



Co-funded by the
European Union

Supporting
Implementation of
Maritime Spatial
Planning
in the
Celtic Seas

Newsletter 2
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Co-funded by the EU Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, SIMCelt is a two-year project that aims to enhance cross-border cooperation between Member States on the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive in the Celtic Seas.

SIMCelt's activities have ramped up as we enter the 2nd and final year of the project. For the past few months we have been busy with a number of our outputs including the overview report, briefing notes on sectoral trends and analyses of data gaps. Partners came together in Liverpool at the beginning of 2017 to agree methodologies and scope for components where a united approach will yield more useful outputs.

We have been busy promoting SIMCelt throughout the Celtic Seas and further afield, learning from previous projects and making connections with relevant stakeholders.



Find out where we have been promoting the project and what we learnt from the Baltic Scope project in Riga.

Page 3

Solway Firth Partnership

SFP have joined the SIMCelt team to deliver work on transboundary planning. Their work is shared by Emma Baruah, SIMCelt Project Officer

Page 4

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All views expressed are opinions of the editor and do not represent those held by the European Commission or other project partners.*

You can download this newsletter in pdf form from <http://www.simcelt.eu/project-outputs/newsletters/>

Our work continues

Overview of the Celtic Seas report

Our first output is due to be published this month which sets out the baseline situation for MSP in the Celtic Seas. It reviews the legal framework for MSP as well as the governance settings which guide its implementation in each Celtic Seas country. There is information relating to maritime sectors such as ports, fisheries, renewable energy, tourism and aggregates and a first-look at the trends in each sector. The work under 'Scenarios' builds on this by examining the conditions driving demands for marine space and working with industry experts to predict how these trends will develop and influence maritime planning in the future. The overview report reveals the rationale for each of SIMCelt's components which provides an accessible way to understand exactly what the project is focusing on.

French partner Agence des Aires Marines Protégées (AAMP) has produced a report on Marine Protected Areas as part of the work being done on 'Scenarios'. It includes a review of national processes for designating and managing MPAs by national regulatory authorities. Once the review is complete the document will be made available for wider comment.

SHOM's data gaps and analysis report is currently being reviewed by partners, observers and steering committee members. However, feedback will be sought from others as the work develops. If you have a special interest in marine data – please get in touch. The document examines the availability and inter-operability of data sets across the Celtic Seas area. It highlights sectors and datasets which are lacking crucial information which should feed into the MSP process. The next stage of SHOM's work seeks to make data and metadata more accessible through the use of a SIMCelt data portal.

Sectoral focus

UoL, UCC, Marine Institute, DAERA and SHOM met in January to collaborate on components where there is complementarity and opportunity for synergies:-

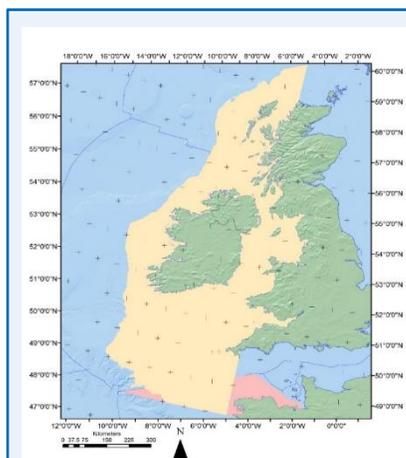
- ⊙ **Spatial Demands and Scenarios for maritime sectors**
- ⊙ **Case Study #1 Understanding cross-border issues and challenges**
- ⊙ **Case Study #2 Assessment of cumulative impacts in the Irish Sea**
- ⊙ **Case Study #4 Understanding and applying ecosystems services to MSP**



Insights were gained from past projects, Celtic Seas Partnership, ESaTDOR, ODEMM and TPEA on assessing ecosystem services and cumulative impacts as well as data management. In the limited timeframe for the SIMCelt project, it is critical to build upon pre-existing work to advance transboundary maritime spatial planning. Discussions resulted in the following suggested list of sectors of particular concern from an ecosystem health/transboundary MSP perspective:

- ⊙ **Aquaculture**
- ⊙ **Ports including dredging**
- ⊙ **Shipping**
- ⊙ **Offshore renewable energy (wind, wave, tidal)**
- ⊙ **Tourism and recreation**
- ⊙ **Pipelines and cables**

Further to this, UCC has developed a research rationale for Case Study #1 which considers the specific topic of *cross border cooperation on maritime transport* to be of a suitable scope and scale to warrant attention. Shipping density maps for the Irish Sea are currently being assessed against offshore renewables, fisheries activity and conservation in the Irish Sea.



Amended project area

Last edition, we introduced our project area, the Celtic Seas. Since then, the Commission has accepted a request we made to amend our boundary. The new area is superjacent to the Celtic Seas Shelf, shown in red below. Inclusion of this area increases coverage of the French Atlantic seaboard thereby enhancing involvement of MSP competent authorities in the region.

Work by ICES and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) has informed new maps released by the European Environment Agency in November. Regional sea areas have been aligned with the MSP Directive and the biogeographic regions identified in the Habitats Directive as well as, to the greatest extent possible, those of the Regional Sea Conventions. You can explore the maps on the [ICES website](#).

