



Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan Policy

23 September 2020

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1 Executive Summary

In February 2016, the Government of Seychelles completed a first-of-kind \$21.6 million debt swap that paves the way for protecting and managing more than 400,000 km² of ocean in Seychelles and the first comprehensive marine spatial plan in the Western Indian Ocean. The formal closing of the financial arrangement was a crucial milestone in a bold commitment made by former President James Michel at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro to put 30 percent of its marine resources under conservation and sustainable use by 2020, up from less than 1 percent in 2012. The financial arrangement means that payments that Seychelles owed to debtors remain in the country and are instead directed to the new, independent, locally based and led Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT).

SeyCCAT was created via legislation in November 2015 and it is now estimated that SeyCCAT will receive US \$700,000 per year, including revenue from sovereign blue bonds issued by Seychelles. The Trust will disburse funds for conservation of marine resources including to support the Marine Spatial Plan, with emphasis on actions that will help strengthen the resilience of these resources in the face of climate change.

The debt swap is a significant milestone which now holds the Seychelles government accountable to delivering the tangible conservation and climate change outcomes that will be realized through the Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) Initiative. The Marine Spatial Plan will address marine management issues in multiple sectors, including fisheries, conservation (environment), shipping and transportation, non-renewable resources, infrastructure, tourism and recreation.

The MSP will identify marine zones, allowable activities, management considerations, and recommendations that will require a new policy, including clearly identifying the Ministry responsible for implementing the marine spatial plan and monitoring its progress. A new policy will ensure alignment with all relevant marine policies including the Protected Areas Policy that was officially endorsed in October 2013, the Fisheries Policy, and others. There is hence a need to draft a broad policy to guide the completion of the MSP and full implementation in 2021.

In 2016-2017, a consultancy developed a draft MSP Policy to assist government and stakeholders with finalising the MSP and leading to implementation. The policy will be developed to:

- Address comprehensive marine environmental management of Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone and Territorial Sea.
- Meet the commitments and milestones set in the Seychelles debt swap loan agreement.

- Take on-board the Seychelles' international commitments while taking into consideration modern developments in Protected Area management, blue economy and sustainable development.
- Meet and surpass the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi target of 10% marine protection by 2020.
- Facilitate integrated governance between Ministries.
- Meet and surpass the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of 10% marine protect by 2020.
- Address the need to review and synergize management priorities in the country.
- Integrate national biodiversity goals and the Blue Economy in order to ensure a resilient ocean, support healthy, local fisheries and sustainable development of a globally-significant marine tourism sector.

Source:
Cabinet Memo
29 November 2016

2 Seychelles MSP Policy Statement

The Government of Seychelles:

Cognisant that Seychelles' landmass constitutes less than 0.05% of the area of its Territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone that encompass 1.35 Million square kilometres;

Recalling Article 38 of the Seychelles Constitution and reaffirming the importance of the marine environment in providing diverse social, cultural and economic services, and the international importance of the ecology of our marine ecosystems;

Highlighting its national commitments to improve: the management of its marine environment and biodiversity, the integration of marine resource management, and maritime security as set out in, *inter alia*, the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, the Seychelles Fishery Policy, the Merchant Shipping Act, the Blue Economy Roadmap and as embodied in the national pursuit and development of a Blue Economy;

Reaffirming Seychelles' International Obligations and Commitments including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its related agreements, and *inter alia* the Convention on Biological Diversity, the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries and the Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries, the Port States Measures Agreement, the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in so much as they pertain to Seychelles and its national circumstances;

Aware that significant additional effort, investment and capacity are required to realise the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment, mitigation of the impacts of climate change and promotion of the Blue Economy;

Committing to enable the development of a diverse portfolio of financing options to support effective implementation of the marine spatial plan.

