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<b>Document title</b>	Information on the activities related to the Policy Area (PA) Spatial Planning of the EUSBSR and main achievements in 2023
<b>Code</b>	5-1
<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	Agenda item 5 Coordination of the EUSBSR Policy Area Spatial Planning, MSP related projects and initiatives
<b>Submission date</b>	28 September 2023
<b>Submitted by</b>	HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats
<b>Reference</b>	

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## Background

HELCOM and VASAB are co-coordinators of Policy Area (PA) Spatial Planning of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG acts as the Steering Committee of the PA Spatial Planning on MSP related matters. VASAB CSPD/BSR acts as the Steering committee for the PA Spatial Planning concerning land-based spatial planning issues. VASAB Secretariat assists the VASAB CSPD/BSR in this role, by e.g. keeping the committee informed of activities related to the (EUSBSR) and PA Spatial Planning (such as funding opportunities and meetings) and representing the PA in various meetings and processes as needed.

## Action requested

The SG is invited to take note of the information on the activities related to the Policy Area (PA) Spatial Planning of the EUSBSR and organizational matters.

# Developments and activities related to the EUSBSR and PA Spatial Planning

September 2023

## Activities concerning the EUSBSR Action Plan and PA Spatial Planning

The updated EUSBSR Action Plan was adopted by the European Commission on 15 February 2021. There is an indication that new revision of EUSBSR Action Plan would be initiated in 2024 to address the new EU programming period.

The overall goal of the PA “Spatial Planning” is to increase territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region. In 2030, the Region shall be a better-integrated and more coherent macro-region that has reduced socio-economic development divides between its individual parts and has turned global challenges into assets. The current version of the revised EUSBSR Action plan for PA Spatial Planning has two actions:

- Action 1: Strengthening territorial cohesion in the BSR through land-based spatial planning
- Action 2: Ensuring coherent maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea

Following the requirements of the revised Action Plan of the EUSBSR, PA Spatial Planning has developed a [Work Plan 2022-2024](#). VASAB has been assigned the lead PAC. The work and operational framework of PA’s Steering Group is organized according to the [Rules of Procedure](#) (RoP).

PA’s report for National Coordinators Group was circulated to SG members for tacit approval on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## Follow-up on funding activities

*CINEA /EMFAF (The European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency/European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund)* – No information on further MSP calls is currently available. Under the last call EMFAF 2021 a [project MSP GREEN](#) (Maritime Spatial Planning as enabler of the European Green Deal) with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia and the Regional Council of Southwest Finland participate as partners, BSH, VASAB and Finnish Ministry of Environment (FI) as associated partners and [project ReMAP](#) (Reviewing and Evaluating the Monitoring and Assessment of Maritime Spatial Planning) with HELCOM Secretariat as project partner have been approved and have started.

*Interreg BSR Programme* – 2<sup>nd</sup> call for small projects closed on 26 January 2023. 2<sup>nd</sup> call for core projects closed on 14 March 2023. New calls under discussion for 2024.

As part of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> calls of Interreg BSR project multiple projects relevant for PA ‘Spatial Planning’ have been approved: Baltic Sea2Land (VASAB and HELCOM Secretariats as project partners, led by Latvian MoEPRD), BaltSusBoating 2030, Blue Supply Chains, Blue-Green Bio Lab, BOWE2H, BalMalGrav, BEACH-SOS, BSR Cultural Pearls, Energy Equilibrium, Liveability, Urbantestbeds.JR, Urbfrail, We Make Transition!, and PASPS project providing technical assistance to the implementation of PA Spatial Planning (2022-2024). Please find the overview of closed and upcoming [calls](#).

*Interreg Europe* – The 2<sup>nd</sup> call for project proposals closed on 9 June 2023. The 3<sup>rd</sup> call for project proposals under discussion for 2024.

*EURO ACCESS tool* can be used to identify further funding programmes.

