Baltic Sea Region
MSP Data Expert Sub-Group
14th meeting

DECISIONS

Online, 16-17 September 2020

General:

1. Capacity4MSP BASEMAPS workshop took place back-to-back with the 14th MSP Data Expert Sub-group (hereafter - Data group) meeting. BASEMAPS (Baltic WEB Map Service) development as well as its functionalities were presented and demonstrated; participants took the chance to provide feedback. Main aim of the workshop was to test adding new data sets to input data in BASEMAPS and the participants had a chance to test using the admin panel and receive support and assistance from HELCOM Secretariat. Outcomes and main conclusions of the workshop are summarized in Annex 1.

2. MSP Data Experts Sub-group (hereafter - Data Group) members introduced with the latest developments concerning the data issues ("tour de table"):

   a. **Denmark:** there is a little delay in the foreseen schedule; however, there is still an attempt to launch the consultation on November this year. Currently, a lot of focus is on testing the security of the legally binding system.

   b. **Estonia:** Stage 3 of the transboundary consultations about Estonian MSP main solution has started. The commenting phase is 9 weeks and the deadline to give comments is 18.11.2020. All the documents including the web map are available here. The transboundary consultation meeting was held on-line on 23 September 2020 from 13:00-16:00 EET (12:00-15:00 CET). If somebody would like to have map layers of Estonian MSP then contact Triin Lepland, triin.lepland@fin.ee. Nationally public hearings were held in August and a lot of comments have been added to the plan afterwards. There is an opposition from the local people of island Saaremaa about planning offshore wind areas as well as conflicts with trawling. Therefore the planned timeline will shift and right now it is uncertain how long it will be as some kind of agreement on these issues has to be reached.

   c. **Finland:** Finnish plan draft was available for the national and international consultation in the early summer (18t May – 17 June 2020), 87 statements and 54 general opinions were received. Aquaculture seems to be the most difficult issue; however, it has to be kept in mind that the Finnish maritime spatial plan is a strategic plan and markings in the plan are used to show the values of marine areas and the future potentials for certain activities; the plan is not legally binding. At the moment we are finalizing the plan draft and the MSP Portal. The aim is that regional councils will approve the MSP plan by the end of this year; the websites on maritime spatial planning is available in English.

   d. **Germany:** the draft of the maritime spatial plan and the drafts of the environmental reports for the German EEZ of the North Sea and Baltic Sea have been prepared taking into account the provide feedback during early consultations. Plan is provided

here in German and national consultation has started, translation will be provided in a later stage, if assistance is needed, Bettina and Olaf can provide help. International consultation is foreseen for October, November 2020.

e. **Lithuania:**

f. **Latvia:** no further work on MSP has been carried out since the adoption of the Latvian MSP, current focus is on the territorial reform and related land use planning issues.

g. **Poland:** is finalizing ESPOO procedure on the draft development of spatial plan for Polish sea areas in a scale 1 : 200 000. Documentation translated to English and German is available here. Collecting feedback about trans-boundary environmental impact assessment is finished. Now work on supplementing and clarifying plan proposals based on the responses from stakeholders during the consultation is carried out. It is planned that MSP proposal will be handed to Polish Government within the next few weeks. Spatial Information Portal for Maritime Administration (SIPAM) was launched in August. It's a hub for GIS data collected by Polish maritime administration. It contains only input-data, however output MSP data could be connected in SIPAM Geoportal through OGC web services. SIPAM data could be accessed through OGC web services or could be downloaded in Esri Shapefile format.

h. **Russia:** there are no updates to the Russian data collection information or data services for the past year. Russia is actively developing open data portals under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy of the Russian Federation now, but since there is no MSP in Russian legislation, the shared data do not currently include spatial data on the marine areas. The Roadmap for promoting MSP in Russia will include a block on data exchange formats adopted by the Baltic Sea countries and the need to develop services for MSP data. Also, although the developing of data services is not included in the tasks of the project Capacity4MSP, being implemented currently, we plan to organize workshop for data experts to discuss the prospects for creating national MSP data portal (or possibility to use existing service for MSP data) - who can hold it, what resources it will require. It may be possible to organize a BASEMAPS presentation. Now such a workshop is being discussed by project supporting organizations and experts.

i. **Sweden:** Sweden is currently planning ahead for the final version of the MSPs. The plans are currently being handled by the government and there are no changes in the data since our last meeting. WMS, WFS (+download zip) are available with English descriptions (at the bottom of the website) but not yet adapted to HELCOM-VASAB standards.

3. A new brochure of HA Spatial Planning activities has been prepared and printed.

4. HASPS 3 prolongation has been approved until June 2021, VASAB might prolong it until September 2021 (due to COVID-19).

5. HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan update is taking place and should be finalized until 2021, a lot of work is carried out in different groups. The update has reached the Create the Content and Renaissance phases in which contents and new actions for the updated BSAP are elaborated and proposed.

6. Joni informed that the essential fish habitats maps prepared in the Pan Baltic Scope project have been published on the HELCOM Map and Data Service (related HELCOM news article

about it). The outcome of the discussion on what fisheries data is needed in national MSP with the goal to identify common requirements for aggregated fisheries data has been presented to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20th Meeting.