Recognising the direct linkage between marine uses, activities and ecological health, the importance to plan for the future through equitable stakeholder consultation and application of best international practices for comprehensive, multi-objective planning. Seychelles is utilising the process of marine spatial planning to identify and allocate space for ecological, social, and economic objectives using a public and participatory process;

Understanding that robust governance structures are needed to ensure a transparent, participatory and equitable decision-making process for the protection and development of the ocean;

Noting the fundamental importance of science to develop, guide and adaptively manage Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan and the need to promote scientific capacity and research in Seychelles, *inter alia* in ecology, economics and social science, to address the gaps in key information on the marine environment and to ensure optimal management;

Reaffirming the importance of equity in the access to and the sharing of benefits from Seychelles' marine resources in order to improve the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the Seychellois people;

Keenly aware the threat that climate change and its various impacts pose to the marine environment, its productivity and the overall sustainable development of Seychelles;

Restating that Seychelles' economic, social and environmental well-being are fundamentally linked to the ecological diversity, stability and resilience of the marine environment;

Commits through the development, implementation and periodic review of the Marine Spatial Plan to the conservation and sustainable use¹ of the marine environment, the mitigation of climate change and the promotion of the Blue Economy and to cooperate internationally as appropriate to further those ends.

In this Policy, the term “marine environment” is defined as:

“The area from the high water mark to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone of Seychelles”.

3 Operating Principles

The MSP should be read, interpreted, developed and implemented within the context of the following operational guidance:

Integrated: Address the interrelationship among issues and sectors and between nature and development; integration can help enable complementary and mutually reinforcing decisions and actions.

Ecosystem-based: Safeguard ecosystem processes, resilience, and connectedness, recognizing that ecosystems are dynamic, changing and sometimes poorly understood (therefore requiring precautionary decision-making).

¹Conservation and sustainable use of Biodiversity as per CBD usage and definitions.

Public Trust: Marine resources are part of the public domain, not owned exclusively or benefited by any one group; decisions should be made in the interest of the whole community and not any one group or private interest.

Sustainability: Decision making should take into account environmental, economic, social and cultural values in meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Transparency: The processes used to make decisions should be easily understood by the public, allow citizens to see how decisions are made, how resources have been allocated, and how decisions have been reached that affect their lives.

Participatory: Communities, persons, and interests affected by marine resource or activity management should have an opportunity to participate in the formulation of ocean management decisions.

Precautionary: Article 15 of the Rio Declaration on Sustainable Development states that: *“In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation”*.

Adaptive: MSP is a continuing, iterative process that learns and adapts over time.

Coordinated: It is essential that the process incorporates and builds upon other pertinent national initiatives such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Seychelles Climate Policy & Strategy, Priorities and Nationally Determined Contribution, and the Seychelles Blue Economy Roadmap, Seychelles National Development Strategy.

Scale: Data has been used to generate the basis for the Marine Spatial Plan. The scale and resolution of data used in decision-making must be appropriate to the activity, development or objective under consideration.

4 Annexes

4.1 The Need for MSP in Seychelles

A brief examination of the physical nature of Seychelles is very telling. A comparison of the country's landmass with its EEZ reveals that only 0.03% of its resource area is terrestrial. Indeed this percentage will drop considerably when the seabed area covered by the extended continental shelf is factored in.

Seychelles has benefited from the wealth of its marine environment since the archipelago's initial colonization. Considerable degradation has ensued in particular with regard to the historical and ongoing loss in the diversity and abundance of marine megafauna. The last 30 years has also seen a notable decline in demersal fishery stocks on the Mahé plateau. The complexity of the multi-species fishery exploited by diverse fishing methods coupled with difficulties of regulatory enforcement has so far proved a conundrum beyond the national capacity to address with key stocks showing continuing and worrying declines.

New technologies and improved scientific methodologies and understanding are, however, opening new vistas of marine economic potential and scope for rehabilitation. It is clear that Seychelles' economic resource base is overwhelmingly marine and has the potential to support future economic growth and provide quality employment if developed and managed appropriately, in line with the precepts of the Seychelles marine spatial planning initiative.

4.2 Seychelles Debt Conversion

In 2012 the Government of Seychelles (GoS) announced at the UN Rio+20 its intention to protect 30% of its territorial waters and EEZ. This equates to a commitment to create approximately 400,000 km² in new marine protection areas.

In order to establish a funding mechanism for this ambitious undertaking, the Government of Seychelles partnered with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to develop an innovative debt for conservation and climate adaptation swap, or conversion.

The award-winning financing mechanism led by Government of Seychelles, designed by The Nature Conservancy and supported by the Paris Club enabled the Government of Seychelles to buy a portion of its debt payments to fund nature-based solutions for conservation and climate change. The debt conversion allows a portion of the Seychelles' debt to be redirected into a more manageable debt package held by a local entity. To accomplish this refinancing, The Nature Conservancy provided \$16.6 million in an impact capital loan and \$5 million in grants to buy-back \$21.6 million of Seychelles debt at a discounted rate.

