



Convention on Biological Diversity

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Sustainable Ocean Initiative national workshop for the Philippines

Manila, 4–6 March 2026

Report of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative national workshop for the Philippines*

Introduction

1. The Sustainable Ocean Initiative national workshop for the Philippines was held in Manila, Philippines, from 4 to 6 March 2026. The workshop was co-organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI), the United Nations Environment Programme - Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), and the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of the Philippines, with additional support provided by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and Sound Seas, and financial support by the Government of the Republic of Korea (through the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries). The workshop was convened pursuant to a request, through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative of the Convention, by the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of the Philippines, to support national efforts on marine spatial planning.

2. In view of ongoing legislative developments related to marine spatial planning in the Philippines, efforts to establish a national framework for marine spatial planning, and existing related platforms and initiatives across national agencies and development partners, there is a need to harmonize efforts, reduce duplication, and build on existing experience, while safeguarding marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystem services. The workshop was convened to strengthen coordination and dialogue in support of advancing marine spatial planning in the Philippines as a means to support national priorities, contribute to the national blue economy agenda, and advance implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The objectives of the workshop were to:

(a) Strengthen shared understanding and application of key concepts and approaches related to marine spatial planning, coastal resilience, and integrated marine and coastal management;

(b) Facilitate cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination to identify national priorities and objectives for marine spatial planning, address key challenges and gaps, and support integrated ocean governance;

(c) Inform science-based planning and priority-setting, including through the review of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and other relevant information; and

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

(d) Advance national development of marine spatial planning, in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including by identifying key elements of a roadmap to guide the development and implementation of the national framework for marine spatial planning.

3. The Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) is a global capacity-building platform coordinated by the Secretariat to support countries in achieving global goals for the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. Following the adoption of the Framework, SOI continues to support its implementation by promoting coordinated, cross-sectoral action and fostering partnerships, dialogue and knowledge exchange among governments and stakeholders. Through national and regional workshops, global dialogues, and engagement in international processes, SOI provides a holistic, action-oriented framework that promotes balance between conservation and sustainable use and builds bridges across sectors. In decision 16/17, the Conference of the Parties requested the Secretariat to continue facilitating capacity-building activities under SOI in support of implementing the Framework with respect to marine, coastal and island biodiversity.

4. The workshop was attended by 65 participants representing government agencies of the Philippines, intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, and other organizations and initiatives. It comprised plenary sessions, including thematic presentations, question-and-answer sessions and discussions, as well as breakout group work. The workshop programme and presentations are available at www.cbd.int/meetings/006755, and a list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

5. The workshop was co-chaired by John Erick Avelino, Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of the Philippines, and Mahesh Pradhan, United Nations Environment Programme - Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia.

6. Summaries of the workshop discussions in plenary and breakout groups under items 3-8 are provided in annex II to the present report. The summary of the session under item 9, including the key elements of a roadmap for marine spatial planning developed during the workshop, is contained in annex III.

Item 1

Opening of the workshop

7. Representatives of the Government of the Philippines, the COBSEA, the Secretariat of the Convention, and GOBI opened the workshop at 9.00 a.m. on 4 March 2026.

8. Welcoming remarks were delivered by the Undersecretary for Legal and Administration of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, Atty. Ernesto. Adobo Jr.,. He expressed appreciation to the Secretariat of the Convention, COBSEA, and GOBI for their continued support and highlighted recent national milestones, including the passage of the Blue Economy Bill through its third reading in the Congress, and the country's ratification of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). He emphasized that marine spatial planning will be key to operationalizing these commitments through a science-based and integrated approach to balancing conservation, sustainable use, and economic priorities, and underscored the need for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. He expressed hope that the workshop would contribute to shaping a clear roadmap for marine spatial planning and integrated ocean governance in the Philippines.

9. Welcoming remarks were also delivered by the Coordinator of COBSEA, Mr. Pradhan. He emphasized the timeliness of the workshop, noting the Philippines' current chairship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and upcoming hosting of the 27th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA. With limited time remaining until 2030, he stressed the need for tangible progress on target 1 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

through marine spatial planning and emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement for effective implementation.

10. In a pre-recorded video message, the Coordinator of Marine, Coastal and Island Biodiversity at the Secretariat of the Convention, delivered remarks on behalf of the Executive Secretary. He thanked partners and donors for their support and highlighted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as an ambitious and interconnected blueprint for biodiversity, with its target 1 calling for all areas to be under participatory, integrated and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning. He emphasized that marine spatial planning provides a coherent framework to guide implementation, serving as a starting point rather than an end in itself. He underscored the importance of building on the wealth of existing knowledge and experience in the Philippines, and engaging people on the ground to translate global commitments into local implementation, underscoring the Philippines' rich marine biodiversity and the close relationship between its people and the ocean.

11. In a pre-recorded video message, the Coordinator of GOBI, Mr David Johnson, delivered welcoming remarks. He highlighted GOBI's role in advancing science and supporting processes such as ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, as well as its collaboration with SOI. He emphasized the value of national workshops in supporting information exchange, transparency and cross-agency dialogue, and wished participants productive discussions toward achieving national and global goals for the ocean.

Item 2

Workshop background, objectives and expected outcomes

12. Mr. Avelino delivered a presentation on the background, objectives and expected outcomes of the workshop.

13. The presentation was followed by a roundtable introduction of participants and an in-session poll regarding participants' needs and expectations for the workshop.

Item 3

Global, regional and national context for marine and coastal management in the Philippines

14. Resource persons and participants delivered a series of presentations on global, regional and national considerations, priorities and goals with respect to marine and coastal management in the Philippines. An expert from Seascope Consultants Ltd. presented an overview of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, with a focus on target 1 on biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning. This was followed by a presentation by a representative of COBSEA on marine and coastal spatial planning in the East Asian Seas region. An expert from the United Nations Development Programme's Early Action Support presented on existing national priorities and goals of the Philippines, followed by a presentation by the Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change on ongoing efforts related to marine spatial planning in the Philippines.

15. The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer and plenary discussion, a summary of which is contained in annex II.

