



MSPglobal 2.0

Online Kick-off Conference

6 September 2023

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Author: Joseph Onwona Ansong (IOC-UNESCO)

Reviewers: Michele Quesada da Silva (IOC-UNESCO), Laura Stočkutė (DG MARE)

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MSPglobal 2.0 Online Kick-off Conference

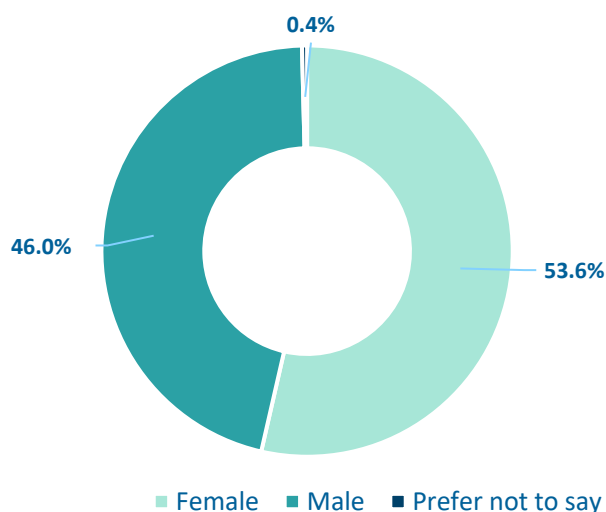
On 6 September 2023, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) organised an online kick off conference to launch the 2nd phase of MSPglobal, which was dubbed: ***“Building knowledge and collaborations towards Marine Spatial Planning”***. The project “Supporting the global implementation of international marine/maritime spatial planning guidelines” (MSPglobal 2.0) will contribute to the target 14.2 of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, i.e., sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems, particularly through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).

The event was moderated by **Mr. Vinicius Lindoso**, IOC Communications Officer, and aimed to present the key topics and upcoming activities of the project's second phase which will last until December 2024. The conference was divided into four sessions in which representatives from international and governmental agencies, as well as the scientific community and civil society gave keynotes and contributed in panel discussions to some of the key focus areas of MSPglobal 2.0: SDG 14.2, data value chain from ocean observation to knowledge-based MSP, national and transboundary MSP in the Gulf of Guinea and the Western Pacific, the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and the adoption of a gender-sensitive approach into MSP. The presentations and video recordings of the conference (English, French and Spanish) are available on the MSPglobal website.¹

Participants Profile

The event was attended by 502 unique viewers from 92 countries (on all continents), including participants, speakers, and organisers.

Gender balance



¹ <https://www.mspglobal2030.org/mspglobal-kicks-off-the-second-phase-with-a-sweeping-online-conference/>

◆ Opening Remarks



Vladimir Ryabinin
Executive Secretary, IOC-UNESCO



Delilah Al Khudhairy
Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy,
DG MARE



Michele Quesada da Silva
MSPglobal 2.0 Project Coordinator, IOC-UNESCO

Mr. Vladimir Ryabinin highlighted the strong collaboration between IOC-UNESCO and DG MARE resulted in a successful first phase of the project that engaged 5,000 stakeholders from over 140 countries and published more than 15 technical reports and policy briefs. Mr. Ryabinin underlined that the second phase will focus on implementing several actions outlined in the Updated Joint MSProadmap to further contribute to the SDG 14 Life below water and its target 14.2 to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems.

Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairy stated that through initiatives like the Joint MSProadmap and MSPglobal, the European Union (EU) is supporting the advancement of MSP around the world and moving towards the goal of having at least 1/3 of the global maritime areas under national jurisdictions with marine spatial plans by 2030. *This support of EU* to promote the use of MSP and related processes by non-EU countries and at international level, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Life below water) **is highlighted in the EU's international ocean governance agenda**. Ms. Al Khudhairy expressed gratitude to IOC-UNESCO for their dedication and collaboration and thanked the participants, speakers and organisers who are supporting MSPglobal 2.0.

Ms. Michele Quesada da Silva presented the main objectives and planned activities of the second phase and emphasised that MSPglobal 2.0 is looking for synergies with other initiatives to build knowledge and collaboration. Workstreams for MSPglobal 2.0 has been designed at two levels: at global level where knowledge tools will be developed to support MSP practitioners. At regional level, transboundary pilots, will be implemented with beneficiary countries in the Gulf of Guinea and the Western Pacific.

