



**NESBp**  
Northern European Sea Basins project



Ministerie van Infrastructuur  
en Waterstaat

# Summary Report

Northern European Sea Basin-Project Task 3.4.

***An assessment of the current status of Cumulative Impact  
Assessment activities across regional institutes and countries at  
Northern European Sea Basins***

Assigned by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management in the Netherlands

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## List of Abbreviations

|              |                                                                                                 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BSPI         | Bangladesh Sweden Polytechnic Institute                                                         |
| BSII         | Baltic Sea Impact Index                                                                         |
| Carpe Diem   | French project mapping tools & policies re ecosystem knowledge for marine management frameworks |
| CFP          | Common Fisheries Policy                                                                         |
| CIA          | Cumulative Impact Assessment                                                                    |
| CoP          | Community of Practice                                                                           |
| EIA          | Environmental Impact Assessment                                                                 |
| EU           | European Union                                                                                  |
| GNSBI        | Greater North Sea Basin Initiative                                                              |
| HELCOM       | Helsinki Commission (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission)                           |
| I&W          | Dutch ministry of Infrastructure & Water Quality                                                |
| ICES         | International Council for the Exploration of the Sea                                            |
| KEC          | Ecology and Cumulative Effects Framework                                                        |
| MSFD         | Marine Strategy Framework Directive                                                             |
| MSP          | Maritime Spatial Planning                                                                       |
| MONS         | Monitoring – Research – Nature Restoration – Species Protection                                 |
| N2000        | Natura 2000 protected areas network                                                             |
| NESBp        | Northern European Sea Basin project                                                             |
| NGO          | Non-Governmental Organisation                                                                   |
| NSEC         | North Seas Energy Cooperation                                                                   |
| OSPAR        | Oslo-Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic   |
| SCAIRM       | Spatial Cumulative Assessment of Impact Risk for Management                                     |
| SEA          | Strategic Environmental Assessment                                                              |
| PlanWise4Blu | Baltic-wide MSP platform/project in the EU marine context                                       |
| SEABAS       | SEABAS is a Baltic Sea regional platform project co-funded by EU/Interreg                       |
| SPIA         | Strategic Planning and Impact Assessment                                                        |
| Symphony     | Tool for cumulative marine impact assessment                                                    |
| WFD          | Water Framework Directive                                                                       |
| WGCIAM       | Working Group on Cumulative Impact Assessment Methods                                           |
| WT           | Work Track                                                                                      |
| SPIA/HOLAS   | SPIA group for HELCOM Holistic Assessment of the Ecosystem                                      |
| WT           | Working Track                                                                                   |
| WT CIA       | Working Track for Cumulative Impact Assessment                                                  |

# Executive summary

## Approach

This document provides an overview of the need for collaboration on the development and application of Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA) within the Greater North Sea Basin and the Baltic Sea. The work forms part of the NESB project, supported by the European Commission.

From September to November 2025 regional institutes and countries neighbouring the Greater North Sea Basin and the Baltic Sea have been requested to reflect on how they develop and apply CIA for decision-making regarding marine spatial planning (MSP) and how they see future collaboration. ICES, HELCOM, OSPAR and NSEC responded to a survey, participated in bilateral interviews and joined the online regional institutes workshop. In parallel 14 countries have given their input through a survey and/or the online countries workshop.

## Learnings

HELCOM, ICES, NSEC and OSPAR, are engaged in how sea basin scale tools and methods that describe cumulative pressures on marine ecosystems to support strategic decision making can be developed and applied. Regarding collaboration, their ambitions converge on harmonising spatial datasets, agreeing on common activity–pressure–ecosystem linkages, clarifying approaches to uncertainty and developing a focused set of well-understood tools of high quality rather than proliferating new ones. Constraints are the patchiness and incompatibility of spatial data across borders, the lack of agreed standards for pressure computation and uncertainty treatment, and limited expert capacity stretched across many overlapping initiatives. Efforts should thus also focus towards improving data quality and availability, an issue all four institutes identify as central.

Countries acknowledged the benefits of collaboration and explored practical ways forward through exchanging on case studies and CIA pilot exercises. Such pilots produce policy relevant examples that demonstrate the added value of sea basin CIAs for national Maritime Spatial planning (MSP) and highlight areas requiring further alignment. To sustain this cooperation, partners suggested to align workplans under a light coordination mechanism by the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative (GNSBI) and existing regional conventions. Key priorities include:

- > Strengthening the science–policy interface through clear communication materials and guidance on CIA’s decision relevance and limitations. This way, CIA experts can advise and guide policy makers in their MSP process, while CIAs are also commissioned by (questions arriving from) policy makers.
- > Ensuring national CIAs are comparable for agreed human uses, pressures, spatial grids, and baseline ecosystem components aligned with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Birds and Habitats Directive (Natura 2000).
- > Aligning data by providing spatial layers in common formats, using regional datasets (HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES, NSEC), and documenting data sources transparently.
- > Making linkages and uncertainties more explicit via shared pressure–receptor matrices and standardised documentation of objectives, scope, assumptions, and uncertainty treatment.

- > Both the four regional institutes and the countries consider international cooperation in the field of CIA very important.

## Recommendations

Across countries and regional institutes, a common medium- to long-term goal is to join forces working collaboratively to greater alignment and comparability of CIA across borders and sea basins, including alignment of methods, data, indicators, and better accessibility for non-scientific audiences.

Institutes and countries suggest that collaboration with and through GNSBI should focus on

- > Data standardisation.
- > Harmonisation or alignment of methodologies.
- > Linkages and how to deal with uncertainties.
- > Shared communication and educational efforts.
- > Connecting technical CIA work to policy questions from ministries.

They also mention that GNSBI can support formal agreements on incorporating transboundary CIA in MSP policymaking, help organise pilots that gather spatial data and apply CIA across the basin, and map overlaps and gaps between existing groups to coordinate efforts.

### *Science policy interface*

Institutes and country representatives underline that engagement and communication around CIA are critical and very challenging, especially explaining concepts, uncertainties, and results to policymakers and non-experts. They explicitly state a shared need for better communication strategies, more intuitive tools, clearer explanations, and earlier, clearer integration of CIA in planning dialogues to improve uptake by decision makers and stakeholders.

Opportunities:

- > Joint assessment of the requests at the demand-side.
- > Develop together an approach for policy engagement and communication.
- > Discuss how to ensure an earlier application of CIA in SEA/MSP processes.
- > Define transboundary consultation: such as economical activities, trends, and decision-making.

