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Strengthening Cooperation in the Greater North Sea:

**Initial Lessons for Cross-Sectoral
and Cross-Border Cooperation for
Maritime Spatial Planning.**

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Strengthening cooperation in the Greater North Sea:

initial lessons for cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation for maritime spatial planning

Defining the where, when, how and what of dialogue

This policy brief is produced as a discussion paper under the EU Northern European Sea Basins project (NESBp), co-funded by the European Union. It is aimed at policymakers and technical experts working on maritime spatial planning (MSP) in the North Sea, as well as partners involved in regional cooperation initiatives (including North Seas MSP collaboration group and the NSEC) and MSP related projects. The brief focuses on efforts to improve (MSP) coordination across countries in the Greater North Sea area. The shared challenge of managing increasingly crowded seas while safeguarding healthy and thriving oceans requires cooperation beyond national borders, making sea-basin approaches and the creation of the GNSBI both necessary and timely. In particular, this brief looks at the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative (GNSBI)¹ established in 2023, aimed to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on energy, fisheries, nature through MSP across the Greater North Sea basin. Supported by a ministerial declaration and formal Terms of Reference, the initiative provides a platform for regular dialogue between countries, themes and governance levels on emerging spatial and ecological challenges. The purpose of this policy brief is three folded: (1) to explain the current state of cooperation within the GNSBI, (2) to share initial lessons from ongoing dialogue between countries, and (3) to highlight practical recommendations from NESBp on how the MSP cooperation could be strengthened in the future. Overall, the recommendations in this brief could be viewed as discussion starters that aim to support conversations between MSP related initiatives and projects to hopefully achieve a shared understanding. Emphasis is placed on lessons from 'early maritime spatial planning dialogues' and what they could contribute if implemented to their full potential.

Conclusion and policy recommendations

The increasing intensity of marine use in the Greater North Sea requires earlier, more continuous and more cross-sectoral cooperation than existing planning processes alone can provide. While GNSBI is still in an early stage of development, its political backing, cross-sectoral composition and basin-scale perspective position it as a valuable platform for facilitating early MSP dialogue and supporting more coherent maritime spatial planning across the region. This policy brief recommends further conversation on:

- Clarify what constitutes "early" MSP dialogue. GNSBI should develop a shared understanding of when dialogue can most effectively influence national planning processes and identify key windows for cross-border engagement by mapping national planning cycles and decision-making processes.
- Develop a shared evidence base for basin-scale decision-making. Combining ecological, socio-economic and spatial datasets can support joint fact-finding, increase transparency, and improve the quality of cross-border dialogue.
- Use scenario-based approaches to support strategic discussions. Joint exploration of alternative spatial temporal ecological and economic scenarios including for offshore renewables can help stakeholders understand trade-offs, address uncertainty and develop a shared narrative for the future of the Greater North Sea Basin.
- Focus early MSP dialogue on ecological coherence and future scenarios. GNSBI should prioritise discussions on sea-basin ecological priorities and connectivity needs, alongside the development of shared future scenarios and narratives that can guide strategic, cross-border and cross-sectoral decision-making.

1 - https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/theme/eu-sea-basin-strategies/greater-north-sea-basin-initiative-gnsbi_en and Ministerial declaration from Antwerp <https://www.government.nl/documents/2024/11/25/greater-north-sea-basin-initiative---antwerp-ministerial-declaration>

1. Why an 'early MSP Dialogue' for the Greater North Sea basin.

Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Greater North Sea(s) increasingly requires cross-border coordination. The rapid expansion of offshore renewable energy and grid infrastructure is adding pressure to an already intensively used sea basin. At the same time, countries have increased ambitions for nature protection and restoration, while providing a future for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, arrange defence and security activities and support other sustainable blue economy developments. Because many of these activities and ecosystems extend across national borders, planning decisions taken in one country can directly and indirectly affect neighbouring or other countries around the regional sea basin. Climate change on top of this, is affecting the entire sea basin, and needs to be reckoned with. The challenge is two folded: living in harmony with nature by 2050 as agreed under the UN Convention of Biological Diversity (the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework) and making an energy transition to net-zero stemming from the Paris-agreement. The implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation and the EU Green deal by EU North Seas Member States and achieving the goal of 300+ Giga Watt (GW) of offshore wind as agreed under the NSEC. These agreements give concrete direction for action.