◆ **Session 1: Accelerating MSP as we are behind schedule to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems (SDG 14.2)**

Objective:

Discuss expected project impact within a broader context of achieving and monitoring SDG14.2

Speakers:

- Mr. Julian Barbière, Head of Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section, IOC-UNESCO
- Mr. Felix Leinemann, Head of Unit for Blue Economy Sectors, Aquaculture and Maritime Spatial Planning, DG MARE
- Mr. Ole Vestergaard, Programme Management Officer, Sustainable Blue Economy Initiative, UNEP
- Ms. Helena Rodrigues, Ocean Policy Officer, WWF European Policy Office
- Mr. Joe Appiott, Coordinator for Marine, Coastal and Island Biodiversity, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (video)

Key messages:

During this session, the moderator conducted a panel discussion with the first four speakers regarding the use of MSP as an approach to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems. The panel discussion was then followed by a video message from Mr. Joe Appiott.

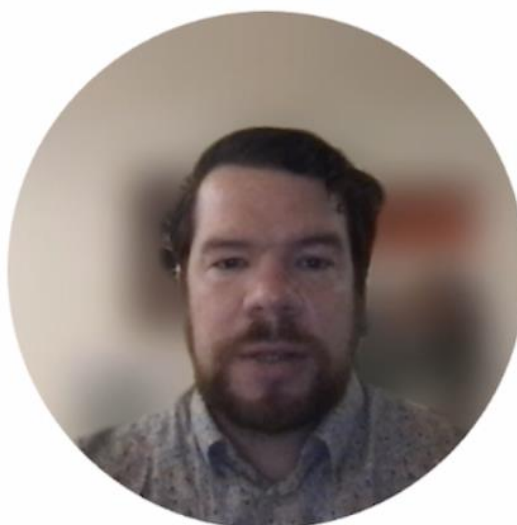


Mr. Viniçius Lindoso (top left), Mr. Julian Barbière (top middle), Mr. Felix Leinemann (top right), Ms. Helena Rodrigues (bottom left), Mr. Ole Vestergaard (bottom right)

Plenary questions	Response
<i>Why should countries select MSP as an approach to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems? What are the key advantages of this type of policy?</i>	<p>Mr. Julian Barbière noted that there is a clear realisation from nations around the world that in order to achieve sustainable economic development, whilst also ensuring the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, we need a different approach from the traditional sectoral management. This involves a change of paradigm, from individual species, to looking at ecosystems, multiple scales and transboundary context as well as integrating human aspects. MSP needs to be driven by science and to inform adaptive management. The benefits of MSP here could be organised around four areas to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce conflicts among different users especially in crowded coastal and marine spaces. • Deliver better predictability of uses and marine environment due to changes such as climate, political and economic changes. • Deliver compatible and multi-uses to optimise the use of marine space. • Provide strong evidence by considering ecosystem services. <p>Ms. Helena Rodrigues highlighted that to address challenges in developing a sustainable economy we would need MSP as a policy tool. An effective MSP process takes both space and time into consideration when allocating the different areas for maritime activities, including nature, restoration, and conservation. Helena noted that, WWF believes an ecosystem-based approach is the best way forward as it considers the ecosystems ability to carry for human activities and climate change issues. Helena further noted MSP has key advantages to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help connect sectoral policies e.g. conservation and energy policies. • Act as a forum where different stakeholders come together to plan for the future, understand current challenges and conflicts. • Act as an adaptive strategy or framework where plans evolve and are reviewed to address social, environmental, and economic changes. • Advance current and future ocean science and knowledge
<i>What should be the priority focus of efforts to accelerate MSP? What are the key roles to be played by national, regional and/or international institutions?</i>	<p>Mr. Ole Vestergaard highlighted that international, national, and regional institutions must enhance policy coherence and align various sector aspirations and needs, and connect institutions, and finance more effectively. Ole noted that MSP processes can benefit from stronger early or upstream policy steer from policymakers and decision makers to guide and overcome planning and implementation challenges. Practical formats for governance are needed e.g., direct collaboration across departments, agencies, building coherent legislation and information management systems. UNEP and the Commonwealth Blue Charter programme have developed a blue economy readiness assessment to help countries get started on blue economy transition. Ole noted that, they would be interested in collaborating with partners in MSPglobal 2.0 to see how that framework and readiness assessment could be applied in practise.</p>
<i>What are the key indicators to</i>	<p>Mr. Felix Leinemann noted that MSP is successful if it can deliver on the three elements of energy, food, and nature nexus. The European</p>

