



# DEVOTES recommendations for defining GEnS – a roadmap

## Milestone 4

NOTE: THE ORIGINAL TITLE OF THIS MILESTONE IN THE DOW WAS  
“Criteria for defining GES table complete”  
(see justification inside)

Dissemination level

**Restricted to other programme participants  
(including the Commission Services)**

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## Milestone scope

The work detailed in this milestone report has been conducted during the initial stages of Task 1.3.4. This task aims to summarise the main messages from all the deliverables completed in WP1 and discuss these in relation to their value and influence on the criteria required for defining Good Environmental Status (GEnS) for descriptors D1 – Biological diversity, D2 – Non-indigenous species, D4 – Food webs and D6 – Seafloor integrity, as described in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Annex III (MSFD; EU, 2008) and Commission Decision 2010/477/EU.

Task 1.3.4 will lead to a final deliverable (D1.5) which will discuss how the GEnS Descriptors and indicators will be influenced by the quantitative methods of linking pressures to biodiversity responses, the problems of moving baselines and other aspects of climate change, the links between ecosystem functioning and biodiversity and the adequacy and capabilities of monitoring. A report with recommendations for defining GEnS (Deliverable 1.5) will be published in October 2014 (month 24).

Milestone 4 establishes the roadmap for compiling the lessons learned in DEVOTES not only from WP1 but from tasks in other workpackages that have a relevant contribution for defining GEnS.

**NOTE:** As described in the *DEVOTES First Interim Report* (submitted to the EC in June 2014), a number of mismatches (e.g. Task 1.3.4 title, task description and incompatible timescales between the various tasks that led to this milestone) were pointed out. For this reason, the title of Milestone 4 was changed from “Criteria for defining GES table complete” to “DEVOTES recommendations for defining GEnS – a roadmap” to better reflect the work that is being done by the task and to be in line with Deliverable 1.5. This change will allow us to produce a relevant document that will give a valuable support for the implementation of the MSFD.

## Approach

The MSFD (EU, 2008) is currently being reviewed in a process triggered by the Directorate-General for the Environment (DG Environment) with the approval of the endorsed Member States in the MSFD implementation groups. The need to review became apparent after analysing the outcomes and difficulties found by the Member States in the initial steps of the MSFD implementation (for more details see for example Palialexis *et al.*, 2014). The review will essentially focus on the Commission Decision 2010/477/EU but possibly also on the Annexes I and III of the MSFD itself. This review is a scientific and technical process and its outcomes will advise and support the potential revision of the COM DEC (2010).

DEVOTES is one of the R&D projects that provides scientific support for the implementation of the MSFD. Therefore, the project Deliverable 1.5. will summarise the results of almost two years of work and provide clear insights and recommendations to feed the review process. Our proposal is to compile the main lessons learned by DEVOTES that will be valuable in the context of this review process and have them discussed and summarised in a concise document with clear recommendations for defining GEnS (Deliverable 1.5). To do this efficiently DEVOTES will produce D1.5. by the end of September and will present the report to the Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES) before their next meeting in October 2014. This way we insure that the DEVOTES main scientific results will be valuable and available at the appropriate time to inform the review process.

Figure 1 below indicates the overall structure for the MSFD implementation and this task and the Deliverable D1.5 will interrogate this figure with regard to the impediments to implementation and the lessons learned form the DEVOTES projects.

