

Regional MSPforum for Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas – 1st edition

Event Report

When: 16 December 2022

Where: Online



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Agenda

- ❖ **Session 1: Opening**
 - Opening remarks
 - MSP related initiatives in the region

- ❖ **Session 2: Marine protection, restoration and blue economy**
 - Key messages from the 5th International MSPforum and 3rd International Conference on MSP
 - Thematic talk: MSP accelerating blue economy development in the region
 - Panel Dialogue

- ❖ **Session 3: Knowledge support and capacity development**
 - Key messages from the 5th International MSPforum and 3rd International Conference on MSP
 - Thematic talk: Knowledge gaps and capacity need for the implementation of Marine Spatial Planning in the region
 - Panel Dialogue

- ❖ **Session 4: Cooperation opportunities**

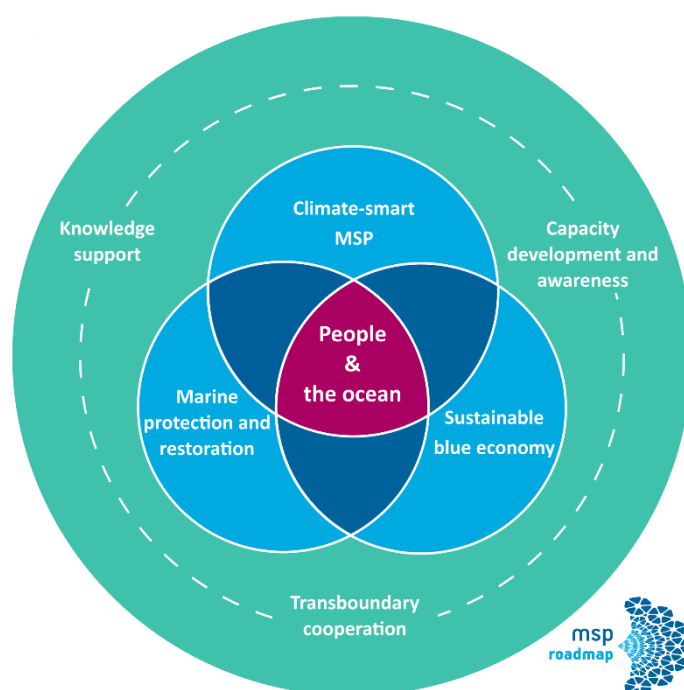
- ❖ **Session 5: Closing**
 - Closure and conclusions

MSProadmap and Regional MSPforums

Our ocean is experiencing important challenges nowadays; the living base for millions of humans is threatened in different ways in many sea basins, and there is a global goal to achieve a sustainable development of this menace environment.

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is a process that proposes a more integrative, multisectoral approach to managing marine spaces and resources. It can be defined as a process that brings together relevant authorities to better coordinate how marine spaces are used and managed to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives. MSP can improve decision-making and provides a framework for reconciling competing human activities within social and ecological limits. The overall objective of MSP is to balance sectoral interests and achieve the sustainable use of those marine resources.

Since 2017, the IOC-UNESCO and the European Commission are working together to accelerate MSP processes worldwide through a joint framework called MSProadmap, which an updated version was launched during the 3rd International Conference on MSP, in November 2022. The IOC-UNESCO's work on promoting ecosystem-based management through MSP is also a major contribution to the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).



MSProadmap (2022-2027)

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Action VI of the updated MSProadmap *“aims to support the establishment of a network of Regional MSPforums and Platforms together with interested regional institutions and initiatives working on MSP”*. Regional MSPforums can support a dialogue process on MSP, including its links to the priority areas of the MSProadmap. Obtaining better mutual understanding of marine spatial planning processes undertaken within specific regional contexts is an opportunity to learn from each other's experience.

Therefore, in 2022 IOC-UNESCO and its Sub Commissions (i.e., IOCAFRICA, IOCARIBE, and WESTPAC) created Regional MSPforums for Africa, Latin America and The Caribbean, and Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas. These forums are a mechanism for IOC-UNESCO, together with regional collaborators and initiatives working on MSP, such as the GEF IW:LEARN project (executed by IOC-UNESCO and implemented by UNDP and UNEP) and Regional Seas Conventions, to act in the regions which need technical support, including Large Marine Ecosystems (LME), thus reinforcing existing transboundary management frameworks at regional level. Looking for synergies between MSP-related programs within and beyond IOC-UNESCO is key to support Member States in a more efficient way.

The first edition of these three Regional MSPforums was organised online, but IOC-UNESCO expects that they were a kick-off to a regular event to be jointly organized by a consortium established by regional partners willing to implement the following editions as a face-to-face event.

