

Summary of the 89th CSPD/BSR Meeting

Online, 28 April 2023

Chairperson: Mr. Daniel Meltzian (DE)

Participants: CSPD/BSR members: Mr. Lukas Kühne (DE), Mr. Jens Kurnol (DE), Ms. Kristi Grišakov (EE), Ms. Anna-Leena Seppälä (FI), Ms. Tiina Tihlman (FI), Ms. Algimante Treiniene (LT), Ms. Anita Līvija Rozenvalde (LV), Ms. Patrycja Artymowska (PL), Ms. Maxi Nachtigall (SE), invited guests: Mr. Uģis Zanders (Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat), VASAB Secretariat: Ms. Alda Nikodemusa, Ms. Elīna Veidemane, Ms. Jana Patmalniece, Ms. Liene Gaujeniete, Ms. Egija Stapkēviča and Ms. Margarita Vološina.

1. Adoption of the report of 88th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting

The Committee adopted the Report of 88th CSPD/BSR online meeting on 13 December 2022 without changes.

2. Adoption of the summary of 88th VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting

The Committee adopted the Summary of 88th CSPD/BSR online meeting on 13 December 2022 without changes.

3. Information on Open Troika meeting

The Committee took note of the Report of the VASAB Open Troika online meeting on 31 March 2023.

4. Expert's Conference on the updated VASAB Vision: Vibrant, Resilient, Well-connected – The Baltic Sea Region in 2040 on 1 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany

Interviews of CSPD/BSR members on stakeholder's process

The Committee was informed about planned agenda for Expert's Conference on the updated VASAB Vision: Vibrant, Resilient, Well-connected – The Baltic Sea Region in 2040 which will take place on 1 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany. The Committee members were asked to take part in a session 'Making the VASAB Vision 2040 reality' which will be organised in an interview style and divided in two parts: one on pearls and patches, and second on strings and systems.

The Committee took note on information on preparations for the Expert's Conference on the updated VASAB Vision: Vibrant, Resilient, Well-connected – The Baltic Sea Region in 2040 which will be held on 1 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany.

The Committee agreed that VASAB Secretariat will send to the Committee members the latest version of the VASAB Expert's Conference programme with incorporated guiding questions for the session 'Making the VASAB Vision 2040 a reality' in order to prepare for the interviews.

5. VASAB Ministerial Conference on 2 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany

The Committee was informed about planned agenda for VASAB Ministerial Conference which will take place on 2 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany.

The Committee took note on information on preparations for the VASAB Ministerial Conference which will be held on 2 June 2023 in Wismar, Germany.

Ministerial Declaration

The Committee was informed that draft Ministerial Declaration has been sent to the Committee members for feedback and Wismar Ministerial Declaration will be agreed on in two written procedure rounds. If an online meeting will be necessary to discuss the Declaration, it will be organised.

The Committee agreed that Wismar Ministerial Declaration will be agreed on in two written procedure rounds and if needed an online meeting will be organised to discuss the declaration.

6. Implementation of VASAB Vision 2040

The Committee was informed that this agenda item ‘Implementation of VASAB Vision 2040’ builds on the previous Committee meeting when the VASAB Vision 2040 was adopted and then there was a discussion what to do next, how to encourage the implementation of the Vision, how to operationalize it and also set the framework for evaluation of the progress. VASAB Secretariat has prepared a concept for implementation and it is based on work done by German consultation company ‘REM consult’ who are assisting VASAB German chairmanship. The document ‘Concept for the Implementation’ has been sent to all Committee members and this document is trying to answer the questions: what the Vision is, how can it be implemented, how this implementation can be evaluated and which tasks could be set for the other stakeholders that also can support the implementation. Currently the document refers to all 40 possible future actions of the Vision and the question is whether these actions should be prioritised. Most important part of this document would be the implementation opportunities, such as projects, pilot actions, young planners summer school etc. Then other important aspect to include is knowledge transfer. Probably this document could propose specific topics in which some workshops/forums/meetings could be organised in future as guidance also for upcoming VASAB chairmanships. Knowledge transfer could also be ensured by developing synthesis reports such as cities development report and accessibility report which have been developed few years ago. This document could include information on what kind of tasks could be done by VASAB and other stakeholders in the future. Continuous dialogue with stakeholders should be mentioned too, like bilateral discussions with policy area coordinators and other stakeholders, spreading the word about VASAB and VASAB Vision 2040, inviting to different events etc.

