

INTERNAL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025 - ISSUE #1

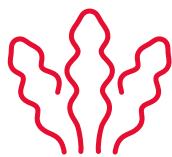
Welcome to the First BLUE CONNECT Internal Newsletter!

We are excited to introduce this bi-monthly newsletter as a platform to promote our results effectively and provide comprehensive updates on the project's progress. Through this regular communication, we aim to keep everyone informed about key achievements and upcoming activities across all work packages. Let's stay connected as we work together!

★ HIGHLIGHTS

- ONLY 4 MONTHS INTO THE PROJECT, THE LOCAL STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUPS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AT ALL DEMO SITES AND HELD THEIR KICK OFF MEETINGS (M7)- GREAT ACHIEVEMENT!
- THE BLUE CONNECT WEBSITE HAS BEEN LAUNCHED!
- BLUE CONNECT HAS BEEN ACCEPTED INTO THE MISSION OCEAN CHARTER!





WP UPDATES

WP1

We have a new Project Officer, check out her profile here: [Christine van Wunnik](#)

Deliverables & Milestones submitted: [D1.1](#), [D1.2](#), [M1](#) (SUB)

Upcoming Deliverables & Milestones: [D1.3](#) (VLIZ), [M2](#) (Salt) (Submission date: 28.02.2025)

An internal [Financial Budget Tracker](#) has been created- to be filled out by all partners every 6 months (until 28.02., due end of March)

DS Board is set up and meeting for alignment bi-monthly. DS are now in the process of filling out the [DSIP](#) until end of February.

External Advisory Board: 6 candidates already confirmed, you can [check out the list here](#).

WP2

RBINS created a [tool inventory](#) to identify tools in use or planned in DS (M3)

T2.1.: The literature review has started: From 12.2024 to 02.2025 WP2 partners will identify relevant information and fill the [database for grey literature](#).

From 01.-02. 2025 WP2 core team will work in identifying the literature for review.

RBINS also started the [BLUE CONNECT Glossary](#). Feel free to check it out, add your input and use it throughout the project.

T2.2 (connectivity modelling) (UTARTU) and 2.3 (ecological modelling) (Deltares) will be co-organized and coordinated together, Kick-Off meeting took place on 30.01.



WP3

1st WP meeting took place on 01.2025, Task 3.1 and Subtask 3.3.2 kicked-off- Task 3.2 will kick-off on 07.02.25.

WP3 members are collecting [info on deliverables from other projects that could be relevant for WP3 tasks](#).



WP UPDATES

WP4

M7: Establishment of LSWG has been submitted, the Kick-Off meetings have been held and the news have been published on the Blue Connect website.

T4.1 is almost complete

T4.2: 01.-02.25: Consultations with citizens on local needs/views/inputs/ concerns/priorities – under preparation – complementing the scoping analysis. Start collaboration with citizens and stakeholders in each DS.

WP5

T5.1: Initial research plan developed by UMA

T5.2: VLIZ is developing the work plan



WP6

T6.1: Coordination on how to collect data from the WPs/ Tasks/ Deliverables that will be feeding directly into the Blueprint. The task progress, collecting data, and the format and content of the blueprint will go hand in hand along the project.

The blueprint will be an online platform, possibly as part of an already existing website or portal-feasibility, what type of data and how it will be made available, as well as format of Blueprint are still to be defined.

WP7

Visual Identity & Website have been launched (M13) (www.blueconnect-project.eu)

Check out the News section!

Remember to provide your input and keep the CommDiss Tracker up to date!

Upcoming Deliverables: D7.1 & 7.2 (@Demo Sites: don't forget to fill out your exploitation templates!)- (Submission by 28.02.25)





HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT EVENTS



- **BLUE CONNECT at the Mission Arena 3 in Amsterdam**

On November 26 and 27th, BLUE CONNECT co-hosted three workshops at the Mission Arena 3. Read more about each one of them here:

1. ["Connecting Seas: Cooperation and Tools for EU MPAs"](#)
2. ["Leading the Way: marine nature restoration advancements, challenges and needs in the North Sea Region"](#)
3. ["Stakeholder Engagement in Innovative Marine Solutions: Marine Conservation Management, Financing and Beyond"](#)

- **Helena Calado (UAc) at Projeto Marine SABRES**

On January 17th, Helena took part in the 2nd Stakeholder Workshop for Projeto Marine SABRES. The session ran from 9 AM to 3 PM, where participants explored the socio-ecological system model and shared opinions on the Macaronesia corridor. A great opportunity to dive deep into marine conservation strategies!