Item 4

Relationship of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and other taxa-specific important biodiversity areas to marine spatial planning

16. In a pre-recorded video message, a representative of GOBI delivered a presentation on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and other taxa-specific important biodiversity areas, and their relevance to marine spatial planning.

17. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer and plenary discussion, a summary of which is contained in annex II.

Item 5

Rationale for marine spatial planning and vision-setting exercise

18. An expert from the Macquarie University delivered a presentation outlining the rationale, context and existing guidance on marine spatial planning, building on existing planning and management approaches in the Philippines, including integrated coastal zone management and community-managed areas. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session.
19. Mr. Avelino presented the results of a pre-workshop survey aimed at assessing the baseline level of understanding of marine spatial planning among participants. He further engaged participants in an interactive discussion to capture initial perspectives on the vision for marine spatial planning in the Philippines, including what participants would like marine spatial planning to achieve over the next three to five years.
20. Following the interactive discussion, participants were divided into breakout groups for further discussion on the objectives and intended outcomes of marine spatial planning in the Philippines. The discussions were guided by a set of key questions to inform the development of elements of the roadmap for marine spatial planning under item 9. Rapporteurs from the groups subsequently presented summaries of their discussions in plenary. A summary of the discussions under this item is contained in annex II.

Item 6

Experiences with marine spatial planning from other countries

21. Under this agenda item, participants were presented with experiences and lessons learned in marine spatial planning from other countries, namely Thailand, England, and Sweden. In pre-recorded video messages, experts from the Prince of Songkla University and GOBI shared experiences associated with marine spatial planning in Thailand and England, respectively. This was followed by a presentation from an expert from the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management on experiences with marine spatial planning in Sweden and neighbouring European Union countries.
22. The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer and plenary discussion, a summary of which is contained in annex II.

Item 7

Data infrastructure

23. Resource persons and participants delivered a series of presentations on data considerations essential for marine spatial planning. Topics covered included datasets on key environmental and human use drivers, delivered via a pre-recorded video by an expert from the University of Tasmania; approaches to data management and social metrics, delivered by an expert from the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management; data infrastructure for marine spatial planning in the Philippines, delivered by an expert from the University of the Philippines (Cebu); and the mainstreaming of integrated coastal management into local land-use planning, delivered by a representative from the Department of Human Settlements, and Urban Development.
24. The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer session and plenary discussion, a summary of which is contained in annex II.

Item 8**National marine spatial planning: Existing initiatives, governance, tools, and practical exercises**

25. Participants from various government agencies delivered presentations on existing initiatives related to marine spatial planning across multiple sectors and agencies, including area-based conservation, delivered by a representative of the Protected Area Management Office; fisheries management, delivered by a representative of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture; and offshore wind development, delivered by a representative of the Department of Energy. The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer and plenary discussion.

26. Participants were subsequently divided into small groups to undertake a governance and practical mapping exercise to inform national marine spatial planning. Using printed maps and guided by a set of key questions, participants discussed issues such as current marine uses, coordination challenges, overlapping mandates, policy pressures and scenarios, and governance challenges. Rapporteurs from each group presented summaries of their discussions in plenary. A summary of the discussions under this item is contained in annex II.

27. Participants were then presented with a case study on the application of systematic conservation planning in Coron, Philippines, delivered by a resource person.

Item 9**Development of the key elements of a roadmap for marine spatial planning**

28. Experts from the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management facilitated a session on the development of key elements of a roadmap for marine spatial planning, aimed at supporting the Philippines to become ready for marine spatial planning. In the first part of the exercise, participants worked in small groups to assess the current status and readiness for marine spatial planning in the Philippines, based on a set of guiding questions. The results of this assessment were subsequently compiled, analyzed, and discussed in plenary.

29. In the second part of the exercise, participants continued working in groups to develop concrete steps and actions for the roadmap, using a structured template. Each group presented the outcomes of their discussions in plenary. A summary of the discussions under this item, including the key elements of the roadmap as developed during the workshop, is contained in annex III.

Item 10**Workshop conclusions and next steps**

30. The co-chairs of the workshop provided concluding reflections and outlined next steps for the Philippines, which will build on the key elements of the roadmap developed during the workshop. They emphasized that progress on marine spatial planning should begin immediately, without waiting for the full passing of the Blue Economy Bill, by building on existing platforms and initiatives and harmonizing ongoing efforts. They highlighted opportunities to reflect key principles for marine spatial planning in pending legislation, and stressed the importance of mapping, stakeholder engagement, and governance mechanisms. They noted that the workshop outputs would be submitted to the Technical Working Group for Marine Spatial Planning and presented at the Harmonization Meeting on Marine Spatial Planning-related initiatives, focused on discussing roles, deliverables and timelines, and a consolidated workplan across all ongoing and planned marine spatial planning-related initiatives in the Philippines.

Item 11

Closure of the workshop

31. Following expressions of thanks delivered by the co-chairs of the workshop and the workshop co-organizers, the workshop was closed at 3:00 p.m. on 6 March 2026.

Annex I

List of participants

Government of the Philippines

Department of Agriculture

Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

Roy Ortega

Ma. Bernadette Lintag

Macy Tagaduar

Department of Energy

Sheria Dawn Fileo

Queenie G. Belleza

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Atty. Ernesto Adobo Jr.

Jay Ar Lorenzo

Krystyne Ong

Atty. Analiza Rebueta-Teh

Christiana Pena

Micah S. De Leon

Ocean Environments Task Force

Annette J. Menez

Cesar Villanoy

Gil Jacinto

Aiko Love del Rosario

Lea C. Avilla

Charlene Olsim

Joaquin Silvestre

Eena Marie Nuevas

Joyce Melendres

Kim Cyrus Miranda

Lesley Peregrino

Biodiversity Management Bureau

Nancy R. Corpuz

Rowena Bolinas

Clio Elizandre Villanueva

Shanelle Napoles

Biodiversity Management Bureau – Coastal and Marine Division

John Erick B. Avelino

Criselda B. Castor

Grick Cordero

Alexis Ann Alcantara

Joeimarie Carmela Bueno

Marilyn Q. Alcober

Ma. Laya Soleil Perez

Environment Management Bureau

John Paul Reniva

Mary Esther D. Ofiaza

Forest Management Bureau

John Calvin L. Clarete

Legal Affairs Service

Giuseppe Frilles

Masinloc-Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape – Protected Area Management Office

