

Document 3-12 Att.1: Draft of the regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2027

Preamble

Adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting VASAB Ministerial Conference committed to the implementation of the Roadmap.

REGIONAL BALTIC MSP ROADMAP 2021-2027

AWARE of the high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space and increasing multiple pressures on marine environment and resources and RECOGNIZING the urgent need for increasing resilience to the changing climate in the Baltic Sea region.

RECALLING that Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) is a continuous participatory process of analysing and allocating spatial distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives, as well as to minimize conflicts between the sea uses.

NOTING that MSP is a cyclical and adaptive process that fosters adaptation to emerging needs and challenges, such as the climate change and a sustainable use of marine resources in the context of the circular economy and the sustainable blue economy.

RECALLING that the ecosystem-based approach is applied in MSP and thus contributes to achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Baltic Sea.

RECOGNIZING the valuable work done by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group since 2010 as the renowned regional Baltic Sea platform on Maritime Spatial Planning and ENCOURAGING the continuation of cooperation.

RECALLING the HELCOM-VASAB Baltic Sea broad-scale Maritime Spatial Planning Principles adopted by HELCOM and VASAB CSPD/BSR in 2010 and the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020 adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2013 and endorsed by VASAB Ministerial Conference in 2014.

RECOGNIZING the joint effort by the Baltic Sea countries to draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea Region and that the joint efforts have contributed to fulfilment of the Regional MSP Roadmap 2013-2020.

TAKING NOTE of the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and its update, VASAB Long Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (LTP), the EU directive on a framework for maritime spatial planning, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy. TAKING FURTHER NOTE of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030, Paris Agreement and EU Green Deal to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

EMPHASISING that the focus of the regional MSP collaboration is now shifting from drawing up of the plans to implementation, [monitoring,] evaluation and follow-up with subsequent eventual reviewing of the maritime spatial plans.

CONFIDENT and COMMITTED to implement this roadmap that will support the achievement of the Baltic Sea Region MSP Framework and HELCOM and VASAB goals, strategies and policies.

GOAL

The goal of the roadmap is strengthening the joint effort and coherence throughout the region to implement Maritime Spatial Plans, aiming for sustainable development of the Baltic Sea region and building a sound basis for an adaptive Maritime Spatial Planning process applying the ecosystem-based approach.

Objective 1 Implementation of MSPs builds knowledge base for the new MSP cycle (proposal by RU and DE)

The Baltic Sea countries collaborate in the evaluation and monitoring of their Maritime Spatial Planning processes. Special consideration will be given to the application of the ecosystem-based approach and the precautionary principle. The maintenance of an up-to-date knowledge database and the application of modern analysis tools are an important aspect of this work. The Baltic Sea countries will promote the development of common approaches to monitoring and evaluation, the improvement of assessment practices, the building of a regional MSP knowledge base and the capacity of MSP practitioners and decision-makers.

Joint actions to support implementation and follow-up of the MSP plans in relation to the regional MSP framework:

- 1.1 Develop a common evaluation framework for MSPs, including a set of definitions
 - Output: BSR evaluation framework for MSPs; common set of general definitions ("Implementation", "Knowledge Base", "MSPCycle", "Coherent MSP", etc.), year?
- 1.2 Develop and share a concise and descriptive overview on national plans' implementation (what does implementation mean in different countries; where/when do they impact on decisions on certain projects, spatial and temporal management of activities etc.)
 - Output: overview on national MSPs implementation, if possible, inclusion in established country fiches, year?
- 1.3 Develop a regionally coherent monitoring system/programme to follow up implementation of MSPs; (==> what is when, how, to be monitored?). Results could be aggregated and analysed on a regional sea level.
 - Output: BSR Monitoring system/programme for implementation of MSPs, year?
- 1.4 Analyse and support spatial efficiency by comparing approaches and solutions with regard to spatial use (e.g. exclusive vs multi use of space) and conflicts management
 - Output: Report on best practices/cases and recommendations on spatial efficiency and good examples of multi-use, year?

Joint actions to develop the knowledge base of the MSP:

- 1.5 Develop a common approach for evidence-based evaluation and monitoring [, in particular with regard to socio-economic, historic, cultural and environmental aspects (incl. ecosystem services)].
 - Output: Common BSR approach for monitoring of MSPs implementation, year?
- 1.6 Improve MSP related data retention and flows and assuring data actuality. Ensure regional compatibility of the MSP Input and Output Data by further advancing MSP Data Flow Model¹, and developing national data portals
 - Output: Updated MSP Data Flow Model, year?
 - Output: Overview on national MSP data portals, year?

