

VASAB WORK PLAN 2025-2026

(as of 17 September 2025)

VASAB CSPD/BSR (VASAB Committee) with support of the VASAB Secretariat continues valuable work in facilitating international cooperation in spatial planning according to the [VASAB Ministerial Declaration](#), [VASAB Vision 2040](#), VASAB Chairmanship priorities and VASAB Work Plan.

Priorities set by the VASAB CSPD/BSR Chairmanships:

Estonian Chairmanship (July 2024 – June 2025):

- Explore the links between the emerging topic of spatial resilience and VASAB Vision 2040;
- Highlight the importance of resilient spatial structures and communities;
- Strengthen collaboration between land-based spatial planners to fully utilize VASAB as informal knowledge and best practice hub for practitioners in spatial planning;
- Hold an international webinar to support regional equity, high quality, and sustainable spatial decision across governance levels, by sharing best practices and experiences of national level spatial policies across the BSR.

Polish Chairmanship (July 2025 – December 2026):

- Build up on the topics of previous chairmanships of Finland and Estonia: resilience, territorial resilience, and spatial resilience;
- Prepare a proposal for ESPON targeted analysis on measuring resilience in Baltic Sea Region (November 2025);
- Organise a Directors General meeting to present VASAB's work (2026);
- Hold 3rd VASAB Young Planners Summer School (August 2026).

Priority Actions of VASAB Vision 2040, proposed by the VASAB CSPD/BSR (January 2024):

1. Good quality of life and adaptation policies in carbon neutral and resilient cities
 - Carbon neutral and resilient cities; Quality of life and public services in small towns and rural areas; Adaptation (policies) of settlements to crisis conditions; Capitalization of local values and assets to improve competitiveness and attractiveness of territories.
2. Multimodal and integrated mobility and transport connections
 - Intermodal mobility hubs on suburban/peri-urban environments; Sustainable & multimodal transport; Planning green transport solutions, involving energy provider; Bundling of freight transport flows, esp. in Nordics; Safety of maritime transport vs development of offshore wind turbines farms.
3. Secure, climate proofing and decentralized energy systems
 - Offshore energy development; Transformation from centralized to decentralized energy systems; Energy communities in the heating sector.
4. Sustainable blue economy and environmental protection in coastal areas and at the sea
 - Further development of multi-use concept for the Baltic Sea; Coastal & local communities – balancing pressures and vulnerability, traditions and innovation; Data availability; Awareness, communication, knowledge share.

No	Activity / Task	Outputs	Timeframe	Status	Notes
Intergovernmental Multilateral Co-operation of the Baltic Sea Region in Spatial Planning and Development					
1.	VASAB Ministerial Conferences and Declarations (VASAB Member states initiative)	VASAB Ministerial Conferences VASAB Ministerial Declarations			9 th VASAB Ministerial Conference in Wismar, 2 June 2023 Wismar Declaration 2023 VASAB Ministerial Tallinn Declaration on Spatial Resilience 2025
2.	VASAB CSPD/BSR				
2.1.	VASAB CSPD/BSR	VASAB CSPD/BSR meetings Open Trio meetings Agendas, documents, presentations, reports Committee reports and summaries Open Trio reports	Up to 3 times per year	4 March 2025 19-20 March 2025 2 June 2025 16 June 2025 4 September 2025 16-18 September 2025	Decisions and summaries of CSPD/BSR meetings All documents from CSPD/BSR and Trio meetings
2.2.	Strengthen cooperation among BSR countries in spatial planning and development	All BSR countries are represented in VASAB CSPD/BSR (incl. Denmark and Norway)	Continuous	Active in VASAB: EE, LV, LT, PL, DE, SE, FI Suspended from 4 March 2022: RU, BY	Norway as observer
2.3.	Activities as part of the Estonian Chairmanship	Webinar on national level spatial planning during Estonian Chairmanship Land-based Planners' Forum project interaction with Estonian spatial planners (face-to-face event in Tallinn)	Spring 2025 May 2025	11 February 2025 Postponed until February 2026 and is planned as the project's final conference	Video, Presentations Please see point 4 of this Work Plan on the Land-based Planners' Forum project
2.4.	Activities as part of the Polish Chairmanship	Directors General meeting to present VASAB's work 3 rd VASAB Young Planners Summer School	2026 August 2026		