### *Learning and exchange knowledge and experience*

Joint technical workshops, shared guidelines or frameworks, integrated CIA pilots at basin level, shared spatial datasets, and coordination on data streaming and storage. Joint projects and pilots through CoP for institutes, suggested collaboration topics include joint projects on data sharing and cleaning (including industry data), cross-basin case studies.

Opportunities:

- > Exchange on CIA knowledge and experiences between countries and institutes around specific topics.
- > Jointly discuss challenges further and incorporate these in programmatic approach to address and solve these challenges.
- > Increase or continuation of institutes working together on joint pilots and projects.

## ***Increase comparability and alignment of efforts on CIA***

Both institutes and countries share the goal of building a more coherent evidence base on ecosystem components, sensitivities, and responses to multiple pressures, while recognising substantial knowledge gaps. Existing platforms for knowledge exchange include HELCOM and OSPAR monitoring and assessments, ICES working groups, NSEC's mitigation catalogue and timelines, and national programmes and collaborations such as MONS, Wadden Sea work, and international use of Symphony.

Opportunities:

- > Map existing initiatives and use existing infrastructure where possible.
- > Have a common perspective in 2026: develop a joint perspective on what a CIA means/entails.
- > Agree on principles: build further on the ICES advice ([link to ICES advice](#)).

## ***Strengthening the use of WT CIA in GNSBI as a community of practice***

Regional Institutes and countries both indicated that a community of practice (CoP) would be a good form for collaboration. Such a CoP could include all kinds of stakeholders that are relevant for the CIA work in the coming years, also beyond members of the WT CIA. A CoP does not have to have a strict membership. The CoP could grow and change in an organic way. GNSBI is described as a key actor and platform for such as community of practice; enhancing collaboration between regional institutes and countries on CIA in the Greater North Sea Basin and links to the Baltic Sea. The CoP would be used to exchange experience and knowledge on CIA and MSP-related discussions and to facilitate workshops, networking, cross-sectoral dialogue, and annual meetings, without being a formal policy authority.

Opportunities:

- > Develop a programme for collaboration.
- > Map existing initiatives and connect to other those (e.g. working tracks).
- > Use existing infrastructure of working tracks and projects in the GNSBI to avoid new time-consuming formats and to embed activities in the current teams of GNSBI where possible.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The Northern European Sea Basin project (NESBp)

The NESB project is an EU-funded project for implementation under the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative (GNSBI). The goal of this project is to support international cooperation for maritime spatial planning (MSP) in the North Sea and Baltic Sea regions, promoting coherent cross-border policies, an ecosystem-based approach, and sustainable blue economy development. The geographical scope includes the North Sea and the Baltic Sea regions. With a temporal scope of 15 November 2024 until 14 May 2027.

The NESBp has close linkages to the GNSBI working tracks and reports to the initiative on progress and insights. Within the WT CIA of GNSBI partners work on several tasks related to Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) development and application, e.g. the ICES advice.

We distinguished between CIA development and CIA application:

- > Development: the processes of building tools, methodologies, selecting parameters, etc.
- > Application: the processes in which you use tools for creating insight and/or decision making in specific processes and spatial scopes.

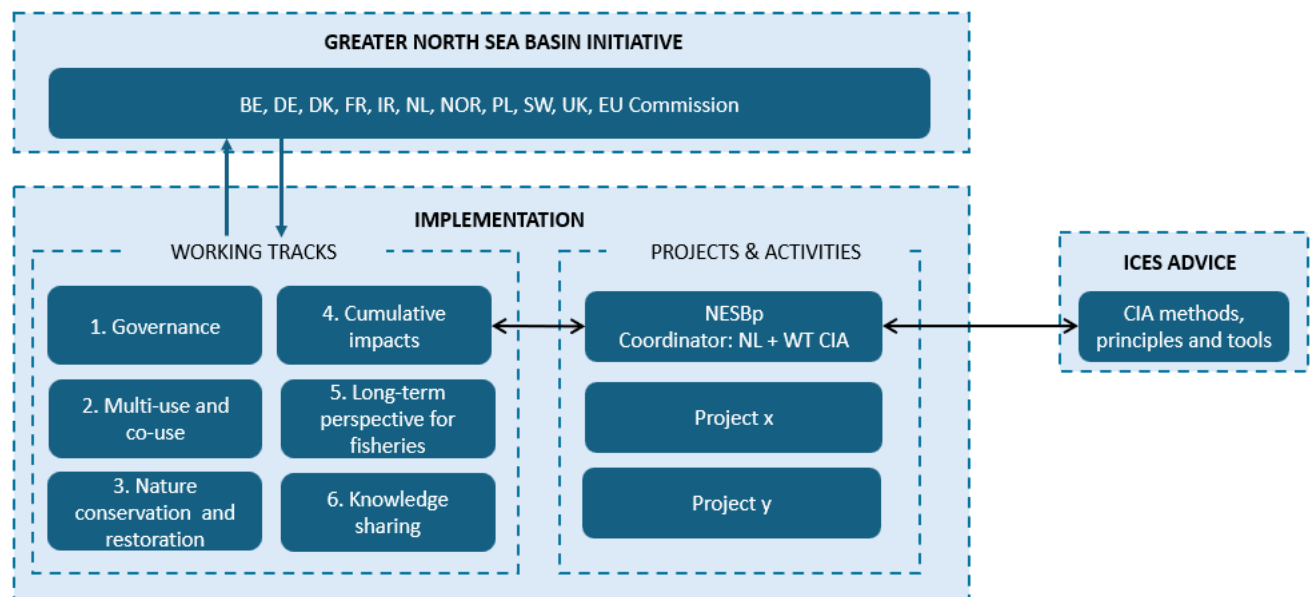


Figure 1. Overview of work structure and relation between activities

## 1.2. Purpose of task 3.4

### *The goal*

"To enhance collaboration between regional institutes and countries that work on CIA within the Greater North Sea Basin and Baltic Sea."

The activities under this assignment aimed to deliver insights in the progress of CIA developments and implementation at country and sea basin level. The assignment has three working tracks:

- > Work Track 1 "Collaborate with existing fora to align development and application of CIA tools".
- > Work Track 2 "Define how countries can apply CIA and how countries can collaborate and exchange".
- > Work Track 3 "Support cooperation in the development, exchange, and collection of ecological knowledge".

These work tracks have been translated into four main activities, namely:

- > Assess how regional organisations are progressing on CIA tools.
- > Assess how CIA is applied by countries in MSP (regional context and national processes).
- > Identify challenges and opportunities for countries and for regional organisations.
- > Identify the potential for collaboration and integration of activities.

### *The audience*

For this assignment we have involved two groups of stakeholders:

- > CIA experts from four regional institutes: HELCOM, ICES, NSEC, OSPAR.
- > CIA experts and policy officers from 14 countries: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom.