The Committee took note on information of the prepared document ‘Guidance for the implementation of the VASAB Vision 2040’ and agreed on proposed approach. *The Committee* agreed to continue elaboration of the VASAB tasks supporting the implementation of the Vision 2040 in the next meeting.

7. News and major challenges regarding national spatial planning issues and implementation of the EU emergency regulation to accelerate renewable energy in member states

Germany: news in spatial planning:

- There will be a European wide tender procedure for an expert opinion on multi-use in maritime spatial planning for the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Outcome of this procedure

should be a more specific matrix of which multi-use possibilities are there in the maritime spatial plan.

- The Federal Spatial Planning Law in Germany is revised and now it is going through the legislative procedure. It is in the Official Gazette and will take into force in September 2023. One part of this new legislation on federal spatial planning is one article about the EU emergency regulation. The expansion of renewable energy is an overriding public interest and makes a bit difficult for the regional planners to cope with.
- The Nature Restoration Regulation that is currently discussed on EU level brings additional spatial targets with new obligations on nature restoration. For example, in urban areas there shall be a restoration of up to 5% of urban greens.
- The concept and guidelines on federal level on spatial planning in Germany are under consideration. In 2021 a federal spatial plan was developed on flood risks where were included some innovative elements of intercommunal and inter federal states consultations and more risk-oriented view on spatial planning that you're not built houses in certain areas and rebuild some things that you look on critical infrastructure and so on.

Finland: news in spatial planning:

- We had just elections in Finland and it seems the right-wing parties won which means there will be a new government. We are waiting for the programme to proceed with our revision of the land use legislation. And we have been working on that quite long. The provision of land use and building act has finally gone so that it was separated into two different acts and only the Building Act was approved by the Parliament. In the Land Use Act changes were made to make it possible to have full digitalization of planning and for that a national information system is being developed. Legislation that makes possible to use it was approved so only this part went forward and we are still having the same challenges that we think that in the reform of the Land Use Act we need to take the climate challenges better. Due to the geopolitical situation and Finland becoming a member of NATO, national land-use guidelines and especially the needs of the National Defence and security of supply need to be reviewed. We haven't yet seen that there should be much changes in the land use planning because of that, but it can have effects and then of this green transition we have a lot of efforts to promote.
- We have given grants to municipalities, our regional councils to plan investment projects and we have also had a lot of discussion about the wind power and especially wind power on sea that needs to be developed also in collaboration, for example, with Sweden. We are working out how to do that and also the construction of large solar power plants is growing. We have also set up a steering group to prepare a guiding material for planning and permit, licensing the large solar power plants.
- Restoration of urban areas and the urban greens has been in discussion in Finland. It's especially difficult because our municipalities are already very green.

Latvia: news in spatial planning:

- Nature restoration law is in very intense discussions in Latvia, especially Article 6 - the urban areas one. We see that the changes in the proposal are currently being steered and in our opinion it is the right direction. However, there are big implications on using space for renewable energy projects, so there has to be some stipulations. We are still in discussions. We're trying to defend this position that renewable energy does not classify the same as any new development. There are other mentions also about data, but still in discussions and we'll continue to participate and talk to other countries as well.
- Currently there is an ongoing coordination group for maritime spatial planning in Latvia. Today is the third meeting of the coordination group and group is discussing how to reassess the allocation of space in the Maritime Spatial Plan of Latvia which was adopted in 2019. We are doing an interim assessment and trying to figure out what adjustments might be

needed and coordinating cross sectorally. We are coordinating opinions and discussions, and hopefully soon will have tangible results in the form of interim assessment.

- Another big planning consideration has been the fact that this spring Latvia experienced extensive floods in multiple cities, so there are also ongoing discussions about how to deal with hazardous flooding. There is going to be a meeting in the upcoming month about the situation with the floods.
- In terms of regional development more generally, as well as planning is the fact that we are trying to address our Eastern border, which has not been able to uptake as many European funds and develop, therefore there is a development gap. There will be organised a Conference on 12 May 2023 to discuss these issues and everybody who is interested and join the conference. We are exchanging with other countries their experiences on how to deal with border regions that are lagging behind and have certain influences in their daily ongoings.

