



Risk-based Approaches to Good Environmental Status (RAGES) is a two-year, €800k project, funded by DG Environment to support implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The project is led by MaREI -SFI research centre at University College Cork. The project began in January 2019 and comprises a consortium of partners from Ireland (UCC and DHPLG), France (MTES and INERIS), Spain (DGSCM-SGPM and IEO, UPV) and Portugal (DRAM, DGRM, ARDITI, MARE FCUL, IPMA and DRM), these include the MSFD competent authorities from each country.

This policy brief highlights the development of a Standard Operating Procedure for Risk-Based Management.

More information on the project can be found at www.msfd.eu/rages

or contact us directly

Dr Tim O'Higgins: tim.ohiggins@ucc.ie 083 8625449
or Dr Emma Verling: emma.verling@ucc.ie



Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Achieving Good Environmental Status in the North East Atlantic

Standard Operating Procedure for Risk-Based Management

What is the Marine Strategy Framework Directive?

Clean Healthy and Productive Seas



GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS (GES)

The directive sets out 11 diverse descriptors of environmental status for which EU Member States must achieve or maintain good environmental status. These descriptors include commitments to high profile issues such as biodiversity, management of marine litter and sustainable fisheries as well as more technical aspects of marine environmental health like food web structures and alterations to hydrography.

The Challenge

In the first cycle of implementation of the directive the European Commission found that many aspects of implementation of the MSFD were inadequate, adequate or partially adequate. In recognition of the fact that some Member States have very large marine territories and relatively little marine data, the commission made provisions for Risk Based Approaches (RBA) to Good Environmental status. To facilitate regional harmonisation of the new RBA the RAGES project developed a standard methodology for risk based management in MSFD. The methodology was applied to Descriptor 2- Non-Indigenous species and Descriptor 11- Underwater noise.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

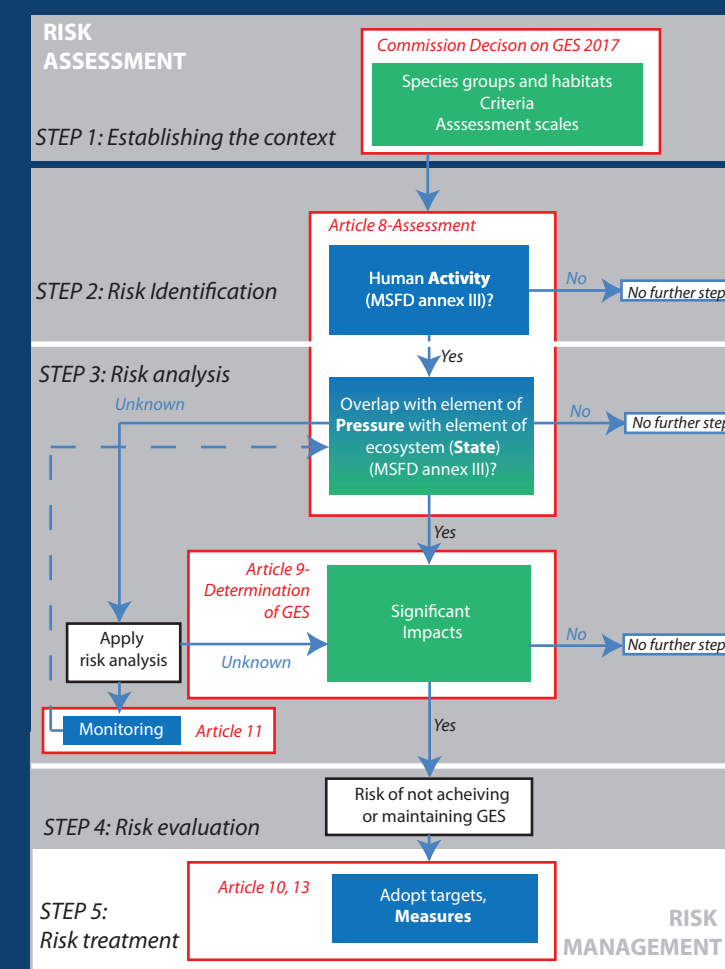
The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is coordinated centrally through a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS). Every six years Member States must:

- Assess marine environmental quality.
- Put in place monitoring programs.
- Design and implement programs of measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

The MSFD applies to waters under Member State jurisdiction. It recognizes that the marine territories form continuous ecosystems where the activities in the marine waters of one Member State may affect the environmental state in another. The MSFD obliges countries to cooperate across regions and subregions. This is facilitated by the existence of the regional seas conventions, in the North East Atlantic this is the OSLO Paris Commission (OSPAR).

Steps of the ISO risk management framework harmonised with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Articles



Results

The RAGES RBA was successfully applied to two MSFD descriptors.

A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed and documented to enable Member States with large marine territories and limited data to comply with the requirements of the Directive by developing risk-based management of Good Environmental Status.

This methodology can be applied at any scale enabling Member States to focus on the main anthropogenic pressures affecting their waters.

The method shows particular potential for applications to Descriptor 2- Non-Indigenous species, Descriptor 6- Sea Floor integrity, Descriptor 8- Concentrations of contaminants, Descriptor 10- Marine Litter and Descriptor 11- Underwater Noise.