7. Florent introduced the progress towards new Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2021-2027. This time there is no dedicated section for MSP data, however this topic is included in all other objectives:

    a. Implementation of MSPs builds knowledge base for the new MSP cycle (draft prepared by Germany and Russia);
    b. MSPs improve regional policy coherence (draft prepared by Latvia);
    c. MSPs contribute for achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the BSAP (draft prepared by Finland and Sweden);
    d. MSPs contribute to sustainable blue economy (draft prepared by WWF Sweden);
    e. Spatial planning increases climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience in the Baltic Sea Region (draft prepared by Sweden).

8. Joni introduced the EU MSP Technical Expert Group on Data, which he is co-chairing. It is working with following tasks:

    a. Work across sea basins to identify the needs in the area of MSP data for implementation;
    b. Produce guidelines (not mandatory) on necessary data, standards for MSP and links this activities with other relevant policies (MSFD, INPSIRE, COPERNICUS, EMODnet, etc);
    c. Work on standard parameters that allows MSP plans to be harmonized across sea basin regions and across EU, if possible in line with the INSPIRE Directive;
    d. Assist in the production of a European portal containing information on MSP plans.

    Topics a and b ("input data") are discussed in the Sub-group 1 and topics c and d ("output data") are discussed in the Sub-group 2.

    - The meeting took note that the work of the EU MSP TEG data sub-group 2 is relevant for the BSR Data group and aims at applying similar type of approach as in the HELCOM-VASAB guideline on MSP output data but in pan-European context.

9. Ms. Lise Schroeder introduced the outcomes of the BONUS Basmati project. Multiple approaches and tools to support MSP have been developed as part of the project and introduced to the Data group:

    a. Data harmonisation to facilitate planning across borders and scales;
    b. Baltic Explorer – collaborative GIS approach for new interactive MSP;
    c. SPACEA – a GIS toolbox to facilitate easy spatial and environmental suitability analysis;
    d. ESA4MSP – an ecosystem service assessment tool;
    e. MYTILUS – a toolset for assessing the impacts of maritime activities;
    f. SEANERGY – a tool for analysing conflicts and synergies between different marine uses.

10. Data group members and secretariats shared their views on the further work with input data and the overall opinion what should be the tasks of the Data group until the end of its` mandate at the end of 2021. To sum up the discussion and emphasize the most important aspects:

    a. It is necessary to emphasize and clearly communicate how time and resources consuming is the work with input data on BASEMAPS and in general due to various sectorial data hosting organizations at national level as well as lack of data harmonization.

b. There is clear task from the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to work with MSP input data. Also knowing that when the national MSPs are updated they will remain static for certain period of time, working further with input data could be considered a reasonable task for the Data group in a long run.

c. It was suggested to concentrate the discussions of next two meetings on the output data – how to upload the national MSPs as well as discussing the application of the Data guidelines.

d. The aim of the Data groups work until the end 2021 should be to upload all MSP Output data. Being aware of national processes in the BSR, it should be feasible.

e. Only few input data services are available (they have not been published yet by the national providers), in some countries no marine data portal exist, or national data is very scattered, so it raises a question on the usability of the input data section in BASEMAPS if it is clear that all services won`t be available there. In some countries it is clearly too early to discuss availability of input data. However, work with the input data is so time consuming that it might be worth to start adding the already available services and downloadable resources.

f. In many countries, it would be impossible to ask the data providers to add their services to the BASEMAPS. On the other hand, the capacity of the Data focal points is limited to carry out adding input data in BASEMAPS. An opinion that the MSP Data Focal points can only act as the information providers has been shared. Still, on the contrary, many participants shared the willingness to carry on the work with input Data on BASEMAPS.

g. It must be agreed on how often the input data section of BASEMAPS has to be updated, proposal of 1-2 times per year is the most common.

h. A workshop/helpdesk or dedicated session as part of the upcoming Data group meetings to work with input data and adding new services to the BASEMAPS is suggested.

i. It has to be kept in mind that currently there is no funding to considerably develop BASEMAPS further, only hosting, maintenance and very small scale development is available.

j. BASEMAPS also offers an opportunity to add downloadable resources (e.g. zip package of a dataset), not only services.

Outcomes:

11. It is agreed that the Data group prepares a joint message to deliver to the EU MSP Technical Expert Group on Data in order to enhance the work already carried out by the Data group. It is essential to emphasize that the Data group has been testing the Baltic model for quite some time now and it has showed to be effective for the BSR countries with their various planning approaches. Further messages to be delivered:

a. HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG has approved Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure that specify the data model that contains the required information (glossary on sea uses and sea use types) and as simple as possible data format for data exchange;

b. Data group have looked into Hierarchical INSPIRE Land Use Classification System (HILUCS) land use classes and found those too generic and not fitting for MSP, thus

specific glossary on sea uses were developed following the MSP directive (Annex 2 of the guideline);

12. It is suggested that the Data group would like to follow-up the progress EU MSP Technical Expert Group on Data on a regular basis.

