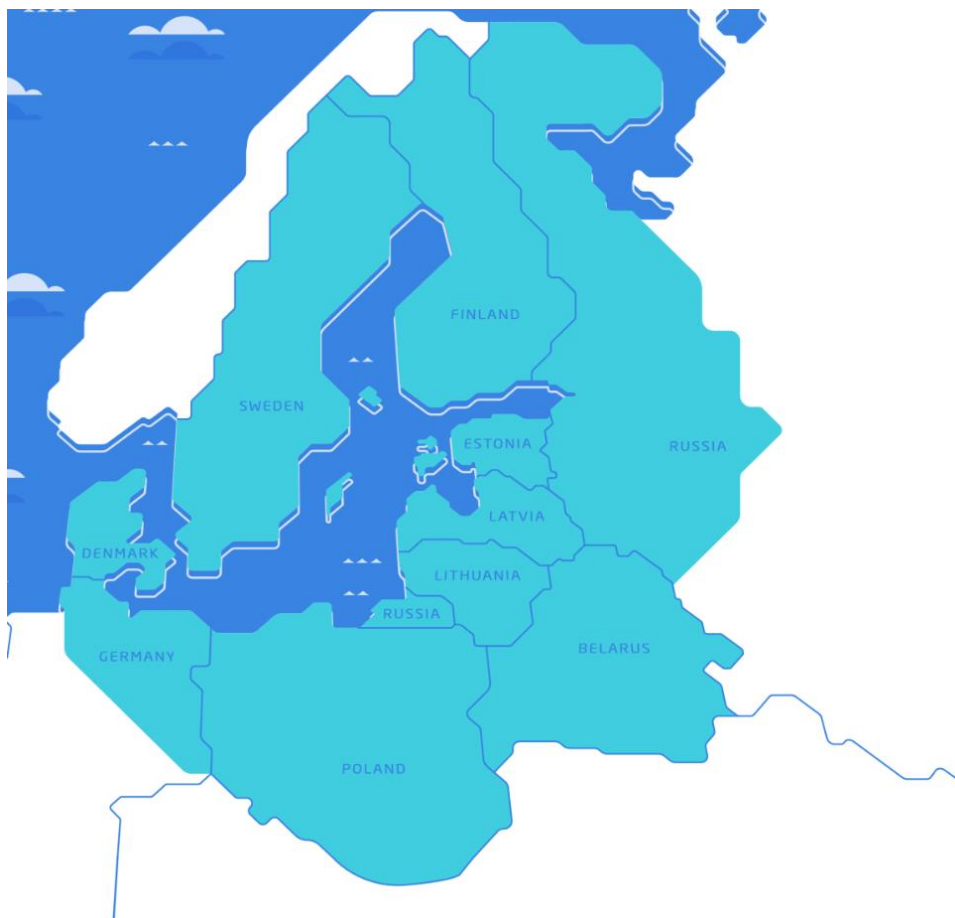


## Input Paper

### A Long-Term Perspective 2040 for the Baltic Sea Region - How can you participate in the implementation?



### Stakeholder Workshop on the application of the draft VASAB Vision 2040

16 May 2022, online

With the revision of its Long-Term Perspective for the territorial development of the Baltic Sea Region (LTP), VASAB wants to face the challenges of the advancing 21st century and offer the strategic-visionary framework for a safe, prosperous and sustainable spatial development.

This 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*) shares its prospects and discusses what implications the updated Vision may have on the ground and how to make it reality. The aim is 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. The second topic for this workshop is the role of VASAB in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

This document serves as a stimulus for discussion and reflection for the workshop participants.

## A VISION FOR THE BALTIC SEA 2040

In 2021 the development of the new version of the LTP was led by a team of experts (Spatial Foresight and Nordregio) and advanced in a co-creative process with the help of a series of internal and external workshops. Six internal workshops served to involve and coordinate content with the members of the VASAB Committee for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region (*CSPD/BSR*), which brings together the views of the national and regional ministries in charge of territorial development involved. Three external stakeholder workshops were used to check the quality and reality of the drafts. Blind spots were identified, important elements were highlighted and potential ideas that could contribute to achieving the vision were discussed.

