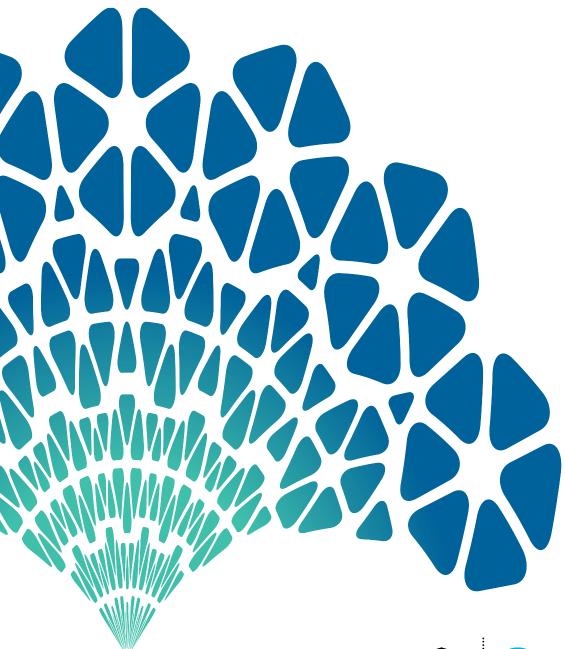
Recommendations

to promote knowledge exchange and transfer on MSP



marine spatial planning **global**



United Nations • Educational, Scientific and • Cultural Organization •



Oceanographic Commission



Sustainable Development Goals



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This publication is the result of dialogues, "serious games" and consultations with Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) experts, country officials, researchers, professionals of different maritime sectors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); in summary, the vast and diverse MSP community around the globe. It is an attempt to represent this diversity and its particularities while trying to make this publication understandable and useful at global level.

To everybody that participated in this exchange, directly or indirectly, our most sincere gratitude and our deepest desire to keep working together globally for a better MSP.







1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. What is the purpose?

To date, capacity development in Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) has mostly targeted professionals directly involved in the development of MSP plans. However, MSP is a public process that must engage all levels of stakeholders effectively during the policy development, and, in order to accomplish it, stakeholders need to have the appropriate knowledge about MSP to take informed decisions. In this context, communication, knowledge exchange and transfer, and ocean literacy activities are key aspects that need to be promoted.

Within capacity development, knowledge exchange is a two-way process of sharing different types of knowledge (technical, scientific and traditional), but also ideas and experiences. It is intended to be mutually beneficial and provide inputs to problem solving.

Therefore, these recommendations were developed to advise professionals directly involved in the development of MSP plans on how to promote knowledge exchange and transfer towards other public authorities, private actors and civil society. These stakeholders are, indeed, the final users, implementers and beneficiaries of the MSP plans.

The publication was developed in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 and its target on transfer of marine technology, as well as taking into account the "Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission"¹. The issue of which knowledge needs to be transferred, to whom and how to do it are aspects approached in this document, with concrete actions and recommendations whenever possible.

What is Transfer of Marine Technology (TMT)?

The United Nations Convention of the Law of The Sea (UNCLOS) contains a number of provisions dealing with transfer of marine technology (TMT). In this regard, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) is the only intergovernmental organization with a specific mandate in marine capacity building in all of the world's ocean basins.

Marine technology may include **instruments**, **equipment**, **vessels**, **processes** or **methodologies** required **to produce** and **use knowledge** to improve the study and understanding of the nature and resources of the ocean and coastal area.

¹ https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000139193



1.2. Inputs

This publication seeks to approach knowledge exchange and transfer on MSP from a practical perspective, trying to be as specific and pragmatic as possible.

The **content** of this publication was developed based intrinsically on experiences and opinions from MSP experts and stakeholders involved in the different aspects of knowledge exchange and transfer on MSP around the world. Inputs were collected from different engagement activities organized by the MSPglobal Initiative at local, regional and national levels, as well as from a final consultation with early career MSP planners who have experienced personally the issue of having to apply theoretical learning into real-life MSP processes. This heterogeneous gathering of inputs from different parts of the world, different stakeholders and different contexts provides an opportunity to have various perspectives under the same framework.



1.3. How to use this publication?

Any stakeholder can be both a knowledge source and a knowledge target. All interested and affected actors need to be targeted by the MSP team in charge of the elaboration of the plan for knowledge transfer about the MSP process. Based on specific knowledge needs throughout the planning process, some stakeholders can be identified as knowledge source to improve the development and implementation of the MSP plan.





