

Baltic Sea Region for the next generation: VASAB Vision 2040 and Coastal Recommendations

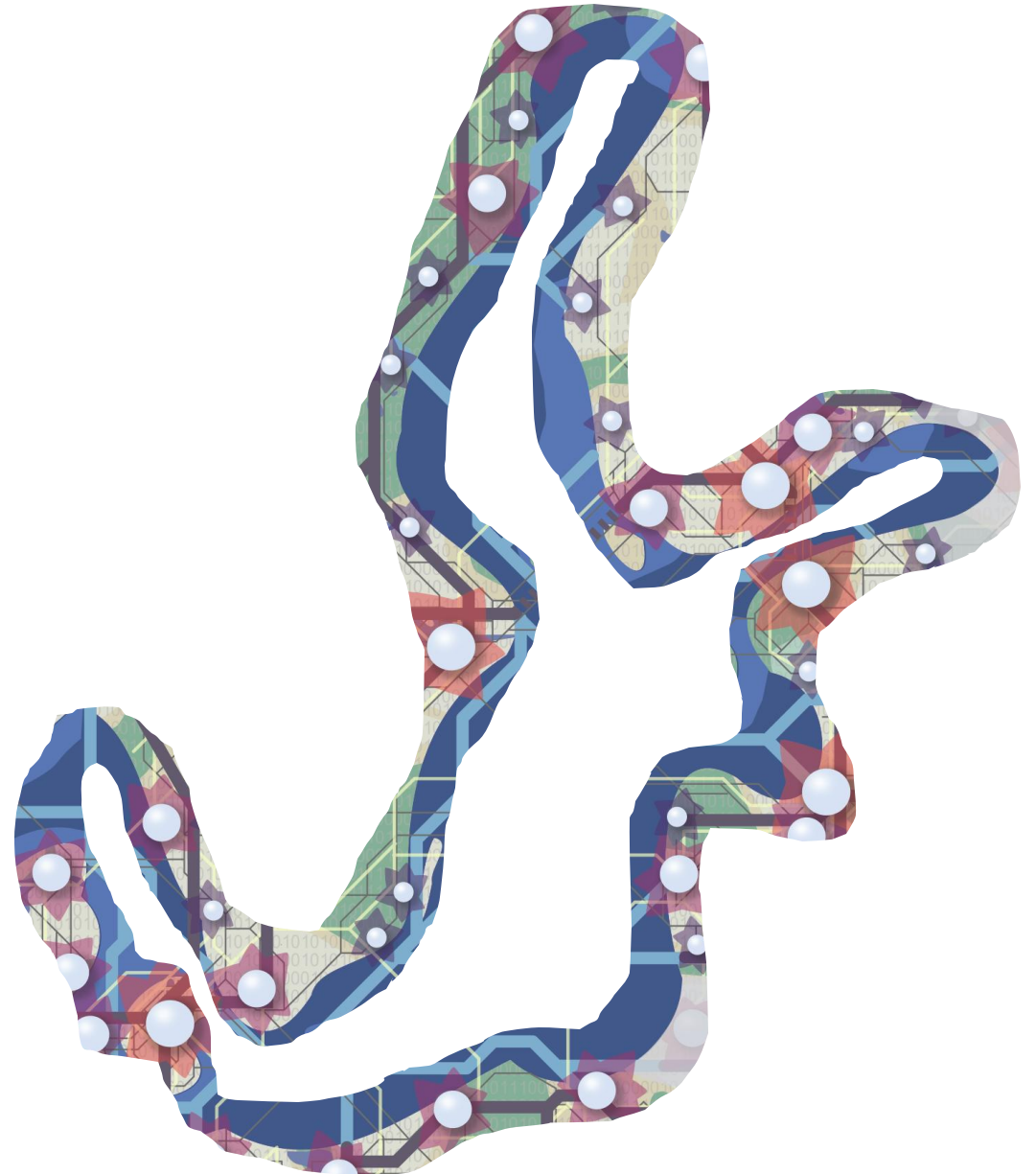
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Liveable, connected, and resilient Baltic Sea Region

where coasts are places of beauty
and opportunity, but also of pressure
and change.



