

# A Guide to support the integration of Marine Protected Areas into Maritime Spatial Planning

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## PURPOSE AND USE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide supports the integration of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) into Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) process using three key elements: recommendations for Strategic Environmental Assessment, Strategic Recommendations, and a Criteria Checklist.

The Guide is organized according to the three stages of Planning: Pre-Planning, Planning and Implementation. Practitioners may choose the planning stage, or the key elements, that suit better to their needs, as the Guide is flexible and adaptive to different contexts.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is intended to be used throughout all the planning stages to identify key environmental risks, goals, and parameters for integrating MPA into MSP process: It helps balance conservation objectives, ecological importance, and stakeholder needs; during implementation, SEA should be adapted to monitor cumulative environmental impacts and adjust activities within the MSP framework.

Strategic Recommendations are practical guidelines for enhancing the integration of MPAs into MSP, focusing on legal frameworks, stakeholder engagement, data sharing, and adaptive management. The recommendations include suggested actions like adopting binding legal frameworks, improving stakeholder integration, enhancing data-sharing mechanisms, and incorporating adaptive management principles.

The Criteria checklist should be used to define key parameters and foundational goals for the integration of MPAs into MSP: it complements strategic recommendations and ensures that early planning decisions reflect ecological, social, and economic objectives; and is intended to be employed dynamically throughout the planning process, guiding the design and integration of all planning phases; It can also be used for ongoing monitoring and management.







**The Strategic Recommendations, can also be used under SEA process or independently according to the planning process phases.**

**The Criteria checklist is presented in each planning stage, but its use should be cumulative on the three stages of planning instead of isolated.**

This Guide is the result of screening MSP across Europe with focus on gaps, barriers, and lessons learned on integrating MPAs into MSP processes. More clarification on Methods and additional materials on the three key elements on this Guide can be found in “Calado H., et al., (2025). Strategic Guidance for the Integration of MPA and MSP Processes on Multiple Governance and Ecosystem Levels - Deliverable – D4.4., under the WP4 of MSP4BIO project (<https://msp4bio.eu/> - GA n° 101060707)”.

