

Tensions between blue growth and good environmental status: who's at the helm?

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Strategic aim of EC marine policy framework, including HELCOM and Maritime Spatial Planning - **Ecosystem-based approach**

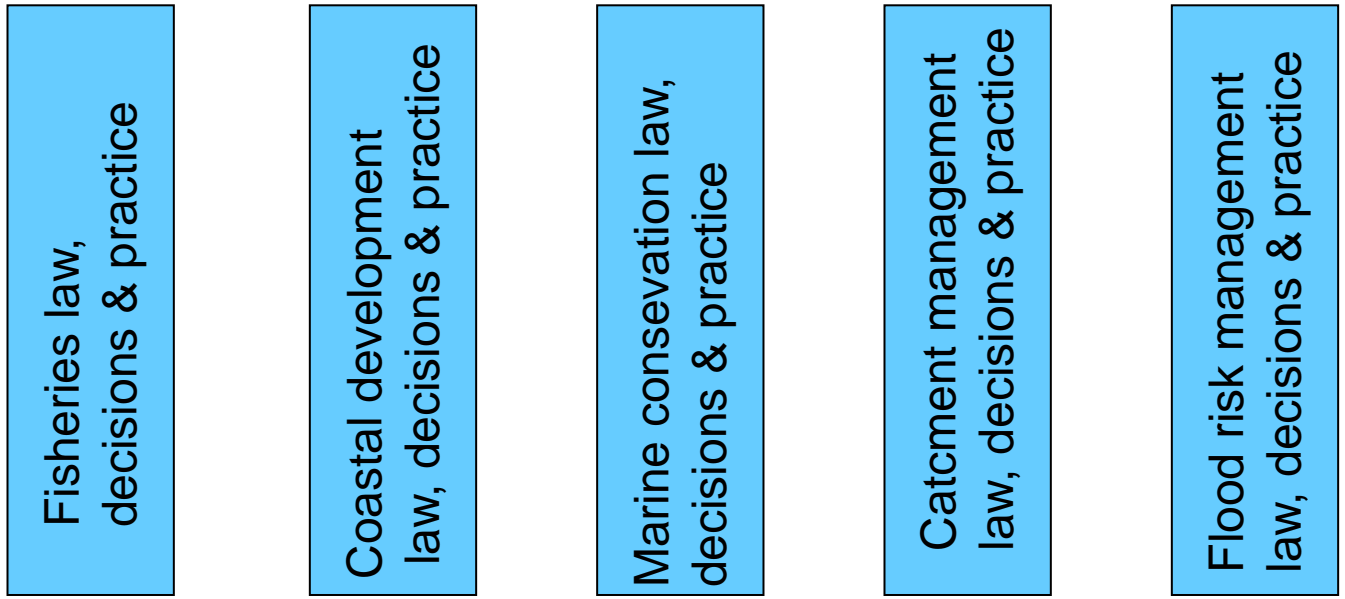
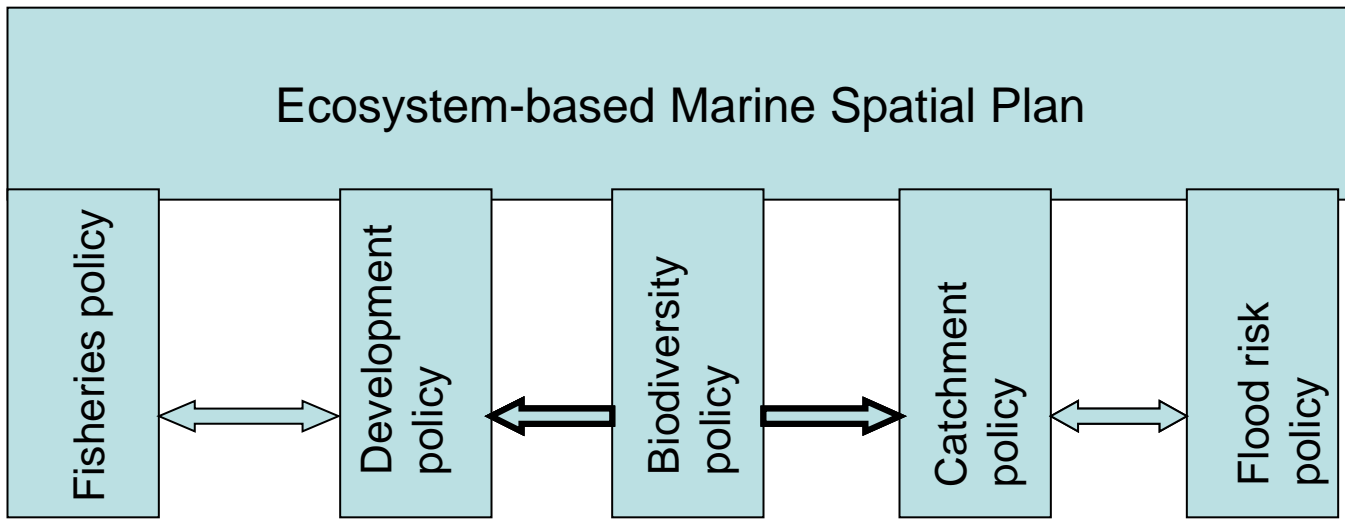
Human elements, given that humans are part of many ecosystems