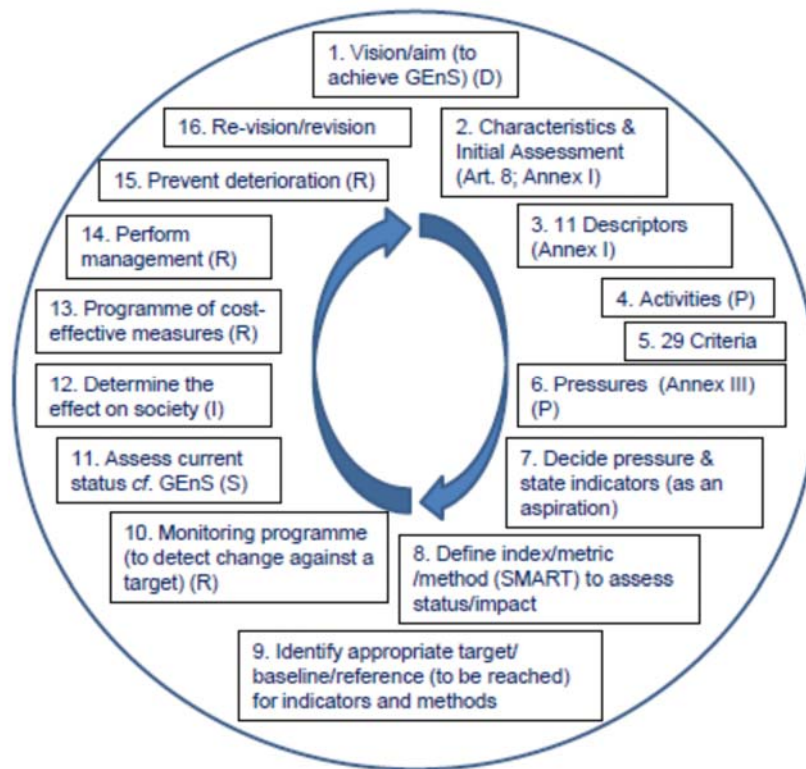


Figure 1. A conceptual model of the implementation of the MSFD (from Elliott *et al.* submitted). Each rectangle is a step in MSFD implementation including DPSIR.

## Next steps

We have already identified a number of DEVOTES relevant topics (Table 1) and outlined a roadmap (steps and deadlines) to guide us in the process.

**Step 1** (all participants): Identification of shortcomings, problems, inconsistencies (also with other EU legislation) and needs for improvements arising from analysis of the D1, D2, D4 and D6 implementation so far. Based on lessons learned by DEVOTES but also EC Art 12 Assessment, EC JRC IDA (Palialexis *et al.* 2014), other relevant documents.

**Table 1.** Topics related to the definition of Good Environmental Status (GEnS) currently under study within the DEVOTES FP7 Project with relevance for the review process of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Commission Decision 2010/477/EU. Published and upcoming results and their linkage to specific parts of the COM DEC are identified. WP: work package, M: Milestone. D: deliverable (or Descriptor, in the first column). Note: all tools, deliverables and milestones available at: <http://www.devotes-project.eu/deliverables-and-milestones/>.

Relation with MSFD review process	Relevant topics for GEnS definition	DEVOTES outputs relevant for this process	WP with upcoming results
Overarching	1. Definition of GEnS;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Borja <i>et al.</i> (2013)</li> </ul>	
Overarching	2. Barriers and bottlenecks (socio-economic and legislative) that prevent the GEnS being achieved;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Luisetti <i>et al.</i> (in prep)</li> <li>D2.2 report (30 April 2015)</li> </ul>	WP2
Overarching (MSFD Annex III); Descriptors level (D1, D2, D4, D6)	3. Pressure-State changes links and climate change effects on biodiversity (e.g. challenges of shifting baselines) – the effect of pressures and climate changes on biodiversity; the effects of climate change on attaining GEnS; the way in which these aspects are related to existing and proposed criteria for defining GEnS;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smith <i>et al.</i> (2014)</li> <li>M5 (November 2014) and D1.2. (January 2015) will present matrices and an accompanying report detailing generic and regional sea-specific pressure-impact relationships.</li> <li>Elliott <i>et al.</i> (submitted)</li> </ul>	WP1
Overarching	4. Monitoring: the current situation, fitness for purpose assessment, highlight gaps and opportunities, collaboration level, etc;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patrício <i>et al.</i> (2013)</li> <li>Patrício <i>et al.</i> (2014)</li> </ul>	WP1
Descriptors level (D1, D2, D4, D6); overarching	5. Selection, testing and development of indicators;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teixeira <i>et al.</i> (2014) (papers in prep) + DEVOTool Catalogue of indicators</li> <li>Piroddi <i>et al.</i> (2013) + Piroddi <i>et al.</i> (submitted)</li> </ul>	WP3; WP4
Descriptors level (D1, D2, D4, D6)	6. Keystone species – are we “protecting” what needs to be protected and does the DEVOTES knowledge about keystone species allow improvements to indicators, especially creating surrogate measures?;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>D6.1 report on keystone species and processes (30 July 2014)</li> </ul>	WP6
Descriptors level (D1, D4, D6)	7. The role of biodiversity in ecosystem functioning and does this allow the creation of functional indicators which may be more relevant to descriptors than structural indicators;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong <i>et al.</i> (in prep)</li> </ul>	WP1