¹ A brief explanation of the term - "MSP DATA FLOW MODEL" is given in the **Annex 1**.

- 1.7 Facilitate exchange of information on the best practices of MSP implementation across the BSR and other sea basins
 - Output: Regular exchange in HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG
 - Output: Conference (ca. 2023 - 2025) on Implementation of MSP in the BSR with input from other regions,
 - Output: MSP Planning Forum acting on the regular base

- 1.8 Improve the education of MSP planners and international educational exchange
 - Output: Joint program of action on education of MSP planners and international educational exchange in the BSR, year?

Objective 2. MSPs improve regional policy coherence (Proposal by LV)

This roadmap will lead the Baltic Sea countries through a new planning cycle when the implementation of adopted maritime spatial plans will be taking place. In general, this will be a period of evaluation of national MSP frameworks and regional co-operation. Therefore, in particular it is crucial to understand implications from targets of other national and EU level (e.g. Green deal) policies to the achievements of targets set in MSPs.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 2.1 The Baltic Sea countries' MSP authorities continue close collaboration [*continuously*]
- 2.2 Use the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group as a platform for cooperation of MSP authorities with other HELCOM groups, sectorial stakeholders and regional policies to establish a common understanding on how MSP can contribute to regional goals
 - Output: meetings and outcomes (to be elaborated)
- 2.3 Explore good practices and application of planning and policy instruments for coordination of land-sea interactions across different levels and sectors
 - Output: make use of Planning forum – report by 2022
- 2.4 Study the relationship between various policies related to protection and sustainable use of marine resources by continuously following national MSP implementation as well as other related processes concerning marine and coastal domain (e.g. Blue economy, Green deal)
 - Output: supplement country fiches with relevant information by 2025?
- 2.5 Enhance Baltic sea level collaboration of MSP authorities and planners with various sectors to contribute to aligning sectoral policies and sectoral decision-making and by raising awareness on the role of MSP between involved stakeholders
 - Output: regional event every 2 years, e.g. Baltic MSP forum
- 2.6 Further develop institutional framework for the intergovernmental collaboration on MSP in the BSR
 - Output: review Baltic sea regional “Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation” by 2026

Objective 3. MSPs contribute to achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the Baltic Sea Action Plan (Proposal by SE and FI)

Maritime Spatial Planning applies an ecosystem-based approach with an aim to reduce environmental pressures of sea-based activities on the Baltic Sea ecosystem and to strengthen protection and restoration of marine species and habitats. Hereby contributing to achieving Good Environmental Status, supporting implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as the EU Biodiversity strategy 2030. This objective focuses on extended integration between MSP and environmental management and development of common impact assessment frameworks and review of EBA-guidelines.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 3.1 Update the EBA-guidelines based on shared experiences in national application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and the evaluation of EBA-implementation in the latest MSP-round and other relevant input.
 - Output: updated EBA guidelines, year?
- 3.2 Establish cooperation between HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and HELCOM STATE and CONSERVATION to develop common language and views on Ecosystem based management and green infrastructure, cumulative assessment methods, spatial data, status assessments.
 - Output: meetings and outcomes (to be elaborated), year?
- 3.3 Identify how MSP can support conservation and sustainable use strategies including information on MPAs and possible OECMs (Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures) or other areas of high natural values in MSP (as a basis for steering harmful activities away from such areas) and possibilities of MSP in achieving the CBD target and EU Biodiversity Strategy target of reaching 30% target for protected sea areas.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 3.4 Develop SEA-guidelines as a Baltic SEA-framework including themes common data, assessment methods for impact evaluation, cross-border consultations.
 - Output: SEA guidelines, year?
- 3.5 Follow-up on the sharing of environmental information and stakeholder participation as part of international consultations and the Baltic MSP Espoo procedures as carried out for the current MSPs.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 3.6 Promote the use of methods and tools in MSP for assessing cumulative environmental and other impacts of sea-based activities.
 - Output: methods defined/agreed/available/? (to be elaborated), year?
- 3.7 Evaluate how MSPs are supporting the overarching goals of the MSFD and thereby deliver to good environmental status.
 - Output: to be defined, year?