This put together in MSP terms results in the need for earlier and more continuous coordination, collaboration and dialogue, across sectors and countries. Maritime Spatial planning (MSP) has proved to be an important toolkit for coordinated action. Through MSP all the above challenges can be addressed through a more coherent approach and support more efficient allocation of marine space and hence support in finding a balance between the environmental needs and sustainable use of the seas.

Why?



- The North Sea faces increasing spatial and ecological pressure from human activities and climate change.
- These challenges cross national borders, making basin-scale coordination through MSP increasingly necessary.
- GNSBI was created to enhance informed national decision making and cross-border, cross-sectoral collaboration by acting as a forum for facilitating early dialogue, and engaging early with all parties with the aim to, where possible, ensure the optimal use of the limited available physical space in the Greater North Sea Basin within its ecological carrying capacity, while acknowledging the environmental, economic and social perspectives.
- The initiative aims to complement existing formal MSP processes by creating space for earlier coordination, knowledge exchange and identification of potential conflicts and synergies.

The Greater North Sea Basin Initiative (GNSBI), established in 2023, aims to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on energy, fisheries, nature through MSP across the Greater North Sea basin². Supported by a ministerial declaration and formal Terms of Reference, the initiative provides a platform for regular dialogue between countries, themes and governance levels on emerging spatial and ecological challenges in the North Sea. Within this context, GNSBI promotes 'early MSP dialogue': informal and non-binding exchange between policymakers, planners and sector representatives while maritime spatial and related sectoral plans are still under development or in the process of revision and options remain open. Early dialogue can support countries to:

- identify potential conflicts and synergies earlier,
- improve alignment between national MSP processes,
- strengthen shared understanding of cross-border impacts,
- support more coordinated decision-making under conditions of uncertainty.

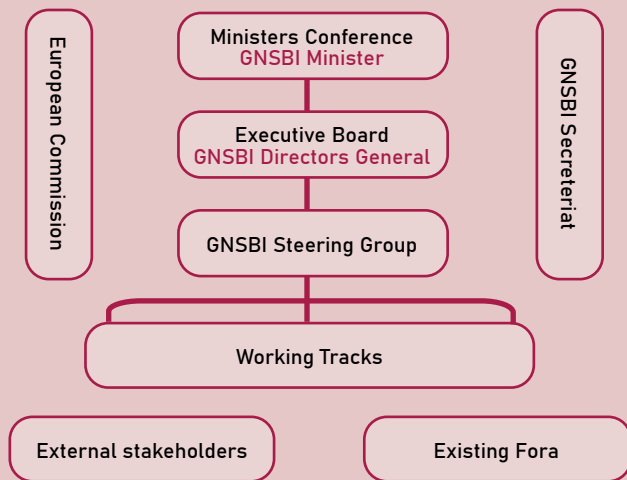
This is increasingly relevant as future spatial demands, cumulative environmental impacts and geopolitical developments remain difficult to predict.

2 - GNSBI brings together the 9 North Seas Countries Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom and the European Commission as strategic partner.

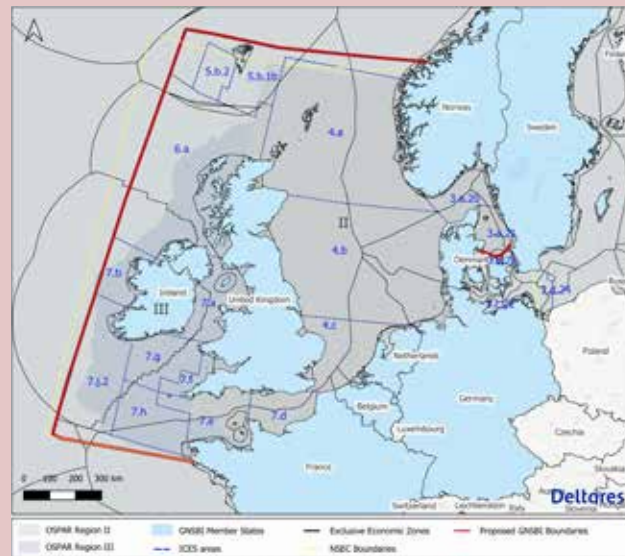


Early MSP Dialogue definition within GNSBI

GNSBI aims to facilitate early MSP dialogue to support informed national decision-making and cross-border, cross-sectoral cooperation in the North Sea basin. The dialogue should take place while plans are still being developed and options remain open, enabling countries to exchange information on planning intentions, identify opportunities for alignment, flag potential conflicts, and explore cooperation at an early stage. It is informal and non-binding, complements formal MSP procedures, and respects national autonomy and legal obligations. In this way, GNSBI could provide a safe space for constructive cross-border dialogue and improved sea basin-wide awareness and coordination.