Emmanuel Penson Jr

Mines and Geosciences Bureau

Arvien Terence Cudilla

Department of Foreign Affairs

Edwin De Pacina

Gene Alec Sunga

Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development

Jenny Rose Olfindo

Department of Public Works and Highways

Karl Angelo R. Porley

Department of Transportation

Jeremiah Perez

Philippine Coast Guard

Leah Mae C. Villaranda

Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

John Francisco A. Pontillas

Presidential Office for Maritime Concerns

Haidee Changcoco

Intergovernmental organizations

Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia

Mahesh Pradhan

Margarita Caballa

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Joseph Appiott¹

United Nations Development Programme

Vincent Hilomen

Other organizations and institutions

**Conservation International
(Philippines)**

Augustus Rex F. Montebon

**Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)**

Melody Joy Dagta

**Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative /
Seascope Consultants**

David Johnson¹

Marketa Zackova

Macquarie University

Vera Horigue

Ocean Energy Pathway

Adrienne Cacho

Rizaller Amolo

Prince of Songkla University

Sakanan Plathong¹

Sound Seas

Tundi Agardy¹

**Swedish Agency for Marine and Water
Management**

Ingela Isaksson

Joacim Johannesson

Wilhelm Gårdmark

**UK COAST (Climate and Ocean
Adaptation and Sustainable Transition
Programme)**

Andre Jon Uychiaoco

**University of Tasmania (Integrated
Marine Observing System)**

Eduardo Klein-Salas¹

University of the Philippines (Cebu)

Hazel Arceo

**University of the Philippines (Institute
for Maritime Affairs and Law of the
Sea)**

Ana Cosme

**University of the Philippines (Marine
Science Institute)**

Rene Abesamis

Wildlife Conservation Society

Jenzon Lopez

Mar Saniano

¹ Provided pre-recorded messages and/or presentations due to being unable to attend in person.

Annex II

Summary of discussions in plenary and breakout groups under items 3-8

Item 3

Global, regional and national context for marine and coastal management in the Philippines

1. Participants discussed various approaches to implementing target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), emphasizing a mix of strict protection and other management, noting that not all areas may be designated as no-take in the Philippines. Concerns were raised about declining fish stocks within protected areas, stressing that effective management, rather than coverage alone, is crucial, and that realistic, context-specific targets, especially for no-take areas, need to be defined to ensure sustainable fisheries and deliver on target 3.
2. Participants highlighted the importance of building on existing local government initiatives, including marine protected areas (MPAs), other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs), and integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), emphasizing the need to ensure that national planning considers both top-down and bottom-up efforts.
3. Ongoing legislative developments were discussed, including the Blue Economy Bill which would establish a Blue Economy Council and integrate marine spatial planning (MSP) into national and local planning, and the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Bill, which focuses on institutionalizing a national coordinating mechanism for coastal and marine governance and related tools, such as MSP.
4. Participants emphasized that national-level plans emerging from these laws need to be implementable at the local level, and that the national MSP framework should clearly outline how MSP will be operationalized locally, including resource mobilization and capacity-building for Local Government Units (LGUs), emphasizing a bottom-up approach.
5. The need to strengthen alignment between national and local levels was highlighted, including mapping spatial jurisdictions, overlapping and conflicting mandates and policies to identify overlaps and simplify processes. The Ocean Accounts tool was noted as useful for reviewing laws and policies across space.
6. Participants noted that LGUs face significant capacity challenges, particularly where requirements defined at the national level are not fully accompanied by sufficient support, resulting in strong policies but limited implementation on the ground. The need for a comprehensive review of existing governance structures was noted.
7. Participants stressed the importance of accounting for local vulnerabilities in the allocation of national funding for climate-related impacts, noting that some regions are highly vulnerable and quickly run out of resources, as well as challenges related to limited data to conduct more detailed vulnerability assessments.
8. It was noted that the mechanism for adopting the national MSP framework is to be determined, with discussions on the potential role of the National Maritime Council. The Joint Resolution for the Creation of the National Inter-Agency Steering Committee on ICM and the Technical Working Group (TWG) for MSP were highlighted as other MSP-relevant institutional mechanisms.
9. Given the range of MSP-related projects of development partners across different national agencies, participants stressed the need to improve coordination, consolidate efforts, and establish systematic processes, including a shared database to track ongoing and planned initiatives.

10. Participants underscored the importance of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of plans, including the need for a holistic approach to monitoring local capacities, as well as of engaging both practitioners and environmental planning professionals, particularly through the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners.

11. Participants discussed the monitoring framework of the KMGBF, including relevant indicators for tracking progress across targets, particularly target 1, as well as the elements of the seventh national report template. Participants further emphasized that while KMGBF targets provide an important guiding framework, they must be translated into national contexts based on priorities, capacities and practical implementation needs.

Item 4

Relationship of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and other taxa-specific important biodiversity areas to marine spatial planning

12. Participants discussed the importance of using various tools to strengthen the scientific basis for conservation and planning and integrate them into MSP processes, including ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), and important marine turtle habitats, many of which are present in Philippine waters. Recognized as complementary with closely aligned criteria, they provide scientifically robust and peer-reviewed inputs for decision-making and spatial prioritization.

13. Participants noted the engagement with the Coral Triangle Initiative on the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion EBSA, while highlighting challenges regarding securing stronger political endorsement and translating such tools into policy-relevant commitments at the national level.

14. Participants highlighted the importance of updating existing EBSA descriptions, noting that new modalities adopted by the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention allow revisions based on improved scientific information, with different procedures for areas within and beyond national jurisdiction. Updating the EBSAs in the Philippines, described at a regional workshop in 2015, was noted as a key opportunity to support MSP and conservation prioritization, with the Philippine Rise (formerly Benham Rise) noted as a potential case study, including its relevance as a potential area-based management tool under the BBNJ Agreement.

