



**Baltic Sea Region
MSP Data Expert Sub-Group
13th meeting**

DECISIONS

**Venue: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia
(Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija)**

General:

1. 3rd Baltic MSP Forum together with the 4th MSP Global forum and Pan Baltic Scope Final Conference took place on November 19-21, 2019 in Riga. By the end of 2019 Pan Baltic Scope project has ended. Outcomes of the forum and the project are available at the Pan Baltic Scope [webpage](#).
2. HASPS 3 prolongation is foreseen and the project would continue until May 2021. Prolongation documentation has to be prepared until March 27th.
3. HELCOM and VASAB participated in the EU MSP Expert group meeting in Riga on November 18-19 as well as will participate in the upcoming meeting back-to-back to European Maritime Days in Cork on May, 2020.
4. HELCOM is taking the lead of the BASEMAPS related activities within the extension of Baltic LINES and the project platform Capacity4MSP - elaborating a BASEMAPS (BALTic SEa MAP Service) [userguide](#) and promoting BASEMAPS in BSR and beyond. In Pan Baltic Scope project, [detailed instructions for admin panel](#) were made available. A [video](#) was also produced to explain BASEMAPS. A workshop to present BASEMAPS in upcoming INSPIRE conference "Bringing sustainability and digitalization together" in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in May.
5. HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan update is taking place and should be finalized until 2021, a lot of work in different groups.
6. A new project was launched and will support HELCOM to develop the [Map and Data Service](#). The project will help to implement special widgets to explore shipping data as well as to increase the performance of the Map and Data Service.
7. There is a regional [calendar of MSP related events](#) and processes in BSR available at VASAB webpage. Calendar is updated twice a year before HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meetings. If there are any upcoming events to be added to the calendar, information should be sent to VASAB Secretariat (info@vasab.org).
8. There is a new contact point Kristina Veidemane for Baltic Sea Region within EU MSP Platform. She has been approaching national MSP Focal points to discuss what kind of assistance and support would be needed. For example, Lithuania has shown an interest to receive support in preparing national data sets for BASEMAPS, possibly a dedicated workshop could be organized.
9. MSP Data Experts Sub-group (hereafter - Data Group) members introduced with latest developments concerning the data issues ("tour de table"):
 - a. **Denmark:** The work on 1st draft is still ongoing, it might be possible to present it to the government soon. Parallel legally binding digital system, good progress. Should be able to show something next meeting. Hearing planned for summer, commenting will be fully digital. A meeting in Rostock planned to discuss international MSDI. Denmark is

MSDI lead for Baltic and North Sea, therefore are a 3 day-long hackathon in Norway is being planned. Intent is to show the opportunities to work with marine data.

The system to show the digital binding plan will also include general, not only area specific rules. When clicked on certain area, all the zoning with descriptions will be available. There will always be disclaimers to be sure whether the layer is legally binding or not. In addition, historic information and versions of the development of the plan as well as comments will be available to offer the opportunity follow the progress of the plan.

- b. **Estonia:** Main solution should be ready until the end of week. Next week disclosure on national level should be started. National process started prior the international (due to translations). International consultations should start at the end of March the latest. When the transboundary consultation will be started all countries will receive materials, commenting phase will last for 9 weeks. April-May for transboundary consultation, possible meeting or webinar could be organized. Government has decided to start three applications of wind parks are started. One is close to Saaremaa Island and another - in Gulf of Riga where mussel farms and wind turbines are planned to co-exist. It is intended to build floating vertical turbines planned.
- c. **Finland:** MSP is currently finalized, public consultation will take place from mid-May to mid-June. International meeting is planned for 20th of May in Helsinki. The Finish MSP will be general, showing potential, not binding. Some data, e.g. nature protected areas are only depicted in thematic plans. Marine portal is currently under development, it is planned to publish it on April, MSP will be linked to the marine portal.
- d. **Germany:** pre-drafts have been developed and are now in informal national consultation. There are three different versions of one joint map for North and Baltic seas, however there are not too much differences in 3 versions for Baltic Sea. Shipping got some more importance, a lot designated areas for wind energy. Document and maps will be translated and consulted within MSP community. That will be an informal process, before official ESPOO procedure and might start in March. A webinar is planned on 27th of April (tbc). So far a bilateral meeting with Polish colleagues has taken place. The three concepts also available [online](#). To support MSP process new data has been collected for the MSP and we have gained new knowledge on gathering and publishing the data. This experience could be used to update input data links in BASEMAPS.
- e. **Lithuania:**
- f. **Latvia:** Latvian MSP web map service has been published on the spatial development planning information system, [TAPIS](#), so now it is available for wider public and land use plans and MSP are available on the same map. According the legislation, local planners are assigned to plan to 2 km in the sea. Currently an administrative territorial reform is taking place and is intended to reduce from 17 local coastal municipalities to 9 with more capacity and knowledge for planning and managing the coastal waters.
- g. **Poland:** Current plan available on [data portal](#). No changes since the previous meetings, in next weeks ESPOO procedure will start and last for at least 7 weeks. At this point, all Polish ports that should have a MSP, have started the elaboration. Work on Vistula

lagoon plan hasn't started yet. The project of developing Spatial Information System should be finalized in July.

