



Document title	New work plan – identified MSP topics
Code	5-3
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	5 - Planning future work and a new Work Plan
Submission date	27.10.2016
Submitted by	HELCOM Secretariat
Reference	

Background

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 12-2016 discussed the pan Baltic needs for MSP in the future based on the outcomes of the VASAB MSP workshop (24 February 2016), made initial and complementary suggestions on topics for continued cooperation (see list below) and agreed on the steps to further work on future work items on MSP.

Initial and complementary suggestions on topics for continued cooperation:

- how plans are applied, including information exchange on new projects of transboundary relevance that may come up both within preparing the plan and its application;
- follow-up on the implementation of the agreed guidelines on ecosystem approach and on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation, review them and amend them as regarded necessary once experiences have been gained and reach out for political commitment to the implementation of the guidelines with to aim for coherent MSPs’;
- common criteria for monitoring and evaluation;
- continue with all-inclusive cooperation involving both EU and non-EU countries;
- reflect on how to consult with other countries and have a baseline or process where to start communication from,
- deepen the task of exchange of information on the plans under preparation, including among others how to deal with transboundary issues, green infrastructure, socio-economic aspects and environmental protection.
- what to do to ensure coherence of MSP, taking into account the requirements of the MSP Directive and the related Directives as far as EU countries are concerned, the possible cooperation with other relevant HELCOM working groups (such as safety of navigation, on ecosystem approach).

A draft list of MSP pan-Baltic topics were elaborated jointly by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats and circulated to the members of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG for comments (on 20 April 2016). An online meeting to further reflect the comments provided by Finland, Germany, Sweden and Co-chairs was held on 6 May 2016. A revised draft list and a list of additional tasks proposed by the Co-chair, Mr. Andrzej Cieslak were circulated after the online meeting.

The 72nd meeting of VASAB CSPD/BSR held on 8 June 2016 requested that the Work Plan of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG has to be worked out and submitted to the VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting in January 2017 for adoption. The Committee discussed the tasks and agreed that the presented paper on identified MSP topics is too detailed and ambitious, and could not be fulfilled in 3 years’ time. Fewer tasks (3-4) would be more feasible, MSP WG should focus on the issues which could be done together in the BSR, such as exchange of experience and information, coherence of the plans and data information.

HOD 50-2016 considered the draft list of MSP pan-Baltic topics as contained in Annex 2 and proposed additional tasks as contained in Annex 3 of [document 4-13](#) and took note of the proposed additions by Germany to Annex 2 as reflected in [document 4-13-Rev.2](#).

The Meeting took note of a study reservation by Russia on the tasks in Annex 2. The Meeting noted that at this stage not all Contracting Parties can support the additional tasks as in Annex 3 and that it should be considered in the MSP Working Group first.

The Meeting mandated the MSP Working Group, at its 13th meeting on 24-25 November 2016 (Riga, Latvia), to develop a draft work plan for the future work, utilizing the identified MSP topics (document 4-13-Rev.2), as well as to consider and make proposals on any other related matters as needed, for consideration and approval by HOD 51-2016.

Annex 1 contains the latest list of the MSP tasks including specific comments by the members of the WG as well as additions by HOD 50-2016.

Annex 2 contains the list of additional tasks as originally proposed by the Co-chair, Mr. Andrzej Cieslak.

Annex 3 contains the detailed comments provided in the consultation prior to the 72nd meeting of VASAB CSPD/BSR and HOD 50-2016. General comments on the list are provided below:

- Latvia supported the draft list.
- Sweden was of the general view that the tasks need to be narrowed down (both in number and scope) and the actual activities further developed and discussed by WG to formulate a work plan.
- Estonia was also of the view that the draft task list can be used as input for the new work plan, however, refrained from commenting the individual tasks at this stage, apart from stating that it is too detailed and unbalanced. Instead, Estonia commented from the perspective of the overall mandate that for prolongation of the WG's mandate (*by VASAB*) a shorter and clearer document, stating only the few main directions of work and objectives, is seen as needed.
- Finland expressed that the following should be reflected in the mandate: there is a need to continue the mandate until 2020 as ministers have agreed of the Roadmap 2020. There is a need to exchange information between countries of how planning is proceeding. There is also a need to follow up the implementation of the ecosystem guidelines and transboundary/ participation guidelines. The group should also continue to act as HA Spatial Planning leader of the EUSBSR. The more detailed tasks of the group could be drafted after the mandate has been agreed.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to develop a new work plan for the WG.

Annex 1. List of tasks for the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group

As considered by 72nd meeting of VASAB CSPD/BSR (8 June 2016) and commented by HOD 50-2016 (15-16 June 2016, additions made in the meeting are with track changes)

Proposed tasks:

Overall aims (most could be included directly in a renewed Mandate)

In addition, the overall aims and tasks listed in the current Mandate are largely valid

- Regular exchange on the progress in MSP in individual countries (e.g. country fiches¹) and sharing best practices and challenges (inter alia by organizing practitioners' workshops).
- Keep the list of competent national MSP contact points and MSP country fiches updated.
- Follow and contribute to global and European policy and regulatory developments related to MSP.
- Follow the MSP related actions and projects
- Act as the Steering committee for the Horizontal Action Spatial Planning of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.
- Develop means and suitable solutions for countries to share basic, relevant and available MSP related information.
- Promote the creation and sharing of MSP relevant Baltic Sea regional datasets. (possibly to be merged this with the above point)
- Contribute to promoting the education and professional development of maritime spatial planners.
- Facilitate and assess the implementation of the MSP Roadmap (in 2018 and 2020).
- [Use knowledge and expertise of other HELCOM bodies to support the work of WG and cooperate with other international organizations contributing to or addressing MSP aspects.]²

Specific or new tasks/aims (could be included in a new work plan):

Please note that the subheadings are tentative and indicate the major directions of future work

PLANNING CYCLE

- Exchange information on the plans with the aim to develop solutions on how to deal with e.g. transboundary issues, socio-economic aspects, green infrastructure and environmental protection in the planning process.
- [Exchange experiences and build joint understanding how to pursue planning stages after plan elaboration and adoption, including how plans are applied and monitored.]³
- Serve as a platform for the countries to exchange information on new projects with possible transboundary implications that may come up both within preparing the plan and its application. (could also be included as part of the task to the exchange of information between countries.)

COHERENCE

- Identify minimum requirements for preparing and implementing MSP across the borders and follow up how they are met to ensure coherence of the plans.^{4,5}

¹ <http://www.helcom.fi/action-areas/maritime-spatial-planning/country-fact-sheets>

² Finland suggests to delete as evident

³ Finland: This cannot be a task of the group because the plans are assessed in ten years period minimum.

⁴ Finland raised the question if Finland if this is already included in the transboundary guidelines.

⁵ Germany proposed to add at the end the following " - taking into account the possible cooperation with other relevant HELCOM working groups and prepare joint documentation"

- Exchange experience on how to link implementation of MSP and MSFD, as far as EU countries are concerned.
- Seek engagement of regional actors in the regional MSP deliberations through organized and systematic cooperation. (to be further identified how to do this in practice)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- [Propose MSP monitoring and evaluation process of Baltic Sea regional maritime spatial plans including suitable criteria.]⁶
- Facilitate and follow-up the application of the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP. Based on the experience gathered, review and, if needed, revise the Guideline⁷.
- Consider the practical use of valuation of ecosystem services in MSP.
- Facilitate and follow-up the application of the Guidelines for transboundary consultation, public participation and cooperation. Review the guidelines, if needed, once the experience has been gathered.
- Follow-up the application of the MSP Principles.

LAND SEA INTERACTION

- Propose means and tools to support coherent application of MSP and terrestrial plans.

