



The International Business Alliance
for Corporate Ocean Responsibility

International Ocean Governance: Marine Planning Brief 2014

Introduction

Marine Planning, also known as Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), Maritime Spatial Planning, Ocean Management or Ocean Zoning is the process of identifying and analyzing the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in specific marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives.ⁱ Consultation with scientists, technical experts, the business community, stakeholders, and those with traditional knowledge is the foundation of Marine Planning.

What is Marine Planning?

Marine Planning is a framework for planning the use of coastal and ocean space to accommodate access to and services of the marine environment in a long-term, sustainable manner. Around the world, Marine Planning includes many forms, models and processes. Generally, it uses maps and spatial analysis to create a more comprehensive picture of a marine area, identify where and how an area is used and what natural resources and habitat exist. The main elements of Marine Planning include an interlinked system of plans, policies, regulations and management systems. Marine Planning has the potential to address the management of all activities in a specific place, so that a marine ecosystem can be productive, resilient to change, and accommodate appropriate economic activities. It also can remedy fragmented management approaches unable to address the complex interactions of simultaneous activities in ocean and coastal areas.

How is Marine Planning Conducted?

Marine Planning is a tool deployed in the context of public policy and not an end unto itself. Marine Planning is also a process, the successful implementation of which depends upon certain core stages and phases. Each Marine Planning model or approach establishes a vision; sets goals and proffers SMART objectives.ⁱⁱ Each inventories and plots relevant science and data: social, cultural, biological or physical. Each identifies uses, users and resources that are compatible or incompatible with the articulated vision, goals or SMART objectives and then develops management strategies to address conflicts. Finally, each approach engages in ongoing monitoring, assessment and adjustment in support of the vision.

When implemented effectively, Marine Planning does not lead to a one-time, static plan. Marine Planning is a continuous process that evolves and adapts over time. European Marine Planning, for example, outlines the following steps to successfully develop and implement Marine Planning:ⁱⁱⁱ

1. Identify need and establish legal authority.
2. Obtain financial support.
3. Organize the process through pre-planning.
4. Organize stakeholder participation.
5. Define and analyze existing conditions.
6. Define and analyze future conditions.
7. Prepare and approve the spatial management plan.
8. Implement and enforce the plan.
9. Monitor and evaluate performance process.
10. Adapt the spatial management.

What Outcomes Could Marine Planning Produce?

Marine Planning is a tool employed to evaluate trade-offs among competing uses, users and finite resources. The result of marine planning used in this way illustrates the effects of trade-offs made during the decision making process. Marine Planning anticipates positive or negative consequences of a plan's implementation, for example, displacing fisheries, adding costs for industrial users or reducing user conflicts. The Marine Planning process then mitigates those consequences through trade-off analysis, scenario development or stakeholder engagement.^{iv}

Though evidence of such benefits is limited, established Marine Planning processes could manifest potential benefits:

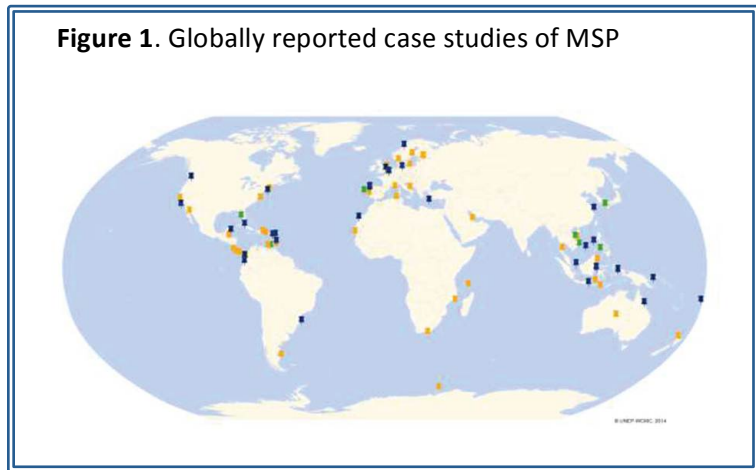
- Facilitate the sustainable development of different economic activities.
- Enhance incomes and increase employment.
- Encourage activities in places where they bring the most value to ensure maximum social benefit.
- Reduce the costs of information, regulation, planning, and decision-making by streamlining reviews and reducing duplication.
- Reduce user-user or user-resource conflict.
- Protect the environment.
- Increase investment, coordination and cross-border cooperation.

