

COASTAL COMMUNITIES IN MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING: CONNECTING LAND AND SEA



Marine Spatial Planning

Marine spatial planning (MSP) is a public process that aims to bring ocean users together to manage human activities effectively and sustainably. The Government of Canada through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) is developing marine spatial plans in five marine planning areas in the Atlantic and Pacific regions. Maritime nations around the world are adopting MSP, with over 100 countries having implemented planning ranging from early stages, as in Canada, to second and third generation plans.

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How do communities make decisions?

This project reviewed the literature about community decision-making processes, particularly natural resource-based decisions. The review investigated how information is used in making decisions and the structures that support decision-making, and identified factors that affect community decision-making.

Tobbi Dyer, MLIS



Publications

Manuel, P., & MacDonald, B. H. (2020). Local governments and coastal communities are more than stakeholders in MSP. *The Journal of Ocean Technology*, 15(2), 128-129.

Yet, M., Manuel, P., DeVidi, M., & MacDonald, B. H. (2022). Learning from experience: Lessons from community-based engagement for improving participatory MSP. *Planning Practice and Research*, 37(2), 189-212.



Designing a place-based decision-making framework for local stakeholder engagement in MSP

Using the Scotian Shelf-Bay of Fundy bioregion as a case study area, this research aims to reimagine MSP by moving from a top-down to a locally-based approach, supported by participatory planning. The study focuses on understanding local stakeholder engagement principles; how to build engagement in MSP; and the social, cultural, or political contexts of the Scotian Shelf-Bay of Fundy bioregion communities that influence the participation of local stakeholders.

Daniel Martinez Calderon, IDPhD student



Toward a participatory MSP framework for community-based aquaculture planning in Atlantic Canada

MSP can arise in response to a sector need, like aquaculture. Aquaculture in Atlantic Canada could benefit from marine planning but needs a transparent, community-based process. Stakeholder engagement in MSP is criticized for being top-down and tokenistic. This research explored stakeholder engagement in MSP, experiences in marine planning in Nova Scotia, and participation best practices in terrestrial planning. Lessons from terrestrial planning can inform community-based aquaculture planning.

Maggie Yet, MPlan



Conference presentations

MARE People and the Sea, virtual.
Coastal Zone Canada, virtual.
Sustainable Oceans, virtual.
Atlantic Planners Institute, Charlottetown.

Canada marine planning atlas – Atlantic: User perspectives from coastal communities

DFO launched a digital marine atlas for Atlantic Canada in winter, 2023. This study identified the relevance of the spatial data for Nova Scotian coastal communities, data gaps, and data that could be included in the atlas to support those interests. The research also explored the user experience with the atlas.

Julia Szujo, MPlan



Briefings, conferences

Presentation and briefing note to DFO on community interests and the Marine Atlas – Atlantic.

Coastal communities in marine spatial planning: Connecting across the coastal zone. Coastal Zone Canada 2023, Victoria.



2019

DFO Initiates MSP

2020 Pandemic



2021

2022

2023

2024

How we began our research

Our MSP Research Group is part of the Ocean Frontier Institute Phase 1 Large Projects: Module M - Social License and Planning in Coastal Communities (coastalfutures.ca). Module M focuses on sustainable aquaculture. In the Atlantic provinces, aquaculture lacks a planning framework and could benefit from marine planning. MSP could support sustainable aquaculture, but needs a transparent, community-based process. We planned the research to be place-based in a socio-ecological model to benefit community development within the environmental limits for fish farming.

While that was our plan, place-based research needs to work with places and partners. Communities and local governments in Nova Scotia, where our research is situated, are often ambivalent or cautious about aquaculture or opposed to it in their coastal waters. No one wanted to talk about aquaculture, let alone plan for it. But they were interested in MSP.

Dr. Patricia Manuel &
Dr. Bertrum H. MacDonald



Conference and workshop presentations

COIN Atlantic, Halifax.
Ocean Frontier Institute, St. John's.
MARE: People and Sea, Amsterdam.
Atlantic Planners Institute, St. John's.

The role of stakeholder participation, MSP, and Participatory GIS in siting aquaculture facilities

Diverse strategies and tools support public participation in land use planning and resource management. This study scanned the global literature to identify the use of PGIS in MSP and if and how both PGIS and MSP are used in siting aquaculture facilities.

Brianna Maxwell, BCD



The role of municipal governments in MSP in Nova Scotia

Senior levels of government would typically initiate and manage MSP. If MSP is intended to facilitate sustainable marine management and promote a blue economy, coastal communities should be primary beneficiaries.

This study explored how local governments in Nova Scotia can fit into MSP for the benefit of coastal communities and improvement of processes and outcomes. Coastal communities occupy the land-sea interface, but many interviewees noted that land and sea are often separated in planning processes and communities are not connected to marine planning. Local communities and their governments are the social, economic, and political link between land and sea.

Monica DeVidi, MPlan



Briefing notes and blog posts

Shoring up MSP: A briefing note on the role for municipal governments in marine spatial planning in Nova Scotia.

Can marine spatial planning learn from community-based engagement practices?

Perspectives on social value, processes, and outcomes of marine spatial planning at MARE People and the Sea X, June 24-28, 2019, Amsterdam.

"Out of the blue": Integrating land and marine planning for coastal community resilience: A MARE People and the Sea conference session.

Maritime spatial planning: Past, present, future: A book review.

Coastalfutures.ca

Marine Spatial Planning Workshop

Re-imagining MSP from the bottom up

Coastal communities' interests and processes do not fit easily into MSP frameworks. Our research group transitioned from the initial research plan to re-imagining MSP for coastal community benefit, that is, MSP applied in local waters, addressing local marine environmental and resource use concerns, and examining the land-coast-sea planning continuum. Coastal communities do not sit at the edge of MSP, they are its fulcrum.

We ask:

What is the role for local governments in MSP in Atlantic Canada?

What is a framework for meaningful and results-based community participation in local-level MSP?

