



Proposal for making harmonized MSP plan data available across Europe

*Results of the work of the Technical Expert Group (TEG)
on MSP data*

September – 2021



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1. INTRODUCTION

Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) introduced an obligation to develop MSP plans which are coherent and coordinated across the marine regions. In this regard, Member States should organize the use of the best available data and decide how to share the information necessary for maritime spatial plans.

The Directive outlines that EU Member States were required to develop MSP plans by March 2021. The planning has resulted in production of various geospatial data and maps on different sea uses. However, there are no explicit or prescriptive requirements for harmonisation, reporting or sharing of MSP data in the directive itself. Therefore, regional and project developments have emerged and evolved to develop data sharing practices and data models to be applied to share data resulting from MSP processes in a harmonized and comparable way.

The aim of this document is to present existing developments and to propose a solution for sharing maritime spatial plans in common formats that enable the preparation of a harmonized pan-European MSP map.

2. EU MSP TEG DATA

The data required for preparation of Maritime Spatial Plans are diverse, including different domains, geographical areas, spatial and temporal scales, quality and completeness of description, availability, and re-use potential. Furthermore, data availability varies within the EU regions due to differences in applied data management, data infrastructure, documentation (specifications) and metadata catalogues. Nevertheless, data diversity has also become a challenge for those maritime spatial plans already developed, mainly due to interoperability issues. Delivered plans which are using different non-standardized database structures (so called data models) and which apply diverse symbology, sometimes make it difficult to understand, compare and assess planning coherency in cross-border contexts and at the sea-basin level.

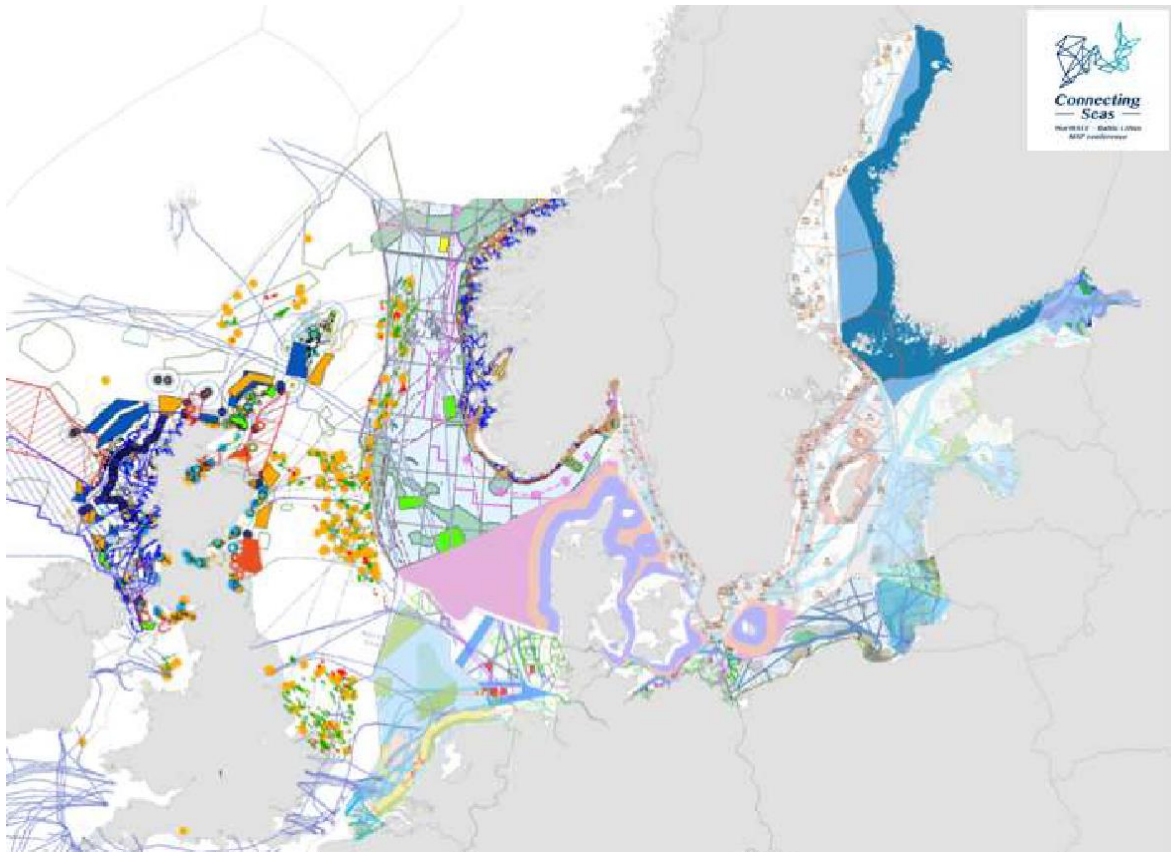


Figure 1 -Slide from Kai Trümpler, BSH presented at the conference 'Connecting Seas'.

