NESBp
Northern European Sea Basins project

Co-funded by the European Union

Cumulative Impact Assessment in the Greater North Sea and Baltic Sea

Progress made in 2025

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Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA)

Goal of the working track

The tracks aims to align the development and application of Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA), where possible, across the Greater North Sea Basin by collaborating between countries, existing fora like NSEC/OSPAR/ICES on research, data collection and data sharing to improve cumulative impact assessments.

Track leadership, participation and interlinkages

- The track is currently led by Philipp Arndt (DE) and Jan Schmidtbauer Crona (SE)
- Track participation: all countries
- Interlinkages with working tracks: Nature Restoration and Conservation, Knowledge Sharing, and Multi-Use
- There will be a close connection to the NESBp WP3 and it is planned that the budgetary needs will be mostly covered by NESBp in 2026, next to existing contributions by NL

Work Strands

- **Work Strand 1:** Strengthen cooperation and alignment (common frame) with OSPAR, ICES, NSEC and HELCOM through bilateral exchange and workshops. (CIA1)
- **Work Strand 2:** Strengthen cooperation and alignment (common frame) with the countries in the North Sea through overview on development and application as well as workshops. (CIA2)
- **Work Strand 3:** Create an overview of gaps and hindrances in CIA development and application. (CIA3)
- **Work Strand 4:** Develop specifications of the decision tools (CIA4) - currently on hold
- **Assess potential** (strategic) **collaboration with European Environmental Agency** (EEA)
- **Work together** with WT Nature and WT Knowledge Sharing on **data needs** for CIA-applications.
- **Collaborate** with WT Knowledge Sharing about adding CIA-content to the **compendium**.

Approach in 2025

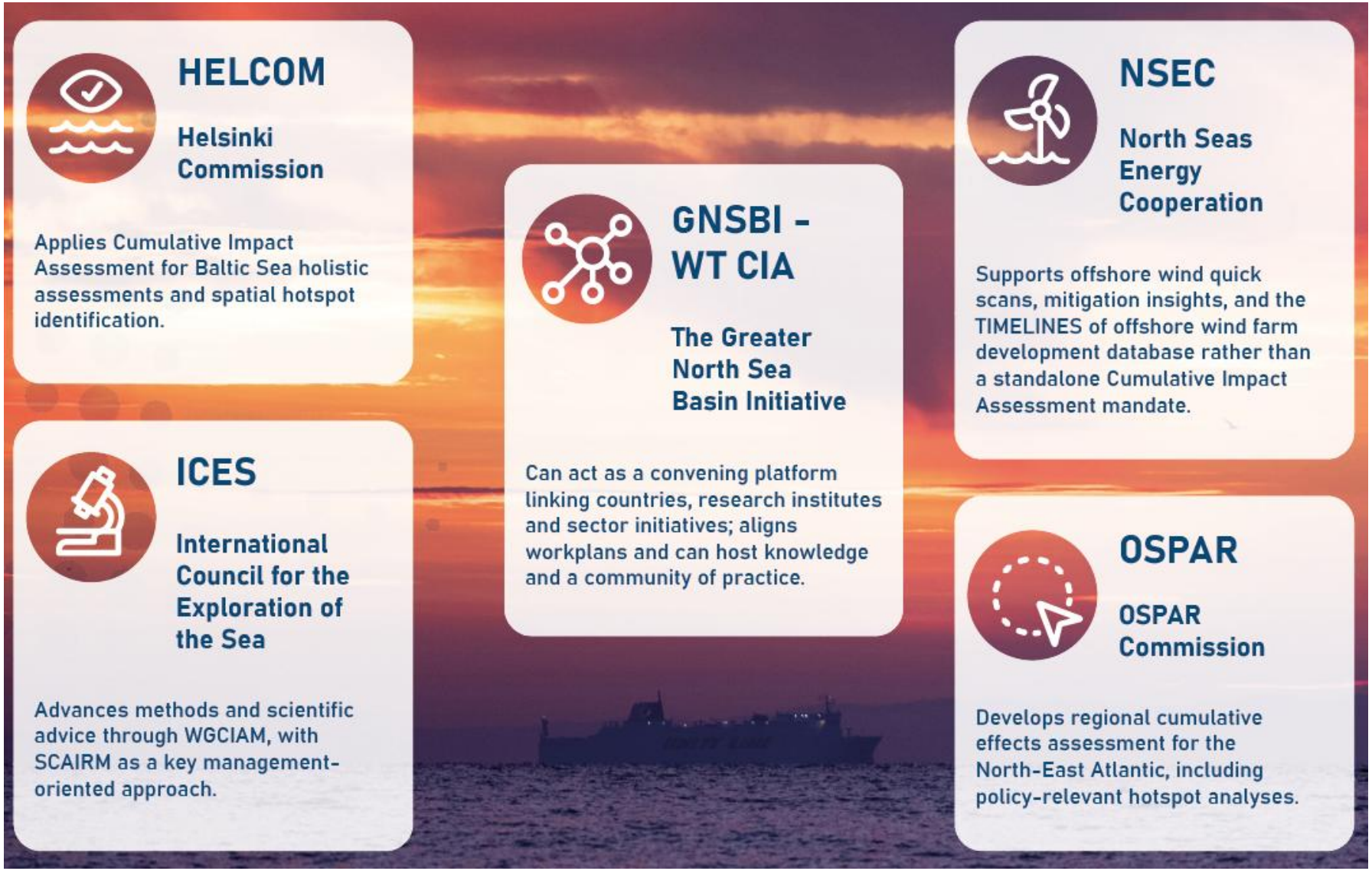
How is CIA developed and applied for decision-making regarding marine spatial planning (MSP) in the Baltic Sea and Greater North Sea and how do we see future collaboration?

