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Background

HELCOM and VASAB are co-coordinators of Horizontal Action (HA) Spatial Planning of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). The joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group acts as the steering committee for the HA Spatial Planning concerning MSP issues. Both Secretariats assist the WG in this role, by e.g. keeping the group informed of activities related to the (EUSBSR) and HA Spatial Planning (such as funding opportunities and meetings) and representing the HA in various meetings and processes as needed.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

Developments and activities related to the EUSBSR and HA Spatial Planning

March 2019

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EU activities concerning macro-regional strategies

EC has initiated the [Revision process of the EUSBSR Action Plan](#) in order to provide a relevant update before the new programming period 2021-2027 starts. Revision will consider achievements and challenges for both thematic and governance issues, the relevance of Strategy's objectives, sub-objectives and targets, as well as set the future tasks. The revision is expected to be more coherent with other macro-regional strategies, EU policy and funding priorities. The timeline for the revision is set quite ambitious with goal to finalize the process by the end of 2019 / beginning of 2020. In this regard the external expert (COWI) has been hired by EC to prepare the thematic report of the main issues of the Strategy and its Action Plan by the end of April 2019, as well as recommendations about the governance structure (including the scope of thematic areas of the EUSBSR) by autumn 2019 (*see detailed plan in Annex of this report*).

EUSBSR thematic coordinators is expected to have an important role in revision and they are invited to provide the proposals for respective thematic descriptions by the mid-2019. Taking into account that majority of the strategic targets are set with timeline by 2020/2021, strategic goals within thematic areas could be reconsidered.

The **overall goal** of the HA "Spatial Planning" is to achieve territorial cohesion perspective in the BSR by 2030.

The **strategic goal** of the HA "Spatial Planning" is to draw up and apply transboundary, ecosystem based maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region by 2020/2021. Current work on follow-up of the regional MSP principles, guidelines and Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap within Pan Baltic Scope project can be valuable and timely input to the EUSBSR update process, by providing initial proposals for future tasks in macro-regional MSP cooperation.

Follow-up on funding activities

[Interreg BSR Programme – the 2nd Call for the project platforms](#) was open from 2nd October 2018 till 31 January 2019 to combine projects for more impact, more intensive use, better durability and transferability of the projects' outcomes.

VASAB Secretariat together with Maritime Institute in Gdańsk (MIG, PL), Aalborg University (DK), Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM, SE), HELCOM, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV), s.Pro (DE), Scientific and Research Institute of MSP Ermak NorthWest (RU) prepared a platform project application "**Strengthening the capacity of MSP stakeholders and decision makers (Capacity4MSP)**".

Within the Interreg BSR Programme **the 1st Call for the extension stage projects** was open from 2nd October 2018 till 31 January 2019. There is no indication if any MSP-related project extension was submitted.

[Interreg Central Baltic Programme \(EE, LV, SE, FI, Åland\)](#) – the **4th Call** was open from 15 October till 16 November 2018. The 4th call is targeted only to the opened Specific Objectives (SO 1.1., SO 1.3., SO 2.1 (*sustainable tourist attractions*), SO 3.1 (*transport flows of people and goods*), SO 4.1). The Steering Committee will make the decision on 4th Call projects in March 2019.

[Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 \(DE, DK, LT, PL, SE\)](#) - **6th Call** was opened between 1 October - 18 December 2018 for the Specific Objectives: 2.2 (*green technologies*), 3.1 (*sustainability of transport services*), 4.1 (*skilled labour force in blue & green economy sectors*) and 5.1 (*cooperation capacity*). The Monitoring Committee's decision on the approval of projects submitted under the 6th call for proposals is expected in April 2019.

[Interreg Europe](#) – **4th Call** for proposals for interregional cooperation projects was open between 7 May - 22 June 2018 for all thematic priorities and all remaining ERDF funding (~74 mil EUR). The strategic and operational quality assessment will be carried out by January 2019; the decisions of Monitoring Committee will be announced in March 2019.

EUSBSR Seed Money

Seed money is EU funding to prepare projects that contribute to one of the priority areas or horizontal actions of the EUSBSR. The Seed money gives an opportunity to draft a project plan that can be further developed into an application to any of the EU or national funding sources.

