFD programmes of measures and MSP programmes is planned in Sweden. Monitoring programmes are currently linked partly to MSP but this link should be strengthened. Concerning Programme of Measures, the measures that need allocated marine space are linked to MSP.

The MSP-relevance of different MSFD descriptors is different. The speaker evaluated biological diversity (D1), population of commercial fish/shellfish (D3), sea floor integrity (D6), alteration of hydrographical conditions (D7) and introduction of energy, including underwater noise (D11) as most relevant for MSP.

The preliminary Swedish MSFD Programme of Measures includes increase of marine protected areas from the current 6,4% to 10% and also measures related to physical and biological impacts. Research is included in supplementary measures as it is basis for both, MSFD and MSP.

SwAM is trying to communicate both, MSFD programmes of measures and MSP at the same time. However, it is quite complicate because there are a lot of unanswered issues.

The main thing is to consider GES objectives, which is the connecting link between MSFD and MSP (the "GES-heart").

Discussion:

- Does Sweden have enough data to make good background for MSP?
  - Sweden is not a frontrunner regarding data. SwAM will use the existing data and identify the additional data needs. Problematic is that SwAM does not have bathymetry data.
- There is never enough data but there are quite good models to forecast everything we need. It is important to have proper impact assessments, try to forecast the effects of all possible actions, to create MSP contributing to GES. The existing data and models, info on best practices should be shared.
  - There are actually much more data and models existing than can be handled in an efficient MSP process. In reality MSP has to find a compromise that most of stakeholders can agree with. It is a societal decision, not only expert discussion. It has to be explained to the public.
- Every country defines GES differently. It would be good to have common GES agreed between countries.

**In which ways MSP can (or cannot) support implementation of the MSFD?, by Riku Varjopuro, SYKE, Finland**

R. Varjopuro compared the objectives of the MSFD and MSP, analysed MSP's contribution to MSFD objectives and highlighted some limitations of MSP in delivering GES. He also introduced the Human pressure index method that is currently under development.

The presentation was based on the following sources:

Gilbert, Alexander, Sarda, Brazinskaite, Fischer, Gee, Los, Jessop, Kershaw, O'Mahony, March, Pihlajamäki, Rees, Varjopuro (in press). "Marine Spatial Planning and Good Environmental Status: a perspective on spatial and temporal dimensions" *Ecology & Society*

Korpinen, Varjopuro, Nurmi, Jääskeläinen, et al. (forthcoming). "Human pressure index method. Application for spatial planning."

**A critical analysis of the potential of MSP to contribute to a healthy Baltic Sea, by Johan Näslund, AquaBiota Water Research, Sweden**

J. Näslund analysed the requirements and interlinks of MSFD and Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD) as well as highlighted some problems related to practical implementation of both directives and applying ecosystem approach in maritime spatial planning.

MSFD and MSPD are both framework directives leaving a lot of policy/legal space for Member States in their implementation. MSFD is the environmental pillar of MSPD, which is implemented differently in countries. In principle, the Member States with small maritime industries (e.g. Sweden) more likely apply 'hard' sustainability (environment is the basis for MSP) and Member States with large maritime industries (e.g. UK, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands) 'soft' sustainability (environment is considered as one of the sectors). But for sustainable use of the sea *ecosystem based approach* as defined by MSFD Article 1 shall be used.

However, the scenarios developed for the Baltic Sea show that even if the Baltic Sea Action Plan measures would be fully implemented, the large part of the Baltic Sea would still not be healthy by 2050 due to historical loads and negative feedback loop.

The problems of implementing ecosystem approach in practice are related to legal and political limitations for setting 'environmental' MSP measures (e.g. marine traffic, fisheries are regulated centrally). Also there are some problems that cannot be solved with MSP (e.g. protection of harbour porpoise). The question is:

do we accept non-sustainable level of GES if we see that the favourable conservation status cannot be achieved?

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are considered as the key measure to contribute to GES but often the efficiency of this measure is questionable and there are a lot of unclear issues related to it. Another problematic issue is assessment of cumulative impacts.

