

Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Northern European Atlantic

The SIMNORAT project focuses on the **two key objectives** :

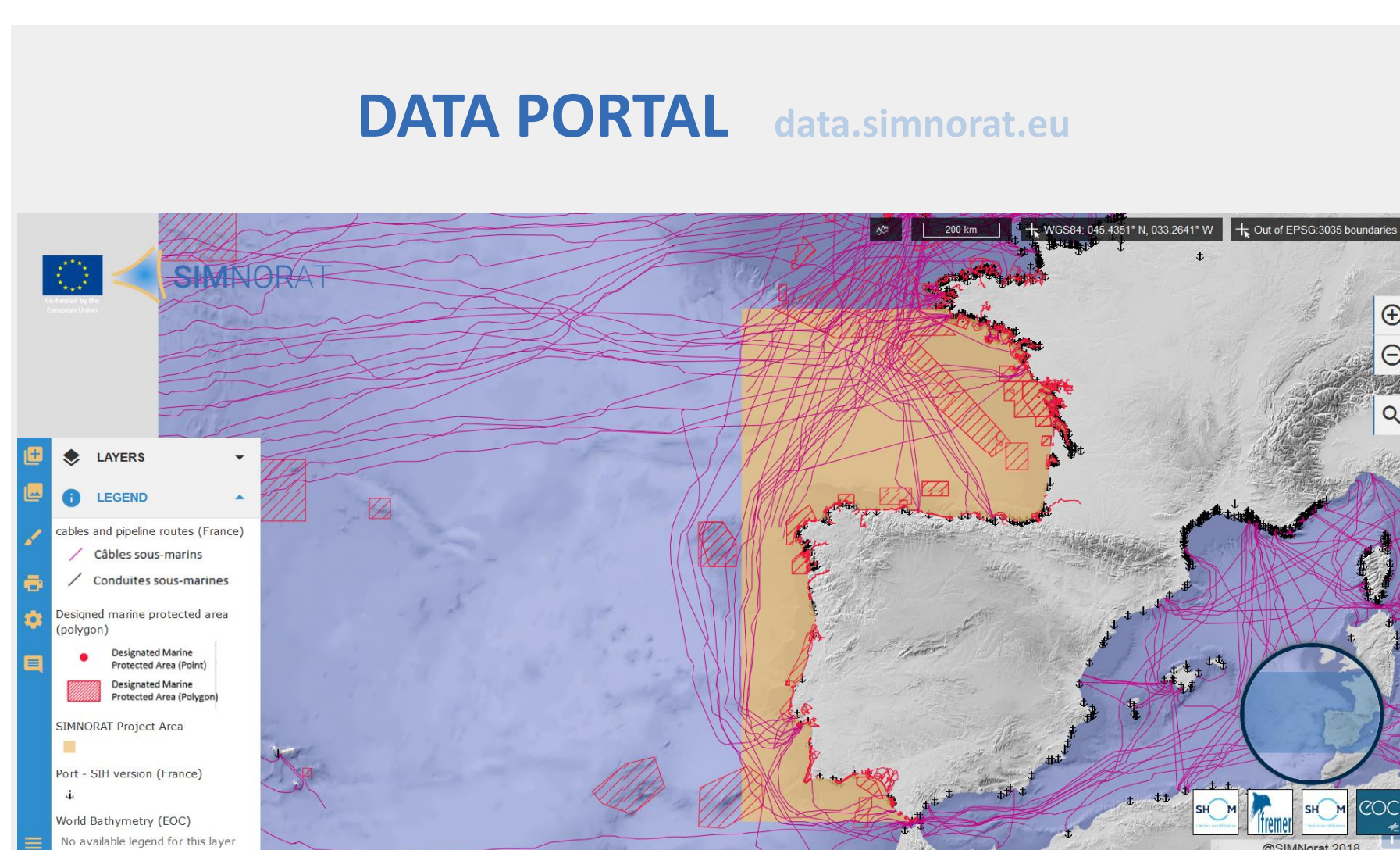
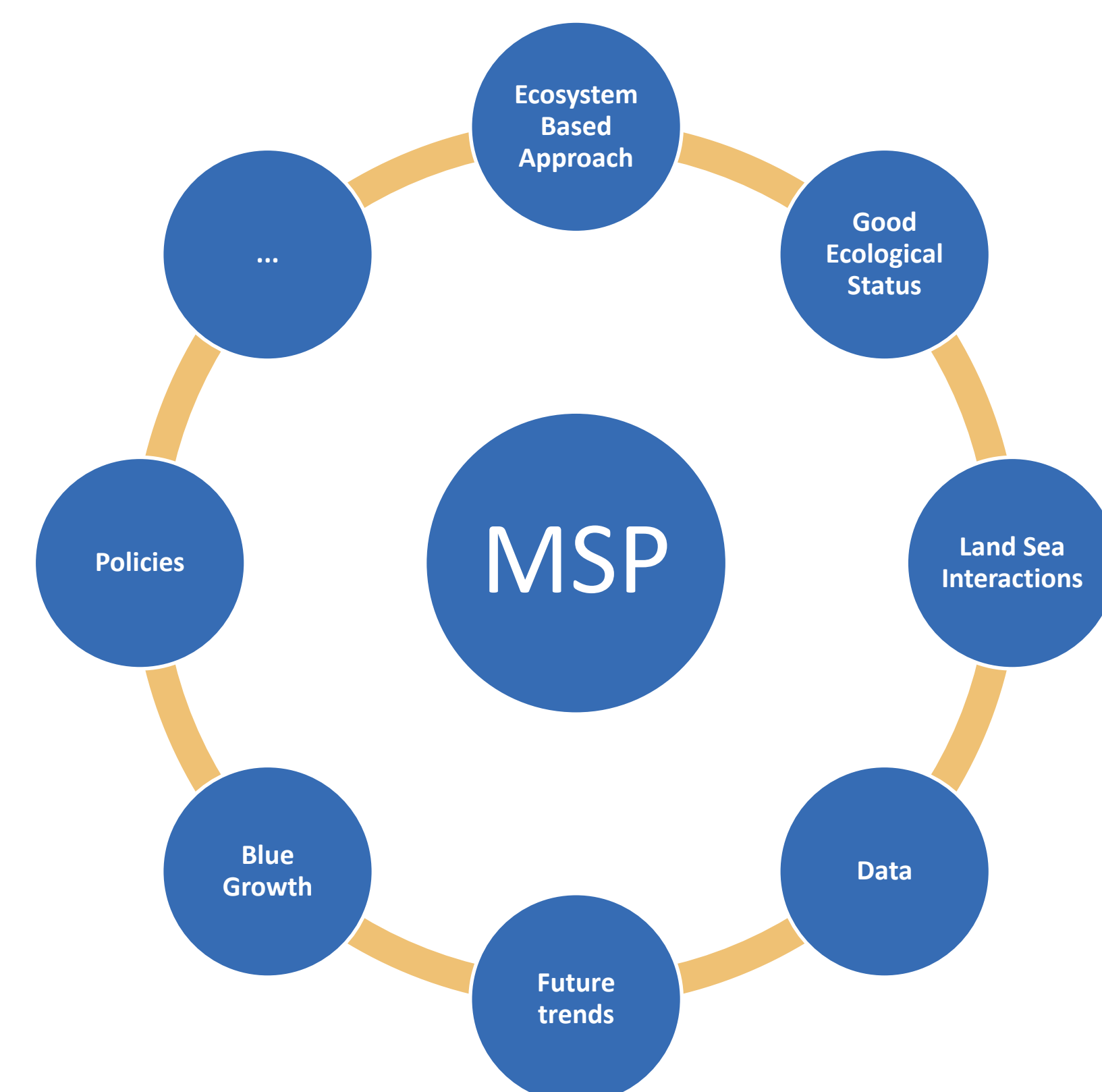
- Support the **implementation of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning** in Member States' marine waters
- Launch and carry out concrete **cross-border MSP cooperation** between Member States in the Northern Atlantic Region

