Agenda Item 2 **Recent MSP developments**

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PAN-BALTIC STAKEHOLDERS' DIALOGUE ON MSP

This document contains the key findings from single-sector workshops held in 2013 organized by the PartiSEApate (Multilevel Governance in Maritime Spatial Planning throughout the Baltic Sea Region) project.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, as the Steering Committee for the Horizontal Action (HA) Spatial Planning, agreed on granting flagship project status to the PartiSEApate project under the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region at its fifth meeting (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 5/2012) and agreed to function as a Project Advisory Group for the project. HELCOM and VASAB are the Horizontal Action Leaders for HA Spatial Planning.

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HORIZONTAL ACTION 'SPATIAL PLANNING'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

Pan-Baltic stakeholders' dialogue on MSP:

Key findings from PartiSEApate single-sector workshops held in 2013

In 2013 the following single-sector workshops have been organised by the PartiSEApate project:

- Aquaculture, 15-16 April, Gdansk (PL)
- Climate change, 13-14 May, Skanör (SE)
- Research, 28-29 May, Klaipeda (LT)
- Underwater Cultural heritage, 3-4 June, Riga (LV)
- Data network building, 15-16 October, Hamburg (DE)
- Shipping/ports, 24 October, Brussels (EUR)
- Nature/ Environment, 31 October - 1 November, Riga (LV)
- Offshore wind energy, 12-13 November, Vilnius (LT)
- Fisheries, 14 November, Vilnius (in co-operation with HELCOM)

The overall objectives of the single-sector workshops were the following:

- To introduce the MSP principles of the BaltSeaPlan vision 2030 on allocating marine space;
- To identify and evaluate sectoral priorities, objectives with regard to sea use;
- To discuss with relevant stakeholder groups what MSP means to them and why it is important to treat certain topics on a transnational level;
- To review expectations and potential fears with regard to the MSP process and outcomes;
- To identify the specific nature of conflicts / synergies with other sectors;
- To explore the scope / range of MSP tools potentially available for solutions.

Key findings form the workshops

AQUACULTURE

- The sector has great hopes towards MSP – it sees MSP as an opportunity to regain its voice and to grow from "the forgotten sector", which gets only "left overs" after other users have made their claims, into an equal player in competing for sea space.
- Due to new – environmentally more friendly – technologies, also in the Baltic Sea marine aquaculture (or mariculture) could have development potential, not only in those countries (DK, FI, SE), where aquaculture is currently already existing (but could not develop during the last decades due to environmental restrictions). Taking into account decreasing fish resources and increase of demand for fish, in future we can expect a shift from traditional fishing towards marine farming. However presently, even under optimistic scenarios, not more than 1% of sea areas is expected to be taken by the aquaculture farms.
- Before looking into conflicts / synergies with other sectors (i.e. summer houses, fishery) – environmental regulation conditions have to be clarified. So far development of marine fish aquaculture is mainly hampered by "region specific" / "zero" nutrient discharge policy (e.g. in Denmark) and very strict interpretation of other environmental legislation. Aquaculture is treated very differently than agriculture. It is recommended to focus on nutrient balance rather than site specific nutrient policy.
- So far no targets/ demand for space have been agreed at pan-Baltic scale. Conceptual communication and agreement of potential areas among the countries would be needed.

