VASAB WORK PLAN 2025-2026

(as of 28 October 2026)

VASAB CSPD/BSR (VASAB Committee) with support of the VASAB Secretariat continues valuable work in facilitating international cooperation in spatial planning according to the VASAB Ministerial Declaration, VASAB Vision 2040, VASAB Chairmanship priorities and VASAB Work Plan.

Priorities set by the VASAB CSPD/BSR Chairmanships:

Polish Chairmanship (July 2025 – December 2026):

- Build up on the topics of previous chairmanships of Finland and Estonia: resilience, territorial resilience, and spatial resilience;
- Prepare a proposal (Baltic ReSeaLand) for and support the implementation of an ESPON targeted analysis on measuring resilience in the Baltic Sea Region.
- Organise a Directors General meeting to present VASAB's work (27-28 October 2026);
- Hold 3rd VASAB Young Planners' Summer School (23-29 August 2026).

Estonian Chairmanship (July 2024 – June 2025):

- Explore the links between the emerging topic of spatial resilience and VASAB Vision 2040;
- Highlight the importance of resilient spatial structures and communities;
- Strengthen collaboration between land-based spatial planners to fully utilize VASAB as informal knowledge and best practice hub for practitioners in spatial planning;
- Hold an international webinar to support regional equity, high quality, and sustainable spatial decision across governance levels, by sharing best practices and experiences of national level spatial policies across the BSR.

Priority Actions of VASAB Vision 2040, proposed by the VASAB CSPD/BSR (January 2024):

1. Good quality of life and adaptation policies in carbon neutral and resilient cities
   - Carbon neutral and resilient cities; Quality of life and public services in small towns and rural areas; Adaptation (policies) of settlements to crisis conditions; Capitalization of local values and assets to improve competitiveness and attractiveness of territories.
2. Multimodal and integrated mobility and transport connections
   - Intermodal mobility hubs on suburban/peri-urban environments; Sustainable & multimodal transport; Planning green transport solutions, involving energy provider; Bundling of freight transport flows, esp. in Nordics; Safety of maritime transport vs development of offshore wind turbines farms.
3. Secure, climate proofing and decentralized energy systems
   - Offshore energy development; Transformation from centralized to decentralized energy systems; Energy communities in the heating sector.
4. Sustainable blue economy and environmental protection in coastal areas and at the sea
   - Further development of multi-use concept for the Baltic Sea; Coastal & local communities – balancing pressures and vulnerability, traditions and innovation; Data availability; Awareness, communication, knowledge share.

No	Activity / Task	Outputs	Timeframe	Status	Notes
Intergovernmental Multilateral Co-operation of the Baltic Sea Region in Spatial Planning and Development					
1.	**VASAB Ministerial Conferences and Declarations** (VASAB Member states initiative)	VASAB Ministerial Conferences VASAB Ministerial Declarations			9th VASAB Ministerial Conference in Wismar, 2 June 2023 Wismar Declaration 2023 VASAB Ministerial Tallinn Declaration on Spatial Resilience 2025
2.	**VASAB CSPD/BSR**				
2.1.	VASAB CSPD/BSR	VASAB CSPD/BSR meetings Open Trio meetings Agendas, documents, presentations, reports Committee reports and summaries Open Trio reports	Up to 3 times per year	4 March 2025 19-20 March 2025 2 June 2025 16 June 2025 4 September 2025 16-18 September 2025 4 February 2026 18-19 February 2026 19 May 2026 2 June 2026 13 October 2026 28 October 2026	Decisions and summaries of CSPD/BSR meetings All documents from CSPD/BSR and Trio meetings
2.2.	Strengthen cooperation among BSR countries in spatial planning and development	All BSR countries are represented in VASAB CSPD/BSR (incl. Denmark and Norway)	Continuous	Active in VASAB: EE, LV, LT, PL, DE, SE, FI Suspended from 4 March 2022: RU, BY	Norway as observer
2.3.	Activities as part of the Estonian Chairmanship	Webinar on national level spatial planning during Estonian Chairmanship	Spring 2025	11 February 2025	Video, Presentations

		Land-based Planners' Forum project interaction with Estonian spatial planners (face-to-face event in Tallinn)	May 2025	Postponed and implemented as a broader stakeholders' event - as the project's final conference, hosted by EASP in February 2026	Please see point 4 of this Work Plan on the Land-based Planners' Forum project
2.4.	Activities as part of the Polish Chairmanship	Directors General meeting to present VASAB's work Proposal for ESPON targeted analysis on measuring resilience in Baltic Sea Region (November 2025) Support the implementation of ESPON targeted analysis 'Baltic ReSeaLand'. 3rd VASAB Young Planners' Summer School	27October 2026 November 2025 Q4 2026–Q4 2027 23-29 August 2026	The project has been selected for funding VASAB Young Planners' Summer School has been selected for CBSS Project Support Facility Funding	Baltic ReSeaLand VASAB Young Planners' Summer School – materials, recording, CBSS project information
2.5.	Cooperate with other Pan-Baltic organizations (CBSS, UBC, etc.)	Pan-Baltic organisations represented in VASAB events and vice versa	Continuous	BSSSC Annual Conference 28 October 2025 BSSSC Day of Cities and Regions 11 May 2026 UBC General Conference 4-6 November 2025	VASAB as observer