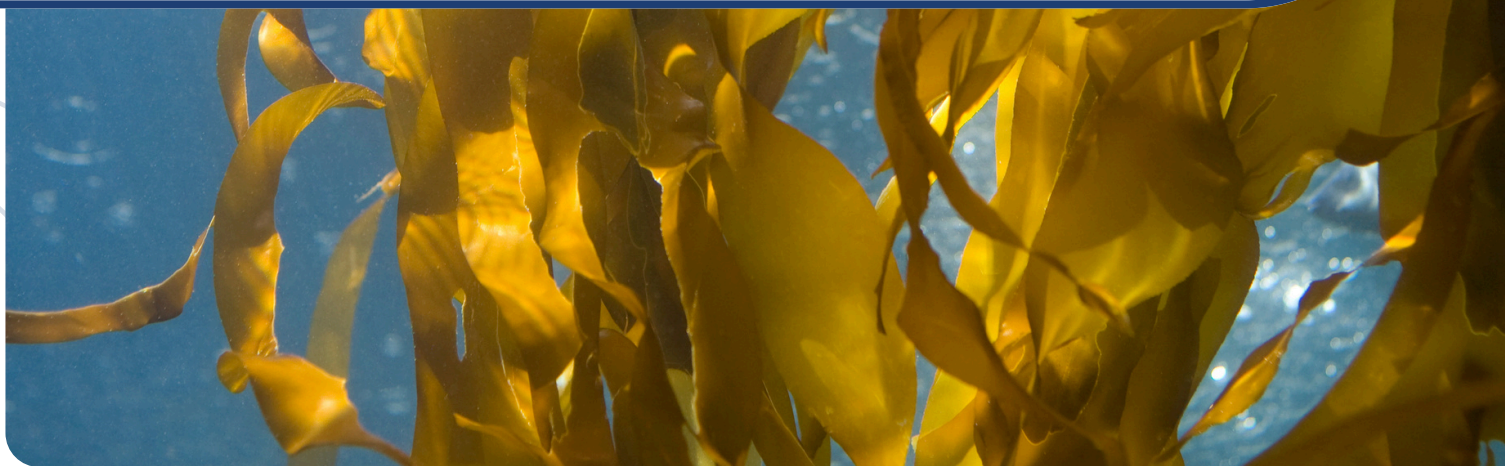
## A MODEL FOR MPA INTEGRATION INTO MSP

MSP is an important integrative and adaptive process aiming at managing the increasing and often competing demands for maritime space. It contributes to the sustainable use of marine resources while safeguarding ecosystem health. A central component of MSP is its capacity to integrate multiple sectors, governance levels, and ecological considerations into a cohesive planning framework. The implementation of MPAs is an important measure used to guarantee the protection of marine ecosystems. When well-managed, these areas contribute to biodiversity conservation and restoration, the maintenance of ecosystem services (ES), and ecosystem resilience, which are essential for human well-being.



## A MODEL FOR MPA INTEGRATION INTO MSP

Integrating MPAs into MSP is a multi-staged process requiring careful consideration of relevant criteria, recommendations, and environmental analysis, fully integrated in a Model organized according to the 3 stages of Planning (Figure below).







## PREPLANNING STAGE

### INCORPORATING SEA

To enable meaningful integration of MPAs into MSP from the outset, it is essential to initiate SEA at the preplanning stage. This begins with the scoping phase, which should be specifically designed to support the alignment of MPA and MSP processes. At this stage, SEA plays a critical role in identifying key environmental risks, defining conservation goals, and setting parameters that guide subsequent planning decisions.

It ensures that conservation objectives, ecological importance, and stakeholder considered and balanced early on. Promoting the early application of the ecosystem-based approach within SEA helps embed biodiversity priorities into the MSP process and supports the long-term sustainability of marine and coastal ecosystems. This includes applying an integrated framework across environmental, social, and economic dimensions, with tailored sustainability metrics, regular assessment of effectiveness, and adjustments based on monitoring results.

### INCORPORATING SEA

Strengthening the legal and policy basis for SEA is also necessary to ensure that the process directly addresses compliance with international and national obligations—such as the MSFD—and explicitly integrates MPAs into MSP objectives. Legal mandates should also require the consideration of cumulative ecological, social, and economic impacts, especially in relation to protected areas. Transparency is a critical element throughout the SEA process, which should be collaborative and ensure that MSP explicitly acknowledges MPAs and incorporates relevant EU directives. While SEA and MSP are distinct processes, their coordinated planning can reinforce shared objectives and ensure that regulatory considerations are fully addressed from the beginning.



# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## DEVELOP CLEAR AND ROBUST REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS TO SUPPORT THE INTEGRATION OF MPAS INTO MSP PROCESSES, BY:



- Adopting Binding Legal Frameworks for MSP in countries where such frameworks are currently lacking, to ensure enforceability and alignment with MPA goals.
- Enhancing legal mechanisms for the integration of MPAs into MSP or introducing “soft” coordination mechanisms where gaps have been identified. Where necessary, revising the legal framework is advisable to minimise conflicts and enhance synergy. Additionally, strengthening conservation enforcement measures may be required to ensure the effectiveness of MPAs.



## ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND WELL-STRUCTURED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS, BY:

- Streamlining governance structures to reduce complexity by clarifying roles and improving coordination between the various agencies responsible for MSP and MPA management. Address fragmented responsibilities and ensure coherence and accountability.
- Developing a structured participation strategy targeting local communities, conservation managers, and sectoral representatives (e.g., fisheries, energy, shipping) to align MSP and MPA objectives. In some countries, collaborative stakeholder forums may be needed. Fostering interactive processes involving stakeholders enhances transparency and buy-in, contributing to effective management.