- Stakeholder participation in decision-making;
- Equity amongst users;
- Economically sustainable;
- Inter-sectoral approach: integration of sectoral policies;
- Fulfilling societal needs, **particularly for ecosystem services.**

Environmental elements

- Focusing on ecological scales, rather than administrative boundaries;
- Maintaining the structural and functional attributes of ecosystems;
- Living within environmental limits:
 - sustainable use
 - taking account of cumulative impacts
- Maintaining ecosystem resilience through conserving biodiversity;
- **Ensuring that the flow of ecosystem services is maintained.**

: Analogous to sustainable development... and essentially all about governance



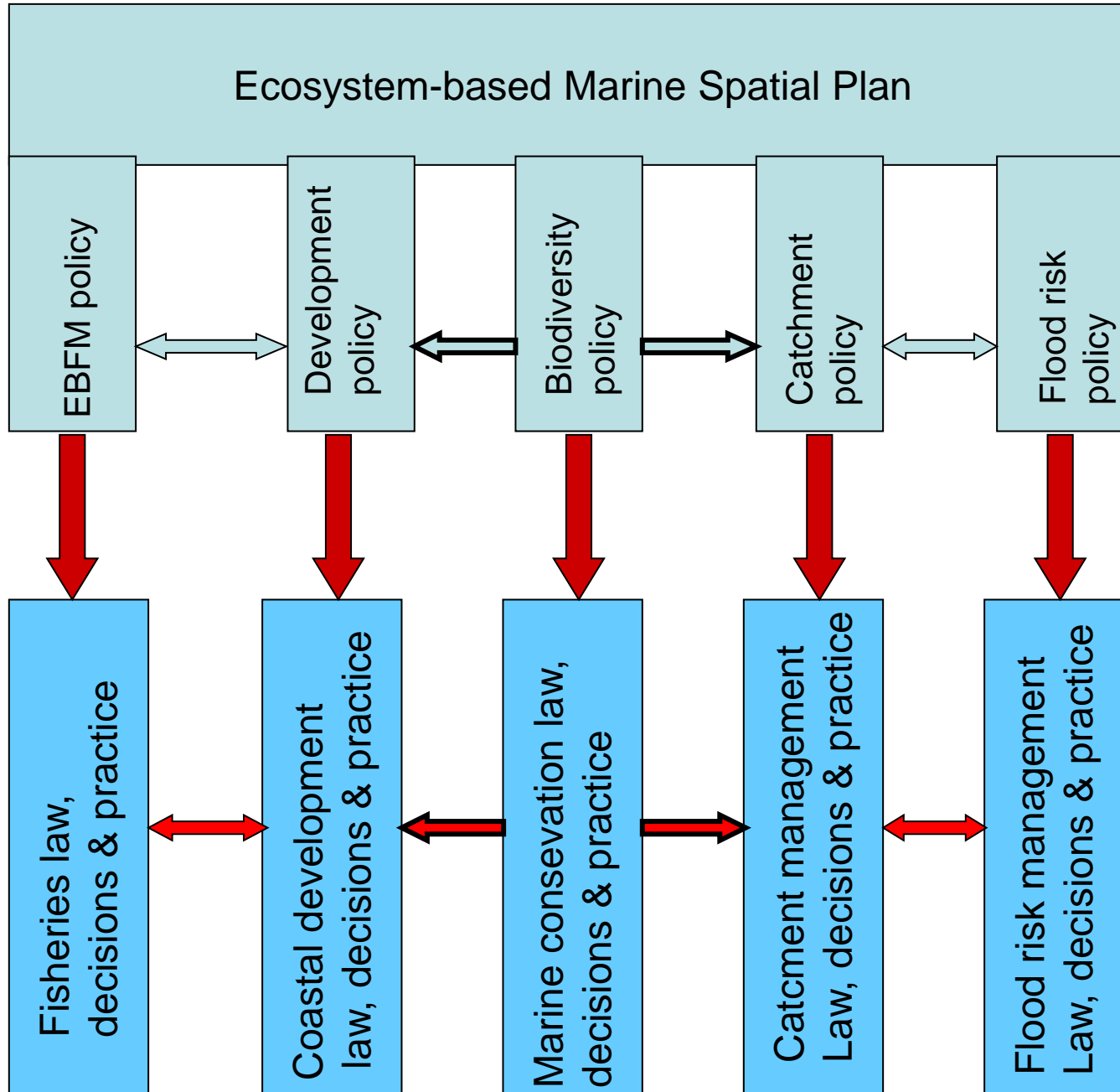
Business-as-usual