More information about the Regional MSPforums organised by IOC-UNESCO and its Sub Commissions is available in a dedicated page on the MSPglobal website:

<https://www.mspglobal2030.org/msp-forum/regional/>

Regional MSPforum for Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas

The Western Pacific and its adjacent areas are highly populous, rapidly advancing, yet fragile. The region is home to the highest level of marine biodiversity and endemism in the world. Its position as the growth engine of the world economy has been intensified since the beginning of this new millennium. Escalating human activities, eutrophication and pollution, overfishing, vulnerability to marine disasters and climate change, have been posing increasingly severe risks for ocean health and humanity's prosperity.

All those environmental, social and economic challenges constitute a key driving force for various MSP practitioners and stakeholders in the region to jointly promote and accelerate MSP.

The 1st Regional MSPforum for the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas was implemented online on 16 December 2022 and was co-financed by the Government of Sweden. The event was organized by IOC-UNESCO, together with its Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas (WESTPAC), in collaboration with a broad range of national and international organizations working in the region.



Online
Regional MSPforum
Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas
16 Dec 2022, 09.00 – 15.00 (UTC+7)
Language: English

2021 United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2030

Organised by:   In partnership with:         With the support of:    

The event brought together various MSP practitioners and stakeholders in the region, including local/national authorities, research/academia, business/private sectors, NGOs, and foundations, aiming to:

- Share the outcomes of the 5th International MSPforum and the 3rd International Conference on Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning;



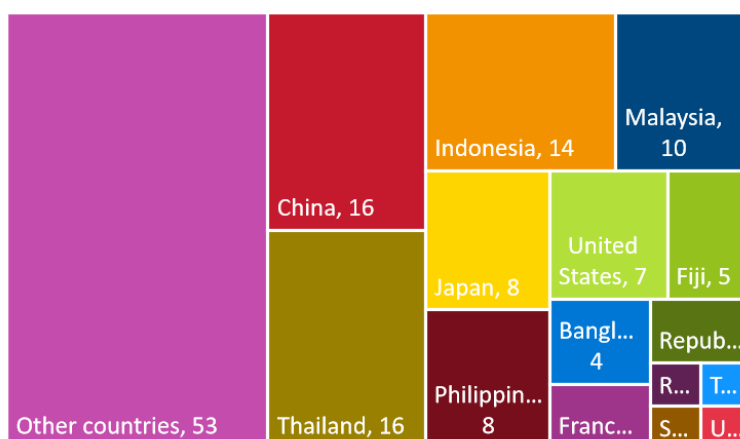
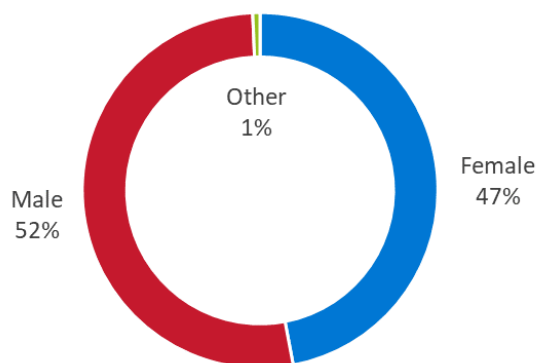
- Brief on relevant national and regional achievements, tools, and innovation demonstration;
- Express views and seek a better mutual understanding of marine spatial planning processes undertaken within the specific regional contexts;
- Seek new opportunities for exchange and cooperation, and explore the possibility of developing a roadmap to accelerate Marine Spatial Planning in the region.

This report shares a summary of the interventions by each speaker as well as recommendations from the 1st Regional MSPforum for Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas.

❖ Participants

The Regional MSPForum for the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas attracted great interest as 151 participants registered for this event (98 people from 15 WESTPAC countries and 53 from other countries). They represented mainly ocean policy/management and research, but also the private sector, foundations and NGOs, including Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs).

Gender balance and geographical diversity of registered participants (N = 151)



Summary of the sessions

❖ Session 1: Opening & Regional MSP-related initiatives

1.1 Opening remarks



Wenxi Zhu, Head of IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific, welcomed all participants to the online Regional MSPforum. He highlighted the rapid development of MSP internationally since IOC-UNESCO organized the first International Workshop on Marine Spatial Planning in 2006. He stressed the need for the region to concert efforts to accelerate MSP in view of the unprecedented environmental, social and economic challenges. He called upon marine science communities to work closely with diverse stakeholders to achieve “the Science We Need for the Ocean We Want”. MSP proves to be an indispensable example of actions to demonstrate how knowledge could be generated and translated into practical plans in support of ecosystem conservation, restoration, and blue economy.