In October 2019, DG MARE and EASME convened a workshop on 'Data for MSP' to exchange knowledge and experience between MSP data practitioners. The workshop underlined the willingness and openness of the MSP data community to share experience and further develop knowledge.

Following this, DG MARE and EASME, with support from the MSP Assistance Mechanism, formalized the establishment of the Technical Expert Group (TEG) on MSP data, to increase dialogue within the European MSP community, sharing the experience gathered in the last years, to contribute to policy making, to move towards more robust and common standards in terms of MSP-related data collection, and to support the delivery of harmonized and interoperable national plans.

Within the TEG there are more than 40 actively participating "data" experts. Since April 2020 when the first meeting was held, there have been four technical meetings and related workshop organized within the framework of the INSPIRE Conference 2020.

After almost one year the TEG has achieved a major milestone, a technical solution for harmonizing the data of maritime spatial plans, presented in this proposal on how to reach a common MSP layer for Europe.

3. APPROACH TO GATHER AND HARMONIZE MSP PLAN DATA

3.1. Basis for development

In the run up to the March 2021 deadline for Member-States to deliver their spatial plans, the TEG was focussed on developing a standard for MSP "output data" – a common data model solution for maritime spatial plans.

Within the TEG, Sub-Group 2 was established to allow more efficient collaboration on this precise task, namely, to identify or elaborate a common data model for the "Harmonization of nomenclature and standardization of Output Data". The TEG initiated the work with following objectives:

- Delivering the standard before the deadline of March 2021 would allow member states to implement harmonized approaches for their MSP outputs;
- Development of a harmonized common data layer that will include information for EU seas on implementation of the Directive 2014/89/EU. Development of the EU MSP data layer should be based on the data model with common vocabulary, that will allow cross-border comparisons;
- The MSP data standard should take advantage of the INSPIRE Directive¹, to be adapted to the needs of a maritime context and build on the regional work initiated in the MarSP project and the HELCOM-VASAB working group.
- Provide support to the EMODnet team which is responsible for the development of a new harmonized MSP section in EMODnet human activities portal.

3.2. 1st Meeting May 2020

The 1st meeting of this working sub-group was held on 28 of May 2020 and brought together more than 40 MSP experts. During the meeting presentations were given on the two 'ready to use' solutions, as well as the third model under development:

- 1) BASEMAPS** developed in 2018-2019 by the HELCOM-VASAB working group on MSP data coordination. This group delivered guidelines for output data, including data specifications, technical requirements, and harmonization in the MSP context. Themes within the Basemaps data model are derived from Article 8 MSP Directive. The proposed flat data model has been identified as a relevant standard for plan data and has been implemented within the HELCOM website as an online geographic data portal that provides both input and output data from the MSP process in the Baltic Sea.
- 2) MSP INSPIRE data model** developed in MarSP project, finalized at end of 2019. This data model solution is an extended version of the INSPIRE model for terrestrial planning, adapted for the needs of MSP. The solution includes a data specification guidance document, extended vocabulary of maritime uses, GIS flat model templates, including a symbology standard. The solution was discussed and tested for application during a "hands on" MarSP project workshop, including examples of plans in development, that are available on the Canaries MSP platform.
- 3) EMODnet – Human Activities** portal team, presented the challenge to harmonize all member-states marine spatial plans online by 2021. The team has developed a proposal for a common nomenclature of ocean uses. The participants of Sub-Group 2 confirmed their willingness to support MSP Human Activities team in development.

¹ INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC is a legal EU initiative to establish an INfrastructure for SPatial InfoRmation in Europe and to make geographical information more accessible and interoperable for a management of environment and other wide range of purposes, supporting sustainable development.

3.3. 2nd Meeting October 2020

On 29th October 2020 the 2nd meeting of TEG Sub-Group 2 was held. EMODnet Human Activities portal team presented a first draft of **MSP EMODnet model**. The conceptual solution presented extended the *MSP INSPIRE data model* and integrated *BASEMAPS* elements, bridging the two data models into one. The conceptual solution and draft data specifications were discussed in the meeting. Following the meeting TEG members provided feedback, comments, technical proposals in order for the EMODnet Human Activities developers to finalize the conceptual data model and Data specification document.

3.4. 3rd Meeting February 2021

The third meeting was held on 8th February 2021. The TEG Sub-Group 2 endorsed the newly developed **MSP EMODnet model** as a *ready to use* solution together with *BASEMAPS* and the *MSP INSPIRE* data models.

Furthermore, the TEG MSP Data provides the following recommendation to MS, to use any of three *'ready to use'* solutions, as they can be easily integrated in EMODnet Human Activities geoportal in order to display MSP plans at the European level. The integrated data product will be generalized and will represent a modelled overview of European MSP. It will not provide, since it is not necessary within a harmonised view, the level of detail defined by MS' within their national plans.