<i>evaluate the effectiveness of MSP? Which outcomes would you like to see as evidence that MSP is contributing to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems?</i>	Commission have developed a toolbox for monitoring and assessing MSP . The toolbox allows you to select different objectives and then measure how they are being achieved when reviewing plans. In Europe, the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive is complemented by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which acts as an environmental benchmark. The MSFD has the objective of ensuring a good environmental status for all the EU waters and also has indicators that can be used as baseline to compare environmental status before the plan development and after plan adoption.
<i>How has the progress of SDG 14.2 been evaluated and reported? What are the challenges of such monitoring? Any suggestions of potential solutions to overcome these challenges?</i>	Mr. Ole Vestergaard noted that in practice the measurement of SDG 14.2 with regards to MSP is in twofold including: the development and implementation of marine spatial plans to deliver the SDG 14. Ole noted that we need to build synergies when we develop these indicators and data systems e.g., with the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy 100% ocean management commitment. These indicators can be structured around: first to what extent MSP is delivering protection and ecological outcomes as well as to what extent is MSP moving into actual implementation and use of plans? UNEP have previously carried out work on implementation of plans and would look at undertaking such work again. There is a UNEP manual on measuring SDG 14 progress .
<i>Which types of collaborations are needed to accelerate MSP?</i>	<p>Ms. Helena Rodrigues reported that from the WWF's assessments on MSP in Europe, there's still issues with cross-border stakeholder engagements. Cooperation between different countries within the same sea basin is needed to accelerate MSP. This is needed as the ocean does not necessarily follow human borders, and marine ecosystems can be affected by risks across countries. There is the need to consider how well Member States or national maritime spatial plans align with each other and how the regional and international perspective is considered in the national plans.</p> <p>Mr. Julian Barbière noted that there are three areas where we need to strengthen collaboration including science innovation, data generation and tools for mitigating environmental stressors and ecosystem services. The second area is transboundary cooperation, creating common vision, technical cooperation mechanism for data sharing and experiences. The third area is communication and having communities on board to own the MSP process. Julian noted that MSPforum and the tools that are going to be developed in MSPglobal 2.0 will hopefully help to advance those collaborations and come up with socially acceptable solutions.</p> <p>Mr. Felix Leinemann noted the EU have developed communities of practice (CoP) and supporting sea basin level CoP in the North and Baltic Sea. Felix highlighted that the Mediterranean CoP on MSP was recently set up to engage the different sectors in co-creating maritime spatial plans.</p>

Mr. Joe Appiott delivered a video message about the link between SGD 14, MSP, and target 1 of the Global Biodiversity Framework which was dubbed as 'biodiversity inclusive spatial planning'. The action-oriented targets, which have a 2030 deadline, are organised according to the themes of reducing threats to biodiversity, meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit sharing, and the tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming. Joe noted that MSP is a tool that can and should be used to achieve a whole range of conservation and sustainable use and reducing the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance.



Mr. Joe Appiott

Coordinator for Marine, Coastal and Island Biodiversity,
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Question **FROM** the audience

Should we still treat conservation as a sector or a strong sustainability element that has to be integrated in marine spatial plan?

Mr. Julian Barbière noted that conservation can be both a sustainability concept that should be integrated in the objectives of a plan and a sector because it is also a group of stakeholders that we want to fully engage in the process.

Ms. Helena Rodrigues highlighted that as an environmental NGO, WWF follows an ecosystem-based approach to MSP. This means that the health of the ecosystems is the foundation for any decisions on space allocation or activities and human pressures. Hence, conservation is just not a sector but the foundation to a sustainable blue economy. Nonetheless, there are still specific environmental policy requirements and sectoral policies.

◆ Session 2: Joining forces to move the data value chain from ocean observation to knowledge-based MSP

Objective:

Discuss the development of MSPglobal data toolboxes in synergy with existing ocean data initiatives.