- **Débora Gutierrez (UAc) at Marine Biodiversity Networking**

On December 13th, Débora facilitated a fascinating session on SeaSketch at the Marine Biodiversity Networking event. This innovative platform empowers marine conservation professionals with participatory mapping tools for better spatial planning. You can catch the recording of the session here: [SeaSketch Video](#)



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT EVENTS



- **Final Conference of the MSP-OR Project**

On December 11th and 12th, Débora and Helena joined the MSP-OR Project final conference in the beautiful Azores, where they moderated the interactive session on “Advancing Maritime Spatial Planning in Outermost Regions.” This was an exciting opportunity to explore new strategies for enhancing maritime spatial planning efforts in these regions.

- **Helena Calado Speaking at Sustainable Ocean Planning & Management Workshop**

On November 27th, Helena was an invited speaker at the Sustainable Ocean Planning & Management workshop. The session, held from 10 AM to 1:30 PM WET, gathered experts to discuss innovative solutions for ocean sustainability.

- **Roundtable on Maritime Spatial Planning at Universidade Nova de Lisboa**

Also in November, Helena joined a roundtable discussion on Maritime Spatial Planning in the Next 10 Years in Lisbon, Portugal. Organized by Carlos Pereira da Silva and João Mourato from Universidade Nova, the event was a great platform for exchanging ideas on the future of MSP.

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PUBLICATIONS /RECOMMENDATIONS

Webinars

Cost-effective marine restoration webinar recording now available ([click here to watch](#)).

The Nordic Council of Ministers' Working Group for Environment and Economy (NME) and HELCOM have released a recording of their webinar on cost-effective marine restoration, held at the end of last year. The webinar highlighted innovative strategies for restoring marine ecosystems in the Nordic region and addressed the socio-economic implications of restoration efforts. This timely discussion aligns with the EU regulation on nature restoration, and provides valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and environmental organizations.

MPA Communities

The **MPA Help mailinglist** could be interesting to share with the Stakeholders as a easily to reach platform for exchange of MPA ideas. <https://octogroup.org/programs/mpa-help/>

Articles

- Abramic, A., Mendoza, A.G., Cordero-Penin, V., Magalhães, M., Yaiza Fernández-Palacios, Y., Andrade, C., Calado, H., Kaushik, S., Carreira, G., Nogueira, N., Shinoda, D., Haroun, R. (2024). Site selection within the maritime spatial planning: Insights from use-cases on aquaculture, offshore wind energy and aggregates extraction. *Ocean & Coastal Management* 251: 107051 (2024), ISSN 0964-5691, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2024.107051>.





PUBLICATIONS /RECOMMENDATIONS

Articles

- Bocci, M., Soffietti, F., Ramieri, E., Carella, F., (eds) et al. 2024. Maritime Spatial Planning as an enabler of the European Green Deal. MSP-GREEN project. Deliverable report D4.2 (<https://mspgreen.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/D4.2-Final.pdf>);
- Frazão Santos, C., Agardy, T., Crowder, L.B., Day, J.C., Pinsky, M.L., Himes-Cornell, A., Reimer, J.M., García-Morales, S., Bennett, N.J., Lombard, A.T., Calado, H., Scherer, M., Flannery, W., Wedding, L.M., Gissi, E. (2024). Key components of sustainable climate-smart ocean planning. *npj Ocean Sustain* 3, 10 (2024). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44183-024-00045-x>
- Gabriel, D., Martins, B., Ribeiro, C., Vilizzi, L., Ferreira, A.I., Fredericq, S., Calado, H. (2024). Quantification of the invasiveness risk of non-native macroalgae in the Azores to support conservation measures. *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems*, 1–15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/aqc.4082>
- Hipólito, C.; Lopes, F.; Gonçalves, J.; Calado, H. (2024). A Critical Approach to Existing Management Perspectives in Scuba Diving: A Step in Defining Ecological Carrying Capacity. *Sustainability* 2024, 16, 1762, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16051762>
- Queiroz, J., Gutierrez, D., Calado, H. (2024). Trade-Offs in Marine Policy Decisions Through the Lens of Literature. *Oceans* 2024, 5, 982-1007. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/oceans5040056>





