

## **Working Group on Data for MSP**

### **Subgroup 2 - Harmonization of Terminology and Nomenclature for MSP Output Data**

**Thursday 28 May 2020 – Online Meeting**

#### **Synthesis**

**Version of 19/06/2020**

#### **Presence or represented:**

*Please refer to attached list of participants.*

#### **Meeting summary**

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The recently formed Technical Expert Group on MSP Data has been established to increase dialogue within the European MSP community and to move towards more robust and common standards in terms of MSP-related data collection and delivery. Under the TEG, a working sub-group has been set to focus on harmonization issues and to identify or elaborate potential common data models (structure, format, nomenclature, etc.).

The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of this working sub-group brought together more than 40 MSP experts, of whom 18 registered as active members.

The first session of the workshop was organized around four 10 minutes talks to gain insight on harmonization methods developed under the following European projects and data initiatives: 1) HELCOM-VASAB, 2) MarSP, 3) SIM projects and 4) EMODnet. A synthesis of each presentation is provided below.

In the second session, the floor was open to all participants, which allowed for:

- Confirmation of the relevance of this group to merge all competences and work conducted around Europe and contribute to the consolidation of the MSP Data community;
- Identification of common challenges;
- Confirmation of focus on output data; and
- Definition of tasks and short to medium terms objectives.

#### **Insights from 4 European MSP projects**

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- 1) *Joni Kaitaranta*, from the HELCOM secretariat, presented experience gained in the Baltic Sea and gathered within the HELCOM-VASAB working group on MSP data coordination since 2015. In 2018 this group delivered guidelines for output data, including data specifications, technical requirements, and harmonization in the MSP context. This 13-page document is available at: [https://vasab.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Guidelines-on-transboundary-MSP-output-data-structure-ADOPTEDbyVASAB\\_HELCOM.pdf](https://vasab.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Guidelines-on-transboundary-MSP-output-data-structure-ADOPTEDbyVASAB_HELCOM.pdf) and has been acknowledged during the discussion as a robust and transferable method. The proposed flat data model has been identified as a relevant standard for plan data, allowing one to distinguish different types of space allocation, from priority to exclusion, and using controlled vocabulary for sea uses. The data model has been put to practice in <https://basemaps.helcom.fi>, an online geographic data portal that provides both input and output data from the MSP process in the Baltic

Sea. This advanced example has already been a source of inspiration for other European data portals.

- 2) *Andrej Abramic*, responsible for data management within the MarSP project, gave the group a presentation of the INSPIRE-based MSP data model developed in MarSP. This data model is an extended version of *Planned Land Use* INSPIRE model, including classification system for maritime activities (extended HILUCS) and allows one to consider the vertical dimension of sea uses. It has been discussed and tested during a dedicated workshop in 2019 and implemented in the [Canaries MSP platform](#). The INSPIRE dimension of this data model makes it a consistent and transferable model by design, which could be a strong advantage to consider for all Member-States' plans to come. The model includes a base for cumulative impact assessment (PLASMAR+ project 2020-2022) and land-sea interaction analyses. Resources available for applying the data model are *Data specification document (V1.0)*, as related templates (xsd-gml; GeoPackage and ESRI shapefiles).
- 3) *Dominique Carval*, from the French Hydrographic and Oceanographic Institute (SHOM), presented the experience gained through the successive SIM projects (SIM-Celt, -Wetsmed, -Norat, -Atlantic) with regards to data collection and provision. Within each of these cross-border projects, [data portals](#) were setup to bring together MSP datasets made available by member states. These have mostly concerned MSP input data as of now, but specific attention is given to output data within the on-going SIM-Atlantic project. To this end, SHOM is disseminating a survey to member states to assess their current standards in terms of output data (format, language, licences). Within SIM-projects, the use of webservices has strongly been promoted, as a mean to access continuously updated and official datasets.
- 4) *Marta A. Ballesteros*, from the EMODnet – Human Activities portal (CETMAR), presented the challenges faced by this Emodnet portal in the view of the 2021 deadline to provide all member-states marine spatial plans online. To this end, the team has developed a proposal for a common nomenclature of ocean uses, which is based on plans that have already been approved and is continuously updated. It is meant to ensure the use of a controlled vocabulary. It is proposed that the experts of Subgroup 2 review, comment, and feed into this definition process. Efforts to facilitate translation from national nomenclatures to this standardized English one would be useful. It should be kept in mind that ultimately, the users of data portals should have a role in the nomenclature to use with regards to their specific objectives.