Objective 4 MSPs contribute to sustainable blue economy (Proposal by WWF)

Ecosystem-based Integrated Ocean Management²: A framework for sustainable ocean economy development. A sustainable blue economy provides social and economic benefits for current and future generations. Restores, protects and maintains the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions, and intrinsic value of marine ecosystems, and is based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 4.1 In line with the European legislation, we COMMIT to properly assess the potential impacts of future investments to be made in the Baltic Sea Region in order to avoid or limit their potentially harmful impacts; we COMMIT to not provide funding for projects with potential harmful overall impacts.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.2 Share experiences in guiding sectoral development to resolve conflicts between marine users, identify actions that can be enhanced on the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) level through implementation of MSP and apply them.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.3 Incorporate the linkage between environmental and social economic dimensions through an ecosystem services analysis.
 - Output: joint analysis of ecosystem services or method for the analysis (to be elaborated), year?
- 4.4 Ensure that spatial planning is conducted in an integrated manner across marine and terrestrial areas. This is in the interest of both, environmental protection of coastal areas and the effective development of maritime and coastal economies.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.5 Assure cross-border coherence and resolve transboundary conflicts hampering development of sectors of sustainable blue economy to achieve zero-waste, zero-emissions and find win-win solutions to help steer to a sustainable blue economy.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.6 Work for a participatory, transparent, and accountable process with sustainable blue economy actors to ensure successful integrated and holistic MSP and marine management.
 - Output: meetings and their outcomes (to be elaborated), year?
- 4.7 Ensure that planning and decision-making recognize relevant conditions, issues and goals at national and regional scales that could impact MPAs and adopt a precautionary approach.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.8 Set marine spatial plans to significantly contribute to mitigate the impacts from blue economy activities exerted on MPAs and include individual MPAs and MPA networks as an integral part of MSP.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.9 Integrate in MSP frameworks climate adaption strategies as a risk measure in order to achieve effective, efficient and equitable ocean governance³.
 - Output: MSP climate adaptation strategies (to be elaborated), year?

² The term is not commonly used in HELCOM-VASAB framework. The explanation by WWF is given in **Annex 2**.

³ The action seems to be more relevant to the objective 5 dedicated to climate change.

- 4.10 Assure long-term monitoring data to assess the role of MPAs in MSPs in reaching GES
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.11 Adopt Guidelines on integration of Sustainable Blue Economy projections in an ecosystem based transboundary MSP.
 - Output: Guidelines (to be elaborated), year?
- 4.12 Ensure dialogue and transparency across government, industry and civil society to implement a sustainable blue economy.
 - Output: meetings (to be elaborated), year?
- 4.13 Secure the natural capital of the sea by effective, adaptive, ecosystem-based marine spatial plans with strategic environmental assessments to ensure that human activities at sea do not have negative effects on areas that contain particularly sensitive habitats, species and/or ecological processes.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.14 Set clear accountability targets for environmental performance targets and indicators for maritime sector activities to operate to ensure the growth of Blue Economy is compatible with the health of the Baltic Sea.
 - Output: to be defined, year?
- 4.15 Update the future oriented report on marine and maritime activities and developments of Baltic Sea regional importance.
 - Output: updated report (to be elaborated), year?

Objective 5 Spatial planning contributes to climate change mitigation, adaptation and, thus, increase resilience of the Baltic Sea Region (Proposal by SE)

Climate change is a global challenge which has to be addressed in MSP. There is a need to get a better joint understanding of how sectors and the marine environment will be affected by climate change and to strengthen the role of MSP to adapt to climate change and contribute to measures of climate change mitigation.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 5.1 Explore how MSP related sectors will be affected by climate change including how climate change might impact human activities under different future scenarios, aiming at developing MSP-strategies for increasing maritime sectors capacity to adapt to expected climate change impacts.
 - Output: MSP climate change adaptation strategies (to be elaborated), year?

- 5.2 Explore how MSP can contribute to climate change mitigation.
 - Output: to be defined, year?

- 5.3 Identify how MSP can support adaptive conservation strategies to cater for spatial changes in ecosystems (e.g. migration of species, change of critical conditions for habitats), including the further exploration of the potential for including climate refugia in MSP for the entire Baltic Sea.
 - Output: implementation plan of the MSP climate change adaptation strategies (to be elaborated), year?

- 5.4 Share best practices of use of MSP to increase ecosystem resilience by mitigating impacts of future human activity
 - Output: best practices report (to be elaborated), year?