Source: GNSBI Antwerp Declaration 2024



References: OSPAR Regions: OSPAR Commission, OSPAR Maritime Area and its Regions, Economic Exclusive Zones: Marinerregions.org, ICES Areas: ICES, ICES statistical rectangles, NSEC Boundaries: Royal HaskoningDHV, Spatial study North Seas 2030 – offshore wind development, 2022. Reference: RHQHV-BI4271

The dialogue can take place through several layers of the GNSBI governance structure. The Working Tracks focus on:

- nature restoration and conservation,
- cumulative impact assessments,
- multiple use of space,
- long-term perspectives for fisheries,
- and knowledge sharing.

GNSBI Steering Group provides a forum where Working Track leaders and Country Coordinators can introduce topics for early MSP dialogue. Supported by a structure of DG and Ministerial levels, as seen in the figure on the left.

GNSBI builds on existing forms and fora of international cooperation on maritime planning and management, such as national and EU work, OSPAR actions (from the 2030 agenda) and the energy transition in NSEC. For example, under the Espoo Convention³, countries formally assess and consult on potential transboundary environmental impacts of plans and projects. However, these consultations generally occur after draft maritime plans have already been prepared, leaving limited flexibility for broader coordination or substantial changes⁴. GNSBI seeks to complement these formal procedures by creating space for earlier, informal and cross-sectoral dialogue at sea-basin scale. Other regional initiatives, including the North Seas Maritime Spatial Planning Collaboration Group (NS MSP CG) and the North Seas Energy Cooperation Support Group 2 on MSP (NSEC SG2), also support cross-border MSP exchange. **GNSBI aims to add value and achieve desired results by bringing together multiple sectors and governance levels within one broader dialogue platform.** As this form of early MSP dialogue is still developing, there is a need to reflect on experiences and lessons learned so far. At present, the dialogue mainly supports the exchange of preliminary findings from the five technical Working Tracks and improves understanding of national policy processes and by tackling a number of concrete topics (i.e. practice by doing), including on DG level during the 2025 meeting in Rotterdam. **The next step is to further develop this approach by learning from existing sea-basin cooperation practices and dialogue initiatives.** Through the EU funded project, the Northern European Sea Basins project (NESBp), cooperation between the Baltic Sea basin and the North Sea basin is facilitated.

3 - <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/convention-environmental-impact-assessment-transboundary-context-espoo-3>

4 - <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901124002545?via%3Dihub>



2. Structuring the dialogue: applying lessons learned from other dialogue processes

Finding the appropriate time and (safe) place for 'early MSP dialogues' is crucial to ensure that basin-scale collaboration can effectively support coordination and decision-making. Some consider the North Sea governance landscape to consist of a "patchwork of institutions" or "fractured landscape of organizations"⁵. Any new dialogue platform therefore needs to carefully consider how it complements existing cooperation structures and avoids unnecessary duplication. A prime example of an existing MSP dialogue platform is the North Seas MSP Collaboration Group (NS MSP CG), founded after the NorthSEE⁶ project. The group's informal structure allows for flexible and open exchange without requiring immediate commitments to national policy changes. However, its specific impact on the alignment of maritime spatial plans or broader basin-scale coordination is difficult to assess.

How?



- Effective early MSP dialogue needs clear positioning within the complex North Sea governance landscape.
- Informal platforms support trust-building, knowledge exchange and flexibility, but are not sufficient on their own to ensure long-term alignment of national MSP processes.
- Experience from the Baltic Sea and North Sea initiatives shows that effective basin-scale cooperation combines informal dialogue with more structured coordination, political backing and continuity.
- Strengthening GNSBI requires better timing of exchanges, professional facilitation, inclusive participation and trust-building across technical, political and sectoral levels.