He concluded that this Regional MSPforum marked the beginning of the joint acceleration of the MSP process in the Western Pacific and adjacent areas, and encouraged all participants to interact with invited speakers and share their perspectives and actionable suggestions for accelerating MSP in the region.



Julian Barbière, Head of Marine Policy and Regional Coordination, IOC-UNESCO, briefed that, over the last twenty years, IOC has been providing and supporting the development of MSP tools, guidance, capacity development and tracking progress globally. MSP has evolved from a concept to a framework for developing sustainable ocean economy whilst conserving and restoring its resources.

He informed about the updated MSProadmap launched in the 3rd International Conference on MSP in November 2022 and invited all MSP stakeholders and institutions to engage in the implementation of the joint MSProadmap, defining own priorities and join forces in this endeavor. He expects that this Regional MSPforum would be a mechanism to bring all partners together to act in the regions, identify required technical support, exchange experience amongst different projects, and create synergies between MSP-related programs within and beyond IOC to deliver the best support to Member States.

1.2 MSP-related initiatives in the region



Margarita Victoria C. Caballa, Secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), shared the information about COBSEA, one of the Regional Seas Conventions and Actions Plans hosted by UNEP, and its previous effort in relation to marine and coastal spatial planning and management. She focused on the COBSEA's two MSP-related activities: 1) SIDA Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone (2010-2013), and 2) Blue Solutions MCSP Trainings and Policy Review (2020-2021). Furthermore, she introduced the ongoing efforts in developing a COBSEA Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework with specific targets. The overall goal of this framework is to integrate and harmonize all COBSEA's effort in relation to marine and coastal ecosystem. The draft Framework covers 4 priorities: blue economy, marine & coastal spatial planning, marine protected areas, and habitats.



Claudette Spiteri, IOC-UNESCO, briefed on the GEF's project IW:LEARN Phase 5 (2022-2026), which focuses on 5 components: 1) Provide targeted knowledge sharing and results showcasing across projects and development partners; 2) Support the communication and replication of portfolio results and experiences; 3) Deliver intra and inter-regional knowledge management across focal areas in SIDS; 4) Deliver support to surface freshwater, groundwater and large marine ecosystem subsets; and 5) Mobilize public and private partnership to enhance long-term sustainability of project interventions. She shared that, in the project sub-component "4.3 Training and capacity building activities in support of MSP as a tool for strengthening blue economy development", a practical approach to integrate MSP into the TDA-SAP process will be developed, and regional trainings and dialogues will be held on MSP.



Nancy Bermas from the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) introduced that the East Asia has a solid foundation of national policies, strategies and plans, legislations and institutional arrangements on ocean and coastal governance and sustainable development in support of integrated coastal management (ICM) and MSP. PEMSEA is looking at the advantages of utilizing existing ICM programs covering 40% of the EAS region's coastline to link coastal and marine planning with land-based and river basin/watershed planning. She analyzed the opportunities for integrating land/watershed, coastal and marine spatial planning with the example from the Provinces of Bataan and Batangas, in Philippines, and the GEF-UNDP-ASEAN Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Project. In addition, she also briefed on the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers and PEMSEA Network of Local Governments in the region for capacity development, and concluded that PEMSEA actions will move towards the full integration of land/watershed/river basin, coastal zone and ocean.



Wenxi Zhu, IOC Sub-Commissioner for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC), informed on the UN Ocean Decade Action 21: Accelerating MSP in the Western Pacific, which was developed and registered for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for the Sustainable Development (2021-2030). To meet the increasing demand of countries in the region for advancing MSP at the regional level, the Decade Action will

amplify the IOC-UNESCO's MSP effort in the region, capitalize on the MSPglobal outputs and engage relevant or direct stakeholders to promote and accelerate MSP in the region. The Action aims to build and foster sustained mechanisms in the region with technical support center(s), driving the MSP development, including the Regional MSPforum. The Action will also apply and demonstrate the outputs of MSPglobal at different levels, synthesize lessons learned, update technical guidance and build local, national and regional capacity for different groups of stakeholders. He highlighted the importance for all to synergize efforts, as demonstrated by the first ever Regional MSPforum at its initial stage, and invited all interested partners to actively take part in the Decade Action.

❖ Session 2: Marine protection, restoration, and blue economy

Objective:

To share the experience and ideas of representatives from diverse stakeholder groups on how MSP could support marine protection, ecosystem restoration, and blue economy in the region.