15. Participants discussed the relationship between EBSAs and KBAs, emphasizing their complementarity, and highlighting the value of EBSAs for their focus on various types of ecological and biological features of a given area, promoting ecological connectivity, and formal global recognition under the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Participants also identified KBAs as a key basis for spatial prioritization of MPAs and OECMs in the Philippines, including contributions to target 3 of the KMGBF, with ongoing efforts to update marine areas in the World Database on Protected Areas. Some participants noted that relying solely on KBAs may overlook areas important for particular ecosystem services (e.g., storm surge protection or fisheries productivity), underscoring the need for complementary approaches.

16. Reference was made to national target 3 of the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP), which is aimed at increasing the proportion of effectively managed coastal and marine areas, using KBAs as a basis for identifying priority areas. Marine KBAs, of which 136 have been identified, were noted as critical conservation sites in the Philippines, though only a small percentage are currently protected, presenting opportunities for expansion through MPAs and OECMs, and leveraging partnerships with communities, NGOs, and the private sector.

Item 5

Rationale for marine spatial planning and vision-setting exercise

17. During the question-and-answer session, participants discussed terrestrial bias in local land-use planning processes, noting ongoing efforts to better integrate marine and coastal aspects, and the need to improve compliance among LGUs in incorporating water use. The importance of including seasonality and temporal considerations (including climate changes and vulnerabilities) in marine and coastal planning was emphasized, although participants acknowledged the challenges of doing so and the need for more forward-looking approaches and to consider market drivers, engaging economists and social scientists. Participants underscored the need for robust data infrastructure and a clear roadmap including institutional mechanisms and governance structures to guide MSP implementation. MSP was reaffirmed as complementary to MPAs and OECMs, with the Philippines' strong experience in community-based coastal planning and ICZM, providing a strong foundation to improve coordination across governance levels and support integrated land-sea planning through an ecoscope approach that considers management, restoration and conservation altogether.

18. Participants were divided into breakout groups to further discuss the objectives and intended outcomes of MSP in the Philippines. The discussions, guided by three key questions, were aimed at informing the development of roadmap elements under item 9. With respect to what a successful MSP framework may look like in three to five years and what concrete changes should take place in ocean governance, investments and coastal communities, participants highlighted the following:

- A successful MSP framework should be legally anchored and enforceable to ensure compliance, with a clearly designated lead agency, defined institutional arrangements across national and local governance levels, and strengthened inter-agency coordination to harmonize fragmented mandates and policies, clarify overlapping roles and jurisdictions, and reduce conflicts, to ensure coherent ocean governance.
- The framework should align national, regional and local planning processes and priorities, integrate MSP into national frameworks and local plans such as Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs), and be supported by clear operational guidelines and a shared data system. It should outline MSP application across scales, ensuring alignment of individual LGU plans and reflecting local needs and realities.
- Importance of integrating existing MSP-related initiatives into the MSP framework, given that several programs, projects, and management plans are already being implemented across sectors and locations, ensuring that previous investments, data, and lessons learned are consolidated into a more coherent national planning system.
- A scale-based approach to MSP implementation is essential. A regional-scale approach may be more appropriate for certain ecological and management considerations, such as large marine mammal corridors and migratory pathways extending beyond municipal boundaries, which would allow for addressing ecological connectivity and cross-boundary issues, ensuring that measures reflect the broader dynamics of marine ecosystems.
- MSP should function as a forward-looking and adaptive tool, incorporating geographic, socio-economic, climate and development aspects, including well-developed data systems for adaptive management, and be consistent with the KMGBF.
- The MSP framework should embed inclusivity and transparency through meaningful participation, integrating stakeholder concerns into planning and decision-making processes, while allowing sufficient time and resources to build consensus. The importance of capacity-building for key stakeholders to effectively participate across all stages of MSP, including for stakeholder engagement and negotiation with local governments and communities, was noted.

- A well-designed strategic communications plan to make MSP accessible and relatable, translating technical language into clear messages and simplifying concepts and processes, to strengthen public understanding, ownership and participation.
 - The framework should translate investments into long-term sustainable financing schemes that provide empowerment opportunities for coastal communities, ensuring improved resource management, reduced user conflicts, and tangible local benefits.
19. Regarding how MSP should actively enable and guide the country's blue economy agenda, while ensuring ecological integrity and social equity, participants highlighted the following:
- The blue economy should serve as the overarching framework within which MSP is anchored, with MSP and ICM implemented in a complementary manner, with ICM providing the land-based planning perspective that informs MSP at the local level.
 - The MSP framework should guide the blue economy agenda through science-informed decision-making, using tools such as cost-benefit and option analyses, and natural capital accounting and valuation. It should reduce business, ecological, and governance risks, while supporting sustainable and equitable development.
 - The framework should balance sectoral needs, while ensuring social equity and ecological integrity as well as improving environmental sustainability within businesses and industries. It will require identifying and protecting strategic areas, strict enforcement, using tools such as root-cause analysis to maintain the integrity of planning and decision-making, and a clear spatial organization of marine uses to advance blue economy.
20. With respect to sectoral perspectives on how MSP will be used, contributed to, and benefited from, and the most critical concerns for its effectiveness, participants noted the following:
- MSP should function as a standardized, data-driven system to streamline government processes and support evaluation of diverse marine uses, while maintaining ecological integrity. The importance of integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, clearly delineating physical boundaries for planning, and ensuring adaptive management was also noted.
 - Sectors can contribute data, expertise and experience, including technical datasets (e.g., vessel traffic data, information on designated dumping sites, other maritime operational data), local leadership experiences, and guidelines, which can support harmonized decision-making, improved stakeholder communication and more strategic investments. In turn, for example, MSP could support oil spill responses through prioritization of sensitive areas, shoreline profiling and improved spatial decision-making.
 - Key challenges to effective implementation include overlapping mandates and functions, noting the need to identify the root causes of governance and coordination challenges, sustained political support, limited technical capacity, and insufficient financing and infrastructure.
 - There is a need to review data privacy and freedom of information policies in order to identify mechanisms that can facilitate data sharing and ensure updated datasets, particularly in the context of developing interactive mapping tools, and consider designating an agency to consolidate all data related to MSP.