Ecosystem-based approach should be implemented in EU & related regional seas, such as the Baltic Sea, through **Ecosystem-based** Marine Spatial Plans

But these are often **disconnected by design**, with business-as-usual proceeding under specific sectoral policies that circumnavigate ecosystem-based Marine Spatial Plans

e.g1. only 'due regard' needing to be given to MSPs under Marine Act in England

e.g2. *de facto* disconnections & tensions between **Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)** & **Directive Establishing a Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning (DEFMSP)**



Need ecosystem connectivity through institutional connectivity: essentially, it's all about **decentralising responsibilities** whilst ensuring that strategic ecosystem-based MSP objectives are achieved

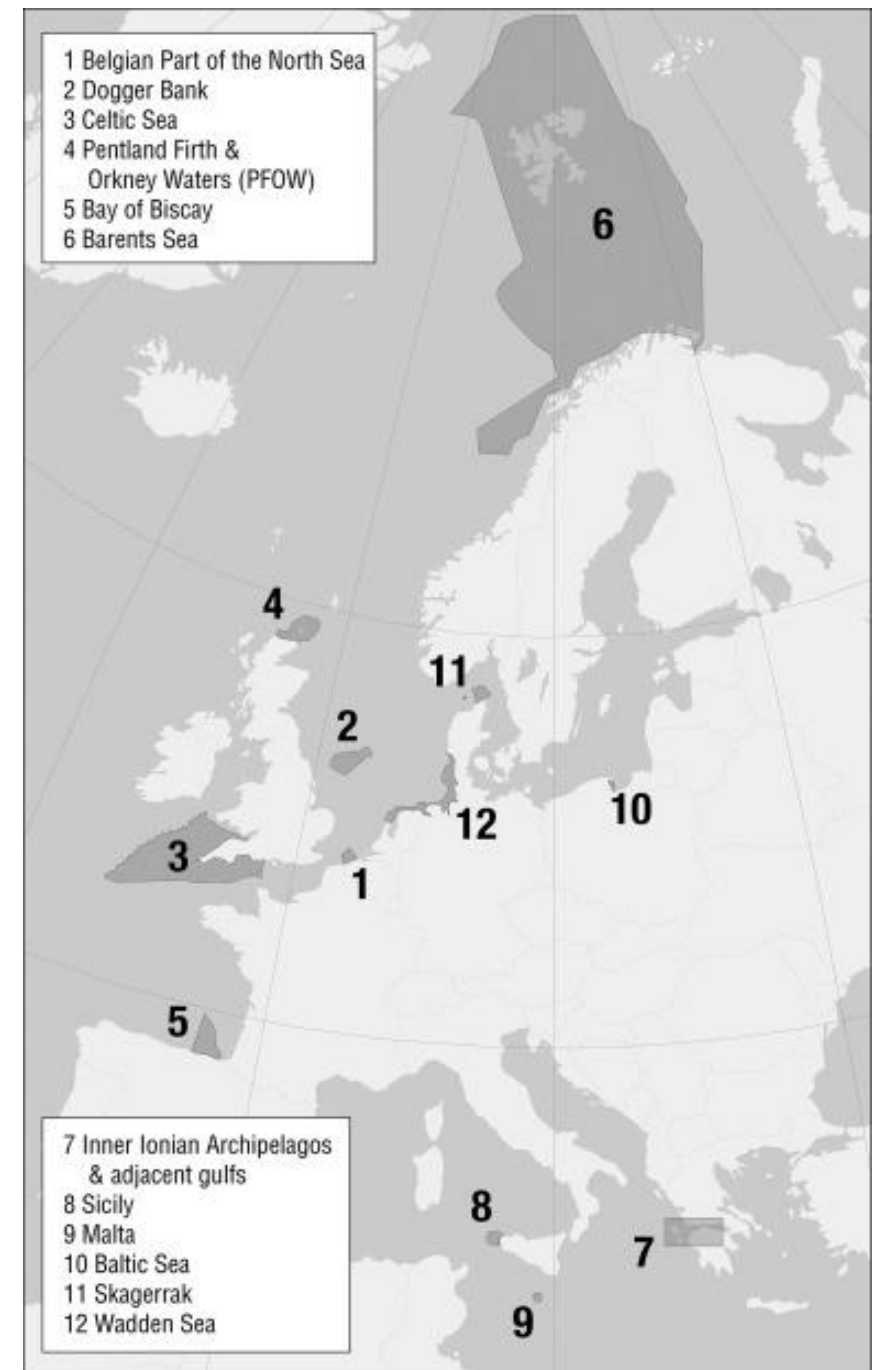
Case study: European Union (Jones et al. 2016 MSP in Reality)