		CBSS Expert Group of Sustainable Maritime Economy		CBSS EGSME Meeting 9 December 2025 2nd CBSS EGSME Expert Seminar 8-9 June 2026	
2.6.	Recommend transnational policy measures	Statements, policy briefs, recommendations Recommendations for coastal development & planning 2nd Online seminar to discuss Recommendations on Coastal Planning and Development in BSR Report on Multi-level Dialogue on Land-Sea Interactions and Coastal Governance incl. report Towards updated Coastal Planning and Development Recommendations	Continuous 2025 June 2025	 17 June 2025 New Baltic Sea MSP Task Force - on recommendations in 2026	Baltic Sea2Land project Information about event, presentations and summary available in Secretariat Report The MSP Task Force was established to draft Baltic Sea Recommendation(s) on maritime and coastal spatial planning, applying an ecosystem-based approach and addressing coastal strip protection.
2.7.	Cooperation with other cross-BSR initiatives (relevant projects)	Projects represented in VASAB events	Continuous		ESPON, PA Spatial Planning relevant
2.8.	Promote a dialogue with sector institutions	The dialogue takes place	Continuous		Mainly through the EUSBSR Framework 5th Baltic MSP Forum

2.9.	Terrestrial Country Fiches	Publicly available on VASAB website, up to date information about terrestrial spatial planning (land-use planning) in the Baltic Sea Region countries	Continuous		Terrestrial Country Fiches at VASAB website
VASAB Vision for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region in 2040					
3.	**VASAB Vision 2040**				
3.1.	Preparation for update of VASAB Vision 2040	Analytical background paper: VASAB Vision 2040 and spatial resilience. How is the whole-of-government all-of-hazards logic represented in the long-term spatial strategy?	2025-2026	Prepared and coordinated by the VASAB chairing organisations 2024-2026 (The Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture of Estonia and the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy of Poland)	Link to the document
3.2.	VASAB Vision 2040 Implementation	Assessment of VASAB Work Plan 2025-2026 VASAB Work Plan 2027-2028	Continuous	Survey of relevant EUSBSR Policy Areas on implementation of VASAB Vision 2040 actions	
3.3.	Promotion of VASAB Vision 2040 to increase awareness	Through various events and social media VASAB area vision passport*	Continuous		* Short document which includes key elements from the vision
4.	**Land-based Planners' Forum**	1 A Brief Comparison Of Seven Spatial Planning Systems In The Baltic Sea Region 2 Feasibility Study: Land-based Planners' Forum In The Baltic Sea Region 3 Informative material Webinar (comparison of country planning systems, cooperation practices for planners)	 March 2026	End of 2025 18 September 2025	Comparison Of Spatial Planning Systems Feasibility Study Informative material Information about event

		Stakeholder conference in Tallinn BSR cooperation mechanism proposal		11-12 February 2026 May 2026	Information about event Project, co-funded by Swedish Institute Project applications to Swedish Institute and Blue Action Banos calls
5.	**Young Planners' Academy**	Third Young Planners' Summer School (Poland)	23-29 August 2026	Gdansk, Poland (23 - 29 August 2026)	Project application in 2025 and 2026 VASAB Young Planners' Summer School – materials, Video from Opening Day (26 August), CBSS project information
6.	**VASAB Knowledge Hub to Shape Cooperating Planning Systems** (Transfer of knowledge contributing to cohesion of spatial planning in the region)	VASAB planners' forum Multi-level governance enhanced Integrated land and sea observations and assessments Digital planning sharing platform Communication and dissemination	2025-2026	Baltic Sea2Land Navigator:	Supported by Interreg BSR Project Platforms: Baltic PlaNet SEABAS BSR Urban Mobility Future Cities Platform
Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Management					
7.	**Joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group**	HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG Sessions and Meetings Agendas, documents, reports, presentations	At least twice a year	7-9 April 2025, Rostock 15-17 October 2025, Helsinki 21-23 April 2026, Tallinn	Workplan 2025-2027 of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG
7.1.	Implementation of Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2021-2030	Regional MSP Roadmap Interim Assessment Task Force meetings Survey on value of MSP Country Fiches	2025	21 March 2025 15 Sep 2025 26 Nov 2025 15 January 2026	Draft report prepared January 2026 Survey closed on 14 February

