

**Northwest Atlantic Ecoregional Marine Assessment & Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)
Regional Workshop
June 8-9, 2009 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, Rhode Island**

Guiding Questions

1. General questions for the workshop

- a. Is there a need for marine spatial planning in the Northwest Atlantic? What types of problems could MSP address?
- b. What are the key ecological, socio-economic and governance principles that a regional MSP process should follow? What might be the key goals of a regional MSP process?
- c. How can the boundaries for MSP be identified? What jurisdictions should be included? What should the time frame for the planning component be?
- d. At what scale is marine spatial planning (MSP) most appropriate? Given the existing state and federal planning processes, should they be integrated to develop a regional perspective? How? Is a “nested” approach appropriate?
- e. What is the key ecological, environmental, and oceanographic information needed for MSP? What is the key information about human activities needed for MSP? Does the resolution of that information depend on the scale of the effort? What’s appropriate from a regional perspective?

2. Questions for breakout group discussion Day 1 (Data Café)

- a. How can data be relevant and useful to you?
- b. What are the *opportunities* for using the NAM ERA data for MSP in the NROC/MARCO region, considering:
 - i. Scale
 - ii. Geographic coverage
 - iii. Data gaps
 - iv. Identification of biologically and ecologically important areas
 - v. Identification of economically and socially important areas (existing and future)
- c. What are the *limitations* for using the NAM ERA data for MSP in the NROC/MARCO region, considering:
 - i. Scale
 - ii. Geographic coverage
 - iii. Data gaps
 - iv. Identification of biologically and ecologically important areas
 - v. Identification of economically and socially important areas (existing and future)
- d. Is our data analysis reasonable?

3. Questions for breakout group discussion Day 2 (principles and concepts)

Overarching/Guiding

- a. What are examples of the social and economic benefits of MSP? What are examples of the environmental benefits?
- b. How could the NAM ERA data be useful in helping to achieve multiple management objectives
- c. How could MSP provide predictability and certainty for project applicants? What other benefits to the private sector can MSP deliver, e.g., stream-lined permitting?
- d. How could the protection of ecologically or biologically important areas be considered as part of MSP?
- e. How can all sectors be integrated into MSP? (i.e. fisheries, oil and gas, shipping)
- f. What tools can be used to implement MSP, e.g., zoning, performance standards, codes of conduct, etc.? Is zoning always required to implement MSP? Does MSP have to result in legally defined zones to be useful?

Operationalizing

- a. What types of incentives are needed to facilitate state, regional or federal scale MSP?
- b. Can federal and state agencies have common information standards and requirements for evaluating specific project proposals?
- c. How could roles for federal agencies and NGOs be defined in state processes?
- d. What federal agencies should be involved in MSP efforts and what should their roles be? Are there particular agencies that should play lead roles in coordination?

Data and Information

- a. How could federal and state agencies with diverse missions coordinate their data collection and management to improve efficiency and access to well organized MSP data?
- b. What are the barriers to data coordination and integration?
- c. What is the key information needed for MSP? Does the resolution of that information depend on the scale of the effort? What's appropriate from a regional perspective?
- d. How could information about the future be used, e.g., projections of future marine transportation, offshore oil and gas, offshore aquaculture, sand and gravel mining, etc? How can future sea use scenarios be considered in MSP? How could anticipated effects of climate, e.g., shifts in habitats or animal populations, be incorporated into MSP?