The next – 2nd Seed Money Call is expected to be open in autumn 2019, after the revision of EUSSBR Action Plan to ensure better alignment of funding and more successful connection with next financial perspective 2021-2027. Taking into account the fact that most of the Interreg funds have been committed and to avoid the situation that seed money projects develop plans without any real funding options, there was agreement to postpone the 2nd call to the latest possible time (end of 2019). In this case seed money would work also as “bridging funding” between the funding periods.

Progress of ongoing Flagship projects of MSP relevance:

Title	Funding & Duration	Latest activities
<p>PanBaltic SCOPE http://www.panbalticscope.eu/</p> <p><i>Flagship status granted by EUSBSR NC meeting on 26 September 2018.</i></p> <p>Flagship lead: Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, SE 12 partners, 3 associated organisations,</p>	<p>DG MARE (Call EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.6.)</p> <p>2 years [Jan2018-Dec2019]</p>	<p>Latest activities: 5th Planning forum took place on 12 Feb 2019 in Hamburg. Along the issues related to the progress of the project informing on each countries’ most pressing issues and developments in each activity the particular attention was paid to the: Cumulative Impacts; Lessons Learned and Cross border fisheries with the focus on three main aspects – data, stakeholders and solutions. Latvia, Finland, Åland, Sweden, Denmark and Poland presented their cases.</p> <p>Also, the project was presented at the MSP in the Baltic Sea Region stand during the Connecting Seas conference on 13-14 November in Hamburg.</p> <p>Next project event: Cross border meeting: Better maritime planning – towards a shared future, together on 26-27 March in Umea, Sweden; MSP in the Baltic Sea Region stand including project representation at EMD on 16-17 May in Lisbon; 6th Planning Forum on 27-28 May in Tallinn; 3rd Baltic MSP Forum on 20-21 November in Riga.</p> <p>Next project partner meeting: 27-28 May in Tallinn.</p> <p>Planned deliverables. Coordination of the final deliverables, participation in the events and the final conference of the project / 3rd Baltic MSP Forum are in progress.</p> <p>The outcomes of the workshops and the event calendar are available on the project website www.panbalticscope.eu.</p>
<p>Baltic LINes - Coherent Linear Infrastructures in Baltic Maritime Spatial Plans www.balticlines.eu</p> <p>Letter of Commitment issued by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG on 30 January 2015 VASAB Secretariat = Partner (external communication)</p> <p>Flagship lead: Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, DE 14 partners, 8 associated organisations</p>	<p>Interreg BSR Programme 2014-2020</p> <p>3 years [Mar2016-Mar2019]</p> <p>Project is prolonged for 2 months until 30th April 2019</p>	<p>Final project event: “Connecting Seas”- NorthSEE – Baltic LINes joint MSP conference, 13-14 February 2019, Hamburg, Germany</p> <p>Planned deliverables: Report on energy scenarios, recommendations for transnationally coherent planning solutions and transboundary consultations for linear infrastructures, printed brochure “Baltic LINes project findings”.</p> <p>Deliverables are available for download: https://vasab.org/project/balticlines/project-outputs/</p>

Progress of other ongoing projects of MSP relevance:

Title	Role of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG	Funding & Duration	Latest activities
<p>Plan4Blue Maritime Spatial Planning for Sustainable Blue Economies http://www.syke.fi/projects/plan4blue</p> <p>Project lead: The Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), 2 partners from Research institutions, 3 partners from regional organizations and associated with 4 public authorities</p>	<p>Letter of Support issued by H-V MSP WG on 25 Feb 2016</p>	<p>INTERREG Central Baltic Programme; 2nd Call</p> <p>3 years [Oct2016-Dec2019]</p>	<p>Projects 3rd phase “MSP alternatives”: Workshop 4 “Maritime spatial planning alternatives / January 2019, Estonia, Project meeting / March 2019 (Estonia)</p> <p>Available deliverables: https://goo.gl/dMgpdJ</p>

