



Workshop summary

Vision and Strategies for Coherent MSP Framework

Organized by Gdynia Maritime University, Maritime Institute and VASAB Secretariat on 2nd December 2021, in online formula.

Aim of the workshop was to present VASAB work towards coherent MSP Framework in the Baltic Sea and share existing practices in visioning processes in MSP, identified by Capacity4MSP project platform and applied practice around the Baltic Sea Region countries. Building on shared experience, the workshop proceed with co-creative work for the update of the VASAB Long-Term Perspective (LTP). Going through the four metaphors of the vision, i.e., the *pearls*, the *strings*, the *patches* and the *system*, each representing a different territorial element, participants shared their views how these metaphors are related to MSP and what should be addressed by VASAB Vision 2040.

The participants were welcomed by Jacek Zaucha (GMU-IM or MIMUG, Poland) who introduced the aim and rationale of the workshop that links two process: the screening process of Capacity4MSP Project and upgrading of the VASAB Long-Term Perspective. He encouraged participants to share their knowledge related to MSP visioning and underlined the role of VASAB in enhancement of MSP. He also gave credit to the EU Commission for their MSP efforts and to scientific community for developing transnational projects in MSP.

PART 1 – What has been done so far?

Eļīna Veidemane (VASAB Secretariat) has presented the Baltic history of MSP. She mentioned the Wismar declaration of 2001 and the Gdańsk VASAB Ministerial Conference of 2005 *Policy Document Connecting Potentials* in which MSP was upgraded to the key VASAB tasks the first time. She also referred to the VASAB Ministerial Conference in 2009 that adopted VASAB Long Term Perspective and paved foundations for establishment of the Joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group that made BSR a forerunner in the MSP vis a vis other EU Sea Basins. Important role in enhancement of MSP in the BSR was also played by the EU BSR Strategy in which VASAB is co-coordinator for spatial planning. Recently the new Regional MSP Roadmap was adopted. She completed her introduction with presentation of the process of the LTP update. The workshop is part of this process in the co-creative phase. The update of the LTP is expected to be finalized by the end of 2022.

Jacek Zaucha (GMU-IM or MIMUG, Poland) have presented **BSR visions – main conclusions by Capacity4MSP** and encouraged participants to share their own thoughts on that. In presenting BSR MSP visioning he focused on the outcomes of transnational projects such as BaltSeaPlan, EU MSP Platform, Plan Bothnia, Baltic Integrid, BalticLINes screened by the Capacity4MSP project. Out of these visions at least two influenced the MSP national processes: BaltSeaPlan and BalticLINes. One of the main reasons was involvement of MSP authorities in their preparation and their ownership of the outcomes. The BaltSeaPlan *Vision 2030* contains very important guidelines and principles such as list of transnational MSP topics (environment connectivity, shipping, energy, fishing) requiring joint consideration of all countries. Connectivity thinking and plea for sparing planning are still valid and important innovative elements of this vision. MSP is very complex e.g., climate change can alter migration routes of migratory birds and the off-shore farms planned today might became a future barrier for these important processes although current analysis do not detect such risks. In the final part of his intervention Jacek Zaucha encouraged participants to make use of *The Handbook for developing Visions in MSP* (by EU MSP Platform). This handbook clarifies the meaning of the different formats and elements a vision may entail, i.e. scenarios, forecasts, visions, strategies, action plans and roadmaps; and how they can be used in MSP processes; presents methodological approaches used in existing and on-going vision development processes and highlights the lessons learnt; provides multiple examples from the vision development processes in the Baltic Sea, such as e.g. the

BaltSeaPlan Vision 2030; highlights good practices on related formats, processes and tools from these given processes, and also lessons to be learned to inform and potentially improve future vision processes. The presentations were ended with *key policy observations* on visioning in the BSR (based on Capacity4MSP Project screening process):

- The good practices related to visions are available.
- Despite their great potential to influence the planning process and outcomes they have not been frequently used.
- Probably the reason is in lack of trust into vision practical power in changing reality or concentration on concrete planning topics as suggested by VASAB-HELCOM MSP Working Group.
- Several countries have been reluctant due to the lack of long-term policies and targets of sectors.
- However, visions are important for stakeholder engagement, adding social sustainability to the economic and environmental ones and for discussing on long-term development goals.
- At least in the BSR a more complex cross-sectoral vision (integrating sectors) prepared by different authorities have not been sufficiently developed (such as BSR Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) vision as proposed by students at the BSR Young Planners` Contest initiated and organised by VASAB).
- For pursuing visions political commitment is necessary (also for mesh grid).
- Young people clearly see the need of MSP visioning (see the outcomes of the Young Planners contest organised by VASAB).

