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Background

This document contains information on a proposal for new MSP-project in the Baltic Sea Region, PanBaltic SCOPE to be financed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. It is proposed in the application that the project starts in January 2018.

The project consortium consists of 12 partners from the Baltic Sea region and is led by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

PanBaltic SCOPE project

The objective of PanBaltic SCOPE is to achieve coherent national maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea region and to build lasting macro-region mechanisms for cross-border MSP cooperation.

The project is built on the results and experiences of a series of MSP-related projects in the Baltic Sea region as well as on national MSP processes. In particular, the experiences from real-life planning and recommendations on further work from the [Baltic SCOPE](#) project (2015-2017) have been the basis for the proposal.

The project activities will be carried out at different geographical scales – from sea-basin level (pan-Baltic Sea) to specific area, including even site-specific work. The work at sea-basin level aims at strengthening knowledge, enhancing cross-border and pan-Baltic dimensions in MSP cooperation and contributing to establishing lasting mechanisms for such cooperation.

The partners involved in the project are:

- Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM), Sweden
- Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH), Germany
- Maritime Office in Szczecin (UMS), Poland
- Danish Maritime Authority (DMA), Denmark
- Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MoEPRD), Latvia
- Ministry of Finance, Estonia
- Satakunta Regional Council (RCS), Finland
- Government of Åland, Finland
- Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Finland
- VASAB
- HELCOM
- Nordregio

The Ministry of the Environment in Finland and The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Ministry for Energy, Infrastructure and Regional Development of Mecklenburg and Vorpommern act as associated partners.

The project have five work packages:

- WP 1.1 Cross-border Collaboration and Consultation to Support National MSP-processes
Aim: to carry out national MSP processes in collaboration with other countries' planning authorities.
- WP 1.2 Advancing the Implementation of the Ecosystem-Based Approach and Data Sharing
Aim: to advance the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach (EBA) in MSP in the Baltic Sea region and thus contribute to promoting the sustainable growth of the maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources in the Baltic Sea.
- WP 1.3 Integrating Land-Sea Interactions into MSP
Aim: to identify and practically work with important aspects of land- sea interaction in the BSR and to work with data and method development to integrate these into MSP
- WP 2.1 Management and Coordination
- WP 3.1 Communication and Dissemination

WP 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 including the activities are summarised in the following section. Please note that the text is a shortened version of the text in the project application.

Component 1 Maritime Spatial Planning

WP 1.1 Cross border Collaboration and Consultation to Support National MSP-processes

WP lead: SwAM

The WP includes

- supporting planning authorities' cross border collaboration at different geographical levels (from pan-Baltic to site-specific)
- facilitating information exchange needed for finding appropriate planning solutions
- supporting cross-border consultation on plan proposals
- testing and making use of guidelines, methods and tools developed for implementation of MSP in the Baltic Sea region at pan-Baltic or at national level,
- sharing best practices in MSP

Activity 1.1.1 Planning Forum

SwAM (lead), All partners

The Planning Forum is the main working meeting within the project. It will function as a regular platform for the collaboration on general and specific planning issues identified by the planning authorities and regional organisations. At the beginning of the project the forum will identify planning needs in a cross-border context.

Tasks:

- organise periodical meetings in a Planning Forum matching the needs of the national processes
- organise cross-border consultation on plan proposals
- identify topics and/or geographical areas for closer border collaboration
- carry out case studies when needed or organise meetings/workshops for hands-on work
- develop recommendations on sub-regional or site-specific planning issues and solution while also pointing out limits for common solutions
- guide, inform and provide input to the other activities in WP1 and to the further development of the tools and methods being worked out in WP1.2 and WP1.3.

Activity 1.1.2 FI-AX-SE Case

GoA (lead), RCS, SwAM

To support the coordination the Regional Council of Satakunta, the Government of Åland and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management will collaborate within a FI-AX-SE Case. The Case comprises the waters between Sweden and mainland Finland, including the autonomous region of Åland with its archipelago. Of central concern for planning at sea are, in addition to the archipelago, the shallow but permanently water covered areas in the Bothnian Sea, known as banks.

