

Towards a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland

A Roadmap for the delivery of
the national Marine Spatial Plan

UCC Law and the Environment Conference

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Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil**
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- **What is MSP?**
- **Why do we need MSP? What's in it for you?**
- **Where are we at in the MSP cycle?**
- **What MSP will and will not do**
- **Process / structures**
- **2018 milestones**

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What is MSP?

- A process that brings together multiple users of the ocean to make informed and coordinated decisions about how to use marine resources sustainably
- Tool for rectifying spatial conflicts if they arise
- EU Directive 2014/89/EU – Minister for HP&LG Competent Authority
- Plan will apply to Ireland's maritime area → territorial seas + exclusive economic zone (EEZ) + continental shelf.
- 490,000 km² → mean high water mark at the coast seaward to in excess of 200 nautical miles in parts
- Marine Plan for Ireland by March 2021 – a parallel to NPF

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Why do we need it? What's in it for you?

- lower transaction costs for maritime businesses and improved national competitiveness;
- improved certainty and predictability for private investments;
- improved certainty in obtaining financing for investments in the maritime area;
- improved use of sea space and the best possible coexistence of uses in coastal zones and marine waters;
- improved attractiveness of coastal regions as places to live and invest;
- reduced co-ordination costs for public authorities;
- greater development of innovation and research; and
- enhanced and integrated data and information.

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Where are we at in the MSP cycle?

Stage	Milestone	Timeframe
Activation Stage	Establish and resource MSP function in Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government	Immediate – complete
	Identify and initiate contact with key stakeholders	Now – end 2017
Development Stage	Establish MSP Inter Agency Group	End November 2017
	Develop road map – <i>Towards a Marine Spatial Plan</i>	Publish before end 2017
	Initiate contact with broader external stakeholder group (e.g. energy industry reps, fisheries, coastal communities etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In writing before end 2017 • Regional workshop/stakeholder fora Q1 2018
	Prepare issues paper (this phase includes collection, mapping and analysis of data on current conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish September 2018 • 2 month consultation
	Prepare draft MSP (including Environmental Assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Minister/Government Q2 2019 • 3 month consultation
Finalisation Stage	Prepare final MSP (including Environmental Assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Minister/Government Q2 2020 • Publish and notify European Commission – Q3 2020
Implementation and Review Stage	Implementation and review	2020 onwards

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What MSP will not do

- Will not
 - replace or amend existing policies, regulatory rules in each sector – fisheries, aquaculture, renewable energy, oil/gas, etc.
 - replace any existing consent systems
 - decide where individual developments or activities take place
 - provide a mechanism for regularising unauthorised developments or activities
 - add/remove SACs/SPAs or change site conservation objectives
 - create new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
 - alter shipping lanes, navigation
 - have a budget to invest in projects or areas
 - introduce a ban on micro plastics or micro beads

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However, marine spatial plans when adopted will...

- be an overarching plan that consent systems must have regard to when making decisions on individual applications
- provide the blue print for stakeholder investment in Ireland's marine sector
- help to determine what areas of our seas are suitable for particular developments, activities or protections
- inform future negotiations on the CFP
- feed into future decisions around European site designations and MPAs
- may involve framework for resolving conflicts, if they arise

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MSP process / structures

Inter Departmental Group – to lead and oversee the development of the MSP. Senior representatives from Marine Institute, local government and government Departments whose policies and functions are relevant to the Plan.

Advisory Group – to ensure participation of relevant non-governmental organisations, professional bodies and technical experts from social, economic, environmental pillars.

Stakeholder engagement – parallel process with strong focus on coastal communities, smaller unaligned stakeholders, individual members of larger representative bodies

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2018 Milestones

- Initiate contact with broader external stakeholder groups (e.g. energy sector reps, fisheries bodies, local environmental groups, coastal communities, local recreational / hospitality reps etc.)
- Commence development of evidence base - Spatial Data and Evidence to support MSP – Marine Institute leading
- Regional workshop/stakeholder fora Q1 2018
- Develop interactive tools (Ireland version of MSP Challenge)
- Prepare **Issues Paper**
- Publish September 2018
- 2 month consultation

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<http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/marine-spatial-planning/towards-marine-spatial-plan-ireland>



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