Ongoing projects with Policy area ‘Spatial Planning’ involvement:

Title	Role of Steering Group	Funding & Duration
<p><b>EMSP NBSR</b> <a href="https://www.emspproject.eu/">https://www.emspproject.eu/</a> Emerging ecosystem-based Maritime Spatial Planning topics in North and Baltic Sea Regions</p> <p><b>Project lead:</b> Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), 17 partners from NL, BE, DE, PL, DK, FI, SE, FR, Åland. 2 associated organisations</p> <p><b>NB!</b> Final conference “Emerging Ecosystem-based Maritime Spatial Planning Topics in the North and Baltic Sea Regions” will take place on <b>31 January – 1 February</b> 2024, at the coast of the Gulf of Gdansk , Poland. Registration will open soon.</p>	<p>VASAB &amp; HELCOM Secretariats, SWaM, DMA – project partners</p>	<p>CINEA, EMFF-MSP-2020 call</p> <p>2,5 years [Sept 2021 – Feb 2024]</p>
<p><b>Baltic Sea2Land</b> <a href="https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/balticsea2land/">https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/balticsea2land/</a> Fostering integrated governance for the joint sustainable use of human and natural capital in the near shore zone</p> <p><b>Project lead:</b> MoEPRD, LV 13 partners from LV, EE, FI, DE, LT, PL</p>	<p>VASAB &amp; HELCOM Secretariats - project partners</p>	<p>Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027</p>
<p><b>MSP Green</b> <a href="https://mspgreen.eu/">https://mspgreen.eu/</a> Maritime Spatial Planning as enabler of the European Green Deal</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> CORILA (IT) 10 partners from IT, ES, FR, LV, FI, BG, DE, 2 associated organisations</p>	<p>VASAB Sec., BSH and MoE (FI) – assoc.org., MoEPRD (LV) – project partner</p>	<p>CINEA, EMFAF-2021-PIA-MSP</p> <p>2 years [Nov 2022 – Oct 2024]</p>
<p><b>ReMAP</b> <a href="https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/projects">https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/projects</a> Reviewing and Evaluating the Monitoring and Assessment of Maritime Spatial Planning</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 4 partners from ES, FR, IT, FI</p>	<p>HELCOM Secretariat – project partner</p>	<p>CINEA, EMFAF-2021-PIA-MSP</p> <p>3 years</p>
<p><b>MSP4BIO</b> <a href="https://msp4bio.eu/">https://msp4bio.eu/</a> Improved Science-Based Maritime Spatial Planning to Safeguard and Restore Biodiversity in a coherent European MPA network</p> <p><b>Project Lead:</b> s.Pro 18 partners from BE, BG, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IT, LT, PL, PT, RO, UK</p>	<p>HELCOM Secretariat – project partner</p>	<p>Horizon Europe</p> <p>3,5 years [Aug 2022-Feb 2026]</p>
<p><b>PASPS</b> <a href="https://vasab.org/project/pasps-2/">https://vasab.org/project/pasps-2/</a> Policy Area “Spatial Planning” Support</p> <p><b>Project lead:</b> VASAB Secretariat Project partner: HELCOM Secretariat</p>	<p>VASAB &amp; HELCOM Secretariats – project partners</p>	<p>Interreg BSR Programme 2021-2027</p> <p>3 years [Jan 2022-Dec2024]</p>

Further recently approved Interreg BSR 2021-2027 projects relevant for PA Spatial Planning & regional framework implementation on MSP

