

COMMITTEE ON SPATIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE BALTIC SEA REGION

**Summary of the 87<sup>th</sup> CSPD/BSR Meeting**

Berlin, 24-25 May 2022

**Chairperson:** Mr. Daniel Meltzian (DE)

*Participants: CSPD/BSR members:* Mr. Lukas Kühne (DE), Mr. Jens Kurnol (DE), Mr. Taivo Tali (EE), Ms. Algimante Treiniene (LT), Ms. Anita Līvija Rozenvalde (LV), Ms. Patrycja Artymowska (PL), *invited guests (participated online):* Prof. Paula Prenzel, Ms. Lisann Schmidt (University of Greifswald), *VASAB Secretariat:* Ms. Alda Nikodemusa, Ms. Elīna Veidemane, Ms. Jana Patmalniece and Ms. Liene Gaujeniete.

**1. Adoption of the report of the 86<sup>th</sup> CSPD/BSR meeting**

*The Committee* adopted the Report of the 86<sup>th</sup> CSPD/BSR online meeting on 5 November 2021 without changes.

**2. Information on Open Troika meeting**

*The Committee* took note of the Report of the VASAB Open Troika online meeting on 3 May 2022.

**3. Update of VASAB Long-Term Perspective: stakeholder consultations, Pan-Baltic events, reflections from CSPD on national activities, next steps**

An overview on past and future developments of Update of the VASAB Long-Term Perspective was presented. VASAB Draft Vision 2040 is in stakeholder consultation phase that will last until 15 July 2022. VASAB Secretariat has organised bilateral meetings with PAs and Pan-Baltic organisations to introduce with VASAB, to invite to the VASAB events and encourage to provide feedback. An online survey has been prepared for this purpose. Secretariat is also supporting VASAB German chairmanship with preparation for events in May and June 2022. On 5<sup>th</sup> May first VASAB German chairmanship event was organised – ESPON Peer Learning workshop on climate change. During this workshop climate change issues in the Baltic Sea Region were discussed and participants looked into ways of mainstreaming climate change in sector policies and to the new VASAB Vision 2040. On 16<sup>th</sup> May a VASAB Stakeholder workshop was organised to share the prospects of the draft VASAB Vision 2040 and discuss the views on what implications the updated VASAB Vision may have on the ground and how to make it reality. On 9<sup>th</sup> June a workshop on 'Offshore wind energy: Challenges and opportunities emerging from new European expansion targets' will be organised by German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency.

*The Committee* took note on the current progress, recent and upcoming events, milestones and other activities of the update of VASAB Long-Term Perspective.

*The Committee* took note on the reflections of the Committee members on VASAB stakeholder consultations at national level and agreed to submit brief overview of national stakeholder consultations together with national feedbacks by 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 as latest.

*The Committee* agreed to hold an online meeting on 19 September 2022 to discuss received feedback on VASAB Vision 2040.

#### 4. News and major challenges regarding national spatial planning issues

**Poland:** Preparation of the National Development Concept 2050 is ongoing and several seminars with stakeholders have been organised to identify key trends shaping the future in social, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions, and to indicate the most important development challenges that Poland faces and will face in the near future. The concept is to become the document combining socio-economic and spatial planning. Different areas of Poland need a different perspective and their own development paths. The main goal of the document is to preserve the diversity of all areas while strengthening territorial cohesion and sustainable use of natural resources.

**Estonia:** After 5 years of intense process Estonian parliament has approved Estonian maritime spatial plan. There are only 4 small places where to put wind parks in the sea. A new national spatial plan 2040 will be developed and in year 2022 national and international spatial trends are studied and how they will impact spatial development in Estonia. Local general comprehensive plans are developed for 76 local municipalities, 15 of them are already approved.

**Latvia:** Spatial planning and development issues:

- On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, the Administrative Territorial Reform (ATR) came into force restructuring 119 municipalities into 43 new municipalities. Since in Latvia spatial planning is the responsibility of municipalities, the administrative territorial changes mean that local government spatial plans have to be updated in all municipalities, the territories of which have changed. It has been stipulated that the new local government spatial plans have to come into force until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025, and while some municipalities began collaborative work on a joint local government spatial plan even before 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, others are struggling to communicate within the new municipalities to establish a common ground. However, ATR is also expected to lead to increased capacity for spatial planning - better regional availability of various specialists and services, as well as capacity for more effective use of development funds.
- On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers supported the bill proposed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development “Law on the simplification of wind farm building procedures for the stimulation of national energy security and independence” (henceforth – the Bill). The Bill has since also been conceptually supported by Parliament and it stipulates a simpler and faster procedure for building wind farms with capacity above 50MW until the total built capacity of wind farms reaches 1000MW. The Bill would support faster adoption of renewable energy in Latvia and aid in avoiding further critical excessive increases in energy prices in Latvia.
- A support programme for renewable energy household use has been created. The programme’s funds amount to a total of 30 million EUR and since 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022 it has been welcoming citizens to apply for financial support for installing heat supply solutions based on renewable energy technology (such as solar panels). As of May 2022, 289 applications for support have been received for a total of 0.9 million EUR.
- In the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine waged by Russia, concerns about the remaining Soviet heritage in public spaces (e.g., monuments) have been raised in Latvia. While some perceive objects like the Monument to the Liberators of Soviet Latvia and Riga from the German Fascist Invaders as integral to remembering WWII, many see such Soviet heritage as a remnant of forced celebration of Soviet occupation of Latvia. As Latvia’s Ukrainian neighbours, who share a similar history with Russia, once again are fighting for maintaining sovereignty, there has been an increase in the urgency of resolving the tricky issue of determining the future of Soviet heritage. Public protests regarding the issue have been held and legislative barriers to demolition of such monuments have now been removed by Parliament, notably the local government of Riga has since supported the demolition of the aforementioned monument specifically, however, wider discourse on the issue is still to continue.

