

Notes from 2nd Planners` Forum within PASPS project

08.03.2023. Helsinki & Online

During years 2022-2024 BSR MSP Planners` Forums will be organized as part of [PASPS](#) project (funded by [Interreg BSR](#)). PASPS project has taken on Planners` Forum from [Capacity4MSP](#) project platform (2019-2022, funded by Interreg BSR) and [Pan Baltic Scope](#) project (2018-2019, funded by EMFF). The second meeting of the Planners` Forum within PASPS project concentrates on two topics:

- Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)
- Offshore Wind developments

In addition, process towards identifying MSP project needs was discussed.

Planners` Forum remains a platform for practical exchange for MSP practitioners, topics to discuss remain flexible and adaptive; participants of Planners` Forum can raise pressing MSP issues to be included in the agenda upon need.

News from VASAB and HELCOM and EUSBSR PA Safe

VASAB: [VASAB Vision 2040](#) has been finalized and approved by the VASAB CSPD/BSR. Vision 2040 will be endorsed during the VASAB Ministerial Conference on 1-2 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany. On the 1st of June there will be Expert conference to celebrate concluding the Vision 2040 development process and discuss jointly with stakeholders how it can be brought to life. Planners` Forum participants are invited to join the Expert conference, registration to the event [here](#).

The 14th EUSBSR Annual Forum will be held on 4-5 October in Riga, Latvia. Forum is organised by the Riga City Council together with Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UBC and VASAB Secretariat.

HELCOM: Third holistic assessment of the Baltic Sea (HOLAS 3) is entering concluding stages; data collection process has been finalized and working groups are processing the results.

A two year long process of restructuring in HELCOM subsidiary bodies has come to an end. It does not affect the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, but redistribution of tasks is ongoing between the Pressure and State and Conservation Group, two new working groups are being formed.

HELCOM is involved in multiple new projects – [eMSP NBSR](#), ReMAP, [AqualNFRA](#), [Baltic Sea2Land](#), new nature conservation projects, like [MSP4BIO](#) and PROTECT Baltic. This will provide resources for MSP work.

Traficom, PAC Safe of EUSBSR: PA Safe is planning a workshop on planning the sea areas and offshore wind parks on the other half of 2023, there is potential interest to organise it back-to-back with other MSP relevant events.

News from countries: MSP status updates and M&E processes

**Context: participating members are invited to share their MSP news. Special attention was paid to MSP status and pressing issues, as well as countries were invited to exchange on their approach on monitoring & evaluation. It is followed by an input from eMSP NBSR project Monitoring and Evaluation Community of Practice.*

Denmark: Danish MSP is legally binding since March 2021, however it is not adopted yet, after consultation in 2021 it was decided to negotiate the MSP during parliamentary debates. After that new government has decided to revise draft, the revised MSP has been presented to the government. Consultation phase has to start at the latest in September this year. Consequently, M&E hasn't really started yet. Once the plan will be adopted, slight changes to the plan will be possible twice a year.

Estonia: Estonian MSP situation hasn't changed a lot since the previous meeting. Recently there was an election and there will be a new government as well as a new climate ministry will be established. Pressure on renewable energy is expected to increase.

Finland: Finnish MSP status remains the same. Finland is taking part in international MSP projects: eMSP NBSR, [MSP Green](#) and Baltic Sea2Land. It is intended to update MSP by 2026 and there is a huge pressure to do that, mostly to increase the amount of energy areas. A concept for M&E was provided in 2020, it consists of 330 indicators, which should be validated with stakeholders, e.g., citizen jury. Currently it is planned to start M&E on the second half of 2023. With assistance from international projects, already a series of workshops have taken place.

Draft version of the Coastal zone strategy development plan has been finalized; it is a part of MSP. English version will be available by the summer, Baltic Sea2Land project will support putting the strategy into practice, coordinate engagement of associated organisations and piloting multi-level governance approach.

Åland: has a guiding plan that should be revised every 6 years. The plan serves as a base for planning large scale energy projects. M&E is not required by law, as it is guiding, therefore there is no framework in place. Currently work is carried out to strengthen the ecosystem-based approach (EBA) and marine protected areas.