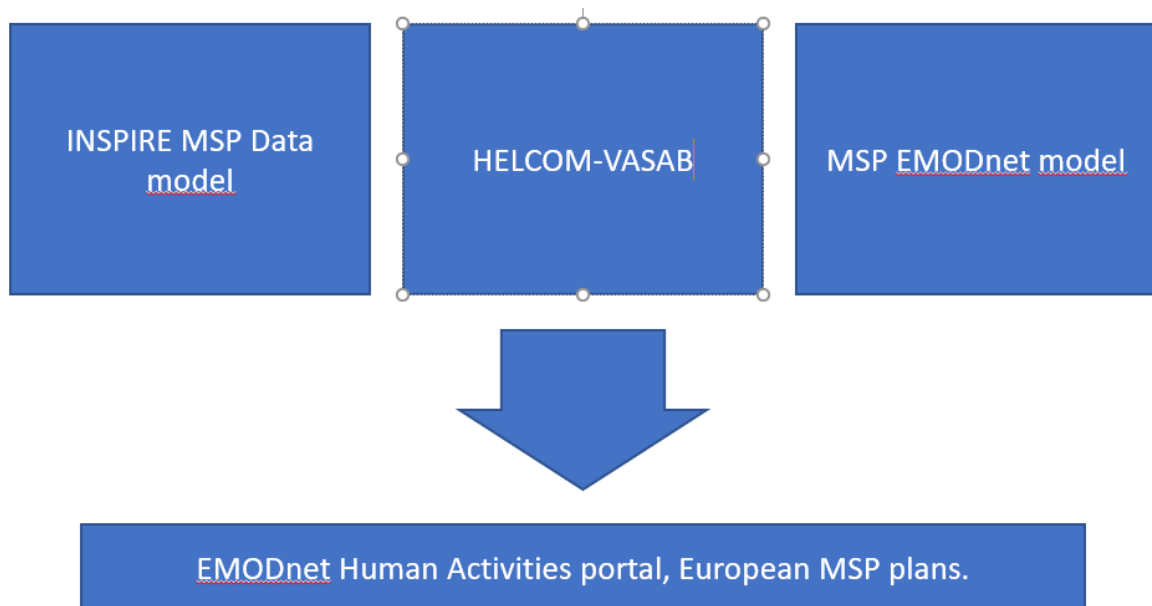


Figure 2 - Compatibility of MSP data models

4. WHAT CAN MEMBER STATES DO?

To achieve the goal of producing a coherent and harmonised European MSP map, it is proposed that Member States choose one of the three recommended “ready to use” data models. This approach allows flexibility for the MS to choose an “output data” standard that fits with their MSP plan and/or is already implemented by the national authorities within a regional cooperation or joint project.

The table below briefly presents a comparison of key features of each of the three “ready to use” data models.

| Data model | Basemaps | MSP INSPIRE data model | EMODnet MSP model |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Base data model | Flat (simplified) INSPIRE Land Use | Flat (simplified) INSPIRE Planned Land use | Flat (simplified) INSPIRE Planned Land use |
| Base model extensions | 1. seaUse code list; 2. Maritime uses functionality | 1. Vertical distribution of zoning elements 2. Extension of Land use classification to specify maritime uses | 1. seaUse code list; 2. Maritime uses functionality 3. Vertical distribution of zoning elements 4. Extension of Land use classification to specify maritime uses 5. EMODnet operational attributes |
| Model complexity | Lower complexity 2 spatial features | Higher complexity: 3 spatial features and 1 no-spatial | Higher complexity: 3 spatial features and 1 no-spatial |
| Maritime uses classification | generalized HELCOM-VASAB MSP Output data Guideline code list (Based on MSP Directive) | specific INSPIRE Land use extended classification, open for extensions | Generalized MSP EMODnet themes |
| Implementation | Fully operational, hosted by HELCOM | tested with MSP drafts and maritime uses, operative on Canaries MSP Platform | Fully operational, hosted by EMODNET Human Activities portal |
| Available tools | Data upload and validator (Basemaps application) | Templates, Register of maritime activities, Styled Layer Descriptor | Data upload portal. Check, download and filtering by uses/countries. |
| Dimension | 2D | 3D | 3D |
| Download service available | no | yes (by provider) | yes |

BASEMAPS is a robust and already operational solution running within the HELCOM spatial data infrastructure, with established data flow and experience in merging MSP plans at the marine basin level within HELCOM-VASAB cooperation. Following INSPIRE principles based on *Land use*, it is a simple flat data model with general code lists. It is easy to implement and it counts with operative data import and a validation tool. **It is recommended that MSs follow this standard if it is already operational and implemented within their sea region.**

MSP INSPIRE data model, successfully tested with draft plans and current maritime uses in Macaronesia basin. The standard is based on the land planning INSPIRE model, adapted for MSP, extending the classification system to fits specific and detail maritime uses. The model extends 2D land planning into three dimensions, including information on zoning vertical extension. **This model is suitable to specify a high level of detail within maritime uses and for MS that plan to share MSP at the local level and for the development of the EU common layer.** The proposed solution includes templates for implementing flat data model, tested for application during a “hands on” session with MSP implementers.