Moderator:

Suvaluck Satumanatpan, Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies, Mahidol University (Thailand)

Speakers:

- Michele Quesada da Silva, Consultant of Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section, IOC-UNESCO
- Zhiwei Zhang, Vice Dean of Research Centre for Coastal Science and Marine Planning, First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources (China)
- Ukkrit Satapoomin, Director of Marine Resources Conservation Division, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (Thailand)
- Ario Damar, IPB University (Indonesia)
- Eunhee Kim, Vice Director, Citizens' Institute for Environmental Studies (Korea)
- Yulong Liu, China Communications Construction Co., Ltd
- Henry Galuvakadua on behalf of Arpana Pratap, Director Blue Economy, Pacific Islands Development Forum

2.1 Key Messages from the 5th International MSPforum and 3rd International Conference on MSP



0-Michele Quesada, IO-UNESCO

Michele Quesada da Silva, IO-UNESCO, shared key messages from the two important MSP events with a focus on marine protection and restoration as well as sustainable blue economy. The detailed information is listed below.

Marine protection and restoration	
Issues/Challenges	Recommendations
Insufficient attention to ecosystem services when taking decisions (allocation of uses) in MSP.	Collect data to have a general understanding of the ocean: species, ecosystems services, impact assessment, cumulative impacts. Include Ecosystem Services valuation.
Marine ecosystems are complex and dynamic and there is much uncertainty, lack of knowledge and data around them.	Use tools and modelling to address knowledge gaps, analyze impacts and map ecosystem sensitivity in order to have the necessary holistic view on the status of the marine environment.
Ecosystem-based management (EBM) is understood in different ways by different actors. There is not a unique definition but a set of principles that can be interpreted and implemented differently.	Include the human dimension into EBM by engaging and creating benefits to communities, working in behavior change with incentives, informing on decisions and monitoring impacts.
MPAs connectivity needs to be science-based. Particularly at the ecosystem scale, connectivity is challenging in terms of identifying what needs to be connected, why and how.	Scientists need to be aware and consider the timeline of the MSP process and understand it as an opportunity for intervention.
Connectivity is not straightforward. How to capture it in the plan? How to enable connectivity? It is unlikely that MSP can be the only mechanism to enable MPA connectivity.	Connectivity is about enabling ecosystem-based approach and transboundary MSP, i.e., Working at the wider scale enables better MPA designation and management opportunities.
Disconnected MSP/ MPA processes can lead to potentially conflicting uses at borders (e.g., MPA next to an oil platform).	Experience shows that enabling successful ecological connectivity is dependent on successful political connectivity. Must ensure that ecological connectivity is agreed at the decision-making level.

Sustainable blue economy	
Issues/Challenges	Recommendations
The goal of the sustainable blue economy is to protect nature. We depend on a healthy nature for a sustainable blue economy. Nature must be seen not as a sector but as the basis of everything.	Ecosystem evaluation is needed to put in the place the long-term financial benefits on protecting our seas. MSP must be the core of the sustainable blue economy, but communications must be treated carefully to make sure that the private sector understand the benefits of this long-term sustainable blue economy.
The public sector is responsible for public awareness, thus needs to explain the importance and benefits of the sustainable blue economy. On the other hand, the private sector can support to integrate economic activities with environmental and social sustainability.	Improvement in terms of education is needed. Innovation, engagement of young generations and new tools are key for the development of a sustainable blue economy in the context of MSP.





2.2 Thematic talk: MSP accelerating blue economy development in the region



Zhiwei Zhang spoke about the close connection between MSP and sustainable blue economy development. As an enabler of blue economy, MSP will contribute to promoting multiple uses, identifying sites for new and emerging uses, and filling critical knowledge gaps between the ocean and key sectors. Moreover, the ecosystem-based approach (EBA) to ocean management in MSP can further foster development of maritime and coastal economies through sustainable use of resources. He introduced three case studies: 1) European Union offshore renewable energy strategy; 2) Turkey’s ecosystem-based fisheries management and maritime surveillance; and 3) China’s MSP regulation system including marine functional zoning, marine ownership management and paid system of sea area. He concluded by emphasizing the integration of ecosystem-based approach into marine plans, and the importance of knowledge for marine management and innovation as well as collaboration among various stakeholders for sustainable blue economy development.

2.3 Panel Dialogue

Around the topic of this session “Marine protection, restoration, and blue economy”, a panel discussion was held to bring together representatives from diverse stakeholder groups to share their engagements in MSP and perspectives on the contribution of MSP to marine conservation and economic development. Key messages are described below.