Theme	Project title	Lead partner	Overall aim
Blue Economy	<b>BaltSusBoating 2030</b> Baltic Sustainable Boating 2030 - Making leisure boating in the Baltic Sea fit for the post-pandemic boating tourism market	The Association of Sea Cities and Municipalities (PL)	BaltSusBoating 2030 initiates a strategic cooperation at BSR level for developing the Baltic Sea into a single & sustainable boating destination, and to jointly promoting it at international markets. Supported by CBSS, the main umbrella organisations & boating tourism actors' team up to define goals & steps for a collaborative destination development and joint marketing until 2030.
	<b>BSC</b> Blue Supply Chains	Port of Hamburg Marketing Reg. Assoc. (DE)	BSC will provide a three-pillar approach on how Port authorities can support greening process in port operation (electrification of handling equipment), by providing alternative fuels (bunkering & charging strategy) and by pushing to set-up green transport chains (combined transport).
Safe shipping & maritime data	<b>BalMarGrav</b> Homogenized marine gravity maps of southern and eastern Baltic Sea for modern 3D applications in marine geodesy, geology and navigation	Institute of Geodesy and Cartography (PL)	The project aims to increase the potential of national sectoral agencies and the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC) to realize their tasks. BalMarGrav will build up a transnational network of the relevant experts in the region, save and reprocess the fragmented historical data and provide harmonized and validated open data products to the target groups.
	<b>Baltic Sea e-Nav</b> Shared waters – same standards. Baltic Sea Partnership for Future Navigation	Swedish Maritime Administration	Project will digitalise navigational charts and develop navigational products from today's standards to support the planning of more energy efficient routes, co-existence with other maritime activities and to avoid safety risks.
	<b>MaDaMe</b> Maritime Data Methods for Safe Shipping	Turku University of Applied Sciences	Project will provide digital information sharing and messaging services for fairway users as a solution for safety and clean shipping.
	<b>OpenRisk II</b> Tools for shared & dynamic maritime traffic risk picture of the Baltic Sea region	Finnish Transport and Communication Agency	Project will provide new, practical and user-centred risk management tools to support the competent authorities in preventing maritime accidents, minimizing their human and environmental consequences and improving the quality of overall maritime risk management.
Circular economy	<b>Blue-Green Bio Lab</b> Blue-Green Bio Lab across the BSR	Skive Municipality (DK)	This project targets the urgent challenge to reduce nutrients to BSR waters, limit GHG emissions, and quickly enhance European self-supply with food, feed and energy.
Energy Transition	<b>BOWE2H</b> Baltic Offshore Wind Energy to Hydrogen	Greifswald University (DE)	BOWE2H answers the need to have joint regional knowledge on offshore wind and hydrogen production with a stakeholder network that hosts six regional expert events, and co-creatively produces a Strategic Roadmap for Regional Offshore Wind and Hydrogen Development.
Land-sea interactions	<b>BEACH-SOS</b> Climate Smart Baltic Beaches and Tourism	Helmholtz-Zentrum hereon GmbH	Project aims to enhance the capacity of local governments, Blue Flag beaches, coastal tourism business, business support units, NGOs and coastal communities to become "climate-smart" and to incorporate climate change into beach management strategies and provide the best available data and information for adaptation of coastal tourism.
	<b>Light in the Dark</b> Increasing resilience in rural and coastal tourism in the northern BSR by developing off-season experiences	Novia University of Applied Sciences	Project will develop a transnational northern Baltic archipelago concept for nature-based tourism during off season.

## Events related to EUSBSR

*EUSBSR National Coordinators' group* is currently chaired by Latvia who took over from Sweden. Last meetings under the Swedish Presidency took place on 3 April, 19 April, 11 May, online and 5 June, Visby, Sweden. The first meeting under the Latvian Presidency took place on 14 September.

*Monthly EUSBSR Presidency* meetings with PACs, the latest meeting was on 25 September.

*VASAB Ministerial Conference and VASAB Experts Conference* was held on 1-2 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany to celebrate the completion of VASAB Vision 2040. The focus of the VASAB Ministerial Conference was the endorsement of the VASAB Vision 2040 and the adoption of the Wismar Declaration 2023, which underlined the commitment of participating countries to implement the VASAB Vision 2040. More information [here](#).

*14<sup>th</sup> EUSBSR Annual Forum* will take place on 4-5 October 2023 in Riga, Latvia. VASAB is involved in the organization of the Forum. The main organizer is the Riga City Council with assistance from the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UBC. VASAB Secretariat is supporting the registration process, development of visual materials, organizing networking village with a pitch corner, and contributing to the development of the agenda.

