

GES4SEAS

Milestone Report

M1.5 – Brief on PAB feedback/outcomes to WPs2-5.
First Year



This report was developed in the framework of the GES4SEAS project. The content of this document is confidential and intended for internal use only. It is strictly forbidden to share any part of this message with any third party, without a written consent of the project's Coordinator. If you received this document by mistake, please reply to the message and follow with its deletion, so that we can ensure such a mistake does not occur in the future.

GES4SEAS (Achieving Good Environmental Status for maintaining ecosystem services, by assessing integrated impacts of cumulative pressures) project is funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe program (grant agreement no. 101059877). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or UK Research and Innovation. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

1. Milestone M1.5

This *Milestone Report* summarizes the milestone M1.5 **Brief on PAB feedback/outcomes to WPs 2 to 5. First Year** achieved in the *GES4SEAS* project. It was due Month 13, but we delayed its submission to include outcomes from the 1st interim online meeting with all project partners and PAB scheduled for month 15.

This milestone refers to:

Task 1.2. Co-creation and design thinking process, lead by AZTI and developed in partnership with UAVR, NIVA, AU, SYKE, TI-SF MariLim, Scitation, CNRS, ISPRA.

Task 1.3. Iterative development & validation of beta toolbox version, lead by AZTI and developed in partnership with NIVA, AU, SYKE, UAVR, MariLim.

This Milestone 1.5 **Brief on PAB feedback/outcomes to WPs 2 to 5. First Year** provides an update on the GES4SEAS Practitioner Advisory Board Members, details on the approach to maintain a continuous communication flow between the project partners and the PAB, including the strategic updated calendar of participatory events. It also provides an overview of the PAB engagement activities that took place during the 1st year of the project, as well as an outline of the activities in the project year 2 which plan close interaction with the PAB and other stakeholders.

1.1 Update of GES4SEAS Practitioner Advisory Board Members

The Practitioner Advisory Board (PAB) is now composed by 14 Members (Table 1), with the most recent updates being that the project has now representatives from all four Regional Sea Conventions in Europe on board, with the inclusion of OSPAR during the first year of the project. A new representant from UNEP-MAP Barcelona Convention has also been assigned. The complete updated list is detailed below and can be found in the project website along with a small profile of the PAB Members (<https://www.ges4seas.eu/practitioner-advisory-board-members/>).

Table 1. List of Members of the GES4SEAS Practitioner Advisory Board (PAB) as of Month 12 of the Project.

Competent authorities from Member States	
Lucía García-Denche	SPAIN
Sorcha Ní Longphuirt	IRELAND
Otilia Mihail	ROMANIA
Axel Kreutle	GERMANY
Roberto Giangreco	ITALY
Regional Seas Conventions	
Juuso Haapaniemi	HELCOM
Iryna Makarenko	Black Sea Commission
Christos Ioakeimidis	UNEP/MAP
Dominic Pattinson	OSPAR
Johnny Reker, Monika Peterlin	European Environment Agency
Camino Lique	Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity

1.2 Summary of PAB engagement activities of the 1st year

A calendar of main participatory events set-up early on the project (**Milestone 1.2**) has been regularly updated by partners with activities for which they would like the PAB to be involved or consulted. This calendar is shared within the project TEAMS workspace and has been **instrumental to plan participatory events**, avoid overlaps, foster synergies between activities and partners and avoid stakeholder fatigue by optimizing requests and means of collaboration. The calendar has currently 17 entries covering the main planned interactions with PAB with GES4SEAS activities, with details updated as work progresses (Figure 1).