<p>Baltic RIM Integrated maritime cultural heritage management in the BSR https://www.submariner-network.eu/projects/balticrim</p> <p>Project lead: Submariner Network 6 partners from Research institutions, one partner from public authority, 2 partners from private consulting and 17 associated organizations, one associated business park</p>	<p>Letter of Support issued by H-V MSP WG on 1 Jun 2016</p>	<p>Interreg BSR Programme 2014-2020, 2nd Call</p> <p>3 years [Oct 2017 - Oct 2020]</p>	<p>Recent activities: 3rd partner meeting 5-6 Feb 2019, Kaliningrad. Currently elaboration on 5 test cases: https://www.submariner-network.eu/projects/balticrim</p> <p>Project will identify potential MCH challenges for MSP, as well as elaborate on future scenarios (undiscovered heritage, climate change, MCH and Blue Growth etc.)</p> <p>Next project meeting: Sept 2019, Klaipeda (LT). <i>Project will develop commonly agreed spatial planning perspectives for maritime cultural heritage and gain knowledge for the integration of MCH into cross-sectoral planning processes.</i></p>
<p>BONUS BASMATI Baltic Sea Maritime Spatial Planning for Sustainable Ecosystem Services https://bonusbasmati.eu/</p> <p>Project lead: Aalborg University (DK) 7 partners from Research institutions</p>	<p><i>Follow project activities</i></p>	<p>BONUS Programme 2010-2017</p> <p>3 years [Jul2017-Jun2020]</p>	<p>Recent and upcoming activities: 24th-25th January 2019 WP-meeting in Helsinki regarding the Baltic Explorer. The development of the Baltic Explorer is in progress, and it will allow simultaneously to access the shared platform from different devices. Baltic Explorer will probably also be tested within a Pan Baltic Scope setting in a nearby future.</p> <p>14th March 2019 WP-meeting in Copenhagen regarding a further conceptualisation and operationalisation of an ecosystem based framework for assessment in planning processes.</p> <p>Next project partner meeting 8.-10 May 2019 Turku - focus on the evaluation of the ongoing national and international MSP initiatives, and on the methods and tools related to monitoring and evaluation of maritime spatial plans. As part of the partner meeting there will be PhD course on MSP processes in Baltic Sea countries on 6.-8. May 2019: https://bonusbasmati.eu/event/phd-course-on-msp/</p> <p>Planned deliverables: Several publications are in the pipeline, and the available deliverables so far can be found her: https://bonusbasmati.eu/results-material/deliverables/</p>
<p>SEAPLANSPACE – Marine spatial planning instruments for sustainable marine governance https://seaplanspace.ug.edu.pl/</p> <p>Project lead: University of Gdansk (PL) 7 partners from Research institutions and 4 associated partners from public authorities.</p>	<p>Letter of Support issued by VASAB Secretariat on 28 Jun 2017</p>	<p>Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 4th Call</p> <p>3 years [Jan2018-Dec2020]</p>	<p>Recent activities: <i>Kick-off Meeting was in Gdańsk (Poland) on 16-17 March 2018. So far up to 5 partner meetings have been organized in Gdańsk and Sopot. Stakeholder event “Marine spatial planning instruments for sustainable marine governance” was organized on 18 Oct 2019 in Gdansk. The event consisted of three sessions: Challenges of the MSP, Marine governance instruments and The SEAPLANSPACE Training.</i></p> <p>Planned deliverables: current work on the SEAPLANSPACE Manuals. The curricula has been prepared and agreed with all our partners from 5 countries, the list of speakers has been drafted, promotional activities are being performed and the registration for the SEAPLANSPACE Workshops will be launched soon. Some progress is also being made in the field of preparing the SEAPLANSPACE Portal.</p>
<p>Land-Sea Act Land-sea interaction advancing Blue Growth in the Baltic Sea coastal areas https://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/projects/land-sea-act-170.html</p>	<p>Letter of Support issued by VASAB Secretariat on 6 Apr 2018</p>	<p>Interreg BSR Programme 2014-2020, 3rd Call</p> <p>2,5 years [Jan 2019 - Jun 2021]</p>	<p>Recent activities: Project kick-off event on 12-13 March 2019, Riga. <i>Project will explore better governance practices to balance local communities’ and small scale businesses’ interests with large scale development and investment interests in maritime spatial planning. The main result will be a multi-level</i></p>

<p>Project lead: Latvia's Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development 3 partners from Research institutions, 7 partners from public authorities</p>			<p><i>governance agenda on blue growth and spatial planning in the BSR. The project also provides various reports and guiding documents for stakeholders of transnational organisations, national authorities, municipalities, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders.</i></p>
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Progress of Interreg BSR Programme 4th priority (technical assistance) projects

