

Enhancing marine conservation through better marine spatial planning: Science gaps, practical solutions, and recommendations

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Marine spatial planning is an integrated marine governance process aiming to balance sustainability and exploitation objectives, but despite this, it does not yet have a clear capacity or set of widely accepted methods to help achieve EU and global environmental policies. As yet many European MSP and marine protected area (MPA) designation processes are currently uncoordinated. In this presentation I will give a quick overview of how MSP should support conservation goals and provide examples of marine spatial plans that have conservation objectives. Further I will detail the science and knowledge needed to assess potential benefits of marine spatial planning with offshore wind, fisheries, and conservation targets. Finally, I will show how the newly developed MarinePlan decision support system can guide both a better alignment of MSP and conservation planning processes and standardised process to define marine protected areas that account for MSP.