



OUTCOME OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE HELCOM-VASAB MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING WORKING GROUP (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 9-2014)

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- all EU member States will be required to do MSP as a crosscutting instrument covering all relevant sectors,
- crossborder MSP, public participation and MSP data flows are important features of the Directive.

2.5 The Meeting noted also the following points in terms of practical implementation:

- regional cooperation is an important feature of the overall implementation of the proposed Directive and in this respect the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG acts as good example for other regions to follow,
- many practical issues require EU wide attention, including data for MSP,
- implementation guidelines for a number of issues will be developed with the Member States,
- need for coherence in implementation of MSP across sea basins.

2.6 The Meeting stressed the important role of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG in the region in terms of cross-border MSP and highlighted particularly the importance of Russian participation, for EU Member States also in terms of MSP Directive implementation.

2.7 The Meeting took note that in order to prepare for the implementation of the MSP Directive, EU funds can be used for MSP projects and implementation of crossborder MSP. Even if the work programme has not been finalised a North Sea and Baltic Sea call as well as a Black Sea call are foreseen.

2.8 The Meeting noted also that these funds are primary for EU Member States wanting to do crossborder MSP but that third countries can also participate. The Meeting noted also that other projects remain important as the funds available within the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) are quite limited.

2.9 The Meeting noted also that the European Commission proposes a facilitating process to help EU Member States to implement the MSP Directive in the Baltic Sea region.

2.10 The Meeting recalled from the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 8-2014 that the European Commission informed of a number of Guidelines to be prepared as part of the Directive process.

2.11 The Meeting noted that even if these Guidelines will be developed within the EU Member States Expert Group on MSP, the European Commission has hired a consortium of consultant which may also look into new ideas on ecosystem approach in relation to ICM and MSP. The consortium is currently working on the feedback from the Meeting of the Expert Groups on MSP and Integrated Coastal management (ICM) on 5 June in Athens, Greece.

2.12 The Meeting recalled that the subsidiarity principle remains central in EU cooperation and that the division of work and regional added value should be carefully considered to maximize effectiveness.

2.13 The Meeting recalled the procedure agreed on by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 4-2012 (paragraph 2.6) to update information on national MSP developments prior to each Working Group meeting and took note of the table as contained in documents 2-2 and 2-2-Add. The information in the table has been updated by Estonia, Germany, Sweden and Russia (document 2-2-Add) since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 8-2014.

2.14 The Meeting further took note of the following national MSP developments:

- Denmark: last week the Ministries which are responsible for issues related to the sea agreed on a strategy on how to deal with MSP in Danish waters. It was decided that Denmark will follow the time line as indicated in the EU MSP Directive by 2021;
- Finland: A status report on MSP in Finland was finalized last autumn. Currently regional spatial plans are in place in territorial waters but no plans are available in the EEZ.
- Germany: A new project with the aim to advance environmental approaches for a further development of MSP in the German EEZ has started in 2013 as indicated in document 2-2;

- Latvia: the MSP process started in January 2014 in accordance with Spatial planning law, by now Terms of Reference are adopted by a officially established Working Group and now ministry is in its final state of procurement process preparations.
- Russia: A law on aquatorial (maritime) planning in the Russian Federation is being prepared by the Ministry of Regional Development of Russian Federation and a working group has been established together with the Government working on the concept of the law. The concept is expected to be ready in autumn 2014;
- Sweden: MSP legislation is now in place and enters into force 1 September 2014. The objective is to contribute to sustainable development. The Government is currently writing on an ordinance. A report on the current status of MSP will soon be found [online](#) in English.

2.15 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties/Member States to provide any further updates to the table 2-2 to the Secretariats (laura.meski@helcom.fi and info@vasab.org) at the latest by 30 June 2014.

2.16 The Meeting agreed that a reliable source of information on what is going on concerning MSP in the Baltic Sea is needed, that it should be provided by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and that this information should be easily available on the HELCOM and VASAB web pages.