EMODnet MSP model is a hybrid solution from the BASEMAPS and MSP INSPIRE data models, including all specific features from both solutions. It is based on the MSP INSPIRE data model, including 3D, detailed classification of maritime activities, adding BASEMAPS maritime uses functionality classification and EMODnet system attributes. It is the most complete and complex MSP data model as it integrates both solutions, but it is still not difficult to implement. **This data model is highly recommended as it enables translation between the existing operational models and will be used to develop a generalized and modelled overview of EU MSP which will be shared through the EMODnet Human Activities geoportal.** It should be noted that as this data model is a combination of two data models (BASEMAPS and

MSP INSPIRE), the data should be filled in only for the relevant parts – I.e. those relevant for the Basemaps data model or the MSP INSPIRE data model.

The selected solution should be disseminated to planners and MSP practitioners at all levels in the national/regional administrations, highlighting the importance of sharing plans. The chosen model should be applied following related guidance – data specification document, employing the already prepared data templates, symbology and tools to map the national maritime spatial plan.

It is recommended that Maritime Spatial Plan - “output data” should be publicly available, increasing the transparency of the MSP process, facilitating reuse and avoiding duplication of effort in relation to data collection and analyses at the national, regional and European level. Publicly shared maritime spatial plans can support resolution of transboundary issues, such as cross-border pollution management, as well as sea basin planning consistency and uniform application of international activities. For the avoidance of doubt, a disclaimer should be attached to the publicly shared data in case it is not identical to the legally binding version of the plans under national law.

As Maritime Spatial Plan output data can be legally binding national data, the display of harmonized MSP output data product in an online portal should always be flagged with a disclaimer stating that the data is a generalised and modelled overview of the countries’ MSPs and should be used only for visualization purposes.

Maritime spatial plans can be shared through different data flow mechanisms, that can enable use by EMODnet human activities:

- 1) Sharing MSP plans within the already **operative MS national spatial data infrastructure**, making plans visible through geoportals, searchable by metadata catalogues and downloadable by network services, following INSPIRE 2007/2/EC Directive principles.
- 2) Sharing MS MSP plans with **Regional Sea Convention spatial data infrastructure**, making plans visible through geoportals, searchable by metadata catalogues and downloadable by network services/links to MS national portals. E.g., as implemented by HELCOM;
- 3) Including details on MSP shared “output data” **within the EU MSP platform**, updating the national page;
- 4) Using the established EMODnet data flow mechanism. The EMODnet Data Ingestion Portal streamlines the data ingestion process so that data holders from public and private sectors, that are not yet connected to the existing marine data management infrastructures, or who do not share data on a regular basis, can easily release their data for safekeeping and subsequent distribution through EMODnet (available here: <https://www.emodnet-ingestion.eu/>)