ToR for the Baltic Sea Region MSP Data Expert Sub-group

The Data Expert Sub-group of the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group established for a period of two years, i.e. until the end of 2016⁸. The aim of the sub-group is to support data, information and evidence availability for MSP processes with regard to cross-border / trans-boundary planning issues to ensure comparability of maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea Region.⁹

⁶ Finland: What are regional maritime plans? Evaluation and monitoring of the plans is not possible task for the group as the plans will be finalized by 2021. Sweden: This could be quite an ambitious and challenging task. Needs further discussion before being included in a new work plan. The activity could be postponed to the period beyond 2019.

⁷ Germany proposed to replace the existing clause by - Enforce, facilitate and monitor the application of the Guidelines for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP. Review and, if needed, revise the Guidelines based on the experience gathered in this process as well as in light of the objectives and principles of the Helsinki Convention and its process of BAT/BEP development.

⁸ Terms of Reference:

<http://www.helcom.fi/Documents/HELCOM%20at%20work/Groups/MSP/ToR%20BSR%20MSP%20Data%20Expert%20Sub-group.pdf>

⁹ Latvia, Finland, Sweden have expressed the support for the prolongation of the sub-group so far. Sweden: Apart from supporting availability of data/information and evidence, the group (with experts from planning authorities) is also needed to follow other data related issues and initiatives in the BSR.

Annex 2: proposal for additional tasks for HELCOM-VASAB working group

A proposal for additional tasks for HELCOM-VASAB working group

by Co-chair, Mr. Andrzej Cieslak

Up till now the mandate, and therefore the work of the Group was focused on getting work on MSP started in all the Baltic countries (roadmap) and on helping countries on some difficult issues related to development of their national MSPs (principles, ecosystem approach, participation, to some extent the data/information Subgroup). Now we are at a different stage. Shortly all countries will have their legal frameworks for national MSP in place and have started, or will shortly start, developing the national plans. Some (Germany, Lithuania) even already have them.

Now the focus of the Group should change a bit. While supporting the ongoing work in the Baltic countries, the Work Group should think and act a few steps ahead. We should now start thinking, and acting towards, the pan-Baltic picture and achieving coherence not only across borders, but over the whole Baltic Sea. Having this aim in mind, I think that the H/V MSP WG should undertake the tasks to:

1. develop a proposal for a formal Baltic agreement on transborder and Baltic-wide consultation of national maritime spatial plans (taking up all issues covered by an MSP, not only environmental);
2. develop a proposal for a formal Baltic agreement on monitoring of transborder and Baltic-wide impacts of national MSPs (this could be a part of agreement 1, but I think it would be easier to develop the two separately);
3. develop a proposal for a formal Baltic agreement on accessibility and exchange of MSP-relevant information/data; and finally
4. develop a proposal for a spatial vision (or very strategic spatial plan) for the Baltic Sea, covering the transborder and Baltic-wide issues of space management.

Work on all the above points could use experience gained and thoughts from ongoing as well as finished national maritime spatial planning processes and MSP oriented projects.

The first draft of agreement 3 (to be further considered by the WG) could be tasked to the Data Subgroup.

Annex 3: Comments received during the commenting period 6-17 May 2016

Finland: Does not support the list of additional tasks.

Sweden:

- *General comment: For the future there is a need for a more structured and firm cooperation related to MSP in the BSR. However how the cooperation should be structured; formal agreements, recommendations, guidance documents etc. needs to be further discussed and elaborated. What options do we have? What does a Baltic agreement imply, etc? . These issues need to be sorted out before we can take any final position on the proposal.*
- *Point 1: Any proposal should be built on experience from the use and application of the recently finalized Guidelines for transboundary consultation, public participation and cooperation.*
- *Point 2: This needs to be discussed in light of the Inspire-directive in the EU member states.*
- *Point 4: The vision should be linked to the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (as far as this is appropriate for all contracting parties.)*