Knowledge exchange

These recommendations are structured into **four key topics**:

- Target stakeholder;
- Knowledge assessment;
- Knowledge source;
- Knowledge exchange and transfer (general and target-specific recommendations).

This publication intends to present key recommendations on how to exchange and transfer knowledge to specific target stakeholders. Awareness about the relevance of MSP is necessary to improve stakeholder willingness in taking part in such activities.

Remember to clearly define the target group of stakeholders when promoting knowledge exchange and transfer, also taking into account the scale of the planning process.



2. TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

Knowledge exchange and transfer must always be objective-focused, specific, concrete and targeted. This publication focuses on three targeted stakeholders (public authorities, private actors and civil society) and two scales (national and transboundary). It is advised to adopt a more direct action that only reaches one group rather than a general action that ends up reaching nobody or reaching people not interested in this information. This last case might be inefficient, counterproductive and a waste of time, money and human resources.

Stakeholder	Scale
Public authorities National, sub-national and local institutions with competencies and/or interests related to the maritime territory.	National Exchange with institutions at the same (horizontal) or different governmental level (vertical).
	Transboundary Exchange with national institutions of different countries at cross-border level (neighbouring countries), regional level (regional sea basin) or global level.
Private actors Representatives of maritime sectors that might be affected by or interested in the MSP process.	National Exchange with private sectors operating inside a country.
	Transboundary Exchange with private sectors from and/or acting in different countries.
Civil society Citizens who are not part of any maritime sector but beneficiaries of their products and services, as well as beneficiaries of the goods and services provided by the marine environment. This category also includes organized civil society (NGOs).	National Exchange with citizens or NGOs acting at national level.
	Transboundary Exchange with citizens from different countries, at sea basin or global levels, as well as NGOs acting at international level.



3. KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Within the context of MSP, knowledge can refer to:

- the MSP processes per se;
- related concepts;
- data and information;
- decision support tools.

It is important to determine the baseline knowledge of the different groups of stakeholders in order to design the knowledge exchange or transfer program, campaign or event accordingly.

3.1. At national level

Depending on the available resources (human, financial and time), a questionnaire, personal contact by phone or email, as well as informal meetings can be useful to assess and evaluate the knowledge of participants before engaging in specific MSP activities.

3.2. At transboundary level

Independently of the phase in which a country is in relation to MSP development or implementation, it is important to identify the strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders' knowledge and to look for the way to complement them. However, it might be difficult or very time consuming and not effective to organize an initial consultation. As the knowledge exchange is taking place regarding a particular issue, it might be useful to just provide the players with the definition of the concepts that are going to be used during the exchange.



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4. KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

To exchange and transfer knowledge, first it is necessary to identify the potential sources and the kind of knowledge necessary for MSP. It can be internal, i.e., produced or available by the MSP team, or externally provided by one of the source stakeholders presented below.

4.1. Scientific community

The MSP team might not be up to date regarding new instruments, methods or tools in every aspect of its sphere of competence. However, MSP knowledge might be available in research institutions, which are significant for knowledge development. Therefore, it is relevant to seek knowledge in these institutions, learn from them and then adapt it to the implementation requirements. In fact, in many countries research institutions participate in MSP pilot projects.

In this regard, project databases and reports may help to identify which institutions have the specific necessary knowledge. Promotion of science-policy exchange events could help in "translating" new knowledge and innovation into institutional assets. In this context, it is important to consider the transfer of national budget to interdisciplinary research programs in ocean matters specifically; national funding is essential to avoid dependency on international sources, whenever possible. Private research institutions should also be considered.



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4.2. Public authorities

Governance frameworks related to MSP are usually complex, with competences and knowledge spread among institutions at the same or different administrative level. When engaging with public authorities (including sectoral ones), it is important to identify institutions that share competences and have relevant knowledge in order to establish an efficient communication and avoid duplication and inefficiency.



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4.3. Private actors

Private actors are the experts of their own sectors. MSP processes require a deep understanding of maritime activities performance, and representatives of the private sector are the most knowledgeable and updated about the sector's dynamics and trends. Furthermore, companies are increasing their involvement and partnerships in research and development, which inherently are source of knowledge and innovation.



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4.4. Civil society

Traditional and local knowledge may play an important role in the MSP process. Local communities sometimes harness relevant and interesting information and approaches that are difficult to access through other sources.