## ESTABLISH ENABLING CONDITIONS THAT PRIORITIZE BIODIVERSITY EFFECTIVELY WITHIN MSP, BY:



- Incorporating biodiversity goals into MSP through the explicit integration of relevant EU directives, such as the MSFD and the Habitats Directive, to ensure the protection and restoration of biodiversity are central to planning processes.



## STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS



### ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND WELL-STRUCTURED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS, BY:

- Developing comprehensive public engagement strategies that incorporate various forms of outreach, including education campaigns on marine conservation, to increase participation rates. Invest in technology platforms for virtual consultations to accommodate diverse stakeholders, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.
- Establishing multi-stakeholder governance structures that include representatives from both MSP and MPA sectors, and facilitating regular dialogue to address regulatory conflicts, streamline roles, and improve coordination.
- Increasing public awareness by educating communities on the ecological, social, and economic importance of MPAs within MSP processes, to foster public support and compliance.

### PROMOTE EFFECTIVE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN MSP PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION, BY:



- Encouraging transboundary cooperation where neighbouring countries align MSP objectives to jointly manage transboundary MPAs and address cumulative impacts effectively.
- Streamlining regional and national objectives by standardising practices and harmonising MSP implementation to align with broader EU biodiversity and conservation goals.
- Addressing inconsistencies in national regulations that hinder efficient cross-border collaboration in MPA management, by building on existing frameworks such as Regional Seas Conventions and further strengthening the alignment of MSP strategies with transboundary goals.





## CHECKLIST CRITERIA

### DEVELOP CLEAR AND ROBUST REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS TO SUPPORT THE INTEGRATION OF MPAS INTO MSP PROCESSES



#### POLICY CRITERIA:

- Legally binding status of the plan
- Consider and integrate environmental provisions and objectives of interconnected policies such as Birds and Habitats Directives, MSFD, CFP and Biodiversity Strategy.
- Identify and clearly articulate relevant international, EU, regional and national policies, including their targets and timelines
- Entire sea area covered

### ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND WELL-STRUCTURED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS



- Required funding and appropriately skilled staff are provided
- A science advisory committee is established
- MSP team is established

#### PLANNING PROCESS CRITERIA:

#### GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- Community, multi-stakeholder, and public participation is ensured.
- Comprehensive public consultation involving all relevant stakeholders (including minority groups) is conducted, and their input is incorporated into the next phase of the plan.
- Effective authority for MSP is established, with balanced representation of government powers.
- Competent authority for delivering EBA-MSP is in place.





## ESTABLISH ENABLING CONDITIONS THAT PRIORITIZE BIODIVERSITY EFFECTIVELY WITHIN MSP



- Preferred vision is selected
- MSP goals are identified and Biodiversity/Conservation objectives specified.

### PLANNING PROCESS CRITERIA:

### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:

- Land-sea interactions are identified and analysed, including coastal activity impacts and measures to address them through MSP.
- Precautionary principle and preventive action principle are applied.
- Sensitivity mapping and analysis of sensitive areas are included in plan drafting.
- Environmental baseline studies and identification of ecosystem services and functionality are carried out.



- Economic baseline studies and economic impact assessments are carried out.
- Clear economic objectives are defined, focusing on sustainable development and aligned with blue economy and finance principles.
- Ocean uses are identified and analysed; measures are proposed to reduce conflicts, social tensions, accidents, and pollution.
- Social, political, and cultural baseline studies and impact assessments for local communities are conducted.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA:



## PROMOTE EFFECTIVE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN MSP PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

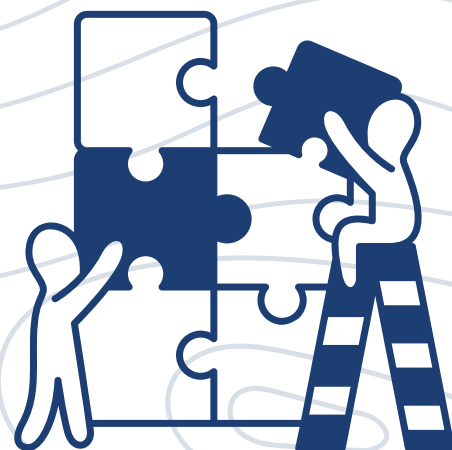
- Cross-border cooperation mechanisms are established for planning, monitoring, and enforcement.