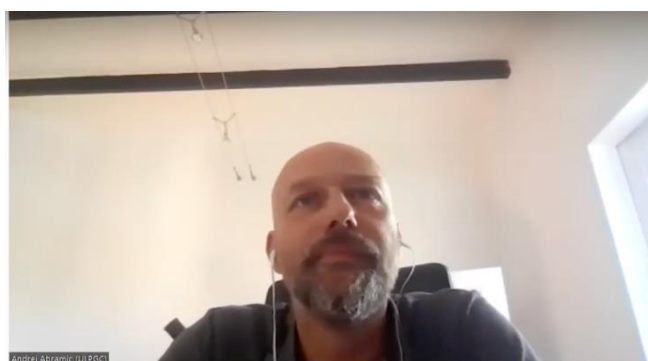
Speakers:

- Mr. Andrej Abramic, Researcher, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (EU Technical Expert Group on Data for MSP)
- Ms. Nadia Pinardi, Professor, University of Bologna (CoastPredict)
- Ms. Lotta Fyrberg, Data manager and IODE Co-chair, Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (IODE's OIH/ODIS)
- Mr. Louis Demargne, Data & Knowledge Management Officer, IOC-UNESCO (UN Ocean Decade Data Groups)

Key messages:

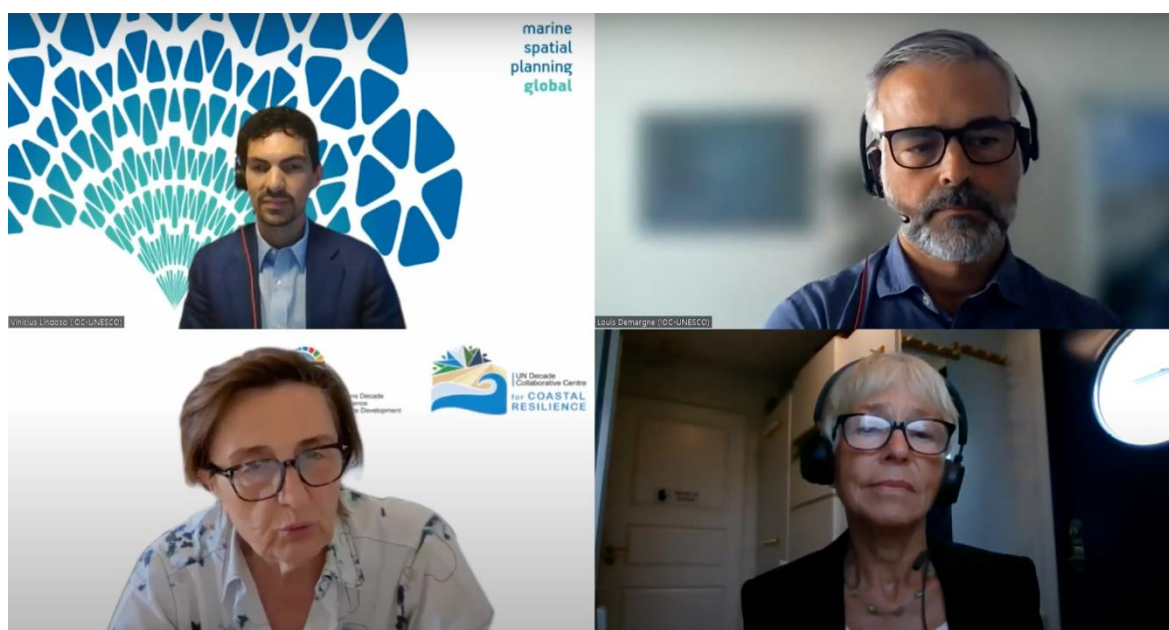
Mr. Vinicius Lindoso started this session by introducing the keynote speaker Andrej Abramic, to deliver his presentation after which the session was followed by a panel discussion with the rest of the speakers.

Mr. Andrej Abramić delivered his keynote presentation about the recently developed Maritime Spatial Planning Data Framework (MSPdF). The MSPdF development was led by the Technical Expert Group (TEG) on data for MSP with the objective to structure and organise input spatial information and data for EU MSP process and facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of operational plans. The MSPdF includes 7 clusters and checklists as well as flow maps that should be followed for data collection process, monitoring, and evaluation process. Andrej ended his presentation by noting that the use of the selected data clusters and checklists in the MSP process guides data collection, facilitates identification of data gaps, improves comparability of applied data collection, and supports design for monitoring and evaluation.



