



EMODnet Thematic Lot n° 3 – Seabed habitats

6th bi-monthly Report

Reporting Period: 01/09/2014 – 31/10/2014

Date: 31/10/2014

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1. Highlights in this reporting period

- Delivery of the year 1 interim report. Receipt of preliminary note from DG/MARE asking for minor revision. Revised version submitted on 20 Oct. Final acceptance and payment awaited any time now.
- Upload of the 3 contractual broad-scale maps to the portal (Adriatic Sea, Macaronesia, Biscaye and Iberian).
- Production by JNCC of a brochure called “EUSeaMap, a broad-scale physical habitat map for European seas” for dissemination to stakeholders.

2. Meetings held since last report

Date	Location	Topic	Short Description
30 Sept. - Oct.	Malta	EMODNet Geology progress meeting	Topics of interest for us: - 2015 delivery of 1/1M sediment layer - provision of a layer with special features of the seabed - confidence as addressed by the Geology lot
6 Oct.	Rome	EMODNet special event organized by Secretariat	Status report of each lot and checkpoints. Contribution of EMODNet to MSFD reporting
20-24 Oct. 2014	Athens	Progress meeting #2	Year 1 work debriefing. Year 2 progress plan with geographical focus on Black Sea and Norwegian Sea.

3. Work package updates

WP1 – EUNIS applicability

At the Athens progress meeting, we debriefed the making of masks for the Po river plume (Adriatic Sea) and the Danube. These masks are made necessary by the presence of the large river plumes and telluric influence that affect seabed sediment distribution. We also finalised the agreement on biozones definition.

WP2 – Data preparation

We have received notification from the Bathymetry and Geology lots of their expected delivery timeframe in 2015, respectively the 1/8NM gridded depth and the 1/1M harmonised seabed sediment layer (corresponding to our nominal 250m pixel size) which are key inputs for us. This has to be monitored by our group as we are committed to the delivery of all remaining basins by 9 Sept. 2015

WP4 – Thresholds for boundaries between EUNIS categories

This is the most tricky bit of our work because of the gaps in EUNIS (mostly Black Sea) and the overall difficulty of getting habitat sample data. We expect some progress over the next period, particularly in Norway, to a lesser extent in Black Sea. In eastern Med., due to the tectonically active character of the seabed, the usual definition of deep sea biozones fail and we have to find an innovative way around it.

WP5 – Modelling and confidence

5.2 Summary of confidence assessment approach

The project will continue to assess source layers using a qualitative scoring approach, the details will depend on the assessment of quality on the primary layers (provided by the other lots). The quantitative approach requires a large amount of in-situ physical data, it cannot be applied in every regional sea and it also requires that all contractors that are (or have been) involved in the derivation of physical layers also provide uncertainty information. Efforts will be concentrated on improving biological relevant fuzzy thresholds in the next year of the project.

WP6 – Habitat map collation and WebGIS issues

A new emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu website has been created and is currently online. The homepage and content pages have been designed following the EMODnet style guide¹ and

¹ Van Houten, M. (MARIS), 2010. EMODnet Style guide.(EMODNETstyleGuide,pdf)

the Secretariat's draft recommendation for the harmonisation of the thematic portals². This portal is intended to gradually receive all types of EU habitat maps (legacy as well as newly created). Partners are encouraged to collate all maps in existence, although we are conscious of the difficulty of the task both technically and in terms of access. To this end detailed instructions were given by JNCC during last week's meetings as to formats, metadata etc.

WP8 – Management and communication

We had an issue with the venue of our second progress meeting, which was to be organised in Erdemli, Turkey. The proximity of Syria led us to change the meeting venue to Athens, following an offer from HCMR. This obviously was the best choice (rather than Varna or Constantza) because it was quite easily reachable from Istanbul, where all participants had to transit anyway.

4. Specific challenges or difficulties encountered during the reporting period

- There is still a shortage of habitat sample data in Eastern Med. and the Black Sea, which we still hope to remedy. This jeopardizes the task on thresholds, which means we may have to resort to depth proxies for some thresholds (e.g. 20m depth contour as lower infralittoral in Black Sea).
- This is also a shortage of polygons of Posidonia, because in Greece and Turkey, mapping is far from being comprehensive. This may be problematic when we are going to overlay the available polygons on top of the classification, the risk being to show no seagrass are present when it may not be true. Moreover, in the absence of data, assessing confidence is impossible, so no warning can be given to users.
- Mediseh foreground data, i.e. the modelled layers for the 3 habitats considered (seagrass, coralligenous, rhodoliths) are not yet with us. Our wish is to give visibility to this EU-funded work by displaying these raster modelled maps on the "Habitat unique portal" now in place to be the central repository of habitat maps of all kinds from all over Europe .

5. User Feedback

²EMODNET Secretariat, EMODnet Portals: Discussion document on guidelines for the further harmonization of the thematic portals

No specific user feedback for this period.

6. Outreach and communication activities

Date/Audience	Media	Title	Short description and/or link to the activity
Sept. 2014 (Online, see below)	Printed brochure and online PDF	EUSeaMap: A broad-scale physical habitat map for European Seas	An attractive brochure to describe the achievements of EUSeaMap phase 1 and what to expect from phase 2 of the project. Hard copies are available at JNCC.

EUSeaMap brochure at <http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=2024>



7. Updates on Progress Indicators

There won't be any update of indicators with this report. We intend to make a more significant update by Dec. 31 in the next bi-monthly report, after this has been discussed at the Dec. steering committee meeting.