



An Overview of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning Initiative

1. What is the Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning Initiative?

The Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Initiative is a process focused on planning for and management of the sustainable and long-term use and health of the Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone, a marine area covering 1,374,000km² and encompassing the Seychelles archipelago of 115 islands. The MSP Initiative is a Government-led process, with planning and facilitation of the Initiative managed by a partnership between The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the GOS/UNDP/GEF Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU). Funding for the Initiative is being provided through a number of GOS/UNDP/GEF grants as well as an Oceans 5 grant awarded to TNC. The MSP Initiative takes an integrated, multi-sector approach. The process will include input from the major sectors of the Seychelles which use the country's marine space such as fishing, tourism, conservation and petroleum development in order to develop a holistic climate-smart multi-use plan, integrating the new challenges created by climate change into planning and management efforts.

2. Why Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) for the Seychelles?

The world's oceans have become busier and their resources are increasingly in more demand. The Seychelles' EEZ is among the top twenty-five largest in the world, with some of the highest catches and landings of tuna and an area of immense marine and terrestrial biodiversity and resource wealth. Studies also indicate that there are potentially large off-shore petroleum reservoirs. Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) provides a practical, transparent way to create and establish a more sustainable use of the Seychellois marine space and the interactions between its uses; to balance demands for development with the need to protect the environment; and to achieve social and economic objectives in an open and planned way. The Government of Seychelles has a planning mandate to fulfill, and the participatory nature of MSP encourages interested and committed civil society and private sector partners into the process as active participants and advisors.

3. What is the overall goal of the MSP Initiative?

Article 38 of the Seychelles Constitution declares that:

“The State recognises the right of every person to live in and enjoy a clean, healthy and ecologically balanced environment and with a view to ensuring the effective realisation of this right the State undertakes to ensure a sustainable socio-economic development of Seychelles by a judicious use and management of the resources of Seychelles”. In light of Article 38 and the guiding principles, vision and goals of the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS)¹, the MSP Initiative seeks to provide a basis for developing and implementing an integrated multi-use marine zoning and climate change adaptation plan to (1) optimise the sustainable use and effective management of the Seychelles marine environment while (2) ensuring and improving the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of its people. This multi-use plan will serve as the basis for guiding the strategies and decisions of the Seychelles Conservation & Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) established as part of the GoS-led Debt-for-Climate-Change-Adaptation swap. Phase I of the MSP Initiative (February 2014 – June 2015) will produce a suite of design options, tools and management strategies (a blueprint) as a basis for further development and implementation of the national multi-use plan.

¹ http://www.emps.sc/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=26&Itemid=86

4. What is the planning scope?

The planning scope covers the 1,374,000km² of the EEZ, and is focused on **seven major thematic sectors or uses** which are (in no particular order):