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They show us how tightly land and
sea, communities and ecosystems,
development and risk are interlinked

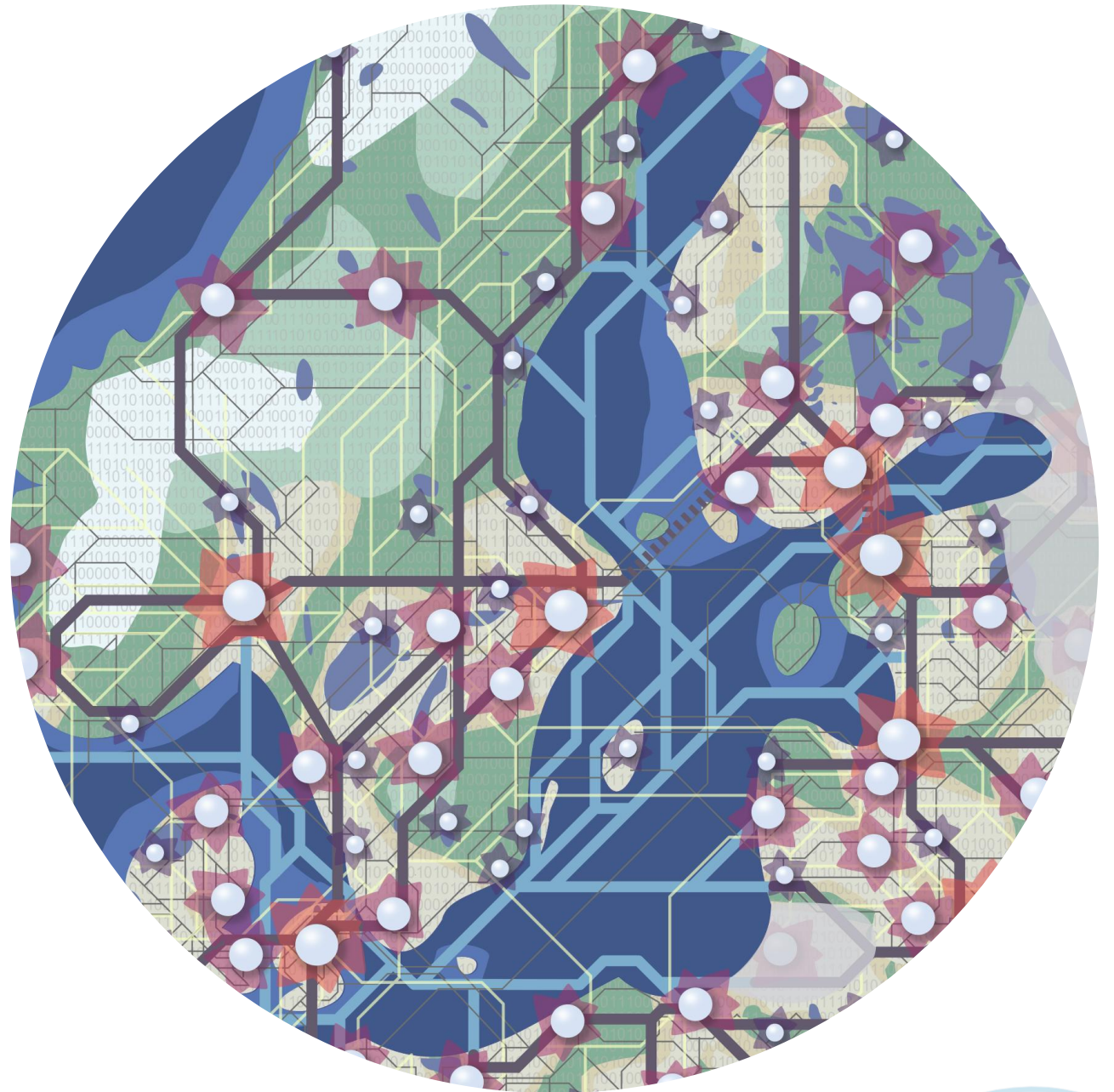


VASAB

*Vision and Strategies
around the Baltic Sea*

— *intergovernmental
organisation* —

**brings countries
together and
strengthens
territorial
cooperation through
spatial planning**



VASAB Vision 2040

Vibrant and inclusive communities



PEARLS: Vibrant structure of urban networks & settlements