The speaker concluded that MSP is a powerful tool for managers but it cannot solve all problems related to the health of the Baltic Sea. Ecosystem based MSP should consider local ecosystem properties when planning the sea use activities (e.g. in areas with eutrophication problems it is not wise to plan fish farms). Successful MSP requires governance on several levels and also making some difficult decisions and compromises.

Discussion:

- HELCOM-VASAB road map was developed in co-operation of environmentalists and planners.
- The presentation was a critical view. However, despite of some problems, MSP and MSFD are good tools that the governments should use.

### **MSFD and MSP: Which is the more dominant and practicable contributor to maritime policy?**

*by Clare Fitzsimmons, Newcastle University, UK*

Clare Fitzsimmons presented the results from a research paper published in "Marine Policy" Brennan et al., 2013. MSFD and MSP: Which is the more dominant and practicable contributor to maritime policy? This paper explains MSFD and MSP, examines their relationship, and compares their practicability, concluding that MSP is both the more dominant and the more practicable instrument, reflecting the UK's preference for sustainable development over conservationism in marine policy.

The study was based on interviews with stakeholders from two industries active in the UK marine environment (aggregate dredging and renewable energy), trade bodies, consultants, environmental non-governmental organisations, governmental conservation agencies, and academics studying marine policy. The study was carried out in 2012 - before the adoption of the MSP Directive.

The interviews showed that people had some concerns about MSFD, e.g. what are the benefits for sustainable development or what is GES (pristine, sustainable or status quo?). Everybody cited data deficiency as the root of problems. A push from government would be needed to even contribution of different sectors in data collection. MSP's integrative role was supported by people – coordination of sectoral activities was considered to be necessary.

The speaker concluded that although both are flawed instruments, MSFD suffers from more weaknesses than MSP. The deficiencies of MSFD include lack of clarity about the meaning of GES; tension between scientific and normative criteria for baselines/reference conditions; problems of consistency with other EU directives (e.g. WFD) and policies (e.g. CFP); opacity on how to implement the ecosystem-based approach; difficulties of engaging stakeholders in decision making; lack of a level playing field between different marine users; open-endedness of opt-out clauses; obstacles to inter-state harmonisation; data deficiency; and lack of political will.

The deficiencies of MSP include the ambiguity of its role (especially whether it is the slave or master of MSFD); its alleged redundancy; its limited room for manoeuvre; its fraudulent claim to neutrality; the unfairness of its prioritisations; its democratic deficit; its self-contradiction between flexibility and uniformity; and its lack of a legal framework. It seems that the deficiencies of MSFD are more intractable than are the deficiencies of MSP, many of which (such as the lack of legal authority) are already being dealt with.

Because the UK government has chosen to interpret MSP less as a means of implementing MSFD than as a means of adapting MSFD into the UK environmental culture of balancing environmental objectives against socio-economic objectives, MSFD is likely to have a minimal economic impact on either the aggregate dredging sector or the wind farm sector in the UK.

The fact that the European Commission has proposed a new directive to give legal status to MSP and integrated coastal management reinforces the UK's strategy of prioritising sustainable development over conservationism in its application of MSFD.

MSP Directive 2014 sets minimum requirements for the drawing up of national maritime spatial plans. As many of the activities run across national borders, the Directive will help Member States co-operate better.

Discussion:

- The study was mostly based on interviews of two sectors (aggregate dredging and renewable energy), which gave information from industry perspective. Industries want certainty to make economic decisions.

### **Panel discussion on integration of the implementation of MSP and MSFD**

*The panelists: Inguna Urtane (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia), Anni Konsap (Ministry of Interior, Estonia), Jan Schmidtbauer Crona (Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management), Rhona Fairgrieve (European Commission, Directorate General for Environment), Sylvain Gambert (European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries)*