Item 6

Experiences with marine spatial planning from other countries

21. Participants discussed other MSP experiences, noting that Sweden applies MSP at multiple scales, with national plans complemented by more detailed municipal plans that overlap geographically but operate at various levels of detail, helping minimize conflicts. Jurisdiction varies

between near shore and offshore areas, with municipalities playing a key role nearshore and environmental courts in territorial waters. Participants emphasized the importance of regular MSP plan evaluation and review, noting the example of England, where those were conducted every 3-6 years for the ten separate marine plans that had been developed for inshore and offshore areas.

22. It was further explained that in Sweden, conflicts (particularly related to offshore wind) are usually addressed through comprehensive consultation processes rather than formal negotiation procedures. While plans can be adapted based on stakeholder input to accommodate different views, it was acknowledged that not all interests can always be accommodated.

23. Participants also discussed approaches to balancing trade-offs in areas with overlapping marine uses (e.g., energy, defence, conservation), using tools such as cost-benefit analysis, environmental impact assessments (EIA), or the Symphony tool developed specifically for MSP-related impact assessment. Such tools can help inform decision-making with respect to which uses may have priority over others. It was noted that more detailed assessments are required especially at the permitting stage, e.g., for offshore wind applications.

24. Participants highlighted the new international guide for MSP developed by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO and the European Commission under the umbrella of the ongoing initiative MSPglobal, including its six-phase approach,¹ Rapid Assessment Methodology² for MSP (used in the case of Thailand), and the older 10-step process for MSP.³

Item 7

Data infrastructure

25. Participants discussed the critical role of data infrastructure in enabling effective MSP in the Philippines, given the country's geographical context and overlapping marine uses, highlighting the importance of reliable and spatially explicit data to identify suitable zones for various uses and help resolve conflicts among competing uses.

26. Participants noted several key gaps in data systems in the Philippines, including fragmented datasets across agencies, lack of interoperability, inconsistent standards, and limited integration of socio-economic and climate data. The development of a centralized Philippine Ocean Data Portal, with data usability and incorporation of local knowledge were noted as key for successful MSP.

27. Participants stressed that without adequate data, decisions risk creating conflicts, degrading ecosystems and undermining livelihoods, while noting that planning should not be delayed by waiting for perfect datasets and should instead build on existing data and improve it over time. The potential need for tools and guidance regarding guiding integration at regional levels (e.g., through Regional Development Councils) was noted, and tools such as cumulative impact assessments and the MSPglobal Data Toolbox⁴ were highlighted as useful to support MSP data systems.

28. Participants emphasized the importance of establishing a common national MSP vision to guide data structure and collection, including the importance of following the FAIR⁵ data principle and scale considerations, together with recommendations to use existing datasets, ensure standardization, integrate all the types of data layers, invest in national data capacity, and establish data pipelines with proper metadata and regular updates from the beginning.

29. Participants discussed the integration of ICM into CLUPs using a ridge-to-reef framework, which includes extending planning boundaries up to 15km into municipal waters, delineating watersheds and coastal zones, and incorporating marine resource assessments into land use plans. It

¹ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379196?posInSet=1&queryId=64e6a48c-4589-4cf4-8685-710a1d0dfa43>

² <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000393841>

³ <https://www.mspglobal2030.org/resources/key-msp-references/step-by-step-approach/>

⁴ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000395316>

⁵ FAIR: Findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable.

was further clarified that CLUPs already consider water use under existing guidelines, with ongoing updates to further integrate biodiversity considerations. Participants also noted that while the Philippines has over 1,515 municipalities (with more than 830 coastal municipalities), about 49% of LGUs have adopted CLUPs, with ongoing efforts to increase uptake and implementation.

Item 8

National marine spatial planning: Existing initiatives, governance, tools, and practical exercises

30. Participants emphasized the need to harmonize existing MSP-related initiatives, provide structure and allocation of funds, and compile ongoing projects across departments and development partners. The draft Blue Economy Bill was highlighted as a key instrument in this context.

31. Participants highlighted several ongoing initiatives, including the application of coastal and marine spatial planning in the Masinloc-Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape to strengthen governance, restore ecosystems and promote sustainable livelihoods and ecotourism. Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs) were noted as ecosystem-scale spatial units that respect LGU jurisdictions while serving as a practical boundary for MSP, integrating fisheries management. The role of MSP in offshore wind development, specifically under the UK PACT (Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions) program and the Department of Energy (DOE), was also discussed.

32. Participants discussed the development of the national MSP framework under the FISHCORE project under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR), emphasizing its importance for guiding local planning, strengthening inter-agency coordination, and supporting implementation. However, the need for context- and site-specific objectives and plans was noted as essential due to the diversity of the Philippine areas. Participants also stressed the importance of establishing a lead authority for MSP and engaging all relevant agencies.

33. Participants noted the need to establish clear legal basis and mechanisms for adopting marine spatial plans at national and bay levels, including approaches for prioritizing sectors, noting ongoing discussions among agencies on whether to develop a national spatial plan for all sectors, in light of the country's archipelagic context and geopolitical considerations.

34. Gaps and challenges regarding the integration of avian and marine biodiversity considerations into offshore wind planning and permitting were discussed, noting that while existing guidelines include wildlife more broadly, migratory seabirds and flyways may not be sufficiently considered, with limited data beyond aggregation sites. Ongoing efforts include the development of bird-tagging protocols and improved data collection, recognizing that standardized and bankable environmental data is critical for project financing and decision-making in offshore wind development.

Governance and practical mapping exercise for marine spatial planning

35. Participants were divided into small groups to undertake a governance and practical mapping exercise to inform national MSP. Using printed maps, participants first examined how marine space is currently used and governed, including dominant sectors, overlapping sectors and mandates, and the roles of different agencies and levels of government. All groups focused their discussions on the areas of Manila Bay, the Verde Island Passage, or both. The discussions are summarized as follows:

- A wide range of marine uses were identified, including fisheries, aquaculture, shipping and navigation, public works and infrastructure (e.g., reclamation), tourism, conservation and protected area management (including locally managed MPAs, and the proposed Verde Island Passage MPA boundary), offshore wind energy, seabed quarrying, water quality and watershed management, and submarine pipelines and telecommunications infrastructure. The areas were also noted to host critical habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves.