Mr. Andrej Abramic

Researcher, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (EU TEG on Data for MSP)



Mr. Vinicius Lindoso (top left), Ms. Nadia Pinardi (bottom left), Mr. Louis Demargne (top right) and Ms. Lotta Fyrberg (bottom right)

Plenary questions	Response
<p><i>MSPglobal 2.0 aims to develop data toolboxes in synergy with existing ocean data initiatives. Could you briefly describe the data initiative that you are involved? How can MSP practitioners benefit and contribute to this initiative?</i></p>	<p>Ms. Nadia Pinardi emphasised that in the past 20 years, there's been a silent revolution where operational oceanography has been established through real time observation network and forecasting. Nadia noted that she is chairing the CoastPredict which is one of the new Ocean Decade programmes to transform our understanding of operational and multidisciplinary oceanography. Ms. Pinardi recommended that MSP practitioners should use the ocean prediction paradigm to get real time data, forecasts, and optimal reconstruction of the state of the marine environment and operational chronographs. Nadia is also involved in the Ocean Decade collaborative centres for coastal resilience that would enforce the connection, transfer, new knowledge and develop recommendations to shorten the time in which coastal resilience science will have an impact in decisions. The outputs from this centre could also inform the activities of MSPglobal 2.0.</p>
	<p>Ms. Lotta Fyrberg strongly recommended the use of IOC's International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) systems that are developed, maintained, and updated regularly. The purpose of these systems is to enhance marine research, expectation, and development by facilitating exchange of oceanographic data and information. Lotta noted that they have a long traditional European project on data management, in close cooperation with the European Commission. Data from the Ocean Biodiversity Information system (OBIS) could inform recent and upcoming EU projects on MSP which aims to identify the locations within the European seas where MPAs would preserve the diversity of species habitats and ecosystems. This information is crucial to establish functional MPA networks and will help managers to propose additional areas for conservation.</p>

	<p>Mr. Louis Demargne mentioned that within the framework of the Ocean Decade and Ocean Decade Coordination Units it was recognised early that data and information are cornerstones of the success of the decade. Louis highlighted that the Ocean Decade have developed a data and information strategy and is currently designing action plans to develop inclusive, interoperable ocean data and information ecosystems. He emphasised the importance of engaging with users and practitioners at the very beginning of an MSP project to understand the data needs and where to find the baseline datasets. Louis further noted that the Ocean Decade data strategy and action plans should deliver data outcomes for MSP practitioners to find baseline datasets including time series, ocean forecast and decision support tools as well as building a community of data users including data literate or digitally literate individuals.</p>
<p>What are the obstacles to move the data value chain from ocean observation to knowledge-based MSP? Any suggestions of potential solutions to overcome these obstacles?</p>	<p>Mr. Louis Demargne highlighted that the Ocean Decade data strategy hopefully will make a lot of that ocean data findable and develop data solutions that will support MSP. There is a lot of work to be done to build awareness about the benefits of MSP, getting buy-in and understanding ocean health. Co-design with users is important to build the MSP programme and also find the solutions that we need to develop data.</p> <p>Ms. Nadia Pinardi noted that progress to establish the state-of-the-art information for coastal and marine governance through modelling and observation have been relatively slow. However, the Ocean Decade puts scientists and the need for solutions at the forefront. Ms. Pinardi recommended the need to invest in human capital to develop data, multi hazard systems and community concepts that will strengthen MSP and coastal resilience issues.</p>

Question FROM the audience

With data being the biggest challenge and knowing MSP's final deliverable is not a zoning map. What data layers will prove or disprove that an MSP has been completed?

Mr. Louis Demargne highlighted that the marine spatial plan is never completed as it is a living thing, that needs to evolve. The first thing is to think about the baseline data through co-design and engaging with the end users of MSP to identify priorities and then build a database that responds to the questions and the needs of end users.

Ms. Nadia Pinardi noted that MSP does not end because new uses of the ocean appear all the time, highlighting the need to think about the revision of current uses and data to support users.

Event break question **TO** the audience

In your opinion, what should be the priorities related to building knowledge and collaborations towards the success of MSP and SDG 14.2?