- In **Latvia** there have been already some projects like BaltSeaPlan integrating stakeholders into MSP, so the stakeholders know what it is. Also the legal frame for MSP is established on national level, the plan will be adopted by government. Probably it will not be a neutral tool because there are some industries competing for the marine space. There will be tensions between sectors. Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development tries to apply ecosystem based approach and elaborate some tools for decision-making.
- **Estonia:** The most important question is what the aim of MSP is. If it is about setting environmental restrictions for different sectors then MSP will be a negative thing for most of stakeholders. If the aim of MSP is to give certainty and added value to use the sea areas then it will be positive thing for everyone using marine areas.
- In **Sweden**, MSFD and elaboration of GES is quite expert-focused (traditional environmental management side), MSP is more balancing different interests. Even in SwAM and ministries there are different views. From perspective of the Ministry of Environment the environment is setting principle goals for development. Ministry of Enterprise is developing maritime strategy and MSP with the aim of creating jobs, blue growth. We have to handle these different perspectives. Ecosystem services can be a way out, to get at least a bit win-win situation – to show that development and our welfare are depending on ecosystem services.
- **R. Fairgrieve:** MSP is more practical and therefore easier to understand for stakeholders than MSFD. UK marine planning is based on expectation that all current activities can continue in the areas where they are practiced unless they have significant negative environmental impacts. The key aspect in the national approach is balancing the activities. Compromises are inevitable but compromises can still be a win-win situation. MSP has also a considerable background in Integrated Coastal Zone Management and in the last few years also marine planning in Scotland. England has taken a regional approach to plan for all coastal and offshore activities.
- **S. Gambert:** MSFD is much more flexible tool than MSP Directive. For the MSFD the Programmes of Measures are not developed yet. The MSFD process so far was focused on environmental issues like defining GES etc. that are very difficult to understand for stakeholders.
- In **Estonia** Ministry of Interior is responsible for MSP. MSP is seen as a balancing act between different sectors and aspects (environmental, social, and economic). Ministry of Interior has a good position to integrate all different aspects because it is not a sectoral ministry. Environment is a very important part of it because it sets limits how far can we go with the use of marine areas.
- In **Latvia** Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is responsible for MSP. It is good to have environment and regional development in one ministry to ensure better cooperation (even under one roof there are sometimes problems with communication between different units). MSP process starts in beginning of 2015, hopefully there will be more cooperation and communication between environmental and regional development units then. There is a need to convert environmental data into a format that can be used for planning (maps).
  - Spatial planning is not the point that the environmentalists work with. MSP is about planning new activities for which there are often no data to build the impact forecasts.



MSFD is talking also about land sources. If we will plan something having negative impact on marine environment then somebody will pay for it. If we plan new activities we need more data about impacts.

- **Sweden:**
  - Converting environmental info into spatial planning thinking is an issue also in Sweden. If we would have spatial info on GES and also some understanding of what is required to maintain it then it could be basis for development. Also development can benefit of better knowledge on environment – e.g. to find out where are better possibilities for development. It is important to continue the work with data, to do the holistic analysis.
  - We do not know yet how much data is needed to backup MSP. The situation regarding data availability is different in different counties – much better in counties where mapping and modelling projects have taken place. Dialogue with SwAM on completing the mapping is going on.
  - Forecasting for MSP? – it is possible to make some scenarios, e.g. on climate change, but scenarios are only scenarios.
- GES is the target of MSFD and also focus of MSP. It is not so clear what it means, there are different interpretations in countries and even inside the countries. How can the sea uses be planned so that they will not harm GES if there is no common understanding on what GES is? Should we have a pragmatic agreement?
  - There are many scientific opinions. From EC perspective, definition of GES is delegated to the Member States and they should cooperate with neighbouring countries in order to come to common understanding. Pragmatic approach and compromises are needed in MSP as well as in MSFD.
  - There might be also situations where MSP and MSFD are in contradiction. Then there are two options: not to use that resource or redefine GES for that resource - depending on what is considered more important, MSP or MSFD.
  - It cannot be said which is more important, MSP or MSFD because both look at the same issue from different angles. However, it is a bit biased because MSP is broader than environment.
  - It is not so easy to adjust GES for each country or indicator scale. It can be adjusted for regional scale, but that means agreements and compromises.
  - MSFD says that GES should be determined on regional seas level but at the same time it is delegated to Member States. So, Member States should do it in cooperation.