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 adopted as a vision for the macro-regional territorial development of the Baltic Sea Region up to 2040. Further information about the LTP update process can be found here: <https://vasab.org/ltp-update-2021-2022/>

### **Why is the update of the VASAB vision necessary?**

Visions are a powerful tool, as they define a desirable picture of the future, shared by people who wish to make a desirable change for the next generations. This is particularly relevant in view of new challenges and trends that influence the territorial development in the Baltic Sea Region. In that respect, VASAB has been a pioneer during the adaptation of its vision for different time horizons in the past. The current update of the vision aims to set the tone for the desirable future in the Baltic Sea Region, highlighting the importance of foresight and visions for informed policy-making.

## What can be a desirable future for the Baltic Sea Region?

How do we imagine the Baltic Sea Region in 2040? What will urban networks and settlement structures look like, how will they be physically and digitally connected? How do we ensure attractive living conditions in all regions and how do we organise spatial planning, on land and at the sea? These are key questions when drafting the new version of the LTP.

For 2040 a Baltic Sea Region, where the healthy Baltic Sea is the core asset of the region, is envisioned. By 2040, there is a clear shift to sustainability and wise use of technology, while cooperation, solidarity and integration are a must. 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.

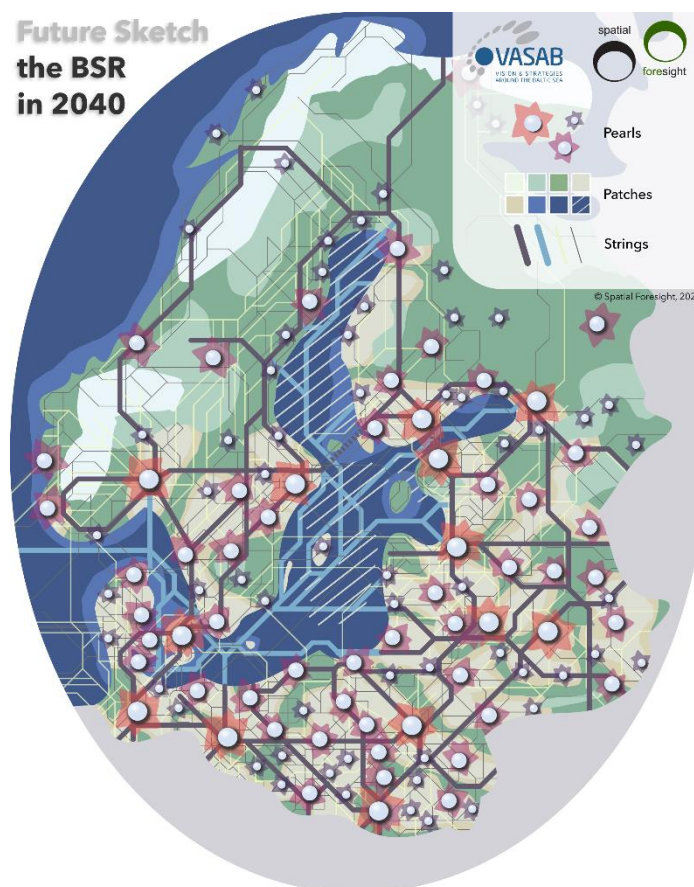
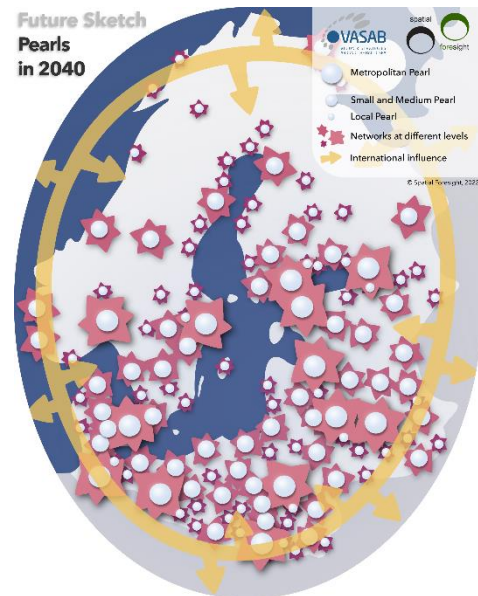


