



**eMSP
NBSR**

Emerging Ecosystem-based
Maritime Spatial Planning
Topics in the North and Baltic
Sea Regions



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Initial proposal on what could be revised in the Baltic Sea regional Guideline on EBA in MSP

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Baltic Sea Regional MSP Roadmap 2030:

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, 2025.*

PA Spatial Planning workplan:

2.1. Facilitation the development of regional MSP framework in synergy between EUSBSR PA SP and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG

2.1.2. Assisting HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG in the implementation of the Regional MSP Roadmap (2021-2030)

eMSP NBSR project deliverables:

Develop concrete recommendations supporting international legal and policy framework for application of EBA in maritime spatial planning, e.g. EBA guidelines, common ground for Strategic Environmental Assessment-framework.



What we'd like to achieve with the revision?

Revision objectives

- 1. Integrate good EBA practices** developed in the past MSP cycles in the upcoming revision of national MSPs.
- 2. Strengthening nature conservation component** of marine management as a part of EBA in MSP.
- 3. Reflect recent development of policy landscape** in the Guideline (EU, Baltic Sea, North Sea, global).
- 4. Operationalize the Guideline** based on the experience of its application for national MSP processes.
- 5. Make a step towards harmonization** of EBA practices in MSP with North Sea region.



Challenges to address

- Absence of **harmonized international methodological framework** for cumulative impact assessment.
- **Insufficiency of information (data)** related to various EBA aspects, including ecosystem components, distribution of human activities and their impacts.
- **Lack of evidence base** on the role of MSP in the support of good environmental status in terms of **MSFD (WFD)**.
- **Insufficient cross-sectorial knowledge base** for identification and optimization of co-use/multi-use of areas.
- **Difficulties to communicate** scientific evidence base with general public and broad stakeholders' community.
- Accounting for **linkages between sea and land** in MSP solutions at national and local scale.
- **Limited integration of Marine Protected Areas** into MSP planning and implementation, resulting in inadequate protection of important marine habitats and species.

Note: climate change is not addressed here but later in this presentation.



Content of the Guideline.

1. Introduction
2. Special features of spatial planning at sea
3. Definitions of the ecosystem-based approach concept
4. Policy context of the ecosystem-based approach
5. Key elements for applying the ecosystem-based approach in MSP
6. Available knowledge on ecosystems of the Baltic Sea
7. Description of the maritime spatial planning process
 - 7.1. Table 1: Implementation of the ecosystem-based approach in the maritime spatial planning process



Policy context of the ecosystem-based approach

Reflected in the Guideline	Revision proposal
Helsinki Convention	No revision
HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan	Revision required, since new BSAP 2030 was adopted in 2021
Joint HELCOM–VASAB MSP Principles	No revision?
EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	Revision required, since new Action plan was adopted in 2021
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	No revision
	Regional MSP Roadmap 2030
	Water Framework Directive
	Birds and Habitats Directives
	SEA Directive
	European Green Deal – multiple policies (climate change is in dedicated section)
	Common Fisheries Policy?
	Relevant aspects from the North Sea policy framework (OSPAR)?

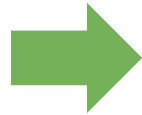
Reflected in the Guideline	Revision proposal
<p>Issues to be considered in addition to Baltic Sea broad-scale MSP Principles</p> <p>Such elements like environmental accounting, strategic environmental assessment, public participation and communication, precautionary principle are mentioned in the text.</p>	<p>Reflect “broad-scale principles” as part of policy landscape.</p> <p>Examples to discuss in relation to current key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Accounting for nature value: nature conservation and cumulative impact within ecosystem bearing capacity. b. Social and economic considerations: utilization of ecosystem services and incorporating relevant human activities. c. Comprehensiveness and coherence: cross-border and cross-sectoral consideration. b. Ocean governance: institutional structure and aligning strategic policy objectives and targets. d. Adaptive management: forward looking approach including monitoring and revision.