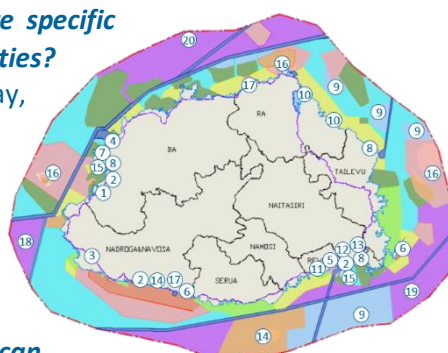
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Government</p>	 <p>2-Ukkrit Satapoomin</p>	<p>Ukkrit Satapoomin introduced that the MSP in Thailand has been carried out as pilot projects in 3 areas: Lan Island, Sichang Island and Phang Nga Bay. Actions have been taken in these three pilot projects to collect baseline information on ecological conditions, human activities, natural resources and maritime activities; identify human use conflicts and compatibility, with the output of draft zoning schemes towards different usage areas. To foster MSP process in Thailand, he added that an MSP Sub-Committee was established under the National Maritime Interest Policy Committee (NPT) by the Office of the National Security Council (ONSC), and the development of a national MSP roadmap is underway.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Research</p>	 <p>Ario Damar</p>	<p>Ario Damar shared the case of Bontang’s integrated marine spatial planning adopted in 2012 by the local government, mapping MPA of the city. MSP implementation in this region generated impacts in three aspects: 1) ecologically, the quality of marine ecosystems was improved; 2) socially, reduction in spatial conflicts among stakeholders in Bontang was achieved; and 3) economically, capture fisheries production and fishers income were increased. Finally, he stressed again that if MSP is well developed based on correct and complete processes, it will enable the region to improve ecological status and economic income, reduce conflicts among stakeholders, and achieve better management of MPA and sustainable development.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">NGO</p>	 <p>Eunhee Kim</p>	<p>Eunhee Kim started her presentation by raising a question: How much does the public want marine protection? She explained that actually the desire of the public is reflected in MSP process. According to a public survey conducted in Korea this year, 87% of respondents support to expand marine protected areas. However, there are still some challenges for the MSP development in relation to the public, e.g., limited public engagement, lack of transparency in MSP processes and communication among different stakeholders. At last, she suggested coming up with solutions on how we can build the link between MSP and MPAs more effectively, and promote public engagement in the MSP process.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Private Sector</p>	 <p>2-Yulong Liu</p>	<p>Yulong Liu gave an introduction to an MSP Cooperation Project in Fiji. As a member of the MSP Academy of China Oceanic Development Foundation, the company undertook MSP cooperation in Fiji in January 2019. He briefed that a Development Strategy was formulated, with the objective to improve integrated marine management by coordinating conflicts and compatibility of human uses of the sea. The Strategy also provided two scenarios: development-oriented and environment-oriented, with six major categories and eleven sub-categories of sea use defined in each scenario. Finally, he mentioned that 20 developable projects were identified for blue economy, covering costal tourism, port and shipping, aquatic industry, commerce and finance, culture and exhibition and energy development.</p>

PIDF	 <p>Henry Galuvakadua, representative of Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF), highlighted MSP process in the Pacific Island Countries. Specifically, Fiji has committed to a national network of 30% marine managed/protected areas and will be designating 30% of ocean within its Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) as MPAs by 2030; Tonga has approved the Tonga Ocean Management Plan that ensures sustainable management of the country’s EEZ; MSP workshops and capacity training provided to key officials have resulted in preliminary spatial maps and information as basis for MSP in Kiribati; Vanuatu launched its National Ocean Policy in 2016 and committed to a Marine Spatial Plan which includes a network of Marine Protected Areas; Marine Spatial Planning has been incorporated in the National Reef to Ridge programmer document of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; The Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park safeguards 100 percent of its EEZ and Territorial Sea to fully protect 40% as a no-take Large Scale MPA; States throughout Palau has established 35 MPAs; The Marae Moana Act 2017 (the Act) established the Marae Moana within the waters of the Cook Islands and provides for its integrated management.</p>
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Each panelist was also asked to address the questions below.

Q: Regarding the culture and exhibition vision, are there specific zones in the coastal and marine areas allocated for the activities?

[Yulong Liu] Yes. Projects on traditional culture display, exhibition and events, island wedding and film shooting for this vision will be developed and conducted in the coastal and marine areas of Fiji. The specific zones allocated for relevant activities are marked on the map with the serial number 14-17.



Q: In your capacity as a governmental official in Thailand, can you illustrate with some examples, the lessons you learnt from MSP development in Thailand?

[Ukkrit Satapoomin] The understanding and knowledge of MSP among the stakeholders of this group is limited and the engagement of multi-sectoral authorities and high-level institutional and governance structure is deficient. Maritime activities and policies have been scattered among several government entities rather than the single or centralized ones, so it is important to facilitate policy dialogue at the national level.

Q: From your perspective, what role the NGOs can and shall play from your MSP practices in Korea?