**Lithuania:** News regarding national spatial planning issues:

- Lithuania prepared the Comprehensive plan of the Republic of Lithuania - the national level spatial planning document. The Concept of this Plan was adopted by the Parliament on 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2020 and Plan itself was approved by the Government in 2021. In the meantime, the program on implementation of the Comprehensive plan until 2030 is being developed. This program has to be linked with National Progress Program, as well as regional planning documents. The implementation tools of these documents shall comply with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and ways of its implementation, be linked with financial instruments as well. In Lithuania, with a newly reformed strategic planning system, more integrated approach is promoted in planning system by linking spatial planning, regional planning, and financing. The Comprehensive Plan is one of strategic documents according to the Law on Strategic Governance.
- The Law on Municipal Infrastructure Development (entered in force 2021-01-01) – its main target is to solve infrastructure development problems in municipalities seeking to prevent the urban sprawl, especially the development of pre-urban areas, by creating favorable conditions for investments. According to this Law, municipalities shall, according to the relevant criteria, define priority development territories where municipalities develop their social and/or engineering infrastructure and non-priority development areas where municipalities do not undertake to develop social and/or engineering infrastructure. The municipals' councils shall establish the procedure on the payment of the municipal infrastructure development fee and the exemption from its payment.
- The Government has started the reform of land management in cities and towns. It is planned to transfer land management from national level institutions to self-government. Conditions for business, economy and development of territorial infrastructure are expected to improve and administrative burden for municipalities and economic entities to reduce. The provisions of different laws need to be changed according to this reform and currently are under consideration in relevant Committees of the Parliament of Lithuania.

**Germany:** Recent news in spatial planning:

- The Federal Spatial Planning Law is currently amended. The overall objective is to speed up planning procedures inter alia through digitalisation, bundling of environmental assessments and participation rights, as well as fastening contracting procedures. The second objective is to make plans more robust in judicial procedures. The amendments are part of a greater package to speed up planning and permit procedures for expanded targets on renewable wind energy, transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure.
- Another legislation in the parliamentary procedure is on the spatial demand for wind energy. It establishes a mechanism for spatial contributions of the sixteen Federal States to reach a target of 2% of the total space of Germany for wind energy production in 2032 (1,4% by 2026). The total target is distributed between the Federal States based on their different preconditions for wind energy production. The Federal States have different options to break down the target on regional and local planning levels or negotiate transfers to other Federal States. The exclusion and steering of wind energy production through plans shall only be permitted as long as the target of the Federal State is reached. If the target is not reached the wind energy production is privileged permitted in the whole planning territory. The right of the Federal States to regulate a minimum distance between settlements and wind energy turbines is linked with the 2% target and shall not undermine the target. As long as the target is not reached regulations on minimum distance become inapplicable. The law shall be decided by parliament in July and enter into force on 1 January 2023.
- A third part of the legislative package are amendments to the Federal Nature Conservation Law. To speed up the expansion of wind energy it establishes federal standards in the examination of wildlife conservation in planning procedures, allows wind energy parks in landscape conversation areas and facilitates the repowering of existing wind energy turbines.

In compensation programmes on species conservation affected by wind energy are established.

- A recent publication of the BBSR on small towns which play a decisive role in ensuring equal living conditions presents the current state and development trends of small towns on the basis of comprehensive quantitative empirical data and analyses, namely for the topics of settlement and urban structure, labour market and economy, services of general interest, finance and governance. Finally, the strategies of urban development that are particularly relevant for small towns are highlighted and the commitment of the federal government to support small towns through its initiatives and urban development funding as well as through the research activities of the BBSR (<https://www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/EN/publications/AnalysenKompakt/Issues/ak-2022-02.html>).
- The new Maritime Spatial Plan for the German EEZ entered into force in September 2021 and has been part of the BSH webinar on June 9. More information can be found under [https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime\\_spatial\\_planning/Maritime\\_Spatial\\_Plan\\_2021/maritime-spatial-plan-2021\\_node.html;jsessionid=FEA92D8BF62C6C556B5A796065A205F4.live11312](https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime_spatial_planning/Maritime_Spatial_Plan_2021/maritime-spatial-plan-2021_node.html;jsessionid=FEA92D8BF62C6C556B5A796065A205F4.live11312).