### TIPS

**Clear Guidance and Protocols:** Establishing robust regulatory frameworks to guide the integration of MPAs into MSP. The legal backing ensures that sustainable use and conservation are balanced in regional planning efforts.

**Expand Knowledge Sharing Platforms:** Foster regional collaboration for sharing best practices on MPA integration into MSP. Platforms like the GeoSea Portal should be enhanced to support data visualisation, ecological mapping, and stakeholder coordination.







## PLANNING STAGE

### INCORPORATING SEA

SEA should be expanded and refined during the planning stage to support informed and adaptive MSP development. It should build on insights from the pre-planning phase, incorporating biodiversity data, ecosystem functions, transboundary concerns, and human pressures. SEA should be tailored to address context-specific governance levels—local, national, and regional—and ensure early integration of ecological and socio-economic baselines for MPAs and surrounding areas.

Cumulative impacts must be assessed systematically, using shared tools and cross-border frameworks to analyse how multiple sea uses interact over time. These assessments should guide the alignment of MSP objectives with long-term conservation outcomes. Where data or ecological knowledge is limited, the precautionary principle should apply, especially in areas with emerging activities like aquaculture or offshore renewables. Research efforts should be increased to fill knowledge gaps related to connectivity, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. SEA should also strengthen transparency and participation by embedding multi-stage stakeholder engagement, particularly involving MPA managers, scientists, and local communities. Findings and decisions must be communicated through accessible platforms and formats to foster public trust. SEA processes should also help identify and mitigate socio-economic risks, especially for vulnerable groups such as small-scale fisheries. Where appropriate, sustainable and transparent compensation measures should be proposed to address trade-offs between conservation and development.

By linking SEA closely with MSP planning, it becomes a forward-looking instrument to support adaptive management, guide spatial decisions, and align ecological, social, and governance priorities across marine and coastal systems.

# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## STRENGTHEN KNOWLEDGE, DATA INTEGRATION AND FOUNDATIONS FOR MONITORING SYSTEMS BY:



- Collaborating with research institutions and establishing open data initiatives to provide stakeholders with real-time access to MSP information at all stages of the planning process.
- Investing in comprehensive ecological and socio-economic monitoring to support data-driven decision-making, [similar to approaches integrating SEA].
- Utilizing emerging technologies, such as drones and remote sensing, to enable real-time data collection and support adaptive management processes.
- Enhancing the use of GIS and dynamic mapping tools for multi-layered spatial analysis to anticipate ecological needs, with regular updates supported through community science.
- Developing standardised protocols for cumulative impact assessments to ensure consistent evaluations across sectors.
- Applying advanced tools—such as simulation models, ecosystem service valuation frameworks, and pressure-impact matrices—to improve understanding of cumulative impacts.
- Supporting joint monitoring and transboundary data sharing to ensure coherent management of shared MPAs.



## PROMOTE INTER-SECTORAL DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION BY:

- Empowering stakeholders from key marine sectors—such as energy, fisheries, shipping, and tourism—to actively participate in planning and negotiation processes, ensuring balanced solutions that integrate conservation and development goals.
- Supporting multi-use spatial planning approaches that harmonise diverse sectoral needs while maintaining policy coherence, through clear zoning and prioritisation of uses.
- Develop resolution strategies for conflicts between MPAs and other marine activities by using stakeholder mapping to anticipate competing interests and support negotiated trade-offs and stakeholder-driven compromises.



# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## ENSURE ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY AND RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE BY:



- Identifying priority areas for MPA enhancement, expansion, or designation of potential MPAs through comprehensive ecological assessments, using biodiversity indices, ecosystem health indicators, and resilience metrics, supported by active stakeholder engagement.
- Incorporating ecological corridors and connectivity between MPAs into MSP by establishing clear management regimes that include concepts such as blue corridors and functional linkages, with a focus on reducing habitat fragmentation, including across transboundary areas.
- Addressing environmental pressures from coastal and offshore development to enhance the resilience of MPAs and ensure their effectiveness in protecting critical habitats.
- Expanding protection of offshore and deep-sea ecosystems, using spatial tools to assess and enhance connectivity and ecological representativity.
- Integrating climate change resilience measures into MSP and MPA frameworks, addressing sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and ecosystem shifts.



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# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## STRENGTHEN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS BY:



- Expanding adaptive and ecosystem-based approaches that respond to changing environmental conditions and align offshore activities with coastal conservation goals, while incorporating long-term ecological, social, and economic considerations into planning.
- Ensuring mechanisms for continuous adaptation, supported by regular assessments and the integration of scientific findings and stakeholder feedback.
- Introducing preconditions for mandatory review cycles in MSP processes, using clear indicators of environmental health and governance effectiveness to guide timely adjustments.





## CHECKLIST CRITERIA

### STRENGTHEN KNOWLEDGE, DATA INTEGRATION AND FOUNDATIONS FOR MONITORING FRAMEWORK

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:

- Cumulative impact assessment of all activities at sea is used.
- Planning is based on best-available scientific evidence. Interdisciplinary science-supported decisions.
- Planning is based on data and assessments of the functionality of natural processes, ecosystem structure, functioning and services to prevent their losses. Marine ecosystem services are assessed and included.



### ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND WELL-STRUCTURED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS

- Forecasts of future human activities documented and mapped.



#### PLANNING PROCESS CRITERIA:

#### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- Spatial and temporal utilisation of maritime space for different sea uses and activities is identified
- Transparent decision-making process is ensured, including the public sharing of relevant documents



#### SOCIO- ECONOMIC CRITERIA:

- Results from cross-sectoral public consultation incorporated. Outcomes from the public participation process are made publicly available.



## ENSURE ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY AND RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:

- Areas suitable to restoration activities followed by restoration plans are identified, including ecosystem functions.
- Blue Carbon ecosystems protected.
- Planned activities fall within environmentally sustainable limits, not exceeding the carrying capacity or limit achievement of Good Environmental Status.
- Across borders coherency with major ecosystem boundaries and ecological features is considered.



### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- Temporal and spatial uncertainties in the era of climate change are addressed, including adaptation measures.
- Future expansion of marine protected areas / 30% area protection, of which 10% strictly protected is well defined.
- Zoning schemes and Plan Strategy consider potential important areas for conservation considering climate or other environmental changes.



### SOCIO- ECONOMIC CRITERIA:

- Offshore renewable energy development is foreseen, which is sufficient for just energy transition and climate goals and is in areas compatible with biodiversity recovery and resilience. CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality respects biodiversity objectives.

## PROMOTE INTER-SECTORAL DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION



### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- Sustainable multi-purpose uses through time and space are identified.
- Stakeholders are satisfied with the participation process.



### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA:

- Sustainable blue economy objectives and finance principles that are transparent, science-led, compliant and inclusive, are applied.
- Adverse effects on traditional practices and relationships or social systems avoided or minimized.
- Industry employment and income generation are forecasted.
- Possible side-effects and distribution of positive and detrimental impacts across sectors and groups (including regional differences) are identified, fostering social justice.
- Risk in conflicts among users addressed
- Clear political, social and cultural objectives/values, associated with measures and obtained through an open and participative consultation process, are defined.
- Sea use by fisheries assessed and included.
- Respect for and/or understanding of local knowledge enhanced.

## STRENGTHEN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS



### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:

- Long-term perspective is adopted, including identification of how MSP can support adaptive conservation strategies to cater for spatial changes in ecosystems (e.g. migration of species, change of critical conditions for habitats).
- Planning is based on spatial-temporal analysis and protection of species and habitats sensitivity in the long run and considering climate change impacts.