5 - See <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2025.106954>

6 - <https://northsearegion.eu/northsee/index.html>

Example of NS MSP CG

The NS MSP collaboration group includes authorities, ministries and other relevant organizations from Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the North Sea Commission. Since 2019, the NS MSP CG has met three to four times per year on a voluntary basis. The MSP dialogue primarily functions to inform participants about new (national) policy developments or to share knowledge about emerging developments proposed by members and as outlined in a work program. The Group illustrates how transboundary maritime spatial planning can develop through dialogue-based cooperation rather than formal regulation. Members brought together policymakers, scientists, NGOs, and industry actors from multiple North Sea countries to discuss shared spatial challenges such as offshore wind expansion, shipping routes, and environmental protection. Through workshops and simulation exercises, participants learned how national planning decisions create cross-border impacts and identified the need for continuous coordination. The process demonstrated that informal dialogue, mutual learning, and trust-building are crucial foundations for long-term transboundary maritime governance.⁷

The GNSBI has a governance structure that differs from the more informal arrangement of the NS MSP CG. Through its Ministerial Conference, Executive Board, Steering Group, and Director-General meetings, GNSBI benefits from political commitment. Its added value lies not only in its high-level mandate but also in its cross-sectoral composition, which brings together perspectives from nature conservation, fisheries, energy, and spatial planning. This structure complements the NS MSP CG by providing a

platform where cross-sectoral challenges can be visualised, discussed, and addressed collectively. This need for coordinated responses to transboundary and cross-sectoral issues is highlighted by the involved Directors-General. In this way, GNSBI helps connect sector-specific priorities with broader spatial planning considerations and supports more integrated decision-making across the North Sea Basin.

Informality allows for trust-building, flexibility and joint fact-finding, which are particularly important in the early, experimental phases of new networks. At the same time, informal governance structures can create challenges related to transparency, continuity, accountability and predictability for actors in- and outside the process. Dialogue outcomes may remain dependent on voluntary engagement, personal networks, available funding, and changing institutional priorities. Nevertheless, voluntary contributions and informal dialogues alone are unlikely to ensure long-term strategic alignment between national MSP processes and differing institutional frameworks. A first step towards basin-scale alignment is **to identify windows of opportunity for 'early MSP dialogue'**, for example through mapping individual national planning cycles and timelines. This is particularly important as the GNSBI working definition of 'early' MSP dialogue has yet to **clarify what "early" means in practice**. Ideally, **information should be shared and be discussed as and when it arises or even co-developed**, rather than just according to formal planning cycles and as part of formal consultation.

Through the NESB project cooperation between the North Sea basin (GNSBI) and the Baltic Sea (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG) was established, providing experiences and lessons learned for an governance perspective. The Baltic Sea example shows, through multiple expert groups, a more structured and institutionalised form of MSP dialogue compared to many informal sea-basin platforms. A key added value is the presence of stable institutional support through the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats. This provides continuity across political cycles, reduces dependence on voluntary engagement alone, and helps ensure follow-up between

7 - Keijser, X., Mayer, I., Toonen, H., & van Tatenhove, J. P. (2025). Learning across borders: Establishing transboundary coordination in Maritime Spatial Planning in the North Sea Region—Lessons from the NorthSEE project. *Marine Policy*, 180, 106770. Kusters, J. E.H., Van Kann, F. M., & Zuidema, C. (2026). Developing Transboundary Marine Spatial Planning: Opportunities and barriers for the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative. *Marine Policy*, 184, 106954.



meetings. In MSP governance literature⁸, such independent or semi-independent secretariat functions are considered important for maintaining long-term coordination capacity, especially in multi-country settings with uneven administrative resources. The Baltic model also illustrates how technical dialogue is linked to political legitimacy. Although much of the work is carried out at expert- or technical level, outcomes are anchored in jointly agreed regional principles and endorsed within intergovernmental frameworks. A second policy brief produced under the NESBp Ocean Governance work package will provide more context on this. This strengthens predictability and supports gradual alignment between national MSP systems. At the same time, the model is relatively resource intensive and institutionally demanding, relying on sustained secretariat capacity, regular meetings, and long-term political commitment.⁹

Both HELCOM and VASAB maintain permanent secretariats funded primarily through contributions from participating governments, supplemented by project-based funding. HELCOM's secretariat is embedded in a treaty-based intergovernmental organization with a formally agreed budget and host-country support from Finland, whereas the VASAB Secretariat operates as a member-state financed coordination body hosted by Latvia and complemented by project funding from different relevant funding sources. This may be difficult to replicate in contexts where funding, staff time, and administrative capacity are more limited. Finally, the Baltic experience highlights that trust-building is reinforced by continuity and repeated interaction across governance levels. However, it also suggests that structured systems may be less flexible than informal dialogue platforms when it comes to rapidly emerging or politically sensitive issues, where lighter and more adaptive formats may be preferable.

8 – Jay, S., Klenke, T., Ahlhorn, F., Ritchie, H., Stori, F., & Gee, K. (2016). Transboundary dimensions of marine spatial planning: Fostering inter-jurisdictional relations and governance. *Marine Policy*, 65, 85–96.