## 1.3. Implementing team

This assignment was executed by P2 and Value of Nature, in close collaboration with the client (Ministry of I&W) and the two chairs of the GNSBI WT CIA. This so-called steering group has been essential in the design, the implementation and the reviews. The assignment started in August 2025 and has finished in November 2025.

## 2. Approach and instruments

To deliver on the three working tracks as described in 1.2 we, together with the steering-group, have we have developed a framework for data collection, see figure 2.

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | <b>WT1. Collaborate with existing fora to align development and application of CIA tools</b><br><b>Target group: regional institutes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>WT2/3. Define how countries can apply CIA and how countries can collaborate and exchange</b><br><b>Target group: countries</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>SURVEY</b>           | <b>Approach:</b> survey based on 4 key topics, with sub-questions to retrieve detailed information on the key questions. The survey will take about 1 hour and will be sent to 1 representative, with the request to align with the other experts of their institute.<br><b>Result:</b> overview of the objectives, activities and planning per institute and reflections on (more and better) collaboration ("the status quo and the potential") | <b>Approach:</b> survey based on the 5 key topics, with sub-questions to retrieve detailed information on the key questions. The survey will take about 1.5 hours and will be sent to all representatives, with the request to complete the survey individually.<br><b>Result:</b> detailed information on national, cross-border and sea basin level CIA application and collaboration ("the way we work now") |
| <b>WORKING SESSIONS</b> | <b>Approach:</b> from the survey we analyse the differences and similarities in 1) tools and objectives, 2) approach, 3) principles and definitions, 4) gaps, 5) collaboration and harmonization (common ambitions). In a 1.5h online session we discuss conclusions/issues on these 5 topics.<br><b>Result:</b> dilemmas, challenges and opportunities for regional institutes on the 5 topics.                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>WORKSHOPS</b>        | <b>Approach:</b> input to the meeting is the analysis from survey and working sessions. The focus will be on a selection of the dilemma's, challenges and opportunities. We do solution-driver break-out group discussions (e.g. how can we set a joint ambition? What do we need for better collaboration?)<br><b>Result:</b> 3-6 advices for alignment and collaboration                                                                        | <b>Approach:</b> the survey results will be shared before the meeting. We will pay attention to a) national, cross border and sea basin level alignment, b) level of application, c) problems, potential, needs. TBD<br><b>Result:</b> an overview of issues and opportunities                                                                                                                                  |

Figure 2. Framework for collecting information and data

### 2.1. Research questions

The key research questions have been applied as a structure for all data collection instruments. Based on the key research questions we developed detailed questions for each specific instrument, being a survey, a working session or a workshop. Our key research questions were:

1. What are goals and objectives of CIA development and application at national, transboundary and sea basin level? (vision and mission, joint ambitions, principles: compatibility, complementarity, harmonisation)
2. What is currently happening regarding the development and application of CIA? (approach and process, focus and priorities, progress, organisation)
3. What are key challenges and opportunities that regional institutes and countries meet when working on CIA? (tools, data needs and knowledge gaps, definitions)
4. How do regional institutes and countries engage with others on CIA? (governments, for promotion for application, peers, for exchange, others)
5. What is the purpose for collaboration, and how can we organise effective and efficient collaboration for CIA development and application? (current collaborations: goals and objectives, activities, future collaborations, goals and objectives, activities, needs and ideas how to facilitate collaboration)

## 2.2. Process design

To collect a lot of information in a short period we built a process with two parallel streams of work:

- > One for the input from the regional institutes including a survey per institute, an online working session per institute and one online 3-hour workshop with all institutes.
- > One for the input of countries, including a survey per country and one online 3-hour workshop with all countries.

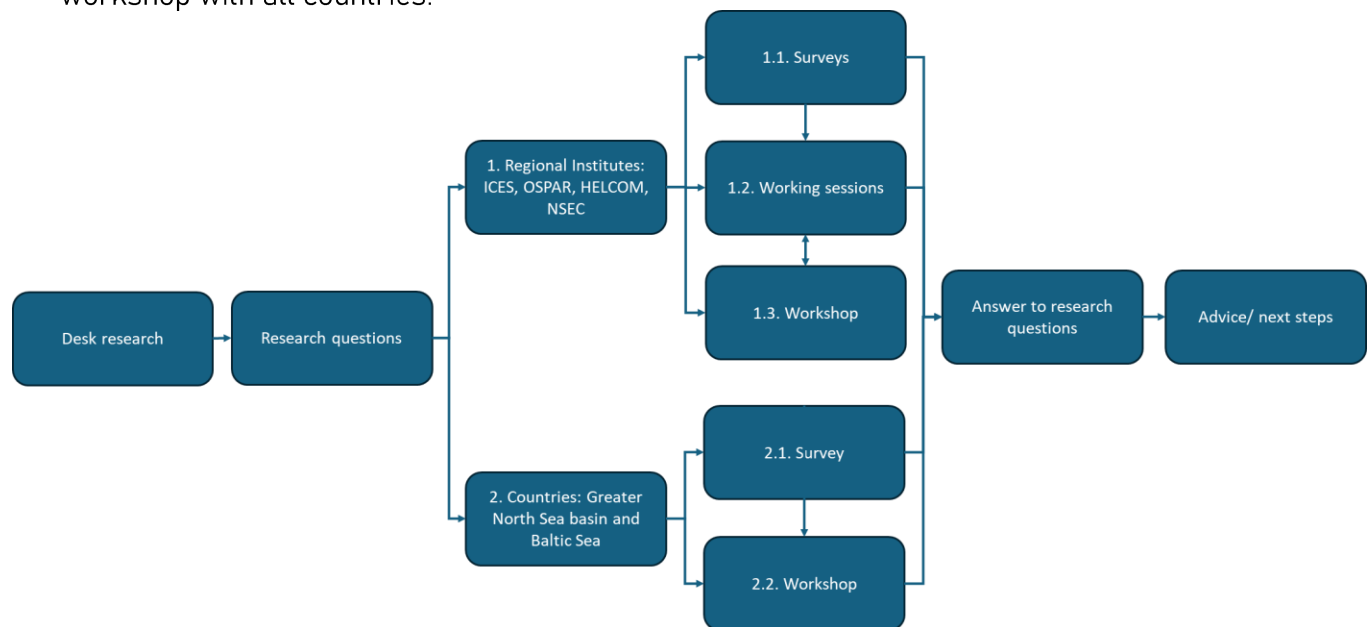


Figure 3. Process design

### Desk research

At the start of the assignment the steering group defined the knowledge base (see annex 1) as the key references for the desk research. The desk research was used for:

- > Formulating research questions.
- > Informing on the ongoing activities and current approaches in CIA.
- > Input on the challenges and opportunities of regional institutes and/or countries.

