**Marine Strategy Framework Directive: Innovative and participatory decision-making workshops for the identification of common measures in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean sub-regions**

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**Abstract**

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is the European Commission’s flagship initiative for the protection of the European Seas, and the first holistic approach to ensuring that European Seas reach and are maintained at what is called a ‘Good Environmental Status’ by the year 2020. Regional cooperation, especially between neighbouring countries, and involvement of all interested parties, are horizontal principles of the MSFD, and particularly apply to the definition of programmes of measures, the principle instrument through which each member state will implement its marine strategy. This paper presents the results from two sub-regional workshops organised in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, which aimed to bring experts and policy/decision-makers from neighbouring countries together, to discuss and agree upon common measures for implementation in their sub-regions. It shows that a participatory approach, expertly facilitated by short, structured workshops can be a successful way to enhance sub-regional collaboration. The paper also presents the top ranking measures, selected by experts and decision-makers for common implementation in the two sub-regions.