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Background

The BONUS BALTSPACE project was presented to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group in its 10th meeting. An update on its progress was given in the 11th meeting and interim results discussed at the 13th meeting.

Inter alia, the project examines which challenges and opportunities exist for MSP integration in different contexts through case studies. One case relates to integration on the pan-Baltic level, including the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working group. The findings selected for presentation at the 15th HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group meeting focus on transboundary and cross-scale integration as one out of the four integration challenges initially identified through the BONUS BALTSPACE project and will be presented in an interactive way.

The BONUS BALTSPACE survey on transboundary and cross-scale integration in the Baltic Sea Region:
https://www.io-warnemuende.de/transboundary_and_cross_scale_integration_in_MSP

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

BONUS BALTSPACE transboundary and cross-scale integration

What is the BONUS BALTSPACE project about?

The overarching aim of the BONUS BALTSPACE project is to clarify and improve the capacity of marine spatial planning (MSP) as a policy integrator by means of science-based approaches and tools. This will enhance the capabilities of society to respond to current and future challenges of Baltic Sea governance (Saunders et al. 2016).

Four integration challenges were identified as being worthy of more in-depth examination, shown in Table 1 (Saunders et al. 2016).

Table 1 BONUS BALTSPACE integration challenges

Integration Dimension	MSP Ambition
transboundary/cross-border	to garner cooperation among jurisdictions (e.g., across national and sub-national borders) for further coherent planning and use between maritime activities and good environment status across borders and in the open sea - particularly in transnational marine space
policy/sectoral	to pre-emptively address sectoral use incompatibilities, but also to achieve synergistic interaction between sectoral interests - where mutual benefit/interest is emphasized (and sought after) - rather than only where sectoral interests are pursued
stakeholder	to develop processes in order to support engagement among a range of stakeholders and put measures in place to manage conflicting interests in a timely and deliberative manner within legitimate and high quality policy/planning processes and outcomes
knowledge	to interlink different forms of stakeholder knowledge and to fill gaps, to support multi-disciplinarily and robust science-based approaches to underpin MSP decision-making in pursuit of sustainable marine governance

The case study analyses political integration processes, roles and functions at the regional MSP level, zooming in on the role of regional institutions and structures in between national decision-making and EU directives/strategies/programmes etc. and relevant international treaties, as well as issues of transboundary consultations. As the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group delivers essential contributions to political integration processes in MSP, its work constitutes also an important part of the research.

Q methodology

With the use of the Q method including statistical analysis, it is possible to explore different viewpoints of MSP practitioners in MSP and challenges in MSP. The Q method was developed by William Stephenson at the University of Oxford in the 1930s and has been used to investigate patterns among groups of people on several issues (Webler et al. 2009).

Overall, a sample of 24 Q statements (Q-set) have been strategically selected and extracted to be used in Q methodology. These statements (Tab. 2) are based on findings and results of the pan-Baltic case study of the BONUS BALTSPACE project focusing on transboundary and cross-scale integration challenges in MSP and have been formulated in a manner to represent an expression of an individual opinion.
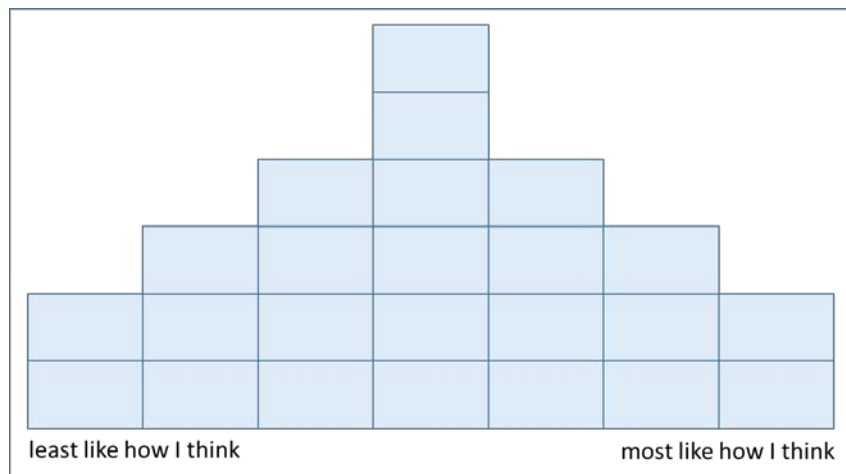
Step 1: Pre-sorting

Participants will be asked to pre-sort the statements **based on their individual expert opinion** into three piles:

- most like how I think,
- neutral
- least like how I think

After this pre-sort, participants will have to make a final sorting of the statements in a fixed

Step 2: Sorting according to fixed distribution

In addition to the distribution of the statements on the distribution chart, participants will be asked to fill out an additional part in order to incorporate the participant's underlying values and assumptions in the process of interpretation.