The output of the desk research has further defined the questions in the surveys and working sessions and have been incorporated in the 'results' (chapter 3).

### Surveys

The survey for the regional institutes consisted of 13 questions based on the 4 main topics: challenges and opportunities, approach and process, engagement/communication, and collaboration. The survey of the countries consisted of 13 questions based on the 5 main topics: goals and objectives, challenges and opportunities, approach and process, engagement/communication, collaboration. See annex 3 for the both surveys.

For each regional institute or country 1-2 contact persons were asked to complete the survey with input of their colleagues. The level of participation for both surveys was high: 100% of the regional institutes responded and 86% of the countries (see annex 2 for the response).

Note that the survey responses are no formal positions, not of regional institutes and not of the countries. The responses are meant to inform this assessment with the best available information.

## ***Working sessions***

Per regional institute we developed a working session to have a more in-depth discussion on selected topics. The topics were selected based on the survey answers and during the workshop other relevant topics were discussed as well. We were able to meet with 3 out of the 4 institutes. See annex 4 for the working session questions.

## ***Workshops***

Two 3-hour online workshops were organised. One for the regional institutes and one for the countries. In the table below you find the goals and expected outcomes for each of the workshops. Both were interactive, using miro-boards for the brainstorm, and collected information directly from the participants. Break-out groups were used to have a more in-depth discussion. The level of participation was again very high: 100% for the regional institutes and 93% for the countries (see annex 2).

|                   | <b>Workshop regional institutes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Workshop countries</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goal              | Identification of potential topics for collaboration on CIA development and application and ideas on how that could be organised.                                                                                                                | The workshop aims to explore how CIA results support most effectively and efficiently national maritime spatial planning decision-making processes, and how transboundary collaboration can further enhance these outcomes. It also seeks to identify innovative ideas and approaches to strengthen cross-border collaboration.                                   |
| Expected outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Understand challenges and initiatives for collaboration.</li> <li>&gt; Assess and discuss needs for alignment.</li> <li>&gt; Discuss and brainstorm on how to organise the collaboration.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Insight in what makes an CIA effective and efficient for maritime spatial planning decision-making.</li> <li>&gt; Assess and discuss how transboundary collaboration contributes to a more effective and efficient CIA application.</li> <li>&gt; Discuss and brainstorm on how to organise collaboration.</li> </ul> |

*Table 1. Goals and expected outcomes for each of the workshops*

To have a closer look at the output of the workshop, please use the links to access the miro-boards:

- > [Miro-board regional institutes](#)
- > [Miro-board countries](#)

## 3. Results

The following paragraphs give a summary of the output and outcome per main topics, namely Goals and objectives of CIA development and application, Challenges and opportunities, Engagement and communication, Collaboration and Role of GNSBI.

### 3.1. Goals and objectives of CIA development and application

#### *Regional institutes*

All four share an interest in using CIA to support ecosystem-based management and cross-border understanding but differ in institutional mandate:

- > OSPAR and HELCOM focus on regional environmental assessments.
- > ICES on methodological development and advice.
- > NSEC on energy-focused data and mitigation support.

Across the four regional institutes, there is a shared aim to develop and apply CIA tools that provide sea basin-wide overviews of cumulative pressures and impacts to inform policy, measures, and initiatives and projects within the sea basin.

- > OSPAR aims to further develop CIA methods by 2028 to analyse cumulative effects in the North-East Atlantic at greater detail and regional scale, using results to inform measures and highlight key threats and hot spots.
- > HELCOM's goal is to use its SPIA/HOLAS-based CIA as a holistic assessment tool focused on Baltic Sea status, currently looking back over six-year periods and potentially evolving towards future-oriented scenarios if contracting parties commit.
- > ICES focuses on CIA as a management-oriented tool, advancing methods in WGCIAM to guide policy and decision-making processes including MSP and several EU directives, with SCAIRM as a key method.
- > NSEC does not have an independent CIA mandate, but supports OSPAR and GNSBI, mainly around offshore wind, quick scans, and a timelines database to provide sea basin data and mitigation insights.

Common elements include the wish to link CIA results to policy questions, measures, and MSP, while differences lie in whether CIA is already applied to status reporting (HELCOM, OSPAR) or primarily as method development and quick scans (ICES, NSEC).

#### *Countries*

Across countries, CIA is mainly used to support Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), MSP, and related marine management objectives. The application often has a focus on identifying cumulative pressures on ecosystems and supporting good environmental status and sustainable blue economy. Several countries explicitly link CIA to the MSFD pressures, N2000 assessments, and ecosystem-based management. Other countries emphasise using CIA to guide offshore wind siting, understand impacts on marine nature, and compare sectors within a

common framework. Some countries are still in early stages, such as planning the first CIA for MSP revisions or testing tools like SCAIRM and Symphony (e.g. UK, Finland, The Netherlands), whereas others already apply CIA routinely within SEAs (e.g. Denmark, Latvia, Estonia, Germany).

During the workshop it was mentioned that strengthening the methodological foundation and move toward quantitative, repeatable, and data-driven CIAs can be essential for plan revisions and decision-making. Countries also discussed ambitions to develop interactive tools, improve transboundary inclusion, and ensure CIA supports integrated management and ecological carrying capacity.

Differences arise in legal status and maturity of CIA application: in some places MSP is strategic and non-binding with limited earlier CIA use, while in others CIA already informs legally binding plans and licensing. Some countries explicitly aim to link CIA outputs to policy needs, thresholds, and decision-support frameworks, while others focus more on tool development, pilot applications, or testing different methodologies.

A common medium to long-term goal stressed by many participants during the break-out sessions of the workshop is greater alignment efforts and comparability of CIA across borders and sea basins, including alignment of methods, data, and indicators. Another recurring objective is to make CIA more accessible and understandable for non-scientific audiences so that it can effectively support planning and political decision-making.

## 3.2. Challenges and Opportunities

### *Regional institutes*

All institutes report substantial challenges related to

- > Data (abiotic data, ecosystem data, human pressure data) availability, quality, comparability, and alignment of pressure and impact layers across sea basins, with gaps in interoperability, spatial coverage, and standardisation.
- > Methodological convergence and uncertainty are also common issues, including differing CIA tools, limited harmonised regional frameworks, and questions on how to model effects of policy measures, future scenarios, and mitigation effectiveness.
- > Resource constraints and limited expert capacity are flagged by several institutes, alongside the complexity of CIAs and the long communication processes between modellers, biologists, planners, and policymakers.
- > Challenges at the science-policy interface include the fact that policymakers do not fully understand what CIA can and cannot do. It can be a challenge to translate technical results into policy-relevant messages, due to the limitations in attributing effect to certain human activities, the variety of activities, and the high complexity of analysing effects of stacked activities.