Germany: Recently the Site Development Plan ([SDP](#), [geodata](#)) has been published. Multiple studies have been carried out recently and are prepared: North Sea Shipping study for shipping route No.10, which includes formal safety assessment together with Netherlands and Denmark (in preparation), North Sea and Baltic Sea Traffic analysis report, North Sea Risk Analysis Report and Baltic Sea Risk Analysis Report, a document accompanying and putting MSP in wider context, Spatially relevant developments in the German exclusive economic zone in the North Sea and Baltic Sea 2021 (part of M&E process), Spatially relevant developments in the German exclusive

economic zone in the North Sea and Baltic Sea 2021, North Sea Energy Cooperation: Study on wind energy development in the North Seas until 2030, Maritime spatial planning in the German Exclusive Economic Zone. Overview of actors and responsibilities. Regional spatial plans for land and sea are being revised.

Latvia: MSP was adopted in 2019, and currently the plan is being implemented. Among pressing issues are wind park development issues, possible new Natura territories, (via [Life REEF](#) project). Until the end of 2023 interim assessment should be ready, and it is currently carried out. As part of the M&E discussions are ongoing with stakeholders about sustainable use of Latvian marine spaces. A coastal and marine coordination group has been established where these consultations take place. Cross-border consultations planned for the second half of 2023. The interim assessment will include similar themes as MSP, also indicators defined in MSP will be followed up, the assessment will be mainly qualitative.

Lithuania: Lithuanian MSP is part of the Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of Lithuania.

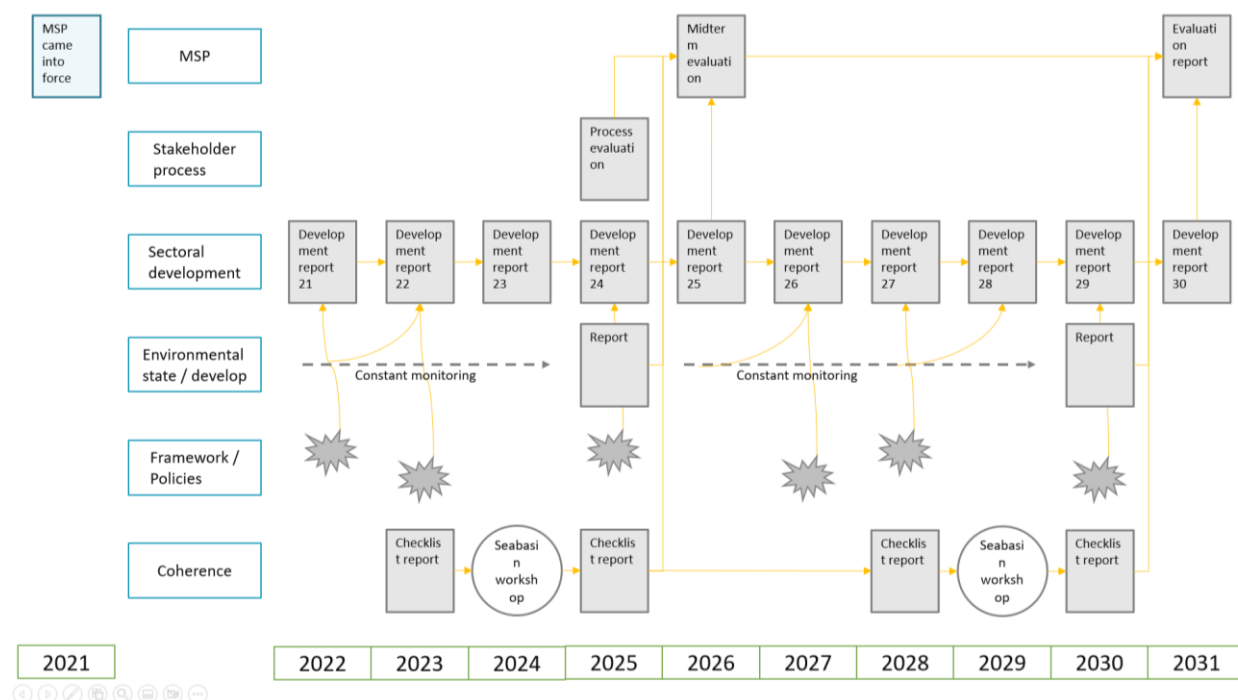
Poland: Polish MSP with scale 1:200 000 has been amended since last year to avoid conflict with a company who had licence for gas and oil exploitation, but which was not reflected in the plan and some other minor changes are implemented. These changes are being translated in English and will be sent to MSP contact points. 'Small plans' are being slowly concluded, so the legislative procedures are started. At this stage there is no monitoring framework in place. For evaluation there is a regulation that plans must be revised at least every ten years – it is a report on current status of sea areas based on which a decision is made whether there is a need for MSP revision. A private association has provided a new report on possible offshore development in Poland which is currently being consulted with key stakeholders.

