

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
Steering Group for Policy Area Bioeconomy



Rules of Procedure

Adopted 3 May 2022

Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the Steering Group (SG) for Policy Area Bioeconomy of the EU Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). These Rules of Procedure also apply when the SG makes decisions by way of written procedure.

Article 2

Composition of the Steering Group

The SG consists of representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. SG members should come from key ministries or authorities in the relevant field. They should have sufficient capability, mandate and resources to fulfil their tasks as required by the EUSBSR.

An EUSBSR Member State can choose not to participate in the SG by informing the lead Policy Area coordinator (PAC) in written form. A Member State can also appoint more than one representative to the SG, if this is necessary due to the structure of the Member State or other similar reasoning. In this case, one of the representatives has to be nominated as the main representative and act as one as regards the decision-making.

The SG may be an existing cooperation body within the PAC organisation, if appropriate and approved by the national coordinators group (NCG).

The SG may also invite representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States represented in PA-Bioeconomy. Furthermore, an SG may also invite representatives of regional, national or other organisations to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States. However, before such decisions are implemented, they must be endorsed by the NCG.

Representatives of the European Commission are welcome to join SG meetings in the capacity of strategic advisors.

PACs, i.e. lead PAC and co-PACs, take part in SG meetings as Other participants, in an advisory capacity. The lead PAC must keep the SG presidency, the BSP and the respective National Coordinator and the NCG presidency updated as soon as changes occur in the composition of SG membership or observers.

Article 3

Role and responsibilities

The SG provides strategic guidance to the PA, holds policy discussions and identifies key ways to achieve the EUSBSR Objectives through different means of actions and determine how to best implement the required solutions. Its main tasks are set out in Article 4.

Article 4

Tasks

The main tasks of the SG are:

- Supporting the PAC/PACs in fulfilling their tasks, notably by
 - Guiding the development of the PA in general by policy discussions and by endorsing new objectives, developments and operation formats, including flagships;
 - Endorsing proposals to update targets, references etc. that do not change the Action Plan substantially, in close dialogue with the European Commission¹;
 - Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy-making;
- Monitoring and evaluating the PA, notably by
 - Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA, drafted by the PAC/PACs, and submitting these documents to the NCG for information.

In addition to their responsibilities within their group, SG members representing national or regional governments serve as focal points in their respective administrations, where their functions notably include:

- Acting as liaison between the PA and the respective administration, ensuring linkages between macro-regional and national or regional policy processes;
- Raising awareness and ownership of the Objectives, means and achievements of the EUSBSR within their respective administrations and by other relevant stakeholders;
- Cooperating with relevant Managing Authorities in their respective home countries, regarding the operational level;
- Supporting their respective National Coordinator in promoting political commitment to the Strategy as well as in raising national awareness and promoting visibility of the EUSBSR.

Article 5

The rotating SG Presidency

The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. The SG decides among available candidates.

The SG Presidency supports and works in close cooperation with the PAC/PACs.

SG meetings are prepared and organised by the SG Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective PAC/PACs.

¹ Decisions on substantial changes to the Action Plan remain the sole competence of the National Coordinators Group.

Article 6

The Policy Area Coordinator(s)

The PAC/PACs are the key operational stakeholders of the PA, ensuring the implementation of the Strategy with support and guidance of the SGs. Their tasks include:

- Ensuring a general overview of the PA;
- Managing, coordinating and developing the PA;
- Monitoring and reporting on progress within the PA;
- Ensuring communication and visibility of the PA.

If the PA has more than one PAC, the NCG decides which one of them is the leading PAC, following a proposal by the SG. The lead PAC is responsible for coordination among the PACs and for the administration of the PA.

The lead PAC must keep the SG Presidency and the Baltic Strategy Point informed as soon as changes in the composition of the SG membership occur.

The PAC/PACs are appointed and recalled by the NCG, following a proposal by the SG.

The PAC/PACs participate in all meetings of the SG, except for those that directly concern decisions regarding their performance and proposals for appointment or recall of PACs or lead PACs.

Article 7

Decision-making

The SG makes decisions by consensus. As stated in Article 2, in case a Member State appoints more than one representative to the SG, one of the representatives has to be nominated as the main representative and act as one as regards the decision-making.

Representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries or organisations cannot block decisions of the EUSBSR Member States, but may choose to opt out of specific decisions taken by the SG.

The SG Presidency, or the lead PAC following approval by the SG Presidency, can initiate a written decision-making process (written procedure) by sending a draft decision and related documents to all SG members, which shall have at least 10 working days to respond in writing to the Presidency. In case of issues which require national coordination, the period can be adapted. In the absence of any reaction, it will be deemed as a silent agreement. The use of written procedures should take due account of holiday periods.

Article 8

Agenda

The SG shall address topics at the request of its members and respond to the needs of key stakeholders regarding the implementation of the objectives of the Policy Area.

The PAC/Lead PAC, after approval by the SG Presidency, shall submit the draft agenda for the SG meeting to all SG members at least 10 working days before the meeting for consultation.

Documents supporting decision-making shall be submitted to all SG members at least 10 working days prior to the SG meeting, unless duly justified circumstances require circulating documents later. Documents for information and discussion shall be submitted to all SG members at least 5 working days prior to the SG meeting, unless duly justified circumstances require circulating documents later.

The agenda is adopted at the SG meeting as the first agenda item.

Article 9

Meeting participants

The SG may decide to invite one or several guests to participate in a specific meeting.

Article 10

Frequency and format of meetings

The SG should convene at least twice a year. Online meetings are encouraged.

Article 11

Reporting

The PAC/PACs are responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all SG meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12

Revision

The Rules of Procedure of the SG are adopted and shall be revised, as appropriate, by decision of the SG.

Annex:

Steering group members (as of May 2022)

Organisation	Country
Ministry of Environment and Agriculture	Denmark
Ministry of Rural Affairs	Estonia
Ministry of the Environment	Estonia
Ministry of Rural Affairs, International Cooperation Department	Estonia
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland	Finland
Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)	Germany
Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)	Germany
Ministry of Agriculture	Latvia
Ministry of Agriculture	Latvia
Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania	Lithuania
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Climate and Environment	Poland
Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Department of Innovation and Industrial Policy	Poland
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Fisheries	Poland
Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation	Sweden
Swedish Forest Agency	Sweden

Note: does not include observers

Policy Area Coordinators

Ministry of Agriculture, Lithuania

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland

Nordic Council of Ministers

Swedish Agricultural Board