

# FIRST TRAINING SCHOOL FOR THE PROMOTION AND APPLICATION OF EU MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN NON-EU MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA COUNTRIES

*4-8 JUNE 2012, CHIOS ISLAND, GREECE*

## Minutes

### 1. Background

The "First Training School for the promotion and application of EU Marine Environmental Policy Frameworks in non-EU Mediterranean and Black Sea countries", was held on 4-8 June 2012, in **Chios island**, Greece and was hosted at the “**Maria Tsakos Foundation**” International Centre for Maritime Research & Tradition.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is the EU’s legal instrument for the protection of Europe’s seas. Its overall objective is to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) of the EU Marine waters by 2020. It involves the adoption of an integrated and ecosystem-based approach to the management of all human activities, which have an impact on the marine environment. Additionally, it highlights the importance of a regional approach to implementation. Further to the EU Framework policies requirements, the cooperation across marine regions is also needed by the United Nations Regular Process on reporting and assessment of the marine environment for enhancing coherence and consistency. Therefore, a basin-wide promotion of MSFD and WFD principles across the Black Sea area can contribute to establishing common understanding and joint approaches to ensure coherence and consistency throughout the Black Sea countries, aiming to facilitate the basin-wide promotion of the MSFD principles and objectives with emphasis on non-EU countries.

The aim of this first training school in Chios was to bring together leading research Institutes from EU Member States, and Black Sea countries, to join forces in a coordinated manner, in order to address common environmental pressures and to train environmental agencies’ personnel, in order to help them improve the conduct of their operations using existing and new data, in compliance with the MSFD and WFD targets. In addition, its main scope was to increase the Black Sea countries capacity for ecosystem state assessment, definition of Good Environmental and Quality Status, monitoring and management based on the MSFD descriptors and WFD Quality Elements

and to provide tools for the application of MSFD and WFD principles and strengthen networking.

This first training school took place in Chios under the auspices and support of the GSRT (The Hellenic Republic being the coordinating country for the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology until June 2012 for the BSEC area) and in the framework of the PERSEUS FP7 collaborative project, coordinated by HCMR.

## 2. Attendees (see Annex 1)

Sixteen scientists from 8 Black Sea countries were invited to participate as trainees, whereas 13 distinguished lecturers from EU and Black Sea countries addressed issues related to the implementation of the European Directives regarding the marine environment and especially the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Furthermore, 7 local scientists (from Chios) were invited by the “M. Tsakos Foundation” to attend the training course, whose work is related to environmental issues.

The trainee selection criteria were the following:

1. A university degree
2. Involvement in the implementation of policies related to marine environment (science/policy/administration)
3. Very good knowledge of English
4. Post-graduate studies on relevant fields were welcomed

## 3. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Stavros Michailidis, director of the “**Maria Tsakos Foundation**” International Centre for Maritime Research & Tradition, welcomed the participants and lecturers of the first training school on behalf of Captain Panayiotis Tsakos, founder of the “M. Tsakos foundation” in Chios.

Then, Dr Vassiliki Pletsa, welcomed and addressed the participants on behalf of the General Secretary for Research and Technology, encouraging an interactive dialogue between lecturers and trainees.

Finally, Dr Evangelos Papathanassiou, coordinator of PERSEUS, welcomed the participants and opened the training school activities, specified its aims and prospects, especially related to a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop in 2013 in Turkey.

The General Secretary for Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Mr. Konstantinos Kokkinoplytis, visited the training school in Chios on Tuesday 5 June 2012, addressed the participants and gave his best wishes for a successful training school.

Representatives from the local authorities were also invited to attend the official opening of the training school. (see Annex 2)

#### 4. Lectures and Presentations (see Annex 3)

##### 4.1 Monday 4 June 2012

The first session was on “Strategic Applications for Healthy Marine Ecosystems: *MSFD and the Role of PERSEUS*” and comprised presentations by:

- **Evangelos Papathanassiou** (HCMR - Greece), who presented the “PERSEUS EU Project and the Potential for the Promotion of MSFD Principles”, which included an overview of the principles of MSFD, the scientific challenges ahead, the role of PERSEUS, its scientific objectives, a brief overview of the work to be done and the expected impact.
- **Gianna Casazza** (ISPRA, Institute for Environmental Protection and Research – Rome, Italy) who presented the “EU’s Legal Instruments for the Protection of Our Seas, Their Historical Review and Key Concepts on Policy and Science” and gave a synoptic but comprehensive view of policies in action for coastal and marine environment protection/management.