## **Session II: Data and information needed for MSFD and MSP. Role of stakeholders in data and information supply for MSFD and MSP. MSP examples from different countries**

### **Analysis of the situation in EE, LV, FI, SE concerning data needed for MSFD and MSP**

*by Edgars Bojars, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia*

E. Bojars gave an overview on availability of data needed for implementation of MSFD and MSP in the project countries (Estonia, Latvia, Finland, and Sweden).

Data availability for MSFD was analysed based on GES descriptors and Commission decision criteria. Analysis of data availability for MSP concentrated on main sea uses. Information related to marine environment and biodiversity is needed for both.

It can be concluded that data for D1 “Biodiversity” are at least partly available in all countries, except data on ecosystem structure in Latvia and habitat distribution in Sweden. The problem concerning habitat distribution is that there are some point data existing but it is not possible to extrapolate it to the whole area. Data on D2 “Non-indigenous species”, D5 “Eutrophication” and D9 “Contaminants in fish and other seafood” are at least partly available in all countries. Situation is the best concerning data on D3 “Commercially exploited fish and shellfish”. For other descriptors there is some lack of data, especially in Latvia. The situation is the worst concerning data on D10 „Marine litter” and D11 “Introduction of energy”. Information on main sea uses is available or partly available in all project countries.

#### Discussion:

- In Latvia there is lack of information on seafloor integrity because there is no information about location of trawling activities. Hopefully the data gaps will be solved by the new monitoring programme, at least partly.
- It was commented that availability of MSFD data in Estonia is actually better than presented – *corrections in the presentation were made after the conference.*
- Swedish assessment of data availability is probably too optimistic: the actual data availability is probably not so good.
- Finland took a critical view/precautionary approach in assessment of data. There is always some group of organisms where there is not enough data, so mostly the data was assessed as “partly available”.
- Implementation of the INSPIRE Directive in relation to MSFD/MSP data was discussed:
  - In Sweden INSPIRE Directive is mostly implemented, National Land Survey is responsible for it. There is a public spatial data portal and a lot of metadata available.
  - In Finland the situation is similar to Sweden: National Land Survey Agency is responsible for implementation, most of data is meeting the requirements of INSPIRE Directive.
  - In Estonia the Land Board responsible for implementation of INSPIRE Directive and most of spatial data available in the geoportal.
  - In Latvia Ministry of Environment is working on INSPIRE Directive but the overall responsibility for implementation lies on Ministry of Defence.
- European Commission understands that there is lack of data because the Member States are implementing MSFD/MSP first time and data collection in marine environment is expensive.

#### **Necessity and use of environmental data for development of the maritime spatial plan of Pärnu Bay**

*by Kuido Kartau, Hendrikson & Ko, Estonia*

K. Kartau gave a brief overview on Estonian planning system and informed about development of MSP for the Pärnu Bay, including data/information used for MSP, problems appeared and solutions found.

In Estonia two first MSPs are being developed now – MSPs for Hiiu and Pärnu County initiated by the Government in October 2012. In Estonia there is 4-level planning system including national, county, municipality and detailed planning. Pärnu MSP should be county level/strategic planning but in reality it is not really. According to the Estonian Planning Act spatial planning should take into account and balance the development needs of the economic, social, cultural and natural environment. County level plan should take into account the state level plan Estonia 2030+, which is mostly terrestrial but includes some info also about the sea (e.g. wind energy, marine transport, military).

For Pärnu MSP mainly two data sources are used: information from previous projects (BaltSeaPlan, Gorwind) and expert knowledge. Pärnu County Government has established the Advisory board for Pärnu MSP consisting of experts, sectoral decision makers and opinion leaders and having meetings 3 times a year. Also interest groups' and public meetings have been organised to discuss the problems and potential solutions. As marine planning is different from terrestrial and a new issue, it requires more public meetings than terrestrial planning. A lot of problems had to be solved, e.g. missing of official county borders in the sea and determining the border of the planning area

Pärnu Bay is an important fishing area, having a strong community of fishermen. Fishermen are hard partners in planning process because they do not want to share all info they have and they have problems even with existing restrictions. It is better to organise meetings with fishermen in fishermen villages, to build some trust. Pärnu port is visited by 600-1000 ships per year, which is not very big port if looking at the bigger picture (the Baltic Sea). Information on protected areas is available and has to be taken into account because changing the borders of protected areas is impossible or very difficult. There is also a proposed wind energy area of Eesti Energia in the planning area. Aquaculture is allowed only if it is nutrient neutral or nutrient negative. Intensive fish farming is not suitable for the Pärnu Bay area because of the eutrophication problem.

