Capacity development and awareness
Capacity Development in the Eastern Caribbean Region: The Closing the Circle Programme

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Programme Objectives

Since 2020, the “Closing the Circle” Programme has been supporting research and capacity development for tackling the challenges of marine debris and Sargassum in the Eastern Caribbean small island developing states (SIDS). Marine Spatial Planning is a cross cutting theme within this programme. Ongoing activities include contributions to thematic working groups, publications and regional workshops and trainings for knowledge sharing and capacity building.

Partnerships for Capacity Development

The Nippon Foundation supports 4 PhD candidates (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada and the Bahamas) as well as a Research Fellow (Trinidad and Tobago). The programme also facilitates collaboration with regional stakeholders for workshops and training, including the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the UN Environment Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP CEP).

Publication


Acknowledgements

The “Closing the Circle” Programme: Marine Debris, Sargassum and Marine Spatial Planning in the Eastern Caribbean, is a project at the World Maritime University (WMU) – Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, Malmö, Sweden. The generous funding of the Institute and programme by The Nippon Foundation is acknowledged.

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Practicing Blue Planning: 6 years of building capacities in Marine Spatial Planning worldwide

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Introduction

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) requires significant human and technical resources, and a change in mindset from the traditional sectoral views to an integrated approach. Building capacities is key for MSP development, particularly in developing countries where resources are limited. Conscious of the capacity gaps in the developing context, the Blue Solutions Initiative created the Blue Planning in Practice (BPiP) training course.

Blue Planning in Practice

BPiP strengthens planning, implementation, and management at sea among government agencies, maritime sectors, civil society and academia. This highly participatory training course uses a case method, which conveys teaching messages through practical exercises and reflection. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the delivery of in-person training. The course was adapted and implemented in online and blended formats using virtual whiteboards and mapping tools instead of flipcharts and paper maps.

Implementation

Since its inception in 2017, BPiP has been delivered more than 40 times with participants from more than 50 countries.

BPiP training participant countries

Success factors

Key success factors identified for BPiP are: the high demand for MSP and ocean management worldwide; the participatory and practice-based learning approach of the training; its availability in several languages (English, Spanish, French and Portuguese) and formats (in-person, online and hybrid); its open-source nature; the promotion and funding by several organizations and initiatives; and the increasing pool of trainers by delivering training of trainers.

The way forward

After 6 years of building capacities with BPiP, demand remains high as MSP has not yet been implemented in most developing nations. The contents of the training can be updated by addition of new modules and MSP practices. BPiP will continue to have an important role in promoting sustainable ocean use in the coming years.

More information

All materials of BPiP are available for free use in the Blue Capacity Hub: bluecapacityhub.info

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Acknowledgements

BPiP was developed by the Blue Solutions Initiative, which was implemented by GIZ, GRID-Arendal, IUCN and UNEP, on behalf of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) of Germany between 2013 and 2021. We thank our trainer colleagues and all participants for making BPiP a success.
Supporting Reform of Marine Management in Ireland (SRMMI)

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**Reforms:**

- Support implementation of MSP Directive 2014
- National Marine Planning Framework 2021
- Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 – Enables development of large and offshore projects including renewables

**Project objective:** Support the establishment of a single-point entry marine management system

**Facilitating decision-making by:**

- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) 2023
- An Bord Pleanála (National Planning Board)
- Coastal Planning Authorities

**Benefits:**

- Simplify and streamline application experience
- Better engage and inform the public
- Single-point, online marine management system built on existing tools (www.marineplan.ie)
- Learn from experience and systems of others: Ireland, England and Netherlands
- Enable coordinated decision-making at national and local levels
- Provide for forward planning, consenting, monitoring and enforcement

**Project outputs:** Technical specifications of a single-point online marine management system; change action plans for each decision-maker; capacity-building amongst all bodies involved

**Follow-up steps:** Procure services for development of the single-point online system (2023)

To learn more: [Supporting reform of marine management in Ireland (europa.eu)](https://europa.eu)

Project implemented with funding by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument in cooperation with Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) of the European Commission

Lead beneficiary of technical support: An Roimh Tithiocha, Rialtais Aniúil agus Oidhreachta, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Lead beneficiary of project outputs: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Implemented by a consortium led by AARC

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Mediterranean MSP Workspace

What is it?

