



## **KEY QUESTIONS FOR U.S. COASTAL MANAGERS CHARGED WITH IMPLEMENTING COASTAL AND MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING (CMSP)**

This document identifies key questions - organized according to steps in the CMSP process - that are important for coastal managers and other stakeholders to answer while implementing CMSP. While conducting the gap analysis for the CMSP-AT curriculum, Project Staff considered the questions, tools, inputs, and outputs of the CMSP process, and whether these were met by the available training materials. These questions are designed such that, when answered, coastal managers will come away with a working understanding of their maritime domain, their community, and the process of CMSP. This list of questions was created by consulting the University of Rhode Island (URI) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) workshop curricula as well as from source materials in the CMSP-AT Bibliography.

### **Drivers**

1. Are your key drivers associated with national, regional, state, or local mandates, legislation, or initiatives?
2. Are your key drivers associated with current or potential future user conflicts?
3. Are your key drivers associated with funder interests?

### **Planning and Assessment Areas**

4. Who is taking the lead in moving this process forward?
5. What is your planning area (description, coordinates, total size, and depth) and how does this differ from your assessment area (In relation to planning area, description, coordinates, total size, and depth)?
6. Is there specific supporting legislation for CMSP?
7. Who holds jurisdictional authority within these areas?
8. Are the boundaries defined by a specific jurisdictional authority (e.g., a marine managed area)?



**Planning and Assessment Areas, continued**

9. Are the different authorities clearly defined? Is the geographic extent of their authority definitively understood? Is it understood whose authority or mandate trumps another agency's mandate?
10. What regulations govern your planning and/or assessment area?
11. Are there specific problems with trans-boundary issues in your region (conflicting regulations or use areas, international or inter-state issues)?

**Coordination Team and Staffing**

12. Who will comprise your teams? (e.g. core team; technical team; government team; strategic team) and are you planning on recruiting staff to take some of the new or existing responsibilities?
13. Have you mapped the necessary skill sets to the existing and potentially new staff positions to ensure proper coverage? Do you understand what these skills are?

**Collaboration with Jurisdictional Agencies**

14. With which agencies will you partner and what is your plan for connecting them?
15. How will you involve groups with special legal status, such as tribes, in developing policies?
16. Are there any agencies that you foresee as uncooperative or potentially unwilling to participate? What impact will this have?
17. Will your aligned agencies be able to meet both their mandate and the requirements of this effort?
18. Will Memoranda of Understandings be signed to coordinate between agencies to further CMSP goals?
19. Who on your team will coordinate this process?



**Collaboration with Jurisdictional Agencies, continued**

20. Is there a mechanism in place for collaborative and coordinated planning between agencies and authorities?

**Stakeholders and Resource Users**

21. How do you define “stakeholders” in your planning area?
22. Who is on your stakeholder list and are there others who fall outside your definition who should be included? What sectors will be represented?
23. Have you worked with your stakeholders before or with any stakeholder planning process?
24. Do you have a process in place for engaging stakeholders?
25. Do you (your team) know someone in each sector you’ve identified?
26. How will you ensure all relevant ocean users are represented?
27. What level of involvement do you really want from your stakeholders? How will you explain to them their role, and the level of their involvement?
28. What constituency can you count on to support you the most and the least?
29. How will you handle stakeholders that refuse to engage entirely or who engage but not constructively?
30. Are there stakeholders that you believe will be difficult to work with from the start, or those that may be difficult to have work together? How will you address this?
31. What will your stakeholder calendar look like? Who will attend from your team? Where will they be held?
32. How will you define a successful stakeholder process? For instance, how will you communicate with your stakeholders? With the wider community? (What media will you use?)
33. How will you know if you have the best representative for each stakeholder group?
34. Have you mapped out all the different types of and times for stakeholder engagement during your planning process?



**Stakeholders and Resource Users, continued**

35. Do you have a communications plan in place to continually keep stakeholders updated on your process?

**Planning Structure**

36. Will you have a stakeholder inclusive planning or management team?  
37. Will you have other technical support teams or working groups?  
38. Who will provide the coordination, feeding, and support for these teams?  
39. Who will facilitate these teams?  
40. What kind of decision-making process will you use?