The case will unfold in several interlinked steps:

- Initial assessment
- Identification and agreement on scope, i.e. topics, sub-areas or could be process-related e.g. stakeholder participation Synergies and linkages will be sought with other project activities., such as in WP 1.2 Advancing the implementation of the Ecosystem-based Approach and WP1.2

Integration of land-sea interactions in MSP. Here the FI-AX-SE Case could potentially constitute test area or focus for case studies

- Design of the Case (month 6)
- Implementation and reporting (months 7-21)

Activity 1.1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation for Selected National Processes

SYKE (lead), MoEPRD, UMS

The Baltic SCOPE project developed an evaluation and monitoring framework for following and evaluating transboundary collaboration in MSP. The framework was based on a review of existing evaluation approaches and especially on the experiences gained during the Baltic SCOPE project.

In the PanBaltic SCOPE Monitoring & Evaluation guidance will be developed for national processes in Latvia and Poland. The frameworks will be produced for each selected country to adapt the evaluation guidance for the needs and characteristics of national MSP processes. The

Even though the evaluation guidance is tailored to the need of each selected country, the project facilitates exchange and collaboration between countries. Exchange of ideas between countries is important for identifying common elements and key differences for evaluation as well as in terms of mutual capacity building in evaluating MSP.

Steps of work:

- Describe the MSP context and decide the scope of the evaluation
- Describe the target of the evaluation
- Outline the evaluation approach
- Plan the evaluation process

Activity 1.1.4 Follow-up of Common Regional Framework

VASAB (lead), All partners

The MSP Road map, MSP Principles and Guidelines provide a common regional framework supporting cross-border cooperation and coherent national MSP-implementation in the BSR.

This activity is designed to:

- follow-up the application of the Baltic Sea Broad-scale maritime spatial planning (MSP) principles
- follow-up the application of the Guidelines for transboundary consultation, public participation and cooperation including: 1) a survey among stakeholders with mandates 2) a follow-up workshop with BSR countries, 2) assessment of the application of the guidelines, main challenges and suggestions for improvement 3) compilation of best practices in partner countries to be disseminated among partners and published on the VASAB website.
- assessment of the achievements of the regional targets for MSP in the BSR MSP Road map including: 1) a survey among stakeholders with mandates 2) discussions at the follow-up workshop with BSR countries, 2) an evaluation of the implementation including indication of future tasks for MSP policy in BSR (outsourced)

The two surveys will be coordinated. The workshops will be organized jointly with engagement of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG. All contracting parties participating in the HELCOM- VASAB MSP WG will be invited to the workshops.

Following up the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach (EBA) in MSP is a separate activity under WP 1.2 along with development of tools and methods to apply EBA and share data.

In addition, WP1.2 will provide input on EBA and data sharing to the workshop to facilitate more complete assessment of the MSP Principles and the Regional Roadmap.

The assessment will be put forward for consideration by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, consisting of all Baltic Sea countries and the EU, to possibly feed into the future agenda setting and implementation.

Activity 1.1.5 Lessons Learned

Nordregio (lead), All partners

The objective is to provide feedback on progress to planners throughout the lifetime of the project

WP 1.2 MSP in BSR: Advancing the Implementation of the Ecosystem-Based Approach and Data Sharing

WP Lead: MoEPRD

Advancing the Implementation of the Ecosystem-Based Approach

The aim is to advance the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach (EBA) in MSP in the Baltic Sea region and thus contribute to promoting the sustainable growth of the maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources in the Baltic Sea.

The MSP Directive requires application of an EBA in national MSP. At the same time, understanding and implementation of EBA have advanced among the coastal countries on a sea basin scale and when implementing the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP, 2007) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2009). Likewise, further and close collaboration among the coastal countries also in their maritime spatial planning and on a sea basin scale is needed to be able to apply EBA in MSP.

HELCOM-VASAB Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area presents a first step towards a common understanding on how the EBA can be applied in drawing up a spatial plan for a sea area in accordance with spatial planning legislation in force in the Baltic Sea countries. However, since the guideline is fairly general, it has been further specified in the Baltic SCOPE project as EBA checklists. However, the checklists have not been fully tested yet.

