

Towards Solent Marine Planning (SoMaP) - Briefing Papers

Briefing Paper 2 - August 2010

What is SoMaP?

The Solent Forum is managing this partnership project, now close to completion, to help prepare the Solent for future marine planning. The project started in February 2009 and will finish in October 2010. The results will be disseminated to Solent stakeholders at the Southern Marine Planning Conference in September. It has an established Steering Group and Data Group. Full details of the project and project resources can be found on the Solent Forum website at www.solentforum.org/forum/SoMaP/.

Background

The aim of the project is to achieve the first steps in the process of establishing a Solent marine planning system, by starting to build a Solent-wide coastal and marine policy framework including a spatial database of plans, policies and activities by sector. Two strands to the project include:

1. Understanding what data is required at this initial stage to strategically assess different sectors plans and policies in the Solent; and
2. Work closely with a range of stakeholders represented in all sectors and governance of the Solent to obtain this information and explore their views towards a Solent scale marine plan.

The project is working to a programme agreed by its Steering Group and this includes the following seven work packages:

1. Establish a communications strategy.
2. Reiterate national progress on Marine Spatial Planning by the Defra implementation team back to stakeholders.
3. Scope with stakeholders the case for a marine plan at a Solent scale.
4. Understand the information requirements for a Solent Marine Planning System.
5. Agree pilot case study sectors, to represent pressing Solent issues and land and marine interactions, and use these to test the data and information.
6. Obtain and map all sectoral policies within the Solent; obtain further data as agreed in work package.
7. Evaluate project findings and make recommendations to stakeholders.

Stakeholder Engagement

A large number of organisations are involved with managing the Solent including local authorities, harbour authorities, Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, Sea Fisheries Committees, NGOs and recreational and user groups. In addition many statutory and non statutory plans and initiatives already exist. A new marine planning system will bring about change to this management structure; planning for the Solent area will be included in the Marine Management Organisation's 'South Inshore' marine plan area.

Stakeholder engagement and consultation has been at the heart of the project. A Communications Strategy was agreed and followed, and over 80 stakeholder organisations in the Solent attended SoMaP workshop meetings and completed stakeholder engagement questionnaires.

Policy Matrix

The project examined the different sectoral planning policies within the Solent to help inform the new Marine Management Organisation and those with an interest in the potential development of a marine plan. The project team searched and collated over 400 plans and policies over the whole range of sectors operating in the coastal and marine environment. From this dataset key plans and policies were then selected and examined in more detail, with a series of metadata for each policy obtained. This policy matrix can be searched from the Solent Forum website via a web portal designed by Geodata.



Case Studies

The project examined three case studies in more detail to help determine the best way of collecting policy data, and identify further data of relevance. The three case studies selected were:

- Hamble Estuary – this provides a complete estuary case study of a geomorphologically typical Solent estuary with many land and sea planning interactions.
- Boating Movements – this theme was selected as the Solent is very densely used by ships and boats. This tests how marine planning relates to navigation, safety and recreational water use.
- Coastal Squeeze – this is a big issue for the Solent as the low lying coastline is particularly affected by sea level rise. Habitats and coastal livelihoods will be displaced over the next 100 years by sea level rise.

Project Outputs

The following reports and documents have been produced and are available on the Forum's website. These will be brought together into a final report which will include an evaluation of the project findings and recommendations.

- Work programme
- Briefing notes 1 and 2
- Communications Strategy
- National Progress on Marine Planning – report and presentation
- Information requirements report
- Policy matrix – Excel version
- Policy Matrix – Geodata web-based portal
- Report on SoMaP Stakeholder meetings
- The role of stakeholders in the marine planning process – Volume 1: A review of good practice and lessons learnt from international experience
- The role of stakeholders in the marine planning process – Volume 2: A Solent perspective

Steering and Data Groups

The project is steered by the following organisations: Hampshire County Council, West Sussex County Council, Southampton City Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council, Defra, SEEDA, GOSE, Crown Estate, Environment Agency and Natural England. The project also established a Data Group to guide the collation and management of information; this group includes the Crown Estate, Seazone Hydrosatial, Channel Coastal Observatory, ABPMer and Geodata.

Further Information

For more information on this and other Solent Forum projects you can visit our website at www.solentforum.org/SoMaP/. The SoMaP project officers are Karen McHugh of the Solent Forum and Bernadine Maguire from Southampton City Council. For more information contact Karen on 01962 846027 or email info@solentforum.org.

Minutes and papers from the project can be downloaded from www.solentforum.org/forum/SoMaP/Resources/.

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