Therefore, traditional knowledge, including indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), need to be integrated and mainstreamed, particularly as traditional values are associated with culturally relevant values that play a fundamental role in human wellbeing. It is important to identify a representative trusted by the designated public (e.g., local NGO) through which it can reach the rest of the community. Depending on the case, social scientists and NGOs already working with these groups might play an important role.



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KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND TRANSFER

Finally, the most important task is to link the knowledge holders to the knowledge users. Below are described general and target-specific recommendations to overcome some common challenges faced when implementing knowledge exchange and transfer activities.

5.1. General recommendations

Willingness to take part in knowledge exchange and transfer activities

There are usually two opposite situations related to the lack of willingness to participate in the MSP process: stakeholders are either not aware of the MSP process and/or the benefits of their effective participation in such process; or they are aware but have concerns about new regulations and prefer not to be engaged. At the transboundary level, sometimes stakeholders do not understand the relevance and advantages of transboundary mechanisms related to MSP.

ACTIONS

- Promote discussions on challenges and enablers of knowledge transfer and exchange: consider not only potential common challenges (that are various in the marine environment) but also opportunities regarding the simple knowledge exchange of know-how on a MSP process. At the transboundary level, exchange views on how experiences in one country may help the process in the other one and vice versa.
- Promote Ocean Literacy²: defined as "an understanding of the ocean's influence on you and your influence on the ocean", ocean literacy is an inspirational approach to encourage all citizens and stakeholders to have a more responsible and informed behaviour towards the ocean and its resources.

Data sharing

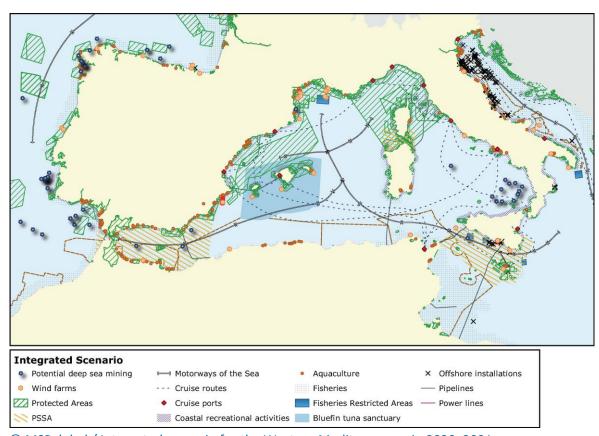
The ideal situation regarding data exchange in MSP will be achieved when data become available in a single database, is well characterized, harmonized and easily understandable for/by everyone. However, experiences have shown that this hardly happens. It is important to understand whether and what legal considerations can mandate or regulate data and information exchange and consultation. Some national legislation and regulations can limit the amount and quality of data and information shared by an entity and with whom. Indeed, some spatial data on the distribution of maritime uses can sometimes be considered sensitive information, either from public authorities (e.g., military areas) or maritime sectors (e.g., fishing grounds or oil and gas reserves) that usually do not want to share it with other institutions, countries or the general public.

² https://oceanliteracy.unesco.org/



ACTIONS

- Promote open data: open data should be promoted in parallel to strengthening user capabilities to re-use and analyse these data.
- Consult national and transboundary legislative sources: this could involve consultation
 with necessary legal institutions and the review of national and transboundary norms
 on information and knowledge exchange to enhance preparedness and understand
 limitations.
- Establish agreements regarding data use and publication: there are different ways to tackle this issue but the basis for all of them is to create trust with the data provider. The MSP team needs to make clear what the necessary data is, how it will be used and if it needs to be available to the public. The agreement could imply the use of the data but not its publication, or its publication but with some limitation (e.g., resolution) in order to protect its sensitivity. Highlighting the benefits of the specific exchange of data could increase the willingness to exchange.



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Common language

Nowadays, most of the information available for planning purposes at transboundary level is in English and too technical. This fact limits the number of stakeholders that can be reached and creates a clear bias. In fact, even if actors and data users speak English, their level of understanding and negotiation in an already complex process could be lowered by having to interact in a language that is not theirs.

ACTIONS

- Translate overly scientific and technical concepts: maintaining technical communication in national languages is of particular significance for knowledge transfer and concept comprehension.
- **Enable multi-lingual communication:** when planning at transboundary level, and when feasible, it is relevant to evaluate the possibility of promoting multilingual activities and material with simultaneous interpretation or translation of documents.