### PLANNING PROCESS CRITERIA:

- Alternative management actions to achieve preferred vision identified.



### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- Based on SMART objectives associated with management measures and indicators to allow for proactive, iterative, and adaptive management.
- Various scenarios of sustainable sea uses are considered.



## STRENGTHEN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS



### TIPS

**Grant MPAs Stronger Regulatory Power:** Regulatory frameworks should explicitly strengthen the authority of MPAs over conflicting maritime activities, ensuring their conservation objectives are not overridden by economic sectors like fisheries or wind energy development.

**Joint Strategic Environmental Assessment:** Conduct joint SEAs for both MSP and MPA initiatives to comprehensively assess environmental impacts.

This assessment would clarify the relationships and complementary objectives between the two frameworks.

**Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration:**

**Cross-Sectoral Task Forces:** Form cross-sectoral task forces to facilitate the continuous sharing of knowledge between maritime stakeholders, ensuring that best practices are highlighted and lessons learned are documented thoroughly;

**Collaborative Educational Programs:** Initiate joint educational programs or workshops that involve academia, government, and non-profits to build knowledge on MPA conservation approaches and integrated marine management practices;

**Strengthen Regional Collaboration:** Harmonise national SEA processes with transboundary environmental assessments to improve regulatory coherence and regional consistency.

This includes enhancing ecological connectivity through measures like transboundary MPAs; supporting cross-border alignment via regional initiatives such as PHAROS4MPAs and the recently created MSP Mediterranean Community of Practice; and advancing knowledge exchange and coordination in the design and implementation of MPAs.







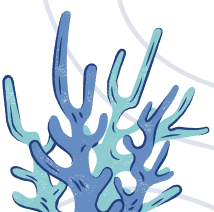
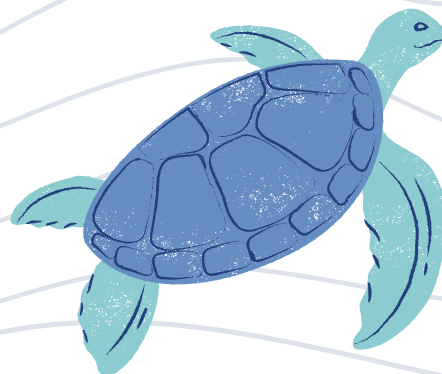
## IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

### INCORPORATING SEA

During the implementation stage, SEA should be used as a dynamic tool to support adaptive management, inform review cycles, and ensure MSP frameworks remain responsive to evolving MPA needs, scientific findings, and environmental performance. SEA can help measure how MPAs contribute to broader MSP objectives, particularly in achieving ecological and social outcomes.

SEA should also enhance stakeholder engagement by ensuring transparent communication and structured dialogue between MSP planners and MPA managers. Publishing SEA findings in accessible formats supports accountability, while feedback mechanisms help align implementation with local priorities. Particular attention should be given to assessing socio-economic impacts—especially for vulnerable groups such as small-scale fisheries—by identifying losses and applying fair, transparent compensation or trade-off mechanisms where appropriate.

Finally, SEA should be integrated into operational monitoring frameworks to track cumulative environmental impacts, assess ecosystem services, and support adjustments to spatial planning. Its application reinforces ecosystem-based approaches and ensures that MPAs continue to contribute meaningfully to ecological integrity and sustainable resource use throughout the implementation process.



# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## STRENGTHEN LEGAL AND ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS BY:

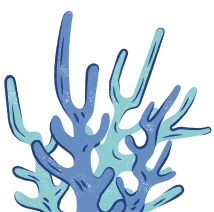


- Establishing or improving adaptive governance models through the development of management strategies and review cycles that regularly update MSP frameworks based on scientific knowledge, climate resilience needs, MPA requirements, conservation challenges, and regional priorities.
- Implementing unified monitoring and enforcement programs that legally anchor MSP and MPA obligations within institutional frameworks.



