

Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



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PROJECT PLATFORMS

SEABAS



SEABAS Project Platform

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NESBp Synthesis workshop

interreg-baltic.eu/project/seabas



SEABAS – Strategic ecosystem-based planning for a sustainable future of the Baltic Sea

Why do we need SEABAS?



MSP Directive (2014/89/EU)

Article 4 §5

When establishing maritime spatial planning, Member States shall have due regard to the **particularities of the marine regions, relevant existing and future activities and uses** and their **impacts on the environment**, as well as to natural resources, and shall also take into account land-sea interactions.

Article 5 §1

When establishing and implementing maritime spatial planning, Member States shall consider **economic, social and environmental aspects** to support sustainable development and growth in the maritime sector, applying an **ecosystem-based approach**, and to promote the **coexistence of relevant activities and uses**.

Preamble (23)

Directive 2001/42/EC [*the SEA Directive*] of the European Parliament and of the Council (1) **establishes environmental assessment as an important tool for integrating environmental considerations** into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes. **Where maritime spatial plans are likely to have significant effects on the environment, they are subject to [SEA] Directive 2001/42/EC**. Where maritime spatial plans include Natura 2000 sites, such an environmental assessment can be combined with the requirements of Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC, to avoid duplication.

SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)

Article 3 §1

An **environmental assessment**, in accordance with Articles 4 to 9, shall be carried out for plans and programmes referred to in paragraphs 2 to 4 which are **likely to have significant environmental effects**.

Article 4 §1

The environmental assessment referred to in Article 3 shall be carried out **during the preparation of a plan or programme** and **before its adoption** or submission to the legislative procedure.

Article 7 §1

Where a Member State considers that the implementation of a plan or programme being prepared in relation to its territory is likely to have **significant effects on the environment in another Member State**, [...] shall [...] **forward a copy of the draft plan or programme and the relevant environmental report to the other Member State**.

The ESPOO convention (UNECE Treaty, 1991)

The Convention on Environmental Impact Assessments in a Transboundary Context **requires signatory parties to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning**.

It ensures that projects with significant adverse transboundary impacts are **notified to and consulted upon with affected neighbouring states**.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG workplan (2025-2027)

3.2 Develop a **Baltic SEA-framework** including themes, common data, assessment methods **for impact evaluation, cross-border consultations.**

3.5 Promote the use of methods and tools in MSP for **assessing cumulative environmental and other impacts of sea-based activities.**

And the HELCOM-VASAB Roadmap: Objective 3

Maritime Spatial Planning contributes to achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

Looking ahead: Ocean Pact → Ocean Act

- By 2027, the Commission plans to propose an **Ocean Act that builds on a revision of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive.**
- It will serve as a strategic tool to modernize planning and ensure **cross-sectoral coordination at the national and sea-basin levels.**
- **New Oversight Bodies:** The Pact establishes an Ocean Board (composed of sectoral representatives) and a public **EU Ocean Pact dashboard** to monitor progress on ocean indicators and targets.
- **Sea Basin Approach:** It encourages **moving from national planning to a sea-basin level approach**, with specific regional strategies for the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Mediterranean, and Arctic
- **Legislative Revisions:** The Pact includes a revision of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) to accelerate reaching "good environmental status" and reduce administrative burdens.

Proposed by

2027

SEABAS – Strategic ecosystem-based planning for a sustainable future of the Baltic Sea

What does SEABAS provide?



SEABAS – Strategic ecosystem-based planning for sustainable future of the Baltic Sea

The SEABAS project platform will facilitate the inclusion of **strategic environmental assessments** into the **maritime spatial planning process**, using results from previous projects:

- data-sharing tools and hubs, including a CIA tool
- policy recommendations
- guidance documents

Ultimately, the SEABAS project platform will enable more **sustainable, resilient, and collaborative MSP processes** across the region.



SEABAS – Strategic ecosystem-based planning for a sustainable future of the Baltic Sea

» Operation of strategic importance



Implementation
July 2025 - December
2027



Project platform

Powered by results from
the following projects

Budgets

SEABAS
in numbers.