Green and resilient region



PATCHES: Sustainable management of ecosystems and unique areas at sea and land

Accessible and connected region

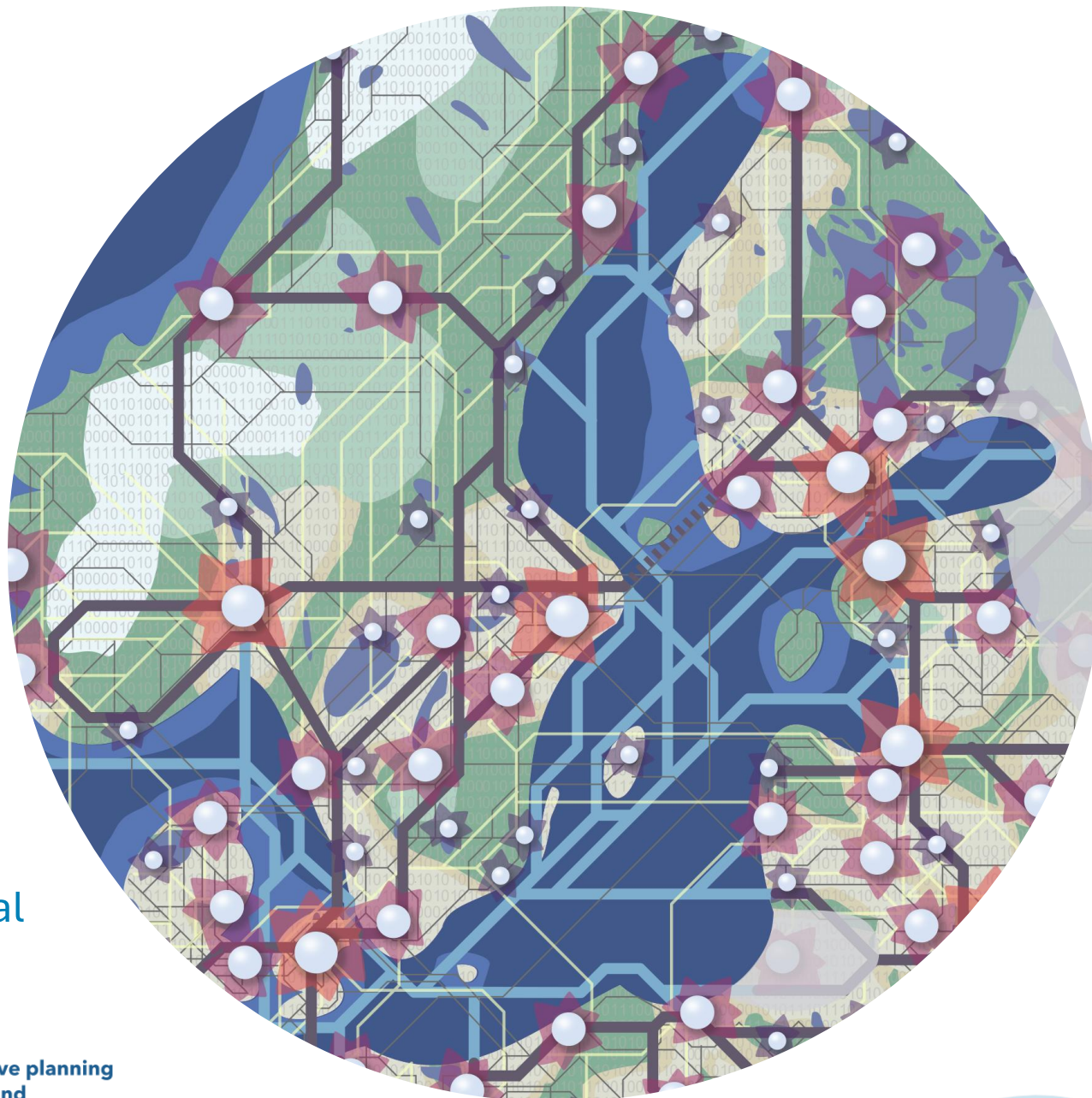


STRINGS: Physical and virtual connectivity for goods, people and knowledge

Linked by the advancement of spatial planning systems and governance across all levels



SYSTEMS: Cooperative planning systems at sea and land



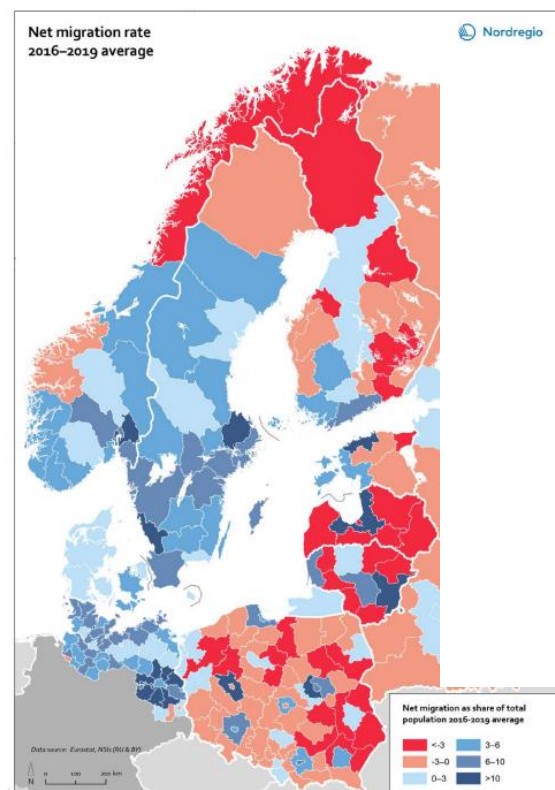


For coastal and marine areas, this means several actions:

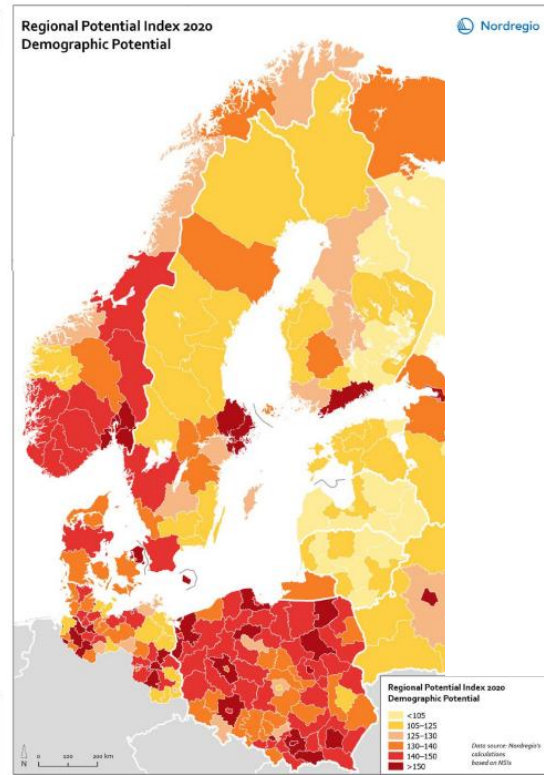
- **Integrating land–sea interaction** into all planning processes
- **Promoting balanced coastal development** that enables the coexistence of tourism, housing, energy, and nature
- **Strengthening networks of small and medium-sized coastal towns** as hubs of innovation and a sustainable blue economy
- **Improving mobility and accessibility** between coastal areas and inland regions
- **Safeguarding coastal ecosystems and distinctive land- and seascapes**

VASAB Ministerial Tallinn Declaration on Spatial Resilience, 2025

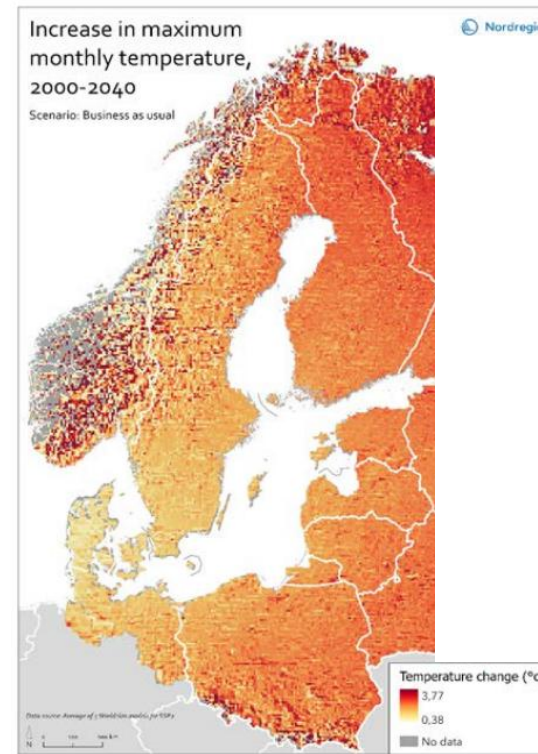
Our region faces increasing uncertainty — from climate impacts and environmental degradation to geopolitical instability and disruptions of critical infrastructure