The second session of the first day comprised two presentations regarding the “Progress in Regional Marine Conventions”:

- **Michael Angelidis** (UNEP/MAP MEDPOL officer) presented the “Ecosystem Approach for the Management of Human Activities in the Mediterranean”, which is the overarching principle of the UNEP/MAP strategy.
- **Irene Makarenko’s** (LL.M., Permanent Secretariat of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, Bucharest Convention) presentation was on the “Environmental Policies in the Black Sea Related to MSFD Principles”, including facts on the Black Sea, an overview of Bucharest Convention and its Protocols, the institutional base, the relations EU-BSC, Interaction of BSC documents and EU Directives (WFD and MSFD) and a number of conclusions.

The third and final session of the first day included a first part of case studies regarding “Where We Started, Where We Are Going and How”, which comprised the presentations of:

- **Maria Kapari** (National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment - Greece) on “Incorporation of WFD and MSFD into the Greek Legislation” giving the road map of the Greek approach to comply with the deadlines of the Directive and the steps already taken to achieve it.
- **Colpan Polat Beken** (TÜBİTAK- Marmara Research Center Environment Institute, Turkey) on the “The Implementation of WFD (and MSFD) in a Non-EU Country”. Dr Beken presented the Regional seas surrounding Turkey (including the Sea of Marmara), the Environmental policies for the coastal and marine waters/responsible institutes of implementation, the projects of adaptation to WFD and MSFD, the Watershed Protection Action Plans, the coastal sensitive

areas and hot spots, the Environmental Assessment and Quality Classification of Coastal and Marine Waters (in relevance to WFD and MSFD), the IPA Proposals, and the EU Projects in Turkey.

An official dinner was offered by the organizers, during the evening of the first day, at the Grecian Castle hotel, where all participants were staying.

#### 4.2 Tuesday 5 June 2012

During the second day, all lectures addressed the topic “Assessment Tools and New Indicators Requirements in the Frame of MSFD”:

- **Gianna Casazza** presented her second lecture on “MSFD: Common Understanding of Determination of GES and Establishment of Environmental Targets” explaining the steps for national marine strategies development and determination of GES according to the 11 MSFD descriptors.
- **Nikolaos Zampoukas** (EC, DG JRC, Institute for Environment & Sustainability) gave two lectures: “Initial Assessment: Setting the Baseline for GES” and “Towards an Integrated Marine Monitoring for the Marine Strategy Framework Directives”. The first lecture addressed the aims and concepts of the Initial Assessment, the of IA Role in the MSFD implementation cycle, the availability of data & methods for assessment, highlighted the best practices and particularly the more relevant for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and finished with gaps and open issues. The second lecture addressed the legislative background, concepts and examples of integrated monitoring, large scale and less applied monitoring approaches and the JRC monitoring activities on contaminants & litter.
- **Panos Panayotidis** (HCMR, Greece) also gave two lectures: the first one with the title “From the Habitat Directive to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive: The Ecosystem Based Management in the Mediterranean” and the second one “Marine Strategy Framework Directive: Descriptor 10: Properties and Quantities of Marine Litter Do Not Cause Harm to the Coastal and Marine Environment. Descriptor 11: Introduction of Energy, Including Underwater Noise, Is at Levels That Do Not adversely Affect the Marine Environment” introducing some of the new challenges of the MSFD.
- **Argyro Zenetos** (HCMR, Greece) in the first part of her lecture presented the “MSFD EC Decision (2010/477/EU) – Descriptor 2: Non-Indigenous Species Introduced by Human Activities Are at Levels That Do Not Adversely Alter the Ecosystem” whereas in the second part she spoke about the two criteria for assessing progress towards GES in relation to marine invasive species.

#### 4.3 *Wednesday 6 June 2012*

On Wednesday 6 June, an excursion was planned by the “Maria Tsakos Foundation” to all participants who went on board the sailboat “Mania” at the port of Chios city with first destination the town of the nearby small island of Oinoussai, where they visited the local maritime museum. The second destination was the town of Kardamyla at the northern part of Chios Island, where lunch was offered by Captain Panayiotis Tsakos at his house in Kardamyla.

#### 4.4 *Thursday 7 June 2012*

The topic “Assessment Tools and New Indicators Requirements in the Frame of MSFD” continued from Tuesday during the morning session on Thursday 7 June 2012 with two more lectures by:

- **Claudette Spiteri** (Deltares, EEA/ETC/ICM) on “Development of Marine and Maritime Indicators, in Support of MSFD Implementation”. Dr Spiteri included information on the general context of indicators and MSFD indicators in her lecture, and then talked about the stages in development of indicators, the process in a Pan European, or regional or national seas level, the content related to descriptors and criteria, monitoring parameters, environmental targets and the Maritime Indicators. She finalised her lecture with a reference to shortcomings and the way forward.
- **Vassiliki Vassilopoulou** (HCMR, Greece) on “Assessment and Development of Indicators Regarding Exploited Fish and Shellfish” focusing on the fisheries indicator, but also giving several examples on the overall assessment of the MSFD. As Dr. Vassilopoulou is the co-WP Leader in PERSEUS, in a WP that is totally related to the MSFD issues, she presented examples of the data and information that are needed for the assessment of the state, especially on the Good Environmental State (GES) and how they can be used.