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- Development potentials of marine aquaculture depend on specifics of natural conditions in the Baltic Sea. Spatial requirements differ between seaweed/algae, mussel and fish cultivations. So far the site selection for aquaculture in the Baltic Sea has not been based on environmentally most suitable sites. Research on selection of optimal sites needs to be promoted.
- Aquaculture sites are not "permanent" infrastructure; they can be moved in case of changing future demands.
- Economically more efficient are larger fish farms. In future aquaculture sites potentially could be searched further in offshore areas.
- Main issue: what kind of aquaculture wanted in future within the Baltic Sea Region - only for "fish" or also for clear water / environmental remediation purposes? In case of mariculture for environmental remediation, more space would be needed.
- Recirculating water system technologies may provide chances for expansion of fish aquaculture in the Baltic Sea marine water. Though, the spatial implications of aquaculture sector on land and on the sea space have to be defined/ differentiated as precondition for development of the sector.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Same as MSP - climate change adaptation (CCA) in the Baltic Sea is still at the beginning stage. There is a lack of strategic approach, coordination and governance as well as lack of competence among local planners, institutional capacity and lack of relevant requirements on the integration of climate change impact in spatial planning. Also the group of players which are engaged in these questions today is rather limited.
- Development of the appropriate communication and information strategies is needed, tailored for the different focal group of players. It is important to visualise climate change data and transform them into information in form of accurate maps, which can be easily interpreted by spatial planners. The planners on local level for instance require support which enables them to down-scale global and regional trends to their local situation.
- Pan-Baltic collaboration between the two topics would be required both at practical as well as policy level.
- Adaptive and flexible planning process is required, which would ensure that the uncertainty of climate change, prognoses, of demographic, socio-economic as well as the environmental changes are taken into account. A frequent evaluation and reassessment of plans would be required. The integration of climate change impact in relevant legislation was noted as an important aspect. Legislation related spatial planning needs a higher degree of flexibility, when facing climate change issues, i.e. "adaptive licensing".
- There is a need to secure that the specific perspectives and roles of different players dealing with, or impacted by coastal/marine climate change adaptations in the Baltic Sea area are involved and continuously can give input to an adaptive planning. EU should consider making the CCA -MSP issue permeate at all relevant EU policy areas.
- Multifunctional perspective shall be integrated in the planning process. Besides traditional focus of the impacts of the sea level rise on housing and "hard" infrastructures, CCA actions should integrate such aspects as maintaining and even strengthening the basis for ecosystem services, for fisheries, for recreation and tourism, for energy production, for aquaculture and other maritime uses and services.
- An interest was expressed to learn more about cases and experiences concerning both marine/coastal planning for CCA and specific actions and measures being tested.
- Coordination and guidelines at European level for MSP and ICZM related to CCA as well as a structure and a strategic framework for processes on the different levels, especially the transnational cooperation was regarded as necessary.
- A pan-Baltic strategy on MSP in the context of CCA should integrate the Baltic Sea Action Plan

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and other strategic approaches.

RESEARCH FOR MSP

- MSP is seen as an essential tool for research and an incentive for new data collection in the marine environment, resulting in development of systematic surveys and data collection of environmental parameters at sea.
- There is an interest in development of joined databases for MSP purposes including biological and socioeconomic data, biological mapping techniques, which are fundamental aspect for implementation of the ecosystem based approach in MSP.
- Research should investigate the role of networks of MPA and possibly assess the ES provision derived from the ecological networks.
- Researchers' face problems in sharing knowledge on the management of marine areas on Pan-Baltic level (conservation regimes, uses, restrictions) and in particular of MPA in order to have a better understanding of different planning and management approaches – "*What works and what doesn`t?"*.
- Ecosystem Services can be applied as performance indicator on how different ecosystem – based management measures or planning scenarios can affect human wellbeing.
- There is the need to develop and apply tradeoff analysis tools based on ecosystem service provided by a specific sea use. Tradeoff analysis system should enable to assess tradeoffs not only between two conflicting uses (2 dimensional perspective) but be capable to address multiple uses conflicts/benefits.

UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE (UCH)

- The UCH sector is a new actor in MSP (except some countries, e.g. UK), as UCH is so far not considered and involved at equal extent compared to other sea use sectors.
- The UCH sector has already a cooperation platform at pan-Baltic level – a working group established under the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), which provides system of information exchange between the UCH sector and other sectors and can be used for co-ordination with MSP process.
- The UCH protection goals potentially conflict almost with all sectors, which can cause physical destruction of the UCH sites. However co-operation and synergies are possible. More active information exchange with other sectors is needed and MSP can serve as a platform for such cooperation.
- Problems with identification of spatial solutions (zoning / sites designation) to present UCH interests in MSP have been notified. The possible approaches have to be further discussed with planners at pan-Baltic level.
- UCH assets (including wracks and other artefacts, submerged sites, relict cultural landscapes) can be found everywhere, therefore the precautionary principle has to be applied - areas which are not yet investigated, should not be left without regulation – there is a need for general rules/guidelines how to act when UCH artefacts are found.

DATA NETWORK BUILDING

- In order to ensure transnational co-ordination of the MSP process and easy exchange of relevant data a Pan-Baltic Spatial Data Infrastructure for MSP shall be set up, involving all relevant BSR states agencies and institutions, HELCOM, VASAB, ICES, EMODnet etc. The marine data infrastructure of Germany was presented as a good model. Participants of the meeting supported development of a decentralised system, in which data storage and

updating is provided by the national authorities.