The workshop **participants vigorously shared their experience on national visioning processes.**

Andrea Morf and Liene Gaujeniete shared the link on the Plan4Blue projects outcomes. The direct link is <https://www.syke.fi/projects/plan4blue> and link via participating organisations SYKE and University of Tartu is <https://www.msp-platform.eu/projects/plan4blue-maritime-spatial-planning-sustainable-blue-economies>

Magdalena Matczak (GMU-IM or MIMUG, Poland) considered visioning as a useful tool in MSP. Without BaltSeaPlan project`s *Vision 2030* the BSR MSP would look quite differently. She regretted that Polish MSP process did not contain the vision and there was no time for visioning. It was a pity because many national policies in Poland were focused on land. *Vision 2030* somehow bridged this gap and played important role in Polish MSP, guiding thinking of planners. Also, VASAB guidelines were useful in the Polish MSP. She asked to start updating of the *Vision 2030* since this document, prepared in 2011, still plays important guiding role.

Kristina Veidemane (BEF, Latvia) shared Latvian experience on visioning. Latvian vision was important for making connections with stakeholders. The national MSP process was started from encouraging stakeholders to present their thinking how the LV sea space will look like in 2030 (15 years ahead). It helped also in structuring the MSP strategic objectives. From *Vision 2030* the key principles were transferred to Latvian MSP. Vision was also important in scenario building seeing different ways of exploring the future opportunities, examining different alternatives. Vision helps to open people minds on possibilities that can be taken into consideration.

Andrea Morf (Nordregio, Sweden) has underlined that it is also important to be clear about the purposes of the future vision processes e.g. a) forecasting, b) backcasting, c) exploring different / more concrete alternatives, d) exploring the future more generally, d) To engage emotionally, etc. There often is confusion in purpose. She also has made an observation from a researcher's perspective: that there are often many goals at many political levels that sometimes are in conflict. She asked whether one can use the visionary process to align and prioritise?

Joacim Johannesson (SWAM, Sweden) acknowledged that Sweden was criticised for weak visioning. But the stakeholders were scared for making prediction in particular the defence officers. SWAM have prepared six pages vision. This vision was detailed, very idealistic, but SWAM was accused to have a prediction not a genuine vision and were criticised that vision is too detailed. The MSP vision was shortened. Some elements are missing in the shorter vision e.g., those related to off-shore energy or international considerations. The current vision is based on existing national policies but it should be updated. The planning objectives are more concrete and they explain vision. But this six pages vision was a useful experience that can be used in the future in a better way. When preparing the vision SWAM looked at *Vision 2030*, but the national focus prevailed.

Anita Līvija Rozenvalde (MoEPRD Latvia) has acknowledged the Joacim's point about visions being perceived as weak. But she agreed with Andrea's previous comment that visions can provide a point of convergence for "stronger" measures, therefore a vision may be what makes sense of other concrete planning documents and activities together.

Jan Peter Oelen (eMSP project, the Netherlands) described the process of scenario building in Netherlands (30 years time horizon) based on territorial dialogue with stakeholder focused on MSP drivers in global scale such as energy or food transition or the climate change (more than 15 elements have been identified with two of the most important ones, perhaps one of them will be level/degree of change in ecosystem). They will have four scenarios evenly feasible.

Sallamaria Tikkanen (Finnish Heritage Agency, Finland) was of the opinion that discussing with other sectors was a key element of the Finnish visioning process. Scenarios and visions are very popular in land-use planning in Finland. This is a very good tool for inclusion of Marine Cultural Heritage (MCH) into the planning process. MCH was included into the MSP vision in Finland in a following way "Maritime cultural heritage is being nurtured and knowledge has increased. Cultural heritage contributes to the preservation and development of biodiversity and coastal vitality." Sallamaria proposed that in a similar way MCH should be included at higher level in the BSR MSP also in its visionary thinking. There is a need for more data and information on culture and MCH to include culture to the MSP. This is the reason why MCH was missing in *Vision 2030*.

Margarita Stancheva (Bulgarian Centre for Coastal & Marine Studies, Bulgaria) informed that Bulgaria is still at the beginning of MSP. But visioning and identification of strategic goals were done both in Bulgaria and Romania. Black Sea MSP vision is aligned towards the sustainable blue economy with some focus on EU Green Deal. Long term vision of the EU part of the Black Sea is in discrepancy with the processes done under regional conventions more inclined towards ICZM. The long-term vision for MSP in the Black Sea is important for involvement of non-EU member states in the region. Such a vision would need a political commitment. The MCH should play a prominent role in the long-term vision for

the Black Sea in line with the MUSES project findings. It is very important for sustainability of local communities.