### **Discussion and reassertion of challenges**

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From both the 4 presentations and participant's reactions, a set of common challenges emerges:

- Format: it is essential that datasets are provided in geospatial formats.
- Licensing: conditions for data use and reuse should be explicit and standardized.
- Conditions of space allocation (priorities, restrictions) should be detailed for each feature of MSP datasets. As of now, the nomenclature proposed by EMODnet does not allow for this level of detail. The flat data model developed by HELCOM-VASAB answers this requirement.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> dimensions: depth and time are essential dimensions for MSP and should be considered from a data provision perspective.
- Environmental data: the redundancy - and thus synergy - between MSFD-related data and the environmental dimension of MSP was recalled. Liaison with similar working groups in the MSFD context is expected. Dictionaries have also been elaborated in the context of pressure and impacts assessments.

Finally, Language(s) was mentioned as a challenge. National MSP plans will be provided in native language, and the issue lies in both the diversity of European languages, and in the subtleties that each one might include. If the collaboration with national authorities is promoted, there is no legal obligation for member states to comply with proposed nomenclature, standards or translation requirements. Therefore, the TEG proposes to support by merging and complementing existing dictionaries. In BASEMAPS as in the SIM- data portals, multilanguage is provided, using unique metadata records for several languages. This is also true for the INSPIRE registry used in the MarSP data model. In Emodnet, multilanguage is not currently expected, for timing and budget reasons, however dictionaries have been elaborated during the translation of datasets to English.

### **Ways forward – Future actions**

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During the presentation, it was recalled that the group should narrow its focus to output data, which are a closer (2021) and still unsolved challenge. Joni Kaitaranta suggested the distinction, within output data, between Marine Spatial Plan data and data on sea uses. The latter is known to be more challenging (particularly in terms of availability) and could therefore be an area of interest for the group in a longer term.

With a specific focus on the provision of maritime spatial plans datasets, it is expected that SG2 participants prepare for the next meeting:

- A mapping of existing sea use code lists and dictionaries – Lead: EMODnet Human Activities;
- A benchmarking of existing code lists and dictionaries – Lead: Andrej Abramic;
- Inputs from the Baltic countries group meeting in September – Lead: Joni Kaitaranta;
- A draft data model for EMODnet - Lead: EMODnet Human Activities;
- The review and consolidation of EMODnet sea use nomenclature proposal – all participants;
- An investigation on merging possibilities between the MSP-INSPIRE data model and MSFD data models – Lead: Stefano Menegon; and
- An investigation of the consideration of coastal uses in proposed dictionaries and data models – Lead: Alessandro Sarretta.

On a longer term, participants should build on the ocean uses translations provided by HELCOM-VASAB MSP Data expert group ([https://vasab.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Possible-sea-uses\\_nov2018.xlsx](https://vasab.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Possible-sea-uses_nov2018.xlsx)) in the Baltic to include more and more languages and move to possible multilanguage options.

The TEG-S2 plans to meet again end-September or early October. The decision to hold the meeting live or virtually will be made according to the evolution of the current Covid-19 crisis.

**Reminder:** The MSP-INSPIRE workshop will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, 14:00.

Access to INSPIRE virtual workshops 2020:

<https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/conference2020/virtualprog>

INSPIRE principles within Maritime Spatial Planning agenda:

[https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/workshop\\_proposal\\_2020a.pdf](https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/workshop_proposal_2020a.pdf)

[Link](#) for direct workshop inscription.