Estonia: news in spatial planning:

- There were elections in March and now there is a new coalition.
- Ministries are being reorganised and new Ministry of Climate will consist of previous departments which were previously Ministry of Communication. Energy, transport, construction together with the departments from Ministry of Environment and another ministry will be Ministry of Regional Affairs which will also hold spatial planning and regional development. The aim of it is to have more cohesive planning of space and cohesive spatial development. There is an idea to form a separate body into the Ministry of Regional Affairs which will be extra support to the municipalities in planning issues to put together different spatial data monitoring system.
- In January 2023 we started the development of new strategic spatial plan of Estonia 2050. It will be hopefully completed by 2026 and then also important issue to accelerate the transfer to sustainable energy production. Whole package of different changes was made but also one of the changes concerned. Then the planning law and the speeding up the planning procedures concerning especially the national designated spatial plans. But we are still preparing some other changes to the Planning Act. No specific news about what exactly is planned at the moment, but there will be more news about that in the autumn. And then as in Finland also the security is currently an important topic. Military is very actively wanting to expand different military training fields and they would like to do it without the following national designated spatial plan procedure, so there is a lot of conflict around this decision and how it will be done and how to do it in a participative manner with the local community.

Lithuania: news in spatial planning:

Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania:

- The program on implementation of the Comprehensive plan until 2030 has been prepared and is going to be presented to the Government for approval. While implementing this program we will link it with EU programming and other initiatives.

Amendments in the Law on Territorial Planning and the Law on Renewable Energy:

- These amendments were made with a purpose to accelerate planning and approval procedures for development in the areas of renewable solar and wind energy. It shall speed up the planning process because in some cases the territorial planning process for the construction of solar and wind farms is not obligatory with the exemptions in urban territories as well as heritage, nature protected territories. However, such constructions shall not contradict legal acts and existing requirements.

Reform of Land Management:

- Since 1st of January 2024, by the Law on Land the state land of cities and towns located in the territory of the municipality shall be transferred to the municipality for management in trust. The initiated changes of state land management in cities and towns continue and necessary legislative amendments are being prepared to establish administrative procedures.

Guidelines for sustainable cities:

- The Ministry of Environment of Lithuania is preparing sustainable urban guidelines. The guidelines shall include an evaluation of the status and principles for spatial-strategic development. The cities will be evaluated spatially and statistically using specific indexes and indicators. The guidelines highlight urban development problems and the principles to solve them. This holistic approach is a big step in integrating the EU initiatives, programs and simplifying the evaluation of the urban environment in Lithuania.

Poland: news in spatial planning:

- We are working still on the national concept of development 2050 and trying to make it more territorial oriented because it should be integrated strategy or rather vision for future.
- Regarding nature restoration proposal, there is a special group who deals with this issue. The Ministry of Climate and Environment are leading the process and the results showed that we need the regulatory impact assessment or we need to work more on the regulatory impact assessment at the European level.
- The Act on spatial planning is now in Parliament. There will be a new general plan and a new Spatial Planning Act which is the integrated investment plan. Understanding how sector policies influence territory, so territorial impact assessment is scheduled for June.

The Committee took note of the information about political news and major challenges regarding national spatial planning issues, as well as implementation of the EU emergency regulation to accelerate renewable energy.

The Committee was reminded to submit a short paragraph to the Secretariat about recent news (from 'tour de table') on spatial planning and development issues to be included in the Committee Report and Summary.

8. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

PA 'Spatial Planning' activities, CSPD/BSR feedback on PA 'Spatial Planning' work

The Committee was informed that each year the Steering group of the PA 'Spatial planning' (VASAB Committee and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG) should evaluate and give feedback on work of policy area coordinator (PAC) and presented developments and activities related to the EUSBSR, as well as activities and achievements in Policy area coordination.

The Committee took note of the information about EUSBSR Policy area 'Spatial Planning' activities and achievements in Policy area coordination in 2022.

The Committee agreed to have a written procedure for EUSBSR Policy area 'Spatial Planning' Steering Group's for land-based planning feedback for the submission to the Interreg BSR Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.

Approach for project needs identification

The Committee was informed that as part of PASPS project, VASAB as Policy area 'Spatial Planning' coordinator should also work on project idea development. VASAB Secretariat has developed a template in which is collected information what relevant projects already exist and potential future project ideas. Involvement from VASAB Committee is expected. VASAB Secretariat is following up relevant existing projects and already include the latest news in the EUSBSR report which is sent to the Committee before each meeting. VASAB Secretariat also has been having meeting with projects which contribute to VASAB Vision 2040 and Policy area 'Spatial Planning' work in order to look for synergies and to define if there are more concrete steps for cooperation.