Reflected in the Guideline	Revision proposal
<p>Declares general need for knowledge.</p> <p>Mentions HELCOM framework related to data, monitoring and assessment.</p> <p>Gives example of HELCOM HOLAS II.</p>	<p>Provide an indicative list of knowledge areas to be addressed – with examples of good practices.</p> <p>Update the section, addressing recent developments (primarily resulted from MSP DATA ECG but not only).</p> <p>Provide recommendations on minimum data requirements.</p> <p>Update information with focus on regional process related to compilation of data on ecosystem health and environmental pressures. Some examples from HOLAS III might be given.</p> <p>Exemplify good practices of obtaining scientific knowledge from national MSP processes.</p>

Description of the maritime spatial planning process

Planning steps *Current EBA Guideline*

1. STARTING
2. SETTING GOALS
3. PREPARATION
4. PROPOSAL
5. APPROVAL
6. MONITORING
7. REVISION



Recurrent procedures

- Goals setting and revision
- Defining the plan’s content
- Evaluation and impact assessment
- Participation and interaction



Key EBA themes

- a. Accounting for nature value
- b. Social and economic consideration
- c. Comprehensiveness and coherence
- b. Ocean governance
- e. Adaptive management

Examples of good practice *(Goal setting and revision)*:

A Vision, including sector specific Visions, are formulated at the initial stage of planning to identify and account for sectoral policy goals with subsequent consideration of these goals at consultation phase. A Roadmap for marine spatial planning process, accounting for key messages from the Vision(s), serves for consideration of the goals throughout MSP process. In addition to planning goals and environmental objectives, the Roadmap can identify major planning steps, key stakeholders and scope of the strategic environmental assessment.

Policy context

(could be included in common section on policy content)

- *Global CC commitments,*
- *European Green Deal,*
- *HELCOM BSAP by 2030,*
- *Baltic Sea MSP Roadmap,*
- *North Sea framework (OSPAR).*

CC related challenges to be addressed

- *Understanding changes in the marine environment caused by climate change,*
- *Keeping up with the accelerated implementation of renewable energy targets,*
- *Understanding of environmental pressures caused by related activities at sea and the development of solutions to keep the pressure within ecosystems' carrying capacity,*
- *Development of MSP solutions/practices to increase climate change resilience.*

Climate change – new section in the Guideline.

EBA components and principles to be strengthened to address climate change:

- **Adaptive management:** *to make MSP process capable to adapt to changing climate parameters; to consider changes of environmental pressures and ecosystem responses caused by climate change;*
- **Precautionary principle:** *consider uncertainty of knowledge base on the environmental changes caused by climate change.*

Practical aspects of accounting for climate change in MSP

Adaptation

- *Mapping and considering in spatial planning areas vulnerable to climate change including climate refuge areas and restoration.*
- *Managing coastal areas to minimize damage caused by extreme weather effects, including flood protection and conservation of coastal ecosystems.*

Mitigation

- *Identifying areas for renewable energy considering environmental pressures caused by related human activities;*
- *Preservation and restoration of biotopes rendering ecosystem services related to carbon storage*

What's next? - Further steps HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG is invited to undertake

- Consider and provide proposals on the proposed scope of revision
- Agree on the scope of revision
- Establish a task force for the revision *(some steps have been done)*
- Develop revision timeframe *(might be the first task for the task force)*
- Invite HELCOM HOD and VASAB CSPD/BSR to agree on the revision
process *(If needed and as it's possible in current conditions)*

What's next? – other related activities

- Encourage projects to contribute to respective sections of the Guideline
 - eMSP: general recommendations, recommendations by Pan Baltic Scope, harmonization with North Sea, data.
 - MSP4BIO: accounting for nature – MPAs, OECMs, etc
 - ReMAP: data, cumulative impact
 - Baltic Sea2Land: MSP and integrated coastal management
 - Considering input from Synthesis Report on the Ecosystem Approach to Maritime Spatial Planning from the Pan Baltic Scope project.
 - Other...
- Identify contact points in projects who might be invited to the task force
- Consider participation in the following upcoming events:
 - 4th CoP workshop of eMSP LS on EBA (30 March, online)
 - CoP meeting of Learning Strand on Ocean Governance regarding establishing a dialog platform between the North and Baltic Sea regions. The need to harmonize EBA framework is one of the topics. (10-11 May, Copenhagen)
 - Workshop on Maritime Spatial Planning strengthening spatial conservation measures and supporting sustainable blue economy (13-15 June)



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