[Eunhee Kim] Considering insufficient engagement in and follow-up on MSP, NGOs can strive to get the majority of the public involved in the process and jointly produce more outputs. In addition, NGOs shall concern the balance between marine conservation and resources uses. International collaboration among NGOs especially in the East Asia and the Pacific region shall be further enhanced to create a network of commitments and efforts to generate ecological benefits.

Q: Could you please share your perspective on how private/business sector can contribute to the MSP process?

[Yulong Liu] Actors and practitioners in the private or business sector can take initiatives to increase the investment for marine spatial planning and blue economy and actively develop MSP projects with diverse themes and in different regions. Besides, the stakeholders in this group can strengthen the connection with existing and potential partners to promote cooperation in the projects that can help accelerate the MSP process in the region.

❖ Session 3: Knowledge support and capacity development

Objective:

The development, implementation and evaluation of MSP requires detailed and a broad spectrum of information and knowledge on ecological and socio-economic conditions, as well as their interdependencies. MSP in most of countries in the region, in particular SIDS, is still in its infancy. Capacity development is essential to assist countries in developing MSP and accelerating MSP in the region. The session shared the views of various MSP practitioners on what knowledge and capacity development are critical, how we can address it, and what roles they can play.



Moderator:

Metavee Chuangcharoendee, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (Thailand)

Speakers:

- Michele Quesada da Silva, Consultant of Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section, IOC-UNESCO
- Sakanan Plathong, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand
- Abdi T Priyanto, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Republic of Indonesia
- Sora Yun, Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology
- Sazlina Salleh, Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS), University Sains Malaysia

3.1 Key messages from the 5th International MSPforum and 3rd International Conference on MSP



Michele Quesada da Silva shared key messages from the two important MSP events with the focus on knowledge support related to issues or challenges and provided recommendations for all issues.

Knowledge support	
Issues/Challenges	Recommendations
Lack of communication among countries. Lack of connection between oceanographic and land data.	As some countries are still at early stages of MSP, share and integrate methodologies from other countries could help the development of Decision Support Tools.
Definition of knowledge and its perceived validity/applicability. Academic knowledge published in scientific papers but not so used by planners. On the other hand, indigenous and local knowledge as well as other stakeholders' knowledge not always considered.	Define MSP knowledge sources and establish the links among the different kinds of knowledge. Include more social scientists in the process. Train more social scientists/ communicators/ educators to drastically increase knowledge exchange capacities.
Lack of professional technicians to process the data as well as to communicate the data. On the other hand, efforts focusing only on that will not necessarily address the need to consider all types of knowledge.	Involve all levels of the public sector to create an online platform that is user friendly. Structure a process to involve and consider stakeholders' knowledge from the start.
Data about climate change is missing, especially in developing countries. Timing is also challenging. It is difficult to predict the climate.	Climate change shall be at the core of MSP. It has to be science-based because the ocean plays an important role in climate issues. MSP can be vehicle for countries to implement National Determined Contributions of the Paris Agreement. Focus on sensitive areas and areas with more human activities.
The actors do not feel included and taken into consideration seriously in MSP process. Politics is an uncertain factor while MSP asks for long term vision and commitment.	Create an independent platform where different actors can meet and share ideas and knowledge (e.g., a Community of Practice).
Lack of spatial and temporal data. Lack of information technologies for acquisition and access. Data with low resolution. Limited institutional capacity and funding for that.	Need to invest in research and education as this is where to find scientific knowledge for MSP.

Capacity development and awareness	
Issues/Challenges	Recommendations
Lack of resources.	Depending on the reality of the sector, they may need financial support to participate. Many processes are project-oriented, once the project ends, MSP ends. Government must commit resources.
Message might not be easy to transmit.	Be culturally aware, use local references that sectors can identify with. Think outside the box, for example develop coastal models that can physically show land and sea interactions in an easy-to-understand way. Consider music, theatre, art, cartoons, or other mediums as a way to transmit the message. Take a layered approach, consider an intermediary that can bring them in. Identify champions or ambassadors that can take the message to the necessary people. Think like your audience, why is it important to me?
Lack of awareness and knowledge on the value of the ocean and relevance MSP, as well as on how humanity relies on the ocean for its wellbeing.	Raise awareness on the importance of the ocean for society, investing resources in education on the climate change – ocean nexus.
Insufficient transparency in decision-making and how stakeholders can be involved and contribute to MSP, particularly for stakeholders that do not usually participate in MSP.	Mainstream educational programmes adapted to different stakeholders, considering their education and literacy levels. Include planners as well.
Engage the general public and communities is not easy (missing stakeholders in MSP events), and it is costly and time-consuming.	Give the opportunity for stakeholders to participate in MSP by hosting events close to them and investing in dissemination of information. Define engagement rules to make their engagement efficient.