Fig.: Future sketch of all metaphors 2040, draft LTP (2022)

## Vibrant pearls of all sizes.

The *pearls* represent the urban network and settlement structure of the region, where local pearls, small and medium-sized pearls and metropolitan pearls, sharing different territorial characteristics, thrive by each building on their own comparative advantages and economic activities. The future for the pearls lies in the networks, as all are networked to each other within and beyond their vicinity and even beyond the Baltic Sea Region, as well as build on their own comparative advantages and complementarities between them.

Fig. right: Future Sketch of 'Pearls' 2040, draft LTP (2022)



	Local Pearls	Small and Medium Pearls	Metropolitan Pearls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vibrant, diversified local economies</li> <li>Quality of life and social cohesion</li> <li>Nature and ecosystem services</li> <li>Urban-rural partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pioneers for innovation</li> <li>Smart specialization and smart shrinking</li> <li>City networks</li> <li>Centers for services</li> <li>Human-centricity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interfaces to the world</li> <li>Profiling, networks</li> <li>City-Surrounding Cooperation, Greater Region responsibility</li> <li>Diverse neighborhoods</li> <li>Greener metropolises</li> <li>Diplomacy</li> </ul>
Possible Future Actions	Carbon neutral Baltic pearls		
	Community-led cooperative economies	Small pearls academy network	The Baltic necklace
	Innovative digital services of general interest	Adaptation policies for demographic change / ageing	Urban pearls and their growth functional geography
		Sustainable tourism initiatives	Metropolitan visions

Fig. above: 'Pearls' descriptions and PFAs from draft LTP (2022), own visualisation, REM Consult

## Well-connected strings between people and places.

The *strings* represent the physical and virtual connectivity in the Baltic Sea Region. Well-connected physical and virtual strings between people and places are characterised by a sustainability shift towards green, sustainable and affordable connections. Rail and maritime connections increase in importance and gradually substitute environmental costly air and car connections. Energy strings reflect a carbon neutral energy production which is decentralised, secure and well-connected throughout the Baltic Sea Region.

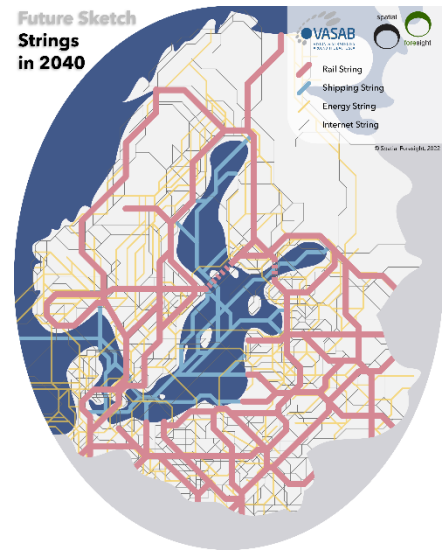


Fig. right: Future Sketch of 'Strings' 2040, draft LTP (2022)