Sweden: The Swedish MSPs were adopted a year ago, February 2022, which was directly followed by a new assignment for identifying new energy areas, focusing on offshore wind. Also, some nature conservation issues are being updated. Consultation process is foreseen in autumn.

Internal M&E framework adopted – a structure to follow up Swedish MSPs. It has 2 drivers – firstly, to evaluate whether there is a need for revision and if the MSPs are still up to date, secondly, to check the environmental impacts. In addition, evaluation of stakeholder process during MSP has been carried out, concentrating on how the participatory approach was implemented, and the overall feedback is positive.

eMSP NBSR project: Monitoring and Evaluation Community of Practice, by Philipp Arndt, BSH. The Learning Strand on M&E is co-led by Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (Germany) & Gdynia Maritime University (Poland). The aim of the M&E Community of Practice CoP is to assist in the evaluation of cross-border coherence and evaluation of plans. Work is organised within multiple topical subgroups – conceptual framework, plan effectiveness, sectoral development, stakeholder involvement and environmental monitoring. Bilateral meetings on plan coherence have taken place. As a result of the process a report will be developed.

There are multiple dimensions of M&E. As part of the CoP work, a conceptual framework (picture below) – idea how to tackle the whole M&E process is being proposed as part of the project - an ideal concept that has to be adjusted to specific national needs. Monitoring should be a constant process with various inputs (e.g., sectoral reports) which should help to better prepare for upcoming planning cycles. The minimum scope of M&E depends on the applicable law. Stakeholders' processes and following up on sectoral developments can feed into M&E process.



Conceptual framework for M&E process, P. Arndt, (2023).

The M&E CoP also addresses coherence of plans; coherence of existing plans and possibilities to strengthen the coherence are being discussed and the [HELCOM-VASAB Voluntary guidance for assessment of cross-border coherence in MSP](#) is being tested and applied. The process is forward looking – how to ensure the plans are coherent after future revisions.

As part of the M&E CoP the cooperation and governance mechanisms in the North Sea have been explored where coherence is addressed through regular work in groups and panels on specific topics:

- North Sea Shipping cooperation – informal group for knowledge and information sharing.
- North Sea MSP Collaboration Group – informal cooperation.
- North Sea Energy Cooperation – framework for facilitating the enhanced cooperation between the countries of the North Seas, that will deliver upon our combined offshore renewables ambition, including through a joint vision and the promotion of cooperation projects.

Comments from discussions: Time, capacity and political pressure impact monitoring and evaluation process. In many states, a new plan is being developed before M&E process has taken place. Therefore, it might be necessary to partially include evaluation of the plans in the development on new MSP. Stakeholders' involvement also beyond national borders is a part of monitoring and evaluation process. Availability and coherence of data remain an issue.

Offshore Wind Developments

**Context: participating members are invited to share information about offshore developments in their countries/regions. It is accompanied by more detailed inputs about German and Finnish offshore wind developments and guiding framework, as well as by a presentation about the OCEaN initiative.*

Denmark: There are currently two pressing issues related with offshore energy. Firstly, what to do with testing facilities and where can these be located? In Danish plan, permits can only be provided in reserved areas.

Answers from other participants: In Germany pilot turbines with special requirements can be built but have to be within the zones. This has changed recently. In Poland the same procedure applies for pilots as for wind parks. In Finland, in territorial waters, the wind energy can only be produced in areas allocated in the regional plan.