Marine Planning in a Global Context

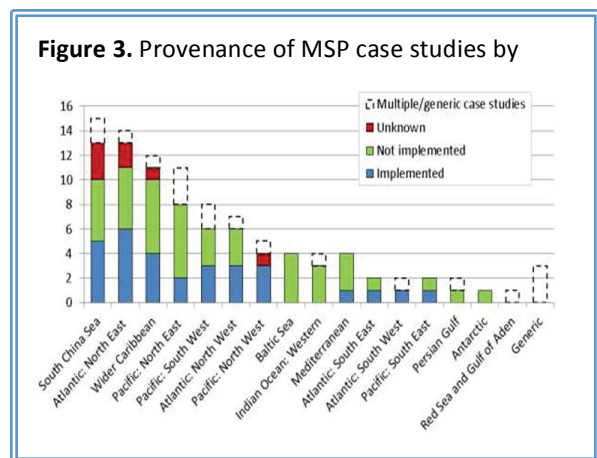
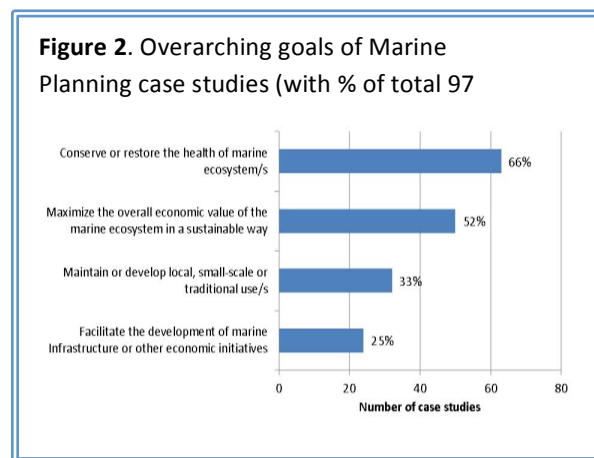
The use of Marine Planning is increasing around the world as evidenced by the multiple active initiatives in the European Union, United States, Australia and Asia.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (GEF/STAP) report compiled the results of an online

survey and follow-up interviews that recorded experiences and lessons from practical Marine Planning implementation around the world.^v Of the 97 case studies reported, respondents submitted 79 distinct cases of Marine Planning globally for analysis (Figure 1).



Of the 18 case studies not analyzed, the Marine Planning approaches were more generic. Of the 79 cases analyzed, plan implementation occurred in 30; 41 were in preparatory or planning phases and 8 with status unknown. Conserving or restoring the health of a marine ecosystem was the most often cited primary goal of Marine Planning efforts (Figure 2).



The majority of case studies included in the GEF/STAP reported on planning initiatives in the South China Sea, North East Atlantic, North East Pacific, South West Pacific and North West Pacific (Figure 3). Fewer than half of each region’s Marine Plans passed through any preparation, planning or adoption phases prior to implementation. Of those implemented, most planning efforts started less than 15 years prior

and few reported revisiting or adapting a marine plan after implementation. As such, benchmarking the success, failure or impacts of these Marine Plans is difficult given the dearth of post-implementation assessment or reflection.

As the use of Marine Planning accelerates worldwide, it is increasingly important for the ocean business community (OBC) to identify Marine Planning efforts and know how to get involved. The OBC has an important role to play in Marine Planning. By contributing scientific information and data to planners, it can educate planners about economic impacts and engender appropriate consideration when decisions or trade-offs are being contemplated. Most important, the OBC can assist in building a balanced stakeholder group available for consultation during planning and decision-making.

Marine Planning Developments

Below are examples of major regional, national or local Marine Planning efforts in development around the world. In each case, there is an opportunity for the OBC to engage with planners.

Regional

Europe – [Marine Spatial Planning Directive 2014](#)

On July 23, 2014, the European Commission adopted legislation to create a common framework for marine spatial planning in Europe.^{vi} While each EU country will be free to plan its own maritime activities, a set of new, minimum common requirements makes local, regional and national planning in shared seas more compatible. The 20-article policy encourages each Member State to establish marine plans with a number of objectives. The Commission is not responsible for each individual plan; however, it provides oversight and support for the plans. Each marine plan under development invites industry participation at early stages and Member State organizations bear the burden of engaging businesses in the course of developing a marine plan. The [European Atlas of the Seas](#),^{vii} the [European Spatial Planning Observation Network](#), and the [European Marine Observation and Data Network](#) are just a few of the tools created and available to European Marine Planners.

The World Ocean Council (WOC) tracks Marine Planning efforts at the European Union Maritime Policy level and recently observed that the focus of Marine Planning has shifted to the regional, sea basin level (e.g., Baltic, North Sea). This new focus compels a similar shift by the OBC to organize themselves to engage at the regional, sea basin level as well.

