



MSP Stakeholder Workshop

Workshop #6

Mahe Workshop

19 May 2017

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: ICCS Room 1, Victoria, Mahe

1. Introduction and workshop overview

The Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Initiative began in early 2014. It is a government-led process aimed at supporting the sustainable and long-term use and health of the waters throughout the Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone. It is an integrated, multi-sector approach to address climate change adaptation, marine protection, and support the Blue Economy and other national strategies. The Initiative receives input from all major sectors including fisheries, tourism, marine charters, biodiversity conservation, renewable energy, port authority, maritime safety, and non-renewable resources. Science, spatial data, stakeholder input, and local knowledge are being used to propose zones for high and medium biodiversity protection and multiple uses. The marine plan will be regulatory to guide policy and economic development.

The Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change is the planning authority and The Nature Conservancy is facilitating the process and developing the marine plan. The project is facilitated by a partnership with the Gos-UNDP-GEF Programme Coordinating Unit. The MSP Initiative is funded by the Government of Seychelles, private grants to The Nature Conservancy, and grants from the GoS-UNDP-GEF Programme Coordinating Unit. The MSP Initiative is a part of the government-led Debt-for-Nature swap that is creating the Seychelles Conservation & Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT). Funds from the SeyCCAT will be used for climate change adaptation work and to implement the marine plan.

This is the first comprehensive marine plan in the Western Indian Ocean. It is significant for improving ocean management for a global biodiversity hotspot and demonstrating best practices in marine spatial planning. Once approved, the Seychelles marine spatial plan will be the second largest in the world.

The MSP Initiative was launched in 2014 and will be completed in 2020. In the first phase of planning, a course-scale zoning design will be developed that identifies and proposes new areas for marine protection in deep water, outside the Territorial Sea, that total 15% of the EEZ. In the second phase, additional areas in the deep water will be proposed as well as new areas for marine protection in shallow waters, inside the Territorial Sea, to bring the total to 30% marine protection. Most of the local activities occur within a few nautical miles of the coast, and the phased approach

will provide the time needed for stakeholder engagement in these areas. After implementation in 2021, the plan will be reviewed and adapted at regular intervals.

Stakeholder participation is key to MSP's success. To date, more than 20 stakeholder meetings, 60 small group consultations and 7 public workshops have been held to discuss and review MSP outputs towards the development of the Seychelles marine spatial plan. An MSP Steering Committee contains members from all key sectors to critically discuss, review and revise MSP outputs; stakeholder workshops are held. Three Technical Working Groups contain scientific experts and marine economic sectors to develop specific planning tools.

The overall objective of the workshop was to present the MSP zoning design to the stakeholders for input into the MSP process.

Specifically, the workshop intended to:

- i. Update stakeholders on the progress of the MSP initiative since the last stakeholder workshops in 2015.
- ii. Review stakeholder input to date that has informed the zoning design.
- iii. Present the Phase I zoning design which identifies 15% of the Seychelles EEZ for Protection and Management
- iv. Receive feedback from stakeholders on the proposed zoning design and allowable activities table.

2. WORKSHOP'S OBJECTIVES

Workshop participants were provided with an overview of the Seychelles MSP initiative including information on the MSP objectives, goals and the governance framework. Once there was an understanding of the process and data input to develop the zoning design, the participants were presented with the latest zoning design version 3.0 and the allowable activities table version 4.0 and provided with an opportunity to raise and questions, seek clarification or provide recommendations and input to the zoning design.

3. ATTENDANCE

The workshop was attended by over 24 participants representing various sectors including fisheries, tourism, environment, Non-government organisations and civil society and youth. A full list of participants with their contact details is provided Annex 1.

4. WORKSHOP OPENING

The Principle Secretary for Environment and Co-Chair of the MSP Steering committee, Mr Alain de comarmond, welcomed all participants to the full day workshop on the Seychelles MSP initiative Phase I. The PS started by introducing the aims and objectives of the workshop and outlined the methodology that would be used. He briefly reviewed the initiative of the MSP and the importance of stakeholder input and engagement into the process. The PS explained the targets of meeting the first milestone of the MSP by the end of the year 2017 which is to identify 15% of the Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) for Protected and management area. He ended by encouraging the

stakeholders present to participate actively in the discussions for fruitful deliberations throughout the day.

5. Round-Table of Introductions

There was a round-table of introductions whereby workshop participants introduced themselves and the organisation/sector they were representing.

6. Workshop Methodology

A simple approach was applied for the delivery of the workshop. These included presentations in plenary followed by round-table discussions on the MSP.

During the course of the workshop a number of knowledge products were made available to participants and were used to guide discussions. These included handouts of the zoning design and allowable activities table, printed maps of the Seychelles bathymetry, rationales tables and a GeoPDF tool which includes layers that inform the zoning design. The GeoPDF is an interactive tool that can be used to explain the importance of particular areas in terms of biodiversity representation, habitat layers, socio-economic activities that occur in the areas.