5. ANNEX: DETAILS ON THE RECOMMENDED DATA MODELS BY TEG MSP DATA

5.1. HELCOM-VASAB / BASEMAPS

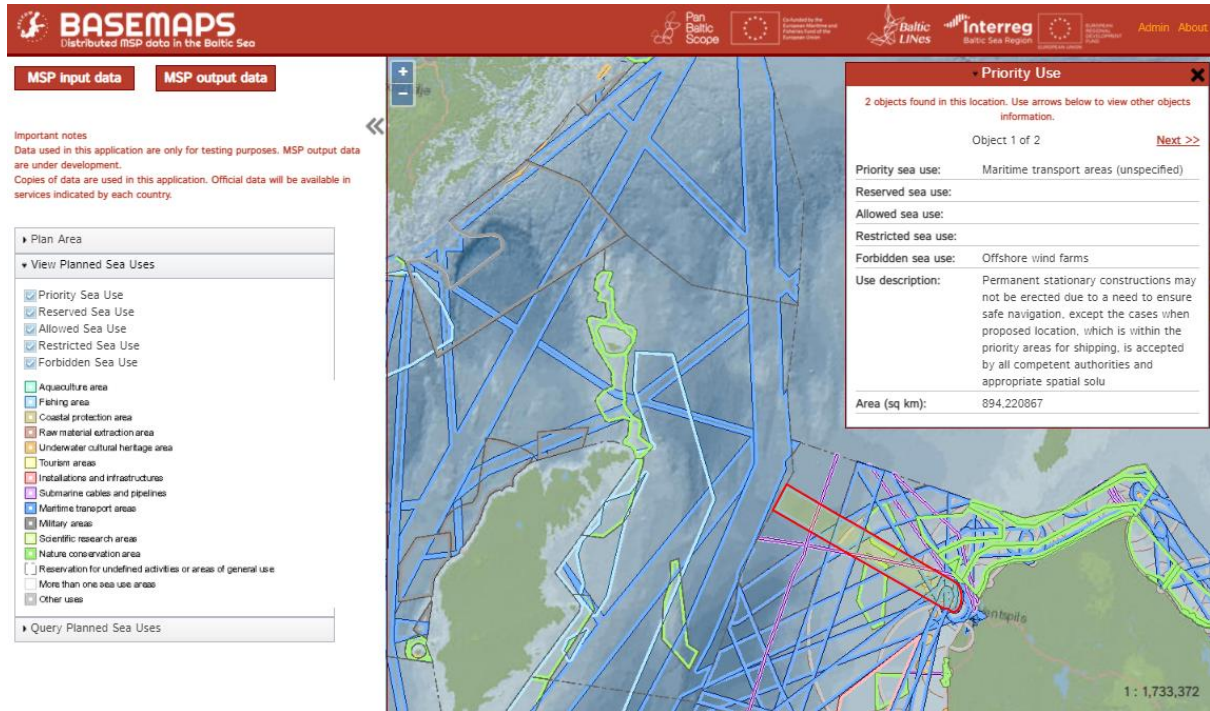


Figure 3 – Basemaps – Output data displayed

Abstract:

Basemaps is a map service to access Baltic Sea maritime spatial planning (MSP) relevant data. There are two sections within BASEMAPS - Input and Output data. This terminology is used according to HELCOM-VASAB MSP Data Expert Subgroup to differentiate between data for plans and the plans.

MSP output data contains national MSP plans harmonized according to HELCOM-VASAB Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure (flat data model):

| Identified geometry in MSP data structure | priority [SeaUse CodeList] [multiple options possible - 0...*, separated with comma] | reserved [SeaUse CodeList] [multiple options possible - 0...*, separated with comma] | allowed [SeaUse CodeList] [multiple options possible - 0...*, separated with comma] | restricted [SeaUse CodeList] [multiple options possible - 0...*, separated with comma] | forbidden [SeaUse CodeList] [multiple options possible - 0...*, separated with comma] | useDsc [CharacterString] | PlanID Permanent identifier of maritime spatial plan, unique at international level - the country code (eg. DE, FI, LT) followed by unique identifier at national level; Identifier will help to link geometries from different countries |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| xxx | Selection from seaUse code list | | Selection from seaUse code list | Selection from seaUse code list | Selection from seaUse code list | Requirements & restrictions within sea use area | |
| Examples: | | | | | | | |
| | installations-owf | | aquaculture - mussel | | transport, fishing | Areas suitable for OWF development. Aquaculture might be considered after additional investigation. | |

The MSP Output data in BASEMAPS is provided by the national authority dealing with MSP and data results from the official MSP plans of the country. Data is made available only for visualization purposes. To download the MSP plan data, the national authority service should be accessed.

BASEMAPS MSP output data section contains the following features to visualize MSP output data:

- Visualization of MSP Plan Area: This general map defines the MSP Plan area information such as the title, date, process step etc. based on the INSPIRE Land Use model.
- Visualization of MSP planned sea use (zoning elements): Actual MSP planning spatial data based on HELCOM-VASAB flat data model. This is spatial data (polygons), where sea uses have been categorized according to the sea use types. Specific visualization was created to distinguish different sea uses and sea use types as well as visualize overlapping polygons.
- Query of MSP planned sea use (zoning elements): User can query zoning elements e.g. by selecting areas where sand and gravel extraction is priority sea use.

Data specification document: <https://vasab.org/document/guidelines-on-transboundary-msp-output-data-structure-2-2/>

Supporting tools: <https://basemaps.helcom.fi/> (Output Data section)

Basemaps admin panel for logged in users (national data providers) contains data validation tool for providing data according to the HELCOM-VASAB data model.

Operative examples:

<https://basemaps.helcom.fi/> (Output Data section)