Opportunities mentioned include initiatives such as

- > NSEC's timelines database and mitigation catalogue,
- > HELCOM's SPIA/BSPI/BSII and SEABAS developments,
- > OSPAR's next CIA and SCAIRM applications,
- > and ICES' WGCIAM work, which create shared reference points and tools.

Institutes see potential to leverage CIAs more strongly for transboundary MSP, mitigation planning, and cross-sector assessments, provided that data, communication, and governance arrangements are further improved.

## **Countries**

Countries report that CIA is methodologically complex, involving many pressures, ecosystem components, uncertainties, and difficulties in defining pressure values, interactions, thresholds, and spatial-temporal dynamics. Common challenges include

- > limited or uneven data (abiotic data, ecosystem data, human pressure data) quality and availability, sea-basin scale effects, cross-border integration, and varying confidence in datasets, which complicate comparison and acceptance of results.
- > Several countries highlight resource constraints, lack of dedicated teams, and limited time for experts, as well as the challenge of integrating CIA at the right moment in the MSP and SEA cycles, which often occur too late. E.g. in Norway and UK they have no formal CIA team, while in Latvia and Germany they have interdisciplinary teams, with biologists, legal experts and planners.
- > Additional issues mentioned a lack of consensus and transparency on methods, difficulties to explain how to deal with uncertainty and risk to the policy makers, and challenges in linking CIA outputs to concrete measures, mitigation, or legal consequences.

Opportunities identified include

- > using CIA as a decision-support tool rather than a definitive answer, improving early use in planning, and exploiting existing rich research and monitoring in the North Sea and Baltic Sea regions. During the workshop there was consensus on the idea that CIA should be done earlier in the MSP process, so CIA outcomes can be used at the start of the planning process.
- > Initiatives such as SEABAS, and national tool development (e.g., Symphony, SCAIRM, Carpe Diem, PlanWise4Blue) are seen as ways to advance quantitative, risk-based and comparable CIA. The majority of the countries see potential in harmonising data categories, indicators, and methodologies, using shared datasets, and linking CIA more strongly to MSFD indicators and criteria. Some also mention opportunities to expand CIA beyond ecological receptors towards socio-economic cumulative impacts and to use CIA to better justify spatial decisions and avoid work by learning from others' experiences. Overall, CIA is viewed as having high potential if applied comprehensively and transparently, but only if key methodological, data, and integration issues are addressed.

## **3.3. Engagement and Communication**

### **Regional institutes**

The institutes underline that engagement and communication are critical but currently challenging, particularly in explaining CIA concepts, uncertainties, and results to policymakers and other non-experts.

- > OSPAR notes the need for simple, compelling communication materials and “easy selling” outputs so that more people understand CIA and can use the results in national contexts.

- > HELCOM highlights that CIA results should be communicated as hotspot analyses rather than precise science, stressing careful explanation of limitations so policy makers know how to use the outcomes.
- > NSEC reports that significant effort is needed to frame quick scan results for coordinators and ministers. Annual workshops with experts, NGOs, industry, and the GNSBI network are used as opportunities to strengthen communication and broaden sectoral engagement.
- > ICES and others emphasise that translating technical results to decision-makers requires targeted efforts, structured communication processes, and a clearer science-policy interface.

Across institutes, common suggestions include developing infographics and overviews of who does what, agreeing on platforms to discuss CIA issues, and organising joint workshops that bring together scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

## Countries

During the country workshop engagement was mentioned to be essential, but also up for improvement:

- > Countries use various mechanisms to transfer CIA knowledge to decision makers and stakeholders, such as non-technical summaries, thematic overviews, environmental reports, and public consultation processes tied to SEA and MSP.
- > There are examples of governance structures like implementation bodies, annual implementation plans with SEA monitoring, and publicly accessible GIS data repositories with regional survey outputs to support both project-level assessments and ongoing plan monitoring.
- > Several countries mention publishing updated CIA-related products regularly (e.g., KEC versions) and presenting findings through interdepartmental consultations, stakeholder meetings, and international fora. At the same time, countries note that communicating CIA remains difficult because of complexity, uncertainty, and limited transparency, leading to misunderstandings such as viewing CIA as providing definitive answers.
- > Some countries report ad-hoc briefings, conference presentations, and informal meetings with policy makers and they recognise the lack of a clear pathway for how CIA outputs should be interpreted and used by these policy makers.
- > The need for more intuitive tools, clearer explanations of processes and interactions, and educational efforts to make CIA explainable to non-scientific audiences is highlighted.
- > There is also a stated ambition in some cases to make CIA tools like Symphony more widely available to regional and local bodies, thereby broadening engagement and use beyond central authorities.
- > Overall, countries share a need for better communication strategies and earlier, clearer integration of CIA in planning dialogues to improve uptake by decision makers and stakeholders.

## 3.4. Collaboration

### Regional institutes

All four regional institutes see collaboration, alignment and harmonisation as essential for improving CIA development and application, especially regarding shared datasets, common grids, terminology, and methodological standards. Regarding harmonisation an example was given on harmonisation of parameters or possibility to split or merge parameters to single or groups.

The needs for **harmonisation** were discussed around topics of standardisation of data formats and spatial layers, agreement on core policy questions to be answered, exchange of common sensitivity matrices and linkage templates, alignment of monitoring of species and habitats, and potentially developing even single or compatible methods at sea-basin level.

Current **collaboration** already occurs through regional sea conventions (OSPAR, HELCOM), ICES working groups like WGCIAM, and NSEC's exchanges with OSPAR and GNSBI, but institutes point out that these are often informal or fragmented and could benefit from more structured platforms. Topics for collaboration include joint projects on data sharing and cleaning (e.g. industry data), cross-basin case studies such as the OSPAR Bird Pilot, alignment of activity-pressure matrices, and cooperation on legal and economic aspects such as polluter-pays principles and the legitimacy of CIA in court.

There is shared interest in **aligning** CIA work with broader policy frameworks (Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), MSP, Water Framework Directive (WFD), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Nature 2000 (N2000), etc.) and using collaboration to strengthen the science-policy interface and build a common community of practice.

Institutes also identify the importance of overlapping workplans, a common platform for communication and progress reporting, and possibly a common workgroup to coordinate efforts and prevent duplication.

Overall, they see collaboration opportunities in pooling resources, sharing tools and best practices, co-developing communication products, and using GNSBI and other regional structures as vehicles to drive alignment, harmonisation and joint capacity building.