3.2 Thematic talk - Knowledge gaps and capacity need for the implementation of Marine Spatial Planning



Sakanan Plathong gave a thematic talk drawing on his MSP experiences in Thailand and other MSP practices. To achieve the goal of blue economy, conservation, and sustainable uses of the sea, he emphasized the importance of a national marine policy to set a common vision and goals for the sea, integrate sectoral plans through the negotiation and engagement of stakeholders. Key important components

for the national marine policy shall include a governance plan, Marine Spatial Planning, and a management plan. A governance framework is essential for an MSP initiative including national policy, institutional arrangement, laws and regulations, participation, staff, knowledge and capacity building and budget. A management framework is a set of processes that help implement the national marine policy, including goals, objectives, measures, projects, and

activities. He also analysed that the success in MSP for Blue Economy relies on three key factors: (1) Policy, laws, and regulations; (2) Participatory management; and (3) Knowledge management. He further suggested that an MSP and Ecosystem Services Framework be established to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and Blue Economy. It requires integrated knowledge to understand marine and coastal ecosystems and their services for human well-beings. In addition, he stated that we need a clear decision supporting system and associated indicators to measure the success of MSP.

3.3 Panel discussion

Around the topic of this session “Knowledge support and capacity development”, a panel discussion was held to share the experience and perspectives by representatives from Governmental Agency, Research and Early Career Ocean Professionals.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Government</p>	 <p>3.3. Abdi Priyanto INA</p>	<p>Abdi T Priyanto introduced the status of the MSP development in Indonesia, including national laws and regulations, framework, process, and capacity development. In order to improve the capacity development in the field of MSP for AIS countries, the following work has been proposed: (1) Training / Course for Planners; (2) Capacity Building of AIS Countries; (3) Workshop/Seminars; (4) Field trip/country visitation; (5) Collaboration in preparation of MSP (pilot project in one priority area in Indonesia); (6) Join work in the cross-boundary MSP.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Research</p>	 <p>3-Yun Sora</p>	<p>Sora Yun mentioned that the lack of key information to reduce uncertainty in decision-making is one of the most important challenges of MSP in the Republic of Korea. In order to solve the problem, the MSP Simulator Development project was established. Its ultimate goals are the development of intelligent marine-space policy simulation technology in support of policies, based on marine digital platform, to predict marine activities, and analyse spatial changes and policies according to different scenarios and development plans.</p>

<p>Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs)</p>		<p>Sazlina Salleh expressed that numerous knowledge gaps need to be filled in developing a scientifically sound MSP. She shared a case study about the turbid reef health in the Palau Pinang. She identified that turbid coral species that are likely to be more resilient to direct anthropogenic impacts has important implications for targeted coral species conservation and marine management. Unlike remote reefs, turbid (urban) reefs are not protected under the Marine Protected Area or Marine Parks for protection and conservation under sections 41-45 of the Fisheries Act 1985. Although Malaysia has an ongoing framework (ICZM, MSP and EBM), there is still a need to translate policy objectives into specific 'on-ground' targets and measures to ensure a holistic MSP incorporating all stakeholders' social and economic needs.</p>
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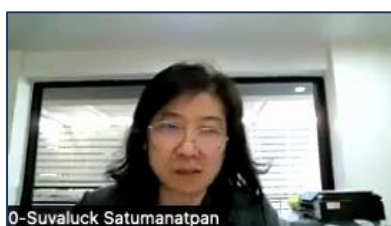
❖ Session 4: Cooperation opportunities

Objective:

This session shared the commitments and potential cooperation opportunities that institutions, countries, and other stakeholders can provide in accelerating MSP in the region.

Speakers:

- Suvaluck Satumanatpan, Mahidol University
- Suharyanto Suharyanto, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia
- Vo Si Tuan, UNEP/GEF South China Sea SAP project
- Xinchun Pan, Secretary General, China Oceanic Development Foundation



Suvaluck Satumanatpan, Professor in **Mahidol University**, shared her research on MSP enabling conditions and recommendations from an Asia's Perspective. She reported on a Marine Spatial Planning project: Application to Local Practice in Thailand. Its objectives are to conduct the review of MSP literature, and gather MSP knowledge from international and local scales and synthesized lessons learnt from available scientific data and experiences so as to provide enabling conditions for filling the MSP gaps in Thailand and promoting effective MSP in the future. Based on the literature review and analysis, MSP authority and legislation, plan development, participation and integration, data and analytical tools, institution and capacity, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation stand out among all enabling conditions in Asia and Thailand. Accordingly, the following recommendations have been made for future MSP efforts: (1) Available/accessible data, future-oriented scenario and suitable tools are suggested; (2) Establishing a leading authority; (3) Generating good vertical and horizontal integration; (4) Identifying key stakeholders; and (5) Building a good team.