- For development of such a system national MSP data contact points shall be assigned and common data standards for data exchange, at least for issues of transboundary relevance, has to be agreed. The priorities for data compilation of transboundary relevance have to be set with the aim to reduce the number of datasets as much as possible (UK experience). A sufficient set of Metadata have to be provided to ensure transparency on data significance, reliability, quality, etc.
- Data from publicly funded work should be freely accessible.
- The further tasks include setting up of an expert group on harmonisation of data and metadata for data exchange (focussing on transboundary MSP issues) and initialising national inventories of main MSP issues and available data/metadata, etc.
- The meeting proposed to establish a subgroup on MSP data exchange under the HELCOM/VASAB MSP working group (DE volunteered to make proposal for TOR, objectives, milestones etc., in line with EUSBSR). The proposal is presented to HELCOM/VASAB WG on MSP-meeting 28/29th January 2014.

SHIPPING & PORTS

- Today most ports and shipping companies lack interest, resources and competence to be part of the MSP process and are left to react to the changes incurred by MSP. To improve this situation, new dialogue mechanisms to communicate between the sectors are needed.

Port industry:

- Insufficient dialogue on MSP implications for ports on a pan-Baltic level has been noted. There is also lack of a common platform for such dialogue and communication gaps between different levels. Ports are commercially competitive, individual players operate in a complex context of local, regional and national level actors, on the inland side as well as on the seaside. Certainly they would benefit from being more involved in land spatial planning as well as MSP.
- The potential of port development is challenged by enormous pressure from city developers (i.e. cities are taking over port areas). Ports are moving out from the city centres into coastal sea areas, closer to the shipping lanes.
- There is a tendency of concentration to fewer and highly developed ports. Also the container ships are becoming larger, which leads to deeper and wider shipping lanes. New future navigation structures and corridors are required, taking into consideration also the new pipelines and cables.
- MSP planners should establish a continuing dialogue with the transport market players (who are drivers of the port development) to learn about future developments and needs of ports/shipping. MSP planners should focus on the container sector – the bulk market always finds their “own ways”, independent of shipping corridors.
- Due to the long licensing procedures for port development, port authorities should be involved in MSP process at a very early stage.

Shipping:

- Similarly to ports, the shipping sector is also rather scattered in terms of stakeholders (in average 1-2 ships per single owner, a large number of shipping agents) thus creating a challenge with regard to stakeholder involvement in MSP.
- The sector lacks information and understanding of MSP, therefore enhanced communication is essential.
- Smart MSP may have positive effects on shipping economy and maritime safety. Early discussions with shipping authorities is essential to find smart compromises between green energy strategies and shipping, avoiding long detours for ships and risk for collisions.

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- The sector has limited resources to participate continuously in the planning process. The existing platforms, such as IMO, IALA, IHO, ICS shall be used for MSP interactions with the shipping sector.
- The focus should additionally be on the merchants (cargo-owners) and perhaps not the individual shipping companies, since the companies ship the cargo as instructed by the merchants, using green routes or going as fast as possible through marine protected areas.
- MSPs have to build on the reality of an increased demand for seaborne transports. Shifts in global/regional trade have huge impacts on shipping volumes and patterns, but these shifts are predictable. A big increase is expected in general cargo, but most of all in container shipping.
- The example of changing ship traffic lanes in Norway, driven by the needs to protect marine environment and fishing areas, illustrates a successful integration of data and collaboration for planning and execution between national MSP planners and industry.