7. Summary of the Technical Presentations

Presentation 1: MSP Overview; Objectives, goals, and governance framework

The MSP Science and Process Lead, Dr Joanna Smith gave an overview of the Seychelles MSP initiative. The definition of MSP which the Seychelles has applied is that of Ehler & Douvère (2009) from the UNESCO MSP guide; 'A public process of analysing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives that are usually specified through a political process'. Dr Smith summarized the importance of doing an MSP and the benefits that this would provide. The goals of the Seychelles MSP is to develop a marine spatial plan by 2020 that

- Legislates marine protected areas that are 30% of Seychelles' Exclusive Economic Zone and Territorial Sea
- Promotes the Blue Economy and other national strategies to support ocean health, local economy, and economic growth.
- Addresses climate change in coastal and offshore habitats
- Is monitored and adapted over time

This follows a commitment made in 2010 by the then President of Seychelles to declare 50% of terrestrial area and commit 30% of Seychelles marine area as protected, half of which will be declared as no-take zones (as a pledge conditional to raising USD\$2.5 million/year for a conservation and adaptation fund). Dr Smith described the links between the MSP, The debt for nature swap that was finalized in February 2016 and the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SEYCCAT).

The proposed zoning approach for the Seychelles is to use "objective" based zoning to identify 30% of the Seychelles EEZ into Zone 1, High biodiversity areas (15%), Zone 2 Medium Biodiversity areas

(15%) and zone 3 Multiple use areas (70%). The objective of zone 1 is to allocate 15% of the EEZ to provide high protection for marine biodiversity goals, by representative habitats and species. The objective of zone 2 is to allocate 15% of the EEZ to provide medium protection for biodiversity goals, by representative species and habitats, and allow economic opportunities for sustainable uses. Zone 3 objectives are to maximise economic opportunities and Blue Economy in Seychelles.

A summary of the governance structure of the MSP was provided. The MSP Initiative is led by the Government of Seychelles and Ministry of the Environment, Energy, and Climate Change (MEECC). The Nature Conservancy is facilitating the process in partnership with support from the GOS-UNDP-GEF Programme Coordination Unit. An Executive Committee approves MSP outputs, a high-level Ministerial committee with representation from all key sectors involved. Planning and stakeholder participation focuses on key marine sectors such as fisheries, biodiversity conservation, infrastructure, public utilities, ports, maritime security, shipping, renewable energy, non-renewable resources, recreation and tourism. Representatives from these sectors provide input through a Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups.

Presentation 2: Phase 1 completion timeline and stakeholder input

Dr Joanna Smith gave a second presentation on the MSP timeline and stakeholder input. The MSP Initiative was launched in 2014 and will be completed in 2020. In the first phase of planning, a course-scale zoning design will be developed that identifies and proposes new areas for marine protection in deep water, outside the Territorial Sea, that total 15% of the EEZ. In the second phase, additional areas in the deep water will be proposed as well as new areas for marine protection in shallow waters, inside the Territorial Sea, to bring the total to 30% marine protection. The second Phase has two set milestones. One is that by the end of 2018 an additional 7.5% of the EEZ will be identified. The second milestone is an additional 7.5% of marine areas are identified by 2020. These milestones are made conditional in the debt for nature swap loan agreement. The phased approach is important as most of the local activities occur within a few nautical miles of the coast, and the phased approach will provide the time needed for stakeholder engagement in these areas.

The stakeholder input through the process was summarized. The Government of Seychelles is committed to engage stakeholders and a participatory process. The Seychelles agreements with foreign fisheries will not change until those agreements end. All shallow water territorial sea areas (3.5% of the EEZ) are also identified as interim Zone 2 areas in the first phase of the MSP until further discussions can be carried out in Phase 2.

Presentation 3: Data and maps to inform the Seychelles MSP

A summary of the data that has been used to develop and inform the zoning design was presented to the participants. There are over 100 layers in the data catalogue which analyse and represent uses. The GIS unit at the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change is the repository for the data.

Presentation 4: Summary of stakeholder input 2014-present

Stakeholder participation is key to MSP's success. To date, more than 22 stakeholder meetings and 50 small group consultations have been held to develop the marine spatial plan: an MSP Steering Committee contains members from all key sectors to critically discuss, review and revise MSP outputs; stakeholder workshops are held to discuss and review MSP outputs; and Technical Working Groups contain local experts and the marine sectors to develop specific planning tools. A summary of the stakeholder input was provided to the workshop participants.