5.2. MSP INSPIRE data model (delivered by MarSP project)

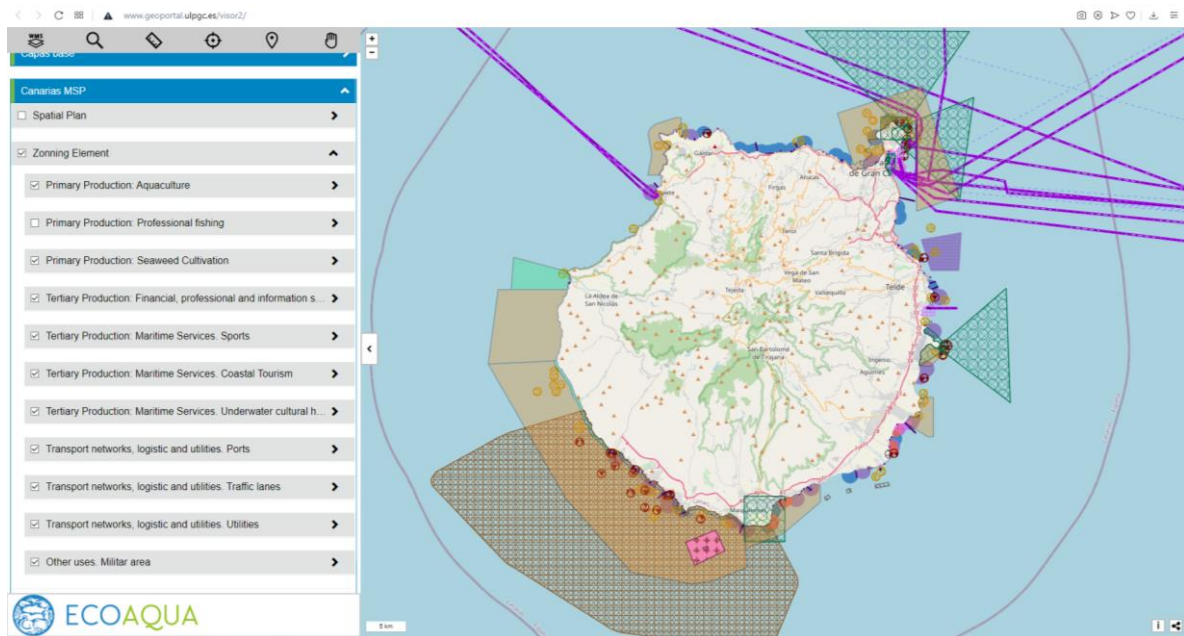


Figure 4 -MSP INSPIRE Data model and SLD example, applied for the current uses (Not MSP draft) within the Gran Canaria (Canary Islands, Spain)

Abstract:

The Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) INSPIRE data model concept has been developing since 2014, applying Infrastructure for spatial information in Europe Directive 2007/2/EC (INSPIRE) data management concepts for marine planning, through the Marine Pilot project (EC Joint Research Centre 2014-2016) and continuing with the PLASMAR project (INTERREG-V 2017-2020). The Macaronesian Maritime Spatial Planning (MarSP) project was a perfect opportunity to finalise the conceptual data model development and, more importantly, to test the developed data model, applying it to the real use cases, developed in the Macaronesia MSP process.

Initially, the INSPIRE data model for terrestrial planning (*Planned Land Use*) was tested to see if it could be applied for MSP. Tests pointed out that the terrestrial data model is robust, and can map MSP's, but it tends to lose detail and specific information on marine uses. To be used for MSP, the *Planned Land Use* data model needs to be adapted for planning of the maritime activities in the marine space.

The INSPIRE data model was extended to cover the requirements of MSP:

- 1) Introducing within the zoning Vertical Distribution component, that provides information where the maritime activity is taking part: surface and/or water column and/or seabed and/or subsoil.
- 2) To avoid ambiguity, it is used an extended INSPIRE register/vocabulary with specific maritime uses, that can be updated on the data providers' request.
- 3) On the base on the extended INSPIRE vocabulary –maritime uses, it is developed standard for the common symbology – provided as Styled Layer Descriptor (SLD)

| |
|------------------------------------|
| 1_4_AquacultureAndFishing |
| 1_4_1_Aquaculture |
| 1_4_1_1_AquacultureSeaWater * |
| 1_4_1_2_AquacultureBrackishWater * |
| 1_4_1_3_AquacultureFreshWater * |
| 1_4_2_ProfessionalFishing |
| 1_4_2_1_FishingLine * |
| 1_4_2_2_HandLine * |
| 1_4_2_3_Trap * |
| 1_4_2_4_BeachTrawl * |
| 1_4_2_5_MorayTrap * |
| 1_4_2_6_TrammelNet * |
| 1_4_2_7_LiveBait * |
| 1_4_2_8_PoleLine * |
| 1_4_2_9_JiggerFishing * |
| 1_4_2_10_Others * |
| 1_4_3_SeaweedCultivation * |
| 1_4_4_RecreationalFishing * |

Figure 5 – Extended register for specific maritime uses, specific type of fisheries

The MSP INSPIRE data model was discussed by GIS and MSP experts during MarSP technical workshop (March 2019) and tested during the “hands on” session, applying it to a real use-case (MSP draft), finalizing and finetuning the data model product.

Data specification guidance link:

http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/atom/download/MSP_INSPIRE_data_model_guidance_v1.0.pdf

Supporting tools:

- Register of maritime activities (HILUCS Extended register) available for extension:
<http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/registro/plannedLandUse/HilucsExt/index.html>

-Templates (xsd-gml, GeoPackage, ESRI Shapefile):
http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/atom/download/MSP_INSPIRE_Data_Model.zip

- Styled Layer Descriptor (SLD)- symbology schema based on register values:
http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/atom/download/msp_sld_styles.zip

Operative examples:

MSP INSPIRE data model applied on current uses (example not MSP draft):

<http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/visor2/?json=mspcanarias.json#>