The South-Western Baltic Sea is a narrow area where plans from Denmark, Sweden, Poland and Germany deal with overlapping interests in a confined space. Here, several transnational areas have been highlighted in the past as they pose synergies and challenges for transnational coherent planning (see e.g. SWB Report Baltic SCOPE). In addition, for some places – such as areas assigned to offshore wind energy - Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) had been conducted with valuable information for any future SEA. The methodologies for transboundary collaboration developed in the previous project seem robust enough to engage in a transboundary test case for an SEA that places particular emphasis on the EBA. It is time to take this experience gained and apply it to real plans in the southern Baltic.

Existing SEA procedures will be compared for different countries in the area. Similarities and differences will be highlighted and the EBA requirements carefully checked. Recommendations will be given on how to align SEA standards and how to integrate the EBA respectively across borders. A corresponding guideline for national SEAs in a transboundary context will help to implement a SEA strategy for the South-West Baltic Sea.

Both the Marine Spatial Planning Directive and Baltic Sea Action Plan/Marine Strategy Framework Directive aim at ensuring that the collective pressure of all human activities is kept within levels compatible with the achievement of good environmental status. Further, economic and social aspects must be considered when establishing both national maritime spatial plans (Art.6, point 2(b)) and national marine strategies (Art. 8

point 1c). Thus, there is a scope for synergies and utilizing the existing knowledge on EBA ranging from implementing the marine policies to support national work on MSP and vice versa.

More specifically, HELCOM's State of the Baltic Sea assessment (June 2017) is developed according to the requirements of the revised Decision on Good Environmental Status 2010/477/EU and with the purpose of serving e.g. the Baltic EU countries in their reporting of Article 8 of the MSFD. The State of the Baltic Sea assessment includes, inter alia, assessment of the spatial distribution of cumulative pressures and impacts from

The regionally developed methods and tools for cumulative impacts assessment and social and economic analysis have so far not taken the needs of MSP into account, despite of their potential of being of use for MSP. However, the cumulative impact assessment method has already been tested for national MSP in one of the coastal countries (Sweden), creating valuable lessons learnt to build on when developing the method further and to be more widely applied in and for MSP.

Furthermore, there is a need to develop ways to include ecological aspects, in a broader sense, in MSP and to harmonize the approaches among the countries. Planning requires not only spatial information on habitats and species but also an understanding of the value they represent for humans and healthy ecosystems such as which habitats are essential for fish recruitment. The activities will provide the national MSP-processes with relevant and useful planning evidence largely lacking today

This WP includes

- exchanging experiences in applying EBA in the ongoing real-life planning on national scale
- applying in a test case the methods developed in a coherent form on a transboundary aligned SEA for the southern Baltic based on best available assumptions as to content of plans
- placing special emphasis on the EBA in the test case
- setting up recommendations for national SEAs (including implementation of the EBA) in a transnational context
- supporting the integration of MSP and marine environment assessment frameworks to be in the position to evaluate MSP scenarios to influence marine management objectives at various scales, and to evaluate the social and economic impacts, including ecosystem services, from changes in the use of marine waters.
- creating a regional platform for exchanging experiences and knowledge on how social/cultural and economic aspects, including valuation of ecosystem services, are considered nationally in MSP, and enhance understanding on economic and social analyses for the purposes of MSP with support of a common framework
- providing improved planning evidence on marine ecosystems and their value, by developing and testing a concept of "green infrastructure" ("blue corridors") for planning purposes.

Data Sharing

The countries are obliged to have their Maritime Spatial Plans in place by 2021 This also means that access output data should be arranged in a regional context to enable cross-border comparison and planning of common sea space.

The aim is to facilitate the development of Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) and build a web-map interface based on MSDI principles to make available output data resulting from Maritime Spatial Plans. MSP output data platform will display the available output data from national MSDIs using distributed spatial data as far as possible and following INSPIRE principles of hosting data at source and harmonization of data. Considering different development stages of planning process and spatial data infrastructure in the partner countries, standardization is required and needs to be tackled during the project to cater for a pan-Baltic collation of output datasets.

The work package will build on work carried out on initial regional mapping of data requirements for input and output data carried out by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Data Expert Sub-Group and piloting activities carried out by e.g. Baltic Scope and BalticLines projects.

