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8.3 Developing Guidelines for Cetacean-sensitive Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

ASCOBANS AC28, 27.9.2023 (Documents 8.3: Draft Guidelines, Inf. 8.3 Cumulative Effects Assessment)
Prof. Dr. Aline Kühl-Stenzel, WG Chair

Brief overview of this session

- Background & mandate
- Update on progress, including online technical workshop (27. & 28.6.2023)
- Presentation of the draft guidelines and review process (Dr. Cormac Walsh)
- Moderated discussion in order to:
 - Take note of the Draft Guidelines
 - Provide guidance (looking towards MOP10 and a Resolution)



Area-based & temporal management is an effective conservation tool

Examples of what can be achieved:

- Safeguarding existing **Marine Protected Areas** and other sensitive zones/times (e.g. reproductive period)
- Reduction in **disturbance**
- Improvement of **prey availability**
- Avoidance of **collisions** with vessels
- Improved **noise mitigation** (e.g. unexploded ordnance, pile driving, seismic exploration, naval exercises, shipping)



manage **cumulative effects**



What role can MSP play for cetacean conservation?

Address anthropogenic pressure, for example:

- Shipping
 - Renewable energy
 - Oil/gas exploration
 - Recreation (e.g. leisure boats)
 - Fisheries
 - Naval/military activities
- Improve environmental status of entire marine ecosystem, including connectivity
 - Advantage: large-scale management, potentially international and transboundary – particularly relevant to highly mobile/transboundary cetaceans
- ➡ International regulation (e.g. OSPAR, ASCOBANS)



Status MSP across the ASCOBANS range



European
MSP Platform



European
Commission



UK is
almost
„blue“,
gap for
Northern
Ireland





Criterion is satisfied



Criterion partially satisfied



Criterion is not satisfied

Table 5: Compiled National Level MSP Assessment Results

N°	Criteria	Belgium	Germany	Latvia	Sweden
2.2c	Cumulative impacts assessment informed zoning				
3.2b	Life-cycles of mobile marine species accounted for				
3.2d	Disruption/fragmentation of ecological corridors minimised				
4.1b	Impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems				
5.2a	Restrictions on commercial fishing methods				
5.5a	Assessment of noise pollution				
5.5b	Measures to mitigate noise pollution				



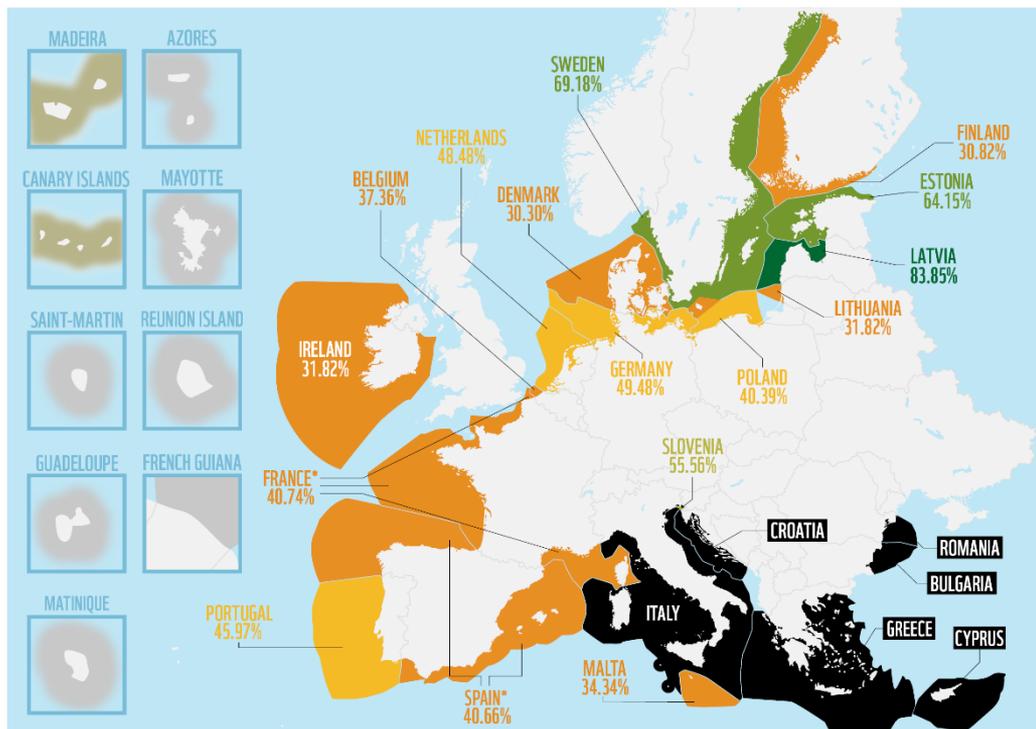
Are EU Member State's Maritime Spatial Plans Fit for Nature and Climate?

Technical Report – Approach and Main Findings
June 2022





THE EU IS FAILING AT ECOSYSTEM-BASED MSP



KEY

SCORE IN %

A national maritime spatial plan is in place and has been assessed by WWF. 100% corresponds to the complete achievement of an ecosystem-based approach to MSP

0%

No national maritime spatial plan in place and the country is under infringement procedures by the European Commission

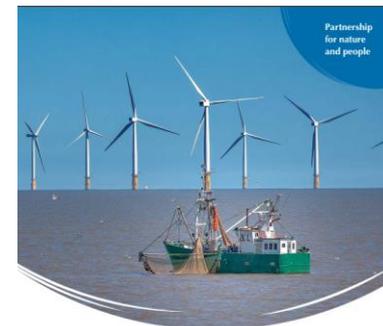
0-100%

A national maritime spatial plan is in place but has not yet been assessed by WWF

0-100%

No national maritime spatial plan is in place but there is no infringement procedure underway as the outermost regions have more time to comply with EU laws

*The score (in %) corresponds to an average of the scores from all sea basin plans. For further information on how the Member State scores in each region, please consult WWF's complete assessments, available on wwf.eu



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Relevant MSP mandates under ASCOBANS



- Resolution 8.9 (2016) on „Managing Cumulative Anthropogenic Impacts in the Marine Environment“, including MSP
- Marine Spatial Planning: covered by ASCOBANS AC every 4 years (e.g. @AC23 in 2017, @AC26 in 2021), as well as MOP
- AC26 requested the Secretariat to establish an Intersessional Working Group: how to best develop guidelines for cetacean-friendly MSP
 - Members: Finland, Germany, Sweden; CCB, NABU, OceanCare, SWF, WDC, WWF + HELCOM
- Voluntary contribution (Germany) received in August 2022 to commission work
- Tender to produce draft guidelines (lead: Dr. Cormac Walsh)
- Peer-review process & technical workshop

Summary technical workshop (27 & 28 June 2023)



- 25 participants, including several members of the intersessional WG, policy advisors, scientists, consultants, NGOs and the Secretariat
- Reviewed the guidelines, focusing *inter alia* on (see agenda online):
 - underwater noise, offshore wind, shipping, fisheries, climate change adaptation, monitoring and dynamic management, integration of cetacean conservation in MSP, restoration
- Selected issues (not exclusive):
 - “Cetacean-friendly” -> “cetacean-sensitive”
 - Should key users of the marine environment contribute to monitoring and management (via MSP)?
 - Inclusion of restoration areas in MSP
 - Discussions on a “base map” similar to HELCOM for the ASCOBANS area
 - Discussions as to whether to extend the Intersessional Working Group



Thank you!

Looking forward to your input!