*The Committee* took note of the information about political news and major challenges regarding national spatial planning issues.

## **5. Terrestrial spatial planning country fiches**

*The Committee* agreed that each country submits a short summary about recent news (from ‘tour de table’) on spatial planning and development issues which will be published at VASAB website. In case of any updates, countries are invited to submit updated national country fiches on terrestrial spatial planning and submit them to Secretariat.

## **6. Update on Young Planners Summer School on 22-26 August in Greifswald, Germany**

*The Committee* took note of the update on Young Planners Summer School on 22-26 August in Greifswald, Germany and of possibility to take part in Summer School’s Jury on 26<sup>th</sup> August.

## **7. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)**

### **EUSBSR Annual Forum, 28-29 September 2022, Lappeenranta, Finland**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the EUSBSR Annual Forum on 28-29 September 2022 in Lappeenranta, Finland and VASAB’s participation in the event.

### **Application for technical support for PAC “Spatial Planning”**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the application for technical support for Policy area ‘Spatial Planning’ coordinators provided by Interreg BSR.

### **PA “Spatial Planning” activities**

*The Committee* took note of the information about EUSBSR Policy area “Spatial Planning” news and activities.

### **Update on Rules of Procedure of PAC “Spatial Planning” Steering Groups**

*The Committee* agreed on the suggestion received from EUSBSR National Coordinators Group to have one Steering Group for Policy area ‘Spatial Planning’ that meets in two formations -

VASAB CSPD/BSR and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and agreed that EUSBSR Policy area ‘Spatial Planning’ Rules of Procedure for Steering Group should be developed accordingly.

### **Let’s Communicate! project news**

*The Committee* took note of the information about progress of project “Let’s Communicate”.

### **8. New ESPON 2021-2027 Programme**

*The Committee* took note of the information about new ESPON 2021-2027 Programme.

### **9. Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) issues**

#### **Information on prolonged suspension of all HELCOM working groups meetings due to invasion of Ukraine by Russian Federation**

*The Committee* took note of the information on prolonged suspension of all HELCOM working groups meetings due to invasion of Ukraine by Russian Federation.

#### **Outcomes of 23<sup>rd</sup> joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group Meeting (online 16-17 November 2021) and 23A intersessional joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group Meeting (online on 27 January 2022)**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the outcomes of 23<sup>rd</sup> joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group Meeting held online on 16-17 November 2021 and 23A intersessional joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group Meeting held online on 27 January 2022, as well as about potential informal consultation meeting in autumn.

### **BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-Group and the next meeting in the beginning of September 2022.

### **VASAB German chairmanship webinar on offshore wind energy on 9 June 2022**

*The Committee* took note of the upcoming VASAB German chairmanship workshop „Offshore wind energy: Challenges and opportunities emerging from new European expansion targets” which will be held online on 9 June 2022.

### **Results of Capacity4MSP project platform**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the results of platform project “Strengthening the capacity of MSP stakeholders and decision makers (Capacity4MSP Platform)”. All materials of the project are available at [www.capacity4msp.eu](http://www.capacity4msp.eu).

### **Progress of eMSP NBSR project**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the progress of project ‘eMSP NBSR’ (Emerging Ecosystem-based Maritime Spatial Planning Topics in North and Baltic Seas Regions). More information about project activities is available at <https://www.emspproject.eu/>.

## **Project application ‘Baltic Sea2Land’ submitted to the Baltic Sea Region Interreg Programme**

*The Committee* took note of the information about the project application ‘Baltic Sea2Land’ submitted to the Baltic Sea Region Interreg Programme to be led by Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, as well as intended VASAB Secretariat’s role and tasks in the project.

## **10. VASAB Budget**

### **Audit Report of VASAB Budget 2021**

*The Committee* acknowledged the execution of VASAB Budget 2021 and took note of the auditor’s Review Report by SIA “Auditorfirma Padoms”.

### **Amendments to VASAB Budget 2022, preliminary VASAB income and expenditure 2022**

Taking into account the audited VASAB Budget 2021, *the Committee* decided to amend the VASAB Budget 2022, allowed payout of the non-taxed salary bonuses in 2022 for the staff members of the Secretariat.

### **VASAB Budget 2022-2025 Cash Flow Prospects**

*The Committee* took note of the information about preliminary VASAB income and expenditure 2022, VASAB budget 2022-2025 cash flow prospects and potential increase of country contributions.

## **11. Long-term solution for VASAB Secretariat after 2024**

*The Committee* took note of Latvia’s willingness to continue hosting VASAB Secretariat in Riga, Latvia and agreed that any VASAB country can express a potential interest to host the VASAB Secretariat from 1 January 2025, and declarations of interests are expected to be received by mail until 16 September 2022.

## **12. VASAB Secretariat news**

*The Committee* took note of the information about operations of the VASAB Secretariat.

## **13. Further involvement of Russia and Belarus from spatial planning perspective**

*The Committee* agreed that it would be useful to organise a workshop on new spatial challenges due to the war and colleagues from Foreign Affairs and other sectors or institutions could be invited.