Figure 1. Pre-arranged distribution of priorities (score sheet).

distribution (compare Fig.1). The fixed distribution used in this respect allows the participants to make distinctions among their priorities (the statements that are most and least like how they think). A **seven-point scale will be used: -3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3**. Here, -3 corresponds to the two statements participants considered as "least like how they think" and +3 the two statements which were "most like how they think". "The ranking of the statements by an individual is known as that individual's Q sort, and reflects how much individuals value each statement. Participants are forced to make choices because the number of statements in each of the seven-point scale was defined previously" (Guimarães 2010, p.8).

There are two possibilities to participate:

1. Materials for the participants will be handed out on the first day of the 15th meeting of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group and collected on the second day BEFORE program starts.
2. You can sort the statements prior to the meeting online using "HtmlQ" by aproxima Gesellschaft für Markt- und Sozialforschung Weimar. To access the program and sort the statements online use the link below and follow the instructions step by step. https://www.io-warnemuende.de/transboundary_and_cross_scale_integration_in_MSP

We are aiming to get a return from all Member States representatives and chairs. On the second day of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meeting a short overview of the distribution results will be given. Results will be open for discussion. We will also kindly ask the participants for feedback on the procedure.

Table 2. Statements used in Q sort questionnaire

Statements	
1	The *Guideline for the implementation of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea* should even reach out beyond the Baltic Sea.
2	The common broad-scale principles on MSP, set up by the group, are paid sufficient attention to in MSP processes that I am involved in.
3	The Strategic Environmental Assessment constitutes a valuable element of formal transboundary consultations in MSP.
4	Different views about methodology of SEAs between my country and neighbouring countries are a challenge for

	transboundary coherent MSP.
5	In the current or foreseen transboundary consultation practice, concerns of neighbours are considered early enough when setting up plans.
6	Transboundary consultations in formal MSP processes should continue to be focussed on environmental issues.
7	Concerns of the potentially affected wider public in neighbouring countries should be incorporated in MSP within my country.
8	Informal communication in international projects is a major prerequisite for successful co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region.
9	HELCOM-VASAB recommendations developed in the group should become more binding.
10	There should be a better dissemination of meeting results to lower governance levels (e.g. regions, municipalities) in my country.
11	EU membership is a main enabler for transboundary integration.
12	I prefer the engagement in open and solution-oriented dialogue over solely formal channels for communication in transboundary MSP.
13	In the Working Group, we discuss MSP from a relatively high level of abstraction.
14	I think each country should keep the sovereignty to decide on its own how to design its MSP.
15	The *Guideline for the implementation of the ecosystem-based approach* offers room for interpretation. This is good, as it allows flexibility.
16	Seen over time, there is a good balance between the environmental (HELCOM) and the planners' (VASAB) view in the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.
17	The fact that countries are proceeding at a rather different pace with MSP processes poses a challenge for transboundary communication.
18	The HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG should become more active in seeking broader dialogue with stakeholders.
19	In my understanding, there are clear common directional objectives and there is a joint vision of MSP development in the Baltic Sea Region.
20	The regional and local (sub-national) level should be properly consulted and involved in MSP.
21	The execution of environmental impact assessments in MSP suffers currently from some deficiencies.
22	I want to actively engage in transboundary communication, also independently from procedures for setting up MSP.
23	In marine spatial planning processes that I participate in, adopting a pan-Baltic perspective should make up an important part.
24	Land-sea interactions are sufficiently taken into account in my country's MSP.

Use of results

The results from the Q method serve as a validation for findings brought about by the BONUS BALTSPACE project. Results are anonymised. They will be shared with the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group. Currently, there is no intension to publish the results. In any case, results would not be published without prior approval from the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group.

References

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