Draft Descriptor Fiches

Follow up to the Evaluation support study

Workshop on the Review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Alicia McNeill (Milieu)

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Introduction

- Purpose of the fiches
- Overview of key questions
- Next steps

Covered in this batch: D1 (biodiversity), D4 (food webs), D6 (seafloor integrity), D5 (eutrophication), and D10 (marine litter)

Purpose of the fiches

▶ Support development of the baseline (evaluation and any subsequent IA)

  ▶ When assessing effectiveness/costs/benefits, what stems from the MSFD and what stems from other factors?

  ▶ How does the MSFD interact with other legislation?

  ▶ What would be the impacts of certain options?

▶ Fiches are a practical way of collecting information from a wide range of sources

  ▶ Drafts: information can be added, and knowledge and needs developed

  ▶ Looking forward: expected developments (to 2030), and what can be expected to happen, with or without these changes

State of the environment

- This varies significantly by descriptor
  - Some are in relatively good state (contamination in seafood)
  - Some have very little data available, so it is difficult to know (pelagic habitats)

Communication to the public

- Some descriptors are well understood (marine litter, marine mammals)
- Some have understood poorly (pelagic habitats, food webs)

Main EU policies

- Many existing policies are sector-specific, and may not relate exclusively to the marine environment
  - Some have many related policies (eutrophication)
  - Some have many broadly relevant policies (biodiversity, vis-à-vis conservation polices)
- The Green Deal and related actions came up in all fiches

Components of the marine strategies

- Quantification and qualification of GES
  - Some descriptors are well understood (including TV), especially those linked to other legislation (eutrophication, marine litter)
- Targets
  - Some targets exist outside the MSFD, but are often very broad
- Measures
- Monitoring

CIS groups

▶ Some descriptors have specific technical groups (marine litter, seabed)

▶ Others are incorporated more broadly (eutrophication, biodiversity)

RSCs

▶ RSCs are doing a lot of work on certain descriptors (marine litter)

▶ Some align with MSFD descriptors, others less so (eutrophication falls under 'pollution')

Looking Forward: climate change

- Climate change will impact all descriptors, but in different ways
  - Physiological changes
  - Renewable/offshore energy production

Upcoming policy trends

- Various sectoral policies changing (UWWTD, energy, CAP)
- Nature Restoration Law could have large impacts (including binding targets)

Next steps

- What do we need?
  - All descriptors? Do we need to add (or remove) questions?
  - How does this feed into the overall baseline?
- If need be, continue building on what we have (inc. other descriptors)