5.3. MSP EMODnet model

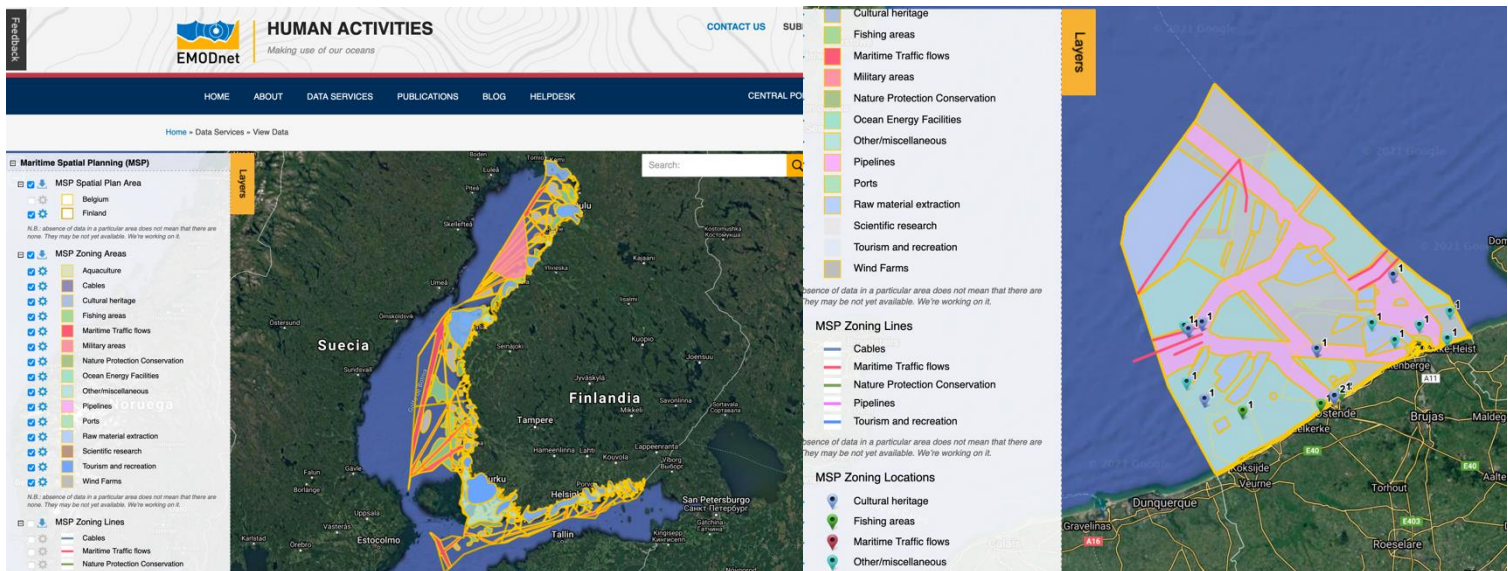


Figure 6 – MSP EMODnet model and geoportals example. This model is applied on current official MSPs of 2 Member States: Finland (Left) & Belgium (Right).

Abstract:

The MSP EMODnet model has been created for the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODNET). EMODnet makes information freely available as interoperable layers and data products for all marine users supporting policy development and economic growth. Hence, five criteria guided the data model development:

- 1) **Simplicity:** searching to balance the usability with the inclusion of all relevant information.
- 2) **Harmonization:** using a nomenclature for marine uses and functions that is compatible with the MSP and Inspire Directive.
- 3) **Integrity:** while harmonizing, the model should recognize the plurality of the plans designed to address the needs of the different areas; therefore, the original MSP of each Member State and the harmonize MSP are visualized at the platform.
- 4) **Compatibility:** capability to interlink with the most consolidated MSP models (HELCOM - VASAB, MarSP and SIM projects), facilitating the integration.
- 5) **Versatility:** the model allows users to visualize and compare across countries, uses and activities. The different marine data users can explore and download information according to their specific needs.

The robustness and usability of the model were strengthened with the support and validation of the Technical Expert Group on MSP Data.

The model is made up of 4 Feature Types, following the INSPIRE model of Planned Land Use conceptual data model:

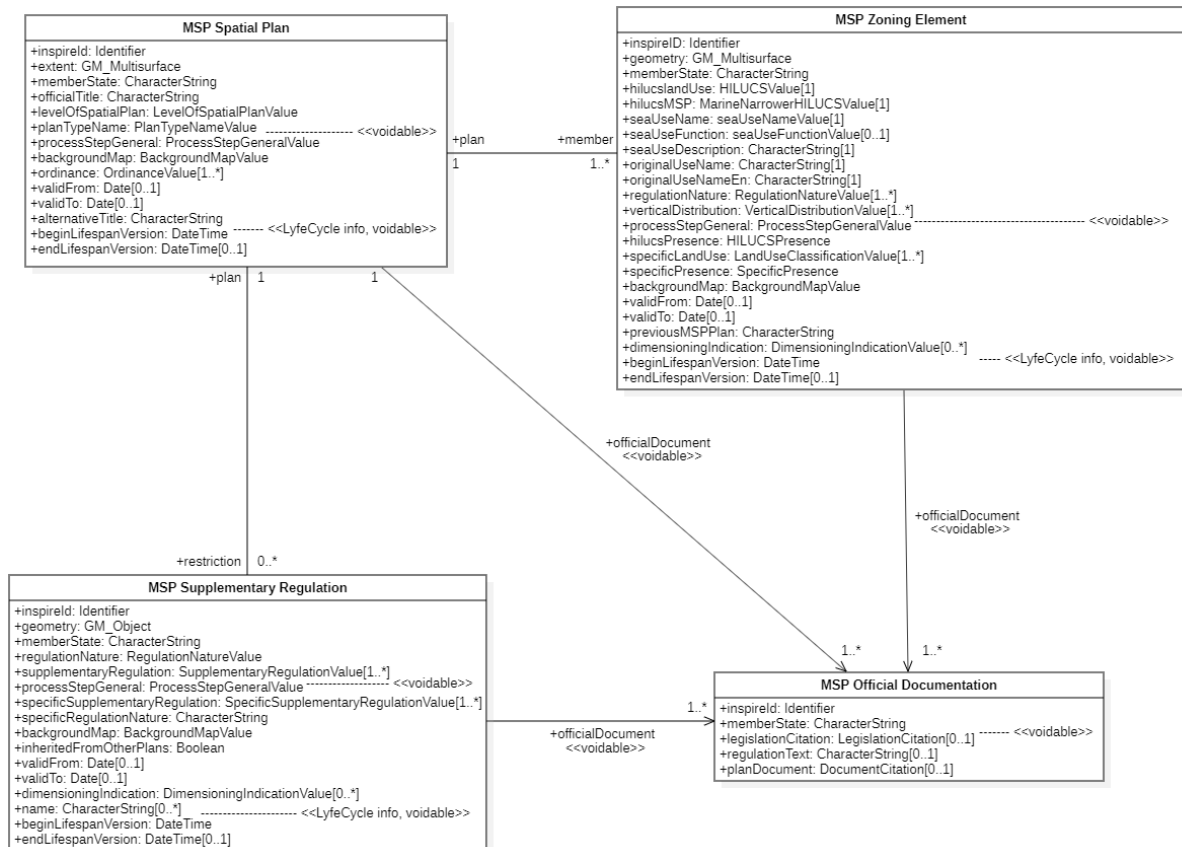


Figure 7 – EMODnet data model

Within the MSP Zoning element feature type are the most important fields of the data model. Those fields are the following ones:

- SeaUseName, where the land use is defined according to the list of codes of uses of the land defined by EMODnet Human Activities Platform, ensuring the dialogue between the MSP and other datasets available at the portal.
- SeaUseFunction, to classify which uses are allowed, reserved, potential, among others, in a certain area.
- SeaUseDescription, to describe the situation related to the uses of the sea in a certain area.

Table 1 – Example of MSP Zoning Element Feature functionality.

| <u>Identified geometry</u> | <u>HilucsLandUse</u> | <u>HilucsMSP</u> | <u>SeaUseName</u> | <u>SeaUseFunction</u> | <u>SeaUseDescription</u> | <u>OriginalUseName</u> | <u>OriginalUseNameEN</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| xxx | 1_4_2 Professional fishing | 1_4_2 Professional fishing | Fishing areas | Allowed | Area important and reserved for navigations. Area suitable for sea fishing bottom trawling. | <u>Pesca de arrastre</u> | Fishing bottom trawling |
| | 4_1_4 Water transport | 4_1_6 Marine traffic lanes | Maritime Traffic flows | Reserved | Area important and reserved for navigations. Area suitable for sea fishing bottom trawling. | <u>Navegación</u> | Navigation |
| | 4_1_4 Water transport | 4_1_6 Marine traffic lanes | Maritime Traffic flows | Allowed | Area important and reserved for sea fishing bottom trawling. Area suitable for navigations. | <u>Navegación</u> | Navigation |
| | 1_4_2 Professional fishing | 1_4_2 Professional fishing | Fishing areas | Reserved | Area important and reserved for sea fishing bottom trawling. Area suitable for navigations. | <u>Pesca de arrastre</u> | Fishing bottom trawling |

Data specification document:

EMODNET_DATA_MODEL_GUIDE_FOR_MSP_WKPAPER_19_02_21

Supporting tools:

- MSP Dataset in EMODnet Human Activities Geoportal: <https://www.emodnet-humanactivities.eu/view-data.php>
- A data Ingestion portal which facilitates additional data managers to ingest their marine datasets for further processing, publishing as open data and contributing to applications for society: <https://www.emodnet-ingestion.eu/>
- Register of maritime activities (HILUCS Extended register) of MSP INSPIRE Data Model (according the previous data model -MarSP project-): <http://www.geoportal.ulpgc.es/registro/plannedLandUse/HilucsExt/index.html>
- Table of correspondences: nomenclature of potential marine uses (EMODnet) and most relevant MSP references:
EMODNET_DATA_MODEL_GUIDE_FOR_MSP_WKPAPER_19_02_21

Operative examples:

Member States MSP output data applied to common MSP EMODnet model and available online via EMODnet human activities portal currently for 3 Member States: Belgium, Denmark and Finland.

<https://www.emodnet-humanactivities.eu/view-data.php>

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