**Executing the Process**

41. What is the budget for the CMSP process and is it coming from multiple sources? If so, is it clear who is going to pay for what, how and when?  
42. Do you have adequate resources (both human and funding) to execute and sustain the plan? If not, how do you build the capacity needed?  
43. Do you have a project plan that is vetted and agreed upon by major parties? Does it include a timeline for milestones and what is your project end date?

**Management Principles**

44. Will your efforts reflect adaptive management? If adaptive, do the stakeholders understand what this means and how it will affect the nature of this strategy?  
45. How will you conduct a visioning exercise that will tell you what the ocean should look like over the time horizon through the planning and implementation? What results do you want at the end of this process?



## Process Approaches

46. Were any guiding principles set before this process began (are you working from a pre-assigned set)? Who, or what, developed them? Are you and your stakeholders able to change them?
47. How will you develop your goals?
48. Do your goals address the drivers in your local/state/regional effort?
49. Are your goals specific enough to measure success?
50. Are your goals too specific to achieve?
51. Are any of your goals in conflict with each other or with your guiding principles?
52. How will you keep your plan flexible for future uses and users?
53. How do you plan to identify areas of compatibility?
54. How do you plan to identify areas of conflict?
55. Have you mapped your cultural resources?
56. Have you mapped your significant economic resources?
57. What formal decision support tools will be used in your CMSP process, and how will you work with stakeholders to select these tools?
58. How does your stakeholder community react to these tools as impartial decision tools?
59. How will these tools help solve conflicting uses?

## Characterizing the Management and Study Area

60. Do you have someone on staff with spatial skills?
61. Do you currently have spatial data about your region?
62. Can you verify these data?
63. What data don't you have that you want or need? Does the data exist, and how can it be accessed?
64. Is there an established regional data portal to which you can contribute or will you build a new one?
65. Will this tool be publically accessible?



### **Characterizing the Management and Study Area, continued**

66. Will the public, users, and/or sectors be able to use and contribute data?
67. If the data does not exist, what is needed in terms of time, resources, and expertise to create it?
68. What activities outside your planning area (within your assessment area) will or could impact your plan?
69. Are there uses or users for your planning area that are just emerging?
70. Are there resources that are more valued than others in your area or those that require specific consideration? (e.g., endangered species, military installations)

### **Defining the Plan**

71. Which management measures are traditionally used in your region and are these appropriate for your efforts?
72. What other management measures are available and appropriate for your region and how do your stakeholders feel about them?
73. Will you be using zoning? Do your stakeholders agree?
74. Will you develop alternative scenarios for review?
75. Do your definitions and descriptions agreed upon by your stakeholders?
76. How will you resolve conflicting goals to fit into a single working plan?
77. Can existing regulations in your planning area be adapted to your plan?
78. Will you have to develop new legislation?
79. Do the existing regulations offer guides or useable language upon which to build?
80. Will CMSP eliminate, simplify, complicate, or streamline the regulatory process for users?

### **Launch and Evolution**

81. What is your process for getting approval and formal adoption of the plan?
82. Do you have a plan for socialization of the CMSP plan?
83. How do you plan to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the plan?



**Launch and Evolution, continued**

84. What indicators will tell you that your plan is succeeding and do your stakeholders agree to these indicators?
85. Who is best suited to set these indicators?
86. What do you believe the economic impact of your plan will be?
87. What do stakeholders believe the economic impact of your plan will be?
88. How will your plan impact conservation and economic development efforts in your region?
89. Will you be using an adaptive management framework?
90. Will you be able to trace impacts of your plan back to the plan itself?
91. Were the policies you established different than what was already on the books?
92. How does your plan meet or not meet your guiding principles?
93. Are there any requirements your plan must adhere to for submission?
94. Which levels of authorization are needed?
95. How long will the plan take to be adopted?
96. How will you communicate that your plan has been implemented?
97. Who is best suited to evaluate your plan against its progress indicators?
98. How will this effort change your team's ability to regulate or make a difference in coastal management?
99. How will this effort change your stakeholders' use of the ocean and their relationships to each other?
100. How do your zones (and their descriptions) align or conflict with existing management areas?
101. How will you present alternative plans?
102. Do your agency partners believe they will be able render faster decisions once the plan is implemented?
103. Is your plan aimed toward helping or hurting any given user group?