The Government of Seychelles can now redirect this portion of their debt service to an independent, nationally based, public-private trust fund called the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT). Debt service payments will fund three distinct streams: one to repay impact investors, one to capitalize SeyCCAT's endowment, and one to fund work on the ground that advances marine and coastal conservation, including strategies for ecosystem-based climate adaptation. The estimated amount to be invested in these conservation activities and the endowment through the debt swap is \$13 million, with nearly 70 percent of this payable in local currency.

The period for debt payment will be extended from eight years to 20 years, reducing the Government's annual debt service by over \$2 million annually. The Nature Conservancy will seek to transfer the impact investment loan into the holding of another investor and put recouped dollars into new projects, a proven approach that enables The Nature Conservancy to mobilize large sums for global conservation.

4.3 Seychelles MSP Overview

Vision

To support a healthy productive marine environment, local communities, and the development of the Blue Economy through improved and integrated management for conservation, sustainable use and ecosystem resilience.

Mission

That the Marine Spatial Plan is finalised and under implementation by 2021 with all its constituent components realised in concordance with the debt-swap agreement.

MSP Objectives

The Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan Initiative has from its conception in 2014 been founded on a broad iterative process of national stakeholder consultation. A governance framework with cross-sectoral committees, an MSP core administrative team and thematic technical working groups was established and supported by extensive stakeholder consultations and a series of national workshops.

The aim of the process was identified and consolidated into three overall objectives², namely to develop a marine spatial plan by 2020 that:

1. Legislates marine protected areas that are 30% of Seychelles' Exclusive Economic Zone
2. Aligns and integrates with Blue Economy and other national initiatives in Seychelles
3. Addresses climate change in coastal and offshore habitats

Technical working groups were formed to cover the domains of marine ecology, socioeconomics and terrestrial ecology respectively and considered their work in the context of thematic areas: fisheries, conservation, utilities & infrastructure, non-renewable resources, recreation and tourism.

Implementation Mechanisms

The Government Ministry with portfolio responsibility for Environment in partnership with The Nature Conservancy will coordinate and oversee the finalisation of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan. The governance mechanism for the implementation, monitoring, review and adaptive management of the plan is currently being developed/determined under the auspices of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries 3 project.

² SMART objectives for each overall objective will be developed through stakeholder consultation through the MSP initiative process. These SMART objectives will be listed in the Marine Plan Document.

Note on Capacity Building: This is a key component but cannot be assessed until: a) the Governance structure is determined and b) the management plans are finalised.

MSP Zoning Framework

Categories of zone for utilisation in the MSP were discussed and developed through the process and ultimately consolidated into three categories:

Zone 1 High Biodiversity Protection - to allocate 15% of representative marine waters to provide high protection for biodiversity.

Zone 2 Medium Biodiversity Protection and Sustainable Uses - to allocate 15% of representative marine waters to provide medium protection for Biodiversity and allow economic opportunities for sustainable uses.

Zone 3 Multiple Uses - to allocate 70% of marine waters to optimise economic opportunities and the Blue Economy in Seychelles.

To provide context and criteria for these zones a detailed and comprehensive matrix of allowable activities was developed and continues to be refined with strictures of an activity being i) allowable, ii) conditionally allowable with reference to additional restrictions and conditions, and iii) not allowable depending upon which Zone is under consideration.

4.4 Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Purpose

The Seychelles MSP Action Plan is intended to see the MSP initiative through its development and establishment phases (2018-2021) in line with the timeline in the loan agreement. Aspects of the Action Plan, namely the completion of the 30% protection goal has strict time bound milestones in order to enable the disbursement of funds from the debt swap agreement (see Action Plan, Objective 1). It is critical to the loan agreement and completion of MSP that these activities are completed on time. The other aspects are less time critical and can be reviewed in Year 4 of the plan in order to seek to optimise their realisation by 2021. The dates presented in the action plan are subject to change for Objectives 2-5. Monitoring and review of implementation of area management plans and implementation of the research agenda will be priority aspects of the follow up action plan 2022-2026.