Title	Role of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG	Funding & Duration	Latest activities
<p>HASPS 3 Horizontal Action "Spatial Planning" Support 3</p> <p>Project lead: VASAB Secretariat Project partner: HELCOM Secretariat</p>	<p>VASAB & HELCOM Secretariats – project partners</p>	<p>Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020</p> <p>2 years [June2018-Sept2020]</p>	<p><i>HASPS3 aims to support objectives assigned in the HA "Spatial Planning" of the EUSBSR, co-led by HELCOM and VASAB and it builds on the coordination activities started within the previous HASPS (2015/2016) and HASPS 2 (2016/2018). Particularly the HASPS 3 will focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>Strengthening the coordination between the two its Steering groups (VASAB CSPD/BSR and the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG) and reporting on latest updates and activities related to EUSBSR;</i> •<i>Assistance in setting the agenda and ensuring the outputs of the MSP Data group (Next BSR MSP Data group meeting in 12-13 Nov 2018, Riga).</i> •<i>Enhancing outreach and integration of HA "Spatial Planning" to other regional and European activities and stakeholders.</i> •<i>Following-up the implementation of the current projects and Flagships, their outputs and interact with the project partners.</i>
<p>Let`s Communicate! https://vasab.org/project/lets-communicate/ Let`s Communicate the EUSBSR for the benefit of the region</p> <p><i>Continuation of the previous project</i></p> <p>Project lead: Centrum Balticum Foundation 6 partner organizations</p>	<p>VASAB Secretariat – project partner</p>	<p>Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020</p> <p>2,5 years [May 2019 – Sep 2021]</p>	<p>Recent activities: the next phase of the project has been approved on 31 January 2019. Currently it is in its contracting phase.</p> <p>Next project event: Project will not have its own events, it will use events organised by others as the platform for communication and trainings (e.g., 10th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR on 12-13 June in Gdansk, Poland).</p> <p>Next project partner meeting: during the 10th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR on 12-13 June in Gdansk, Poland.</p> <p>Planned deliverables: the project collaboration maintains and further develops the current communication channels and continues to create coordinated EUSBSR communications. It provides support to the key stakeholders and ensures the visibility of the Strategy. Awareness raising of EUSBSR in Norway is continued. EUSBSR communications is considered from a larger macro-regional point of view, and further cooperation with other macro-regional strategies is sought. Daily communication via social media channels, newsletters, toll-box development, articles/publications and blogs are the main activities of the project.</p>

Events related to EUSBSR

The next – *10th Annual EUSBSR Forum* will be held on 12-13 June 2019 in Gdansk (Poland) with main focus on circular and sharing economy as response to the demographic changes in the BSR and how these challenges influence such areas as:

- Mobility, labour market;
- Health care and social security systems,
- Social structure, family policy and cultural patterns,
- Production and consumption models
- Use of natural (non-renewable) resources,
- Mature and emerging markets and business sectors.

EUSBSR HAC/PAC Coordination meeting will be on 10-11 April 2019 in Lubeck (DE), as the 5th of the 6 thematic modules within the Interreg BSR Programme 2014-2020 project "EUSBSR Support" carried out by HA Capacity. Previous modules focused on funding alignment and future options beyond 2020, the evaluation and monitoring of HAC&PAC, the working formats of HAC&PAC, the upcoming revision process of the EUSBSR Action Plan. The next module will focus on EUSBSR Implementation practice and operational formats.

AOB

A new open-access book has been published - "**MSP - Past, Present, Future**", edited by Jacek Zaucha and Kira Gee. The book is a comprehensive overview of MSP identifying several key questions that are emerging from current MSP experience. How can MSP deal with a complex and dynamic environment such as the sea? How can MSP be embedded in multiple levels of governance across regional and national borders – and how far does the environment benefit from this new approach? Situated at the intersection between theory and practice, the book draws together several strands of interdisciplinary research, reflecting on the history of MSP as well as examining current practice and looking towards the future. The book available here: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-98696-8>.

* Information prepared with support of the Interreg BSR Programme project "Horizontal Action "Spatial Planning" Support 3" (HASPS3).



Annex to the report: “Developments and activities related to the EUSBSR and HA Spatial Planning”

Commission’s note on a roadmap for the revision of the EUSBSR

There is a need to revise the EUSBSR Action Plan in order to have a relevant up-to-date document in place when the ESIF-programming for the 2021 – 2027 period starts. Furthermore, many of the targets for the objectives and sub-objectives are set for 2020. The last up-date of the EUSBSR Action Plan was in 2014/2015 since then updates of policy areas have been made in 2017.