## STRENGTHEN STAKEHOLDER CAPACITY FOR LONG-TERM COLLABORATION AND CROSS-SECTORAL BENEFITS BY:

- Investing in capacity building for local authorities, planners, and conservation managers to support MPA monitoring, enforcement, and active stakeholder participation in MSP processes—ensuring adaptive, inclusive, and transparent decision-making.
- Fostering participatory processes for MPA designation and MSP development by establishing clear communication channels and participatory governance mechanisms that ensure stakeholder input is consistently considered.
- Expanding regional knowledge-sharing platforms to promote the exchange of best practices on integrating MPAs into MSP.
- Strengthening feedback systems that engage local communities, industries, and authorities in shaping and adjusting maritime planning frameworks.
- Enhancing inter-sectoral coordination among key stakeholders—such as fisheries, shipping, energy, and nature conservation sectors—to reduce conflicts and embed MPA objectives into cross-sectoral implementation.



# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY AND RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH OPERATIONAL MONITORING SYSTEMS BY:



- Investing in data availability and monitoring to ensure robust ecological data collection and monitoring systems that support adaptive management and effective enforcement. Address gaps in monitoring frameworks through cumulative impact studies and long-term assessments of ecological connectivity to minimise disruptions and support sustainable Blue Economy development.
- Enhancing monitoring and enforcement capacity by allocating resources to track long-term ecological and environmental impacts, conservation progress, and MSP compliance using advanced tools like remote sensing or cross-border cumulative impact frameworks (e.g., SYMPHONY) to address emerging environmental and societal challenges dynamically.
- Establishing unified monitoring and enforcement programs for MSPs and MPAs.





# CHECKLIST CRITERIA

## STRENGTHEN LEGAL AND ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS



### PLANNING PROCESS CRITERIA:

- Adaptive management framework applied with feedback mechanism from monitoring and surveillance are in place, assuring the continuous integration of variability and changes
- Management Plan completed
- Tools for monitoring progress and aligning with key policies included
- Management Plan approved and implemented
- Management Plan enforced
- Work plan completed
- Zoning plan and regulations completed, approved and implemented



### POLICY AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:

- All maritime sectors are integrated with their objectives aligned with MSP objectives, targets and timelines already set by relevant other policies and legislations
- Regulatory and enforceability set up
- “Coordination of authorisation, certification and planning procedures” are established
- Transparency, confidence and certainty for investors is provided





## STRENGTHEN STAKEHOLDER CAPACITY FOR LONG-TERM COLLABORATION AND CROSS-SECTORAL BENEFITS



### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA:

- Economic status and relative wealth of coastal residents and/or resource users improved
- Equity within social structures and between social groups improved and fair
- Existence value enhanced or maintained
- Health of coastal residents and/or resource users improved
- Household occupational and income structure stabilized or diversified through reduced marine resource dependency
- Improved availability of locally caught seafood for public consumption
- Local access to markets and capital improved
- Monetary benefits distributed to and through coastal communities and marginalised groups
- Non-monetary benefits distributed equitably to and through coastal communities and marginalised groups
- Public's understanding of environmental and social 'sustainability' improved
- Recreation opportunities enhanced or maintained

- Multi-use of marine space is promoted



### POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:



## ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY AND RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH OPERATIONAL MONITORING



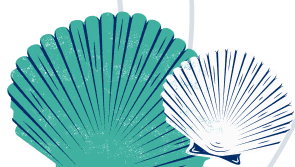
### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:

- Alien and invasive species and genotypes removed or prevented from becoming established
- Coherent, well-connected and representative network of MPAs and areas of ecological importance are integrated, ensuring connectivity through respective provisions outside MPAs, in line with the biodiversity spatial targets, and associated with management plans
- Essential marine habitats connected via blue corridors/green infrastructure
- Protection of migratory routes for birds
- Over-exploitation of living and/or non-living marine resources is minimized, prevented or prohibited entirely
- Catch yields are improved or sustained in fishing within the marine area
- Focal species abundance increased or maintained
- Mitigation hierarchy is applied
- Populations of target species for extractive or non-extractive use are restored to or maintained at desired reference points