Realities of marine spatial planning contrast with related conceptual ideals

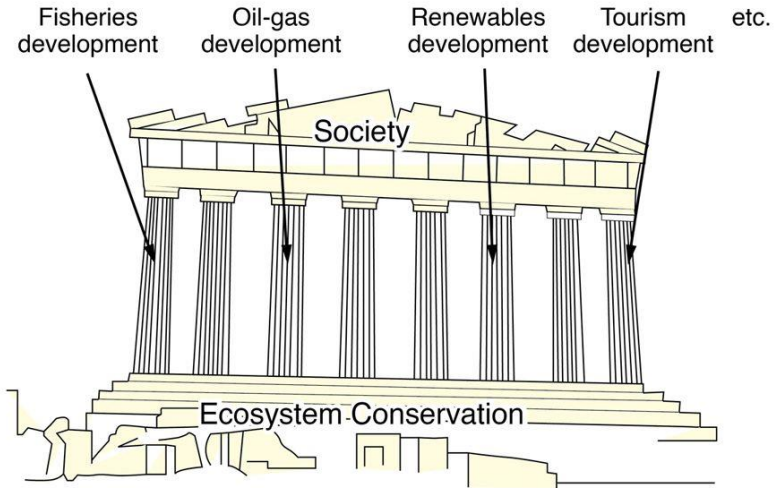
National **blue growth** priorities lead to a focus on ‘**strategic sectoral planning**’, particularly for nationally significant infrastructure & major economic development projects

Top-down approaches dominate from which **participative platforms are disconnected by design**

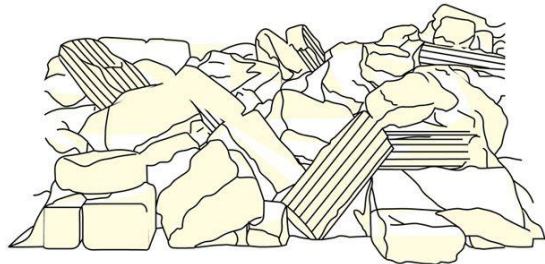
Politically expedient focus on blue growth is undermining environmental priorities