*Information prepared with support of the Interreg BSR Programme project "Policy area "Spatial Planning" Support" (PASPS).*

## Main achievements of PA Spatial Planning during 2023

PA Spatial Planning work is following the [PA's Work Plan 2022-2024](#) that is aligned with the PASPS project. Main achievements under each Group of Activities (GoA) of the Work Plan are described below.

### GoA 1.1. Strengthening territorial cohesion in the BSR through land-based spatial planning

Two Steering Group (SG) meetings on land-based spatial planning have been held during 2023: 89th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting online on 28 April and 90th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting online on 24 November. SG has been updated on latest EUSBSR developments.

On 1<sup>st</sup> June a VASAB Experts Conference on the updated VASAB Vision 2040 “Vibrant, Resilient, Well-Connected Baltic Sea Region in 2040” took place and included a dedicated session on interactions between VASAB Vision 2040 and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and its thematic policy areas.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023, the VASAB Ministers responsible for spatial planning and development in the Baltic Sea Region countries met for the 9th time to jointly discuss the complex challenges related to the geopolitical and energy policy changes in the Region and beyond. The main focus of the VASAB Ministerial Conference was the endorsement of the VASAB Vision 2040 and the adoption of the Wismar Declaration 2023, which underlined the commitment of participating countries and invited pan-Baltic organisations and networks (including EUSBSR) to implement the VASAB Vision 2040.

Work on the document for the implementation of the VASAB Vision has been initiated and will be further discussed at the next meeting of Steering Group on land-based spatial planning (VASAB CSPD/BSR) on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

### GoA 1.2. Ensuring coherent maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea

Two Informal Consultation sessions of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG were arranged - 2nd meeting of SG on MSP took place on 9-10 March in Helsinki and 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of SG on MSP took place on 24-25 October in Riga. In line with further work on the implementation of the Work plan, main topics of these meetings covered the development of the regional framework for EBA in MSP, improvement of the quality and availability of MSP data and intergovernmental cooperation ensuring cross-border coherence of national MSPs. A nominated Task Force initiated the revision of HELCOM-VASAB Guideline on the application of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the light of new regional policy landscape formed by the VASAB Vision 2040, HELCOM BSAP 2030 and the Regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2030 and the European Green Deal.

SG members exchanged national experiences related to accounting for cultural heritage, offshore wind development, climate change adaptation and other issues in MSP. SG has been updated on latest EUSBSR developments, as well as informed about progress in MSP-related projects contributing to the implementation of the Regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2030 and other commitments.

MSP Data Experts sub-group consultation sessions were arranged on 7<sup>th</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023. The Expert Group focused on the improvement of regional MSP data quality and compatibility. It involves further development of the input data structure and maintenance of the up-to-date state of the MSP output data. Availability of MSP data and effective data exchange in cross-border context are considered as key aspects ensuring MSP coherence throughout the Baltic Sea region. The Group steered further improvement of user interface of BASEMEPS MSP data service, discussed methodological approach for regionally coherent data on offshore wind farms, and initiated analysis of cross-border topological coherence of MSP output data.

Update of the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Baltic Sea area based on shared experiences in national application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP is one of the milestones on the way towards the Roadmap's goal, planned for 2025. The revision was initiated by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, which recommended establishing of the respective Task Force. The Task Force has been established with the support of the PA Spatial Planning. The first meeting of

the Task Force took place 5 September 2023, when participants representing Baltic Sea countries and NGOs identified the scope of the revision and developed detailed work plan.

The revision is supported by efficient communication between EUSBSR PAs, HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and other relevant HELCOM subsidiary bodies. It resulted in a 3-day workshop arranged 13-15<sup>th</sup> June 2023, which comprehensively considered various aspects of ecosystem-based approach in MSP and sustainable blue economy with specific focus on new policy commitments related to the European Green Deal and climate change.