13. It is agreed to reorganize the Roadmap for further work with input data on BASEMAPS into a discussion paper in order to summarize long-term needs for BASEMAPS development. This discussion paper will serve as a starting point of the input data discussion in the spring 2021 meeting. The list of needs might serve as a collection of potential project ideas when funding opportunities arise.

14. A work plan with the tasks for the next two meetings until the end of the mandate has been prepared; it is added to the decisions as Annex 2. Both meetings will include dedicated sessions on input and output data. .

15. Each Data group meeting should start with a dedicated session to work with existing input data services and support countries in using the admin panel of BASEMAPS. This session should serve as a helpdesk for the Data group. The discussion should also cover the categories for input data and relevant layers.

16. The possible frequency of the update of BASEMAPS is agreed to be 1 to 2 times per year, before the Data group meetings, however further discussion on this topic shall be carried out in future meetings.

17. Dedicated sessions are also to be organized to support the upload of national output data in BASEMAPS. The discussion regarding output data should be among the planners and data experts, topics to be discussed - how is the Data Guideline understood, practicalities of the sea use categories and how to apply them as well as extension of the data sets in order to achieve the best outcome in BASEMAPS. Overview of the current situation should also be considered as part of the dedicated output data sessions.

18. It is agreed that the Data group should set the goal to have all national maritime spatial plans uploaded in the BASEMAPS until the end of 2021.

19. It is agreed that the HELCOM Secretariat would send out a reminder to the Data group members to have a look on the input data sets available on BASEMAPS two months prior to the meeting.

20. The future meetings should include discussion on the future of BASEMAPS, including the scenario when the mandate of the Data group is not prolonged. Further topics to enhance are the possibilities to attract additional funding and support to the promotion of BASEMAPS in the BSR countries so the MSP workers are aware of the platform.

21. A wish to publish also draft MSPs in the BASEMAPS is expressed as it might be reasonable for the transnational consultations. It was agreed to publish only adopted plans in BASEMAPS in order to reduce workload during the intense period of the maritime spatial plan elaboration, as it would mean that the data set would have to be extended for another round of consultations. In addition, in the current version it is not possible to have overlapping layers of the output data. This might be considered as a future need for BASEMAPS to visualize the chronological evolution of MSP development.

22. It is concluded that group has the ambition to continue the complicated task with working with the input data, but there are many challenges due to the complicated ownerships of the data and restricted capacities of the Data group members.

Tasks and next steps:

23. The outcome of the discussion on what fisheries data is needed in national MSP with the goal to identify common requirements for aggregated fisheries data will be submitted to the HELCOM FISH in November 2020 and to the HELCOM State & Conservation in spring 2021 (responsible – HELCOM).

24. Joni delivers the joint message from the Data group the EU MSP Technical Expert Group on Data.

25. Kristīne together with the secretariats reorganizes the Roadmap for further work with input data on BASEMAPS into a discussion paper to describe long-term needs regarding the BASEMAPS development. The document will be delivered to the Data group before the end of this year for feedback.

Future meetings:

26. Upcoming Data group meetings (tbc):
    a. Spring meeting - April or May 2021, preferably in Helsinki, or online
    b. Autumn meeting – in Warsaw.

27. Data group members are invited to join other Capacity4MSP workshops:
    a. Maritime Spatial Planning and Offshore Wind Energy - Online Discussion Workshop on September 22;
    b. Workshop for federal officials 'Maritime Spatial Planning in the Russian Federation. Why does Russia need it?' on September 23;
    c. other workshops will be announced soon.

28. The Annual EUSBSR Forum will be held as virtual event on 20 October 2020.

29. 4th Baltic MSP Forum together with the final conferences of Capacity4MSP Project Platform and Land-Sea-Act project is planned to be organized on 1-2 June 2021 in Jurmala, Latvia.

Spring 2021 Meeting

Reminder from the Secretariats to login and add data to BASEMAPS – 2 months before the Data ESG Meeting.

- Input data:
    - Work on the categories for input data and relevant layers
    - Discussion on frequency of update: 1 or 2 per year,
    - Dedicated session (i.e. help desk) on adding available input data to Basemaps,
    - Technical issues with BASEMAPS: what to adjust?

- Output data: *"ensuring that the national plans are included in Basemaps"*
    - Dedicated session (i.e. help desk) about technical issues with output data on Basemaps:
        - Overview of the output data availability on Basemaps.
        - extending the current national datasets,
        - uploading data,
    - Progress of the EU MSP Technical Expert Group on Data

- Future of Basemaps and the work of the BSR Data ESG: next steps, funding availability

Autumn 2021 Meeting

- Output data: *"ensuring that the national plans are included in Basemaps"*
    - Dedicated session (i.e. help desk) about technical issues with output data on Basemaps:
        - uploading data,
        - extending the current national datasets,
        - Overview of the output data availability on Basemaps.
- Input data:
    - Dedicated session (i.e. help desk) on adding available input data to Basemaps,
    - Technical issues with BASEMAPS: what to adjust?
- Future of Basemaps and the work of the BSR Data ESG: next steps, funding availability