- h. **Russia:** work on Russian MSP Roadmap as part of Capacity4MSP project has started. There are two partners from Russia in the project: Scientific and Research Institute of Maritime Spatial Planning Ermak NorthWest Limited liability company and Russian State Hydrometeorological University. University will provide environmental data, but ERMAK – economic data. Two model pilot plans will be elaborated- Gulf of Finland and South-East Baltic. The closest event is will be a dedicated session in forum “Baltic Sea Day 2020” on 19-20 March, in St. Petersburg.
 - i. **Sweden:** Swedish MSP proposal has been handed to the Swedish Government shortly before Christmas, response is awaited and most likely, a meeting will be planned in the upcoming weeks. In December, a new webmap published, including the most important input data. It uses ArcGIS online, all the data is store in the cloud and it is working well, MSP output data is available [publicly](#). One of the features of the webmap - if you click on sea uses, whole description is available. Sweden`s MSP is now available on BASEMAPS.
10. Mr. Didzis Ustups, Latvian expert in fisheries presented approach for mapping fish habitats in the Latvian MSP process, Baltic Scope and Pan Baltic Scope projects. Data group was introduced with various data sources that could be used for mapping aggregated fisheries data. Baltic Scope and Pan Baltic Scope aimed to harmonize the approach to map essential fish habitats as the approaches vary significantly among countries. It is possible to map – commercial fish species, species diversity, invasive species and harbours. Differences in the maps – transboundary information, periods of time, gear type, ports, fish habitats. Very different is the way to depict the data and to map the areas, such as spawning areas. There are two types of data that could be used for mapping – Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and logbook data. VMS is more accurate, but for shorter period and harder to use, where logbook data is less accurate and harder to compare between countries, but for a longer time span. In the Pan Baltic Scope project mapping of commercially most important fish species (cod, herring, sprat, European flounder and Baltic flounder, perch and pikeperch) was done and aggregated into one map that was also used to cumulative impacts assessment. The map will be made available in HELCOM Map and Data service by end of March due to prolonged national consultation/review process.
11. Mr. Didzis Ustups also highlighted multiple fisheries studies have been done under [ICES](#) umbrella, ICES also prepares annual fisheries overviews and proposals for next years quota. Furthermore data from ICES surveys are available on [DATRAS](#) database which is publicly available.
12. Project manager Ms. Inga Jekabsons introduced the [Capacity4MSP project platform](#) – it`s partnership, overall aims and activities of the project platform. First partner meeting took place on November 21-22 in Riga. Among the planned outcomes are policy pointers for MSP after 2021, multiple practical support mechanisms, including user guide and visualization material of BASEMAPS (BALtic SEa MAP Service). Multiple stakeholder meetings and cross-sectoral workshops as well as continuation of Planners` Forum are planned.

Outcomes:

13. HELCOM has created usernames and passwords for BASEMAPS admin panel for all MSP Data Focal Points, all countries now have access to the admin panel.
14. BASEMAPS for output data:
 - a. Validation tool for MSP output data on BASEMAPS has been finalized based on the rules agreed on the previous Data group meeting.
 - b. Two options to upload plan areas. If just the plan area needs to be updated, the same "PlanID" should be kept and the geometry will remain the same. If a new plan area or other geometry should be added – "PlanID" has to be changed. This allows to link "Plan Area" with the "Planned Sea Uses". It also allows to depict multiple processes in one area. If there are multiple plans with different areas for one country, each plan will have a different "PlanID" and different data packages. If there is a need to amend a plan, all the data layers have to be uploaded once more. It is agreed, on BASEMAPS only adopted plans are shown.
 - c. Marie has uploaded the Swedish MSP to BASEMAPS, uploading process it worked well and fast, validation tool is working and is easily available on BASEMAPS. The buffers for lines and dots agreed in previous meeting have been implemented and are working fine.
 - d. It is still to be decided how much the data can be zoomed in. The scales are different for different countries, therefore there is the disclaimer added that BASEMAPS contains visualizations of national MSP. The easiest way is to indicate the minimal scale of viewing in PlanArea. Proposal is to have the smallest scale that there is in the plans (1:10000?).
15. Results of discussion on fisheries data to be reported to 20th HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group:
 - a. National MSP are using fisheries data aggregated by national fisheries institutes as planning evidence for fishing activities in space as well as economic value. The aggregation of these national data are in competence of ICES that have specific working group on requirements and provide these generalized data on BSR level.
 - b. The main interest is to aggregate fisheries activity data in order to see in one map all the fishing activities done by other countries within their territory. This kind of data is available on national level -> information about spatial extent of activity of national fishermen within whole Baltic Sea. The discussion on how to aggregate these data for the whole BSR could be initiated in HELCOM FISH.
 - c. Countries are also interested in data produced jointly by Pan Baltic Scope project and HELCOM on essential fish habitats. This must be further discussed in HELCOM State & Conservation, as there were some reservations of Contracting Parties for publishing it on HELCOM Maps & Data Service.
16. HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG has agreed on their Work Plan for 2020-2021 that includes a dedicated section to information and data for MSP containing 3 tasks Data group should contribute to. It includes a task to develop a guide for regularly updated regional MSP data that also enhances the work with input data. It is, however, kept quite general being aware of the limited resources to carry out the task and need to concentrate on national MSP processes. The

main task of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG in upcoming years will be to agree on the Roadmap and common goals for MSP after 2020.