	Regional to Global Strings	Physical Strings	Maritime Strings	Virtual Strings	Energy Strings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate-neutral traffic</li> <li>Connection to global economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intermodal freight transport</li> <li>Night and high-speed trains</li> <li>Regional train connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greener and smarter shipping and ports</li> <li>Substitutes for air transport</li> <li>Safe shipping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grid connection</li> <li>Digitalization</li> <li>eGovernment</li> <li>Cyber security</li> <li>"Green" data centers</li> <li>Virtual inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable energies</li> <li>Democratisation of energy supply ("prosumer")</li> <li>Integrated energy networks</li> </ul>
Possible Future Actions	Joint offers on Mobility as a Service (MaaS)				
	Multimodal systems to connect places				
	Transport and energy networks	Sustainable Baltic train network	„Green“ maritime transport networking	Digital services for all	Baltic energy network of decentralised systems
	Baltic Lighthouses		Short distance shipping		
	Integrated mobility plans				

Fig. above: 'Strings' descriptions and PFAs from draft LTP (2022), own visualisation, REM Consult

## Resilient patches of ecosystems and unique areas at sea and land.

The *patches* are the lungs of the Baltic Sea Region. They represent the sustainable management of the commons and provide the ecosystem services in the region. The high level of biodiversity, the rich flora and fauna, the healthy sea environment, the intact ecosystems, the sustainable agricultural, food and energy production ensure in 2040 a good quality of life for all citizens in all parts of the region and form a mosaic of the Baltic Sea Region's natural and cultural heritage.

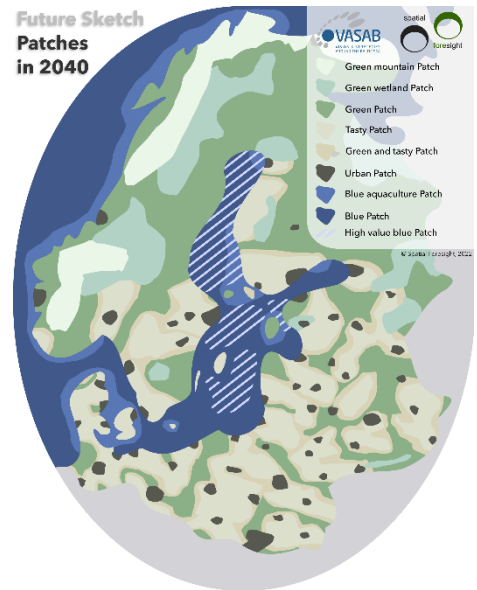


Fig. right: Future Sketch of 'Patches', 2040 draft LTP (2022)

	Blue Patches	Green Patches	Tasty Patches
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean Baltic Sea</li> <li>Offshore energy</li> <li>Islands as frontrunners for circular economy and renewables</li> <li>Coastal Zones: Biodiversity and Human Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecosystem services</li> <li>Green belts</li> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Renewable energy generation</li> <li>Balance of human activities and nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries</li> <li>Regional foods and specialties</li> </ul>
Possible Future Actions	Branding the Baltic Sea Region quality of life		
	Baltic renewable energy booster		
	New tools for evaluating dynamics and processes at sea	Baltic green infrastructure network for the green patches	Baltic eco-villages and kitchens
		Connecting cultural heritage paths	Adjusting Baltic Sea Region agriculture to climate change

Fig. above: 'Patches' descriptions and PFAs from draft LTP (2022), own visualisation, REM Consult

## Cooperative sea and land planning systems.

The *system* represents the sea and land planning, characterised by strong cooperation and smooth communication across different levels of governance, different sectoral policies, as well as a high citizen involvement that carries over the decisions and plans. Digital solutions are important for exchanging information, sharing data and developing synergies.