### Countries

Workshop discussions underline that CIA often requires a sea-basin-wide scope, **harmonisation** of datasets, and shared understanding of cross-border impacts, especially for mobile species and offshore wind developments.

**Collaboration** on CIA currently occurs through regional organisations and projects such as OSPAR, HELCOM, ICES, NSEC, NESBp, SEABAS, and various cross-border MSP initiatives, as well as bilateral contacts and transboundary SEA consultations. Countries cooperate with knowledge institutes, universities, and research programmes to develop tools, fill data gaps, and co-create methods, and some participate in shared projects focused on regional CIA frameworks.

Countries see **collaboration** potential in joint technical workshops, and **aligning** guidelines or frameworks, integrated CIA pilots at basin level, shared spatial datasets, and coordination on data streaming and storage.

They also highlight the importance of learning from each other's successes and issues, avoiding duplicated efforts, and focusing on existing groups rather than creating new ones, given the small expert community and limited time.

**Challenges** to collaboration include different national legislation and ambition levels, sensitivity of information, divergent methods, sectoral interests, limited resources, and unclear legal obligations for cross-border CIA and SEA. Nevertheless, countries broadly regard collaboration as necessary because seas are shared, impacts and mitigation measures do not stop at national boundaries, making joint pictures and aligned approaches particularly valuable.

## 3.5. Role of GNSBI

### Regional institutes

GNSBI is seen as a key stakeholder for enhancing collaboration between regional institutes and countries on CIA, particularly in the Greater North Sea basin and its links to the Baltic Sea:

- > Several institutes describe GNSBI as a platform or “counterpart” for MSP-related discussions and as a facilitator of workshops, networking, and cross-sectoral dialogue, including annual meetings and practical exchanges.
- > OSPAR suggests that GNSBI could help organise and facilitate a potential formal agreement among GNSBI countries on incorporating transboundary CIA in MSP policy making, using CIA work from OSPAR and mitigation measures from NSEC.
- > NSEC sees GNSBI as the place where all sectors can come together beyond the energy focus of NSEC, expanding stakeholder networks and helping integrate all sectors into CIAs for a holistic view of pressures.
- > GNSBI is also mentioned as the channel through which NSEC's timelines database could become publicly available and as a potential partner for demonstrating the effectiveness of mitigation measures within CIA.

Institutes indicate that collaboration between GNSBI and regional organisations should focus on

- > Data standardisation.
- > Methodological alignment or harmonisation.
- > Shared communication efforts.
- > Connecting technical work to policy questions defined by ministries.

Overall, GNSBI is described as both a convening and coordinating body, supporting a community of practice on CIA and helping to link sectoral, national, and regional initiatives without acting as a formal policy authority itself at this stage.

### Countries

The countries see GNSBI as a key actor for enhancing collaboration on CIA within the Greater North Sea Basin, particularly through Task 3.4 activities such as the workshop and associated data collection framework. GNSBI is mentioned as a platform to enhance mutual understanding, enable knowledge sharing, and help develop a clearer picture of how CIA is approached and used across countries and organisations. In the survey responses, GNSBI is referenced as a

forum that can support alignment and harmonisation of CIA tools and applications at sea basin level and facilitate early MSP dialogue that considers CIA results. Countries suggest that:

- > GNSBI can draw on inputs from NSEC, ICES, OSPAR, HELCOM, and national authorities to seek alignment on CIA development, application, and preventive and mitigation measures for the North Sea.
- > It is also proposed that GNSBI help investigate on which topics and how harmonisation and alignment can be achieved, for example by supporting pilots that gather spatial data and apply CIA across the Greater North Sea Basin.
- > Workshop conclusions note that rather than creating new central groups, existing expert groups should be used and pooled, with GNSBI contributing to mapping overlaps and gaps and coordinating efforts.
- > GNSBI's role is framed in connection with building a strong community of practice around CIA and organising focused future meetings that address agreed priority topics efficiently.

Overall, GNSBI is portrayed as an initiative that can facilitate long-term, structured collaboration on CIA without replacing or duplicating existing regional bodies.

## 4. Conclusion and recommendations

Across regional institutes, they see the benefit of collaboration, there is a shared aim to use CIA for sea-basin overviews of cumulative pressures and impacts to inform policy and measures, while supporting ecosystem-based management and cross-border understanding. They identify persistent constraints for collaboration such as patchy and incompatible spatial data, lack of agreed standards for pressure linkages and uncertainty treatment, and limited expert capacity. They share the wish to link CIA results to policy questions, measures, MSP, and broader frameworks like MSFD and N2000, even though their mandates and maturity levels differ. Collaboration efforts should focus on using existing regional conventions and GNSBI instead of creating new structures.

Across countries, a common medium- to long-term goal is to join forces working collaboratively to greater harmonisation and comparability of CIA across borders and sea basins, including alignment of methods, data, indicators, and better accessibility for non-scientific audiences. Countries also share objectives to use CIA to support SEA, MSP and marine management, strengthen methodological foundations, and move toward quantitative, repeatable, data-driven CIA for plan revisions and decision-making.

Institutes and countries suggest that collaboration with and through GNSBI should focus on data standardisation, harmonisation or alignment of methodologies, linkages and how to deal with uncertainties, shared communication and educational efforts, and connecting technical CIA work to policy questions from ministries. They also mention that GNSBI can support formal agreements on incorporating transboundary CIA in MSP policymaking, help organise pilots that gather spatial data and apply CIA across the basin, and map overlaps and gaps between existing groups to coordinate efforts.

### 4.1. Science policy interface

Institutes underline that engagement and communication around CIA are critical and very challenging, especially explaining concepts, uncertainties, and results to policymakers and non-experts. Suggested collaboration actions include developing infographics and overviews of “what kind of questions can be answered through a CIA,” agreeing on science-policy platforms to discuss CIA, and organising joint workshops that bring together scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

Countries report using non-technical summaries, overviews, reports, consultations, and accessible GIS data repositories to share CIA knowledge, but they also note that communication remains difficult and often ad-hoc. They explicitly state a shared need for better communication strategies, more intuitive tools, clearer explanations, and earlier, clearer integration of CIA in planning dialogues to improve uptake by decision makers and stakeholders.

#### Opportunities

- > Joint assessment of the requests at the demand-side.
- > Develop together an approach for policy engagement and communication.
- > Discuss how to ensure an earlier application of CIA in SEA/MSP processes.
- > Define transboundary consultation: such as economical activities, trends, and decision-making.

## 4.2. Learning and exchange knowledge and experience

For countries, collaboration potential is seen in joint technical workshops, shared guidelines or frameworks, integrated CIA pilots at basin level, shared spatial datasets, and coordination on data streaming and storage. They also highlight learning from each other's successes and issues, avoiding duplicated efforts, and focusing existing groups rather than creating new ones because the expert community is small and time is limited.

