



Minutes

Stakeholder Workshop on the application of the draft VASAB Vision 2040

16 May 2022, online

Presentations, agenda, workshop input paper and further information are available for download here: <https://vasab.org/ltp-update-2021-2022/>

This document summarises the results of the Stakeholder Workshop on the application of the draft VASAB Vision 2040 (called the Long-Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region, LTP), which took place on 16 May 2022 online. The workshop shared prospects and discussed what implications the updated Vision may have on the ground and how to make it reality. The aim was to identify ways in which the various institutions can contribute to the application of the LTP principles or where they may already be doing so. Another topic for this workshop was the role of VASAB in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Welcome and technical instructions

Hakan Uraz, project manager at **REM Consult** and moderator of the workshop, welcomed all participants, provided some technical instructions, and informed about the workshop programme before handing over to Dr. Daniel Meltzian, the current Chair of the VASAB Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the BSR (CSPD/BSR).

VASAB and new draft VASAB Vision 2040

Dr. Daniel Meltzian, from the **German Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Building (BMWSB)**, introduced VASAB and its visions up to the current revision of the LTP. The spirit of the update is to 'bridge the old with the new'. The update is based on work done so far by VASAB and ESPON, and four main spatial elements/metaphors (namely pearls, strings, patches and systems) identified already in the first VASAB Vision drafted in 1994 and analysed in context of potential future developments. The update process is organised in a co-creative, collaborative and participatory approach, during which the key elements of the vision have been developed in close cooperation with the VASAB CSPD/BSR and also communicated to other relevant stakeholders. Feedback is still welcome by mid-summer 2022 and very crucial in further nuancing and refining the



Federal Ministry
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Vision document. Daniel Meltzian explained that the VASAB spatial vision for the Baltic Sea Region in 2040 is structured along four territorial elements represented by *four different metaphors*: the **pearls**, the **strings**, the **patches** and the **systems**. Visions are formulated for each metaphor as well as “Possible Future Actions” (PFA) as ideas for starting points of implementation.

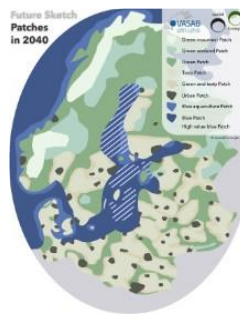
4 metaphors of VASAB 2040 Vision:



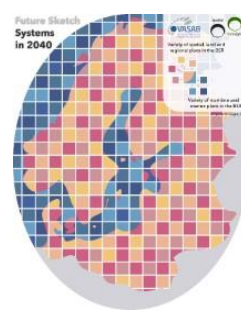
Vibrant Pearls
of all sizes



Well-connected Strings
between people and places



Intact Patches
of ecosystems at sea and land



Cooperative sea and land planning Systems

For further details see presentation “1_VASAB and new Vision 2040 by Daniel Meltzian” and Workshop Input Paper.

Introduction round along the four metaphors

All workshop participants were asked to indicate their organisational background in an online poll. Results showed that, the participants represent the following categories:

- 38% (14 participants) public national authorities
- 19% (7 participants) international governmental organisations,
- 12% (4 participants) public local authorities,
- 12% (4 participants) private sector (SME),
- 9% (3 participants) public authorities and
- 9% (3 participants) NGOs.

An introduction round in break out rooms followed where each participant introduced themselves to their peers telling them to which of the four metaphors, they would subscribe themselves to and why. Interestingly none of the participants have indicated patches, which should be considered in further communication of this metaphor.