no.	Workpac- kage	Task	Brief description of the input required	Period for engagement activity (month(s) of project)	Deadline for PAB input (month of project)	Milestone(s) /Deliverable(s) associated (due date)	Preferred means of communication (suggestions)	GES4SEAS contact	PAB members to engage / invite
1	WP4	T4.1	Feedback on Roadmap to develop an innovative assessment framework and the corresponding toolbox (a software containing a set of tools for assessment and other tasks)	M6-M7	March 2023 (M7)	D4.1 Beta prototype toolbox combining existing codes from GES and CIA/CEA assessments (M11)	E-mail		All
2	WP2	T2.1	Feedback on the final Deliverable 2.1. Receive comments on the main topics of this report that will be pertinent to the practical guidelines to be developed and outlined in D2.3.	M10-11	July 2023 (M11)	D2.1 Ecosystem management approaches based on a review of the activity-pressure-effects chain towards achieving GES in the MSFD (M9)	E-mail		All
3	WP2	T2.3	Feedback on deliverable 2.1 will be taken into account when developing the content of the deliverable 2.3. Digestion of D2.1 PAB comments and reflection of main suggestions and/or concerns in D2.3. Input also into D2.3 made available to PAB.	M10-11	July 2023 (M11)	D2.3 Guidelines (Best Practical Options) for Practical Ecosystem Approach (M13)	(indirect, extracted from with D2.1 comments) & E-mail		All
4	WP3	T3.1	Workshop on Ecosystem Services (WP3): Identify Learning Sites applying it + PAB engagement	M17?	15-19 January (M17)	D3.1 Selected methods and potential applications in Learning Sites (M17) D3.2. Applications of selected tools by LSs, their specific configurations and main outputs to test tipping points and thresholds (M30)	in person workshop - will PAB be invited?	Gerjan Piet	Camino Lique (IRC-BKC)
5	WP4/WP5	?	Toolbox application (WP4): all Learning Sites must test it + PAB engagement	M18? - M?	?Spring - end of March (M19)	D3.2. Applications of selected tools by LSs, their specific configurations and main outputs to test tipping points and thresholds (M30)	Meeting planned for early February? will it include PAB? physical meeting in Germany	WP4 & WP5 (leads & Jennifer)	
6	WP3	T3.3	Engage PAB/stakeholders to define management scenarios for pressures and footprints in the future	M9-M18	April 2024 (M20)	D3.2. Applications of selected tools by LSs, their specific configurations and main outputs to test tipping points and thresholds (M30)	TEAMS possibly with interactive PESTEL	CEFAS	
7	WP4	all	Discussions/dialogue with PAB/stakeholders about the minimum requirement for data (pressures and ecosystems), and how to deal with analyses in data poor regions	M17 - M?	M?	M? or D?	Plus an in-person if we can A focus group in a 1h30min online session to present project development need and collect ideas		
8	WP5	T5.2	Methods to assess and manage HABs, invasive species, jellyfish blooms and top predators will take into account the outcomes of WO1 (PAB)	M9-M32	April 2024 (M20)	M5.2 Method identified for assessment and management of HABs, invasive species and jellyfish bloom (M13) /D5.2 Review and testing methods for HABs, invasive species and jellyfish blooms (M34)	Personal communication and short interviews /training workshops	UAegean	
9	WP2	T2.4	Ecosystem-Based Approach (WP2): Identify Learning Sites applying it + PAB engagement	M7 - M?	Maybe late 2024/early 2025?	?	?	Anita Franco + WP2 leads	
10	WP4	T4.6	Discussion with PAB/stakeholders about how to best present uncertainty/confidence of the toolbox	M20-M28	M30	M4.4 Approaches for presenting and including uncertainty in the assessment (M30)	Discussion at annual meeting plus electronic meeting	AU	
11	WP5	T5.3	Assessing the relevance of information gaps, and testing the tools during development, data limitations and information gaps will be identified. Also with the help of stakeholder workshops. Here LS need to clarify which LS stakeholder are also part of the PAB. But	M2-M40	M30	M5.3 Developed tools applied/tested at all LSs (M40) / D5.3 Synthesis of applying frameworks and tipping point concepts to LSs (M42)	workshops	TI-SF	

Figure 1: Snapshot of GES4SEAS Calendar of main participatory events for engaging the PAB within project activities and developments. Blue activities are closed, orange activities are being planned for the near future, yellow activities for a later stage in the project.

