

# Towards Ecosystem-Based Protection of Marine Environments

*Investigating the scope for marine reserves in Northern Europe under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive*

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ESRC Symposium on Marine Conservation and Governance: MPAs and beyond

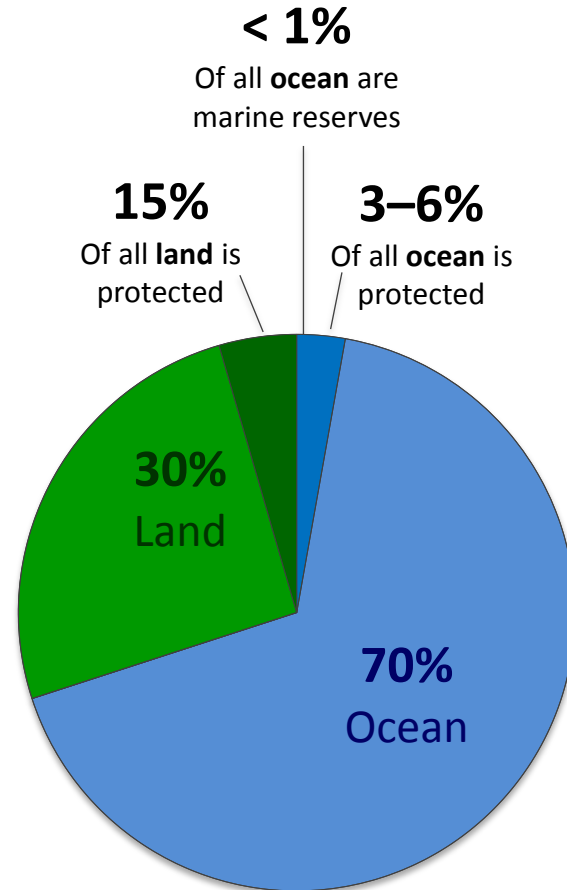
24 September 2015

*Research built on thesis for the fulfilment of the Master of Science in Environmental Management and Policy, Lund University, 2014*



# Why did I conduct this research?

- MSFD first to enforce EBM approach
- Spatial measures mandatory (Art. 13.4)
- Current MPA coverage
- **Marine reserves:** *Closed for all extractive or otherwise to the environment harmful activities.*