The Committee took note of the information about the approach for project needs identification as part of PASPS project.

VASAB engagement in organisation of EUSBSR Annual Forum, 4-5 October 2023, Riga, Latvia

The Committee was reminded that VASAB has been invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia to get involved in the organisation of the 14th EUSBSR Annual Forum that will take place on 4-5 October 2023 in Riga, Latvia. Main organiser is Riga City Council in cooperation with the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Union of the Baltic Cities. VASAB Secretariat tasks will be to support registration process, development of visual materials and website section of the Annual Forum 2023, elaboration of a Forum guidebook, organise networking village with a pitch corner, contribute to the development of the agenda.

The Committee took note of the information about VASAB's engagement in organisation of the 14th EUSBSR Annual Forum which will be held on 4-5 October 2023 in Riga, Latvia.

Possible VASAB representation at EUSBSR Annual Forum 4-5 October in Riga, Latvia

The Committee was informed that VASAB has an opportunity as a co-organiser of EUSBSR Annual Forum 2023 to take part in the closing session and this could be a great chance for the new VASAB chair to present VASAB Vision 2040.

The Committee took note of the information about possible VASAB's representation at the 14th EUSBSR Annual Forum which will be held on 4-5 October 2023 in Riga, Latvia.

Information about upcoming project calls and VASAB's role

The Committee was informed about the progress of project application about VASAB Planners' Forum initiating cooperation among land-based spatial planners and noted that an online meeting is planned on 19 June 2023 in order to meet with potential project partners and to discuss further the project idea.

The Committee took note of the information about upcoming project calls and the new project proposal about VASAB Planners' Forum initiating cooperation among land-based spatial planners, prepared by VASAB Secretariat.

9. Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) issues

Informal consultation session of Joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group Meeting 8-9 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland

The Committee was informed about the outcomes of informal consultation session of the Joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group Meeting which was held on 8-9 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland: presentation of final draft VASAB Vision 2040, further work on Work Plan 2022-2024 implementation, task force to revise/update the EBA Guidelines, information about workshop "Strengthening the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and supporting sustainable blue economy" to be held on 13-15 June 2023 in Helsinki.

The Committee took note of the information about the outcomes of informal consultation session of the Joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group held on 8-9 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland.

BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group 7 March 2023 in Helsinki

The Committee took note of the information about the outcomes of informal consultation session of the BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-Group online meeting held on 7 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland.

Planners` Forum 8 March 2023, Helsinki

The Committee was informed that second Planners` Forum within ‘PASPS’ project took place on 8 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland and the main points discussed: pressing issues in MSP, as many of the countries are revising the plans or carrying out the monitoring and evaluation; input from the eMSP project on monitoring and evaluation.

The Committee took note of the information about the outcomes of the second Planners’ Forum within ‘PASPS’ project held on 8 March 2023 in Helsinki, Finland.

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).

European Maritime Day 24-25 May 2023 in Brest, France

The Committee took note of the information about European Maritime Day which will be held on 24-25 May 2023 in Brest, France and VASAB’s involvement in the event.

Progress of Baltic Sea2Land project

The Committee took note of the information about the progress of project ‘Baltic Sea2Land’.

10. VASAB Budget

Audit Report of VASAB Budget 2022, VASAB Income and Expenditure 2022

The Committee acknowledged the execution of VASAB Budget 2022 and took note of the auditor’s Review Report by SIA “Auditorfirma Padoms”.

Amendments to VASAB Budget 2023, preliminary VASAB income and expenditure 2023 and potential increase of country contributions by DE, PL and SE

Taking into account the audited VASAB Budget 2022, *the Committee* decided to amend the VASAB Budget 2023, allowed payout of the non-taxed salary bonuses in 2023 for the staff members of the Secretariat.

11. VASAB Secretariat news

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

12. Transfer of VASAB Chairmanship & information about the priorities of Finnish VASAB Chairmanship

The Committee was informed that during Finnish VASAB Chairmanship sharing of information will continue and 2-3 Committee meetings will be organised, one of those in Finland. Chairmanship topics are still open but could be on wind power and security maintenance. Finnish Chairmanship will also actively promote Planners’ Forum for land base planning.

The Committee took note of the information about the upcoming Finnish chairmanship.