- 5.5 Gather and make available best available spatial data (on climate change & predicted socio-ecological change) in formats easily accessible to planners (e.g. GIS files) in a coherent data archive (Emodnet/Helcom/HOLAS III)
 - Output: to be defined, year?

Milestones and timelines

NOTE: This initial proposal lists outputs of actions derived from each objective. The milestones could be considered in more general terms reflecting the main stages of the Roadmap implementation. In this case, the outputs of actions would remain only in the object-specific sections.

Objective 1 Implementation of MSPs builds knowledge base for the new MSP cycle	
Set of definitions ("Implementation", "Knowledge Base", "MSPCycle", "Coherent MSP", etc)	By 2022
Regular overview on national MSPs implementation	From 2022, yearly ?
BSR Evaluation framework for implementation of MSPs	2023 ?
BSR Monitoring system/programme for implementation of MSPs	2023 ?
Report on best practices/cases and recommendations on spatial efficiency	2024 ?
Report on requirements/recommendations for relevant evidence, data and information for evaluation and monitoring of MSPs	2022?
Conference on implementation of MSP in the BSR with input from other regions	2023/2024?
Joint program of action on education of MSP planners and international educational exchange in the BSR	2023/2024 ?
Objective 2. MSPs improve regional policy coherence	
Report on good practices in addressing land-sea interaction in MSP	Report in 2022
MSP and other policies?	Countries report in country fiches by 2025
Organise regular events (e.g. Baltic MSP forum) to foster dialogue with maritime sectors	Every two years
Review Baltic sea regional "Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation"	By 2026
Objective 3. MSPs contribute for achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the BSAP	
Establish cooperation at regional level on MSP and environmental management (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and HELCOM STATE and CONSERVATION)	2022?
Evaluate the sharing of environmental information and stakeholder participation as part of international MSP consultations including the Baltic MSP Espoo procedures	2022?
Evaluate how MSPs are supporting the overarching goals of the MSFD and thereby deliver to good environmental status	2023?
Develop SEA-guidelines as a Baltic SEA-framework	2023?
Gather and make available shared MSP input data	2024?
Revise the EBA-guidelines document	2024?
Objective 4 MSPs contribute to sustainable blue economy	

Objective 5 Spatial planning contributes to climate change mitigation, adaptation and, thus, increase resilience of the Baltic Sea Region.	
Develop draft climate based MSP-planning strategies	2022
Gather and make available climate data and knowledge. Identify data gaps.	2023
Develop guidelines on integration of climate change projections in an ecosystem based transboundary MSP	2024

Annex 1.

MSP Data flow model assumes the description of the procedures to exchange regional MSP related data. In general, it includes input and output data, their sources and formats, exchange protocols and visualization methods.

BASEMAPS is a map service to access Baltic Sea maritime spatial planning (MSP) relevant data from the original source where it is stored. BASEMAPS allows users to view and download data/metadata published by national data providers through OGC open geospatial standards - WMS and WFS. It is aimed for planners, data providers and authorities dealing with maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea.

There are 2 sections within BASEMAPS - Input and Output data. This terminology is used according to HELCOM-VASAB MSP Data expert sub-group to differentiate between data for plans and the plans. **MSP input data** opens by default and includes various thematic data which has been considered relevant for MSP purposes. The section contains both national data harvested from national data providers (when available) as well as centralized dataset provided by HELCOM. Users can use input data if they want to access transboundary data. **MSP output data**, on the contrary, contains national MSP plans harmonized according to [HELCOM-VASAB Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure](#). Users can use output data to check what other countries in the Baltic Sea have already planned.

Annex 2.

Ecosystem Based Integrated Ocean Management (EB-IOM) is an adaptive approach for governing human activities in marine and coastal areas, rooted in the ecosystem approach, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a strong focus on improving the ecological status of the ocean, and on strategic integration across governance, knowledge and stakeholders. It is a conglomerate of multiple concepts and tools such as Marine Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), that reinforce each other by sharing a focus on more holistic and strategic management, with the ecosystem approach(EA)/ecosystem-based management (EBM) at its core.

EB-IOM represents the overarching framework for sustainable ocean planning and management, within which national (and transboundary) MSP, ICZM and other tools operate, and should not focus solely on EEZs but also include land-based activities and pressures and consider areas beyond national jurisdiction.