Building on the results of the initial Stakeholders' online Survey and discussions during the 1st PAB workshop at the kick-off meeting (26 to 30 of September 2022) several **recommendations and priorities** were made by the PAB that were compiled into a report and disseminated within the project (as reported in **Milestone 1.3**). The recommendations regarding the top features or capacities that stakeholders expect from an environmental assessment toolbox targeted different work packages of the project (WP2-WP5) and were taken into consideration by relevant tasks during the development of activities in year 1 (Figure 2).

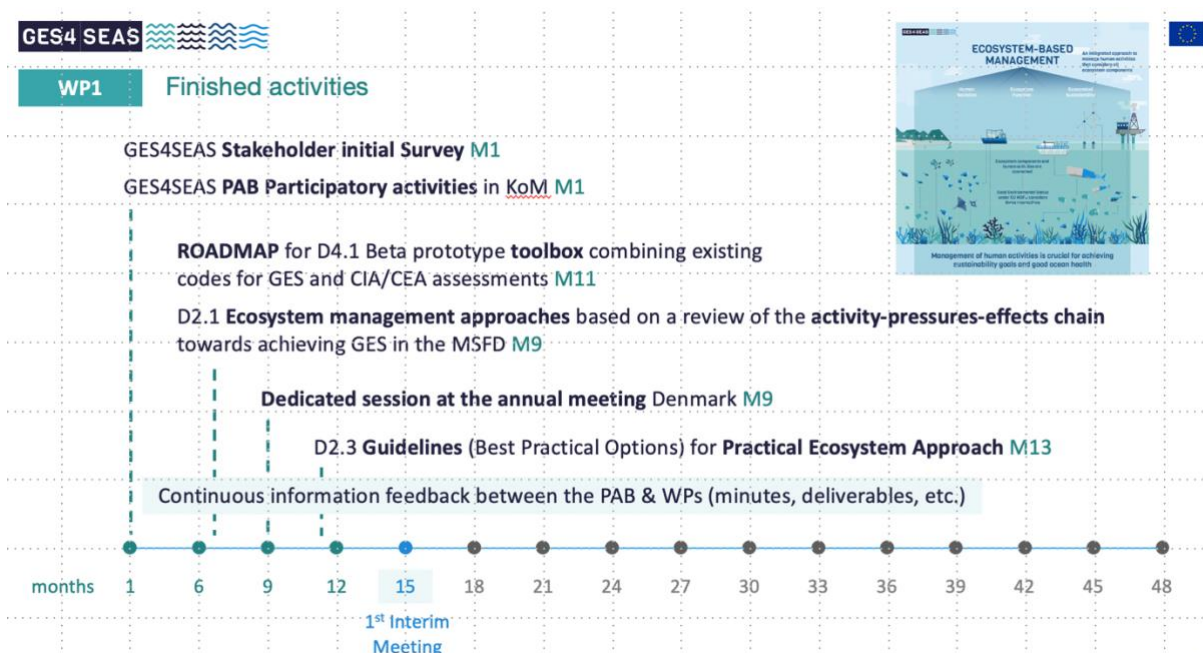


Figure 2: Main activities and Deliverables with PAB direct contribution during GES4SEAS first year.

WP2 | Developing the conceptual framework and knowledge base for ecosystem-based management

During this stage of co-creation and design thinking process (coordinated by WP1 under Task 1.2) the PAB engaged mostly with the activities within WP2 with important contributes for Deliverables:

- **D2.1 Ecosystem management approaches based on a review of the activity-pressures-effects chain towards achieving GES in the MSFD** and
- **D2.3 Guidelines (Best Practical Options) for Practical Ecosystem Approach;**
- but also punctually on **D2.2 Technical report on the state-of-the-art in support of EBM approaches to address HABs, jellyfish outbreaks invasive species and decline of top predators.**

WP4 | Linking pressure and status assessment with the capacity to supply ecosystem services into a unifying holistic framework and nested toolbox

Another important interaction during this stage was the feedback on the **ROADMAP for Beta prototype toolbox combining existing codes for GES and CIA/CEA assessments** (leading to future D4.1). This is a living document central to WP4 developments and to which the PAB made relevant contributions.

All WPs | A dedicated session was set during the project annual meeting in May 2023 in

Denmark, with the presence of PAB members on site and others through remote attendance. An overview of the project implementation and discussion of main ongoing activities was presented to the PAB, opening a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas and recommendations.