Further this WP includes

- developing a pan-Baltic MSP output data platform
- gathering available MSP output data to the MSP output data platform, including distributed data, both as services and data available as files
- developing a guideline for making MSP output data available for the pan-Baltic MSDI.

Activity 1.2.1 Ecosystem-Based Toolbox

SwAM (lead) and all other partners.

- Share experience on practical implementation of ecosystem-based approach in partner countries, including implementation of the SEA-framework
- Test the HELCOM-VASAB Guideline and the tools for the implementation of EBA in MSP
- Provide recommendations on potential development of the HELCOM-VASAB Guideline and the EBA toolbox (checklists) developed in the Baltic SCOPE project.

Activity 1.2.2 Implementation of EBA in sub-basin SEA

BSH (lead), SwAM, UMS

Develop as best as possible transboundary coherent SEA using a coherent approach and assumptions for the southern Baltic as test case for methodologies and guidance developed previously (in projects as well as in national and international fora)

Activity 1.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

HELCOM (lead), SwAM, MoEPRD, BSH, RCS, EE, UMS

- Compare and align metadata for spatial information at different scales with the aim to enhance harmonization of spatial data sets on human activities, pressure, and ecosystem components
- Evaluate robustness and evidence-base of sensitivity scores for assessing the impact of pressures on ecosystem components (common development of knowledge)
- Perform tests of how to incorporate green infrastructure/blue corridors in the scenarios and assessment, and for integration with economic and social data
- Identify key outputs for assessment and evaluation at different spatial scales and for different legal frameworks

Work under this dimension will build on metadata and sensitivity scores from the regional Baltic Sea Impact Index and national activities, including the Swedish Symphony project on cumulative impacts and potentially other projects. The project will also seek exchange of experiences with other sea-basins such as North-East Atlantic (OSPAR).

Activity 1.2.4 Green Infrastructure

MoEPRD (lead), SwAM, MoEPRD, EE, BSH, RCS, GoA

- Outline a concept of “green infrastructure” utilizing previous and ongoing studies and projects
- Test the concept by utilizing available data
- Develop definitions how to present habitats important for fish and improve Baltic-wide maps on important fish habitats, based on the existing knowledge and information from ongoing activities, such as ICES WGSFD8 and ICES WGVHES 9

- Collect feedback on the draft concept from the HELCOM-VASAB MSP working group and HELCOM State and Conservation group involving designated authorities and agencies dealing with nature protection and biodiversity conservation from all Baltic Sea countries, for further developing the concept.

Activity 1.2.5 Economic and Social Analyses

HELCOM (lead), All partners

- Review assessment of economic, social and cultural impacts and existing models in national MSP in the Baltic Sea Region including ecosystem services by compiling available information and presenting current experience/work in a regional workshop. The workshop will be organized together or back/to-back with the HELCOM Expert Network on Social and Economic Analysis.
- Investigate the use of a concept of “territorial monitoring” and the existing data e.g. in the Nordregio database of over 25-30 mainly land-based indicators on crucial economic, accessibility, social, innovation, and environmental factors/indicators at the regional level
- Prepare recommendations on how to develop a framework for social and economic analyses for the purposes of MSP including ecosystem services based on possible synergies and potential for one single framework to serve both MSP and marine policies;
- Organize a second regional workshop to review and finalize recommendations.
- Developing further the economic model for the assessment of the costs and benefits of different sea use scenarios in Estonia