## INTRODUCTION

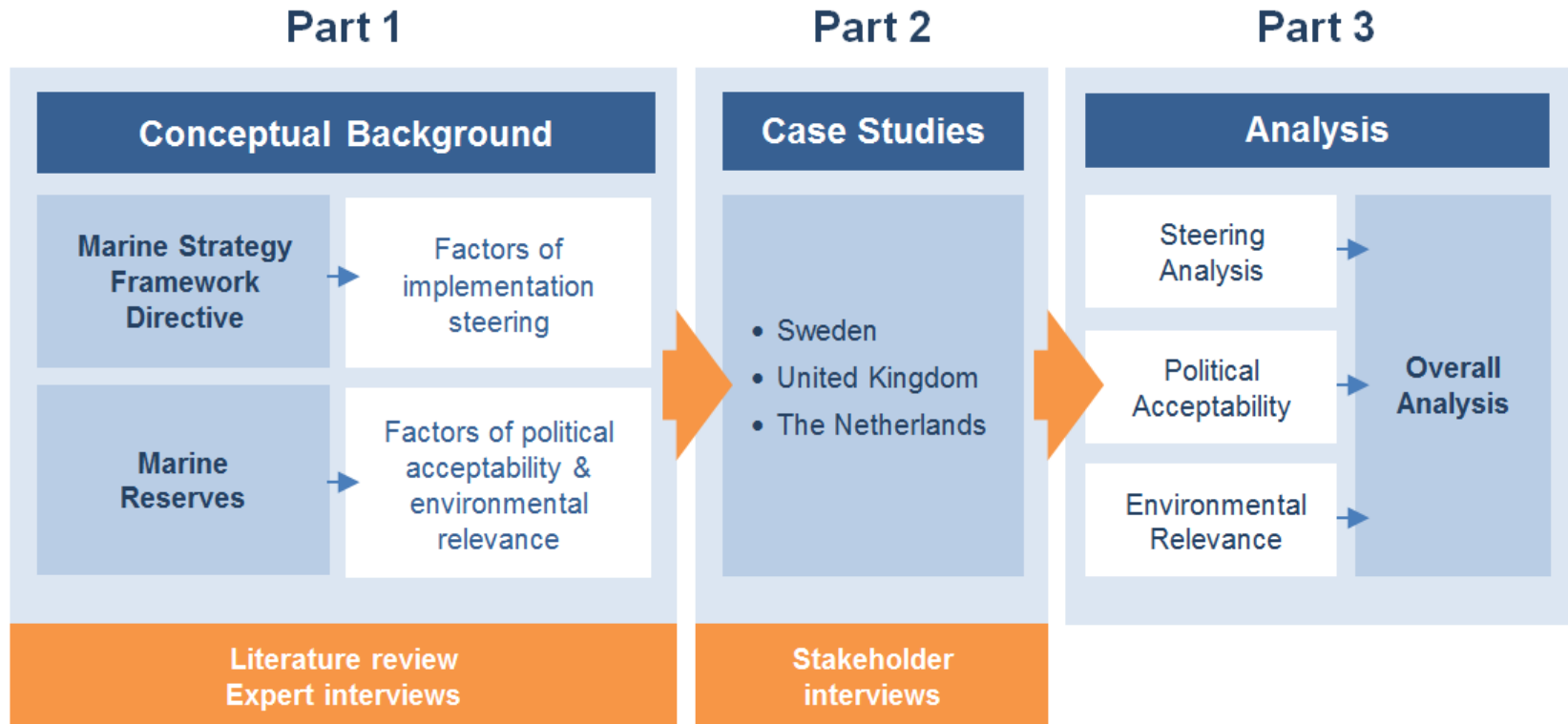
# Why did I conduct this research?

**Aim** *To improve the understanding of how the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is influencing marine spatial protection in Northern Europe*

*Investigate the scope for marine reserves as a policy instrument for achieving the EBM objectives of the Directive*



# How did I approach it?







## KEY RESULTS

# Case studies







	Sweden	The UK	The Netherlands
MPAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 designation types</li> <li>• 6.3% of marine waters (lowest in Baltic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 designation types</li> <li>• 9.5% of territorial waters, limited coverage offshore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 designation type</li> <li>• One area fully implemented; 5 pending</li> </ul>
Of which marine reserves today?	None	3 small areas	None (not accepted)
Adopts spatial measures under MSFD?	No <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance structure imposes time and resource constraints</li> <li>• Eutrophication</li> </ul>	No <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interprets Art 13.4 differently</li> </ul>	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two areas for seafloor protection</li> </ul>

# The MSFD steering

Key factors	Confirmed?	Comments
Regulatory vagueness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New MPAs required or not?</li> <li>• Lack of definitions</li> </ul>
Regulatory overlap		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CFP</b> obstructing MPAs in EEZ</li> <li>• <b>Maritime Spatial Planning Directive</b> causes concern</li> <li>• <b>Natura 2000</b> – not optimal for marine environments</li> </ul>
Scientific uncertainty and lack of knowledge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinders authorities' ability to justify spatial measures</li> <li>• Hinders adoption of socio-economic valuation</li> <li>• Precautionary principle not operational at national or local level</li> </ul>
Dependence on political will		Determined by structural national priorities







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## MAIN FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

# Marine reserves as a policy instrument

Environmental relevance	Confirmed?	Comments
Limitations relating to the nature of the instrument		Marine reserves have not been discussed as an option
Scientific uncertainty and lack of knowledge		Need for data, pilot areas and empirical examples
→ Uncertainty about <b>environmental relevance</b>		
Political acceptability		
Political will		Low at governmental level; higher with authorities
Socio-economic consequences		Unacceptably high coercion; risk of conflict; fear for 'dead hand'
→ Low <b>political acceptability</b>		

# Ways forward?

## Stakeholder participation

- Kosterhavet marine national park (SWE) success story

## Designation in low-activity areas?

- Sweden and Scotland
- Scientific relevance?
- Long-term perspective?