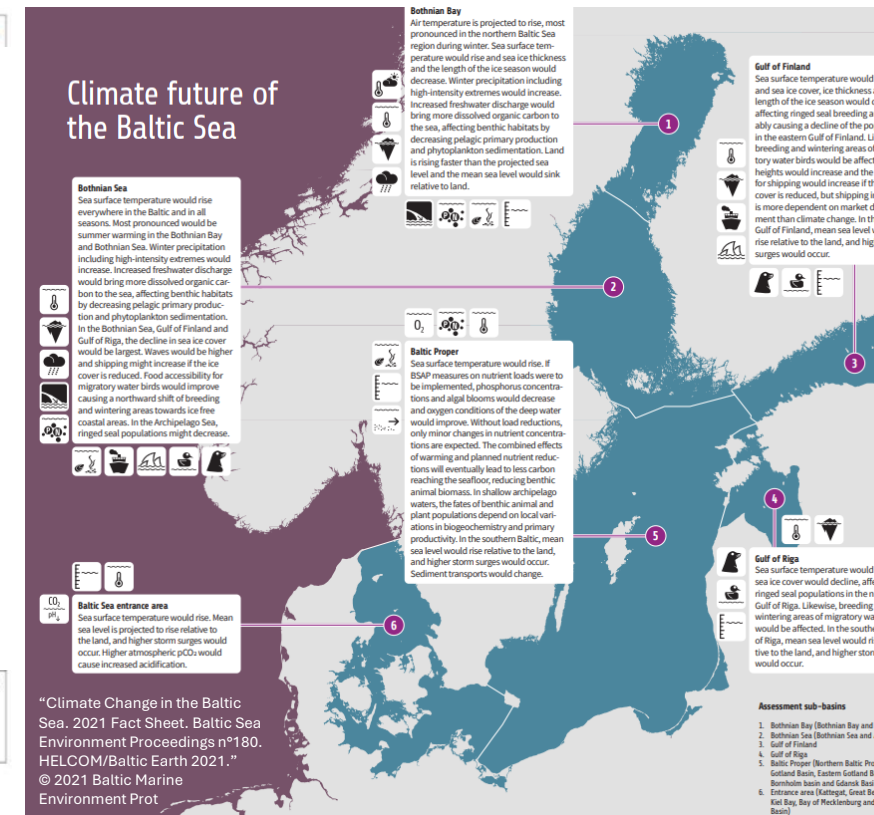
Map 4: Net migration rate 2016-2019
Source: Nordregio (Map by Gustaf Norlén)



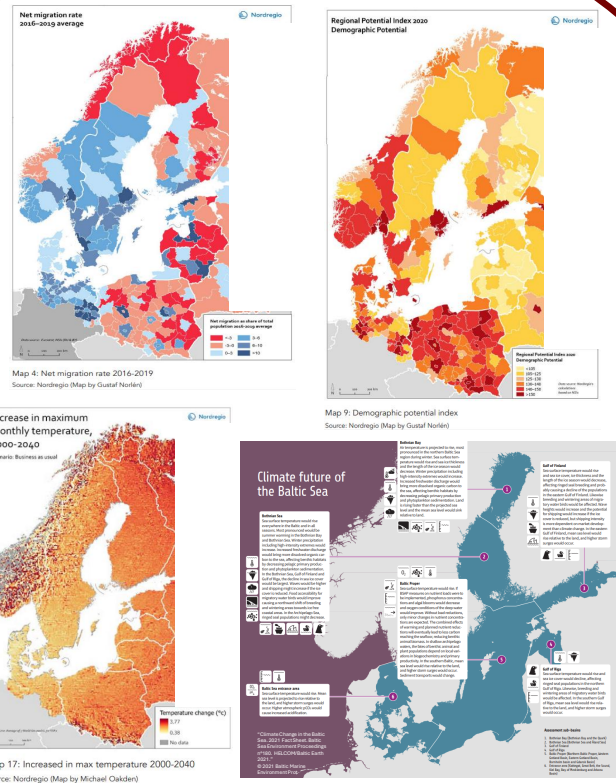
Map 9: Demographic potential index
Source: Nordregio (Map by Gustaf Norlén)