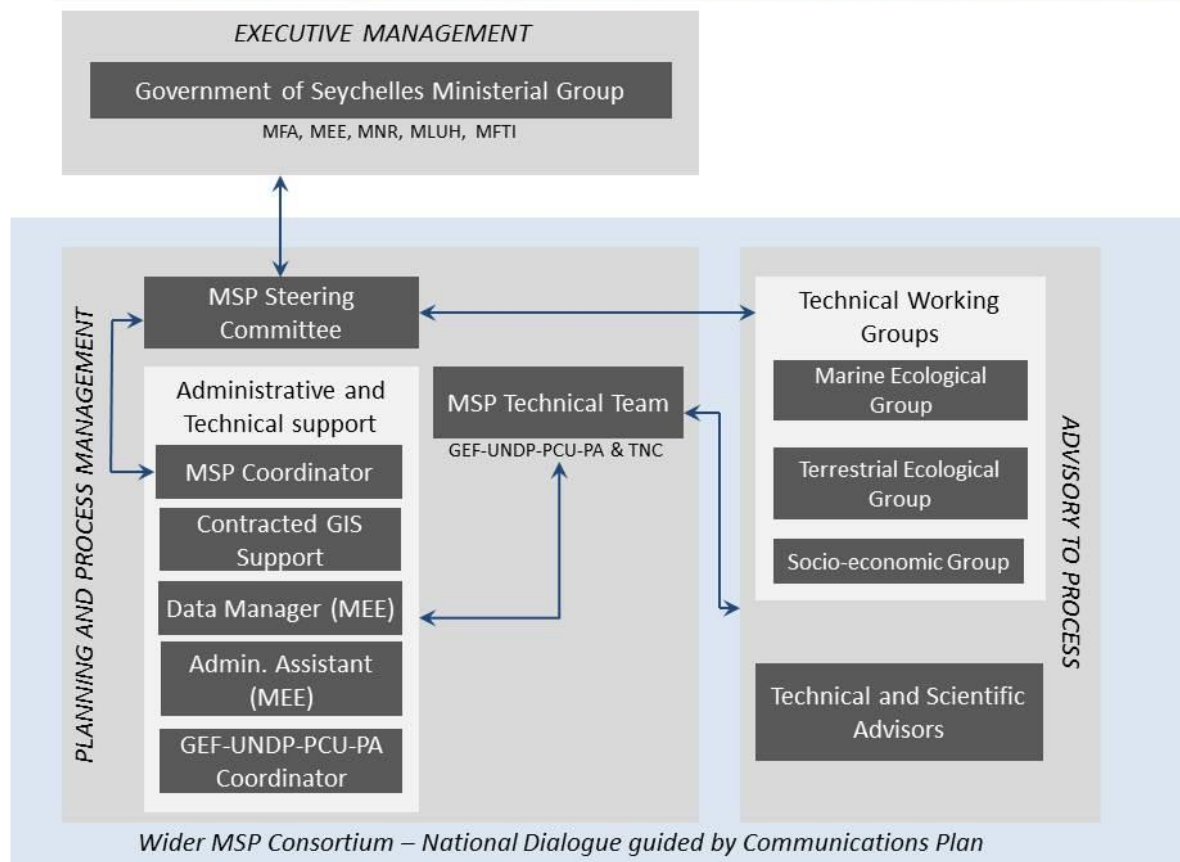
- Fisheries
- Tourism
- Marine Transportation
- Renewable energy
- Biodiversity conservation
- Cultural heritage
- Extraction (petroleum, mining, aggregate).

With regards to the output scope, Phase I of the MSP Initiative (February 2014 – June 2015) will produce a suite of design options, tools and management strategies (a blueprint) as a basis for further development and implementation of the national multi-use plan.

5. How is the MSP Initiative structured? Who is involved?

The governance and process structure of the Seychelles MSP Initiative has a number of components, including an MSP Consortium and an MSP Steering Committee. The Consortium is the vehicle for national dialogue and public input, its purpose being to provide key stakeholders and the wider public with a means to inform and guide the planning and project execution of the MSP Initiative and other relevant national/large-scale initiatives/projects. The MSP Steering Committee provides management leadership and oversight to the MSP Initiative, and also determines the means by which the wider public consortium will be informed about and participate in the MSP Initiative (through a Communications Plan to be developed). Executive decisions for the MSP Initiative are made by a GoS Ministerial Group to which the MSP Steering Committee reports. This Ministerial Group includes the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEE), Ministry of Natural Resources (MNI), Ministry of Land-Use and Housing (MLUH), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Finance, Trade & Investment (MFTI). There will also be three Technical Working Groups advising and guiding the Steering Committee. These groups will consist of Non-Government Organisations and Private Sector, representing socio-economic activities, specifically Fisheries, Tourism and Petroleum and biodiversity/ecology - marine and terrestrial. Additional technical/scientific advisors will be consulted on an 'as-needs' basis. The MSP Technical Team will be executing the spatial planning and data analysis, and is responsible for developing the MSP blueprint. This team comprises TNC staff and GEF-UNDP-PCU-PA consultants. Administrative and technical support to the Team is provided by the local MSP Coordinator (also the Steering Committee Secretary), GIS consultants, the MEE Data Manager and Administrative Assistant from the MEE Senior Advisor's office, and the GEF-UNDP-PCU-PA Coordinator (see diagram below).

Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Initiative - Governance and Process Structures



All data sharing and processing are governed by the terms outlined in an MSP Data Sharing Agreement. Roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee (SC), the MSP Technical Team and the Technical Working Groups and Technical/Scientific Advisors are outlined in specific Terms of Reference or parallel documents.

6. Guiding Principles of the MSP Initiative

The guiding principles of the MSP Initiative lay the foundation of the MSP process and determine the basic or essential qualities of the process and its outputs. The Seychelles MSP Initiative principles were adapted from the IOC-UNESCO MSP Manual² and are as follows:

Marine Spatial Planning Initiative Principles

Integrated	Address the interrelationship among issues and sectors and between nature and development; integration can help create complementary and mutually reinforcing decisions and actions.
Ecosystem-based	Safeguard ecosystem processes, resilience, and connectedness, recognizing that that ecosystems are dynamic, changing and sometimes poorly understood (therefore requiring precautionary decision-making).
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.

² Ehler, Charles, and Fanny Douvère. Marine Spatial Planning: a step-by-step approach toward ecosystem-based management. Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and Man and the Biosphere Programme. IOC Manual and Guides No. 53, ICAM Dossier No. 6. Paris: UNESCO. 2009.

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.

7. MSP methodology ‘101’

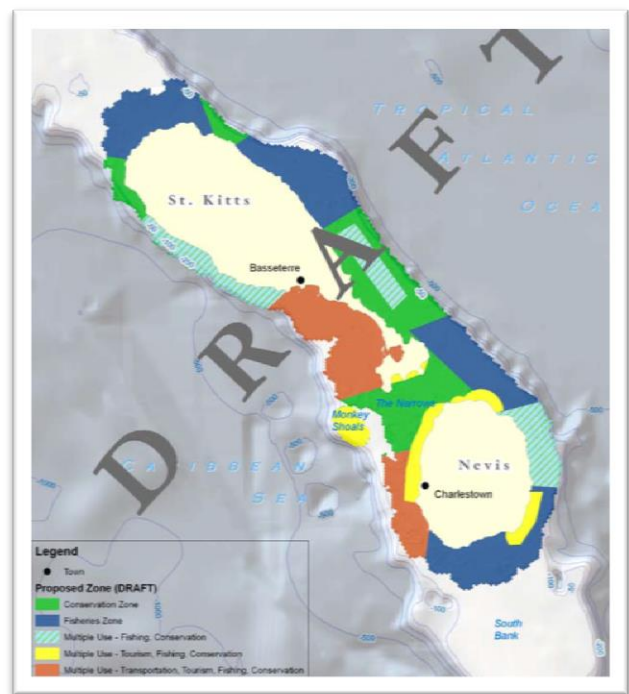
As with many planning processes, MSP does not lead to a one-time plan but instead it can be perceived as a continuing, iterative process that learns and adapts over time (Ehler and Douvère 2009³). MSP can be thought of as a series of inter-linked activities. Each individual activity consists of a number of iterative steps, which may involve the use of decision-support tools such as the spatial software MARXAN to help inform the design, the input of local experts and adaptive feedback loops. These iterative steps consist of:

(1) Identifying need and establishing authority	(6) Defining and analyzing future conditions
(2) Obtaining financial support	(7) Preparing and approving the spatial management plan
(3) Organizing the process through pre-planning	(8) Implementing and enforcing the spatial management plan
(4) Organizing stakeholder participation	(9) Monitoring and evaluating performance
(5) Defining and analyzing existing conditions	(10) Adapting the marine spatial management process.

It is important to note that Phase 1 of the MSP Initiative focuses on steps 1-6.