Secondly, there have been two ways for planning wind parks – tendering or open door, but the latter is being closed down. A large part is allocated for governmental decisions where tenders are announced and remaining areas where for open door procedure. With increasing interest, the procedure was no longer effective. How many other countries have this practice?

Answers from other participants: Sweden and Finland has it, called the 'market based development', Poland has a special procedure where specific sites are allocated, and they can choose among them. If interest is shown from other investors as well, then a regulated competitive procedure starts. The system was introduced due to too high interest in open door procedure.

Estonia: by 2030 Estonia should use 100% renewable energy. Three projects for offshore wind are planned to be finalized by 2028-2030 and it will exceed the national needs twice. Special agreement with the Ministry of Defence and by 2027 there will be less restrictions for offshore wind parks because of the new radars.

Finland: Aim to become carbon neutral society by 2035 sets high expectations for offshore energy production. In national MSP there are ~3000 km² foreseen for offshore wind energy, but there are no concrete targets. Companies see it would be possible to build up to 37 GW, which is twice as much as the national consumption. Investors would prefer 'no go' places for offshore wind parks instead of concrete allocated territories. In territorial waters, the regional plans foresee territories for offshore wind and auctions are planned in foreseeable future. All the offshore wind sites are located in Gulf of Bothnia, as the Gulf of Finland is reserved for defence needs. 10-20 companies have already applied for more specific research sites, mostly in EEZ.

A challenge to consider regarding wind parks is the migratory fish, like salmon and Baltic herring; how will the fishes react when all the foreseen wind parks in the Gulf of Bothnia are constructed? If all the national needs will be allocated, there will be even more wind parks and it is uncertain what will be the effects and they will also have effects on fishermen from other countries.

Webmap of wind developments in Finland [here](#).

Latvia: Locating additional territories for wind parks is also a topic in Latvia. They have to be considered from military perspective, e.g., technical requirements for height of the structures. Observation radars cover a big share of the Latvian sea territory, protection zones have been recently increased.

Recently, the coastal coordination group meeting took place. The dialogue with offshore wind industry has improved, so has the informal cooperation in general. The conflict with nature is the biggest, as the biodiversity research areas have a priority over MSP areas. On the other hand, the social pressure has diminished.

Joint offshore wind project between Estonia and Latvia ELWIND is continued.

Poland: Currently there are multiple areas where licenses are given to investors, who have to wait for environmental decisions and building permits (phase 1 projects). There are also areas who are still waiting for licenses (phase 2). More than 120 applications have been received for those areas. Fisheries, mineral, oil and gas extraction, aquacultures are possible in wind parks after investors consent. It is foreseen in MSP and legislation; the investors can get extra points in evaluation process if they allow other activities in wind parks. If the investor has pointed in the bidding procedure that the possibility to carry out other activities in wind parks will be ensured, it is foreseen in the license and must be ensured.

Polish MSP geoportal [here](#).

Sweden: Second planning round is taking place to find more areas for offshore wind. The work is carried out jointly by 9 agencies and the proposal will be published soon, however there are many conflict areas. Knowledge compilation on coexistence between offshore wind and fisheries and nature conservation has been published. There are many applications for offshore wind energy production, currently 67 TWh are in the licensing stage in government, regional administrations are supporting the analysis of these areas, mainly conflicts with defence. There are further 125 TWh in consultation phase 125 TWh and 174 TWh in early phase. Geographically, areas are dispersed through the West coast, Baltic sea and also in Gulf of Bothnia.

As regards the work with planning evidence, shipping is a newcomer in discussions, a lot of discussions on buffer zones, how to deal with strong winter and ice, winter routes for ships. There is a lack of knowledge, and no licenses can be granted before there is more knowledge. Further issues are the conflict between fishing and floating turbines, increasing defence activities, impacts on harbour porpoise and birds.