Putting the VASAB Long-Term Perspective into practice: Land Sea Act (Interreg BSR)

Dr. Kristīna Veidemane, BEF Latvia, presented the Interreg BSR project Land-Sea-Act, as an example on how the implementation of the LTP on the ground can take place. In doing so, she highlighted that both the Land-Sea-Act project and the LTP put special focus on cooperation, (multi-level) collaboration, co-creation and integration – highlighted also by the attendance of participants at

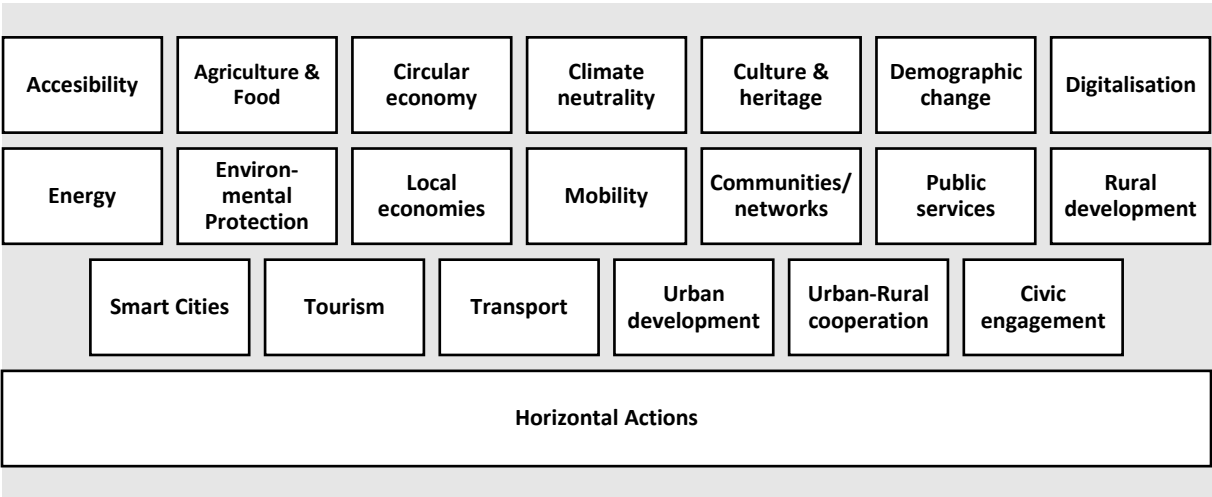
the workshop beyond traditional spatial planner’s policy domain, e.g. transport, tourism. Furthermore, not only understanding but also solidarity between actors from different member states seems to be increasingly topical.

For further details see presentation “2_VASAB_Land-Sea-Act_by_Kristina-Veidemane” and www.land-sea.eu.

VASAB Vision 2040: Options for actions

Hakan Uraz, REM Consult, highlighted the need for concrete actions, activities and projects, so that the *desirable future becomes a reality*. This is also clearly identified by the LTP’s authors and indicated in the VASAB draft LTP Background Synthesis Report (March 2022): “*Visions need to be combined with actions*. Reflecting on possible desirable futures may easily be turned into daydreaming, lacking concrete focus and direction. *Visions need to be combined with actions and vice versa* (Böhme and Lüer, 2016). The VASAB 2040 vision shall *describe a desirable future* and give the overall direction of where the Baltic Sea Region should go. This direction in itself paves the way for *coordinated actions and steps to be taken* to get closer to the overarching future of the vision. Actions linked to the VASAB vision for 2040 shall inform policy makers to realise this desirable future.”

Compared to the previous LTP the updated LTP is thematically rather wide, but also deals with very concrete suggestions for “Possible Future Actions” (PFA), along the four metaphors. These touch one or more of the territorial dimensions and cover a variety of thematic areas.



Own visualisation, REM Consult

From the 32 PFAs 21 thematic areas derived according to REM Consult indicating activities and projects that can contribute to the formulated vision.

Hakan Uraz pointed out that planning actors alone will not be sufficient for implementation. Further, the list of PFAs gives valuable ideas to pinpoint concrete activities, however there might be much more. He continued with presenting implementation opportunities. From the audience Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs) and new Operational Programmes (ESF & ERDF) to be used for transnational cooperation have been added as an option as well.

For further details see presentation “3_VASAB_Workshop 1 BSR_REM_Options to put the LTP into action” and Workshop Input Paper.

Group work on the four metaphors

After a short break, the workshop participants were asked to choose a moderated breakout room dealing with the four metaphors Pearls, Strings, Patches and Systems. During the session the participants were asked the following:

- What is your view on the metaphor?
- Please indicate any previous or running projects/activities/initiatives which are supporting the VASAB vision’s objectives within this metaphor.
- Do you have any ideas/plans for future actions to support the objectives within this metaphor?

