

## Conference report: SEANSE Opening Conference

July 2018

*The Opening Conference of the EU sponsored project SEANSE (Strategic Environmental Assessment North Sea Energy as an aid to Maritime Spatial Planning) took place on July 5th 2018 in Brussels. A total of 30 participants amongst whom where a variety of stakeholders attended.*

*The Opening Conference began with opening remarks of Luuk Blom, Secretariat General of Benelux and Felix Leinemann, DG Mare, Head of Unit of Blue Economy Sectors, Aquaculture and Maritime Spatial Planning. It continued with presentations explaining the SEANSE project in more detail by project coordinator Leo de Vrees and several partners explaining their work. After the presentations the group was divided into two discussion rounds on involvement of stakeholders for the case studies and data work package.*

Opening the conference, Luuk Blom, Secretariat General of Benelux, welcomed us all to the Benelux Building and explained the role of the Benelux in the Political Declaration on energy cooperation between the North Seas Countries. Mr. Felix Leinemann, of DG Mare, highlighted the importance of EU funded projects as SEANSE. Especially now, when there is a growing need for offshore wind park construction in the North Sea with increasingly cross-border impacts.



Leo de Vrees, project coordinator of SEANSE, explained the general objective of this EMFF sponsored project: "to develop a coherent (logical and well-organised) approach to Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) with a focus on renewable energy in support of the development and effective implementation of MSPs". Moreover, the goals needed to achieve this objective and the 6 work packages were explained in more detail. He also explained the relation with the work of Support Group 1 under the Political Declaration on Energy Cooperation of North Seas countries.

Rob Gerits, project leader of the Common Environmental Assessment Framework (CEAF) a subgroup of SG1, explained the development of CEAF and relation with SEANSE. CEAF will deliver a common environmental assessment framework for cumulative impacts from offshore renewable energy, particularly wind energy. This framework will be tested within SEANSE in practice through three case studies.

Marie Dahmen from Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) presented the three case studies that will be conducted in cross-border cooperation and according to CEAF. This will be 1) East Anglia and IJmuiden Ver, 2) German Bight and 3) Dogger Bank. Plus 3 additional case studies on MSP and cumulative effects (Belgium – France North Sea area, East region of Scotland and pre-analysis of SEA in Danish MSP).

Lise Guennal from the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) explained the involvement of the regions in the SEANSE project. At the moment a EU survey/analysis is conducted on the role of the regions related to coastal and maritime directives (MSP, MSFD, Birds/Habitats targeting different topics).

Yuji Kato from SHOM explained the work package 2: Knowledge transfer and information exchange. For this work package the data and information requirements for MSP, and data challenges around transboundary working are identified. The result will be an improvement of MSP data exchanges between countries (existing and future data portals).

After the presentations the group was divided into two smaller groups. In two discussion rounds the involvement of stakeholders for the case studies and data work package were discussed.



To summarize the potential involvement of stakeholders, the following important meetings were identified

<b>When</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
<b>26 – 28 September</b>	Wind Europe in Hamburg	SEANSE will present on 28 <sup>th</sup> September
<b>February 2019</b>	workshop CEAF future issues; agenda scientist and acceptable levels of impact	CEAF
<b>March 2019</b>	Workshop French – Belgium North Sea case study	CPMR and SHOM
<b>Spring 2019</b>	Workshop data availability	SHOM
<b>Spring 2019</b>	Workshop stakeholder and science involvement	CEAF

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