The problem concerning available information is that its quality is different and therefore it needs filtering.

The plan has been almost ready for 1 year but discussions are still going on. Data deficit is solved by agreement (e.g. agreement on restriction of jet skiing) or postponing the issue to the future (e.g. the exact location of the wind farm).

The speaker concluded that environmental data are necessary for MSP (although available scientific information is often not corresponding to MSP needs) and planning is possible also with limited data (then just more conservative approach is needed). Better to do MSP with limited data than not to do!

Discussion:

- Restrictions for water jets in Pärnu Bay are targeting recreational users; professional users (e.g. police, rescue, border guard) are allowed.
- An example was presented on using speed limits for controlling jet skiing – the jets need certain speed to be used (with lower speed they will drown).
  - Pärnu port cannot regulate jet skiing in Pärnu Bay because the port can set restrictions only in its aquatory, which is much smaller area.
- Why marine planning needs more meetings?
  - More meetings are needed because it is the first time and stakeholders (including authorities) do not know what it means. For example it is not understood that long term planning is needed (not for the next 3-5 years but for the next 30 years).
- Precautionary principle or conservative approach is used in Pärnu MSP because of lack of data. It means that no new activities are allowed/planned before there will be enough info on impacts (e.g. oil drilling not allowed near Kihnu island due to that reason).
- Potential wind farm area will be included in Pärnu MSP but it gives no guarantee to the developer that building of a wind farm will be allowed there. It is a designated area for further investigations. If the developer gets building permit then this area will be priority area for wind energy.
- There are losers in MSP - many groups (e.g. fishermen) can feel that it would be easier without MSP. Are fishermen happy with Pärnu bay MSP?
  - Fishermen are quite strongly supported in the plan – no additional restrictions were set for fisheries, except a small area (6 ha) where wind surfers have a priority and fishing is restricted in certain times. So fishermen should be happy with the result.

**Swedish pilot case: Conservation value mapping and marine zoning in Hanö Bight**, by *Frida Fyhr, AquaBiota Water Research, Sweden*

F. Fyhr introduced the methods for finding suitable areas for marine protected areas – conservation value mapping and ocean zoning – and gave an overview on their application and results in Hanö Bight in the frame of the MARMONI project.

Conservation value mapping method includes 4 steps: identifying biotopes and habitats present in the area, evaluation, spatial mapping and compilation of different data sets.

It is important to have data with good spatial coverage as well as sufficient spatial and temporal resolution. In Hanö Bight data on benthic biotopes, inshore fish recruitment, wintering seabirds and seals were used. For evaluation of the conservation value a list of criteria was used, which were mainly derived from the Convention on Biological Diversity. Each biotope or habitat was given a value (1-10) for each criterion, where 10 means high value and 1 is low. This was as far as possible done based on empirical data. When values were established, they were mapped based on modelled maps of the distribution of species and species groups.

In order to achieve a more holistic overview of the conservation values, the data sets were compiled within different organism groups, which were then compiled into one final map showing which areas hold high conservation values.

Ocean zoning is a spatial planning tool that can be thought as a part of MSP and a way to enable Ecosystem-Based Management and holistic planning. It can also be used to integrate management

activities within different sectors and as a support tool for communication. The objectives for the analysis in the Hanö Bight were to identify optimal areas for nature conservation and to test different levels of protection targets. The analysis was conducted as a pilot case for Marine Spatial Planning and coastal areas were therefore not included. For zoning Marxan with Zones was used, which is a planning tool designed for creation of MPAs. This software divides an area into different zones in such a way that protection targets can be achieved whilst at the same time minimizing areas of conflicts between human activities and the conservation values. It is especially useful when including a lot of spatial layers in one zoning analysis. For Hanö Bight some biotopes of vegetation, bottom fauna and concentration areas for Long-tailed ducks were included in the analysis. As result, a map was produced including the following zones: general use zone (zone for general use); light protection zone (zone with limited bottom disturbance); medium protection (zone without bottom disturbance) and strict protection zone (zone of undisturbed environment).