Summarized discussion points:

| Pears | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Feedback | Projects | Future actions |
| Good that all types of pearls are considered | Nordic-Baltic Space, https://www.eurometrex.org/activities/metrex-expert-groups/nordic-baltic-space/ | Smart shrinking |
| Useful metaphor that can relate to others | Carbon neutral municipalities and regions, https://uudenmaanliitto.fi/en/projects/canemure-towards-carbon-neutral-municipalities-and-regions/ (Life project) | Resiliency |
| Interconnections well highlighted | Metropolitan Industrial Strategies & Economic Sprawl, https://www.espon.eu/mista | Carbon neutrality and quality of life |
| | Program for increasing the attractiveness of the central squares and surroundings of Estonian | Security |

| Strings | | |
|---|---|---|
| Feedback | Projects | Future actions |
| Physical and non-physical strings | Infrastructure projects | Digitalisation i) avoid exclusion of elderly people ii) (public transport) ticket systems |
| Infrastructure, virtual connections, but also connecting minds and thinking | Rail Baltica, https://www.railbaltica.org/ | Better railway connections for small and medium sized cities |
| Term “string” good in terms of communications | (transnational) medical prescriptions | Reduce role of aviation |
| “Strings vibrating as a guitar” | | Intellectual strings |

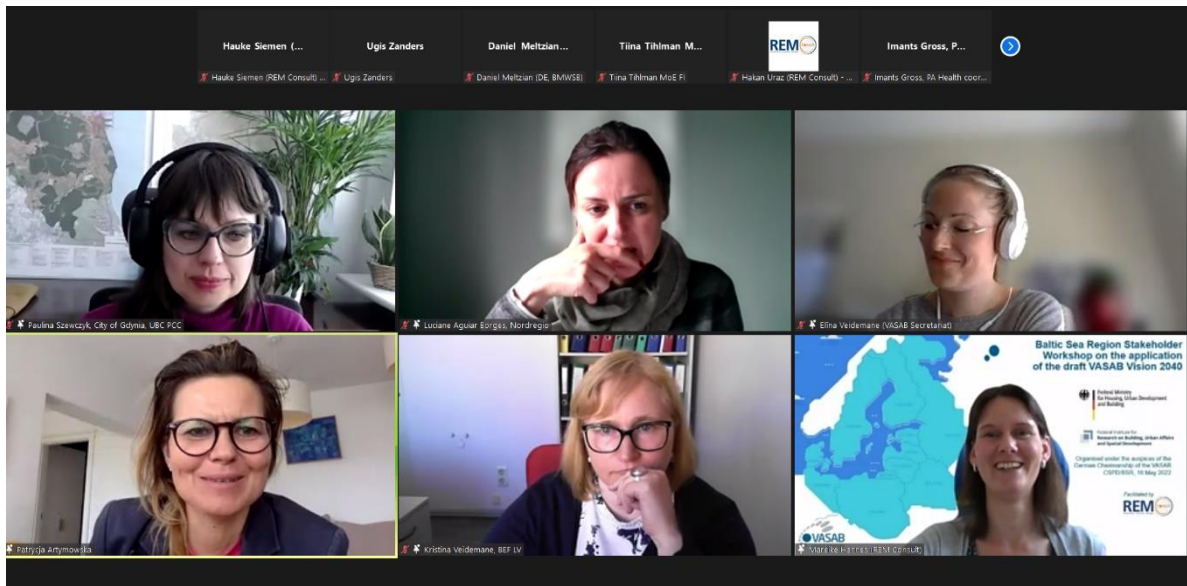
| Patches | | |
|---|---|---|
| Feedback | Projects | Future actions |
| Pearls vs. patches | Baltic InteGrid, http://www.baltic-integrid.eu/ | More integrated planning! |
| Patches are often overlooked | Baltic LINes, https://vasab.org/project/balticlides/ | Avoid risks of fragmentation |
| Patches should be considered horizontally | Land-Sea-Act, https://land-sea.eu/ | Reconciliation of various activities in conflicting regions (e.g. fisheries vs. renewable energies) |
| (Blue) patches quite relevant for MSP | | |

