

Quality check of emerging minimum requirements for marine and coastal Nature-Based Solutions

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Theme: Marine Protection and Restoration

With climate change and biodiversity loss reaching critical levels nature-Based Solutions (NbS) have emerged as powerful tools to foster sustainable development and addressing social, economic and environmental challenges simultaneously, by delivering various ecosystem services. However, despite their potential, uncertainties regarding their scope, effectiveness, and costs have likely hindered widespread adoption. In marine and coastal ecosystems, implementation of NbS presents additional complexities due to diverse stakeholder perceptions, varying interpretations of the concept, and the potential for conflicts with existing policies. This is further enhanced by a lack of detailed implementation standards, which leaves NbS vulnerable to misuse and greenwashing allegations.

To address these challenges, the Horizon Mission Ocean project TRANSEATION aims to develop environmental minimum requirements for marine and coastal NbS. The project has reviewed scientific literature and policy texts, interviewed stakeholders ranging from auditors, to Commission staff and NGO's to clarify potential pitfalls and interpretations. The workshop will set the scene by providing the first insights from previous work on identifying potential requirements, documentation needs and how to decide if a proposed NbS is actually an NbS.

The objectives of the workshop are threefold.

To critically assess:

- the feasibility proposed new environmental minimum requirements for marine and coastal Nature-Based Solutions
- proposed new environmental minimum requirements align with relevant policies
- If the applied terminology is robust

The results of the workshop will feed directly into several EU Mission Ocean projects, and support the drafting of future blue infrastructure building rating systems for marine and coastal structures to help developers contributing to ecosystem-based management of our oceans.