2.17 The Meeting welcomed the format of the country fiches, developed within the framework of the PartiSEApate project (document 3-1), as a good way of presenting the MSP status in the Baltic Sea countries, noting however that the information in the three templates is not yet complete, and agreed that the templates together with the information in table 2-2 could be merged into second generation country fiches of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

2.18 The Meeting decided on the following procedure for updating the second generation country fiches:

- The Contracting Parties/Member States which have not yet filled in the fiches will do so at the latest by the next meeting of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG,
- The fiches will be made available on the HELCOM and VASAB web pages,
- Updates to the fiches will be provided by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG contacts through the national contact points twice a year prior to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meetings,
- The updating of the fiches will be facilitated by the Secretariats and the Secretariats will send out the requests for updates.

2.19 The Meeting requested the Secretariats to make a summary of the updates for the Working Group meeting which will decide on each round of updating.

2.20 The Commission requested the Meeting to share the country fiches with the EU Expert Group on MSP.

2.21 The Meeting recalled that HELCOM and VASAB, coordinated by the Secretariats, act as the Horizontal Action Leaders (HALs) for the Horizontal Action (HA) Spatial Planning (Encouraging the use of Maritime and Land-based Spatial Planning in all Member States around the Baltic Sea and develop a common approach for cross-border cooperation) under the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), for the EU Member States, and that HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG acts as the Steering Committee for the MSP part of on the HA. The VASAB BSR/CSPD acts as the Steering Committee for the land based planning of the HA.

2.22 The Meeting took note of the following information by the European Commission on the developments within the EUSBSRS:

- A report from the Commission concerning the governance of macro-regional strategies (COM(2014) 284 final) was adopted on 20 May 2014. The report underlines that currently there is an over-dependence on the Commission as the principle driving force, and invites

countries and regions concerned to take a more active role in strategic leadership. It also stresses that thematic experts and their Steering Groups are the key force to drive implementation forward.

- 5th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR was held on 3-4 June 2014 in Turku, Finland. The event was entitled “Growing together - for a prosperous, inclusive and connected Baltic Sea region”. The 6th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR will take place in Latvia (in mid-June 2015) and will be co-hosted with the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU. Spatial planning will be one of the topics to be discussed during the event.
- A review process of the EUSBSR and its Action Plan is ongoing with the aim to resolve some of the challenges related to its implementation. The review will be based on an assessment of all parties concerned about where the Strategy creates added value to existing work undertaken and relevance of priorities at macro-regional level. As a starting point the PACs and HALs were invited to Brussels in December 2013-February 2014 to discuss with the EUSBSR team the progress within PAs and HAs. Based on these meetings, and further input provided by PACs/HALs after the 5th Working Meeting of the EUSBSR (in Tallinn on 9-10 April 2014) a discussion paper and recommendations on the EUSBSR have been produced.
- The Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 will provide financial support to the EUSBSR. One single financial envelop, funding three kinds of activities, with a single co-financing rate of 85% and no pre-financing, have been foreseen: seed money – 3 million €; technical assistance to PACs/HALs – 8 million €; Strategy support (incl. Annual Fora) – 2.2 million €. In total 13.2 million € under TO 11. All activities will run as regular projects according to the ETC rules.

2.23 The Meeting took note of a Commission Document on Sustainable Blue Growth Agenda with links between what is being done within the EU as well as the regional work, and namely in the context of the EUSBSR; noting especially the good examples of maritime innovation and technology development as well as the use of sustainability as a driver of growth.

2.24 The Meeting took note that the PartiSEApate project, which is a Flagship project under the HA Spatial Planning, will come to an end in September 2014 (some activities will continue until December 2014) and that the final conference of the project is the Baltic MSP Forum which will be held on 17-18 June 2014. The project has been a good example of a project with close links to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

2.25 The Meeting took note of the information by Poland on the progress within the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility project Baltwise Seed project to prepare a project application for an MSP project under the lead of the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE). Work is ongoing and a teleconference was organized on 11 June between all the partners. Most important dimensions of the project will be on cooperation with Russia in the Gulf of Finland and possibly also in waters around Kaliningrad. The Baltwise Seed project will be finalized with a project application draft in the end of 2014. The project consortium is looking for a good source of funding enabling also Russian Federation participation and noted that the EU Interreg Central Baltic Programme could be one possibility.