- Harmonised monitoring set up
- High quality spatial data is shared publicly and utilized across administrative and sectoral borders
- Tools are devised to translate spatial data into actionable information fit for planning purposes, and end users can evaluate the usability and quality of spatial data and maps

### POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE CRITERIA:



## ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY AND RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH OPERATIONAL MONITORING



### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA:

- Scientific understanding expanded through research and monitoring
- Aesthetic value enhanced or maintained
- Cultural value enhanced or maintained
- Wilderness value enhanced or maintained



## TIPS

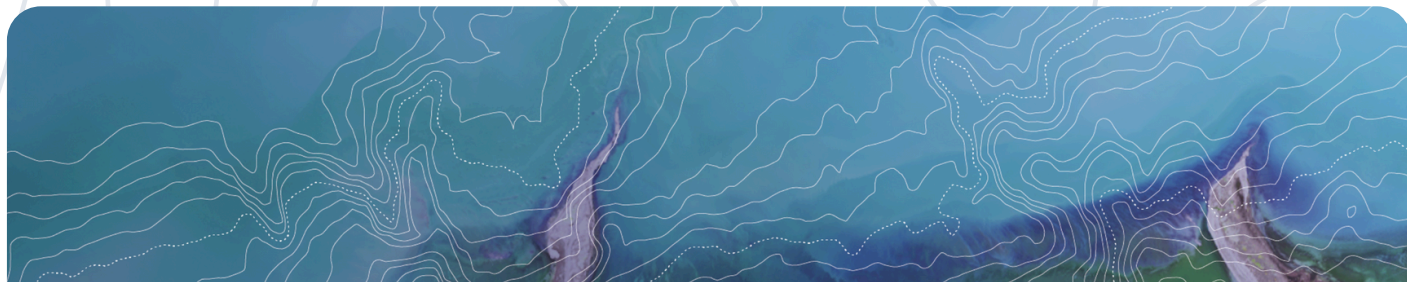
- **Provide Financial and Technical Resources:**

Allocate specific funding and technical support to integrate MPA management goals directly into MSP processes. This includes investments in mapping, ecological assessments, and conflict resolution tools that can be shared between sectors and accounting for income loss especially in the case of vulnerable communities.

- **Outcome Evaluation and Adjustments:**

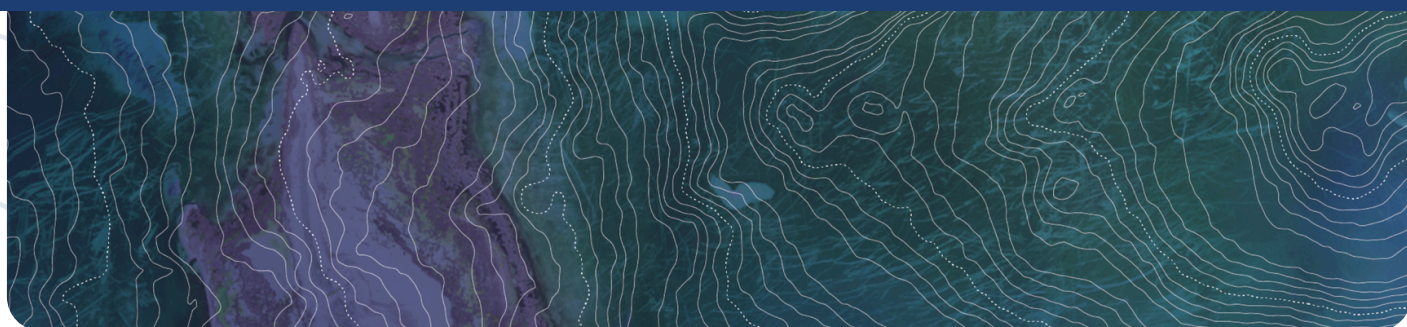
Measure implementation results and adjust the management framework to ensure MPAs are effectively contributing to sustainability and conservation goals.





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