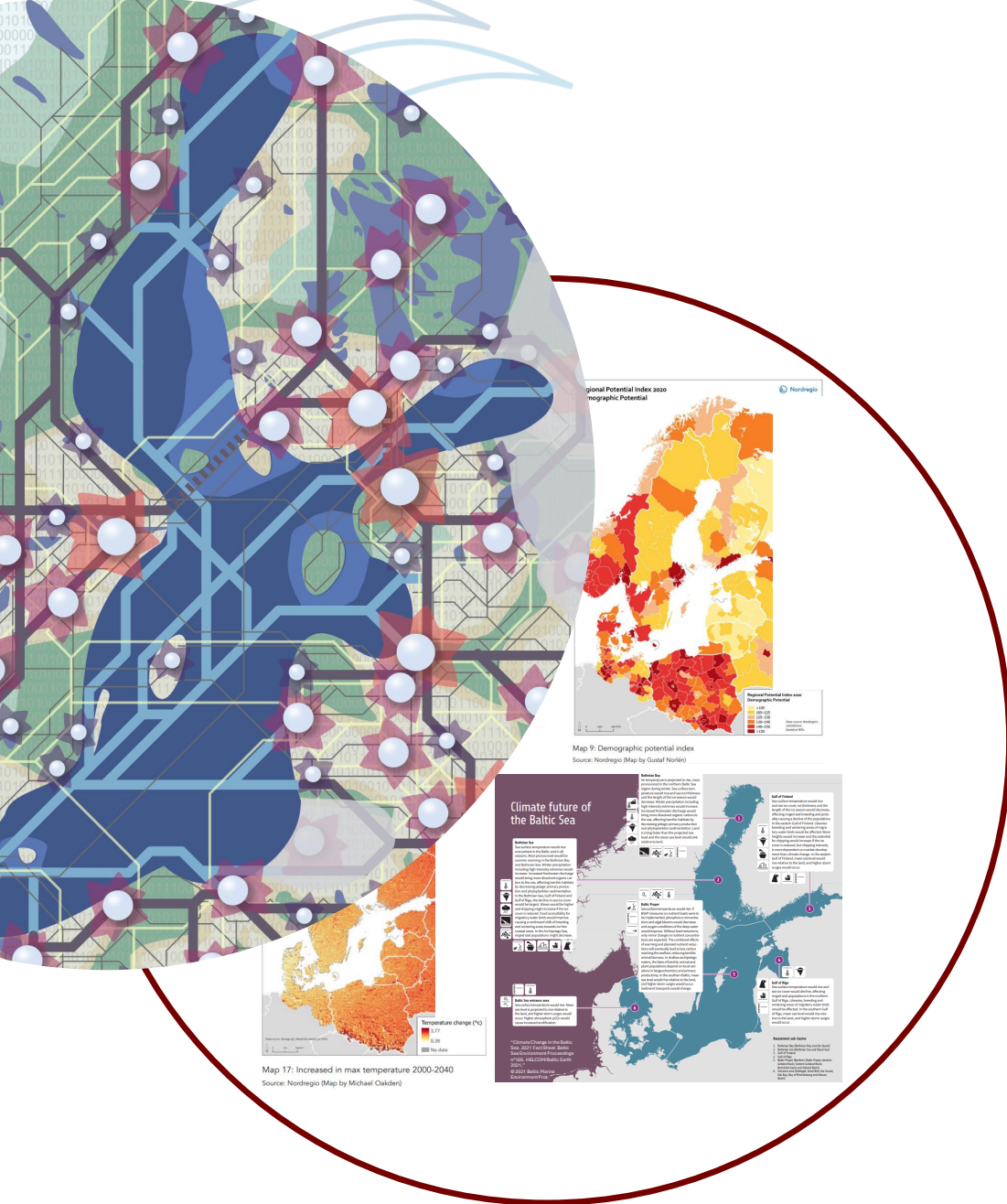
Map 17: Increased in max temperature 2000-2040
Source: Nordregio (Map by Michael Oakden)



VASAB Ministerial Tallinn Declaration on Spatial Resilience, 2025



- spatial planning now to ensure **spatial preparedness** — planning with the awareness of risks, dependencies, and the need to maintain vital functions under stress
- spatial **resilience** means that territories can **absorb shocks, adapt to change, and continue to function** — whether it's a storm damaging coastal infrastructure, a sudden energy disruption, or a population shift



Together — and especially for coastal areas — Vision 2040 and Tallinn Declaration express a macro-regional commitment to sustainable and resilient development.

This commitment supports action at the local level — helping communities address challenges on the ground in ways that strengthen not only their own resilience, but also the resilience of the entire Baltic Sea coast, where issues and impacts cross borders.

Adopted 22 October 1996,

THE MINISTERS

responsible for Spatial Planning and Development from the participating countries in the „Committee for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region”.