2.26 The Meeting took note of the information by Russia that it is difficult to provide MSP relevant data for such projects as the Russian legislation base is not yet ready and it is unclear what data will be used for MSP.

2.27 The Meeting noted that a feasibility study is being prepared by the Baltwise Seed consortium with Finnish national funding, topping up the EUSBSR Seed Money, and is planned to be presented to the VASAB Ministerial Meeting.

2.28 The Meeting took note of the Resolution of the Roundtable on MSP, which was held during the XV International Environmental Forum - Baltic Sea Day on 19 March 2014 in St. Petersburg, Russia. The program and the presentations made during the Roundtable can be found on the [HELCOM web page](#).

2.29 The Meeting took note of the information by the European Commission on the MSP Conference on shipping, which was held in on 6 June 2014 in Athens, Greece. The shipping sector participated actively in the Conference and highlighted the important rules which need to be taken into account concerning shipping in the planning process. Also the importance of MSP for ports and land traffic, industry data collection as well as satellite remote sensing, were highlighted during the event. The conclusion from the work shop will be published shortly.

2.30 The Meeting further took note that the next European Commission conference will be on MSP and tourism in the beginning of 2015 in Italy. The Commission is also considering organizing a work shop on MSP and environment in the future.

Agenda Item 3 Input of the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to the VASAB Ministerial Conference

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-3-Corr, 3-4

3.1 The Meeting recalled that the VASAB Ministerial Conference will be held on 26 September 2014 in Tallinn, Estonia, and took note of the draft VASAB Tallinn Declaration as agreed on by VASAB CSPD/BSR on 11 April 2014 (document 3-1).

3.2 The Meeting took note of the report on the future governance system for MSP in the Baltic Sea Region (document 7-4 and 7-4-Add) prepared within the PartiSEApate project and presented by Ms. Angela Schultz-Zehden, PartiSEApate External Project Coordination Office (**Presentation 1**).

3.3 The Meeting further took note of the comments by Germany (document 3-4) and the PartiSEApate project (document 3-2) but agreed to only look into the sections and comments which are within the competence of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG i.e. related to MSP.

3.4 The Meeting took note that the complete German position is expressed in document 3-4, including also comments to sections related to other issues than MSP.

3.5 The Meeting took note that the European Commission has not been able to submit comments in writing prior to the Meeting due to the time constraints.

3.6 The Meeting commented the draft VASAB Tallinn Declaration and agreed that the revised Declaration edited by VASAB Secretariat after the Meeting will be circulated at the latest by 20 June 2014.

3.7 The Meeting noted that the comments will further be reviewed by the VASAB Open Troika meeting on 18 June 2014 and the amended text – at the VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting on 25-26 June 2014 in Helsinki, Finland

3.8 The Meeting further recalled that VASAB CSPD/BSR will produce a Progress Report on the Implementation of the VASAB Long-Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region as a background document to the VASAB Ministerial Conference and that maps of the existing MSP situation in the Baltic Sea will be included in the Progress Report.

3.9 The Meeting considered these maps prepared by Germany (documents 3-3 and 3-3-Corr), appreciated the efforts by Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) to compile the information and suggested the following improvements:

- improvements of the legend to more clearly show the status of the MSP legislation,
- better visualization of the status of the area within one nm of the Swedish waters,
- indicate the EEZ in a more clear way,
- include information concerning Russian waters,

- double check the status of maritime spatial plans in Lithuanian waters.

3.10 The Meeting requested the Contracting Parties/Member States to provide any further suggestions, corrections and updated information, preferably as shapefiles, to Germany (bettina.kaeppeler@bsh.de) at the latest by 23 June 2014. An updated template will be circulated by Germany shortly.

3.11 The Meeting took note of the comment by WWF that these kinds of maps are important for visualizing the MSP situation in the Baltic Sea and also to reach a broader understanding of a wider public.

3.12 The Meeting recalled that the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020 will be suggested for adoption by the VASAB Ministerial Conference, as it was previously adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in October 2013, and the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG report 2010-2013 will be submitted as a background document to the Conference.

Agenda Item 4 Data needs for MSP

Documents: 4-1

4.1 The Meeting welcomed the proposal by Germany for establishing a subgroup on MSP data to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG as contained in document 4-1.