Joint projects and pilots through Community of Practice For institutes, suggested collaboration topics include joint projects on data sharing and cleaning (including industry data), cross-basin case studies such as the bird pilot, alignment of activity–pressure matrices, and cooperation on legal and economic aspects like polluter-pays principles and CIA legitimacy in court. Joint case studies and scenario exercises are described as pilots that can show added value of sea-basin CIAs for national MSP and reveal where further alignment is needed.

### Opportunities:

- > Exchange on CIA knowledge and experiences between countries and institutes around specific topics.
- > Jointly discuss challenges further and incorporate these in programmatic approach to address and solve these challenges.
- > Institutes work together on joint pilots and projects.

## 4.3. Alignment and harmonisation of CIA

Countries agree that for alignment a common perspective on CIA should be developed; alignment on what CIA is, CIA principles and what CIA can do for the different policy-processes, and when it should be implemented to be most effective for a policy-process.

All four institutes see collaboration, alignment and harmonisation essential for shared datasets, common grids, terminology, methodological standards, sensitivity matrices, linkage templates, and monitoring of species and habitats. They point to needs such as standardised data formats and spatial layers, agreement on core policy questions, and potentially single or compatible methods at sea-basin level.

Countries similarly identify needs for alignment and harmonisation around aligned data and monitoring, comparable indicators and thresholds, agreed terminology, minimum CIA content, and more consistent timing of CIA within national processes. They report that harmonisation of data is important and suggest using agreed formats and grids, contributing to regional datasets curated by HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES and NSEC, and transparently documenting data sources and processing choices.

Both institutes and countries share the goal of building a more coherent evidence base on ecosystem components, sensitivities, and responses to multiple pressures, while recognising substantial knowledge gaps. Existing platforms for knowledge exchange include HELCOM and OSPAR monitoring and assessments, ICES working groups, NSEC's mitigation catalogue and timelines, and national programmes and collaborations such as MONS, Wadden Sea work, and Symphony.

Suggestions to support collaboration on ecological knowledge include harmonising monitoring designs and classifications so data directly serve CIA needs, developing joint evidence catalogues for key linkages, and using basin-wide pilot studies as testbeds to translate ecological knowledge into CIA parameters and management choices. Structured dialogue formats that bring together modellers, ecologists, MSP planners and policymakers, such as workshops around concrete CIA outputs and policy consequences, are identified as a way to ensure research efforts address decision-relevant questions and clarify limits and uncertainties.

#### Opportunities

- > Map existing initiatives and use existing infrastructure where possible.
- > Have a common perspective in 2026: develop a joint perspective on what a CIA means/entails.
- > Agree on principles: build further on the ICES advice to be published soon.

## **4.4. Strengthening the use of WT CIA in GNSBI as a community of practice**

Parties indicated that a community of practice would be a good form for collaboration. And GNSBI is described as a key actor and platform for such as community of practice; enhancing collaboration between regional institutes and countries on CIA in the Greater North Sea Basin and links to the Baltic Sea. It is to exchange experience and knowledge on CIA and MSP-related discussions and to facilitate workshops, networking, cross-sectoral dialogue, and annual meetings, without being a formal policy authority. This can be done through a programmatic approach. The owner- and leadership should lie with the countries with strong support from HELCOM, ICES, NSEC and OSPAR who can link working tracks and provide existing infrastructure.

#### Opportunities:

- > Develop a programme for collaboration.
- > Map existing initiatives and connect to other those (e.g. working tracks).
- > Use existing infrastructure for ownership of activities (of the programme).

# Annexes

## 1. Knowledge base

### *List of reports*

- > Brekelmans, A., Roseboom, M., van der Endt, J. (2024) Review of cumulative impact assessments on North Sea basin level. Greater North Sea Basin Initiative – Rijkswaterstaat Zee en Delta.
- > Witteveen+Bos Raadgevende ingenieurs B.V.
- > CONCEPT: ICES Scientific Reports VOL No: ISS No
- > Heslenfeld, P. (15 April 2025) Draft 0.1 – workplan 2025 WT CIA – WS1 Collaborate with BIG4
- > GNSBI at a glance (2025) Version June 2
- > Heslenfeld, P., Pauwels, K. (19 June 2025) GNSBI WT CIA Workstrand CIA1. Draft implementation plan CIA1 Collaborate with existing forums to align development and application of CIA tools
- > JPI Oceans (2024) Cumulative effects assessment in the marine environment. JPI Oceans Knowledge Hub on Cumulative effects of human activities in the marine environment
- > Piet, G., Jongbloed, R., Golterman, L., Poot, M., Husken, K., Galparsoro, I., Mandiola, G., Louzao, M., Pedreschi, D., O'Donnell, C. (May 2025) Pilot assessment of cumulative impacts of offshore renewables on birds.
- > Piet, G., Grundlehner, A., Jongbloed, R., Tamis, J., de Vries, P. (2023) SCAIRM: A spatial cumulative assessment of impact risk for management. Elsevier, Ecological Indicators 157 (2023) 111157.

### *Internal documents*

- > CIA1\_Conclusions on gaps and additional value for WT-CIA
- > CIA2\_Ministerial Messages GNSBI Working track Cumulative Impact Assessment
- > CIA3\_GNSBI key-questions to be answered by cumulative impact assessment on sea basin level
- > CIA4\_Working track Cumulative Impact Assessment interpretation of “Analysing cumulative impact assessments on Sea basin level for the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative”
- > WT-CIA working strands in 2025 – proposal by the WT chairs. CIA1\_Collaborate with existing fora to align development and application of CIA tools
- > Rienstra, J., GNSBI WT-CIA WS3, defining CIA3 support collaboration in ecological knowledge development, data sharing and data collection

## 2. Level of participation

| Participants               | Survey      | Bilateral working session | Workshop    |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Regional institutes</b> |             |                           |             |
| 1. HELCOM                  |             |                           |             |
| 2. ICES                    |             |                           |             |
| 3. NSEC                    |             |                           |             |
| 4. OSPAR                   |             |                           |             |
|                            | <i>100%</i> | <i>75%</i>                | <i>100%</i> |

| Countries           |     |      |     |
|---------------------|-----|------|-----|
| 1. Belgium          |     | N.A. |     |
| 2. Denmark          |     | N.A. |     |
| 3. Estonia          |     | N.A. |     |
| 4. Finland          |     | N.A. |     |
| 5. France           |     | N.A. |     |
| 6. Germany          |     | N.A. |     |
| 7. Ireland          |     | N.A. |     |
| 8. Latvia           |     | N.A. |     |
| 9. Lithuania        |     | N.A. |     |
| 10. Norway          |     | N.A. |     |
| 11. Poland          |     | N.A. |     |
| 12. Sweden          |     | N.A. |     |
| 13. The Netherlands |     | N.A. |     |
| 14. UK              |     | N.A. |     |
|                     | 86% |      | 93% |