- Participants identified a network of national agencies and local governments, including DA-BFAR, Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Transportation (DOTr), DOE, Philippine National Police Maritime Group (PNP MG), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), LGUs, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), responsible for marine governance in the region.
- Spatial overlaps were noted between fisheries and shipping, whereby fishing grounds may intersect with major shipping routes, causing safety concerns and resource-use tensions. Such issues involve multiple agencies which can lead to unclear jurisdictions.
- Significant spatial overlaps were identified between shipping and tourism, as major shipping routes pass through waters used for activities such as diving and island tourism, creating potential safety risks, environmental pressures, and user conflicts.
- Overlaps between shipping and public infrastructure were noted, in areas where maritime routes intersect with port, coastal or other marine infrastructure developments.
- Overlaps were also noted between reclamation projects and conservation or fisheries sectors, with competing mandates and priorities contributing to governance challenges. Conflicts were observed between the Supreme Court's order for bay rehabilitation (Mandamus Ruling), the PRA's reclamation projects, and LGU's area development goals, possibly resulting in jurisdictional and fiscal conflicts among other users, fragmented governance, and conflicting environmental and economic goals.
- Overlaps were identified between offshore wind development and seabed quarrying, highlighting the need for a coordinated national approach, including a comprehensive plan for all sea-based economic activities and conservation goals.
- Ensuring the protection, conservation and sustainable use of these areas was noted as a governance and coordination challenge, particularly due to unclear responsibilities across agencies, especially for the Verde Island Passage and its biodiversity. Pollution from multiple sectors (e.g., discarded fishing gear, oil spills, construction runoff, solid waste) was highlighted as a major coordination challenge, with regulatory responsibilities fragmented across agencies and legal frameworks. Marine enforcement was also stressed as a key governance challenge, as overlapping mandates among agencies (e.g., DA-BFAR, PCG and PNP MG) may lead to uncertainty regarding primary responsibility in cases of violations, such as illegal fishing or environmental incidents.

36. Following the above discussions, each group was assigned a specific policy scenario and discussed its implications for the marine space, including governance challenges, potential sectoral conflicts, legal or governance gaps, and possible national-level responses. With respect to each of the policy scenarios, participants highlighted the following:

- *Target 3 of the KMGBF*: Potential governance challenges arise where proposed conservation areas overlap with zones intended for infrastructure development, land reclamation, or other public works. Legal and mandate gaps were noted, particularly related to permitting processes and foreshore lease agreements, which may hinder implementation. A high-level policy instrument, such as an executive order, was suggested to provide the necessary guidance and coordination across agencies to support the integration of biodiversity commitments within the MSP framework.
- *Accelerating offshore wind development*: Impacts were noted to potentially occur across the project lifecycle, but particularly during the construction phase (which may last up to ten years). Establishing buffer zones with restricted fishing during that period was noted, with public consultations critical to identify and address potential conflicts early.

Displaced fisherfolk could be provided with alternative livelihoods, such as employment opportunities during construction and operations supported by appropriate skills training.

- *Sustainable Blue Economy investment corridor*: Expansion of maritime transport, port infrastructure, and coastal development may adversely impact other sectors, potentially leading to ecosystem degradation and reduced fisheries productivity. Participants emphasized the need for strong sustainability safeguards avoiding business-as-usual practices, robust accreditation systems, clear regulatory frameworks, and effective monitoring mechanisms to ensure sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.
- *Fisheries security priority*: To address overfishing, seasonal fishing bans and sustainable mariculture were identified as possible management strategies. However, it was noted that mariculture expansion may displace existing marine uses. Key challenges include ensuring effective coordination, stakeholder awareness, and strengthened enforcement of sustainable fisheries practices, which will be crucial to secure fisheries priorities without degrading marine resources. Participants stressed the need for clear national fisheries guidelines, including for mariculture development and seasonal management measures, and technical and capacity support to implementing agencies and stakeholders.
- *Strong LGU autonomy and the presence of ancestral domains of indigenous peoples*: Integrating these considerations into MSP highlighted challenges related to expanding reclamation areas, jurisdiction and fiscal disputes among neighbouring municipalities, and revenue-sharing negotiation complexities, including with indigenous peoples. Regulatory and mandate gaps were noted, especially a lack of systems for cumulative impact assessments to evaluate large-scale developments. Participants emphasized the need for national guidance to align local development goals with the country's broader strategic priorities.
- *Climate shock and adaptation*: It was noted that climate impacts may disproportionately affect smaller-scale sectors such as fisheries and tourism, which require greater support for disaster risk reduction and recovery planning. Other industries, such as mariculture sites, might be climate-ready but not necessarily climate-proof. Some areas may become unsuitable for their current uses, with potential conflicts between sectors increasing competition for space and resources. Participants stressed the importance of coordinated responses among all relevant agencies, and collaboration among DENR, LGUs, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) and academia to support relocation or rehabilitation of settlements based on experiences and projections of storm surges, potentially avoiding new settlements in high-risk areas.

Annex III

Key elements of a roadmap for marine spatial planning under item 9

1. Building on discussions from previous sessions, this session had the objective of supporting participants in identifying ways to move from the current situation toward establishing foundational elements for marine spatial planning (MSP). The session focused on the first two phases of MSP as outlined by the MSPglobal International Guide on Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning,⁶ namely setting the scene and designing the planning process. Facilitators emphasized that, while there is no silver bullet for MSP, there are common characteristics and guiding principles that can support effective implementation.

Current status of marine spatial planning in the Philippines

2. Participants were divided into six groups and given ten guiding questions to assess the current status and readiness for MSP in the Philippines. For each question, they indicated whether progress was not initiated, ongoing, or completed, and provided reasoning or examples (if possible). The questions addressed the following aspects: (i) existence and status of a legal framework (guiding or binding plan); (ii) availability of a baseline assessment; (iii) appointment of a responsible ministry and/or authority; (iv) determination of the appropriate planning scale; (v) availability of financial resources; (vi) establishment of a designated MSP team, and adapted organizational structure; (vii) setting of a deadline for delivery of the final plan; (viii) identification of major stakeholders; (ix) existence of a communication strategy; and (x) existence of a plan for data management.