Communication channel

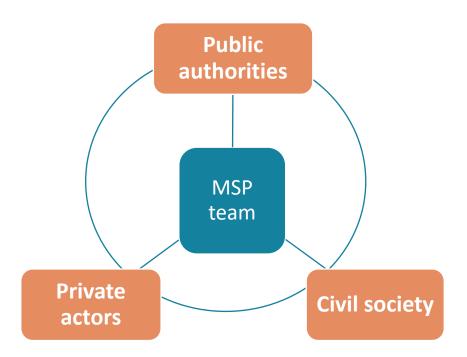
Channels that ensure direct and accessible communication with all actors are often a challenge. Different formats provide effective communication to reach the largest possible audience and go beyond online access or geo-portals, as a way to reach people even in remote locations without the minimum services of electricity and connectivity.

ACTIONS

- Concentrate data and information on a single platform: make things easy. It is important that this knowledge transfer does not involve too much extra time consumption in the stakeholder's daily life. However, it is important to communicate continuously and inform audiences of the status of issues, measures and results. At national or transboundary level, establish a single information source with relevant data for each specific stakeholder (e.g., national hubs, regional seas coordination bodies, regional online platforms or data-sharing portal).
- Publish and disseminate printed material about key information: basic access to electricity and internet is still an issue in some places; as such, printed materials with key information related to the MSP process and the MSP plan will be necessary. Send or distribute by hand the printed materials amongst key stakeholders. Articles in newspapers or radio interviews could also be considered to disseminate information.



5.2. Target-specific recommendations



5.2.1. Public authorities

Considering that MSP is still an emerging public policy in most countries, the initial knowledge assessment may identify the need of knowledge transfer and exchange between public authorities inside a country or between different countries (when planning at a transboundary level).

Specific needs

Public administrations may lack human and time resources, so there is a need to be efficient and to find phases or steps in the MSP process that could be used as good opportunities for knowledge transfer; a proper "learning by doing" approach. In this context, concepts such as "learning by doing" and "adaptive planning" are particularly pertinent as they are performed within a framework of continuous knowledge exchange among institutions. The role of the MSP team in this context is to identify which knowledge is transferred, to whom and how.

ACTION

Prepare ready and applicable knowledge for transfer: it is important that the knowledge transfer to public authorities is the most concrete, specific and ready-to-use as possible.

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Transboundary pilot projects are a good source of knowledge generation and exchange. However, competent authorities do not always have the time or personnel to effectively participate in them. The establishment of an interinstitutional MSP team multiplies opportunities and options to share responsibilities amongst public authorities, thus facilitating participation and knowledge exchange.

Collaboration channels

It is not enough to transfer knowledge to the people who may not follow up, as the energy invested might be lost from the MSP process. It is important to keep the flow of exchanges with the same people in the loop, so the knowledge transfer can be monitored and adapted if needed.

ACTION

Use existing (inter)governmental mechanisms: it is important to have specific mechanisms for exchange in order to establish common goals and common understanding of key MSP concepts. Communication and exchange should be regular and in all directions. Consider introducing MSP in the agenda of already existing stakeholder forums at national or transboundary level (e.g., interministerial commissions, regional sea authorities). If this kind of mechanism does not exist, its creation could be proposed as to have a systematic way for governments to communicate with one another. At the transboundary level, the establishment of a trusted regional process leader, which prioritizes common goals over national interests, is very important, as well as to invest time and efforts in communication and exchange activities.

5.2.2. Private actors

Stakeholder participation is one of the key aspects of MSP, but can how private actors participate and defend their interests if they do not have the appropriate knowledge about the process? Well-trained and informed sector representatives will be able to provide more adequately the information required to develop the MSP plan and improve the acceptance of the measures implemented. At the transboundary level, it is essential to tackle issues that go beyond national borders (sometimes even beyond jurisdictional areas).

Showcasing the benefits

Marine resources are shared amongst sectors within the same country and also in transboundary areas. In these instances, it is important to assert that the activities of one sector on one side of the border may have effects on the other side. In the case of sectors that do not use directly shared resources but whose activities are supported directly or indirectly by ecosystem services (e.g., tourism), they might have an interest in participating in knowledge exchange at the sea basin level.

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ACTION

• Get the attention of the private sector: contact sector representatives as part of a stakeholder engagement program within an MSP process or organize a knowledge exchange event on MSP. This will stimulate the representatives' curiosity and interest by asserting the benefits their participation and time investment will bring. For some representatives, a personal call might be the turning point to get their attention and to understand their expectations. At the transboundary level, promote direct campaigns to encourage sectors to take action and be involved in specific knowledge transfer events or channels. The identification of common issues and benefits and the showcase of win-win situations when it comes to exchanging knowledge is essential. Organizing side events on MSP within already known sectoral events can also be an option. It is important to show the potential economic impacts of no action and vice versa.