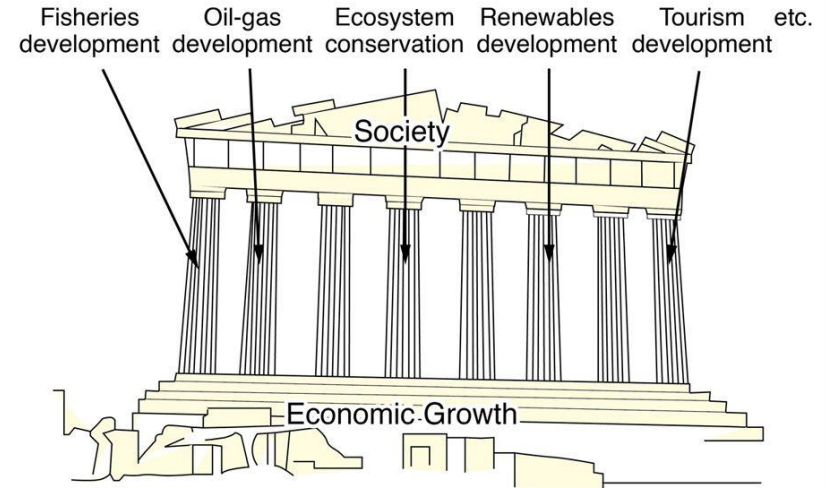
Ecosystem-based MSP - hard sustainability



If ecosystems collapse.....



Integrated-use MSP - soft sustainability



If economic sectors and growth collapse.....



***Ecosystem-Based Marine
Spatial Planning (Marine
Strategy Framework
Directive – MSFD 2008)***

- Longer-term priorities
- Conservation as the basis for sustainable development
- MPAs as foundation of EBM
- MSP as a mechanism for achieving ‘**good environmental status**’ (GES) by 2020
- DG Environment

***Integrated-Use Maritime
Spatial Planning (Directive
Establishing a Framework for
Maritime Spatial Planning –
DEFMSP 2014)***

- Shorter-term priorities (GDP)
- Economic growth as the basis for sustainable development
- MPAs as a ‘sectoral use’
- MSP as a mechanism for achieving ‘**blue growth**’

- DG MARE Qiu & Jones (2013)
www.tinyurl.com/BGorGES

What's in a name?

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Of, found in, or produced by the sea: "marine plants"; "marine biology"

Based on **ecocentric** values



Integrated Maritime Policy;

Directive Establishing a Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning

Connected with the sea, especially in relation to seafaring, commercial or military activity

Based on **utilitarian** values



Underlying value conflicts?

***Ecosystem-Based
Marine Spatial
Planning (MSFD 2008)***



***Integrated-Use Maritime
Spatial Planning
(DEFMSP 2014)***



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➤ DG MARE

Qiu and Jones ([2013](#))

Ecosystem-Based Marine Spatial Planning (MSFD 2008)



Integrated-Use Maritime Spatial Planning (DEFMSP 2014)

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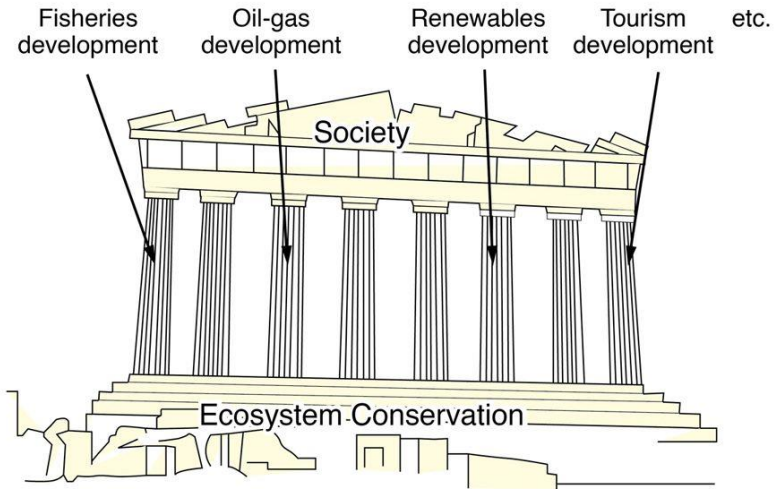
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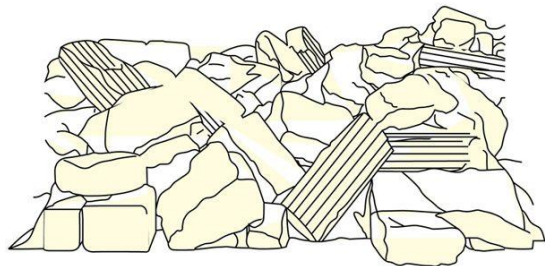
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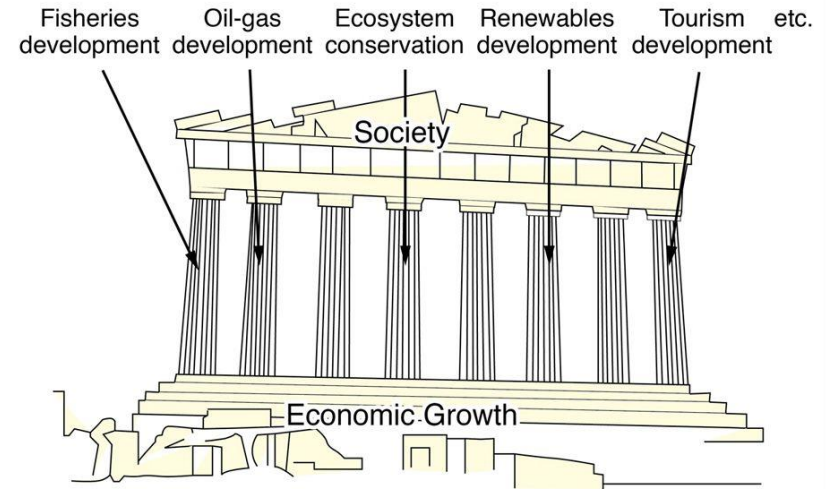
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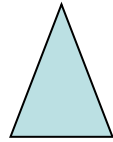
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Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Economic development activities can go ahead for “**reasons of overriding public interest which outweigh the negative impact on the environment**”, though such activities should not “preclude or compromise the achievement of GES” (Article 14)