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Articles

- Ramieri, E., Bocci, M., Capurso, G., Soffietti, F., (eds) et al. 2024. Recommendations on making MSP in the EU an enabler of the Green Deal - MSP-GREEN, Deliverable report D4.1 (<https://mospgreen.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/D4.2-Final.pdf>);
- Frazão Santos, C., Agardy, T., Crowder, L.B., Day, J.C., Pinsky, M.L., Himes-Cornell, A., Reimer, J.M., García-Morales, S., Bennett, N.J., Lombard, A.T., Calado, H., Scherer, M., Flannery, W., Wedding, L.M., Gissi, E. (2024). Key components of sustainable climate-smart ocean planning. *npj Ocean Sustain* 3, 10 (2024). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44183-024-00045-x>
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- Rosa, B., Ng, K., Borges, P., Calado, H. (2024). Exploring Coastal Vulnerability Assessment through the Lens of Physical and Human Vulnerabilities for the Azores: A First Approach. Journal of Coastal Research SI, 113(113), 1-5, DOI: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2112/JCR-SI113-001.1>
- Zaucha, J., Gee, K., Ramieri, E., Neimane, L., Alloncle, N., Blazauskas, N., Calado, H., Cervera-Núñez, C., Kuzmanovic, V.M., Stancheva, M., Witkowska, J., Schütz, E.S., Zapatero, J.R., Ehler, C.N. (2024). Implementing the EU MSP Directive: Current Status and Lessons Learned in 22 EU Member States. Marine Policy, Volume 171 (2025), 106425, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2024.106425>

Conference Reports

- CALADO, H., Cervera-Núñez, C., Gutierrez, D., Stojanovic I (2024). Forging ahead: Climate-smart maritime spatial planning for the future. Marine Policy, Volume 171 (2025), 106503, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2024.106503>





OUTREACH ACTIVITIES BY PARTNERS



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE OUTREACH

SUBMON:

Posts in SUBMON's Instagram and LinkedIn channels about a visit of a school at the Demo site of L'Albera. These are the publications:

https://www.instagram.com/submon_/p/DDzW3CuxKzx/?img_index=1

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/submon_lalbera-mar%C3%ADtima-activity-7275873242681135104-MP_X?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

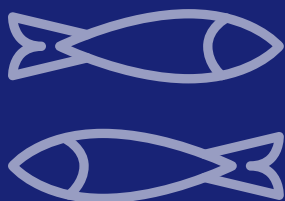
And about the Website launch:

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/submon_conservation-planning-measures-activity-7276872929953411072-ke9b?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

CCMS:

Posts and re-posts on CCMS website: <https://x.com/ccmsbg>

Publishing news/events on CCMS website:
<http://www.ccms.bg/en/>



OTHER GOOD NEWS

BLUE CONNECT has been accepted into the Mission Ocean Charter!

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UPCOMING EVENTS



EU OCEAN DAYS

3-7 March, Brussels

BLUE CONNECT will be present at the [4th EU Blue Parks Community Workshop](#), on 06.03. 'Strict protection in European seas: how it helps people and nature' - via a short presentation on the BLUE CONNECT stakeholder engagement strategy by Margarita Stancheva & Hristo Stanchev.

SUBMARINER also applied for an [MPA Booth](#) where BLUE CONNECT, together with 3 other EU-funded projects (PHAROS, MPA Europe & BioProtect) will host the the ["Mapping Connections: Designing MPA Corridors"](#) game that is currently under development.



EUROPEAN CETACEAN SOCIETY CONFERENCE

14-16 May, Azores

UHI is joining forces across partners to co-lead a marine mammal session hosted by BLUE CONNECT at the [2025 European Cetacean Society conference](#). The workshop proposal has been submitted.

EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY

21-23 May, Cork, Ireland

HAFRO has submitted a workshop proposal on behalf of BioProtect, PHAROS, MPA Europe & BLUE CONNECT for the game ["Mapping Connections: Designing MPA Corridors"](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS



MPA WEBINAR

Date & Time: Wednesday, May 14th, 7PM CET

30 x30? What about the other 70? Cumulative analysis of place-based marine regulations for a more holistic marine protection picture

Presented by: Claire Colegrove and Alex Driedger of ProtectedSeas.
Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hi_qu9_JTPa-vTli8ex_4Q

MSP4BIO GA

Date & Time: 5-6. February, online

The last MSP4BIO General Assembly before the project ends will take place online from February 5-6th.



Thank you for reading