Activity 1.2.6 Data Sharing

MoEPRD (lead), DMA, HELCOM, SwAM, BSH, EE, UMS

- Prepare specifications for harvesting output data from the countries:
 - Scrutinize the available list of MSP output data themes for cross border cooperation (as defined by HELCOM-VASAB MSP Data Expert sub-group)
 - Scrutinize the agreement on harmonized pan-Baltic format and visual guidelines for output data. This takes into account relevant INSPIRE recommendations and data specifications
- National authorities ensure that the national MSP data is available and accessible for the project. The Danish Geodata Agency (under agreement with DMA) will establish and customize a national MSP GIS platform. In that work it will investigate status on implementation and legal aspects of MSDI data for MSP, as well as aspects with focus on access to data for MSP.
- Further developing existing MSP input data access tool (developed by the Baltic LINes project) for MSP output data. The specific focus should be on:
 - Harvesting output data from national OGC (Open Geospatial Consortium) web services and displaying in Web Map service GIS system
 - Establishing WMS map services with relevant datasets (usage of S-57 standard will be explored)
 - Creating specific solutions for non-distributed data
 - Validating and harmonizing data according to the defined formats
 - Maintenance of extended MSP data access platform
 - Harmonizing metadata terminology and key words, to ensure that data can be searched cross border.
- Regional coordination of work to ensure communication with:
 - Data providers throughout all tasks
 - OGC to establish a conceptual model for MSP in the Baltic and North Sea

- ICES Working Group on Spatial Fisheries Data
- ICES Working Group on the value of Coastal Habitats for Exploited Species

WP 1.3 Integrating Land-Sea Interaction into MSP in the WP

WP Lead: Nordregio (MoEPRD)

The aim of this WP is to identify and practically work with important aspects of land-sea interaction in the BSR and to work with data and method development to integrate these into MSP. Depending on the practical cases chosen, this might include work with both planning evidence, method development, processes and responsibilities and communication. This implies the following:

- identify important issues arising when integrating an LSI perspective into MSP, both in relation to data, methods, plans and processes,
- develop knowledge and methods for LSI analysis and work with practical problem solving,
- distil important obstacles to integrate LSI into MSP and how these can be overcome and
- highlight good practices and formulate recommendations on how to continue working on integrating LSI in MSP in the BSR and beyond.

Work will be organised in three steps of core activities:

1. Scoping: Institutional frameworks and practices for MSP in relation to LSI in the BSR
2. Case Study Work: Choosing, designing and conducting two different and complementary case studies: a) a geographically focused one and b) a pan-Baltic, thematic case
3. Synthesis and conclusions: Across cases and beyond the Baltic Sea

This WP will be closely linked with other WPs, trying to profit from and create synergies with their activities. In WP1.1, this especially concerns the FI-AX-SE Case, Monitoring and Evaluation and Follow-up of Common Regional Frameworks and review of principles and guidelines in relation to LSI. In relation to WP 1.2, most likely synergies can be found with the Ecosystem-based Toolbox, Cumulative Impacts and Economic and Social Analysis related activities. Naturally, WP 3 Communication and Dissemination is also relevant; here communication strategies will be designed under way, based on the cases chosen.

Top candidates for geographical case studies are at present the Gulf of Riga¹² and the FI-AX-SE axis (see WP 1.1). The interesting thematic areas identified so far include: linking traffic at sea with ports as a nexus to land-based activities and impacts, tourism and recreation or fishing and aquaculture and their implications for coastal communities, land-based pollution and its implications for the sea and its activities, and socio-cultural analysis in / of coastal areas.

The Gulf of Riga is chosen since LV is responsible to propose to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG means and tools to develop common understanding of LSI and support coherent implementation of MSP and terrestrial plans in BSR.

Activity 1.3.1 Scoping: Institutional frameworks and practices for MSP in relation to LSI in the participating countries

Nordregio (lead), MoEPRD, SwAM, GoA

Steps:

- Mapping national and sub-national practices and approaches:
- Mapping of issues to address when doing MSP from a LSI perspective:
- Stakeholder involvement: mobilizing & scoping:

Activity 1.3.2 Case Studies: Choosing, designing and conducting 2 case studies

Overall lead: Nordregio overall lead cross-case interaction, parts of data management,

Riga Bay Case lead: MoEPRD:, maps, parts of data management

Thematic case lead: To be decided

Steps:

- Choosing and designing
- Case analysis
- Learning within and across cases from case work for planners and future planning

Activity 1.3.3 Synthesis & Conclusions

Nordregio (lead), MoEPRD for synthesis from planners' perspective, thematic case leader (TBD)

- Reflecting on what works and what does not and why within the cases and in relation to integrating LSI into MSP for the BSR.
- Develop a synthesis report, including recommendations on how to develop LSI work in MSP further for the BSR and beyond.
- Share experiences on what works and what does not and why and discuss beyond the project.