Andrea Morf (Nordregio, Sweden) expressed an opinion that the vision processes could be used to more strongly integrate social sustainability dimensions into MSP discussions. She informed that ICES WGMPCZM is currently working on a Terms of Reference on how social aspects are integrated in MSP (Kira Gee and Eirik Mikkelsen are leads). Visions are of course part of it. So far there were 2 workshops on the theme and are now analysing marine plans from different countries. ICES will develop a written product next year¹. -

Triin Lepland (Ministry of Finances, Estonia) informed that in Estonia visioning was important part of the MSP. It helped to add to the environmental side (having strong legislation) also the economical, social and cultural side that have less support from legal acts. The vision helps to find a balance in MSP.

PART 2 – How could the future look like?

Magdalena Matczak presented shortly an **insight into emerging trends in the Baltic Sea**. She was of the opinion that visions can help in discussing various conflicting goals. She discussed and examined the following challenges and emerging trends important for MSP in the future: climate change (mitigation and adaptation), offshore energy expansion and grid development, high quality tourism including MCH, limited knowledge on human impacts (cumulative impacts), new and powerful mega political processes (e.g. Green Deal) combined with new transnational MSP guidelines, tangible and intangible cultural heritage (culture as social aspect) as horizontal issue, fishery transformation, new shipping patterns, blue growth combined with multi-use, growth of bio-blue economy/marine bio-economy and finally circular economy at sea. There is also new knowledge from various MSP related projects e.g., on social sustainability in MSP. Another challenges are monitoring of MSP combined with collection of new information, education on MSP, inclusion of new types of stakeholders so far not participating in our MSP efforts. All these should be better included both in the updated *Vision 2030* and in the LTP update. She invited workshop participants to propose other new challenges for MSP.

Andrea Morf (Nordregio) considered land-sea integration as such a challenge. Also, green blue food development is an issue (blue food & sea-to-fork). It will require new types of actors and new approaches from MSP side. She was supported by Kristīna Veidemane (BEF). Łukasz Zommerfeld (Ministry of Infrastructure, Poland) has mentioned capture and storage of CO₂ as a new issue for MSP. Andrea Morf (Nordregio) supported this proposal, and suggested to link CO₂ capture with ecosystem restoration - i.e., both the societal-technical and the ecosystem-based processes. She also refried to time-geography - studying/mapping human mobility patterns over time and proposed to develop this perspective and related data collection also for the oceans. Sallamaria Tikkanen (Finnish Heritage Agency) proposed a blue care also in connection to the nature and culture and as a part of Blue Growth. Maria Toptsidou (Spatial Foresight, Luxembourg) has mentioned behavioural changes as important future challenge for MSP (e.g., how people communicate, how they travel, covid impact on changes in usage of marine space). Kristīna Veidemane (BEF) emphasised importance of ocean literacy, knowledge building she was of the opinion that people must be cleverer on what will take place in the

¹ WG co-chairs Caitriona & Andrea (andrea.morf@havsmiljoinstitutet.se, caitriona.nicaonghusa@marine.ie) and the thematic ToR leads Kira and Eirik: kira.gee@hereon.de, Eirik.Mikkelsen@Nofima.no.
<https://www.ices.dk/community/groups/pages/wgmzczm.aspx>

marine space. Also, perspectives of younger generation should be taken into consideration. Maria Toptsidou (Spatial Foresight) also underlined importance of shrinking and decline as a part of future MSP (e.g., uninhabited space). She also reminded the territorial scenarios for the Baltic Sea Region for VASAB and ESPON done a few years ago, looking at de-growth as one of the assumptions, if interested: <https://www.espon.eu/BT%202050>. Andrea Morf (Nordregio) pointed out importance of adaptation and resilience and underlined that they should not only be related to the environmental considerations. In the visioning diversity of the marine space should be also better addressed according to Kristīna Veidemane (BEF).

Maria Toptsidou (Spatial Foresight) presented **the process of update of the VASAB LTP** and its four metaphors: the pearls, the patches, the strings and the system. She reminded the importance of the visionary processes in strategic spatial planning.

Regards the pearls the following suggestions were proposed:

- The "coastal pearls" should be distinguished as separate "group" to support Land Sea Integration (Magdalena Matczak),
- Thematic networks and place-based connections are important for the coastal pearls - interacting both in terms of information, collaboration, exchange of goods and services and people - maybe a coastal pearl necklace, they should reflect real situation of coastal towns. (Andrea Morf),
- Maritime clusters (such as in Västra Götaland) should be examined. (Andrea Morf),
- Cross-border multi-theme connections might be also presented, an example: Svinesund Committee between Sweden and Norway (Andrea Morf),
- The VASAB vision should emphasize importance of small and medium size coastal towns. According to the existing proposal, Riga is dominant for Latvia. Do we want that for future? (Kristīna Veidemane),

Regards the strings the following suggestions were proposed:

- Multi-modality including marine transport is a key part for strings for BSR (posted on Menti),
- Around-the-clock transport (sleep while you travel), connecting rail and shipping better for passengers, schedules resilient to disturbances and improving coordination across borders. The highly competitive character of the present transport market has disturbed connectivity. Enhance possibilities to keep physical distance, if necessary (Andrea Morf),
- Connections between different modes of transport at coastal areas should be reflected (Jacek Zaucha)
- Transport in coastal areas should be driven by public concerns not only economic needs (e.g., in order not to spoil marine landscapes) (Jacek Zaucha),
- More focus should be given to cables and pipelines under VASAB strings which is important for connecting energy market of BSR and is a key part of marine strings (Jacek Zaucha),
- A general principle: openness for and adaptivity to technological innovation in transport, energy, communication and new ways to connect should be observed (Andrea Morf),
- Electrification and digitalization of Maritime Transport is a key issue (Joacim Johannesson),
- Ecological, nature corridors - mobility of fish, birds, mammals should be part of strings (Kristīna Veidemane),

- Better interlinkages between different issues are necessary i.e., hydrogen is important for maritime transport so off-shore energy is connected with development of strings (Jacek Zaucha),
- Important issue is reducing vulnerability and increase redundancy and resilience in systems - e.g., mesh grid (Andrea Morf),
- One needs to be agile. But this is not always easy. Big investments will be needed in the energy and transport infrastructure. And we do not know yet what the main parts will be on the energy use of the future. Will we transfer to a hydrogen economy or will solar and wind energy be the key technology? Perhaps the carbon infrastructure will still be needed. We should think how one should address this strategically in a vision. (Jan Peter Oelsn),
- The decentralised energy will need more cables (Jacek Zaucha),
- We need both - the big systems and the decentralised - this is the key to resilience! (Andrea Morf).
- In strings vision can act as encouragement of bottom-up actions of business actors. Spatial planning provides spatial condition for development at sea e.g. for cables or off-shore energy so it should ensure coherence of development and link business with public concerns (Jacek Zaucha)
- Where can element of industrial coal ports be attributed? To pearl or to strings. (Chat)

Regards the strings the following suggestions were proposed:

- Sea basins may be quite local/regional in their characteristics and this is valuable. Important is coexistence and openness to new activities. Sea areas are extremely patchy and multi-layered in themselves (add the summer/winter dimension!). One should consider using the term of "mosaics" (used in ecology) to illustrate interconnected local and regional social-ecological sub- patches with many different aspects. (Andrea Morf)
- Marine energy patches should be taken into consideration (Magdalena Matczak)
- Vision on patches does not take into consideration the specificity of marine patches. Sea is extremely productive. The ecosystem services are related both to biodiversity but also to enhancement of businesses in local disadvantages coastal communities. Sea produces important elements of quality of life. We need to put more consideration to this issue. And we need to link better all metaphors. E.g. sea is important for climate change in pearls because sea is providing important climate related ecosystem services (e.g. absorption of CO₂) (Jacek Zaucha)
- Multidimension of sea patches must be addressed. We have challenge in interpreting the map. Map on patches conveys simplified messages (Kristīna Veidemane)
- Maps should not cover sea areas outside BSR. Open space is a better metaphor than patches since we can combine here environment and local development. Sea is a linking element for all four metaphors used in LTP update (Andrea Morf),
- Man is missing from all the images and explanations (except Patches in 2040 > people), we are talking about species, ecosystems, but man is absent with cultures and intangible values under patches, this should be changed (Sallamaria Tikkanen),
- A special seminar discussing the map and text with marine planners should be organised as a part of LTP update (Andrea Morf),

- The carrying capacity of the sea basin is a very important parameter which sets boundaries for other uses. This fuels the big (political) discussion. At least this is the case in the North Sea (Jan Peter Oelen).

Regards the system the following suggestions were proposed:

- One needs Baltic marine spatial vision that could complement the Baltic Sea Region more general vision (Magdalena Matczak).
- Sea should be used as an integrator between metaphors. Now it does not work like that (Jacek Zaucha)

Maria Toptsidou invited all participants to share with her all concerns related to the marine aspects of the VASAB Vision (maria.toptsidou@spatialforesight.eu) till the spring of 2022 (March).

Jacek Zaucha (GMU-IM) thanked Maria for this very useful exercise and asked not to lose this important marine component of the VASAB work, since integration of marine space into pearls, parches and strings might be challenging. He asked for continuation of the process with a broader set-up of stakeholders (as at this workshop) not only with VASAB CSPD.

Elīna Veidemane (VASAB Secretariat) invited all participants to take part in the LTP consultations that will start March 2022. She thanked for very active contribution to all taking part in the workshop.