Follow up of MSP at the regional level based on the new follow-up mechanism has been launched at the 2<sup>nd</sup> informal consultation session of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG. Countries exchanged information on the latest national MSP development and agreed to provide updates to the follow-up mechanism, with a special view on recent and ongoing EU strategies. The Working Group established close cooperation with the EU MSP Platform and discussed recent report published by the European Commission on assessing the relevance and effect of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive in the context of the European Green Deal.

### **GoA 1.3. Project idea development: Platforms for project ideas generation**

After agreeing on approach how to proceed with identification of project needs for PA Spatial Planning in 2022, the tasks within existing policy framework have been summarized and first project ideas and concrete steps have been selected.

Planners' Forum is continued as a place for safe discussions on pressing MSP issues and serves as the main platform to develop project ideas that will address knowledge gaps and macro-regional planning needs in MSP. The second MSP Planners' Forum within PASPS project took place on 8 March 2023 in Helsinki with focus on offshore wind energy development. Third meeting is taking place in November 2023 with focus on EU Green Deal. Participants continuously feed into the work of project idea development.

SG on land-based spatial planning issues in its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023 will discuss necessary project needs that would be crucial for PA Spatial Planning from land-based spatial planning perspective. As an outcome the list of project ideas will be prepared and disseminated among the stakeholders. An online event targeted to potential project developers is intended to be hosted by the end of 2023 or beginning of 2024.

Interreg Europe interregional cooperation forum "Europe, let's cooperate! 2023" on 15 March 2023 helped to learn more about potential project ideas, as well as share pan-Baltic perspective in spatial planning.

### **GoA 1.4. Communication with stakeholders, PA Spatial Planning promotion and visibility**

Project helped to reach out to various stakeholders and engage them into PA's work. After adoption of VASAB Vision 2040, SG has started to work on the implementation document that also identifies existing gaps or potential project ideas for more successful implementation of the Vision 2040. In order to keep momentum, regular communication and exchange with recently launched projects from Interreg BSR programme (such as Baltic Sea2Land, We Make Transition!, Liveability, BaltSusBoating 2030, Blue Supply Chains, CITYAM etc.) and other funding sources (EMFF and Horizon Europe such as MSP GREEN, eMSP NBSR, MSP4BIO, PROTECT BALTIC, ReMAP) has been taken place.

Meetings with fellow PACs (PA Energy and PA Transport) have taken place to build synergies between VASAB Vision 2040 and other Policy areas to identify potential joint actions, how could PACs be involved in the implementation of VASAB Vision and how can the Vision support PAs in achieving their targets. PA regularly participates at EUSBR Monthly online meetings and shares the latest development within PA.

PA has been successfully presented in various events reaching wide audiences, e.g.:

- European Maritime Days 2023 in Brest, France at workshop "How to plan & deploy nature friendly offshore wind".
- CBSS Expert Group of Maritime Economy meeting in Berlin on 7-8 June and in Turku on 12 October 2023.

- Workshop “Strengthening the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and supporting sustainable blue economy” in Helsinki on June 13-15, 2023.
- ESPON seminar “Territorial perspective of green industrialisation” in Lulea / Sweden on 14-15 June 2023.
- Panel session at BSSSC Annual Conference’s ‘Building a resilient Baltic Sea Region – 30 years of BSSSC as a driver for strong regional involvement’ in Szczecin / Poland on 12-13 September 2023
- Presentation at CPMR Baltic Sea Commission General Assembly meeting in Umea/ Sweden on 18-19 September 2023
- Presentation at ‘Our Baltic’ Ministerial Conference in Palanga, Lithuania on 29 September 2023.
- Annual EUSBSR Forum on 4-5 October 2023 in Riga.
- EU Regions Week on 9-12 October 2023 in Brussels.
- EU MSP Experts Group on 10 October 2023.
- Panel discussion at the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum 2023 in Tallinn on 11 October 2023.
- Representation (presentation and stand) at Blue Mission BANOS’ 1<sup>st</sup> Mission Arena on 14-16 November 2023 in Gothenburg.