BEARING the Resol of the Ba report „V common	RECOGNIZING the need to coastal zone	c) conservation of the biological diversity, the cultural heritage and sustainable use of natural resou for sustainabl	e) new developments should not form a visual barrier along the coast, therefore green wedges or strips should be maintained or provided,
BEARING action 4.3 „guideline	BEING AWA that the co protection, must prom areas for big movement	d) the coasta infrastructure recreational i	f) any large permanent cl appropriate r covering both
BEING CO that the industries for econo which ne subject to	TAKING INT the HELCOM 1994, the H Protected A preservation from Rio de Coast 1993 strengthen Washington Activities, a	e) the land u coastal zone conditions of sandbanks,	g) windmills : way, that the
BEING AL that the especially regionally	TAKING ALS the existing coastal zone	f) the cultural through appri	h) compreher and/or conge
DRAWING the fact t regards si contributi measures for land u	APPRECIATI the measur zone,	g) the impac minimized,	i) options sho allow future r
REGARDII coastal zo to improv influence the cultur	THE MINIST	h) the recreat and public ac	j) discharge of deposit areas regulations su
	RECOMMEN the followin zone to be i	i) the elabor technologies,	k) areas of dif incorporated development
	1. OBJECTIV	2. RECOMME	FURTHERMORE the ministers recommend that the Committee for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region monitors the implementation and the results of the recommendations through demonstrations projects and reports to the next Ministerial Conference.
	a) actions ir living condi biological di	On guidance f	l) vacation ce plans and coh account the p of the landsca
	b) the econ developmer zone should	a) the coasta HELCOM Recr kilometres la existing settle water line,	m) coastal pr considered ne
		b) compreher should be dra of local autho	n) environme problems cau
		c) planning fo vacation cent should be bas	o) the cultura and renewed building areas
		2. PLANNING	

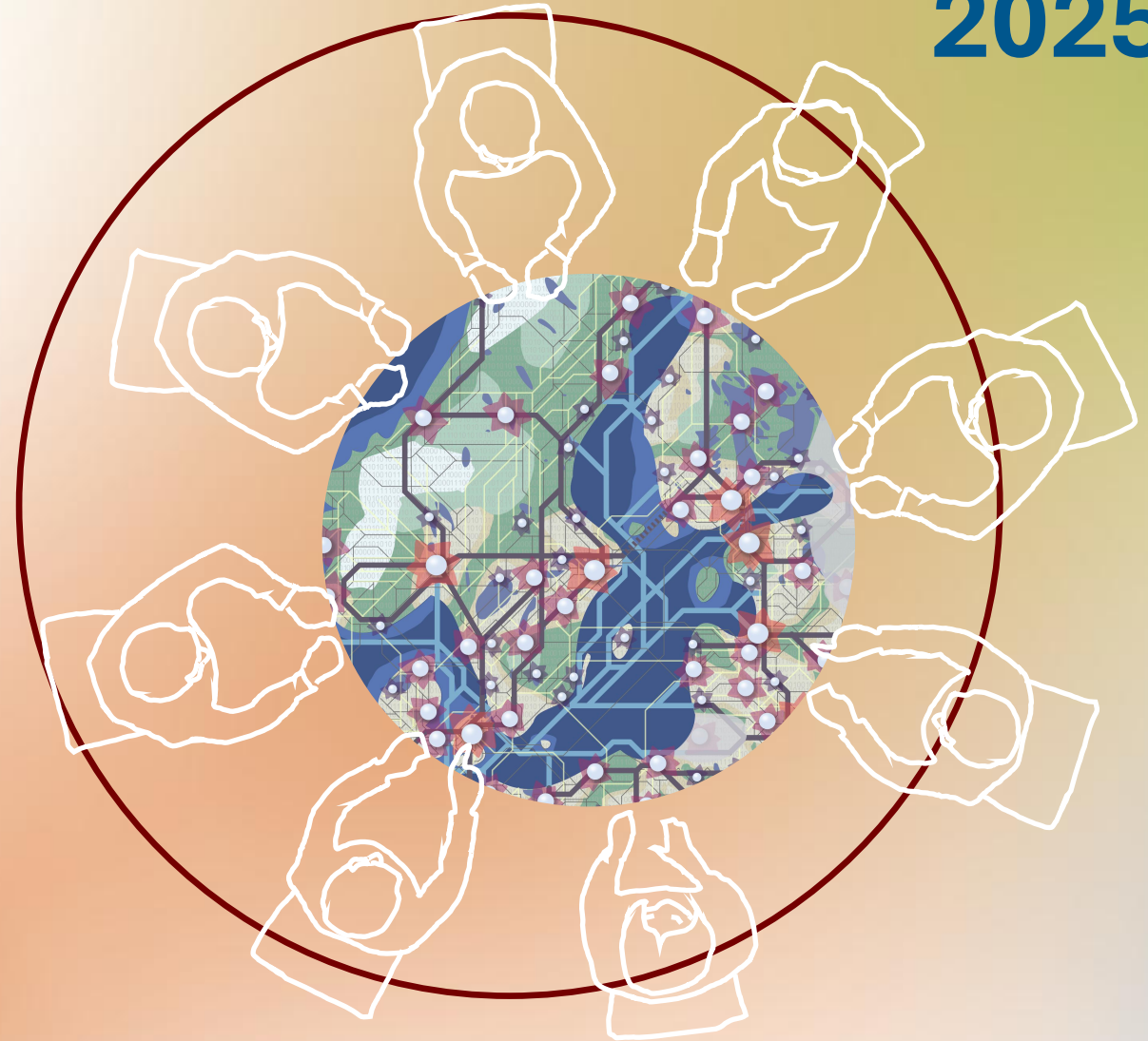
- coastal planning must **respect natural dynamics** — erosion, flooding, and changing habitats
- importance of **keeping coast accessible to the public**, while balancing different interests
- **development** should be **sustainable and locally rooted** — supporting livelihoods like tourism, fisheries, and renewable energy, while protecting the coast's natural and cultural heritage