GNSBI CIA work strand 1: intergovernmental organisations

- ICES, HELCOM, OSPAR and NSEC;
- Survey and work sessions with individual organisations;
- Workshop on 4th of November.

GNSBI CIA work strand 2: countries

- 14 countries responded to a questionnaire;
- Workshop on the 20th of November.


HELCOM
Helsinki Commission
Applies Cumulative Impact Assessment for Baltic Sea holistic assessments and spatial hotspot identification.
GNSBI - WT CIA
The Greater North Sea Basin Initiative
Can act as a convening platform linking countries, research institutes and sector initiatives; aligns workplans and can host knowledge and a community of practice.
NSEC
North Seas Energy Cooperation
Supports offshore wind quick scans, mitigation insights, and the TIMELINES of offshore wind farm development database rather than a standalone Cumulative Impact Assessment mandate.
ICES
International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
Advances methods and scientific advice through WGCIAM, with SCAIRM as a key management-oriented approach.
OSPAR
OSPAR Commission
Develops regional cumulative effects assessment for the North-East Atlantic, including policy-relevant hotspot analyses.

CIA is used across countries with different levels of maturity for maritime spatial planning, strategic environmental assessments and marine management.

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Country	MSP/ SEA	Tool
Denmark	In SEA and Natura 2000 assessments	Development of a digital tool for ecosystem-based analysis and CIA
Estonia	In MSP process	PlanWise4Blue, online tool
Finland	Emerging	NA
France	In MSP and local case studies	The Carpe Diem tool
Germany	In MSP as part of SEA	In-house tool in development
Ireland	In SEA and EIA for MSP and for any sectoral or regional Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs)	Emerging
Latvia	SEA	SEABASS for methodological development
Lithuania	Emerging	Emerging
Norway	CIA for special value and vulnerability in terms of ecological value areas	Interactive tool for CIA, development of the ODEMM framework
Poland	In SEA for MSP	SEABASS for methodological development
Sweden	In SEA for MSP	The Symphony tool
The Netherlands	Framework for Ecology and Cumulative Impact, results can be used in CIA	SCAIRM
United Kingdom	CIA to determine the risk of cumulative impacts of proposed aggregate dredging areas	SCAIRM

Strong interests in forming a community of practice on CIA

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1. Alignment and harmonisation

- Comparability requires agreed basics, not necessarily one single tool.

2. Learning and exchange

- The fastest progress will come from concrete cases, not only conceptual debate.

3. Community of practice

- Can connect and coordinate without becoming another heavyweight governance layer.

4. Science-policy interface

- CIA only helps if decision-makers understand what it can and cannot do.

Priority topics for 2026

- Agree on a common perspective on what CIA is, what it is for, and when it should be used in policy processes.
- Improve data interoperability, shared formats, shared data layers and transparent processing choices.
- Clarify uncertainty and linkages by having common pressure-receptor matrices and documentation practices.
- Run targeted pilots for cross-border, policy relevant cases that test comparability and practical usefulness.
- Strengthen communication.

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THANK YOU!

Netherlands Enterprise Agency

ORG

Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management

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