

Report on the third MOSES Policy Decision Forum (PDF)

Action nº4

Work Package 3

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Held online as part of the Oceans in National Income Accounts 5th International Symposium 2021

24 March 2021

Appendix A: Agenda

On the 24th of March 2021 the 3rd Policy Decision Forum (PDF) took place on-line as part of Oceans in National Income Accounts 5th International Symposium 2021, hosted by NUIG, Ireland and the MOSES consortium. The theme of the 3^d PDF coincides with the theme of the third session of the symposium which was about the “Blue Growth Pathways for blue economy sectors” as developed by research done for the MOSES case studies (WP7). The PDF was a combination of presentations, questions and answers (Q&A) after the end of each presentation and a voting exercise using the poll option in zoom. Participants, consisted of 90 stakeholders from business, policy making and academia from the Atlantic Area and around the world (due to the international range of the symposium).

The talks were about the blue growth pathways for four key sectors, namely coastal and maritime tourism in Ireland (West Atlantic), ports and shipping in UK (NI), offshore renewable energy in France (Brittany) and aquaculture in Portugal (Centro Region). The common elements that were addressed by all four presentations were the current level of sustainable development of each sector, the current stage of development of these sectors and the opportunities/drivers and challenges/barriers that each sector faces for a transition towards sustainable blue growth (SBG). The agenda of the symposium where the titles of the presentations and the presenters’ names are included

along with the presentations themselves can be found at <http://mosesproject.eu/watch-it-again-all-of-the-conference-video-now-online/>.

The Q&A that followed each presentation gave a more detailed view of the challenges each sector is facing for their transition towards SBG and some suggestions to overcome them. Also after the end of each presentation and during the Q&A discussions, the participants were given the opportunity to select from a number of these challenges what they thought were most important. This later element was organized as follows: Challenges for each sector (that were identified from earlier research that took place in the framework of MOSES) were categorized under the four themes of environmental, economic, societal and governance. In order to simplify the voting only two challenges were presented in the polls for each of the first three categories (so six in total) and four were presented for the governance category. From the first six challenges the participants were asked to select two (independent of the category) and from the second four challenges they were asked to select one. The reason why governance challenges were presented separately was because for each sector the governance challenges were always of higher number and frequency comparing to the other three categories and it was necessary to have at least one challenge belonging in this category in the final results.

For the **coastal and maritime tourism sector** the MOSES research that was conducted and presented was on the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW), a 2500 km coastal touring route along the west coast of Ireland from 2018-2020. From the identified environmental, societal, economic and governance challenges that the sector is facing, those that were deemed relevant at the regional AA level were:

- Increasing impacts on our coasts due to climate change and erosion
- The need to reduce ecological footprint of tourism businesses
- The need to keep jobs local where possible
- The opposition to any development, be it sustainable or not
- The need to increase accessibility of the tourist destination (need for appropriate transportation, infrastructure and accommodation)
- The Post Covid travel restrictions that affects the traveling of international tourists
- The need for continued community collaboration that is essential from the outset of any coastal tourism development
- The need for sectoral planning based on clearly defined and measurable goals for sustainable growth
- The need for sectoral planning frameworks to provide guidance for managing multi-stakeholder conflicts
- The need for decentralized governance as coastal communities tend to have their own needs and identity

From these, the governance challenge that refers to “The need for continued community collaboration” and the environmental challenges about the “the need to reduce ecological footprint of tourism businesses” and “the Increasing impacts of climate change and erosion” were the mostly voted by the participants

For the **ports and shipping sector**, the research that was conducted was on the Belfast Harbor in Northern Ireland. From the identified environmental, societal, economic and governance challenges that the sector is facing, those that were deemed relevant at the regional AA level were:

- High costs associated with sustainability actions
- Economic instability and uncertain flows of investment
- Climate change that requires ports and shipping to decarbonize and seek zero carbon emissions
- Limited data and research on monitoring and addressing environmental impacts
- Fragmented governance systems leading to conflict
- Collapsing of port industries and loss of employment
- Lack of evidence, transparency and competency in policy making related to the sector
- Lack of land use and marine spatial planning that would bring efficiency, infrastructure and capacity
- The participation of diverse actors in the sector that requires a great deal of coordination for the measures to be implemented and to be truly effective.
- Different regulations or overregulation can be an obstacle when they do not follow a common pattern.