SIMNORAT brings together a number of partners — research organisations, marine planning authorities and marine management bodies. They address both key objectives through a **variety of approaches**, including: literature and desktop research; future trend analysis; collaborative scenario development; practitioner/stakeholder interviews; development of case studies; tools for MSP analysis and tests; stakeholder engagement mechanisms.

SIMNORAT outputs are **practitioner focused**, and **seek to identify and share best practice** on: technical, (e.g. data management), scientific (e.g. ecosystem based management), and social (e.g. stakeholder engagement processes) aspects of MSP implementation that address barriers to the implementation of the MSP Directive and effective cooperation on transboundary working for MSP.

The **project activities** include:

- Initial assessment with regard to marine conservation and maritime sectors
- Analysis of the MSP process
- Analysis of the MSP Directive implementation methodology with specific focuses on relations with OSPAR, land-sea interactions and Integrated Coastal Management, geographical scales
- Identification of spatial demands and future trends in marine conservation and maritime sectors
- Support for the access to and use of MSP data
- Analysis of stakeholder engagement mechanisms and preparation of stakeholder workshops (local, national, transnational)
- Case Studies in the Bay of Biscay and North Western marine waters of Iberian coasts



The SIMNORAT **data portal demonstrator** has been designed as a tool to help marine spatial planners to access, preview and use relevant data for Maritime Spatial Planning of the Northern Atlantic area. This technical laboratory explores solutions to overcome existing barriers and gaps on data sharing in a transboundary context. The datasets gathered and tested in this portal are mainly Web Services, which are INSPIRE Directive standards aimed at sharing data in Europe.

PARTNERS AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

As SIMNORAT is developed simultaneously with the implementation of the MSP Directive in the countries, the involvement of their MSP competent authorities at the level of the Steering Committee ensure the connection and benefits between both actions.

For France, the maritime policies are embedded in a Ministry, MTES, and the management of the maritime policies is organized by “sea basin”. The Shom (Responsible of the safety of the navigation and in charge of the description of the marine physical environment), the CEREMA (Expertise Center on Risks studies, Environment, Mobility and space planning) and the FBA (French Biodiversity Agency) are the main organisations involved in the MSP process, with the MTES and the SGMer (Secretariat General to the Sea), office of the prime Minister in charge of coordination of maritime policies.

At each sea basin level, a couple of maritime and terrestrial Prefects implement the MSP Directive, supported by the coordination of the DIRMs (Marine Interregional Direction, region Mediterranean).

The project area of interest is the marine waters of Portugal, Spain, and France of the Ospam region IV, expanded by the area between Vigo Seamount and Banco de Galicia in the Northern Atlantic area.

In Spain, two organisations, already involved in the Maritime Strategy Framework Directive process are delegated by the Ecological Transition Ministry, MITECO, in charge of the MSP process, the CEDEX and the IEO. The organization for the MSP is in process.

In Portugal, the General Direction of Maritime for Natural Resources, Maritime Safety and Services (DGRM) delegated the University of Aveiro (UA), which participated in TPEA project.

Moreover, the Regions are in charge of a lot of competencies directly linked to the MSP process. As it was clearly not possible to involve all the regions in the project, the CPMR, association of 160 Maritime regions in Europe, which is active in the areas of ICM/MSP, will therefore ensure link with this important level of governance.