Maritime Spatial Planning Directive

“Member States shall consider economic, social and environmental aspects to support sustainable development and growth in the maritime sector, **applying an ecosystem-based approach**, and to promote the coexistence of relevant activities and uses” (Article 5)...



In reality, is ‘**blue growth**’ *the* objective that other objectives have to be integrated with, or is ‘**good environmental status**’ *the* objective that other objectives have to be integrated with?

How can integrated-use MSP and ecosystem-based MSP be reconciled and integration achieved?

Risk that MSP could become a vehicle for blue growth and continued declines in ecosystem integrity and resilience?

“The implementation of [the MSFD] framework shows, at best, a mixed picture. There are several positive examples of recovery of specific biodiversity features across Europe’s seas, reversing increasing pressure trends, and improved sustainability of some uses of the sea.

However, these partial successes seem **barely to register** against the **observed continued degradation** and the expected increased use of the sea, as well as the **observed and forecast worsening of climate change impacts on Europe’s seas.**”



(EEA 2020)

Ocean Governance Continuum

*Ecosystem-Based
Management*

*Business
as Usual*



- Longer-term priorities (environment)
- Ecosystem-based approach, inc MPAs
- Accountability & Justice
- Conservation +
- Compatible economic development
- Cross-sectoral integration +
- trade-offs
- *Effective conflict management*
- *High institutional connectivity*
- *High ecological connectivity*
- *High resilience*
- ***More sustainable***

- Shorter-term priorities (GDP)
- Economic development-focus
- Dominance of elites
- Sectoral
- *Many unresolved conflicts*
- *Low institutional connectivity*
- *Low ecological connectivity*
- *Low resilience*
- ***Less sustainable***