Suharyanto from the **Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia**, presented a cooperative opportunity for MSP among the AIS Countries. As the world's largest Archipelagic State, the Government of Indonesia has a mandate to carry out spatial planning in the sea, including spatial planning, spatial use, spatial use management, supervision and controlling. He highlighted the needs for collaborations in MSP among countries, as the healthy ocean is their priority, and the connected seas must be managed with MSP for sustainability. The objectives of proposed collaboration in MSP among AIS countries is to share MSP knowledge, technology and practical implementation in these countries. He further briefed on the principles of collaboration, and tentative activities in 2023-2024.



Vo Si Tuan, Regional Science Coordinator of the UNEP/GEF Project entitled "Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand", shared ideas on the cooperative opportunities about MSP and marine conservation in the South China Sea. He expressed that a high pressure on ocean ecosystems due to crowded population in the coastal areas and international maritime operations, and high conflicts among economic sectors have been leading to resource degradation and economic loss. MSP is a tool to optimize benefits to all. The need for an ecosystem-based approach to marine conservation and MSP has been unanimously recognized, but with limited inputs/efforts provided. While briefing on the SCS SAP project implementation for marine habitat conservation, he further proposed cooperation opportunities with IOC/WESTPAC to promote MSP in the region, including:

1. Provisions of data and information on habitat conservation at the national and site levels for conducting MSP;
2. Building capacity, focusing on transformative science for conducting MSP at national and local levels;
3. Co-development of guidance to integrate MSP in developing Revised National Action Plans for participating countries and Strategic Action Program for the SCS;
4. Application of MSP approach in developing management plans at the site level (MPAs, Fisheries Refugia...);
5. Building and maintaining the regional network with engagement of stakeholders at regional, national, and local levels; and
6. Possible co-development and implementation of demonstration project/s on MSP at the priority site/s of the SCS SAP Project



Xinchun Pan, Secretary General, China Oceanic Development Foundation, presented the MSP development in China. He expressed that China's MSP has played an important role in balancing the relationship between marine ecological environment protection and marine resource development and utilization, dealing with the conflicts between various marine industries, promoting the healthy and rapid development of the marine economy, and promoting the harmony between humans and the ocean, as well as the sustainable development of the ocean. He reiterated the willingness of the China Oceanic Development Foundation to work with the IOC Sub-Commission to promote the implementation of MSP in other countries in the region, to achieve the sustainable development of the ocean. The UN

Ocean Decade Action 21: Accelerating MSP in the Western Pacific offered a timely opportunity for all Member States, international partners and various stakeholder groups to intensify and synergize efforts to achieve the ocean we want.

❖ Session 5: Closure & Conclusions

Despite the limitations of virtual events, the one-day Regional MSPforum achieved its objectives, as reflected by the registered number of participants, the willingness and engagement of speakers from diverse stakeholder groups and partners, to the quality of interventions. As a starting point, all contacts that have been made this time shall continue in the future.

The Regional MSPforum concluded that:

- MSP is still evolving over the time in terms of its policy framework, technical guidance, scientific and human capacity, stakeholder engagement, and partnership development. Even so, it was universally recognized as a practical tool and process to promote ecosystem-based approach to ocean management, address conflicting spatial demands among users, and eventually achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives.
- Although MSP has been in a rapid development in the world over the past two decades, its developments in most of countries in the Western Pacific and adjacent areas are still at its early stage. Key impediments identified from the forum include, but are not limited to: lack of policy framework/directives, lack of national authority in charge of MSP, limited technical and human capacity, limited access to data and information, limited engagement of the public, and financial sustainability.
- Due to different environmental, social and economic contexts, the challenges for promoting MSP in the region vary greatly from one country to another. It is important to work closely with MSP practitioners in each country to understand first their situation, help identify needs, co-design and co-develop MSP and associated activities, to serve their priority interests.

To this end, the Regional MSPforum proved to be a very useful platform in the region to engage relevant MSP national and international partners, and practitioners to share and document their MSP practices, synthesize lessons learnt, update technical guidance, and further develop cooperative opportunities for promoting and accelerating MSP in the region.

In view of the pressing need for capacity development including technical/professional support, local stakeholders' engagement, it is hoped that the IOC-UNESCO, in particular its Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas, and other international partners in the region shall assist in any way possible, including through the UN Ocean Decade Action 21: Accelerating MSP in the Western Pacific and adjacent areas.