€**1.18**
MILLION
TOTAL

€**0.94**
MILLION
ERDF





BUNDESAMT FÜR SEESCHIFFFAHRT UND HYDROGRAPHIE



Coalition Clean Baltic



Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development Republic of Latvia



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS



Ministerstwo Infrastruktury

Interreg Baltic Sea Region



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Partners

Projects

9

8+

Associated Partners

4

GOAL: Regional recommendations on integrating SEA in MSP

Framework for integrating SEA into MSP

1. SEA procedure guidance

Recommendations

2. CIA methodology for MSP

Guidance document

3. A hub for tools supporting integration of SEA into MSP

An online hub

Capacity building for Competent Authorities

*Recommendations, guidance, tools &
training*

Output of Science-Policy dialogue

*Recommendations for both scientific and
policy requirements*

Long-term Adoption and Integration

Strategy and roadmap

Project timeline

June 2026

First deliverable

Spring 2027

Main event (tbc)

Dec 2027

End of project

	Period: 1	2	3	4	5
WP.1: Synthesis of Project Outcomes					
A.1.1: Compile and analyze SEA practices from ongoing and previous projects					
D.1.1: Scoping report discussed with representatives of target groups		D			
A.1.2: Formulate SEA framework recommendations					
D.1.2: Guidance for SEA procedure			D		
A.1.3: Operationalization of CIA in MSP processes					
D.1.3: Methodological framework for the effective implementation of CIA in Baltic Sea MSP pro		D			
A.1.4: Design a concept of integrative toolkit to support SEA in MSP					
D.1.4: A conceptual design of the integrative toolkit to support SEA in MSP			D		
A.1.5: Best practice consultation compilation					
WP.2: Enhancing and Utilizing Knowledge					
A.2.1: Validation of the compiled guidance for regional SEA framework					
O.2.1: Validated Regional SEA Framework					O
A.2.2: Implementation of the developed CIA methodology at a pilot sites					
D.2.2: CIA Pilot Application Report				D	
A.2.3: Piloting integrative toolkit to support SEA in MSP					
D.2.3: Integrative toolkit to support SEA in MSP usage report					D
A.2.4: Hybrid meeting formats and consultation process enhancement for SEA					
D.2.4: Hybrid meeting standards recommendations				D	
WP.3: Building Dialogue and Connecting with Target Groups					
A.3.1: Science-Policy Dialogue: The use of the SEA Framework in MSP, national and regional					
O.3.1: Regional recommendations on integration SEA framework in MSP process					O
A.3.2: Tailored capacity-building program for competent authorities on SEA integration into MS					

GOAL: Regional recommendations on integrating SEA in MSP

Framework for integrating SEA into MSP

1. SEA procedure guidance
Recommendations

2. CIA methodology for MSP
Guidance document

**3. A hub for tools supporting
integration of SEA into MSP**
An online hub

**Capacity building for
Competent Authorities**
*Recommendations, guidance, tools &
training*

**Output of Science-Policy
dialogue**
*Recommendations for both scientific and
policy requirements*

**Long-term Adoption and
Integration**
Strategy and roadmap

SEABAS Scoping report

Compile and analyse SEA practices from ongoing and previous projects

Essence: examining outcomes from relevant projects to identify good practices useful for designing transboundary (Baltic) framework for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) in the context of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).

Projects: Baltic LINES, Land-Sea Act, Baltic Sea2Land, SELINA, MSP4MORE, NESBp, MAREA, MSP4BIO, eMSP NBSR, ReMAP, MSP-GREEN, PROTECT BALTIC, Pan Baltic Scope (and other relevant projects).

Good practices: approaches, tools, and methodologies from past MSP projects.

Content of the Report: A detailed analysis covering scoping, data usage, stakeholder participation, and interoperable platforms.

Format: A comprehensive report.

Transnational Value: synthesizing practices across multiple projects, for informing preparation of a harmonized SEA framework applicable in transboundary contexts.

SEABAS Scoping report

Project Acronym	Approaches or methods supporting SEA scoping phase							Assessment methods			
	LSI Land-Sea Integration	MSFD Descriptors and Indicators (to be deleted)	Ecosystem Service Mapping	Environmental Objectives Identification	Defining the contents and level of detail during the scoping of the assessment	Socio-economic Considerations	Cultural Consideration	CIA - Cumulative Impact Assessment	Mapping of nature values	Evaluating significance of adverse effects	Sustainability assessment (socio-economic in SEA)
eMSP NBSR	no	Yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
MSP-GREEN	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no
MSP4BIO	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes
PROTECT BALTIC	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
MAREA	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
ReMAP	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no
Baltic LINES	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Baltic Sea2Land	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Land-Sea Act	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
SELINA	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
MSP4More	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
NESBp	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Pan Baltic Scope	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Project Acronym	Tools			Common data/usage of data			Knowledge & Gaps			Mitigation	
	Alternatives or Scenarios	Mapping Tools	Other	Data Harmonisation	Data Portals	New data generated	New knowledge on SEA gained	Lessons learned / good practices	Gaps / needs for further development	Mitigation measures	
eMSP NBSR	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	
MSP-GREEN	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
MSP4BIO	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
PROTECT BALTIC	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
MAREA	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	
ReMAP	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	
Baltic LINES	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	
Baltic Sea2Land	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	
Land-Sea Act	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	
SELINA	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
MSP4More	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	
NESBp	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	
Pan Baltic Scope	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	