Seychelles MSP Action Plan Objectives

1. Marine Protected Areas, Zone 1 and Zone 2, are designated within the timelines specified for both phases of the MSP Initiative. Note: this is the 30% protection goal in the loan agreement.
2. All Zones are under effective management regimes that support their MSP objectives.
3. Governance frameworks are developed to enable effective implementation and management of the MSP.
4. Monitoring, data collection and analysis is optimised, and management-oriented research undertaken to support attainment of MSP objectives and its adaptive management.
5. Communities and stakeholders are actively engaged in the MSP Initiative.

Seychelles MSP Action Plan Objectives and Activities

The deadlines for Objective 1 correspond to the Seychelles debt conversion loan agreement. Where there is any discrepancy in dates or details, the loan agreement shall take precedent. The timelines and deadlines for Objectives 2 through 5 are subject to change upon review and discussion through development of Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan by December 2020, for implementation in 2021.

4.4.1.1 Objective 1: Marine Protected Areas, Zone 1 and Zone 2, are designated within the timelines specified for both phases of the MSP Initiative

Situation Analysis

The Seychelles debt swap lays out a strict timeline for the designation of new MPAs, in two phases, which must be met to realise the disbursement of funds. Phase 1 is required to be completed no later than February 25th 2018 [see Note 1]. Phase 2 has two milestones due by December 2018 and December 2020 respectively. Key procedures must be undertaken within timeframe to realise this, namely: identification of all new areas for designation, determination of which legislation to use for each area, implementation of Protected Area Policy protocol for designation of protected areas. The existing legislation of the National Parks and Nature Conservancy Act (NPNCA) and the Fisheries Act (2014) provides for all the circumstances required under the MSP. The Fisheries Act however, has not yet been used to create fishery management areas and PA categories have yet to be defined under its auspices. In light of the Phase 1 deadlines it is proposed, as an interim measure, that the NPNCA be utilised for the designation of all areas. Zone 2-Medium Biodiversity and Sustainable Use Areas could be catered for under the classes of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Park that is, Fishery Management Area (AONB) or (National Park). In such instances SFA, for example, could be designated as the Management Authority and the regulations would set out the criteria for the operation of the fishery management area. Management areas could be transferred to appropriate categories under the Fisheries Act when they have been elaborated.

Table 1. Results and Activities for Objective 1 of Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
Results Phase 1	1.1 Zone 1 and 2 areas identified, mapped, endorsed by stakeholders and approved by GoS.	Map of approved areas
	1.2 Appropriate legislation and category applied for each area by 2021.	Public notices, media coverage, consultations
	1.3 Protected Area Policy followed through to designation by 2021.	Public notices, media coverage, consultations
	1.4 At least 15% of EEZ and/or TS designated by June 2018 (Zone 1: 5% & Zone 2: 10%).	Official Gazette
Results Phase 2	1.5 Zone 1 & 2 areas identified, mapped, endorsed by stakeholders and approved by GoS.	Map of approved areas
	1.6 Appropriate legislation and category applied for each area by 2021.	Public notices, media coverage, consultations
	1.7 Protected Area Policy followed through to designation by 2021.	Public notices, media coverage, consultations
	1.8 An additional 15% of EEZ and/or TS designated.	Official Gazette
	1.8a 7.5% by February 2018 Zone 1: 5% & Zone 2: 2.5%.	Official Gazette
	1.8b 7.5% by December 2020 Zone 1: 5% & Zone 2: 2.5%.	Official Gazette
Activities Phase 1	1.9 Identify at least 15% of the EEZ and/or Territorial Sea as areas for new biodiversity protection using the MSP Zoning Framework [see Note 2]: Zone 1 and Zone 2.	Draft maps
	1.10 Identify which legislation and category to be utilised for each zone area.	Draft regulations

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
	1.11 Follow Protected Areas Policy for designation of Protected Areas.	Public notices, consultation findings
	1.12 Designate Phase 1 areas as protected [see Note 3].	Official Gazette
Activities Phase 2	1.13 Identify at least 15% of the EEZ and/or Territorial Sea as area for new biodiversity protection and zones for multiple use using the MSP Zoning Framework: Zone 1, 2 and 3 [see Note 4].	Draft maps
	1.14 Identify which legislation and category to be utilised for each Protected Area.	Draft regulations
	1.15 Follow Protected Areas Policy for designation of Protected Areas.	Public notices, consultation findings etc.
	1.16 Designate Zone 1 and Zone 2 areas as protected.	Official Gazette

Notes:

1: The initial target date was December 2017 but through the application of negotiated grace periods was extended to February 2018.