- *Transboundary collaboration, more internationally binding laws, and enforcement. Without transboundary collaboration the MSP/SDGs cannot be achieved.*
- *A [Community of Practices] CoP set up can be a great example to build up cross-border cooperation and enhance knowledge sharing.*
- *Create a regional marine connectivity map to support 30x30 objectives considering different climate change scenarios.*
- *Co-design of climate-smart marine plans (considering changes in species and habitat distribution, and the social and economic impact of it).*
- *Use collective intelligence and bottom-up processes to design a data concept for decision making.*
- *Focus on countries that do not have the mandate to develop MSP and build the necessary engagement and knowledge needed to convince decision makers and politicians to support MSP.*
- *More research on MSP especially focused on marine social sciences and biophysical ocean sciences.*
- *I believe one of the main challenges of MSPglobal is the generation of strong participatory methodologies for the generation of these agreements, for example based on structured decision making.*
- *Integration between marine spatial plans and coastal zone plans to deal with land-sea interaction issues and coastal degradation.*
- *Engaging with local communities and incorporating indigenous knowledge into MSP as well as considering gender issues. Integrating MSP with Ocean Literacy by creating an MSP literacy program*
- *Build trust in the data and information used in the MSP to encourage buy-in (i.e. data quality, attribution, etc.). Develop a data literate community that promotes data and information management.*

◆ Session 3: Strengthening regional ocean governance and south-south cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea and the Western Pacific

Objective:

Discuss the development of MSPglobal 2.0 pilots in synergy with existing national and regional initiatives.

Speakers:

- Mr. Yacoub Issola, Expert in Integrated Coastal and Marine Zones Management, Abidjan Convention Secretariat
- Mr. Felix Addo-Yobo, Deputy Director and Advisor, SDGs Advisory Unit, Office of the President (Ghana)
- Mr. Zhiwei Zhang, Marine Spatial Planning Officer, IOC-UNESCO/WESTPAC
- Ms. Suree Satapoomin, Marine Resources Management Specialist, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (Thailand)

Key messages:

The moderator started this session by introducing the speakers, which was followed by a plenary discussion about current MSP initiatives in regional and national context as well as synergies with MSPglobal 2.0.



Mr. Vinicius Lindoso (top left), Mr. Zhiwei Zhang (top middle), Mr. Yacoub Issola (top right), Mr. Felix Addo-Yobo (bottom left) and Ms. Suree Satapoomin (bottom right)

Plenary questions	Response
<i>What are the current or planned MSP-related efforts in your country/region?</i>	Mr. Yacoub Issola noted that the Abidjan Convention have worked with Member States on MSP through previous initiatives such as MAMI WATA project and the ongoing West Africa Coastal Resilience Programme to support capacity building, training and pilot transboundary MSP projects between Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Benin. Mr. Issola further noted that they are planning on working with AU-IBAR to support training and capacity activities and transboundary MSP between Togo and Benin Republic.
	Mr. Felix Addo-Yobo noted that Ghana has pledged to put 100% of its maritime area under sustainable management practises by 2025 and are in the process of developing a sustainable management plan of which MSP is a key component. Felix noted that the government identified that they need to adopt MSP as a tool due to increasing use of ocean space coupled with degradation issues.
	Mr. Zhiwei Zhang noted that for the Western Pacific area, countries such as China, Korea and Indonesia have done lots of work in MSP. China has finished third generation of MSP and Korea published its legislation on MSP, while Indonesia have established their MSP system. The rest of the countries in Western Pacific are still in preparatory stages and are making some efforts to advance the MSP. Mr. Zhang noted the IOC Sub Commission for the Western Pacific is currently leading an Ocean Decade Action known as Accelerate MSP in the Western Pacific which will capitalise on the MSPglobal project 2.0 to establish a regional network of MSP experts and partners and undertake capacity building activities. Zhiwei highlighted that a working group has been established and the first workshop will be held in November.
	Ms. Suree Satapoomin noted that Thailand have implemented MSP through a series of pilot projects in three areas. The first MSP project was in Koh Lan, which is a small island in the eastern Gulf of Thailand. The project was undertaken within the framework of Thailand-China Corporation in 2016, aiming to address environmental degradation and conflicts arising from tourism and recreational activities. The process led to zoning scheme which was categorised into nine usage areas and the proposed utilisation areas are undergoing active development through the implementation of legislative measures.
	The second MSP was conducted at Koh Sichang - an Island in the Inner Gulf of Thailand. A draft zoning scheme is being developed to harmonise various activities under the framework of Thailand-China Corporation.
	The third MSP is in Phang Nga Bay and at an initial phase, but it is progressing with baseline data collection and mapping. An analysis of conflicts and compatibility related to human use is ongoing as well as stakeholders being actively engaged in the process.