NATURE/ ENVIRONMENT

- Although the concept of the ecosystem approach has been widely described in many documents and projects, still there is a lack of sufficient knowledge, understanding and practical application. Therefore the upcoming HELCOM-VASAB "Guidelines on the application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP", to be adopted by 2015, is seen as an urgent need for ecosystem based MSP.
- For ensuring the ecosystem based approach and recognising/respecting limits of the resilience of the Baltic Sea , MSP would have to be based on a Baltic Sea wide environmental assessment and, where applicable, a socio-economic cost-benefit analysis in order to identify the most suitable areas of sea uses. Therefore spatially relevant ecological information is an essential need.
- MSP is an important tool for nature conservation in marine areas – it contributes to protection of ecological and cultural assets inside and outside of protected areas by organising the sea uses and avoiding conflicts with protection goals. However, it shall not be used as a tool for designation of MPAs, which shall be based on expert work and in-situ surveys. The most important task of MSP in relation to nature conservation is to ensure the connectivity of the marine ecosystem.
- The BSPA network provides an appropriate platform for the establishment of a coherent MPA network in the Baltic Sea. Although the coverage of BSPAs in coastal areas is fairly good, the coverage in the EEZ (4.6%) should be improved.
- Spatial and thematic protection requirements of MPAs must be included in MSP as reservation or/and priority areas, but still bearing in mind that protection is not the only layer within MSP. Management plans/zoning of MPAs is required that define other uses that can co-exist in the MPAs, especially at the coastal areas with intense economic and social interests. Temporal (instead of permanent) restrictions should be considered in dialogue with other sea-users. A coherent approach to these management plans as well as measures in line with MSP development should be developed in close inter-action between the given actors across the BSR.
- MSP is also an important tool for achievement of the objective of MSFD – good environmental status of the sea. Considering the available knowledge and understanding, part of the MSFD descriptors directly could be applied in MSP process as an objective (defining threshold values for certain economic use) as well as a tool for monitoring the MSP implementation/effectiveness and following the rate of change spatially. However application of descriptors in MSP context is limited by the fact that most of them are so far not defined spatially.

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OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY

- A real Pan-Baltic cooperation between political as well as economic sectors with regard to coordinated offshore energy and grid development is not in place. The North Sea Countries Grid Initiative (NSCOGI) is seen as role model for high level cooperation on the issue.
- Missing national targets and strategies, different national interests, regulatory systems and energy tariffs etc. are hindering a more integrated transboundary/transnational approach. At the same time national MSP developments often are being driven by offshore energy, supported by national targets and regulative systems.
- MSP can serve as a tool to prepare ground and accelerate Offshore Energy development, though, for example, in Denmark strong offshore energy development is experienced without MSP being in place.
- MSP has to provide integration with terrestrial spatial planning with regard to grid connection etc.
- A Pan-Baltic offshore grid could serve as backbone to more refined MSP solutions.
- Planning should be based on very good factual data and inventories, environmental information, taking into account technical developments and potential solutions.
- As the main conflicting sea uses the sector has defined military sea use, navigation routes, extraction of mineral resources (incl. e.g. shale gas), necessary buffers towards cables and pipelines. Minor conflicts are expected regarding protected areas, fisheries (if compensation schemes are in place) and negative visual impacts.
- Synergies are expected with regard to offshore biomass production, coastal development (local tourism, coastal protection), industrial development (nearby energy-intensive industry, ship-building industry resp. supply chain in general).

FISHERIES (to be presented by HELCOM directly – thus only some notes from joint workshop communication are presented here)

- *In order to foster consultations and involvement of fisheries in MSP process a transparent process and clear pattern of expectations shall be created as well as independent facilitation might be considered. Independent funding to enable all stakeholders to participate also might be needed. Involvement of fisheries in MSP could be organised through good practices such as pilot projects, cross-border fora, discussion & data compilations. Stress should be on possible synergies.*
- *For MSP purpose data are needed on spatial extent, resolution and distribution of fishing activities as well as essential fish habitats and their connectivity. More information is needed also on recreational fisheries & mariculture development. Controlled harmonized data systems are necessary. Lack of international access to anonymised VMS has been noted as a significant problem.*
- *Essential fish habitats should be taken into account in MSP and treated as priority areas. Integration between MSP and ICM is welcomed.*

Overall conclusions form the series of the single-sector workshops:

- MSP is acknowledged as a valuable forum to represent the interests of particular sectors as well as to stimulate their development (e.g. aquaculture, shipping, offshore wind energy). It also helps to communicate to other sectors the interests of nature conservation as well as protection of marine environment and underwater cultural heritage.
- MSP also serves as an incentive for new data collection and research on the functioning of the marine ecosystem and assessing the services provided by it, which could serve as performance indicators on how ecosystem-based management measures or planning scenarios can affect human wellbeing.
- The knowledge and understanding of the MSP process is still insufficient among the

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stakeholders of most of the sectors addressed by the PartiSEApate workshops.

- The sectors shall be involved in MSP at a very early stage, which would help to find smart compromises or win-win situations between different interests.
- The existing international platforms/organisations, which are representing the sea use sectors, shall be addressed to bring up the MSP issues of transnational relevance at the pan-Baltic level.
- To facilitate the transnational co-ordination of the MSP in the Baltic region a Pan-Baltic Spatial Data Infrastructure would have to be developed, applying common data standards and established procedures for data exchange.

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