2: (a) In line with paragraph 4 of the policy statement, these areas should also be selected with a view to meeting Seychelles international commitments e.g. protecting threatened biodiversity, key habitats (coral reefs, sea grass beds, nursery habitats & SPAGs) and critical habitats for migratory species. (b) Each area must have its specific MSP objectives defined so that its contribution to the national initiative can be monitored, assessed and adaptively managed.

3: Phase 1 designates the Territorial Sea Interim Zone 2 except for the Port Fee Boundary Area. Phase 1 designations may be subject to change in the development of Phase 2 in order to meet the 30% goal by area, and 30% goal for representation of species and habitats throughout Seychelles' waters.

4: The Phase 1 Zoning design proposes the port Fee Boundary Area as Zone 3-Multiple Use. In Phase 2, it is recognised that 15% of this area may be Zone 1 and 15% may be Zone 2 as there are various unique habitats around the main granitic islands that require protection for the MSP to realise its Mission. This means that additional protected areas will need to be identified, negotiated and designated during the timeline.

4.4.1.2 Objective 2: Zones are under effective management regimes that support the MSP objectives.

Situation Analysis

The areas that make up Zone 1 and Zone 2 respectively have been selected for specific reasons that support the overall mission of the MSP. Each area therefore requires a management plan to guide and realise the attainment of its objectives and thus the advancement of the MSP. Zone 3 may likewise be subject to enhanced management measures and/or legislation for specific areas, activities or developments [see Note 1]. Plans must be pragmatic and reflect the reality of what is attainable in often very large and far-flung areas. Likewise areas that face extensive user conflicts will require more detailed management measures and monitoring and evaluation to enable adaptive management. In such cases planning effort should focus first on the few overarching management objectives and then on the more detailed consideration of the many human uses.

Table 2. Results and Activities for Objective 2 of Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
Results	2.1 Stakeholder approved standardised Management Plan format(s) by end of 2021.	Management plan formats and guidelines.
	2.2 Peer reviewed management plans.	Management plans publicly available.
	2.3 Finalised management plans.	Management plans publicly available.
	2.4 All Marine Protected/Management Areas have management plans under implementation.	Implementation reports Site visits etc.
	2.5 Area objectives advanced and overall MSP objectives supported.	Management plan and MSP reviews
Activities	2.6 Develop, as a matter of urgency, standard formats for Protected/Management area management plans [see Notes 2 and 3].	Draft Standard formats
	2.7 Develop specific area draft management plans with clear measures to support area and MSP objectives [see Note 4].	Draft management plans
	2.8 Draft plans reviewed by scientific and PA management peer group.	Panel comments and recommendations.
	2.9 Implement area management plans [see Note 5].	Implementation reports.

Notes:

- 1: For example, the development of a decision matrix to guide authorisation of and conditions for petroleum exploration.
- 2: Format(s) should be developed with to reference should be made to the format set out in the 2013 PA Policy document and outputs of the PA sustainable financing project.
- 3: Different formats may be required for Zone 1 and Zone 2 areas.
- 4: Specific attention should be given to pragmatic measures for MCS – Monitoring, Control and Surveillance. In addition to the area and MSP objectives.
- 5: The monitoring, review and adaptive management of area management plans will be fundamental to the next MSP cycle (2022-2026).

4.4.1.3 Objective 3: Governance and sustainable financing frameworks are developed to enable effective implementation and management of the MSP

Situation Analysis

Marine Spatial Planning falls within and across the legal and/or policy mandates of various agencies:

- A. The Blue Economy Department (BED) has the overarching policy mandate but, as yet, no legislation to support it.
- B. The Planning Authority (and its parent ministry MHILT) has through the Town and Country Planning Act (and the provisions of the proposed Physical Planning Bill), broad mandate over activities and developments in the marine domain.
- C. The Ministry with portfolio responsibility for Environment (MEECC) has, through its 2016 Environment Protection Act, broad mandate over all activities and developments in the marine domain.
- D. Seychelles Fishing Authority (and parent ministry MAF) has mandate for management of fishery resources through its 1984 Establishment Act and 2014 Fisheries Act. As such BED has the advantage of having the overall portfolio but would require a new act to establish its mandate to govern the MSP. The Planning Authority and MEECC have viable legal mandate over the portfolio which would require the elaboration of specific regulations under their respective acts. The Planning Authority furthermore already has in place all the mechanisms to receive and assess applications for new marine/activities and developments, under the auspices of the MSP, which would only require the formation of a new sub-committee to the planning authority. Both the Planning Authority and MEECC may however be perceived to have a stake in the process and therefore to not be impartial. It is vital that the Governance mechanism established be balanced, equitable and transparent in its mode of operation.

Table 3. Results and Activities for Objective 3 of Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
Results	3.1 Governance mechanism selected by 2021.	Cabinet decision
	3.2 Finalised administrative structure, organogram and <i>modus operandi</i> .	Organogram and <i>modus operandi</i>
	3.3 Proposed legal basis for MSP coordination by 2021.	Cabinet decision
	3.4 Legal mechanism for MSP coordination established by 2021.	Official Gazette
	3.5 A sustainable financing framework to implement the marine spatial plan is endorsed by 2021.	Section included in the marine plan document, and endorsed by Cabinet
	3.6 MSP operationalised by end 2021.	Status reports
Activities	3.7 Investigate and develop MSP governance options, in liaison with key agencies, through a process of stakeholder consultation for executive review.	Governance proposal, Cabinet memorandum
	3.8 Develop selected option i.e. administrative structure, legislation/regulations and budget requirements and submit for approval.	Elaborated governance mechanism proposal. Organogram. 2020 Budget submission by July 2019
	3.9 Develop Regulations and/or Act, as appropriate, in liaison with appropriate agencies by 2021.	AG's office approval
	3.10 Gazette/promulgate regulations and/or Act by 2021.	Official Gazette

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
	3.11 Assess available financing [see Note 1] and include projected costing [see Note 2] and funding gap in strategy to address the long-term financing of the MSP.	Proposal endorsed by MSP Executive and Steering committees
	3.12 Identify and employ MSP coordination agency staff and commence implementation of MSP by last quarter of 2021.	Staff employed. MSP implementation reports

Notes:

1: Assessment should be undertaken with reference to existing financing reviews and assessments inter alia: the Biodiversity Financing project (BioFin), the Protected Area Financing project (PA Finance), the financing section of the Blue Economy roadmap and the SWIOFISH 3 project.

2: Costings must distinguish between budget for administration/governance and budget for implementation of the MSP.

4.4.1.4 Objective 4: Monitoring, data collection and analysis is optimised, and management-oriented research undertaken to support attainment of MSP objectives and its adaptive management.

Situation analysis

Structured, strategic data collection and analysis, coupled with targeted research is essential to enable monitoring, review and adaptive management of both specific area management plans and the overarching MSP.

Monitoring: Strategic and crosscutting, as well as priority specific, datasets need to be identified and integrated throughout the MSP areas where appropriate. With regard to fishery resources and their management fishery dependent monitoring needs significant upgrading in both quality (species resolution) and quantity (representativeness) (Moreno 2013) and significantly more resources need to be allocated to enable a structured approach to fishery-independent data gathering. **Research:** The current MSP was developed from a limited available dataset [see Note 1], diverse proxies were utilised to generate the maps, for example for biodiversity interest, supplemented often by subjective or anecdotal accounts. It is important therefore that key strategic gaps in current knowledge and information be identified and wherever possible addressed by targeted research. Research should be management-oriented in line with the objectives of the MSP.