Then the last session on Thursday 7 June 2012 “Theory and Training on Existing Indicators – Future Development in the Frame of MSFD”, with examples of data use for the training purposes, was addressed by:

- **Nomiki Simboura** (HCMR, Greece): The implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Eastern Mediterranean, State of the Art on Benthic Indicators (Phytobenthos & Zoobenthos).
- **Kalliopi Pagou** (HCMR, Greece): The Implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Eastern Mediterranean, State of the Art on Phytoplankton Indicators Further Development of Indicators Related to Eutrophication.

#### 4.5 Friday 8 June 2012

Participants were requested to be prepared to give a short presentation on the marine environmental pressure and state, and the environmental policies applied in their countries.

The case studies presented by participants were:

**Armenia:** Hasmik Grigoryan & Larisa Kharatova (Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia) “Republic of Armenia: State Environmental Governance”

**Azerbaijan:** Konul Ahmadova (Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources) “The Caspian Sea”

**Bulgaria:** Daniela Toneva-Zheynova (Technical University of Varna, Bulgaria; e-mail:d\_toneva@abv.bg) “Marine Strategy and the Bulgarian Experience”

**Georgia:** A) Irine Baramidze (Batumi State Maritime Academy) “Environmental condition of the Georgia surface and coastal zone waters”, B) Madona Varshanidze (Batumi State Maritime Academy) “Biodiversity of the Georgian Black Sea coastal zone”

**Greece:** A) George Parnassas (Ministry of Environment) “Implementation of WFD and MSFD in Greece: Management and Finance” B) Sissia Roussi “Management Agency of the National Park Messolonghi-Etoliko Lagoon”

**Romania:** A) Andra OROS, National Institute for Marine Research and Development (NIMRD) “Grigore Antipa”, Constanta, Romania “National Environmental Policy for the Marine Environment- Romania”, B) Marian-Traian Gomoiu “Marine Environment Pressure in the NW Black Sea – Romanian Littoral System: Past, Present, Perspectives, Strategies and Policies”

**Turkey:** A) Ayse Gazihan Akoglu & Baris Salihoglu (Institute of Marine Science Middle East Technical University) “Application of EU Marine Environmental Policy Frameworks in Turkey”, B) Patricia Ramey – Balci (TÜBİTAK Marmara Research Center, Environmental Institute, Turkey) “WFD and Insights into the Sea of Marmara: a Benthic Perspective”

## 5. General Discussion - Wrap Up

Based on the presentations a General Discussion was made during the Wrap-Up Session at the end of the Workshop.

The following points were discussed:

- The first step towards collaboration was taken and the networking of people charged with responsibilities on WFD, MSFD or environmental monitoring in Black Sea countries has been achieved. The second step might be more difficult, as it requires the application/implementation of policies.
- The participants are free to contact the lecturers from the workshop and PERSEUS can really help in this direction
- Regarding policy and policy options in relation to the MSFD, we have to choose what is best for environmental protection. The principles of MSFD have been set out and give a nice opportunity to assess, to take actions and measure these actions. The principles have to be evaluated in all countries.
- We mustn't forget that we have tried our best, that the MSFD has just started and the problems still need solutions.
- However, it is the "duty" of the people working with environmental monitoring to think of the next step. As environmental problems have no frontiers, we have to deal with the environmental problems and produce the relevant policies! Connections/collaborations have to be made nationally, regionally, and/or internationally.
- What is important for scientists, has to be understood by stakeholders at all levels
- We have to rely on modeling whenever we have no data using evaluation of the models from past data and information.
- Scientists have to propose intercalibration actions, while monitoring should be continuous in the Black Sea.
- Regionally, we need to agree that although different countries may be involved, a common vision has to be applied.
- Two examples for future activities were mentioned: a sediment experiment in the Marmara Sea, which could help understanding the issues related to sedimentation processes, while management plans in aquaculture have to be applied in the Mediterranean Sea.

## 6. Evaluation

On the last day, a questionnaire was given out to trainees to ask for their opinion on the training school. The results were very encouraging for the next steps (see Annex 4)