3. The assessments from the groups were compiled, analyzed, and synthesized into a spider chart. Participants reflected on the results of the assessment in plenary and discussed the following:

- Some noted that the Philippines' readiness for developing a national MSP framework is currently fragmented, with most efforts operating at the local level without a unified national mandate. While MSP is not yet formally/legally institutionalized, many sectors are already engaged in MSP-related activities.
- There is an emerging legal basis for MSP, including the proposed Blue Economy Bill, the Integrated Coastal Management Bill, and other related initiatives. Once adopted, some noted that the Blue Economy Bill would help clarify the institutional framework, roles and responsibilities, as there is uncertainty regarding institutional leadership for MSP.
- Multiple initiatives toward establishing an MSP coordinating body are ongoing, including the Blue Economy Council under the draft bill, the DOE-DENR Joint Technical Working Group for Offshore Wind, the DENR Technical Working Group on MSP, and the DA-BFAR-led FISHCORE project teams contributing to MSP-related outputs. However, it was noted that many ongoing initiatives are not yet widely known across agencies.
- While key stakeholders have been mostly identified, further stakeholder mapping and more effective and inclusive engagement, especially of local communities, may be needed.
- A lack of a definitive national timeline for MSP was noted, as well as varying timelines across sectors and projects which tend to operate based on individual timelines aligned with project planning cycles and leadership priorities.
- Availability of relevant datasets and maps across institutions, but fragmented databases and lack of consolidation, standardization and interoperability, limiting their use for practical MSP, with knowledge gaps particularly in areas beyond the coastal zone.

⁶ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379196?posInSet=1&queryId=64e6a48c-4589-4cf4-8685-710a1d0dfa43>

- Importance of MSP being conducted across multiple scales, although this has not yet been formally defined. Some suggested this could be aligned with LGUs, guided by economic objectives, or conducted at regional scale to reflect ecosystem considerations.
- A lack of national communication strategy for MSP, though some noted that many MSP-related projects include cross-cutting awareness and stakeholder engagement components.
- Some noted the availability of financial resources through international grants and loans, including programs such as the UK PACT and FISHCORE project initiatives. Financial provisions under the proposed Blue Economy Bill were also mentioned.

Key elements of a roadmap for marine spatial planning

4. Building on the above exercise, and working in the same groups, participants were invited to reflect on how they, and their respective agencies, could contribute to achieving MSP readiness, and to complete a template outlining specific actions for each roadmap objective. Each group was allocated three specific sections/objectives of the roadmap to focus on, and identified concrete actions, responsible actors, and indicative timelines, while also considering potential synergies.

5. The key elements of the roadmap, as developed during this session, are presented below:

Actions or steps	Objectives	Who	When	Objective in roadmap
1. Legal and institutional framework				
Enact Blue Economy Law with MSP provision	Legal framework in place	Congress	Q1 2027	Framework supports MSP preparation & implementation
Develop Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Blue Economy Act	Operationalize law	Relevant Agencies	Q3 2027	
Issue Joint Administrative Order (JAO) across agencies	Create, operationalize, implement MSP	Agencies	Q3 2027	
2. Funding for MSP				
Establish national MSP financing mechanism, allocate regular government funding	Funding secured	Blue Economy Council	TBD	Financial sources identified and accessed
Mobilize external financing (grants, technical assistance, loans)	Funding support for MSP programs	Development Partners (Asian Development Bank, World Bank, UN Development Programme)	Q2–Q4 2026	External resources mobilized
Allocate regional planning funds	Support regional-level MSP	Regional Development Council (RDC)	During regional planning cycles	Funding accessed for regional MSP
Allocate local Comprehensive Land-Use Plan (CLUP) funds	Support local MSP development	Local Government Units (LGUs)	1 year prior to implementation cycle	Local funding ensured
Allocate funds for capacity-building MSP activities	Build institutional capacity	LGUs/Agencies	Continuous	Capacity-building funded
3. Stakeholders				
Capacity-building for MSP practitioners	Key authorities & stakeholders identified	Academe	T-2, annual	Stakeholders identified & capacitated
Develop Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials	Awareness & engagement	Academe/Agencies	Year 1, continuous	Stakeholders engaged
Conduct stakeholder analysis	Identify rights-holders	Agencies	Year 1	Stakeholders mapped

Inter-departmental groundwork for MSP	Coordination & collaboration	Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Ocean Environments Task Force (DENR-OETF)	Year 1	Stakeholders coordinated
4. Roles and responsibilities				
Identify stakeholders/users & establish TWG	Clear roles & responsibilities	All interested parties	Q2–Q3 2026	Roles & responsibilities lined out
Develop governance structure & implementation guidelines	Policy direction for MSP	Responsible Ministries/ Authorities	Upon approval	Governance structure operational
5. Timeframe and deadline				
Create Technical Working Group (TWG) for Inter-agency Work & Financial Plan	Define MSP implementation	Agencies-- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), Department of Energy (DOE), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), etc.	Q2 2026	Implementation plan ready
Assess MSP capabilities of the Philippines	Identify gaps in data, enforcement, finance, offices	Agencies	2026	Gaps addressed
Complete staff work & leadership meeting on timeframes	Finalize MSP schedule	Leadership	Q3 2027	Timeframe/deadline set
6. MSP team and capacity				
Form Scientific Advisory Group	Technical support	Academe	Upon policy approval	MSP team in place
Develop formal MSP education programs	Professionalize MSP practice	Academe	2–3 years	Capacity strengthened
Facilitate research & data collection	Support MSP planning	Academe/OETF/EMB	T-2, continuing	Data & knowledge available
Strengthen technical/institutional capacity	Systems, skills, tools, assets	National/Provincial/ Local agencies	Ongoing	Capacity in place
7. Main MSP issues and conflicts				
Identify MSP conflicts via tools & maps	Data-informed conflict identification	DOE	Aug–Nov 2026	Issues/conflicts identified
Conduct studies on maritime transport & reclamation	Baseline & projected conflicts	MARINA	2024–2029	Conflicts mapped
Surface conflicts via research grants	Highlight conflicts for planning	Private sector / foreign universities	Depending on funding	Analytical data available
Identify climate-related & biological conflicts	Inform MSP zoning	State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)	Immediate	Planning maps ready
8. Vision				