Table 4. Results and Activities for Objective 4 of Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
Results	4.1 Crosscutting and priority data requirements are identified.	Monitoring protocols and resulting datasets.
	4.2 Crosscutting and priority data requirements are used for strategic and targeted data collection.	Monitoring protocols and resulting datasets.
	4.3 Standardised dataset parameters and formats are utilised.	Dataset guidelines & formats [see Note 2]. Data sharing agreements.
	4.4 Data utilised for management and adaptive management passes independent peer review process.	Approved datasets.
	4.5-1 Data maintained in high utility (transferable) format.	Dataset formats
	4.5-2 Adaptive management of MSP and areas therein is enabled.	Biodiversity and resource indicators.
	4.6 Strategic, key and crosscutting knowledge and data gaps are identified.	Assessment of knowledge gaps and research recommendations.
	4.7 National MSP research agenda under implementation.	Reports and scientific publications.
Activities	4.8 Review panel operational, MSP scientific practices established etc.	Minutes of meetings and recommendations.
	4.9 Identify data requirements to support MSP and crosscutting Area management plan objectives. (X-ref Activity 4.8).	Assessment of priority strategic and crosscutting data requirements.
	4.10 Identify data requirements to support priority, area-specific management objectives. (X-ref Activity 4.8).	Assessment of priority area-specific data requirements.
	4.11 Establish criteria for MSP datasets to facilitate analysis and utility (X-ref Activity 4.8).	Dataset guidelines and formats. Data sharing agreements.

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
	4.12 Undertake independent peer review of all datasets (X-ref Activity 8).	Dataset reviews.
	4.13 Maintain data in formats suitable for transfer among tools and programs.	Dataset guidelines and formats.
	4.14 Identify strategic, crosscutting and key gaps in national knowledge and data for MSP management [see Note 3].	Knowledge gap analysis and assessment.
	4.15 Develop a prioritised management-oriented research agenda.	Stakeholder approved research agenda.
	4.16 Establish an independent panel of scientific experts to develop and approve MSP scientific practices, review findings (X-ref Activities 1-4) and to approve model data sharing agreement	Panel membership and appointment, minutes of meetings etc.

Notes:

1: Though numerous, diverse and significant studies have been undertaken of the marine environment in Seychelles – structured scientific data regarding ecosystem function, health and productivity are still chronically lacking. This lack of structured data represents a key obstacle to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

2: Guidelines and formats to be developed by independent scientific panel created by activity 8.

3: Development of the research agenda should be undertaken in collaboration with the National Institute for Science, Technology and Innovation (NISTI) and build where pertinent on aspects of the research agendas of the NBSAP, NPOA sharks, BERI, UniSey, etc. NISTI holds the legal mandate for “providing leadership and coordination for research in science, technology and innovation” and related matters as set out in in the 2014 NISTI Act (Act 6 of 2014)(GoS 2014b).

4.4.1.5 Objective 5: Communities and stakeholders are actively engaged in the MSP Initiative

Situation Analysis

The Seychelles MSP initiative has sought to follow best practice in its formulation and development through an iterative process of stakeholder consultation. Maintaining and enhancing stakeholder engagement is however an open-ended undertaking. The ultimate success of the MSP its implementation and adaptive management depends upon effective stakeholder and involvement and ownership of the process.

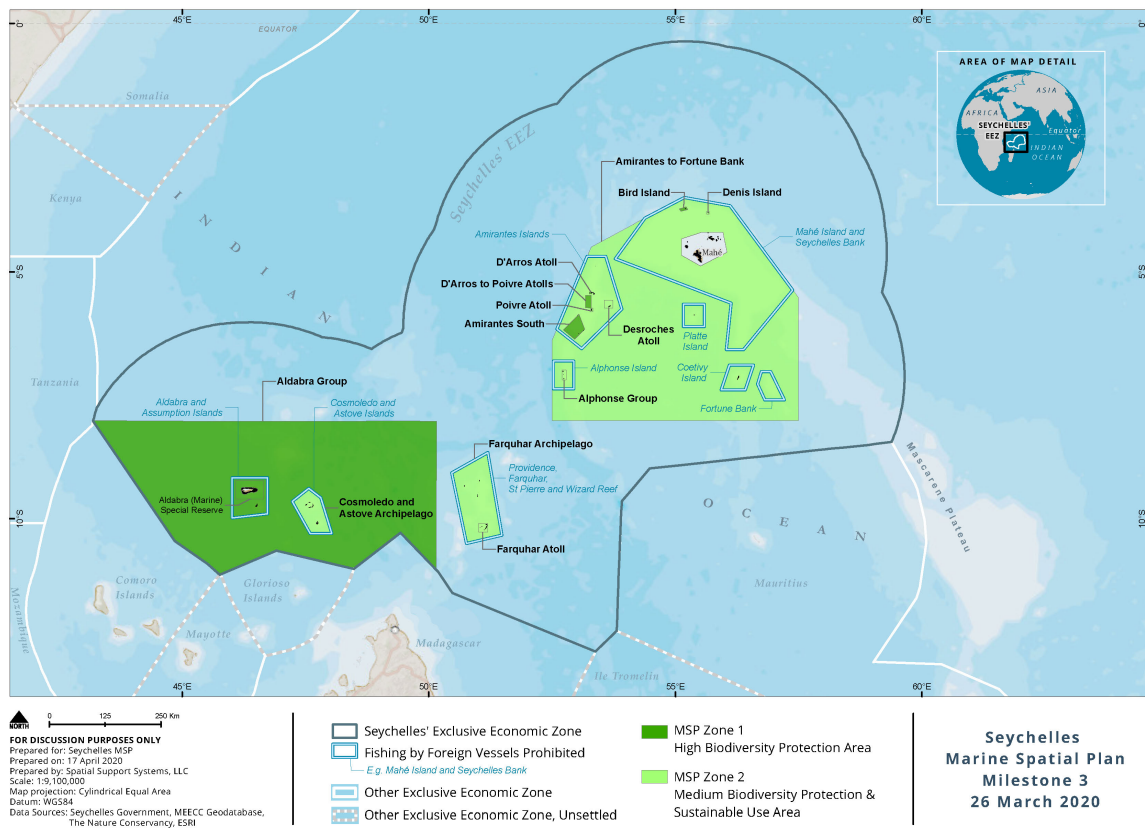
Table 5. Results and Activities for Objective 5 of Seychelles MSP Action Plan