German Site Development Plan 2023, by Kai Trümpler, BSH. Germany has a multitude planning system where site development plan is under MSP and is to be followed by site investigation and

determination of suitability before tendering of sites. In parallel to the central model, a model where tendering of non-pre-investigated sites can be carried out without site investigation and determination of suitability is introduced which increases the speed of procedure. During summer decisions for more than 8 GW will be made. The Offshore Wind Energy Act jointly with other laws defines the targets: 30 GW by 2030, 40 GW by 2034 and 2045 by 70 GW. The current installed capacity is 8 GW. The Site Development Plan 2023 comprises designation to achieve additional offshore wind capacity of 24,7 GW. There are certain conditional territories that could possibly be used for wind energy production, e.g., there is an area in the Baltic Sea where a wind park could be installed if the fishery research could continue or where bird migration and wind parks are allowed at the same time, but turbines will have to be turned off at certain times. Investors will have to take into account these uncertainties.

The site development plan defines territories for offshore wind farms, sites for auctions inside these areas, also the generation capacity and when these areas will be connected to the grid and when it will be tendered. Connection to the grid will be centralised and the costs will be covered by the transmission grid operator. In addition, an area for hydrogen is planned. 1,3 GW are planned at the Baltic Sea. It is expected to reach 34,5 GW by 2031, afterwards 4 GW every year will be added until the targets are reached. In North Sea, 25% of EEZ will be covered in wind farms. However, to achieve the 70 GW target, additional territories are needed and some conflicts with environmental protection, fisheries, shipping or defence areas may arise. Germany has chosen to separate energy and nature protection areas, but it might be challenging to reach both energy and environmental targets required by the EU as they are competing for the same space.

A lot of coordination with Denmark and Netherland is needed so an ad-hoc working group has been established.

To balance wind energy in the overall energy system, storage will be an issue as well as mixing various energy sources.

The Finnish guidelines for building Offshore wind farms, by Jani Koironen, Trafikom. Finnish Transport and Communications Agency (Traficom) together with Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency are developing Guidelines for building Offshore wind farms, as the volume and interest for offshore wind power is increasing rapidly in Finnish waters and current framework is insufficient. The aim of the guidelines will be to provide information to be taken into account when building an offshore wind farm. Wind farms may have impact on waterborne traffic, therefore there are certain requirements to be considered, like distance, navigation in ice, smooth operation of radars (offshore wind farms may impact operation of radars as well as radars operate differently under ice conditions). There are different frameworks for building in EEZ (guided by MSP) and territorial waters (guided by Land Use Planning guidelines). Currently, a lot of offshore wind farms are planned and they'll be located close to each other, which could cause vessels to take the not optimal routes. There is a close cooperation with Swedish counterparts (Swedish Maritime administration) as many developments are planned close to the border and there is a need for thorough analysis for Bothnian Bay especially on winter navigation and ice conditions in offshore wind parks. With the current knowledge available bigger buffer zones seems the most reasonable solution and manoeuvring space has to be foreseen. It is also important to maintain a

step-wise approach where throughout the process impacts are monitored and data is collected on regular basis.

Ongoing offshore energy project Sunnavind in Åland, by Ralf Häggblom, Government of Åland.

Åland MSP was adopted in 2021 and had already foreseen multi use aspects and provided prerequisites for Sunnavind project. Åland is planning its` offshore parks in government waters in the Northern part of Åland. 1000 km² out of 7000 km² are planned for the Sunnavind project with the 4GW of production capacity. The development rights in the wind park will be auctioned on market-based principles and from the government point of view this could be an export opportunity. The project should benefit the society and partly replace income from shipping. Grid connections will be crucial for successful implementation of the project. From the Åland perspective projects of common interest perspective and joint coordination among BSR would be helpful for grid development or hydrogen production.

There are multiple issues that need to be considered when developing Sunnavind project to avoid conflicts – sea traffic, nature, bird migratory routes. The latter especially should be addressed holistically and not on project-by-project base.

Renewable Grid Initiative & OCEaN, by Madlie Le Bihan, RGI. Offshore coalition for Energy & Nature is a coalition coordinated by the Renewables Grid Initiative (NGO founded in 2009) and it brings together offshore grid operators, wind industry and environmental protection NGOs with the aim to develop sustainable development of offshore energy and grid, 27 members and 2 supporting organisation. OCEaN covers North and Baltic Seas, as well as is expanding to Mediterranean and Black sea. For the 2023 OCEaN will work with sustainability of offshore wind and grid infrastructure, protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, MSP and environmental data.