National

Australia – [Bio regional Marine Planning](#)

Bio regional Marine Plans are in place in four (4) of Australia's marine regions: Southwest, Northwest, North and Temperate East. Designed to improve decision-making, it serves to balance the protection of marine biodiversity and the sustainable use of marine resources by marine-based industries. Australia's Bio regional Marine Planning progresses through five steps:

1. Characterization of the marine region.
2. Regional analysis of conservation values.
3. Development of regional priorities.
4. Development of regional advice.
5. Public consultation on the draft marine bio regional plan.

Bio regional Marine Planning engages the OBC to assist in an inventory existing uses and users within specific areas and to address competing or conflicting interests.

Canada – [Beaufort Sea Integrated Ocean Management Plan](#)

The Integrated Ocean Management Plan (IOMP) of 2010 is a voluntary plan that facilitates coordination among marine resource users and managers. A collaborative inter-governmental and inter-departmental structure coordinates with stakeholders in order to maximize economic, cultural, social, and traditional knowledge, and to articulate the plan's goals for the ecosystem. Industry and other interested parties participate in a variety of forums and provide comments throughout the process of development and implementation of the IOMP. The IOMP includes 24 objectives and specifies those organizations responsible for implementation. While endorsed by the national government, no funds have been allocated for implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of Canada's Integrated Ocean Management Plan.

China – [Marine Functional Zoning](#)

In October 2001, the People's Republic of China adopted the Law on the Management of Sea Area Use and its enactment introduced a new legal system for integrated coastal management in China. The 2001 law is built on three concepts: a sea-use authorization system, a marine functional zoning system and a user-fee system. The sea-use authorization system asserts that the sea is owned by the State and all intended users must apply for authorization to use the sea. The marine functional zoning system divides the sea into different types of uses and the user-fee system imposes a fee for use of the sea. The two-level management system requires approval from both the provincial and national governments and has a stakeholder participation process that includes the OBC.

U.S. – [Ocean Policy 2010](#)

In the United States, the OBC mobilized to understand Marine Planning in response to the creation of the National Ocean Council and release of the U.S. National Ocean Policy. The 2010 U.S. National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes identifies Marine Planning as one of nine (9) priority implementation objectives to address conservation, economic activity, user conflict, and sustainable use of marine resources. Among other things, the Policy has called for the development and implementation of Marine Planning through a series of nine regional (sub-national) planning bodies, known as RPBs. While individual state Marine Planning efforts have been underway for several years, state, federal, and tribal leaders in each region are considering if they will establish a Regional Planning Body to implement a regional marine spatial planning process. Currently, four (4) RPBs exist: [Northeast](#), [Mid-Atlantic](#), [Pacific Islands](#) and [U.S. Caribbean](#); RPBs in other regions are underway.^{viii} The National Ocean Council has released a [Marine Planning Handbook](#) in support of regional efforts to engage marine industries, stakeholders, the public and the government's interest in advancing economic development and conservation priorities.^{ix} If all States within a region choose not to participate in or establish an RPB, Federal agencies and federally-recognized tribes could move forward to identify and address priority science, information, and ocean management issues associated with Marine Planning for that region.

State

Rhode Island – [Rhode Island Ocean Special Area Management Plan \(Ocean SAMP\)](#)

The Rhode Island Ocean SAMP is a coastal management and regulatory tool to promote a balanced and comprehensive approach to the development and protection of the state’s ocean-based resources. The Ocean SAMP process includes data collection and analysis, stakeholder outreach, development of a zoning map, development of state policies and standards and submission of the Ocean SAMP for state and federal approval. A particularly unique aspect of Rhode Island’s Ocean SAMP is its “Geographic Location Description” that allows the state agency to review any federal activity or project out to 30 miles off the coast of Rhode Island potentially impacting activities like offshore wind energy development, underwater transmission cables, or LNG pipelines or terminals. The Geographic Location Description, a tool unique to the Ocean SAMP, enables the state to apply Ocean SAMP policies to waters beyond the state’s 3-nautical mile jurisdictional boundary, within the Ocean SAMP area, through the Coastal Zone Management Act Federal Consistency Provision.

Local

[San Diego/Maritime Alliance \(U.S.\)](#)

The Maritime Alliance is pursuing marine spatial planning in San Diego, California, to assist in developing a robust, sustainable maritime industry. The Port of San Diego is part of the Marine Planning process, which drew other ocean businesses to participate. Similar to state and national plans, San Diego focused on reducing conflict and improving the efficient use of marine resources.