Action Plan Item	Description	Indicator(s)
Results	5.1 Stakeholder listings updated at least every 2 years.	Maintained stakeholder list.
	5.2 Stakeholders are actively engaged in the MSP initiative.	Stakeholder participation, provision of data etc.
	5.3 Communities are aware of, informed on and able to contribute to the MSP initiative.	Input from general public
	5.4 Students are aware of, informed on and able to contribute to the MSP initiative.	Student involvement in spectrum of MSP activities.
	5.5 Communities and stakeholders are properly informed on and actively engaged in the MSP Initiative.	Stakeholder participation in meetings, activities, research, monitoring & data gathering etc
Activities	5.6 Undertake periodic stakeholder analyses to ensure stakeholder outreach and engagement, in dynamic and evolving scenario, is optimised	Stakeholder analysis and biennial reviews
	5.7 Provide regular stakeholder updates on development and implementation of the MSP with focus on upcoming opportunities for participation.	Correspondence. MSP Website. Media Coverage
	5.8 Develop and maintain a public education and awareness campaign on the need for, desired results from and progress in the Seychelles MSP. Highlighting how private individuals can contribute to the process.	Media coverage. MSP Website. Public Meetings.
	5.9 Develop and maintain a school age education and awareness campaign on the need for, desired results from and progress in the Seychelles MSP. Highlighting how private individuals can contribute to the process.	Education programme and activities.

Notes:

No notes at this time.

4.5 Seychelles Milestone 3 Zoning Design March 2020



Map reference number of Seychelles Survey Division, Ministry of Habitat, Infrastructure and Land Transport:

- Aldabra Group (Marine) National Park (Zone 1): ML/ADN/184
- Amirantes Group Zone 1 Areas: ML/ADN/180
- Amirantes to Fortune Bank Zone 2 Areas: ML/ADN/183
- Cosmoledo and Astove Archipelago (Zone 2): ML/ADN/179
- D'Arros Atoll (Zone1): ML/ADN/182
- Farquhar Archipelago (Zone 2) and Farquhar Atoll (Zone 2): ML/ADN/178
- Ile Aux Vaches (Bird Island) (Zone 1):ML/ADN/181
- Ile Denis (Zone 2):ML/ADN/177

4.6 References

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4.7 Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym or Abbreviation	Meaning
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BERI	Blue Economy Research Institute
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CMS	Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environment Protection Act
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoS	Government of Seychelles
ICRW	International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling
IOC-UNESCO	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSP	Marine Spatial Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NISTI	National Institute of Science, Technology and Innovation
NPNCA	National Parks and Nature Conservancy Act
NPOA	National Plan of Action
PA	Protected Area
PAA	Protected Area Act
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SeyCCAT	Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust
SSDS	Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TS	Territorial Sea
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCSD	United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UniSey	University of Seychelles
X-ref	Cross reference