Practicality, trust and commitment

When exchanging knowledge about the planning and management of marine resources, the MSP team should consider how the stakeholders' availability is used. There is a need to be practical – involving only the number of people needed – and to share the amount of appropriate information and knowledge to create trust and keep the actors in a continuous exchange loop.

ACTION

Common trusted intermediary: it might not be practical to get every sector involved in knowledge exchange but rather to identify sectors that would benefit from it (i.e., solving common issues). At the national level, this institution might be the competent authority for MSP contacting sectoral coordination points (e.g., a key organization representing the sector) to transfer the specific knowledge about the MSP process. At the transboundary level, the use of already existing sectoral hubs is advised when the exchange is between the same sector at transboundary level. If the exchange takes place between different sectors in different countries, they might need the umbrella of a supranational body or regional coordination body.

The "size" of the players

It is important to take into account that usually networks of local private actors have different dynamics than networks of national private actors in relation to knowledge exchange. Indeed, big maritime players might be more aware of what is going on in other spheres.

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ACTION

• Fit the size: remember that what works for a stakeholder might not work for others. For instance, at the local level, community-led projects or on-site knowledge transfer events are important, where indigenous and youth groups are well involved. For bigger players, a new room for discussion in an already established forum, or a specific section in a monthly e-newsletter, could be the preferential step. Make sure to adjust the way of communicating information based on their own way of internalizing it. Adapt the language, they are professionals of their respective sectors, they do not "need" to know some specific terms related to MSP.

Stakeholders are all important at their respective scales and within their areas of action. The level of knowledge they might need depends on what the MSP process requires from them and what they require to defend their interests; their role should not be based on its economic importance.

5.2.3. Civil society

Knowledge on MSP also needs to reach the broad public. Civil society needs to be aware of a policy that might affect them. Moreover, MSP is defined as a political process, and being so, it will influence and be influenced to some extent by the public. It is for this reason that civil society needs to have the appropriate knowledge to play its role in the process, as this group often constitutes the bridge between governments and sectors and the the most impacted actors by policies' implementation. Furthermore, a correct understanding and sense of belonging could increase the acceptance of certain measures, that otherwise would not be respected. Civil society, or the "general public", is usually the "Achilles heel" when talking about transferring, exchanging or communicating knowledge related to science and policies, hence why the concept of science-policy-society interface is now used more and more frequently.

Society does not need to know about every detail related to MSP, but they should know about its benefits and how it is going to affect their life.

The issues of when

Citizens cannot be informed of a policy or a plan when the decision has already been taken. When it comes to planning and decision-making, they should be informed from the beginning of the process so as not to give the impression that this issue does not concern them.

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ACTION

■ **Be proactive:** some countries already have public consultation processes established for specific projects affecting the environment. But this is not enough, as this requirement is normally fulfilled by the publication of a technical report on an institutional website and when the project is well advanced. The general public is usually not aware of this and may not have the knowledge to understand the technical report. First, the process itself should be publicized properly from the beginning (for instance, on social media or by mailing to NGOs) so that when their time to participate comes, they are fully aware of what is happening and what they have to do.

An educated civil society

Knowledge gives civil society the possibility to take informed decisions and the opportunity to understand decisions taken by authorities, thus improving implementation. A good knowledge communication with civil society may influence the perception of ocean values among the public and decision makers, in turn raising awareness on ocean-related issues and opportunities. At the transboundary level, it is very important as the experience of educational entities in one country may complement that of other countries. Additionally, empowering local communities can help in the monitoring of the plan (auto-surveillance) as well.

ACTION

Promote thematic activities with local communities: the organization of targeted thematic events in local municipalities are a good opportunity for those that are interested (following a successful awareness campaign) in getting more information about the topic. At this stage, the process could change from simply "transfer" (oneway) to "exchange" (two-way) as there might be interesting information that local communities could offer. The introduction of the MSP topic, along with Blue Economy and ocean sustainability, in the early stages of education curriculum is primordial to ensure the good implementation of the process in future generations as well as the provision of maritime professionals. It is important to target young generations to give rise to vocations related to the sea and assure trained and environmentally aware maritime professionals in the future.

MSP is a forward-looking strategy and the young population is a key target of the transfer of knowledge. They will be the users or the managers of the marine space that is being planned today. They will also face challenges in the future, so let's make sure that they are part of the process and better prepared!





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