The Mediterranean Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Workspace offers governance advice and easy access to the latest planning tools following the seven stage MSP process. Tools can be adapted to different national contexts and geographic scales, helping ministries as well as sub-national and local authorities to effectively plan their marine space. Users will benefit from following best practice tips and using the simple assessment tools to strategically allocate the use of marina areas following the ICZM Protocol.

The workspace is coordinated and published by the UNEP/MAP – PAP/RAC. It promises to be an evolving online practical guide for preparing and delivering plans that incorporate climate actions, an ecosystem approach, and land-sea interactions.

Use the planning tools

Rapid assessment and programming tools will take users through the MSP preparation process, setting milestones and giving practitioners specific actions to be adapted to their local context. By using a simple traffic light system, the checklist allows users to measure their own progress, and identify gaps and priorities.

So far, the tools include:

- Mediterranean MSP Planning and Progress Checklist
- Ecosystem Approach & MSP Planning Tool
- Climate Action & MSP Planning Tool
- Land-Sea Interactions & MSP Planning Tool

Feedback

Regular feedback from users to evaluate and improve this virtual space is being gathered via a two-minute online survey. Users can also get in touch with the PAP/RAC team to share their experiences and ask questions.

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Insights on how to incorporate Socio-cultural Values into Maritime Spatial Planning process in the Black Sea

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Bridging the gap between dominant economic rhetoric and a de facto approach to the socio-cultural ecological system is the first step in making MSP successful in the Black Sea.

Fig. 1 | Study area map - natural reserves and Natura 2000 sites.
Fig. 2 | Sea use of multi sectors in the study area (excepting protection sites).
Fig. 3 | A schematic representation of the MSP process. The missing layers must be addressed in all steps (Pennino et al. 2021).

Reasons why human dimensions are excluded from MSP

- Socio-cultural areas are valued less than their economic worth
- Challenging to partition & prioritize cultural space-use
- Inaccurate qualitative analyses and lack of standard methods
- Cost & Time: Inclusive participatory approaches are expensive and time consuming

Possible solutions

- Create more inclusive spaces to define priority areas with all users and underrepresented groups
- Ensure allocation and use of financial resources to understand sociocultural values and improve stakeholder engagement and communication
- Develop standard methods for qualitative studies to address sociocultural values
- De-growth: inclusion of humanistic values, such as considering nature more than a commodity

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Transformation Digital and Sustainable Development Goals

SDGs4: Education provides skills and tools to enhance capacity and participation in marine economic activities, planning, science and technology and, raise awareness about conservation needs.

SDGs13: MSP integrates adaptation and mitigation measures to build the resilience of marine ecosystems, and reduce exposure and vulnerability to climate change.

SDGs17: MSP enhances regional partnerships at transboundary level for the achievement of the SDGs through cooperation in science, technology and capacity building.

SDGs4: E-learning: Access to knowledge to all people no matter where they live or how much they earn

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Introduction
Planning for sustainability and certainty to secure ocean prosperity: Since UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO) and the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) launched in 2017 their Joint Roadmap to accelerate marine/maritime spatial planning (MSP) processes worldwide, the MSPglobal Initiative has contributed to improving cross-border and transboundary cooperation where marine spatial plans already existed or were being prepared, and to promoting planning processes. This is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and supported by national and regional initiatives in the framework of the United Nations Decades of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and on Ecosystem Restoration.

Committed to empowering planners in their own countries and regions

THE TRANSBOUNDARY DIMENSION OF MARINE/MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING (MSP)

Implementing the UN 2030 Agenda

The Education for Sustainable Development for 2030 roadmap outlines actions in five priority action areas on policy, learning environments, building capacities of educators, youth and local level action, stressing further ESD’s key role for the successful achievement of the 17 SDGs and the great individual and societal transformation required to address the urgent sustainability challenges.

Planning for climate change

Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) is the foundation for a low-emission, climate-resilient and just future, thanks to its six interconnected elements: climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these elements.

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