2.5.	Cooperate with other Pan-Baltic organizations (CBSS, UBC, etc.)	Pan-Baltic organisations represented in VASAB events and vice versa CBSS Expert Group of Sustainable Maritime Economy	Continuous		VASAB as observer
2.6.	Recommend transnational policy measures	Statements, policy briefs, recommendations Recommendations for coastal development & planning 2 nd Online seminar to discuss Recommendations	Continuous 2025 June 2025	17 June 2025	Baltic Sea2Land project Information about event, presentations and summary available in Secretariat
2.7.	Cooperation with other cross-BSR initiatives (relevant projects)	Projects represented in VASAB events	Continuous		
2.8.	Promote a dialogue with sector institutions	The dialogue takes place	Continuous		Mainly through the EUSBSR Framework
2.9.	Terrestrial Country Fiches	Publicly available on VASAB website, up to date information about terrestrial spatial planning (land-use planning) in the Baltic Sea Region countries	Continuous		Terrestrial Country Fiches at VASAB website
VASAB Vision for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region in 2040					
3.	VASAB Vision 2040				
3.1.	Preparation for update of VASAB Vision 2040	Analytical background paper: VASAB Vision 2040 and spatial resilience. How is the whole-of-government all-of-hazards logic represented in the long-term spatial strategy?	2025-2026	Prepared and finalised by the Estonian Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture. VASAB chairing organisation in 2024-2025.	Link to the document
3.2.	VASAB Vision 2040 Implementation	Assessment of VASAB Work Plan 2025-2026 VASAB Work Plan 2027-2028	Continuous		
3.3.	Promotion of VASAB Vision 2040 to increase awareness	Through various events and social media VASAB area vision passport*	Continuous		* Short document which includes key elements from the vision

4.	Land-based planners' forum	Feasibility study (stakeholder mapping, collaboration needs, all levels of governance) Webinar (comparison of country planning systems, cooperation practices for planners) Stakeholder conference in Tallinn BSR cooperation mechanism proposal	March 2026 Sept/Oct 2025 February 2026 March 2026	18 September 2025	Project , co-funded by Swedish Institute Information about event
5.	Young Planners' Academy	Third Young Planners' Summer School (Poland)	August 2026		Project application in 2025
6.	VASAB Knowledge Hub to Shape Cooperating Planning Systems (Transfer of knowledge contributing to cohesion of spatial planning in the region)	VASAB planners' forum Multi-level governance enhanced Integrated land and sea observations and assessments Digital planning sharing platform Communication and dissemination	2025-2026		Supported by Interreg BSR Project Platforms: Baltic PlaNet SEABAS BSR Urban Mobility Future Cities Platform
Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Management					
7.	Joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group	HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG Sessions and Meetings Agendas, documents, reports, presentations	At least twice a year	7-9 April, 2025, Rostock 15-17 October, 2025, Helsinki	Workplan 2025-2027 of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG
7.1.	Implementation of Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2021-2030	Regional MSP Roadmap Interim Assessment Task Force meetings Survey on value of MSP Country Fiches	2025	21 March, 2025	Survey closed on 14 February
7.2.	Update of Ecosystem Based Approach (EBA) Guidelines	EBA Task Force meetings A draft revised version of the Guideline on ecosystem-based approach in MSP	2025	Draft presented to VASAB CSPD/BSR on 16 June 2025	Relevant to VASAB CSPD/BSR
7.3.	Knowledge sharing and networking across sea basins	Structure (platform) for cross-border collaboration and learning with North and Baltic Sea countries Assessment of the progress of policy instruments and other actions promoting climate neutrality	2025-2026	ToR for assessment report due by end of 2025	Northern European Sea Basins (NESBp) project

		Evaluation of current MSP governance in BSR Communication and dissemination		First results to be presented at 5 th Baltic MSP forum 11-12 November 2025	
7.4.	MSP Country Fiches	Publicly available on VASAB and HELCOM websites, up to date information about MSP in the Baltic Sea Region countries New structure and demo design proposed by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG	Continuous 2026		MSP Country Fiches regularly updated with relevant information and published at VASAB and HELCOM websites
8.	BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group	BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group meetings (update on VASAB activities) Steering the use and developments of HELCOM Basemaps service	Up to two meetings per year	18 February 2025 13 October 2025	Policy Area “Spatial Planning” Support (PASPS)
9.	MSP Planners’ Forum	MSP Planners’ Forum online/physical meetings, agendas, reports	Up to two meetings per year	25 March 2025 12 November 2025, Riga	Policy Area “Spatial Planning” Support (PASPS)
10.	5th Baltic MSP Forum	5th Baltic MSP Forum in Riga (Content: main thematic focus, speakers, moderator, parallel sessions/workshops — including cooperation with the Forum Task Force composed of Baltic Sea2Land project partners. Operational: logistics, procurement, social programme, communication, etc., with support from the Forum Task Force.)	11-12 November 2025		www.BalticMSPforum.eu Baltic Sea2Land project final conference
11.	EU Member States MSP Expert Group	EU Member States MSP Expert Group meetings (physical/online)	At least twice a year	24 March 2025 22-24 October 2025	VASAB as observer
EUSBSR Policy area ‘Spatial Planning’ - a forum and cooperation platform for regional, trans-boundary and cross-sectoral dialogue towards more coherent planning					