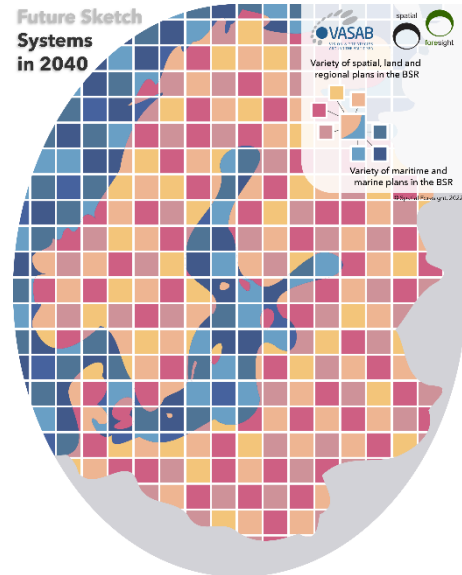


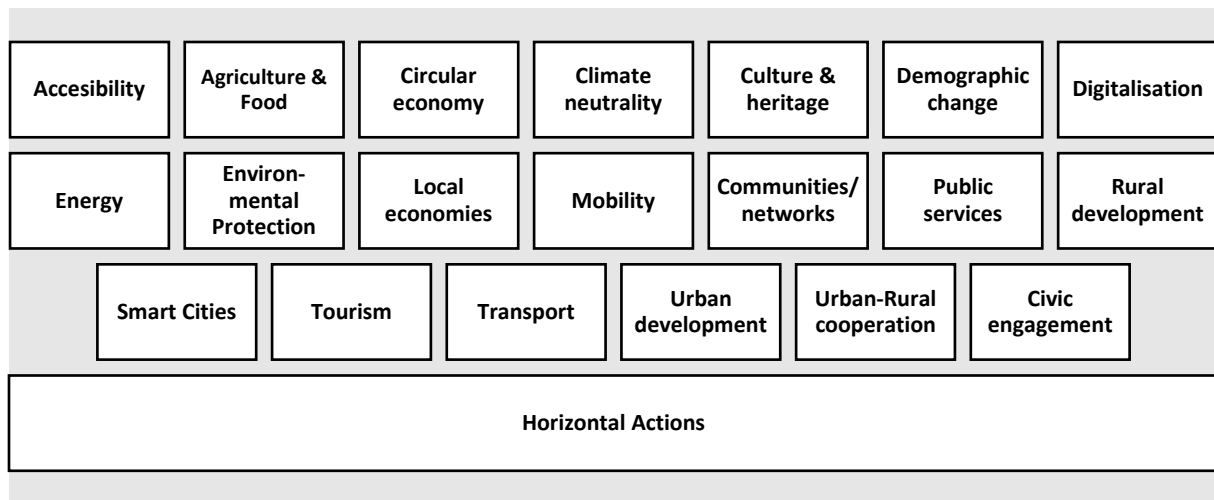
Fig. right: Future Sketch of 'Systems' 2040, draft LTP (2022)

Cooperating Systems	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of sea and land-based planning tools of all member states</li> <li>• Digitization of planning processes and data exchange</li> <li>• Cooperation with relevant sectors (e.g. energy, transport, rural development)</li> <li>• Multi level governance</li> <li>• Macro-regional cooperation: EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, pan-Baltic organisations</li> <li>• Involvement of civil society</li> </ul>
Possible Future Actions	VASAB planners forum academy
	Multi-use land-sea interaction planning
	Integrated land & sea observations and assessments
	Digital Baltic Sea Region planning sharing platform
	Baltic Sea Region citizen involvement

Fig. above: 'Systems' descriptions and PFAs from draft LTP (2022), own visualisation, REM Consult

### Which thematic areas are in the focus of the vision?

The updated LTP 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. From the 32 PFAs we were able to derive 21 thematic areas indicating activities and projects that can contribute to the formulated vision.



Own visualisation, REM Consult

### How is the revised LTP for 2040 different from its predecessor?

Compared to the Long-Term Perspective for 2030 adopted in 2009, the new LTP draws a *regionally more balanced vision* and includes not only the rural areas, but also the small and medium-sized towns in addition to the metropolises. *Digitisation, sustainability, and climate protection* are in the focus. Civil society is fundamentally involved in issues such as the energy transition (prosumers), but also in the implementation of the LTP. When it comes to connectivity, it is not solely infrastructure, but also about forms and habits of mobility. In summary, it can be said that the LTP 2010 and the LTP 2022 have a similar structure in terms of their overarching themes, but the new LTP is much *broader in scope*. With the use of the four metaphors, VASAB returns to the beginnings: The terms "Pearls", "String", "Patches" and "System" were already used in the first VASAB vision for the Baltic Sea region from 1994.

### IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS FOR THE LTP 2040

The LTP 2040 is explicitly titled as a vision, not as a strategy. As a forum for cooperation between the national ministries in charge of spatial planning, VASAB has neither extensive implementation capacities of its own nor resources for financial support for implementation by other stakeholders. Thus, 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. To be successful, stakeholders must also be connected with each other and – as far as possible – equipped with the knowledge required for the development of project proposals for various funding programmes. The interaction of VASAB, public authorities, municipalities and further stakeholders results inter alia in the following implementation options:



<b>Baltic Sea-wide or cross-border implementation options (EU-funded cooperation projects)</b>	<b>Funding Programme</b>	<b>Thematic areas</b>
	<b>Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme</b>	e.g. digitalisation, public services, circular economy, transport, mobility, energy
<b>Implementation within the framework of Europe-wide funding projects</b>	<b>Interreg A Programmes (South Baltic, Central Baltic, DE/DK, PL/DE, etc.)</b>	e.g. digitalisation, public services, circular economy, innovation, energy, water management, culture, sustainable tourism, innovation, education, mobility
	<b>Funding Programme</b>	<b>Thematic areas</b>
	<b>Horizon Europe</b>	e.g. climate neutrality and climate change adaptation, circular economy, energy, agriculture and food, cultural heritage, civil engagement, networks
	<b>European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund</b>	Local economy, tourism, nutrition, local administration
	<b>LIFE</b>	Environmental protection, climate neutrality, energy, circular economy
	<b>Erasmus+</b>	Education, international (knowledge) exchange, digital networking
<b>Implementation through decentral-financed cross-border or transnational cooperation</b>	Suitable could be here for instance the rather little-known <a href="#">transnational cooperation possibilities</a> within the framework of LEADER/Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) scheme (rural development)	
<b>Spatial planning at state level</b>	e.g. within the framework of action strategies for spatial development or scientifically supported pilot projects such as the <a href="#">Demonstration Projects of Spatial Planning</a> (Modellvorhaben der Raumordnung, MORO) in Germany	
<b>Implementation as part of dedicated LTP pilot actions</b>	There is currently no funding mechanism for this, but a model to follow could be the pilot actions for the Territorial Agenda 2030	
<b>Implementation via upscaling/transferring of successfully implemented approaches and projects</b>	Using proven “good practices” and readily available knowledge in other places, e.g. solutions transfer, uptake or upscaling of transnational, local or regional projects	

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP

### **The new LTP and its implementation**

- Is the updated LTP clear and understandable?
- Does it reflect the thematic interests and priorities of potential implementers?
- Are the thematic scope and level of ambition of the new LTP appropriate?
- Do you have any further feedback on the metaphors/LTP?
- How have stakeholders in the BSR already contributed to the implementation of VASAB visions in the past and how can they do so in the future?
- Do you have any other ideas for projects and activities related to the LTP?
- What impact could the current challenges (e.g. impact of the pandemic, security issues, energy shortages) have on the implementation of the LTP?

### **Current and future role of VASAB in the EU Baltic Sea strategy**

- What role has VASAB played so far as policy area coordinator of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and how is this evaluated?
- What priorities have been set in terms of content for the policy area of spatial planning so far, and how could or should this change with the new LTP?
- What can VASAB do to bring land-based planning more on par with MSP?
- During the latest workshop with stakeholders in Germany, the LTP was perceived as rather broad and ambitious. How do you see it? Is there a need for a thematic and/or time prioritization and how could this look like?
- Where do you see the greatest need for action? Which actors are particularly important in this regard?
- From your point of view, what role should VASAB and the LTP play in the future?

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