For protection targets three scenarios were designed: 10 % of all conservation values protected; 20 % of all conservation values protected and one scenario with individually set goals where the conservation values and needs, the total distribution area of the value and data certainty was considered. For each zone the conflicts with human activities were evaluated. The results are quite varying depending on scenario, although the same core areas can be seen in all three scenarios.

As additional information the analysis also gives the possibility to see how much of each conservation value is included in which zone.

As a conclusion it can be said that Marxan with Zones can provide a useful basis for marine protection (and perhaps other sectors) but the results are strongly dependent on the underlying management (e. g. how much and how strict protection do we need to achieve GES?). Also it can be used as an instrument for external and internal communication.

#### Discussion:

- Will the results of this work be used in the MSP process?
  - SwAM will try to use these results in the MSP process, but the methodology is even more interesting.
- The tool can be used but it requires good quality data. In some places additional mapping of biological values is needed. Zoning needs to incorporate also different sea use sectors – it has not been done during this pilot exercise but could give useful results. Most of sectoral data is available for the whole Sweden. Further analysis integrating the sectors will not be done within MARMONI but AquaBiota Water Research has a project with municipality in Hanö Bight, specifics of analysis not designed yet.
- A question that still needs to be answered is how the marine protected areas can be used to reach GES?
  - GES cannot be solved in small planning areas. Coordination between different planning areas is needed.
  - MPAs can solve only local problems but in marine areas there are no local problems. Eutrophication cannot be solved by MPAs. Therefore currently the connection between MPAs and GES is questionable, may be in future MPAs will play a bigger role.
  - In Blekinge County there are MPAs established but they would need better fishing regulation (not new MPAs). And eutrophication problem needs to be dealt with.
  - Designating the area as Natura 2000 site also creates pressure (from EU, political pressure) to deal with eutrophication.
  - There are mechanisms connecting MPAs and pressures. MPAs can be used as a tool for achieving GES, depending on how the GES is defined – if GES is defined using features that can be managed by MPAs.
  - For eutrophication MPAs mostly can act in symbolic way, also MSP is not the key tool for that, it is important to act on land (agricultural policy). There are also other threats - dredging, infrastructure, overfishing on local scale etc. - where MPAs can be quite efficient.

**Finnish-Swedish Interreg IVA-project “SeaGIS”: Cooperation for ecosystem based planning of the marine environment using GIS, by Jens Perus, Etelä-Pohjanmaan ELY-keskus, Finland**

J. Perus introduced the Finnish-Swedish Interreg project SeaGIS and its main outcome – the transboundary map service containing all available GIS data on the Quark region and providing support for MSP.

The SeaGIS project was carried out from June 2011 till October 2014 in the Gulf of Bothnia, Quark (Kvarken) region. Its aim was to increase the knowledge base for MSP, make data more accessible for planners and create a common platform for knowledge storing, planning and future decision making in the Kvarken region.

The project carried out a thorough analysis of organisational and legal processes in the current governance of the sea in Finland and Sweden.

The next step was to find out the attitude and interests of involved municipalities (4 Swedish and 12 Finnish municipalities) and other stakeholders. It turned out that Finnish and Swedish municipalities were very different in size and capacity to take on board new issues. The planning capacity of smaller municipalities was very low. It was an eye-opener for many municipalities that their marine area was larger than terrestrial. The interest in MSP was low because there were activities but no real conflicts in marine areas yet. There was low knowledge about possibilities. The planning authorities were afraid that MSP is another top-down process that will bring more restrictions. Municipalities did not have any ideas on how to develop their marine areas. Mostly they were interested in increasing the population by developing the residential/vacation homes, recreation and tourism (fairways/marinas/safe harbours), ports and industries in the coastal areas.