OCEaN for MSP – a working group on MSP to reach a common understanding. In 2022 WWF, BirdLife and Wind Europe have analysed how MSP addresses environmental and energy targets. Perspectives of the tasks of MSP differ widely among wind industry and NGO`s: sufficient space for nature protection vs. energy production, EBA vs. coexistence of renewables and other uses, planning around nature vs. planning for offshore wind, different understanding of compensation measures. As a result [10 recommendations to improve MSP](#) comprising also good practices, have been developed. At the same common opportunities of MSP has been identified: conflict solving, monitoring long-term, centralised data, multi-use of OWFs, joint and simultaneous planning of designating MPA`s and energy generation sites.

Comments from discussions: European Defense Agency organizes the [1st Plenary Conference for the Symbiosis](#) (Offshore Renewable Energy for Defense) project on Wednesday, 28 June 2023, in Brussels, Belgium.

A discussion was raised on the Unclos Art. 60.7. according to which offshore wind park development might be limited as they would interfere with sea lines essential to international navigation. However, this article could be interpreted in various ways, e.g., some countries would only consider IMO routes under international routes. [HELCOM re-survey database](#) displays areas used in commercial navigation in the Baltic Sea.

In the Gulf of Bothnia the winter and ice conditions have to be analyzed more thoroughly.

An open-source software FOXES for windfarm simulation and wake modelling toolbox which is based on engineering wake models [here](#).

Where should the nature restoration areas be allocated – within the nature protected areas or outside them?

Go to areas – concept more onshore, however some countries have already started screening for these areas in the sea.

Project idea development

As part of the PASPS project, a new task has been allocated to the Planners` Forum – to contribute to a list of project ideas that would support implementation of EUSBSR PA 'Spatial Planning' action field of MSP. As a first step a matching of BSR MSP strategic framework and priorities and already identified project needs was made. It is agreed to use this list for gap analysis to identify fields to focus on and develop more concrete project ideas based on the template provided by the Interreg BSR MA/JS.

During the meeting following project needs and potential project ideas were discussed:

- Offshore wind vs. 30 by 30, avoiding conflicts of energy and nature protection targets defined by the EU. Which areas in MSP contribute to reaching the 30% by 2030 nature protection targets? Can 'other efficient conservation measures' play a role?
- Multi-use and co-existence, what could be the future hotspots or conflict areas
- Cumulative pressures
- Fisheries & aquaculture
- How to greenify offshore wind parks?
- There might be a need for a more modelling tools, especially for holistic evaluation (project idea), Impact assessments – holistic approach – needs, different types of impacts. Collaboration for that is needed.

Themes and timing for the next Planners` Forum

It is agreed that the next meeting of the Planners` Forum will be held online during November 2023 and there will be one topic addressed: European Green Deal and MSP. MSP Green project could provide input (e.g., summary of best practices). Furthermore, there has been an EU assessment on MSP and European Green Deal published in 2022 and eMSP NBSR project will produce policy brief on MSP and European Green Deal and climate change.

There is a suggestion to invite BaltSusBoating 2030 project to present they Sustainability Roadmap for boating and tourism to present the project results in one of the upcoming meetings.

Participants of the 2nd Planners Forum within PASPS project

Country	Name	Organization
Denmark	Trine Skovgaard Kirkfeldt	Danish Maritime Authority
Estonia	Lembe Reiman	Ministry of Finance
Finland	Tiina Tihlman	Ministry of Environment
Finland	Mari Pohja-Mykrä	Regional Council of Southwest Finland
Finland	Jani Koironen	Finnish Transport and Communications Agency, Traficom
Germany	Philipp Arndt	Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, BSH
Germany	Kai Trümpler	Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, BSH
Germany	Bettina Käppeler	Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, BSH
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Latvia	Marta Štūbe	MoEPRD
Poland	Kamil Rybka	Ministry of Infrastructure
Poland	Zajac Natalia	Ministry of Infrastructure
Poland	Magdalena Matzak	Gdynia Maritime Institute
Sweden	Jan Schmidtbauer Crona	Swedish Marine & Water Management Authority
Sweden	Joacim Johannesson	Swedish Marine & Water Management Authority
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Åland	Ralf Häggblom	Government of Åland
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VASAB	Margarita Vološina	VASAB Secretariat