### 3. Survey questions

Here you will find the links to the databases:

- > Database survey regional institutes: t.b.d. (approval needed)
- > Database survey countries: t.b.d. (approval needed)

| Survey                            | Questions (per topic)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Survey Regional institutes</b> | <p><b>CIA assessments: challenges and opportunities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What type of CIA tool does your organisation develop, and in what context is it or should it be applied? Please provide a short description of the method (e.g., Halpern framework, etc.), including its aim and scope. Where possible, use references to relevant scientific literature, reports, or other publicly available resources.</li> <li>2. What are the main challenges your organisation faces during the development of a CIA? E.g. data uncertainty, involvement of policy makers, diversity among models.</li> <li>3. What is the potential contribution of your CIA application(s) to national processes (e.g., maritime spatial planning or other relevant policy and decision-making processes)? Please describe what you aim to achieve with these applications, and, where applicable, indicate whether the results have been taken up in national processes. References to reports, publications, or existing documentation are welcome.</li> <li>4. What types of data does your organisation already use for CIA, and what data are still required? Please provide a brief overview (e.g. type of ecosystem data, human impacts data, etc.) and share your perspective on the potential and limitations of CIA in relation to the availability and use of such data.</li> </ol> <p><b>Approach and process</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. What is your organisation's work plan for the development and application of CIA? Please briefly describe current experiences, including key milestones, deliverables, and activities, as well as your plans for future developments and decision-making processes.</li> <li>6. Do you incorporate findings or lessons learned from current national CIA applications into your work? If so, for what are these learnings used, e.g. for national decision-making, for further development of CIA methods, or for organisational processes? How do you incorporate these learnings?</li> </ol> |

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | <p>7. How have you organised your CIA team and/or which experts are involved in the current activities for CIA development and application in your organisation?</p> <p><i>Engagement/ communication</i></p> <p>8. In which areas have national CIA applications already been coordinated or aligned within the Greater North Sea region? Please indicate existing examples of alignment, such as thematic focus, geographical scope, or policy processes.</p> <p>9. What would facilitate the integration of CIA outcomes into national policy and decision-making processes? In your view, how can scientific experts and policy or planning stakeholders work together more effectively to ensure alignment and uptake of CIA results?</p> <p><i>Collaboration</i></p> <p>10. Do you currently collaborate with other stakeholders (e.g., peer organisations or other countries) on CIA methodology and/or its application? If so, what forms of collaboration exist, and what would you consider necessary to further strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange?</p> <p>11. Where do you see opportunities to improve the alignment of national CIA applications, and how could countries make more effective use of each other's CIA results and data within their own national processes?</p> <p>12. In which areas do you see knowledge gaps and/or overlapping data needs for CIA application, and how could these overlaps create opportunities for collaboration? With which organisations or experts would you like to connect to overcome these challenges.</p> <p>13. What should be the main focus of future collaboration on CIA development and application between GNSBI and your organisation? In particular, what added value could GNSBI provide to your work on CIA (e.g., in relation to your or other regional processes), and what contribution could your organisation offer in return?</p> |
| <p><b>Survey countries</b></p> | <p><i>Goals and objectives</i></p> <p>1. In what ways does your organisation use CIA for marine spatial planning and with what objectives?</p> <p>2. What are your geographical and temporal scopes when applying CIA?</p> <p>3. What are the ambitions – in formal processes or in projects – of your organisation on CIA application for the short-term and long-term?</p> <p><i>CIA challenges and opportunities</i></p> <p>4. Which tools or methodologies do you employ for CIA? Can you elaborate on the specific tools and/or methodologies and why you have chosen these?</p> <p>5. What do you consider the top 3 challenges involved in CIA application?</p> <p>6. How are CIAs integrated in decision making? And do you use CIA results from other countries in the Greater North Sea Basin in your MSP process?</p> <p><i>Approach and process</i></p> <p>7. Is there a leading ministry, agency or institution responsible for the development of CIA application in your country? If yes, do they have an inter-departmental approach?</p> <p>8. Which kind of experts are working on CIA application for decision-making in your country and how is your CIA team organised?</p> <p><i>Engagement/ communication</i></p> <p>9. How do you transfer CIA knowledge to your decision makers and other relevant stakeholders to inform them on the CIA results? E.g. how do you address their needs and ensure effective uptake of CIA results?</p> <p>10. (How) do you align with relevant countries on CIA outcomes and the consequences for cross-border decision-making?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><i>Collaboration</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Do you currently collaborate with other stakeholders (e.g., knowledge institutes) on CIA development, application and/or its results? If so, what forms of collaboration exist, and what would you consider necessary to further strengthen the current collaboration and knowledge exchange?</li> <li>12. Do you experience challenges in the collaboration of CIA application between the countries in the Greater North Sea Basin and Baltic Sea? Where do you see the biggest needs for harmonisation of CIA development and application?</li> <li>13. How can collaboration be organised for better alignment or harmonisation of CIA application? What role should the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative (GNSBI) or other regional bodies play? This is an important question to us, and we look forward to your suggestions.</li> </ol> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 4. Working session questions

### *Goals and objectives*

1. What vision and mission has your organization for developing and applying CIA (in the coming decade)?
2. What principles do you use or would you like to prioritize?
3. What roles and responsibilities has HELCOM (in comparison to other organizations)?

### *Challenges and opportunities*

4. How do we come to an agreement on datasets, base coordination grid?
5. How can we avoid that lack of data limits policy choices?
6. Can we develop one CIA at seabasin level which can deliver for national purposes?
7. How do we deal with limitation in comparability between sea basins/countries?

### *Engagement and communication*

8. Increased interest leads to scattered capacity/less capacity to do the work, how do we deal with that?
9. How do you collect clear questions from the demand side?
10. How do you gain support for the results of the cumulative assessment? Especially when the results are limited and/or politically sensitive.

### *Collaboration*

11. Which 3 collaboration opportunities would you prioritize? Think of structural exchange, engagement with governments, development of agreements on methods and data, ...
12. What roles could your organisation play in joint strategies?
13. What role do you foresee for GNSBI?



# NESBp

Northern European Sea Basins project



Ministerie van Infrastructuur  
en Waterstaat



Netherlands Enterprise Agency



Swedish Agency  
for Marine and  
Water Management



Nordregio



Ministry of Infrastructure  
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