TWG develops vision statement options	Future-oriented maritime vision	All stakeholders	Q3 2026	Vision in place
Final vision approved by Blue Economy body	Stakeholder consultation & approval	Barangay Environmental (BE) Council / Stakeholders	2026–2027	Vision integrated in planning
Ensure vision elements are clear, ambitious, realistic	Guide MSP objectives & planning	All	2026	Vision aligned
9. Planning objectives				
Develop data management & facilitate workshops	Define objectives	Academe	T-1	Planning objectives defined
Align with ASEAN environmental standards	Quality & compliance	Environmental Management Bureau (EMB)	T-2	Objectives harmonized
Facilitate inter-departmental alignment	Cross-agency coherence	OETF	T-2	Objectives integrated
10. Planning principles				
Use lessons from energy sector & systematic conservation planning (SCP)	Define guiding principles	DOE / Private sector	Not definitive	Principles defined
Use Maritime Industry Development Plan (MIDP) & Ocean Equity Index as reference	Basis for sustainable MSP	MARINA	2024–2029	Principles contextualized
11. Planning boundaries and horizon				
Define boundaries per scale (national, regional, provincial, municipal)	Spatial limits for MSP	DHSUD, Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DepDev), LGUs	Ongoing	Boundaries integrated across scales
Set planning horizon (e.g., 2050)	Long-term planning	JOAQUI / Agencies	By 2030	MSP fully operationalized
Develop capacity-building & financing roadmap	Ensure operational readiness	Agencies	By 2030	MSP implementation supported
12. Planning process				
Integrate MSP into Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUP) & review policies	Embed ecosystem-based planning	Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), LGUs, DENR, DA, DHSUD	Start of PDP/2028	Planning process operational
Inception Phase: stakeholder identification, funding, principles, boundaries, data collection	Structured planning	All	Start of planning	Process defined
Mainstreaming Phase: plan preparation, adoption, implementation	Operationalize MSP	All	During plan cycle	Process operational
13. Communication				
Develop communication & stakeholder engagement strategy	Promote transparency & coordination	National/Regional Agencies	Before, during, after MSP	Strategy in place
Use communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), press releases, Information, Education, and Communication (IECs)	Public awareness	Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)	When MSP established	Coordinated communication implemented
Align international instruments	Harmonize local & regional MSP	DFA	Ongoing	Communication aligned globally
14. Baseline assessment				

Consolidate/review secondary data	Identify gaps & conflicts	DHSUD, DA, DENR, NAMRIA, DOT, DepDev, DOE, DOTr, DILG, Academe	ASAP	Baseline data ready
Standardize & harmonize data collection	Consistent methodologies	Agencies	ASAP	Methodologies agreed
Develop integrated database system	Avoid data fragmentation	Agencies	ASAP	Database established
15. Data flow and management				
Set up data flow and management	Support MSP decisions	Agencies under Blue Economy Bill	TBD	Data flow established
16. Monitoring and evaluation				
Establish standards & develop monitoring tools	Track MSP performance	Academe / National Government Agencies (NGAs)	T+2, every 2 years	M&E system operational
Implement monitoring and evaluation plan	Evaluate outcomes	NGA	T+2, every 2 years	Continuous learning & improvement

6. Participants presented the table in plenary and highlighted the following additional points:
- The importance of institutionalizing MSP through the Blue Economy Bill, including mobilizing government agencies, and ensuring an integrated national framework that avoids fragmented and duplicative efforts by individual agencies, while noting the need to identify financing mechanisms across scales leveraging existing development partners' support as the Bill is being finalized.
 - Strengthening governance arrangements was highlighted, including the opportunity to expand the Joint Resolution for the Creation of the National Inter-Agency Steering Committee on ICM to include other agencies and clarify roles and responsibilities in support of MSP, as well as the need to conduct a national-level legal and policy gap analysis to map stakeholders, clarify mandates, and address overlaps and conflicts across scales.
 - Participants stressed the need to build on existing MSP-related initiatives and policies, including CLUPs (noting the Joint Memorandum Circular to mainstream ICM into CLUPs), provincial/regional planning processes, and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) at the national level. Some noted that MSP for a bay or region could be integrated into CLUPs, but national waters need additional consideration. Concerns were raised about potential silos due to decentralized implementation by LGUs, highlighting the need for collaboration across jurisdictions to ensure ecological connectivity.
 - Participants noted the importance of not reinventing the wheel, with the planning process involving mapping existing initiatives, tools, stakeholders, and experiences across scales and LGUs, understanding where different tools and approaches are most effective locally, regionally and nationally. Challenges related to defining and managing planning boundaries for MSP, especially beyond municipal waters, and clarifying responsibilities across scales were also noted.
 - The importance of inclusive and transparent processes was emphasized, including a visioning process reflecting an inter-sectoral approach and engaging all stakeholders, with the workshop's vision-setting exercise providing initial ideas. Effective public communication to support participation and understanding of new regulations, and recognition of MSP as a continuous and adaptive process was noted.
 - Planning principles could include guidance on maintaining ecological connectivity, supporting LGUs to integrate such considerations into their plans and collaborate. Reflecting other key overarching principles and approaches in the roadmap, such as the

ecosystem approach (which was stressed as central to MSP), and biodiversity-inclusive and climate-smart principles, was noted.

- Planning principles in the roadmap could further draw on systematic conservation planning (SCP), which was noted to be a complementary tool to MSP supporting decision-making by using established MPA design principles and translating them into quantitative planning targets that balance biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and fisheries goals, integrating socio-economic costs into the prioritization process. The opportunity to align the principles in the Blue Economy Bill with SCP principles was noted, with the Ocean Equity Index highlighted as a useful tool to assess equity and blue justice principles in projects and inform stakeholder analysis and communication strategies.
 - Data fragmentation was noted, highlighting the need for consolidation, standardization and comparability across agencies. Sharing and integrating available datasets among government agencies is essential, with the NAMRIA Geoportal suggested as a potential lead platform. The Blue Economy Bill could further formalize data flow and management.
 - The importance of aligning roadmap objectives with national and global priorities under the KMGBF was emphasized, as well as integrating EBSAs, KBAs, and other taxa-specific important areas into planning processes to strengthen the scientific basis of marine spatial plans, ensuring that areas of high biodiversity importance are taken into consideration, in line with target 1 of the KMGBF.
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