From these, most often selected by the participants were governance challenges such as the “Fragmented governance systems”, the “Different regulations or overregulation” and the environmental challenge related to the “Climate change that requires decarbonization of ports and shipping”.

For the **offshore renewable energy sector**, the research that was conducted was regarding the sustainability of this sector in Brittany, France. From the identified environmental, societal, economic and governance challenges that the sector is facing, those that were deemed relevant at the regional AA level were:

- Addressing visual impacts of offshore energy installations
- Difficulty in assessment of trade-offs between environmental benefits from ORE and environmental costs from ORE
- High costs related to ORE developments offshore and their connection with the national electricity grid
- Difficulty to influence large size clients’ strategies (ORE developers and investors) so as to support the creation of a strong ORE supply chain
- Ensuring permanent jobs are based in local area
- Need for increased ORE adapted training and skill levels
- Low acceptance or opposition by environmental or other community groups against ORE developments
- The need for sectoral planning frameworks to provide guidance for managing multi-stakeholder conflicts
- Transparency and clearly defined motivations for ORE siting decisions
- Difficulty to calculate trade-offs between local vs global benefits from ORE

From these, the economic challenge of “assessing trade-offs between environmental costs and benefits from ORE” and the governance challenge that refers to “the need for sectoral planning frameworks to provide guidance for managing multi-stakeholder conflicts” were the mostly voted during the participants of the 3d PDF

For the **aquaculture sector**, the research that was conducted and presented was about the sustainability of this sector in the Centro Region of Portugal, showed that the majority of stakeholders involved were optimistic regarding the achievement of sustainable blue growth by the sector. From the identified environmental, societal, economic and governance challenges that the sector is facing, those that were deemed relevant at the regional AA level were:

- Risk of introduction of non-indigenous species
- Need for adaptation to climate change
- Cheap imported aquaculture products that compete with local production
- Closed sector that does not encourage access to new investors
- Uncertainties around production creates fluctuation in employment
- Poor employment conditions
- The need for one common aquaculture spatial planning frameworks for all types of locations (on land, inland, coastal and marine waters)
- The need for planning frameworks to provide guidance for managing multi-stakeholder conflicts
- The need to boost collaboration and communication between the same or different categories of key actors
- Provision of truthful and accurate information to consumers on aquaculture products

From these, most often selected by the participants were the governance challenge that refers to “the need for one common aquaculture spatial planning frameworks for all types of locations” and an economic one that refers to the “cheap imported aquaculture products that compete with local production”

Suggestions towards sustainable blue growth, based on the most selected challenges for each sector

Addressing environmental and governance challenges impacting blue tourism

When planning towards a sustainable blue growth profile of the tourism sector, consideration should be given to the estimation of positive impacts such as increased cultural ecosystem services and preservation and promotion of local heritage. Also it is important to measure the sector dependencies and impacts, intersectoral collaboration and community engagement must be included.

Addressing environmental and governance challenges impacting blue ports and shipping

When planning towards a sustainable blue growth profile of the ports and shipping sector identifying projects that can reduce emissions in the shipping industry, and improve waste management is important. Developing indicators for these aspects of the transition to more sustainable growth paths would also be a worthwhile undertaking.

Addressing economic and governance challenges impacting blue offshore renewable energy

When planning towards a sustainable blue growth profile of the offshore renewable energy sector the level of integration of opportunity costs, costs of possible displacement of other users of the sea and costs for mitigation/compensation measures in the cost assessment of the ORE project must be considered. Also it is important to measure the level of collaboration and fairness between parties that are involved and effected by the development of ORE.

Addressing economic and governance challenges impacting blue aquaculture

When planning towards a sustainable blue growth profile of the aquaculture sector the efficient use of the marine space must be considered as well as the estimation of the benefits from potential co-location of aquaculture installations with other marine uses (such as offshore wind farms) must be considered. Also it is important to measure the level of collaboration between businesses in developing and applying new technologies in production and logistics.