Outreach and events

ACTIVITY DIGEST

Dublin 18/19 Oct **Celtic Seas Partnership Closing Event** exhibition stand

Durham 9/10 Nov **Coastal Partnerships Network Annual Forum**

Presentation to delegates and exhibition stand

Paris 17 Nov **SIMCelt Steering Committee**

Riga 23/24 Nov Project exhibit at **2nd Baltic MSP Forum event**

Carlisle 25 Nov **Solway Firth Partnership/Solway Coast AONB Joint**

Conference – MSP challenge game and exhibition stand

London 18/19 Jan: **Coastal Futures** conference presentation to

delegates and exhibition stand



Solway Firth Partnership and AONB joint conference

This conference aimed to build closer links between all the different Scottish and English organisations and projects around the Solway Firth, (more on

p4). Marine Scotland and SFP were publicising SIMCelt at the event including a demonstration of the MSP challenge game. Hannah Marriot (right) is a marine planner for the Marine Management Organisation and having heard a lot of buzz about it, came over to Carlisle to see the game. She was impressed with the game's potential to help staff at the MMO understand the concept of marine planning as well as engaging stakeholders in the process.

Coastal futures

Over 300 delegates attended and SIMCelt's presence as a 'sponsor' meant we had fantastic exposure on all the event publicity. Our pop-up slot during the conference allowed us to speak about some of the ways we want stakeholders to participate. We interacted with a number of key people from the NGOs and marine planning agencies and we made useful connections with the Crown Estate who offered help with securing marine data.



Future events

We have been invited to host a tri-project workshop at the European Maritime Day conference in Poole in May. We worked closely with Baltic Scope and NorthSee projects to formulate a workshop sharing insights on transboundary stakeholder engagement from our experiences in the different regional seas.



POOLE MARITIME FESTIVAL
18-21 MAY 2017
POOLE, DORSET



2nd Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Forum Riga

The Baltic Scope project organised this event to share its outcomes so far and SIMCelt partners attended to learn from their experiences. Both our projects have similar objectives – to ensure cooperation between Member States to support the implementation of MSP on a transboundary level. We face similar challenges as countries within our respective areas are at different stages of implementing the Directive and despite MSP being a well-established concept most stakeholders and maritime sectors are still not fully aware of what it means.

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) was an early promoter of a transboundary approach to MSP due to its comparatively small size, it being an almost-enclosed natural system and a strong culture of cooperation among the nine BSR states. In comparison, the Celtic Seas is a largely open system where cross-border cooperation is still being established. One presentation highlighted this difference by comparing the Baltic's 32 MSP related projects as compared to 11 in the Atlantic area.

A considerable amount has been achieved since Baltic Scope started in early 2015, attributed to this momentum and experience from previous EU-funded projects. The HELCOM Regional Sea Commission and the associated HELCOM/VASAB working group on marine planning appear to have added significant value in the MSP process by helping to develop and implement initiatives. An intergovernmental institution for MSP in the Celtic Seas does not exist.

Although the outcomes won't be fully shared until March, the conference outlined how the initiative has been able to test the delivery of actual maritime planning outputs such as the planning support checklist and cumulative assessment tool Symphony. Recommendations from the project have been put into practice as they have been developed.

Transboundary MSP on the Solway Firth



A rather tropical looking Rockliffe Bay on the Solway Firth!

Emma Baruah is the newest SIMCelt team member, based at the Solway Firth Partnership (SFP) which is subcontracted by Marine Scotland to deliver work for Case Study #3 Planning across borders. Below is an overview of her work since starting in September.

The Sectoral Interactions project was started by SFP in 2011 and uses a matrix to represent a diverse range of stakeholders. This easy-to-use colour-coded method allows planners to quickly identify areas of positive, neutral, conflict, competition of incompatible interests. Emma has been conducting qualitative interviews to inform a report on the challenges and opportunities to marine planning in the Solway Firth by sector, which gives greater detail on the perspectives of those interviewed. This document will be a useful accompaniment if planners need greater detail about a certain area highlighted from the matrix.

Emma has been researching what the requirements and constraints of primary marine legislation in England and Scotland means for the Solway Firth. Her research has also reviewed regional and local planning documents and the operation of fisheries groups on each side of the border. After a request from the MMO, the report also details archaeological and heritage features (and who manages them) on each side of the border, as there are numerous features of interest and a high number of sea wrecks.

Emma has been involved in outreach work with the Solway Coastwise initiative to engage Glasgow University students with maritime spatial planning concepts and raise awareness of why (and how) people can get involved. Emma and SFP will attend the annual Dumfries Environment Fair to promote marine awareness to local members of the public.



Glasgow University students after a beach litter clean

The above work will then be fed into a document on recommendations for marine planning in the Solway Firth as a cross-border, single-ecosystem area.



One of the SIMCelt partners, the Scottish Government – Marine Scotland is involved in another project of relevance to MSP. The Multi-Use in European Seas (MUSES) project is a Horizon 2020 funded project that is exploring the opportunities for Multi-Use in European Seas across five EU sea basins (Baltic Sea, North Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and Eastern Atlantic). Their website has just been launched and you can see what the project has planned at <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/muses/>

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