## Marine reserves as scientific baseline areas?

- Easier politically
- Network thinking?

## Ecotourism

- Reconcile economic and ecological objectives
- Preconditions?



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# Conclusions

## **MSFD**

→ delivers limited progress for spatial protection

## **Marine reserves**

→ no scope under the MSFD

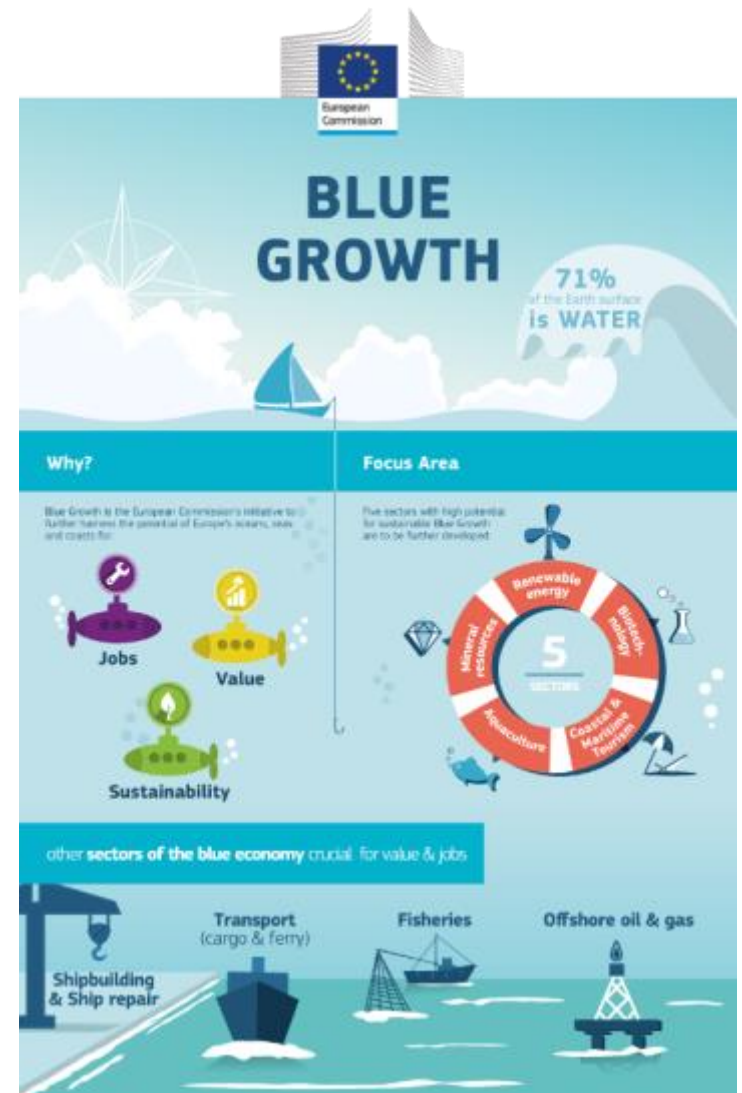


# Recommendations

1. Manage/enforce existing protection first!
2. Address lack of scientific data
3. Improve balance between exploitation and conservation
4. Strengthen ecosystem credentials of Natura 2000

# Points for discussion

- EU and national focus on the Blue Economy
- What will happen to marine conservation objectives under the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive?







# Thank you for listening!

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*Thesis prepared at Lund University, 2014*

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