4.2 The Meeting noted that such a task might be resource intensive and thus proper preparation and participation needs to be ensured. Also any duplication needs to be avoided and coherence ensured with other ongoing marine data initiatives (e.g. MSFD, Marine Knowledge network).

4.3 The Meeting took note that some financing might be available from the PartiSEApate projects for setting up a data group.

4.4 The Meeting welcome the offer by the HELCOM Secretariat that if such a group would be established the first meeting of the data group could be hosted in Helsinki, Finland, during October 2014.

4.5 The Meeting clarified the nomination of the experts for the data group should be done by the Contracting Parties/Member States.

4.6 The Meeting decided to suggest to HELCOM Heads of Delegation and VASAB CSPD/BSR the adoption of the establishment of a data group.

Agenda Item 5 Practical application of the Ecosystem Approach in MSP

Documents: 5-1, 5-2

5.1 The Meeting took note of the document on the ecosystem-based approach and MSP further elaborated under the lead of Finland taking into account comments by Germany, Sweden and WWF provided during spring 2014 (document 5-1).

5.2 The Meeting recalled that the content of the previous version of the document was presented to the 16th Meeting of the HELCOM Nature and Biodiversity Group (HABITAT) in May 2014 by the lead-country Finland and that HABITAT 16-2014 was of the opinion that it is essential for HABITAT to have the possibility to provide comments to the document to ensure that nature conservation aspects will be taken into account in the document. The Meeting took note of the comments to document 5-1 provided by the HELCOM HABITAT contacts (document 5-2).

5.3 The Meeting took note of the comments by the European Commission on document 5-1 which highlighted that MSP is a neutral process taking into account Ecosystem Approach, by Russia that SEA is an EU process and not applied in Russia and by Poland that the Russian concern could be addressed with a footnote.

5.4 The Meeting noted that the majority of participants were ready to approve the document and move on to the development of "Guidelines on the Application of an Ecosystem Approach in

Transnationally Coherent MSP” which are to be adopted by 2015 and applied by 2018 according to the Regional Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2013-2020.

5.5 The Meeting took note that Poland and Germany still have some editorial comments to the document.

5.6 The Meeting noted however that the European Commission cannot endorse the document as it reads now.

5.7 The Meeting agreed to the following process to accept the document as a support paper for the development of the Guidelines taking into account that comments from HELCOM HABITAT (document 5-2) will have a similar value as a starting point:

- The Working Group will do the acceptance as a support paper for the development of the Guidelines in an online meeting to be held on 4 July 2014 in the afternoon,
- The European Commission is requested to provide proposals by 23 June 2014 to the HELCOM Secretariat (laura.meski@helcom.fi),
- Poland and Germany will provide editorial comments by 23 June 2014 to the HELCOM Secretariat (laura.meski@helcom.fi),
- The HELCOM Secretariat will provide a compilation of comments for the online meeting by Wednesday 25 June 2014.

5.8 The Meeting agreed to organize a workshop on the ecosystem-based approach in MSP to start up the work on drafting the Guidelines on the application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP during week 51 (15-16 or 18-19 December 2014) in Helsinki, Finland.

5.9 The Meeting thanked the VASAB Secretariat for hosting the Meeting and to the Ministry for Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia for providing the facilities.

Agenda Item 6 **Future work and meetings**

Documents: None

6.1 The Meeting decided to arrange its next meeting (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 10-2014) in Helsinki, Finland, in the last week of January 2015.

6.2 The Meeting decided that the focus of the next meeting should be on preparing the Guidelines as agreed within the Regional Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2013-2020.

Agenda Item 7 **Any other business**

Documents: 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-4-Add

7.1 The Meeting updated the List of Contact Addresses of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG (document 7-1). The updated list of nominated experts for HELCOM-VASAB MSP is contained in **Annex 2**.

Agenda Item 8 **Outcome of the Meeting**

Documents: 8-1

8.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting as contained in document 8-1.

8.2 The final Outcome of the Meeting has been finalized by the Secretariats of HELCOM and VASAB in consultation with the Co-chairs and made available in the new [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#) as well as on the [VASAB website](#), together with meeting documents and the presentations considered during the Meeting.

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