9 – Zaucha, J. & Gee, K. (eds.) (2019). *Maritime Spatial Planning: Past, Present, Future* (Springer)

Lessons from the Baltic Sea

The Joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG) is a regional cooperation platform established in 2010 by the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission aka the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM Intergovernmental organization governing the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area) and VASAB (Vision and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea, intergovernmental cooperation on spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region). Since March 2022, the participation of Belarus and Russia in the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group has been suspended, and HELCOM has been operating in an H9 format¹⁰; consequently, the current regional cooperation framework does not provide basin-complete coverage of the Baltic Sea. The Working Group ensures cooperation among the Baltic Sea Region countries for coherent regional MSP processes in the Baltic Sea:

- brings together national MSP authorities from Baltic Sea countries
- operates through regular meetings and joint work plan is jointly supported by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats
- is jointly supported by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats
- develops regional MSP principles, guidance and roadmaps
- works towards coordinated and ecosystem-based MSP in the Baltic Sea Region
- operates under a mandate prolonged until 2030 in line with the Regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2030

Unlike regulatory instruments, the HELCOM-VASAB MSP principles and guidelines function as soft-governance tools. Their influence stems from political endorsement by member states, incorporation into national MSP practices, and continuous follow-up through the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group, which serves as a platform for coordination, monitoring, and the development of common approaches to transboundary planning challenges. The Working Group is accountable to both organizations:

- Within HELCOM, it reports through the HELCOM governance structure to the HELCOM Heads of Delegation and ultimately to the meetings of the Contracting Parties.
- Within VASAB, it reports to the Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region (CSPD/BSR), which in turn reports to the ministers responsible for spatial planning and development.

Major outputs such as MSP principles, guidelines, roadmaps, and work plans are endorsed through the governing structures of both organizations rather than adopted autonomously by the Working Group. This reflects the broader mandate structure: the Working Group derives its authority from the participating governments of HELCOM and VASAB, and while it develops technical outputs with operational autonomy, formal endorsement and political weight rest with the respective decision-making bodies.

Sources:
HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group overview (HELCOM; VASAB)¹¹

¹⁰ - <https://vasab.org/about/>; <https://helcom.fi/faq-helcom-and-the-strategic-pause-what-has-been-going-on/>

¹¹ - <https://vasab.org/about/helcom-vasab-msp-working-group/>

At the North Sea, basin-scale MSP dialogue also occurs beyond informal meetings between specific sectors. Examples include the North Seas Energy Cooperation (NSEC), which focuses primarily on offshore renewable (wind) energy cooperation, and the OSPAR Commission, which supports regional cooperation on marine environmental protection and whose decisions are implemented through national policy frameworks. This illustrates that the GNSBI operates within an already dense governance landscape, with several participants identifying overlap particularly with the NS MSP CG, although the added value of GNSBI in its cross-sectoral collaboration is clear. Furthermore, most GNSBI participants also indicate resource limitations in terms of time, available expertise and financial capacity. **This increases the importance of utilizing existing transboundary relations and institutions wherever possible.**

At the same time, differences in national priorities, participation levels and institutional capacities require careful management. Innovative dialogue methods can support this process by helping to build trust and create safe and confidential spaces for continuous cross-sectoral exchange. Early dialogue on various planning scenarios for 300+ GW of offshore wind the GNSBI area and related ecological and socio-economic effects needs to be arranged carefully, for such future scenarios are most likely with a lot of uncertainties.

A second lesson from existing dialogue platforms is the importance of professional dialogue facilitation, combined with clear links to formal cooperation structures. **Embedding facilitation expertise within GNSBI, for example through the dedicated working group on early MSP dialogue, could strengthen the quality and continuity of discussions.**

The experience of the MSP Planners' Forum in the Baltic Sea Region shows that facilitated practitioner-level dialogue is particularly valuable when it is meaningfully connected to formal MSP cooperation structures, allowing practical insights, emerging concerns and knowledge to feed into strategic discussions and decision-making processes.

Research shows that skilled facilitators actively structure complex and politically sensitive conversations, manage power dynamics, and foster inclusive participation in dialogues.¹² This is particularly important in the transdisciplinary setting of GNSBI, where collaboration requires integrating academic, policy, sectoral and societal knowledge across countries, sectors, governance levels and professional backgrounds. Given the sensitivity of some spatial and sectoral data, independent facilitators and trusted platforms may also help participants engage more openly in dialogue processes.