	<p>MSP in Thailand has been endorsed within the National Reform Plan under the 20-year national strategy as a tool for managing marine and coastal resources. The establishment of an Inter-ministerial structure is defined in the form of a subcommittee for MSP's and the National Maritime Interest Policy Committee. This committee is acting as the coordinating body for national level MSP.</p>
<p><i>What could initiatives such as MSPglobal do to collaborate on these efforts?</i></p>	<p>Ms. Suree Satapoomin noted MSPglobal 2.0 could collaborate with Thailand in various ways such as providing technical expertise in developing criteria and systematic protocol for selecting MSP sites. MSPglobal can offer advice on central database management which is instrumental in enhancing the clarity and efficiency of MSP planning and implementation. Drawing from best practitioners MSPglobal can provide insights into institutional management and government improvement.</p> <p>Mr. Felix Addo-Yobo highlighted that in addition to knowledge and experience sharing, Ghana is looking at capacity building to build skills and expertise to support MSP processes. In the long term, they are interested in monitoring and evaluation tools to effectively monitor and evaluate the progress of implementation and then feedback into the iterative process of updating and revising the MSP. They would like to build scientific evidence and scientific approach to the MSP, that includes indigenous and traditional knowledge that has been used over the years to manage the ocean. As part of the MSPglobal 2.0, they hope to develop a robust and sustainable financing model for the MSPs and identify investment opportunities that involves the private sector supporting MSP.</p> <p>Mr. Zhiwei Zhang explained that MSPglobal 2.0 will support the kick-off activities linked to the Ocean Decade Action Accelerate Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas. MSPglobal 2.0 could enhance their efforts in the region for the government to understand the importance of MSP and synergies with international agreement. MSPglobal 2.0 will be helpful in capacity building and regional MSP dialogue. MSP development in most of the countries in this region are still at its early stage and there are issues with the lack of policy and institutional framework, limited technological and human capacity and limited access to data and information. It is important to work closely with MSP practitioners in countries to understand and assess contextual issues and provide training as well as support regulatory processes for MSP.</p> <p>Mr. Yacoub Issola noted that the Abidjan Convention is looking for collaboration with the MSPglobal 2.0 as the Convention covers 22 countries. At the regional level the project will help harmonise MSP tools and the capacity building across the region as well as build on previous capacity building initiatives with International Ocean Institute in South Africa and the Ecological Monitoring Centre in Senegal. At the national level, Abidjan Convention will collaborate with MSPglobal 2.0 for pilot cases in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo to build on previous activities that started under the MAMI WATA project.</p>

Question FROM the audience

What is the status of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire transboundary MSP?

Mr. Yacoub Issola noted that the pilot transboundary MSP discussion was started during the MAMI WATA project, and the transboundary engagement ended in 2021 along with the end of the project. The Abidjan Convention is trying to mobilise additional resources through the World Bank to start the transboundary MSP pilot.

Mr. Felix Addo-Yobo reiterated that since the MAMI WATA project came to an end, not a lot has been done on transboundary issues between Ghana and Côte D'Ivoire. Ghana is at the final stages of securing support from the World Bank through the West Africa Coastal Resilience Programme which has a component on MSP. This will allow Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to build upon what was already done and where possible explore opportunities for doing similar with Togo under the framework of the Ghana Sustainable Ocean Plan.

◆ Session 4: Incorporating Indigenous Peoples knowledge and a gender-sensitive approach into Marine Spatial Planning

Objectives:

Present the relevance of engaging Indigenous Peoples as well as adopting a gender-sensitive approach in marine policies.

Speakers:



Ms. Sarah Singh
Technical Officer
Guyana Marine Conservation Society

Ms. Zhen Sun
Associate Professor
World Maritime University

Key messages:

The moderator started this session by introducing Ms. Sarah Singh and subsequently Ms. Zhen Sun to deliver their presentation.

Ms. Sarah Singh presented on her experience and recommendations on the engagement of indigenous peoples in the management of mangroves. The Guyana Marine Conservation Society (GMCS) started in 2000 as a sea turtle conservation programme and have since then expanded its focus into marine conservation with their involvement in the Shell Beach Protected Area which used traditional knowledge. The Shell Beach protected area is inhabited by the Caribs and the Warrau indigenous peoples who were engaged in sensitisation to stop hunting turtles to eventually advocating for their protection.

The organisation's activities with indigenous communities in Guyana have included the replanting of 500,000 mangrove seedlings in a 500 hectares of mangrove land. GMCS is currently supporting Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy, 2030 which include engagement activities that targets at least 70% of women and youth in developing climate actions. GMCS is also collaborating to provide the marine scientific data for the Protected Areas Commission to establish conservation efforts in the Barima-Mora Passage area and mangrove ecosystems. This includes developing communication and engagement strategy and awareness efforts.