12.	Coordination of EUSBSR PA 'Spatial Planning' jointly with HELCOM	<p>Evaluation of PASPS Work Plan 2025-2026 PASPS Work Plan 2027-2028 Monthly meetings</p> <p>Updated EUSBSR Action Plan, PA 'Spatial Planning' description</p> <p>Reports on main outcomes and PA relevant projects to VASAB CSPD/BSR and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG</p> <p>Feedbacks of VASAB CSPD/BSR and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG Reports to Interreg BSR, EUSBSR, DG MARE</p>	2025-2026	<p>21 January 2025 26 February 2025 18 March 2025 13 May 2025 25 June 2025</p> <p>31 January 2025</p> <p>31 August 2025</p> <p>31 October 2025</p> <p>19-20 March 2025 7-9 April 2025 18-20 September 2025</p> <p>28 January 2025</p>	<p>First SG-approved draft submissions to BSP and NCG</p> <p>Final draft submitted to BSP on 26 August 2025. SG-approved final drafts submission</p> <p>95th VASAB CSPD/BSR</p> <p>HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meeting 96th VASAB CSPD BSR</p>
12.1.	PAC presence in EUSBSR and PA relevant events	<p>Regular exchange with Baltic Sea Strategy Point</p> <p>PA workshops and networking within EUSBSR Annual Forums, Blue Mission BANOS, European Maritime Day, EU Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days, EUSBSR Presidency, Funding Programmes, European MSP Week, ESPON Seminars</p>	Continuous	<p>2025</p> <p>1-2 April 2025</p> <p>20-22 May 2025</p>	<p>Work on Action Plan update Live meeting in Turku Interreg BSR Programme Conference in Tampere, Finland</p> <p>Work on PA Spatial Planning session (together with PA Energy</p>

				May – September 2025	and Secure) for EUSBSR Annual Forum 2025
12.2.	Follow-up, Communication and exchange with key relevant projects (incl. ESPON)	<p>PA news prepared and updated to EUSBSR and VASAB Newsletters</p> <p>PA Spatial Planning page on EUSBSR website up to date</p> <p>esentations from key projects</p> <p>Promotion material on PASPS project</p>	Continuous	<p>February 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>17 February 2025</p> <p>24 March 2025</p> <p>28 April 2025</p> <p>27 May 2025</p> <p>9 July 2025</p> <p>July 2025 - ...</p>	<p>EUSBSR Newsletter February 2025</p> <p>EUSBSR Newsletter March 2025</p> <p>EUSBSR Newsletter April 2025</p> <p>EUSBSR Newsletter May 2025</p> <p>VASAB Newsletter June 2025</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Article on EUSBSR webpage</p> <p>Updating PASPS brochure info</p>

12.3.	PA relevant project idea generation and development	An overview of project ideas generated, and organizations involved in the development of those ideas Targeted events to facilitate the development of perspective project ideas	2026		Policy Area “Spatial Planning” Support (PASPS)
VASAB Communication and Visibility					
13.	Visibility, promotion of VASAB, VASAB projects and regional policy impact of the outcomes	Regular information and update of VASAB website Regular information and update of EUSBSR, HELCOM websites Regular information on VASAB social media (X, Bluesky, LinkedIn, Facebook, Youtube channel) Thematic publications VASAB Newsletter Brochures, leaflets, etc. Video Representation materials	Continuous Twice per year	June and December 2025	www.vasab.org Communication on X (formerly Twitter) has been stopped since March 2025. A new additional social media platform has been established on Bluesky Video: More than 30 years of collaboration around the Baltic Sea region VASAB Newsletter June 2025
13.1.	Participation in different events representing VASAB cooperation, VASAB Vision 2040, PA Spatial Planning, respective projects	Exhibition booth in relevant Pan-Baltic and EU Stakeholders networking events Presentations Project partners meetings	29-30 Oct, Sopot, PL, EUSBSR Annual Forum 11-12 Nov, Riga, LV, Baltic MSP Forum	18-29 April 2025, Sopot, PL, 4th Mission Arena of Blue Mission Banos 22-23 May, Cork, IR, EMD	Insights from the MSP Foresight Workshop European Maritime Day 2025
13.2.	Develop a new VASAB website	Procurement procedure New VASAB website in operation	2025-2026	Procurement concluded May, 2025	