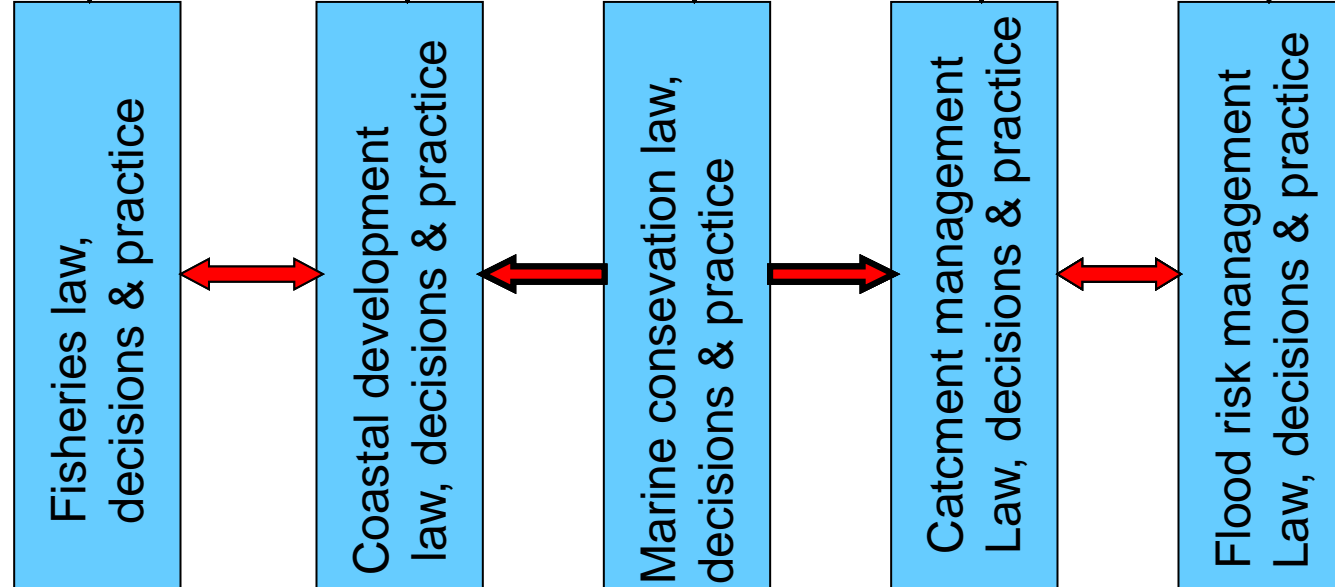
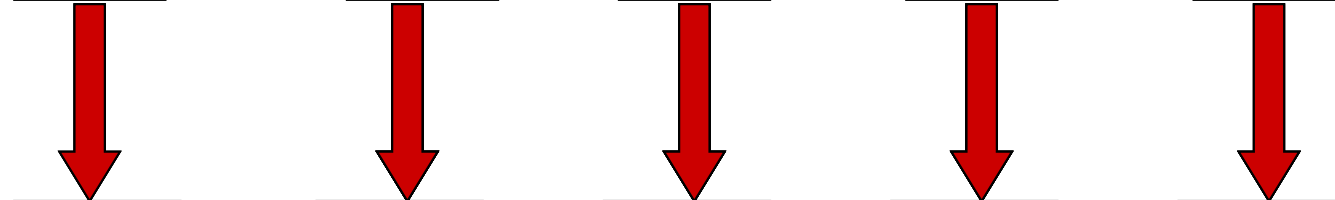
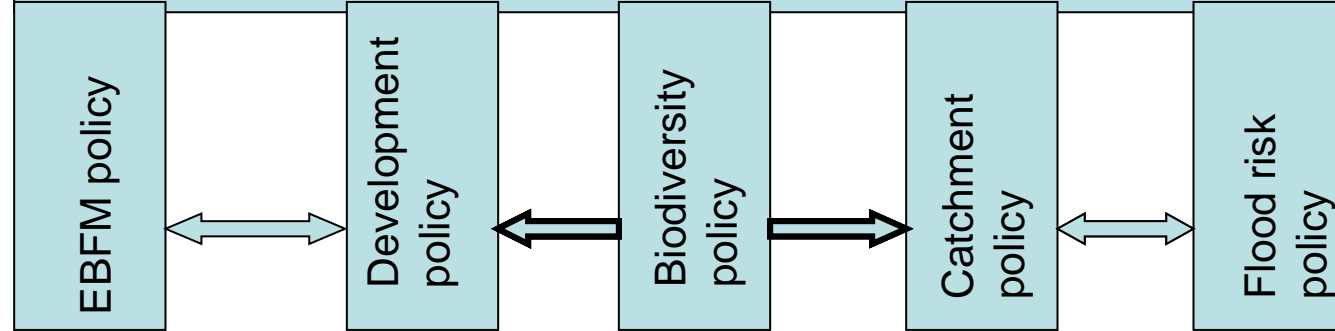
EB MSPlan

Implementation **coordinated by an executive cross-sectoral authority** that agrees targets, *etc* & has legal powers to ensure targets achieved, with supporting political will

Bottom-up

Participation & Institutional learning *ie* targets & rules adapted in light of experiences from local contexts