A revision of the EUSBSR Action Plan should cover a review of the EUSBSR Action Plan itself and an update of the work programmes of the PAs/HAs. In addition it should cover both thematic and governance issues.

Working approach

Thematic

With regard to thematic issues, there are three areas, which need to be covered. They are:

- Discussion on whether the objectives and sub-objectives of the strategy still are relevant or if they should be changed
- A revision of the target indicators for the sub-objectives, which are mostly related to 2020 and
- A discussion on the continued relevance and thematic focus of the policy areas and horizontal actions in light of the discussions of the objectives and sub-objectives

The objectives and sub-objectives of the strategy define what issues of macro-regional relevance we want to address with the EUSBSR. A discussion on the objectives and sub-objectives of the EUSBSR will therefore be a discussion on what we want to focus on. Relevant questions in this connection is what are the most important and macro-regional challenges in the Baltic Sea Region, how can new and emerging needs and priorities like, for example, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) be integrated.

A revision of the target indicators for the sub-objectives, which are mostly related to 2020 is necessary.

A discussion on the continued relevance and thematic focus of the policy areas and horizontal actions in light of the discussions of the objectives and sub-objectives. Relevant questions are how to align the PAs/HAs to the objectives and sub-objectives of the EUSBSR, EU priorities and the relationship to other initiatives. What is the macro-regional added value? How alignment and macro-regional added value can be strengthened within a future framework.

Governance

There should also be a review of organisational and governance issues of the EUSBSR. This covers a range of issues including the functioning of the PAs/HAs, how PAs/HAs should intervene, measuring performance of the PAs/HAs and funding.

“The report on MRS and Cohesion Policy”² points to several factors, which influence how PAs and HAs are functioning so called barriers and drivers. Are there ways to remove barriers and enhance drivers within the framework of the EUSBSR. One key recommendation the report on MRS and Cohesion Policy makes is with regard to indicators on PA and HA level, how this can be incorporated into revised action plan.

Funding. How well aligned are PAs/HAs to national funding or to mainstream ERDF/CF/ESF programmes.

² ‘Macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy’ – November 2017:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/mrs_links_cohesion_policy.pdf

Communication and cross-strategy cooperation. Are there possibilities to re-enforce communication and increase cross-strategy cooperation and coherence with other MRS.

Preliminary roadmap for the update of the EUSBSR Action Plan:

Date	Progress step
11.12.18	NC meeting discussion on process and scope of update
12.12.18	Module 4 Revision and monitoring
Jan 2019	Start of consultants work
Jan - March	Focus on thematic issues
March 2019	Input paper on thematic focus (consultant to Commission)
16 th of April 2019	NCs discuss on the future scope of EUSBSR
May 2019	Agreement on the future scope of EUSBSR (NCs)
May 2019	Request to PACs/HACS to submit revision on their own policy area chapters of the Action Plan
March – June (May)	Focus on governance issues.
May 2019	Input paper on governance (consultant to Commission)
June 2019	Conclusions on governance issues (NCs)
16.09.2019	Proposals for revision are submitted to DG Regio by PACs/HACS
14.10.2019	Send draft updated EUSBSR Action plan to NCs for comments
28.10.2019	Receive comments from NCs
02.12.19	Send draft updated EUSBSR action plan as European Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) to DG REGIO hierarchy
06.01.2020	Start of interservice consultations (ISC) in Commission
27.01.2020	End of Interservice consultations
04.02.2020	Respond to comments (from ISC), proof reading, transmission
02.20 (tbc)	High level group meeting

The general idea/plan is to use the spring to discuss the revision and the summer and autumn to revise the action plan. We plan to have the revised action plan as a staff working document of the Commission. This requires the revised to Action Plan to be sent on interservice consultations (ISC) and there are different procedures to be followed internally in DG Regio and the Commission.

The Commission has hired a consultant (Ms. Bettina Rafaelsen, COWI) to help the Commission with the review. The assistance from the external expert includes an input paper covering the thematic focus of the EUSBSR, input paper on governance and facilitating workshops with key stakeholders of the EUSBSR.