Relation with MSFD review process	Relevant topics for GEnS definition	DEVOTES outputs relevant for this process	WP with upcoming results
Overarching	8. Integration/aggregation and scale issues; Integrative assessment of biodiversity (DEVOTool principles?);	• Borja <i>et al.</i> (in press);	WP6 (T611/T612)
For next phase of the first MSFD cycle?	9. Others... 9.1 DG Env might be asking at some point for <u>methodological standards</u> associated with monitoring and assessment (see previous reports from JRC). If this is somewhat developed for chemical assessment approaches, it is not a common practice within biodiversity assessments, we should therefore assess how the results and outputs from our project (namely new monitoring practices and new tools and indicators provide such a quality certification) can be use; 9.2 ...	NOTE: D1.5 will briefly discuss the need for CEN-European Committee for Standardization standards for the monitoring required	WP3 (T321)

**Step 2 (all participants):** Analysis of text of Commission Decision 2010/477/EU for D1, D2, D4 and D6 by drafting an annotated D1, D2, D4 and D6 COM DEC text. This can start in parallel to Step 1), but should also take its findings into account.

**Step 3 (JRC):** Draft document sections and circulate to participants.

**Step 4 (all participants):** Compilation of resulting findings with options and reasoning, including proposals for decision making and formulation of specific questions to the reviewers.

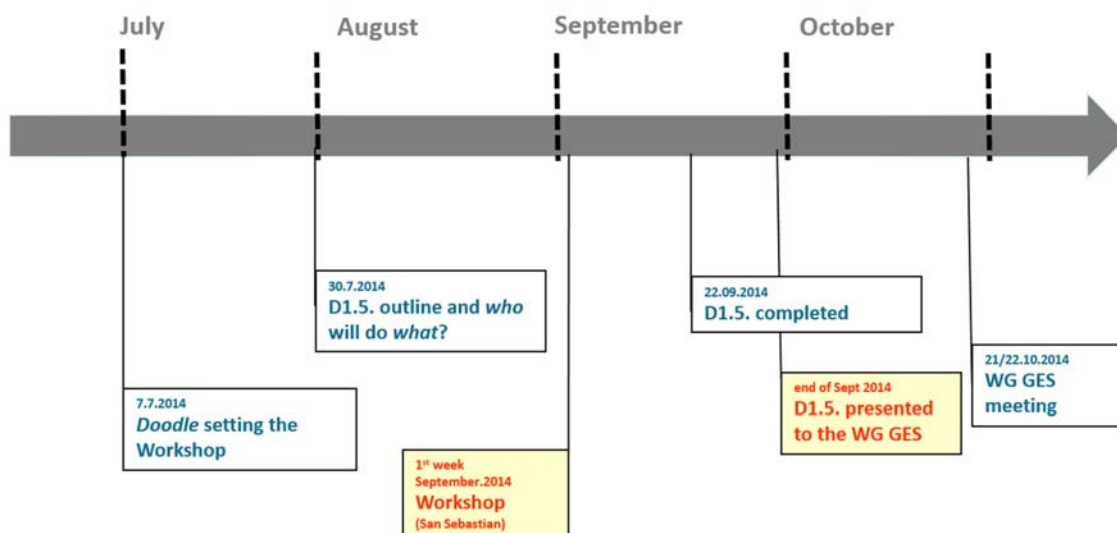
**Step 5 (all participants):** Proposal of necessary actions in the implementation process, such as: harmonisation of approaches, by giving clear indications/descriptions/rationale; providing of additional, specific guidance; amendment of Commission Decision 2010/477/EU text.

**Step 6 (workshop participants):** “Wrap up” workshop to produce a report with concrete recommendations to be sent no later than the 26<sup>th</sup> of September to the DG GES. *This report will be DEVOTES D1.5 and it should not be longer than 30-40 pages and written in plain language as we want it to be a clear and objective document easily understood and used by GES working group during their review process.)*

- **Workshop title:** “Lessons learned and the COM DEC 2010/477/EU review process. Can DEVOTES contribute? How?”
- **Workshop Location:** San Sebastian, Spain (AZTI headquarters)
- **Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September 2014

- **Duration:** 2 days
- **Participants:** a limited number of DEVOTES' participants that can summarise the relevant outputs from each WP
- **Main aims of the meeting:** to summarise the lessons learned by DEVOTES that are relevant for the definition of GEnS and to produce a document with clear recommendations on the review of the COM DEC text and MSFD Annexes I and III.
- **Context in DEVOTES:** Task 1.3.4 & D1.5. – Report with recommendations for defining GEnS

### Deadlines:



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