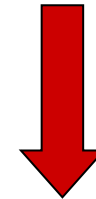
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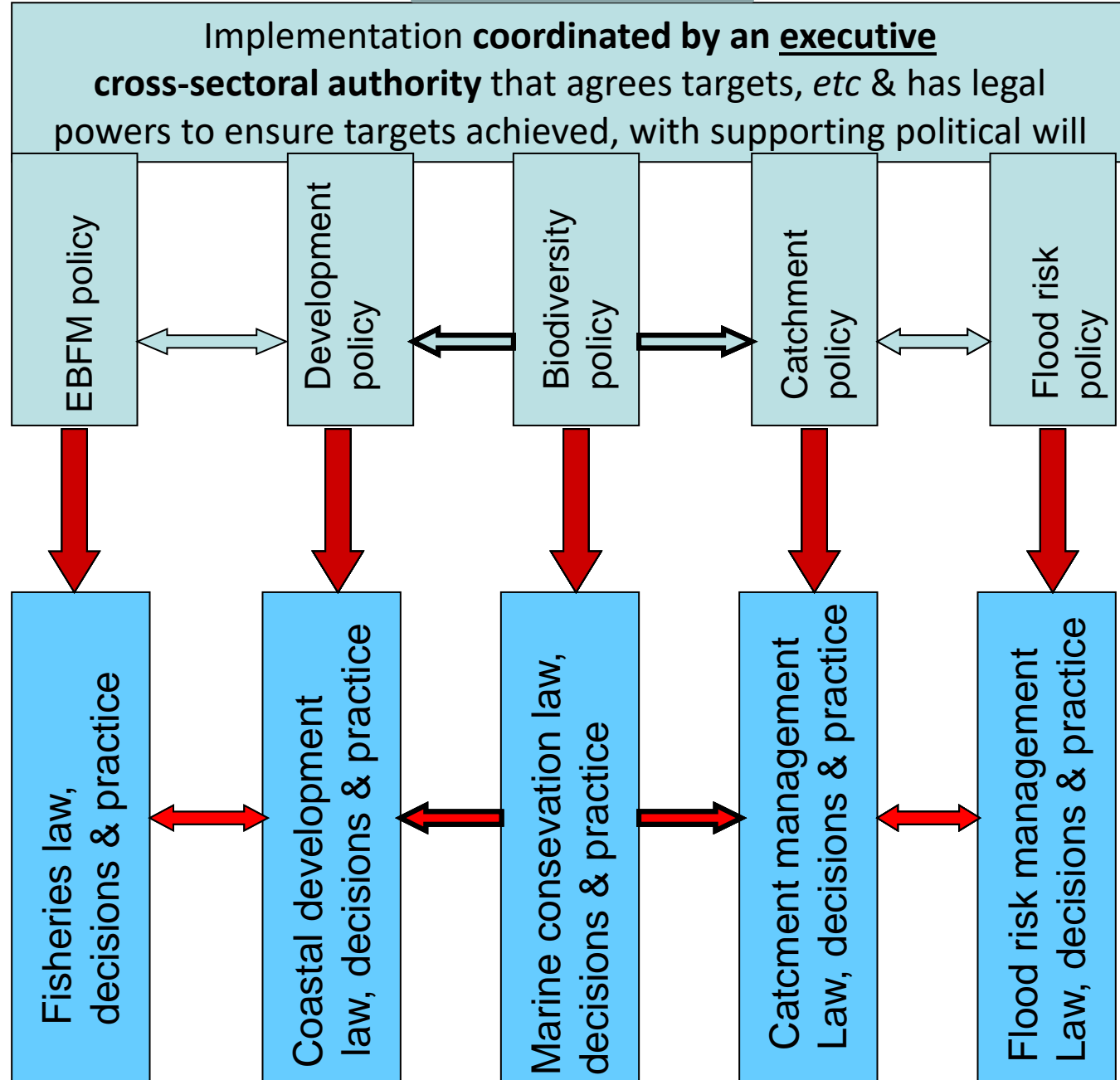
Top-down

Negotiated Implementation

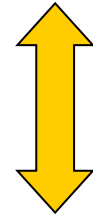
ie rules adapted to local contexts



EB MSPlan



Co-evolutionary
Governance



Rather than particular tools or instruments, we need **institutionally connected ecosystem-based marine spatial planning** to effectively achieve integrated ecosystem-based marine spatial planning

... and this needs political will and a diversity of governance approaches....

...and we need to recognise that **Good Environmental Status** is a strategic cross-sectoral aim, not just a sectoral aspiration, amongst others.....

putting the **Good Environmental Status** at the heart of MSP policies & at the helm of marine spatial planning

