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# A Sea for Life

## The Marine Strategy Framework Directive



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# Urgencies

Marine biodiversity is under severe pressure:

- **Habitat destruction**
- **Fragmentation and degradation**
- **Over-exploitation & Unsustainable practices**
- **Eutrophication**
- **Invasive species**
- **Climate change & ocean acidification**
- **Pollution**

Where marine species and habitat types have been assessed, the majority are found to be in unfavourable or unknown condition (EEA, SOER 2010)



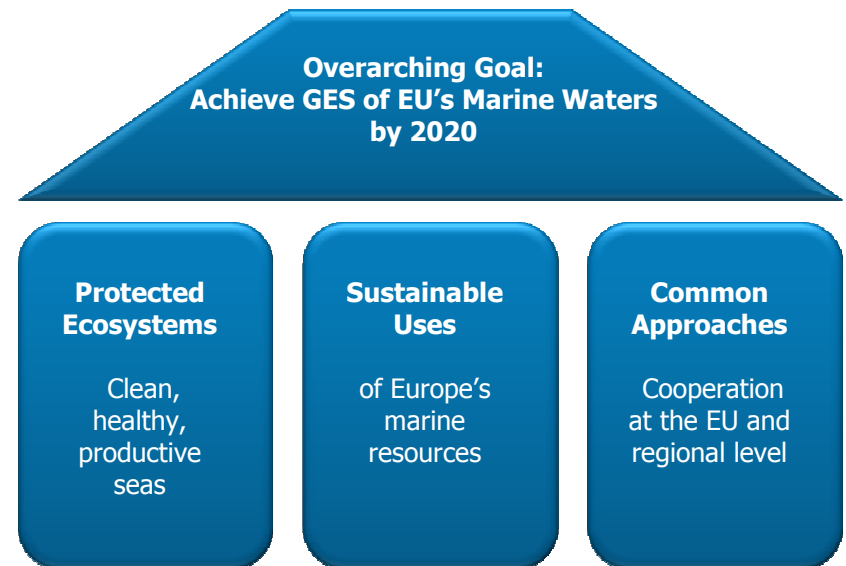
# The Marine Strategy Framework Directive

## EU's legal instrument for the protection of our seas

❑ **Overall objective: achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) of the EU's marine waters by 2020.**

❑ Adoption of an ecosystem-based and integrated approach to the management of all human activities which have an impact on the marine environment.

❑ Regional approach to implementation, and establishment of European Marine Regions



# Marine Strategies

- Each EU Member State must progressively put in place its own “Marine Strategy” (action plan), consisting of several steps
- They must cooperate among themselves and with neighbouring countries...
- ... where possible within Regional Sea Conventions



# Implementation Steps



## Main Steps of a Marine Strategy:

- *Initial assessment (IA)* of current environmental status of MS waters
- *Determination* of GES
- Establishment of environmental *targets* and associated *indicators*
- *Monitoring programme* for ongoing assessment and regular updating of targets
- *Programme of measures* to achieve or maintain GES
- *Review* of the different steps



# Protected Ecosystems

Overarching Goal:  
Achieve GES by 2020

**Protected  
Ecosystems**  
Clean, healthy,  
productive seas



# Good Environmental Status (GES)

**“The environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive” (art. 3(5)).**

- Marine resources are used at a *sustainable level*, ensuring their continuity for future generations.
- Ecosystems are *fully functioning and resilient* to human-induced environmental change;
- *Biodiversity is protected* and biodiversity decline caused by human activities is prevented;
- Substances and energy introduced in the marine environment by human activities *do not cause pollution* effects.



# Necessary criteria for achieving GES

1. Biodiversity is maintained
2. Non-indigenous species not adversely alter the ecosystem
3. Population of commercial fish species healthy
4. Elements of food webs ensuring long term abundance and reproduction
5. Eutrophication minimised
6. Sea floor integrity ensures functioning of the ecosystem



# Necessary criteria for achieving GES (2)

7. Permanent alteration of hydrographical conditions not adversely affect ecosystem
8. Concentration of contaminants give no effects
9. Contaminants in seafood below safe levels
10. Marine litter not to cause harm
11. Introduction of energy (incl. noise) not adversely affect ecosystem



# GES: Common principles, tailored indicators

Ex: Descriptor 10 on Marine Litter

**GES Descriptors**  
high level, generic across EU

**GES Criteria**  
characteristics of what GES means in each MS

**GES: Indicators & Targets**  
If the targets are met, GES should be achieved

**Descriptor 10 – Marine litter does not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment**

- Characteristics of litter in the marine and coastal environment
- Impacts of litter on marine life

**Indicators:**

- Trends in the amount of litter washed ashore and/or deposited on coastlines
- Trends in the amount of litter in the water column and deposited on the sea-floor
- Trends in the amount, distribution and where possible, composition of micro-particles
- Trends in the amount and composition of litter ingested

**Targets (examples):**

- X% of overall reduction in the volume of litter
- Less than 10% of sea birds having more than 0.1 g plastic particles in their stomach
- No increase of micro-plastics by 2020



# Marine Protected Areas

- **Spatial protection measures**
- **Contributing to coherent and representative networks of marine protected areas**
- **Adequately covering the diversity of the constituent ecosystems**
- **Such as:**
  - special areas of conservation (Habitats Directive),
  - special protection areas (Birds Directive),
  - and marine protected areas as agreed in international or regional agreements
- **Link to Common Fisheries Policy measures to support objectives of conservation of MPAs.**