[Bothnian Sea Trans-boundary Pilot Project \(Sweden & Finland\)](#)

The Bothnian Sea Trans-boundary Pilot Project serves a clearly defined sub-basin of the Baltic Sea shared by Sweden and Finland, two countries with similar governance structures, practices, and views on planning. The Bothnia project was an EU Integrated Maritime Policy preparatory action that mapped existing and future uses of the Bothnian Sea in order to reduce conflict between the two nations.

World Ocean Council & Marine Planning

After the 2008 World Ocean Council (WOC) Workshop *Global Ocean Industry Leadership and Collaboration on Sustainable Development of the Marine Environment* during which it was agreed that “spatial management of ocean areas and uses, i.e., ocean zoning, is a key priority for WOC attention,” WOC convened its first Business Forum on Marine Spatial Planning in July 2011 in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the forum was twofold:

1. Ensure that the OBC better understand Marine Planning and informed of the government plans.
2. Assess industry interest in developing constructive and coordinated participation by an informed OBC as Marine Planning advances. WOC has launched a MSP program to engage ocean sectors to facilitate understanding of Marine Planning.

Through the MSP Program, the World Ocean Council intends inform and advise its members and the greater OBC about MSP developments globally and afford each the opportunity to engage and contribute towards the development and implementation of Marine Planning. In support of its MSP Program, the WOC is presently developing three (3) regionally specific U.S. ocean business databases: South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean. WOC is also developing analyses of international MSP case studies, facilitating MSP simulation exercises for the OBC and assisting in identifying the best ways in which to engage the OBC in the Marine Planning process. The 2013 WOC Sustainable Ocean Summit explored the theme of MSP and reported the following summary discussion:

The business community needs to be more constructively and systematically involved in MSP. Businesses should take a proactive step in learning about what MSP is and what their industry stands to potentially gain or lose from its implementation. Industry is worried that MSP will create more regulatory hurdles and would prefer to see a long-term energy policy plan before making changes themselves. Government suggests that by partnering more with industry and increased communication and education on the topic will lead to a more efficient process than currently exists. Industry already has many regulatory and permitting hurdles that are cumbersome and, as a result, view MSP cautiously.

If MSP could be a tool to streamline regulatory processes like permitting, industry would be more likely to support efforts to move MSP forward. More and better communication between industry and government in the form of partnerships is crucial to this. In some countries, the marine policy and overall societal goals for ocean industries were set before the industry developed. This is not true in the U.S., for instance, and leads to concern over how to retrofit an existing industry into a new planning context, i.e. MSP. To help with this situation, performance metrics of MSP should be agreed to up front by industry, government and other stakeholders and then measure the change in time it takes the government to complete the permitting reviews under the new system.

Most recently, the WOC Business Forum on Ocean Policy and Planning, held 28-30 September 2014 in New York City, was convened to explore and foster informed, coordinated and proactive involvement by

the OBC in ocean policy and marine planning developments that may affect the future business operations and sustainability efforts. This meeting served as a forum for ongoing discussions and action item development on the topic of Marine Planning.

Endnotes

ⁱ UNESCO Marine Spatial Planning Initiative, available at http://www.unesco-ioc-marinesp.be/marine_spatial_planning_msp. In addition, World Ocean Council, The Nautical Institute, and The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) published The Shipping Industry and Marine Spatial Planning: A Professional Approach as a guide for maritime professionals, available at <http://www.nautinst.org/en/forums/msp/>.

ⁱⁱ SMART objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound.

ⁱⁱⁱ Douvere, Fanny and Charles N. Ehler, Marine Spatial Planning: A Step by Step Approach (2009), available at <http://www.unesco-ioc-marinesp.be/uploads/documentenbank/d87c0c421da4593fd93bbee1898e1d51.pdf>.

^{iv} A Global Review of Marine Spatial Planning, Ehler, Charles N. 2012 (in press).

^v UNEP & GEF-STAP (2014) “Marine Spatial Planning in Practice – Transitioning from Planning to Implementation. An analysis of global Marine Spatial Planning experiences”. Thomas, H. L., Olsen, S., & Vestergaard, O. (Eds), UNEP Nairobi, pp.36.

^{vi} The legislation, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.257.01.0135.01.ENG.

^{vii} Information about the European Atlas, available at http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/atlas/index_en.htm.

^{viii} Links to regional Marine Planning work, including the existing RPBs, available at <http://www.cmsp.noaa.gov/activities/index.html>.

^{ix} Marine Planning Handbook (2013), available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/final_marine_planning_handbook.pdf.