Input from stakeholders for the high biodiversity areas define Zone 1 areas as areas that;

- Have the highest protections in Seychelles for key species, habitats, ecosystems
- Are implemented using the Protected Areas Policy, Fisheries Act, other legislation; multiple levels of protections within Zone 1
- Conserve biodiversity features (habitats, species, ecological processes) from disturbance or anthropogenic changes
- Provide reference sites to monitor climate change, species populations, coral bleaching, etc.
- Restrict or limit extraction and seabed alteration
- Have compatible uses do not alter the biodiversity objective.

Input from stakeholders for the medium biodiversity areas define zone 2 areas as areas that;

- Have objectives for biodiversity and sustainable uses
- Have multiple levels of protections within Zone 2
- Species and habitats within this zone can be managed with some harvest or extraction levels
- Provide Ecosystem services - the benefit to humans
- Have some restrictions for extraction and seabed alteration
- Have compatible uses that align with the objective for each area

The guiding principles of the MSP Initiative lay the foundation of the MSP process and determine the basic or essential qualities of the process and its outputs. The Seychelles MSP Initiative developed 'Guiding Principles' during stakeholder consultations in 2014-2015:

Governance:

- Laws, Regulations, Acts, Legal Agreements, National Policy, Authorised Management Plans
- Strategies, Goals, Action Plans
- Integration; Co-management
- Transparency; Inclusivity; Participation
- Environmental Stewardship; Equity; Sustainable Development

Approach and Practicality:

- Global Best Practices
- Ecosystem-Based Management Approach; Precautionary Principle
- Balance ecological, economic, social, cultural objectives
- Feasible; Practical; Implementable; Financially sustainable; Adaptable; Dynamic
- Relevant Spatial and Temporal Scales

Presentation 5: Zoning design to identify 15% of the EEZ for Protection & Management & Allowable Activities Tables.

The MSP Initiative will develop a Marine Spatial Plan for Phase 1 outputs before the end of 2017, and complete the final Marine Spatial plan before the end of 2020. Outputs include an MSP Atlas, containing maps and information on biodiversity and human uses, and a spatial data catalogue and decision-support tools to support decision making now and in the future. The workshop participants were presented with the MSP zoning design 3.0 and areas identified to complete Phase I of the MSP. Information provided to participants included the reasons (rationales) as to why these areas are being proposed, comparisons to previous zoning design (Version 2.2 of Sept 2015) and the allowable activities tables version 4 that summarise the activities and conditions in each of the zones. Other documents (all documents are in draft) that are available to participants that inform the zoning design include;

- Master List of Definitions and Uses (2015)
- Seychelles Fishing Authority Common Fisheries Terms (2015)
- Allowable Activities Table, version 3.1 and 4.0
- Rationale Tables for Areas in zoning design 3.0 and 3.1, Phase 1
- Biodiversity Representation by Area for zoning design 3.0 and 3.1
- Stakeholder Preferences Summary for zoning design 3.0 and 3.1

8. Summary of Questions and discussions.

Following the series of presentations, the floor was opened to questions.

i. Input on the Phase I zoning design 3.0 and 3.1

There was generally good support by stakeholders that were present for the Phase I areas proposed.

ii. Monitoring and enforcement.

There were several questions on the monitoring and enforcement of these areas as well as the practicality of implementation and enforcement. Additional queries were made regarding the method of demarcation of the different zones.

iii. Aquaculture

Several queries were made with regards to Aquaculture. Proposals were made to consider aquaculture activities in inshore shallow water areas separately in the allowable activities table because of the potential impacts on biodiversity and to the livelihood of the people. It was also suggested that different types of aquaculture should be listed in the allowable activities table as again, the potential impacts from these would be different (E.g. coral farming vs fish cages). There were recommendations that aquaculture should not be allowable in a zone 1.

iv. Fisheries

It was pointed out that Fortune Bank has high biodiversity but is not picked up in the Marxan model.

v. Others general questions:

- There were questions about representation on the Steering Committee for commercial Tourism – marine charters operating in the outer islands. This group has asked for the possibility of having representation on the MSP Steering Committee. The nomination would depend on approval from the executive Committee. The MSP team confirmed that they would follow up this request.
- There were suggestions to include the MSP in Education program in schools.
- Stakeholders do not believe that temporal closures are ideal.
- There was a general consensus that there should be no oil & gas related activities in Zone 1 areas around Aldabra.
- The sustainability of purse seine activities was questioned. The general feedback was that Industrial long-line is more sustainable than Industrial purse seine as it is more selective with less by-catch.

9. Closing remarks

There being no further questions and queries the workshop was officially closed by PS de Comarmond. The PS took the opportunity to thank the different experts for their input and help to make the workshop successful.

Participants were advised that the zoning design and allowable activities table will be posted online for comments in the next few weeks.

The workshop was officially closed at 15:00.

Annex I: Attendance List

Annex II: Photographs taken on the day of the Mahe Stakeholder workshop.