## Identification of MSP-related project needs within PA Spatial Planning

According to the project application and requirements of PASPS project and consecutive work plan of PA Spatial Planning, project needs and project ideas in the field of spatial planning have to be identified. As PA has two thematic fields – land-based planning and maritime spatial planning (MSP), project needs and ideas are being identified and developed in both fields. List of project needs and ideas to support implementation of PA Spatial Planning policy framework will be result of this exercise. The result will not be exhaustive, it can be amended upon the need and shall serve as a guidance for stakeholders when elaborating project applications.

The process and the approach were presented and agreed in the previous – 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Group meeting (Memo of IC HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 2-2023, paragraphs 5.10 and 5.11). Planners' Forum serves as the main platform to develop project ideas that will address knowledge gaps and macro-regional planning needs in MSP. The progress of the process can be followed in separate document [here](#) (check the sheet 'MSP').

Preliminary list of MSP-related project ideas has been prepared as follows:

### Strings

- o *Future navigation of traditional and autonomous ships, regarding the need for a "safe haven" around a ship to guarantee the safety of navigation - How wide must shipping lanes through or near windmill parks be? How to combine maritime transport with all other needs of the sea, e.g., Natura2000 areas, fishing etc.*
- o *Analysis of impact on MSP of new shipping technologies.*
- o *Development of the network of a small and medium-sized ports and their integration in value and supply chains.*
- o *Sustainable boating routes and yachting connecting the Baltic Sea and inland waterways and opening exciting and safe new routes for sailors and all engaged in water-based activities through enhancing pleasure craft governance regimes and promoting new innovative, sustainable high-quality yachting and other water-based sports and recreations services.*

### Patches

- o *Sustainable development and management of coastal areas responding to the needs of local societies and increasing tourism activities.*
- o *Further incentives for enhancing inclusion of the local actors to the MSP process and examination of the interactions related to the social sustainability (how allocation of the sea space benefits various social groups on land). Increasing capacity of local decision makers and communities, especially in coastal areas.*
- o *Mapping the cultural heritage in the BSR and looking for the best methods for the preservation and the sustainable use of cultural heritage (e.g., blue and green tourism, recreation).*
- o *To promote and valorise the importance of Underwater and Maritime Cultural Heritage in creating and enhancing well-being, quality of life, identity, sense of place, social capital, blue growth, and the power of heritage to build ties between generations and people.*
- o *Analysing socioeconomic and/or cultural aspects in MSP. Practices on the inclusion of recreation and tourism into MSP and promoting good examples showing how in practice tourism related conflicts can be handled in MSP.*
- o *Exploring how plant and mussel aquaculture improving good environmental status could be supported.*
- o *Green Infrastructures - a connectivity analysis of ecologically valuable areas, a more comprehensive ecosystem service assessment and an improvement in input data quality.*

### Climate change

- o *Analysing the role of MSP in the long-term resilience of coastal municipalities in the context of climate change.*
- o *Guidance for strategic ways for integrating climate change adaptation into MSP, development and approbation of good practices.*
- o *Adaptive conservation strategies to cater for spatial changes in ecosystems (e.g., migration of species, change of critical conditions for habitats), including the further exploration of the potential for including climate refugia in MSP for the entire Baltic Sea.*
- o *Modelled maps of climate change impact on marine ecosystem & spatial data on climate change impacts.*
- o *Development and sharing of good practices showing how MSP should deal with other safety concerns such as extreme weather events, massive oil leakages, potential environmental disasters.*
- o *Development of climate resilient coastal infrastructure.*

### Energy

- o *Further improvements on collecting maritime information supporting the development of renewable energy production.*
- o *Exploring cross-sectoral cooperation with regards of sustainable development of renewable energy production*
- o *Promoting energy storage and transfer, as well as holistic approach to energy planning ensuring coherence across the borders.*
- o *Exploring the possibilities of multi-use / co-existence / spatial efficiency in maritime spatial planning and management. Supporting multi-use of energy sites considering technical, administrative and economic aspects.*