The aim of the project was to support the MSP process, to involve municipalities by providing decision support for them. As most planners do not have any ecological background it should be made simple, the end users should be provided with interpreted results. As a first thing a manual on methods and best available techniques for marine investigations was made – to improve the quality of EIAs and shorten the processes. The next step was to provide interpreted maps for planners. Using habitat maps based on HELCOM classification of underwater biotopes and considering impacts of different activities of habitats, the stress maps were created that can be used for decision-making (e.g. for choosing best location for activities, where they cause less stress for the environment).

The most important outcome of the project is the transboundary (Finnish-Swedish, bilingual) map service, including all available data that could be used for MSP. All data are freely available for everybody (if data provider has not forbidden download of data) at <http://maps.seagis.org>.

The map service contains 550 GIS layers out of which 330 are visible (meet quality requirements and are usable for MSP). The map service meets the INSPIRE requirements and functions in multiple coordinate systems. It includes not only ecological data but also social, infrastructure and cultural data. Time series can be played as movie. The map service can be used for communication – informing and getting feedback from stakeholders. Thanks to the diverse content, the map platform can be also used for tourism - to see the interesting places to visit.

The cost for keeping the map service is ca 10 000€/year and when the technology is worked out then increasing of the geographical area covered can be done with lower efforts.

The speaker also highlighted some problems related to creation of the map service and data collection, e.g. some data were not available for free, some data owners choose not to show data due to low confidence in accuracy, some data are classified (settled for coarser resolution) etc. Also all data sets had to be checked if they were positioned correctly.

The NOSTRA project is also using the same map service as a tool for communication and decision-making. The web service will be kept working and updated also after the end of the project. At the moment there are 3 contributing partners (1 in Sweden, 2 in Finland) administrating this platform; at least for the next 5 years it is economically solved.

## Discussion: Reflection on the workshop:

- Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development: Got more confidence that there is a need for a project to translate data into the format usable for planning and create maps helpful in transboundary consultation process.
- Estonian Ministry of Interior: Estonia has done already quite a lot concerning MSP. The message from the workshop is that although MSP is balancing different sectors, good status of the marine environment is important for all sectors. Ministry of Interior should strengthen the cooperation with the Ministry of Environment in MSP – Ministry of Environment should be a partner, not just a stakeholder in MSP process.
- The workshop showed a lot of hints on how to reach ecosystem-based approach in MSP, which would lead also to connection to MSFD goals and maintaining of ecosystem services.
- It is not enough to have agreement that MSP should include environmental goals if possible. We need agreement on what GES is. We should stress the sea basin/regional perspective, to have a dialogue on defining the GES. The regional seas conventions might have a role in this.
- There is an idea to establish a HELCOM-VASAB working group on MSFD data. Defining GES is a complicated, theoretical, abstract issue, which is difficult to communicate to ordinary people. MSP and the coming programmes of measures are probably more understandable for stakeholders and then hopefully the debate will start.
- Data issues are important for MSP. MSP is not a magic stick solving all problems but it can contribute to the improvement of the quality of the Baltic Sea – it is a tool, not the only tool.
- European Commission, DG Mare: The workshop gave hope that linking implementation of MSFD and MSP is possible and that MSP will be implemented. It was a surprise that some people think that MSP is the only tool to implement MSFD - this is definitely not so. Got a lot of hints on topics where further work is needed – linking MSP and MSFD, bringing both sides together; making data user-friendly etc.
- European Commission, DG Environment: It is always useful to hear feedback. The contribution the stakeholders can offer should never be underestimated. It is always good to speak to people face to face. The workshop provided interesting discussions and new information. Different marine regions could learn from each other's experience. Not only MSP is delivering MSFD, there is also WFD etc. It is all very interlinked process, therefore we should be aware of a bigger picture. There is a fundamental difference between terrestrial and marine planning. Data and money issues were stressed in the workshop as well as importance of cooperation between Member States. The Programmes of Measures hopefully bring more clarity to the overall situation.
- MARMONI is cooperating with HELCOM, feeding in lot of information and data. MSP as the tool comes from priorities of funding programmes that include key words like MSP, ecosystem services, ecosystem based approach etc. Marine inventories are extremely expensive; the projects are a way to support competent authorities.
- The final event of the MARMONI project will take place on 27-28 January in Jurmala, Latvia.