Ms. Singh ended the presentation by noting good practices when engaging with indigenous peoples. This includes the need to be aware of rules, consent processes, the governance and

authority structure in the communities before engagement. The use of translators, creating an engagement plan and using effective communication and awareness channels such as house-to-house visits were all noted. Indigenous peoples have traditional knowledge and experience that can be used integrally in creating or maintaining marine policies once they are engaged.

Ms. Zhen Sun emphasised that MSP should be a process to address gender issues and underrepresentation by women in decision-making processes. The UN specifically included a provision in the UN Charter that there should be no restriction on the eligibility of women and men to participate in any capacity. This is specifically recognised in the SDG's and the UN Decade of Ocean Science. A study by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that there is close to medium and median level of discrimination against women. Nearly 60% of the countries that responded to the survey only have less than 30% women taking up the Cabinet Ministers roles. Zhen highlighted that women's contributions within ocean policy are under recognised, and significantly underrepresented in different sectors.

Ms. Sun recommended a gender sensitive approach that ensures an understanding of the systemic barriers that is hindering women and the major causes of inequality in decision-making process. A gender sensitive approach would start with an assessment exercise that identifies vulnerabilities. A case study that has implemented a gender sensitive approach was the United Nations Framework Convention On Climate Change (UNFCCC) [climate change adaptation process](#). The case study noted the need to establish enabling environments to discuss gender issues, gender sensitive assessment to understand the climate change vulnerabilities, the impacts, and opportunities for women's participation in the process of climate change adaptation actions as well as within monitoring. Developing a Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan could present elements to consolidate participation and representation by targeting organisational structure, women in decision making, professional development, advocacy, research, monitoring, and evaluation.

Questions **FROM** the audience

How do we ensure that indigenous knowledge rights and processes, which are mostly informed, are successfully factored into statutory MSP processes?

Ms. Sarah Singh highlighted that the aim would be to continuously consult and include the indigenous peoples in MSP. It is necessary to have meetings and consultations which are a good opportunity for indigenous peoples to use or to include their traditional knowledge.

Are there any international studies that identify differences between genders in terms of what they value most when it comes to benefits from marine resources?

Ms. Zhen Sun iterated that there is no specific study on gender assessment and related benefits from marine resources. The best example of involving women in decision making process as well as implementation process is the study undertaken by UNFCCC.

◆ Closing



Ms Laura Stočkutė
Policy Officer, Blue Economy Sectors,
Aquaculture and Maritime Spatial Planning
DG MARE



Ms. Michele Quesada da Silva
MSPglobal 2.0 Project Coordinator, IOC
UNESCO

Ms. Laura Stočkutė thanked all speakers for their collective passion, dedication, and the sharing of knowledge about MSP and participants for the lively discussions in the online chat where many shared their experiences. This shows commitment and potential for positive change and momentum for MSP. Laura noted that even though MSP is not a panacea it is a remedy and all of the issues discussed such as transboundary cooperation, the inclusion of the indigenous knowledge and gender equality and data-driven decisions in MSP are the ingredients of that remedy. Ms. Stočkutė encouraged participants to leave this conference with a renewed determination to accelerate MSP nationally, regionally, and globally.

Ms. Michele Quesada da Silva thanked the participants and speakers on behalf of IOC-UNESCO and MSPglobal team for sharing their knowledge and engaging in discussions. Ms. Quesada da Silva noted that there is a question on Slido and the MSPglobal team would like to hear from participants about their expectations and recommendations for the new phase of MSPglobal.

Mr. Vinicius Lindoso closed the conference by thanking the speakers, participants, UNESCO technicians and interpreters for making the event possible and engaging in discussions.

Closing question **TO** the audience

What are your expectations & recommendations to MSPglobal 2.0?

- *Stocktaking of all ongoing or established MSP at global level as well as sharing different case studies, success and lessons learnt.*
- *Facilitate pilot projects and learning on MSP-ICZM linkages and practical application of ocean accounting in MSP.*
- *Inclusive engagement in the Gulf of Guinea as well as involvement of NGOs.*
- *Develop clear examples of the role of MSP in international conventions, SDGs etc.*
- *Improved knowledge/data sharing between countries.*
- *Training of decision makers on concepts of integrated spatial management concepts and its use in decision making.*