



MSP4BIO: IMPROVED SCIENCE-BASED MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING TO SAFEGUARD AND RESTORE BIODIVERSITY IN A COHERENT EUROPEAN MPA NETWORK

Maritime Spatial Plan (MSP) enables a more integrated and sustainable planning of ocean uses and resources. It is a key instrument towards integrated maritime policy and blue economy. Thus, one would expect that the designation of **marine protected areas (MPAs)**, would be incorporated into MSP. In practice, however, there is only **little integration** between them. Theoretical work has been done on the issue, but the development and validation of such integrated approaches is still needed.

The main objective of MSP4BIO is to develop an **integrated and modular Ecological-Socio-Economic (ESE) management framework for the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems**. The ESE looks at the compatibility between maritime/coastal uses and protection measures: it includes the **establishment of a practical typology of protection measures**, ecological issues, and activities, allowing to **categorize socio-economic impacts** of these protection measures. The resulting solutions (strategic and spatial) will **fill gaps on marine biodiversity** and better the **integration between MSP and MPA** management. The framework will take into account the criteria and objectives of relevant policies (MSFD, WFD, MSPD, CFP, etc.) and contribute to the EU Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS) 2030 and the Convention on Biological Diversity post-2020 framework.

Six test sites in five European Sea Basins have been selected to conduct the analysis and to showcase and operationalise the ESE management framework. The test sites reflect the processes that are taking place at the national, sub-and-supranational levels, at different geographical scales, and focus on different socio-economic and environmental challenges.

Communities of Practice (CoP) will be established in each of the test sites for the effective interaction with planners, regulators, and researchers relevant for MSP and MPAs. Interactions will take place in the form of workshops and focus group meetings. This is expected to **facilitate exchange, to build ownership, thus ensuring uptake of developed tools in test areas and beyond**.

This Horizon Europe project started in August 2022 and will run until July 2025.

Who does this project serve?

- MPA and MSP managers
- Protection, conservation and restoration stakeholders
- Policy makers from environmental and socio-economic sectors
- Public and business decision-makers at local, national and European levels

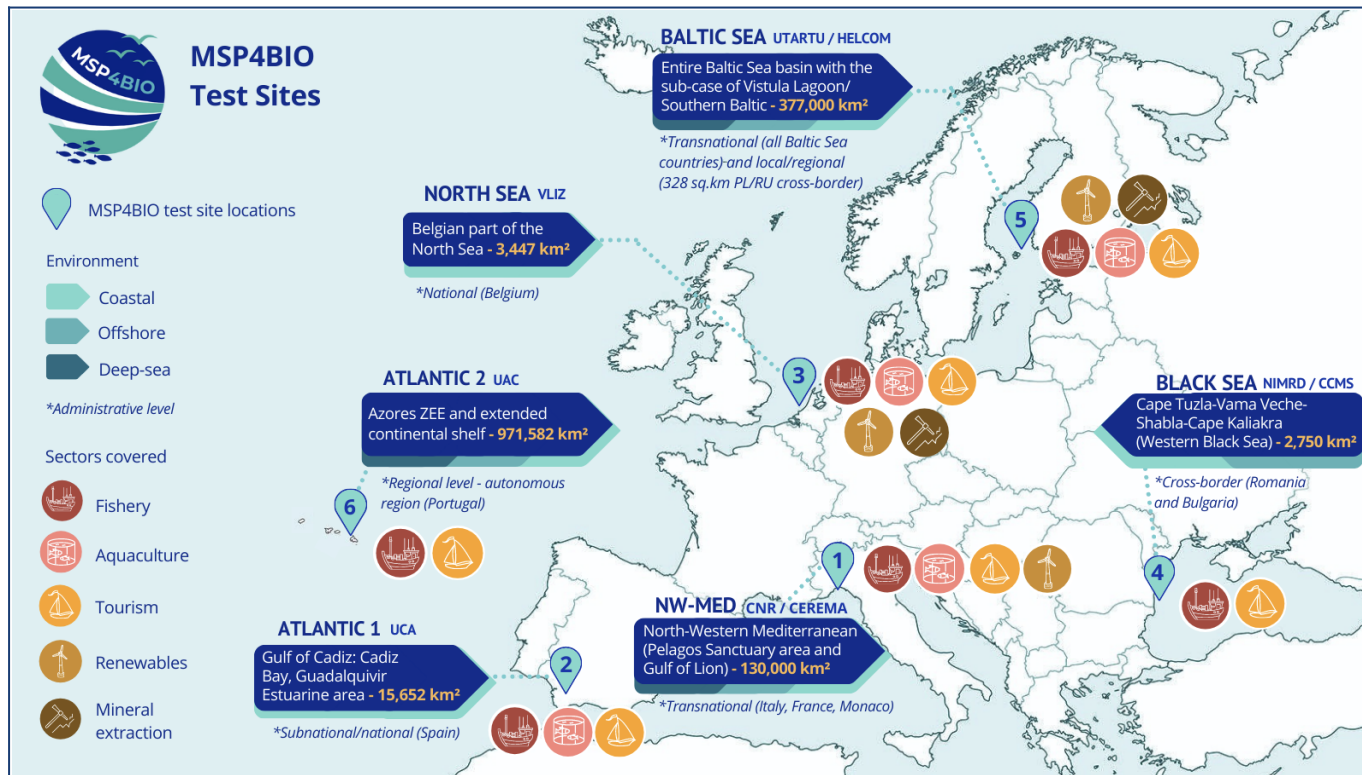
What impact will this project have?