					Interim Assessment report completed and approved
7.2.	Update of Ecosystem Based Approach (EBA) Guidelines	EBA Task Force meetings A draft revised version of the Guideline on ecosystem-based approach in MSP	2025	Draft presented to VASAB CSPD/BSR on 16 June 2025 @5th Baltic MSP Forum Approved by the HELCOM Heads of Delegation on 16 January 2026 and by the VASAB CSPD/BSC on 2 March 2026)	Relevant to VASAB CSPD/BSR Revised and approved Guideline for the implementation of the ecosystem-based approach in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Baltic Sea area
7.3.	Knowledge sharing and networking across sea basins	Structure (platform) for cross-border collaboration and learning with North and Baltic Sea countries Assessment of the progress of policy instruments and other actions promoting climate neutrality Evaluation of current MSP governance in BSR Communication and dissemination	2025-2026	ToR for assessment report due by end of 2025 First results presented at 5th Baltic MSP forum 11-12 November 2025 Workshop at EMD2026 - Making the Sea-Basin approach work through MSP	Northern European Sea Basins project (NESBp) Video Report

				Workshop at the EU MSP Week, 21 May 2026 Policy Brief produced incl. highlighting Baltic Sea experience Communication material prepared Workshop Learning from EBA application in MSP in the Baltic Sea: Discussing Opportunities for the Greater North Sea Basin Countries, 19 Ovrober 2026	Minutes: NESBp & MEDIGREEN Workshop, MSP Week 2026 Strengthening Cooperation in the Greater North Sea: Initial Lessons for Cross-Sectoral and Cross-Border Cooperation for MSP From Vision to Implementation: Applying the Ecosystem-Based Approach in MSP. Includes EBA checklist tool
7.4.	MSP Country Fiches	Publicly available on VASAB and HELCOM websites, up to date information about MSP in the Baltic Sea Region countries New structure and demo design proposed by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG	Continuous 2026	Work continues on the development	MSP Country Fiches regularly updated with relevant information and published at VASAB and HELCOM websites

				of the new demo version (ongoing)	
8.	**BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group**	BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group meetings (update on VASAB activities) Steering the use and developments of HELCOM Basemaps service	Up to two meetings per year	18 February 2025 13 October 2025 4 March 2026 1 October 2026	Policy Area "Spatial Planning" Support (PASPS)
9.	**MSP Planners' Forum**	MSP Planners' Forum online/physical meetings, agendas, reports	Up to two meetings per year	25 March 2025 12 November 2025, Riga 26 March 2026 22 October 2026	Policy Area "Spatial Planning" Support (PASPS) MSP Planners' Forum meeting Notes
10.	**5th Baltic MSP Forum**	5th Baltic MSP Forum in Riga (Content: main thematic focus, speakers, moderator, parallel sessions/workshops — including cooperation with the Forum Task Force composed of Baltic Sea2Land project partners. Operational: logistics, procurement, social programme, communication, etc., with support from the Forum Task Force.) Session 1 – Resilient and Liveable Coastal Communities	11-12 November 2025		www.BalticMSPforum.eu Baltic Sea2Land project final conference Summary report of the 5th Baltic MSP Forum S Video recordings of all sessions Summary video of all 5 Baltic MSP Forums Video
11.	**EU Member States MSP Expert Group**	EU Member States MSP Expert Group meetings (physical/online)	At least twice a year	24 March 2025 22-24 October 2025 16-17 March 2026 1 June 2026 13 October 2026	VASAB as observer
EUSBSR Policy Area Spatial Plannin' - a forum and cooperation platform for regional, trans-boundary and cross-sectoral dialogue towards more coherent planning					

12.	**Coordination of EUSBSR PA 'Spatial Planning' jointly with HELCOM**	Evaluation of PASPS Work Plan 2025-2026 PASPS Work Plan 2027-2028 Monthly meetings <

				16-18 September 2025 18-19 February 2026 2 June 2026 28 October 2026 7-9 April 2025 15-17 October 2025 21-23 April 2026 28 January 2025 12 March 2026 January 2025 January 2026	95th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting 96th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting 97th VASAB CSPD/BSR 98th VASAB CSPD/BSR 99th VASAB CSPD/BSR HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meetings Annual reports submitted to Interreg BSR and BSP
12.1.	PAC presence in EUSBSR and PA relevant events	Regular exchange with Baltic Sea Strategy Point	Continuous	2025 1-2 April 2025 11 September 2025 29 September 2026	Work on Action Plan update Live meeting in Turku EUSBSR Estonian Presidency kick-off meeting Danish EUSBSR Presidency opening event