#### **System**

- o *Future oriented report on marine and maritime activities and developments of the Baltic Sea (pan-Baltic MSP monitoring report)*
- o *Further exploration of tools and approaches for effective involvement and engagement of different stakeholders at various governance levels and across the sectors in MSP and maritime management, including transnational dimension. Development and approbation of transboundary multi-level governance model.*
- o *Improving the data compatibility and support collecting new data in harmonized way and structure.*
- o *Improving tools for sharing, discussing and integration of various types of data for MSP needs*
- o *Development of Baltic Strategic Environmental Assessment framework for MSP*
- o *Further development of tools for cumulative impacts assessment to more conscious application of the ecosystem-based approach. There is a need to connect existing models with economic impact models.*
- o *Further investigation of carrying capacity of marine environment in context of blue growth.*
- o *Exploring linkages between environmental and social-economic dimensions through an ecosystem services analysis with cross-border MSP perspective.*
- o *Monitoring the governance of MSP and impact of MSP on blue economies to promote an adaptive MSP.*

## Draft Feedback from the Steering Group of the PA Spatial Planning on MSP

Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency are chairing the steering group (SG) of the policy area Spatial Planning on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region since 17 November 2021. In our capacity as Chairs of the SG on MSP, we would like to inform the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of Interreg Baltic Sea Region about the SG's feedback on the implementation by the policy area coordinators within the PAC assistance project "Policy Area 'Spatial Planning' Support" (PASPS) co-financed by the Programme.

The steering group of PA Spatial Planning took note of the progress and achievements of the policy area during January – December 2023, jointly coordinated by HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats. The SG exchanged views on the achieved progress and has agreed on the following feedback:

- The SG is satisfied with the progress achieved by the PA in the above-mentioned period and the work of the policy area's coordinators (PACs).
- The SG emphasizes the following aspects of PACs' work as key factors of the PA's progress in this period:
  - o PACs' valuable assistance in maintaining the dialogue between MSP practitioners aiming at enhanced coherence of planning in the Baltic Sea. Planners' Forum meetings and improved follow-up mechanism of the implementation of Regional MSP were recognized by the EU MSP Platform as important communication tools. During 2023 pressing topics for BSR and EU – offshore wind development, European Green Deal and climate change – were on top of the Planners' Forum agenda.
  - o PACs' assistance in the organisation of BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group meetings. The expert group achieved significant progress in the development of regional MSP data model supported by BASEMAPS and consistency of MSP output data.
  - o PACs' contribution to close cooperation with regional and Pan-European MSP projects. Work plans of such projects as MSP4BIO, SELINA, MSP Green, Baltic Sea2Land, Baltic AIMS, eMSP NBSR and ReMAP were coordinated with the regional MSP policy framework to ensure their input in the implementation of the Regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2030.
- The SG were informed about the progress achieved in supporting project idea generation during the 2<sup>nd</sup> SG meeting on 9-10 March 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> SG meeting on 24-25 October 2023 and the role of PACs in facilitation the co-creation process.
- The SG would like to emphasize the role of PACs in the work on identification of knowledge gaps within the existing MSP policy framework.

Furthermore, the SG would like to give the following recommendations that should be considered by the PACs in their work during the upcoming year:

- Contribute to potential revision of EUSBSR Action Plan;
- Coordinate establishing of a dialogue and closer cooperation between planners, environmental policy makers and energy policy makers;
- Support steps towards establishing of an MSP cooperation platform between North and Baltic Seas;
- Continue efforts for further advancement of the regional MSP data sharing system BASEMAPS;
- Facilitate the revision of Regional Guideline on the application of ecosystem-based approach in MSP.

<p><b>Kai Trümpfer</b> Co-chair German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency ____ December 2023, Hamburg <a href="mailto:kai.truempler@bsh.de">kai.truempler@bsh.de</a></p>		<p><b>Joacim Johannesson</b> Co-chair Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management ____ December 2023, Gothenburg <a href="mailto:joacim.johannesson@havochvatten.se">joacim.johannesson@havochvatten.se</a></p>
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