Starting point

SEABAS Scoping report

42 Good practices identified for “SEA approaches or methods supporting SEA scoping phase”

Project Acronym	Approaches or methods supporting SEA scoping phase						
	LSI Land-Sea Integration	MSFD Descriptors and Indicators (to be deleted)	Ecosystem Service Mapping	Environmental Objectives Identification	Defining the contents and level of detail during the scoping of the assessment	Socio-economic Considerations	Cultural Consideration
eMSP NBSR		x		x	x	x	
MSP-GREEN	x		x	x		x	
MSP4BIO			x	x	x	x	
PROTECT BALTIC	x		x	x	(x)	x	
MAREA			x			x	x
ReMAP							
Baltic LInes							
Baltic Sea2Land	x		x		x	x	x
Land-Sea Act	x		x			x	x
SELINA		x	x	x			
MSP4More	x		x		x	x	x
NESBp				x		x	
Pan Baltic Scope	x	x	x		(x)	x	

SEABAS Scoping report (preliminary)

Key considerations for BSR SEA FRAMEWORK

1. Land–Sea Integration (LSI):

- Strong drivers for incorporating LSI into SEA (e.g. the development of cross-border linear infrastructure) and are further reinforcing such integration.
- New aspects related to the inclusion of LSI in SEA: including socio-cultural considerations, trade-offs between key terrestrial and maritime development objectives, and climate-related risks.
- Key constraints: limited availability of harmonised data integrating spatial, social, economic, and ecological dimensions, as well as fragmented governance frameworks and deficiencies in governance capacity.

SEABAS Scoping report (preliminary)

Key considerations for BSR SEA FRAMEWORK

2. Integrating MSFD descriptors into SEA

- Data underpinning MSFD indicators useful for SEA and MSP in quantifying and scoping pressures and environmental conditions as background information; however, this largely reflects a traditional approach.
- A noteworthy innovation: the potential to relate these data to ecosystem services, which could provide an additional dimension for SEA.

3. Ecosystem Service Mapping as the SEA element

- The ecosystem services knowledge base accumulated across several projects as a valuable foundation for the development of the BSR SEA Framework.
- An important task - linking the spatial distribution of ecosystem services with their interactions with human activities and pressures, (e.g. Protect Baltic project).

SEABAS Scoping report (preliminary)

Key considerations for BSR SEA FRAMEWORK

4. Identification of Environmental Objectives:

- In the BSR SEA Framework particular attention should be paid to “new” environmental objectives such as Climate Refugia, , Blue Carbon and Multi-Use Objectives.
- Important ambition should be achieving BSR agreement on relevant targets related to this objectives. Baltic Sea Protection Optimization Framework can serve as an inspiration.

5. Defining the contents and level of detail during the scoping

- The BSR SEA FRAMEWORK should incorporate criteria related to ecosystem functioning, such as ecological carrying capacity and cumulative transboundary effects.
- The BSR SEA FRAMEWORK should enable a more comprehensive assessment of the impacts of offshore wind farms on marine ecosystems.

SEABAS Scoping report (preliminary)

Key considerations for BSR SEA FRAMEWORK

6. Integration of Socio-economic Considerations into SEA

- Of particular importance: MSP4BIO project, especially in relation to the design and implementation of trade-off negotiation processes, as well as the MariPark concept of eMSP and NESbp, which may require a novel approach to SEA and its reconceptualization
- Significant progress in the monetisation of ecosystem services thanks to several projects; but, these approaches remain largely experimental, require broader societal and governance acceptance.

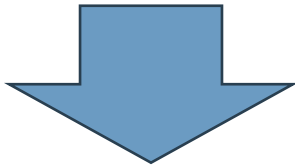
7. Integration of Cultural Considerations into SEA

- Encouraging knowledge and experience related to the integration of cultural considerations into MSP.
- A key limitation: the translation of this experience into the SEA context, not yet fully addressed by the projects to date.

SEABAS Scoping report

Putting puzzles together:

- *Compile and analyse SEA practices from ongoing and previous projects*
- Operationalization of CIA in MSP processes
- Best practice on SEA consultation compilation
- Formulate SEA framework recommendations



BSR regional SEA framework

- SEA guidelines,
- CIA methodology
- Integrated Toolkit to support SEA in MSP.

Thank you!



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