		PA workshops and networking within EUSBSR Annual Forums, Blue Mission BANOS, European Maritime Day, EU Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days, EUSBSR Presidency, Funding Programmes, European MSP Week, ESPON Seminars		16 October 2026 20-22 May 2025 26-27 June 202524-25 September 2025 13-17 October 2025 4-7 November 2025 19-20 November 2025 May – September 2025 29-30 October 2025	Launch of Norway's Accession to the EUSBSR Interreg BSR Programme Conference in Tampere, Finland ESPON Seminar EU Macro-Regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days European MSP Data Week XVIII UBC General Conference ESPON Seminar Work on PA Spatial Planning session (together with PA Energy and Secure) for EUSBSR Annual Forum 2025 EUSBSR Annual Forum 2025, PA SP organized session "Towards a Climate-Resilient BSR" together with PA Secure, Energy and Baltic PlaNet project platform

				January – May 2026	Work on PA Spatial Planning breakout sessions (for one – together with PA Transport) for EUSBSR Annual Forum 2026
				12-13 May 2026	EUSBSR Annual Forum 2026, PA SP organized two sessions EMD 2026
				21-22 May 2026 9-10 June 2026 16-17 June 2026 8-9 July 2026	Interreg Baltic Sea Region Kick-off Meeting for Project Platforms in Berlin, Germany Interreg BSR Small Project kick-off in Kiel, Germany EU Macro-Regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days
12.2.	Follow-up, Communication and exchange with key relevant projects (incl. ESPON)	PA news prepared and updated to EUSBSR and VASAB Newsletters	Continuous	February 2025 March 2025 April 2025 May 2025 September 2025 October 2025	EUSBSR Newsletter February 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter March 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter April 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter May 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter September 2025

		PA Spatial Planning page on EUSBSR website up to date		November 2025 December 2025 January 2026 February 2026 March 2026 April 2026 May 2026 June 2026 August 2026 September 2026 June 2025 December 2025 June 2026 17 February 2025	EUSBSR Newsletter October 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter November 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter December 2025 EUSBSR Newsletter January 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter February 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter March 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter April 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter May 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter June 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter August 2026 EUSBSR Newsletter September 2026 VASAB Newsletter June 2025 VASAB Newsletter – December 2025 VASAB Newsletter – June 2026 Article on EUSBSR webpage

					Article on EUSBSR webpage
				24 March 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
					Article on EUSBSR webpage
				28 April 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				27 May 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
					Article on EUSBSR webpage
				9 July 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
					Article on EUSBSR webpage
				22 September 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				1 December2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				17 December 2025	Article on EUSBSR webpage
					Article on EUSBSR webpage
				10 March 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				12 March 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				15 May 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				19 May 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				11 June 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
				27 June 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage

				28 September 2026	Article on EUSBSR webpage
		Presentations from key projects		12-13 May 2026	Key projects at PA SP stand at EUSBSR AF 2026
		Promotion material on PASPS project		July 2026 16 October 2026	Updating PASPS brochure info PA Spatial Planning presentation to Norwegian stakeholders
12.3.	PA relevant project idea generation and development	An overview of project ideas generated, and organizations involved in the development of those ideas Targeted events to facilitate the development of perspective project ideas	2026		Policy Area Spatial Planning Support (PASPS)
VASAB Communication and Visibility					
13.	**Visibility, promotion of VASAB, VASAB projects and regional policy impact of the outcomes**	Regular information and update of VASAB website Regular information and update of EUSBSR, HELCOM websites Regular information on VASAB social media (X, Bluesky, LinkedIn, Facebook, Youtube channel) Thematic publications VASAB Newsletter Brochures, leaflets, etc. Video Representation materials	Continuous Twice per year	June and December 2025 June 2026	www.vasab.org Communication on X (formerly Twitter) has been stopped since March 2025. A new additional social media platform has been established on Bluesky Video: More than 30 years of collaboration around the Baltic Sea region Newsletter – June 2025

					Newsletter – December 2025 Newsletter –June 2026
13.1.	Participation in different events representing VASAB cooperation, VASAB Vision 2040, PA Spatial Planning, respective projects	Exhibition booth in relevant Pan-Baltic and EU Stakeholders networking events Presentations Project partners meetings	29-30 Oct, Sopot, PL, EUSBSR Annual Forum 11-12 Nov, Riga, LV, Baltic MSP Forum	18-29 April 2025, Sopot, PL, 4th Mission Arena of Blue Mission Banos 22-23 May 2025, Cork, Ireland 12-13 May 2026, Tallinn, Estonia 21-22 May 2026,Limassol, Cyprus 30 August-1 September 2026, Lübeck, Germany	Insights from the MSP Foresight Workshop European Maritime Day 2025 EUSBSR AF 2026 European Maritime Day 2026 35th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
13.2.	Develop a new VASAB website	Procurement procedure New VASAB website in operation end of February 2026	2025-2026	Procurement concluded May, 2025 Test version received in November 2025 New website launched March 2026	Website content development and tests of functions. Website in force, continuous update of content.