| Systems | | |
|---|--|---|
| Feedback | Projects | Future actions |
| New approach to integrate stakeholders incl. civil society? | Baltic LINes, https://vasab.org/project/balticlides/ | Data transmission options for spatial planning |
| Handover responsibilities to newcomers (training is needed) | Land-Sea-Act, https://land-sea.eu/ | Baltic Sea Region Planners' Forum for land-based planning |
| Clarify practical implementation mechanism | Emerging ecosystem-based Maritime Spatial Planning topics in North and Baltic Sea Regions (eMSP NBSR), https://vasab.org/project/emsp-nbsr/ | Knowledge exchange |
| | Maritime transport | Revision/mediation MSP (country coordination) |

The entire wrap up of the exchange and discussions can be found [here](#).

Expert round: New Vision 2040 and VASAB's role as PA coordinator for Spatial Planning

Elina Veidemane, VASAB Secretariat – PA Spatial Planning; **Patrycja Artymowska**, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Poland, CSPD/BSR member, **Luciane Aguiar Borges**, Nordregio; **Paulina Szewczyk**, City of Gdynia, Chair of the Planning Cities Commission in UBC and **Dr. Kristina Veidemane**, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, took part in an expert round moderated by Mareike Hannes, REM Consult.



Among others, the following points were expressed during the discussions focussing on the New Vision 2040 and VASAB's role as PA coordinator for Spatial Planning:

- VASAB as facilitator, knowledge hub and moderator,
- Resiliency and security issues are future topics,
- Avoid overlaps between EU strategies, EUSBSR and VASAB LTP, see VASAB LTP as one leg of many of EU strategies,
- The LTP 2040 is explicitly titled as a vision. Thus, it needs to be ambitious and broad in scope to eventually allow to strive for positive impacts.
- Concentrate on specific policy areas first related to spatial planning and move on to others afterwards,
- Differentiate between short to long term actions (elaborate an "implementation plan"),
- First planning document that sets 2040 as time horizon (instead of 2030 or 2050 as usual), so is it long-term – this is debatable and depends on the policy area perspective,
- It is of major importance to familiarise stakeholders from different sectors and different levels of governance with the vision and to motivate and activate them to make their own contribution to the implementation of the vision. Thus, also cooperation with other policy areas needed.

Reflection and main take away for draft VASAB Vision 2040 and further process

Maria Toptsidou, Spatial Foresight, reflected that the update process is open, participatory, and co-creative. It engages stakeholders at different governance levels (EU, BSR and national), including the thematic coordinators of EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, other pan-Baltic organizations, and national and local key stakeholders through series of events and targeted thematic workshops in various networking platforms. The current advanced draft LTP has emerged from this process and is now in the final phase of stakeholder consultation before the new LTP is adopted at ministerial level and acts as a vision for the macro-regional territorial development of the Baltic Sea Region up

to 2040. She highlighted once again that **visions are a powerful tool**. They necessarily need to be **broad**, but **concrete actions need to follow**. To do so **different players** are needed to take the vision a **step further to its realisation**.

Upcoming activities under German chairmanship & closure

Finally, **Jens Kurnol, BBSR**, informed that the LTP 2040 should be completed by the end of 2022 and then adopted at a high-level conference in the second quarter of 2023.

Feedback and suggestions on the draft VASAB Vision 2040 can still be given via an [online survey](#) or in an [email](#) by 15th July at the latest.

He thanked the speakers and participants very much for their participation and contribution. Please check <https://vasab.org/ltp-update-2021-2022/> or join the events to stay tuned:

- [Webinar](#) „Offshore wind energy: Challenges and opportunities emerging from new European expansion targets“ in the course of the German VASAB Chairmanship (9 June 2022)
- [Summer School](#) „Young Planners and Regional Developers on “Sustainable Futures for the Baltic Sea Region“, Greifswald (22 – 26 August 2022)
- [20th European Week of Regions and Cities](#) (October 2022)

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