# Sustainable Uses

Overarching Goal:  
Achieve GES by 2020

**Sustainable  
Uses**  
of Europe's  
marine  
resources



# Ecosystem-based & Integrated Approach

Objectives:

- Collective pressure of human activities kept within levels compatible with the achievement of GES**
- Uncompromised capacity of marine ecosystems to respond to human-induced changes & climate change**
- Sustainable use of marine goods and services by present and future generations**

Requirements:

- Preservation and enhancement of ecosystems systematically taken into account in the development of human socio-economic activities.**
- Objectives to protect and restore the environment set the boundaries for sustainable use of the natural environment**

**Central to the MSFD**



# Integrated Maritime Policy

- ❑ The MSFD is the Environmental Pillar of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP)
- ❑ But MSFD not just a “green” complement to the IMP, its implementation is essential to maritime economic activities
- ❑ Only healthy marine ecosystems can provide beneficial goods and services:
  - Economic development, jobs, consumption products
  - Potential for eco-innovation
- ❑ The MSFD will help to define more accurately the boundaries of sustainability.



# Adaptive Management

Key principles:

- Flexibility and adaptability of the measures**
- Regular update of environmental targets**
- Integration of the outcomes of scientific research**

Instruments:

- Monitoring programmes: measure progress towards GES**
- Obligation to review marine strategies every 6 years:**
  - IA, Environmental targets, monitoring programmes, programmes of measures

“Learning-by-doing” approach to deal with the uncertainties linked to the complex functioning of ecosystems & to climate change



# Common Approaches

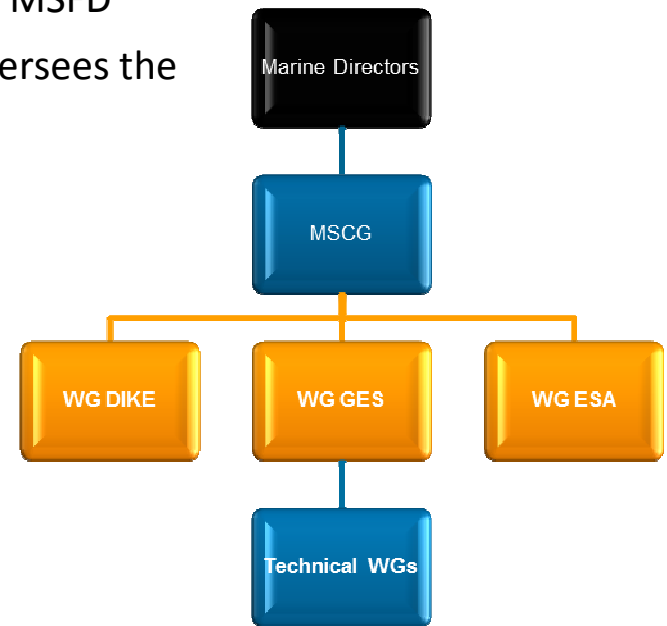
**Overarching Goal:  
Achieve GES by 2020**

**Common  
Approaches**  
Cooperation  
at the EU and  
regional level



# Common Implementation Strategy (CIS)

- ❑ *Marine Directors*: focused on the overall implementation of the MSFD
- ❑ *Marine Strategic Coordination Group*: prepares material and oversees the work of the three WG.
- ❑ *Working Groups (WG)*: provide a platform for discussion among MS
  - **WG on GES**: determination of what GES means for MS marine waters.
  - **WG on Economic and Social Analysis (ESA)**: economic and social analysis of the use of MS marine waters
  - **WG on Data, Information and Knowledge Exchange (DIKE)**: MS data reporting obligations
- ❑ *Technical Working Groups*: forum for exchange focusing on emerging areas of particular concern (Noise and Litter).



# Building on EU legislation & policies

- **Water Framework Directive:**
  - Objective: achieving 'Good Status' by 2015.
  - 6-year planning cycle, River Basin Management Plans, review in 2015.
  - Reduces marine pollution from land-based sources
- **Habitats and Birds Directives:**
  - Europe's key laws on nature conservation
  - Provide special protection for animal, plants and habitat types (Natura 2000)
  - Integration of these sites in MPAs network
- **Common Fisheries Policy:**
  - Objective: Ensuring that Europe's fisheries are sustainable
  - Collaborative way for managing the EU's shared seas and fisheries
  - Planned reform in 2011
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning**
  - Principles of sound coastal and maritime planning and management.
  - Rational and sustainable use of the sea , balance different interests



# The Regional Sea Conventions

- *The Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean:* Mediterranean Action Plan defining key priorities, adopting principles (ecosystem approach) and tools (ICZM).



- *The Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution:* Its Strategic Action Plan for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Black Sea is a pillar of regional cooperation which includes several elements of a marine strategy.

- *The Helsinki Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea:* has undertaken considerable public participation and produced a Baltic Sea Action Plan in 2007 in line with MSFD requirements.



- ***The OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic:* aims to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing pollution.**



# To consider when developing guidelines

- Expectations: role of stakeholders
- Regional cooperation by MS is essential but also stakeholders become more and more international
- Joint fact finding:
  - Jointly define the questions to be answered
  - Participate in establishing ToR, studies and monitoring
- Willingness to think beyond own sector: holistic, innovative