The update builds:

on insights from national, regional, and local perspectives — from Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, and Sweden

and connects directly with the ongoing Maritime Spatial Planning activities at both national and macro-regional levels, such as the revision of the HELCOM Recommendation 24/10R on integrated coastal management and MSP





This work aims to deliver macro-regional recommendations that address:

- **How to better integrate** coastal and maritime planning across governance levels
- **How to balance competing uses** — energy, nature, housing, and recreation — in limited coastal space
- **How to strengthen** local participation and community-led solutions
- **How to make** coastal planning contribute more effectively to climate adaptation, ecosystem health, and regional resilience

Baltic Sea2Land-facilitated processes:

- Stakeholder and expert discussions

• Activities and results from the Baltic Sea2Land *Navigator* piloting areas

Together, they show that multi-level governance and spatial planning can truly empower coastal territories.

Piloting experiences



"We improved coastal and maritime spatial planning integration"



"The Navigator served as a roadmap and tool for self check for planning on regional level"



"Helped to identify coastal accessibility challenges"



"Successfully identified regional planning bottlenecks and upscaled best practices into national planning"



"Effective outreach through the enhancement of the case relevant stakeholder contact list"



"Critical analysis of internal documentation resulting in improved planning practices"



"Tailored system to monitor the maritime economy and track the region's leadership in the sustainable blue economy"



"Support to manage multi-level stakeholder relations and to address different interest groups specifically"

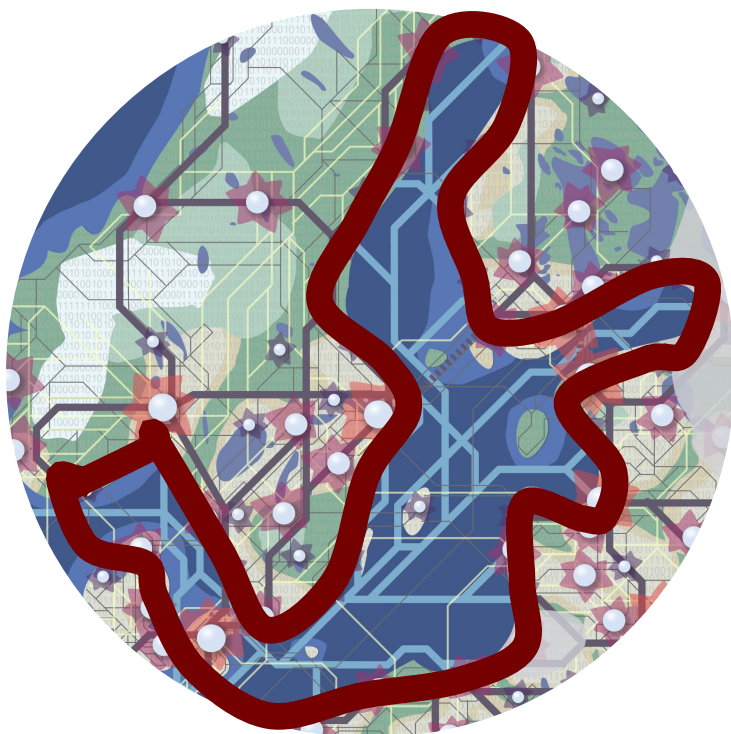
Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by
the European Union

BLUE ECONOMY
Baltic Sea2Land





We plan — not only for growth, but for change.

Our Vision 2040 defines the direction.

**Coastal & maritime planning is trustful instrument to achieve it.
And our shared commitment to spatial resilience ensures that
what we build today will endure tomorrow.**

**It calls for genuine cooperation — between planners and
communities, between countries and institutions, between land
and sea.**

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infor@vasab.org  [@VASAB](https://www.linkedin.com/company/VASAB)

Thank you!