Six months after the 1st annual meeting (Month 15) in **November 2023, the first interim online meeting** of the whole project with the attendance of the PAB took place. A six-month frequency overview was envisaged within the project to foster regular feedback and communication between the PAB & all GES4SEAS WPs.

In addition, **continuous information feedback** between the PAB & GES4SEAS was ensured through sharing of relevant meeting minutes and dissemination of project deliverables and other outputs with no direct engagement of the project. This was maintained throughout the entire period and coordinated by WP1 leads.

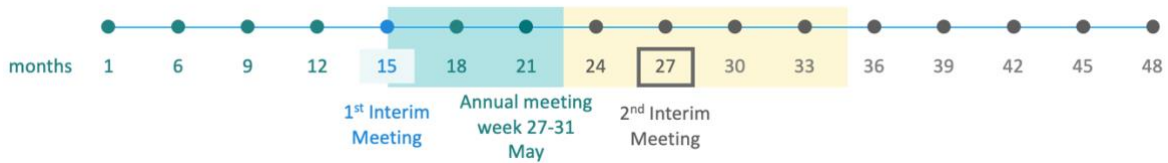
The PAB has also been instrumental in **identifying relevant fora**, namely MSFD working groups and other venues where the project could present its objectives and developments to future end-users of its most relevant outputs.

1.3 Planning of PAB engagement activities for 2nd year

By the end of year 1 and up to now (month 15), future activities have been planned and communicated to the PAB during the 1st interim online meeting (Figure 3). In addition, the means to interact with PAB were also presented to allow the PAB some feedback both on content as well as format of expected interactions, e.g.:

- workshops with PAB members invited according to interest and scope
- in-person meetings try to match or back-to-back with other events
- through TEAMS, possibly with interactive online tools e.g. a PESTEL analysis
- online focus group (e.g. 1h30min session) to present project development needs and collect ideas
- personal communication and short interviews
- training workshops.

Besides WP4 activities leading towards **initial testing of the toolbox**, activities with PAB within WP3 and **WP5** will also intensify in year 2. In **WP3** particularly regarding **capacity building** on diverse methodological approaches that can be used for **Understanding the mechanisms that determine the cumulative impacts of human activities and climate change**, and in WP5 regarding the application of project approaches and tools to **Learning sites: Testing and synthesis**, with the support and inputs from PAB and other relevant stakeholders.



GES4 SEAS

WP1

Upcoming interactions with PAB

Workshop on **Ecosystem Services** (WP3) 15-19 January 2024 Netherlands tbc

Some PAB members might also interact directly in some of the national/international **Learning Sites** (WP5) from January 2024 tbc

PAB/stakeholders input on minimum requirement for data (**pressures and ecosystems**) and on how to deal with analyses in **data poor** regions (WP4) from January 2024 tbc

Engage PAB/stakeholders to define **management scenarios for pressures and future footprints** (WP3) until April 2024 tbc into D3.2 Applications of selected tools by LSs, their specific configurations and main outputs to test tipping points and thresholds (M30)

Methods to assess and manage HABs, invasive species, jellyfish blooms and top predators until April 2024 tbc into D5.2 Review and testing methods for HABs, invasive species and jellyfish blooms (M34)

Toolbox application (WP4) Spring end of March tbc

Hands-on workshop to **test the tool** for GES4SEAS LSs & session on **tipping points** 22-25 April 2024 Germany

GES4 SEAS

WP1

Next annual meeting 27-31 May 2024 (Istanbul, Turkey)

PAB dedicated session to start discussion of ideas and strategy to present and develop the **GES4SEAS Guidance with recommendation for practitioners** (T1.4).
(e.g. best formats; discussion on target topics and contents for the briefs' collection; resources; technical support and tutorials; etc...)

Plan 3rd year interactions with PAB Iterative development and validation of the beta toolbox version (T1.3)

Figure 3: Main activities requiring PAB engagement or contribution during GES4SEAS second year (green period) and beyond (yellow period).



2023