- Facilitation of decision making thanks to Decision Support Tools (DST)
- Holistic and coherent approach to MSP through a flexible Ecological-Socio-Economic (ESE) framework
- Reduction of biodiversity knowledge gap
- Increase of the dialogue between science and policy
- Coherent MPA network



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Geographical distribution of test sites in MSP4BIO, their basic characteristics and challenges



BALTIC SEA

- Transboundary sea basin
- Ecosystem under multiple human-induced pressures
- Need for more MPAs designated areas to achieve the regional goal
- Need for a coordinated plan for human activities

BLACK SEA

- Cross-border area: 2 countries
- Diversity of marine domains
- MPAs Support huge biodiversity and ecosystem services
- MPAs fragmented and do not have operational management

NORTH SEA – BELGIAN AREA

- Well studied and monitored area
- Need for spatial strategy for pelagic biodiversity conservation
- Need for geographical biodiversity assessments units

ATLANTIC 2 – AZORES

- Archipelago with rich habitat diversity – knowledge gaps in offshore and coastal areas
- Need for strategies to enlarge MPA network and for “fully protected areas”
- No MSP approved yet

ATLANTIC 1 – GULF OF CADIZ

- Hot spots with special needs for MSP and MPA
- Need for improvement of MSP and stronger consideration of sea-land interactions in planning
- Human activities threaten MPAs in their vicinity

NW-MED

- Governance complexity as area is shared between 3 countries
- Large spatial scale
- Diversity of marine domains
- Multiplicity of human activities



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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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1 (Coo)	s.Pro - sustainable projects GmbH (SPRO)	Germany
2	Centre d'études et d'expertise sur les risques, l'environnement, la mobilité et l'aménagement (CEREMA)	France
3	Center for Coastal and Marine Studies (CCMS)	Bulgaria
4	Uniwersytet Morski W Gdyni (GMU)	Poland
5	Universidad De Cadiz (UCA)	Spain
6	Universite De Nantes (UNANTES)	France
7	Tartu Ülikool (UTARTU)	Estonia
8	Fondazione WWF Mediterranean (WWF-MED)	Italy
9 (Affiliated entity)	WWF European Policy Office (WWF-EPO)	Belgium
10	Coastal Research and Planning Institute (CORPI)	Lithuania
11	The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM)	Finland
12	Consiglio Nazionale Delle Ricerche (CNR)	Italy
13	Vlaams Instituut Voor De Zee (VLIZ)	Belgium
14	Suomen Ymparistokeskus (SYKE)	Finland
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