8. What will the MSP Initiative outputs be?

- Phase I of the initiative focuses on steps 1-6 of the UNESCO methodology, at the end of which a blueprint consisting of multi-use zoning design scenarios (maps) and a set of associated management strategies will be produced. Additional outputs are listed below:
- Workshop/interim reports documenting MSP methodology and process, conservation features (habitats, species, communities), development/socioeconomic features (heritage sites, important shipping lanes, etc.) conservation and development/socioeconomic targets (habitat area/%) and viabilities, threats and stakeholder analysis, strategy prioritization, and monitoring and evaluation
- Maps and other spatial products
- Customized Decision Support Tool(s) (DSTs)
- User Manual/‘How To’ document(s) to demonstrate the utility of spatial interactive tools developed
- Final report.

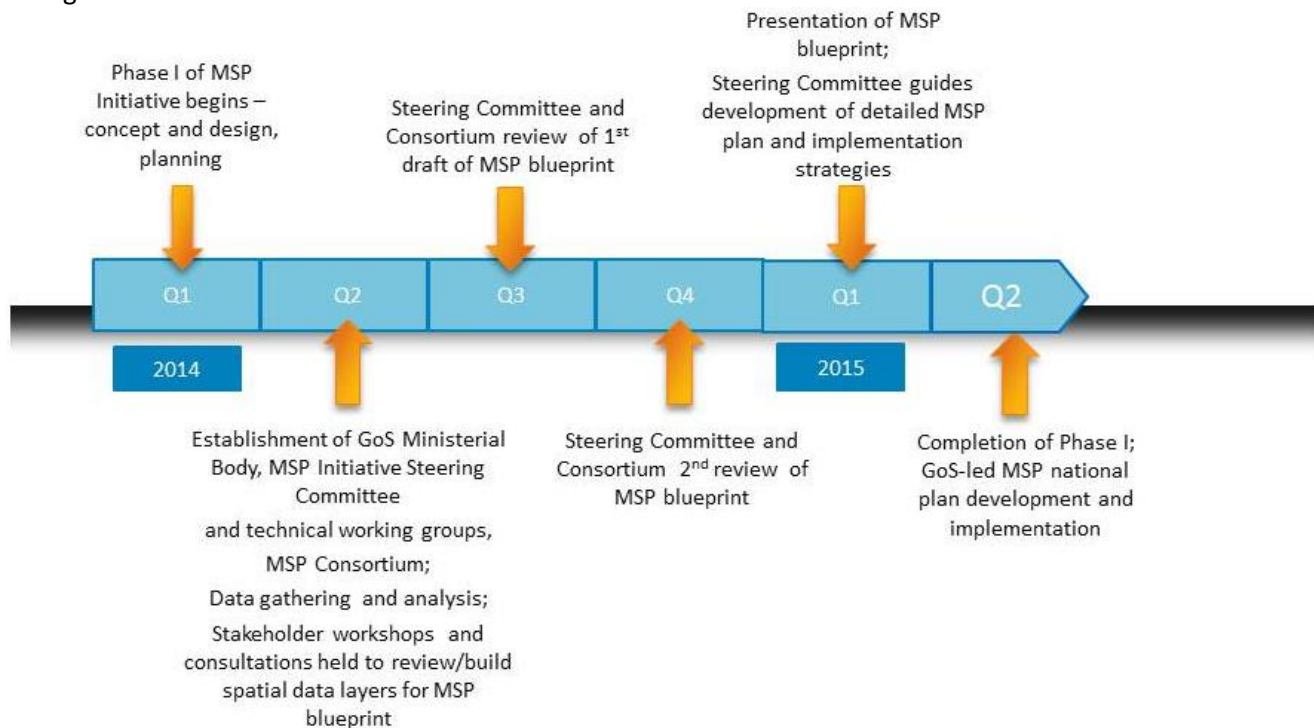


An example of a draft MSP zoning map for St. Kitts and Nevis in the Caribbean

³ Ibid.

9. How long is the MSP process?

Phase I of the Initiative was launched in February 2014 and ends in June 2015 (see below) but must be recognised as the foundation of a longer, more elaborate process to move from a blueprint to an actual Zoning and Management Plan for the entire EEZ.



10. How can I get involved? Where can I find out more?

For more information about the Seychelles MSP Initiative, email

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and visit the website

www.seychellesmarinespatialplanning.com



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