Finally, trust-building should extend beyond the technical level and also involve political and ministerial levels, across sectors and between ministries and countries. This means not only ensuring credibility and trust in data, maps and models, but also fostering transparency, legitimacy, and mutual understanding. At the political level, constructive dialogue requires careful navigation of differing and sometimes conflicting agendas, values and planning horizons. Further, dialogue with non-governmental stakeholders involves recognizing asymmetries in power, resources and knowledge, and creating inclusive processes that support meaningful participation. Dialogue within and across ministries, sectors and countries at both political and technical levels requires breaking down institutional silos, aligning objectives and building shared ownership of challenges and possible solutions.¹³

12 - Morf, A., Moodie, J., Gee, K., et al. (2019). Towards sustainability of marine governance: Challenges and enablers for stakeholder integration in transboundary marine spatial planning in the Baltic Sea. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 177, 200–212.

13 - Spijkerboer, R. C. (2021). The Institutional Dimension of Integration in Marine Spatial Planning: The Case of the Dutch North Sea Dialogues and Agreement. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, 8, 712982.

3. The what: finding focus

To strengthen its added value, GNSBI should focus on strategic themes for early MSP dialogue where it can bridge gaps between existing initiatives. Without such focus, there is a risk that dialogue remains fragmented across initiatives and insufficiently linked to concrete planning and coordination needs. Its cross-sectoral orientation, international network and ministerial anchoring may support better alignment of national policy goals and governance frameworks. In addition, it can help translate informal dialogue into more structured inputs for national MSP processes, while remaining non-binding and complementary to formal planning. NESBP recommends, based on learnings in the projects and experience from HELCOM-VASAB, to discuss whether key-priority could be given consideration by GNSBI as strategic themes to;

A. Identifying sea basin ecological priorities and connectivity needs, taking climate change into consideration

To identify sea basin-wide ecologically sensitive areas and connectivity needs, with a clear focus on cross-border coherence. This could be supported by combining existing spatial datasets, including for example OSPAR ecological and species distribution data and the 300+ GW offshore wind development scenarios from NSEC, climate change and other relevant spatial pressure and use datasets and modelling, including temporal dynamics. Using shared and recognized data sources can support a common evidence base and strengthen trust in the dialogue process. In particular, OSPAR knowledge products can provide a neutral basis for comparison across countries and sectors. The regionalized Digital Twin of the ocean for the GNSBI can be supportive for transparency in modelling and data-use, and making clear distinction between scenario development and actual political decision making. In addition, EU projects, such as MSP4BIO, MPA Europe provided the knowledge on the impact of climate change on ecosystems and species, that could be relevant to consider.

What?



- GNSBI should focus its early MSP dialogue on a limited number of strategic themes to avoid fragmentation and best link to concrete planning needs.
- A priority could be to build a shared evidence base on ecological priorities and connectivity using harmonised datasets such as OSPAR, NSEC and national spatial data.
- Another could be to develop a shared North Sea narrative on key cross-border challenges including biodiversity, climate change, energy transition, the blue economy and maritime security.
- Scenario thinking can support a shift from sector-specific exchange towards more strategic, basin-scale MSP dialogue.



B. Developing a shared scenario-based narrative for the Greater North Sea basin

To develop a collective narrative on the future of the sea basin: where the region currently stands, and how it is expected to develop under existing and emerging spatial pressures. This can help communicate shared challenges and support a more strategic framing of MSP across countries. Such a narrative should reflect transboundary interests, including: biodiversity protection and ecosystem restoration, climate adaptation and resilience, blue economy development, energy security and independence, and maritime safety and security. This would allow MSP dialogue to move beyond sector-specific discussions towards a more integrated, basin-scale and strategic perspective. Scenario thinking could be embedded in this process, including spatially explicit approaches to explore alternative futures and trade-offs. Scenario thinking can serve as a mechanism for developing a shared narrative among stakeholders regarding future development trajectories and the implications of alternative policy choices. By combining participatory scenario development with a dedicated data platform, GNSBI can create a common knowledge base that supports evidence-informed decision-making. This integrated approach would enable stakeholders to evaluate the feasibility and spatial suitability of activities in relation to agreed ambitions, while accounting for uncertainty and future change. Research¹⁴ has shown that scenario-based approaches can facilitate collective learning, improve strategic planning, and support the alignment of policies and investments across governance levels.

14 - Peterson, G. D., Cumming, G. S., & Carpenter, S. R. (2003). Scenario planning: A tool for conservation in an uncertain world. *Conservation Biology*, 17(2), 358-366.



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