

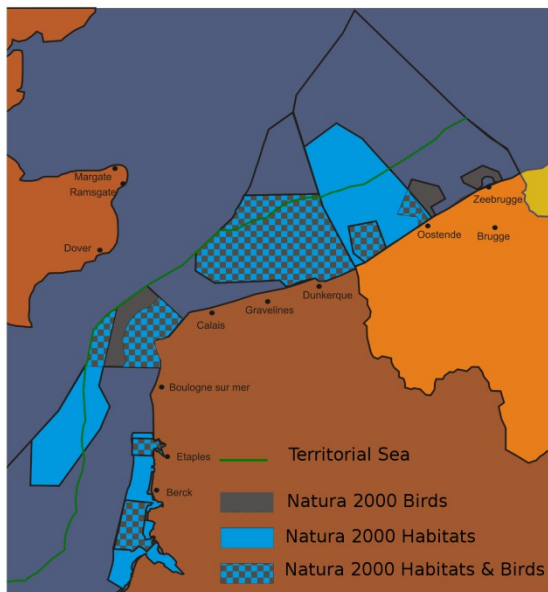


TransMaSP

Summary

Introduction

From a public law and policy perspective, the TransMaSP (Transboundary Maritime Spatial Planning) project explores the impact of legal and natural boundaries in the implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) which is a tool to integrate sea use management. In order to feed this research with concrete elements, TransMaSP has analyzed a case study: the French-Belgian marine and coastal zone boundary (encompassing the Nord-Pas-de-Calais French region and the Belgian coastline) which is a highly used space together with a valuable environment.



Objectives

TransMasP aims to analyze the impact of natural border (Land/Sea) and political border (French/Belgian) on the implementation of MSP. It endeavors to contribute to the understanding and development of the concept of Maritime Spatial Planning, its relation with Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Ecosystem Approach. It has combined the abovementioned theories in order to confront a fundamental question: how to keep sea use management coherent in a transboundary context?

Method

In order to achieve these objectives, the analysis of the French-Belgian case study has been conducted. Besides of desk research, qualitative interviews were conducted. A guidance committee gathering a large panel of stakeholders (from administration, NGO, private sector and scientists) was set up. It has followed the project progresses and advised on further developments.



Results & conclusions

- It has been established that France and Belgium show two different approaches towards integrated coastal and sea management. France has developed a legal framework for marine and coastal strategies, at national and sub-national level, within which MSP can be developed if necessary. On the other hand, Belgium opted to develop a practical sea use management approach namely the Master Plan, an example of MSP in terms of zoning. It misses an overall strategy. However, it could be improved by a new legislation in the near future. In both States the respective approaches remain strongly seaward oriented.
- MSP/ICZM: both States are mindful of the need to integrate land and sea management within ICZM and MSP. The main obstacle remains the lack of cooperation between authorities. The key challenge will be the ability of France and Belgium to develop a fair and transparent cooperation between central or federal State, regional and local authorities in the future.
- Cross-border cooperation in MSP can realize lots of different realities according to its purposes, content and instruments. Indeed, the choices States have to make are strongly linked to the history and the context of the cooperation. The main added-value of cooperation in MSP is to bring an integrated approach to the pre-existing cooperation allowing a comprehensive vision of sea uses and to develop an ecosystem approach.
- A main common concern in cross-border sea use management is sharing information and data. EU appears to be in the best position to tackle this issue. This is in light of the fact that a strong development of EMODnet would be a tangible contribution to MSP cross-border cooperation.

Potential impact

The result of this research can be of interest to all stakeholders involved in coastal and sea use management: policy makers, civil society and scientists. It highlights important issues to take into consideration while developing integrated approach of coastal and maritime management in a transboundary context and list the different institutional options to achieve it with their advantages and constraints.

For more information, please visit the TransMaSP website: <http://www.transmasp.ugent.be/> or contact me at the following address: betty.queffelec@gmail.com