

Marine Spatial Planning in the Levant: Crossing the policy-planning divide

Prof. Michelle E. Portman, Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, Technion.

Many countries have begun marine spatial planning (MSP) efforts in the past decade and much academic and professional literature reviews and analyzes these processes. Relevant research that can contribute greatly to new efforts at MSP compares efforts, both recent and historical, with ideals set for spatial planning processes. This research addresses the extent to which paradigms from the planning practice and the policy field can be relevant for the MSP context. It does so by analyzing the interim products of an MSP process addressing the Mediterranean Sea area in the waters adjacent to the State of Israel. Results emphasize the potential contribution of public policy analysis and planning to critique interim outcomes of the MSP process with the aim of improving these and devising best practices. The complexity and challenge of spatial planning when policy foundations are minimal is highlighted. The presentation will also address how the experience of Israel's MSP process can be used as prototype for capacity building in other areas of the world, through programs such as the Blue Solutions Initiative which is aimed at collating best practices, improving methods, enhancing capacity and fostering knowledge exchange at a global/international level.