17. When logging on the BASEMAPS as admin there is access to summary of the input data services available. To ensure the opportunity check quality of data a validation tool was introduced to check the services whether they are working or not. When the validation tool is running, it checks all the services available on BASEMAPS that is quite time consuming and not user friendly. Validation tools for input and output data differ, it is not clear for users how the validator is working and the errors are not explained when using the input data validator. The input data validator on BASEMAPS is based on the OGC standards for WMS and WFS. It is suggested to apply validator only to the country that is adding new services to BASEMAPS.
18. Feedback on usability is very important to improve BASEMAPS. Countries are invited to test BASEMAPS and provide feedback to HELCOM. For more convenient providing of feedback, Jakub has created [a dedicated forum](#). Also if countries need assistance in using BASEMAPS, Florent and Andžej are to be contacted for support.
19. A discussion on future work with input data took place and various issues were raised. Data group members are concerned that they will be able to upload input data on BASEMAPS as many are not GIS experts and are not the holders of the input data. If a certain service does not work on BASEMAPS, it cannot be requested to the data holder to change the data just for BASEMAPS. Even with the step-by-step user guide of BASEMAPS developed by HELCOM, concerns remain.
20. Comparing with the summary of input data services that were summarized in an excel table during elaborating the first Data group report, the services should be available as WMS or ArcGIS server rest in order to be displayed in BASEMAPS. WFS or any other data delivery type (e.g. FTP) can be added but will not be visualized on map. In addition, comparing the very detailed validation tool of output data, validator of input data does not provide any explanation of errors. The validator only checks if the added service returns a response (URL is valid). It is repeatedly emphasized that there is a lack of resources to update the collected data at this point.
21. Nevertheless using BASEMAPS as the platform to gather input data was welcomed by most of the countries, as the added value of available regional MSP platform was recognized. There are still a lot of issues that cannot be solved in the nearest future nor by MSP focal points, neither by HELCOM secretariat without a permanent funding. However, certain tasks have been identified for this year and future.

Tasks and next steps:

22. Kristīne will present the discussion on fisheries data from this meeting to 20th HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group on 1th-2th April.
23. In the roadmap for further work with MSP input data using BASEMAPS (hereafter – the Roadmap) the next steps towards more user friendly BASEMAPS have been identified for short-term (during 2020) and long-term tasks.
24. Identified short-term tasks for the improvements on usability of admin panel:
 - a. Technical improvements agreed in 13th Meeting of the BSR MSP Data ESG to be done (*responsible – HELCOM, timeframe – until 31st of May 2020*)

- Add more information on the input data service validation criteria when adding a new service;
 - Adding minimum zoom scale to be 1:10 000 due to generalized data on output data side;
 - Input data validation service should be available only for the signed-in country;
 - Input data service summary should be available for selected country or all countries (implemented as drop down list).
- b. Check the usability and provide feedback in the designated forum (*Responsible - MSP data focal points, timeframe – until 31st of May, 2020*);
 - c. Assemble the comments from MSP data focal points to consider further usability improvements on BASEMAPS (*responsible – HELCOM, timeframe – until 1st of September*);
 - d. During the 14th Meeting of the BSR MSP Data ESG, a session to test adding and editing services could be organized with the participants of the ESG (*responsible - HELCOM & MSP data focal points, timeframe – 14th Data group meeting*).
25. Long-term tasks for BASEMAPS:
- a. harvest data from the INSPIRE data portal. This task would require significant work and could only be done within a project with proper resources;
 - b. Possibility to only have the national data displayed in the admin panel when a user is signed in;
 - c. Possibility to generate an excel table with the countries, layers and links of the available services.
26. The Roadmap will be sent to the Data group to be agreed via written procedure. Comments received will be integrated in the Roadmap, after that Roadmap will be resent to the Data group for approval (Liene & Kristīne & HELCOM)
27. Kristīne will present the Roadmap to 20th HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group on 1th-2th April.
28. HELCOM adds a description about the BASEMAPS to the section “about”. It should also include a link to the Data group`s work (HELCOM).

Future meetings:

29. Next meeting will take place in Helsinki on early September, 2020 (indicatively 3-4 of September).
30. Data group members are invited to attend the International Hydrographic Organization MSDI [meeting](#) in Rostock on February 23-24.
31. Data group members are invited to the environmental forum “Baltic Sea Day 2020” on 19-20 March, 2020 in St. Petersburg.