



## EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Hazards

### Steering Group meeting

Date: 27/05/2025  
Time: 14:00-17:00 CEST  
Location: online

### MINUTES

#### 1. Opening of the meeting

*Magdalena Frydrych, Chair of Steering Group, Bureau for Chemical substances, Poland*  
The Chair welcomed the participants and declared the meeting open.

##### a. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved without the amendments.

##### b. Introduction round

#### 2. Information from the European Commission

*Johan Magnusson, Directorate-general for Urban and Regional Policy (DG REGIO)*

Johan Magnusson informed on the upcoming EU Strategies days, which will take place on 24-25 September 2025 in Brussels. Organised by DG REGIO and DG MARE, it brings together all the Macro-regional and Sea-basin strategies. In particular, one workshop will be organised together with the Danube Strategy on Water resilience which could be of interest to the steering group. [Registration is open as of 16<sup>th</sup> of June.](#)

Furthermore, the [5<sup>th</sup> biennial report on the implementation of the EU macroregional strategies](#) had been adopted on 13 May. It covers the progress from mid-2022 to mid-2024 and would normally have been published under 2024, however, due to the European Parliament elections and the change of the European Commission, it was delayed.

Steering Group took note of the information provided by the European Commission.

#### 3. Information from the Baltic Sea Strategy Point (BSP)

*Tom Schumacher, Baltic Sea Strategy Point*



Tom Schumacher informed about the EUSBSR Annual Forum, which will take place in Sopot on 29-30 October. [Registration to the forum opens on 10 June](#).

From July 2025, Estonia will take over the presidency in the National Coordinators Group, and subsequently in the Policy Area Steering Groups as well. A training for the upcoming presidency will be held on 17 June, open to Steering Group members.

#### 4. Update from Policy area coordinator

*Louise Floman, Policy Area coordinator (PAC), PA Hazards, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management*

- PAC informed on PA Hazards involvement in the EUSBSR Annual Forum in Sopot on 29-30 October. A back-to-back event will take place on 28 October, “BSSSC Day of cities and regions”.
  - This year, there are more limited slots for workshops. Therefore, PA Hazards has joined forces with other policy areas to organise a workshop on New Circular Economy solutions.
- A joint PA Nutri + PA Hazards workshop focussing on the HELCOM sea-based hot spot was presented to the HELCOM working groups Sea-based pressure and Source to sea. The members expressed support to the idea, and a preference to have the workshop in September.
- Update of the EUSBSR Action plan. The process has been delayed, awaiting approval from the National Coordinators Group (NCG).
  - PA Hazards coordinator met with the NCG on 22 April
  - Positive feedback on the draft and actions
  - NCG underlined the importance of continuing cooperation with Ukraine and inclusion of youth
- Lastly, the PAC reminded the Steering Group about the role of the Steering Group, after questions from some newer members.
  - Supporting the PAC in fulfilling their tasks by
    - Guiding the development of the policy area in general by policy discussions and by endorsing new objectives, developments and other activities
    - Endorsing proposals to update targets, references etc
    - Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy making
  - Monitoring and evaluating the PA, by



- Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA
  - Serving as focal points in their respective administrations, acting as liaison between the PA and relevant authorities in their countries.

The Steering Group took note of the information provided by the PAC.

## 5. Workshop on PA Hazards updated actions

The Policy Area coordinator submitted a draft of updated actions for PA Hazards in December 2024. Next step is for the National Coordinators Group (NCG) to decide on the structure of the strategy and the policy areas. Once it has been approved, the actions should be finalised, including indicators.

To properly prepare, a small workshop was organised to discuss the indicators and targets.

Tom Schumacher from Baltic Sea Strategy Point (BSP) held a short introduction to the process of updating the actions and on indicators.

**Timeline:** According to the new timeline, the NCG should decide on the future PA composition by June 2025. Policy areas will prepare their final action from July-October.

**Scope of update:** Policy areas and actions can be changed, closed, newly developed or re-defined. Focus is on clarifying actions and having a coherent line of implementation, through the **impact pathway**. Please see attached presentation for a more comprehensive overview. In short:

- **Outputs** are **direct results**, such as stakeholder events, projects generated, solutions developed, recommendations presented to decision makers, research/policy papers/newsletters published
- **Outcomes** are (self-) sustaining effects, such as broad uptake of new solutions, improved policies implemented, new legislation adopted, more stakeholders engaged, impact on agenda setting, changed attitudes and mindsets, more funding aligned.
- **Impact** are **positive changes in the “real world”** such as reduced number of oil spill accidents, lower level of unemployment, share of renewable energy sources, increased number of night-train connections, less nutrients in the Baltic sea.

Tom underlined the importance of having good outcome and impact indicators. The BSP is aware that there is not always a clear-cut connection between PA actions and impacts, however, it is important to relate to developments in the region when developing actions.

PAC Louise Floman went through the draft indicators that were included in the draft PA Hazards actions submitted on 28 January 2025. There are currently no targets for the indicators, and the purpose of this mini workshop was to discuss targets of the indicators and possibly to change some indicators.

### **Output indicators**

A discussion on when the targets should be achieved. No official end date for the Action plan. PAC suggested to set targets for 2030, or to have per year instead (e.g. 2/year). Steering group advised



to set targets for 2030, since it aligns with several EU targets and some HELCOM targets. The suggested targets for 2030 were considered appropriate by the Steering Group.

#### ***Outcome indicators***

- One indicator “To minimize and eventually end the use of PFAS” was eliminated, since it was too similar to an impact indicator. It was decided that it was more suitable as an impact indicator, however, the impact indicator needed to be revised.
- One outcome indicator was added by suggestion by BSP: “Solution transferred (from one country to another or from project to administration)”.
- PAC suggested to measure the outcome targets by sending a survey to participants in events/workshops etc, evaluating if they perceive that they have increased knowledge on the topic. SG members suggested to take inspiration from similar indicator developed by Interreg programmes (programme specific indicator).

#### ***Impact indicators***

- One indicator “More municipalities take action on tox-free environment” was eliminated, since it was too similar to an output indicator.
- The Steering Group decided to task PAC with revising the impact indicators substantially in order to align with HELCOM indicators. Since the impact indicators work as a check on the state-of-the-region, several Steering Group members voiced that they would prefer to use HELCOM indicators to that end. PAC will follow up together with the HELCOM secretariat.
- PAC will prepare a new draft for the approval of the Steering Group.

### **6. Decision on presidency 2025-2026**

#### ***Background***

The rules of procedures of the Steering Group states that “The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. The SG follows the EUSBSR NCG (National Coordination Group) presidency rotation”.

Poland has held the presidency in the EUSBSR National Coordination Group since July 2024 and until June 2025. In the PA Hazards Steering Group, Poland has chaired since 10 May 2024. Next chairmanship foreseen is Estonia, from July 2025 until June 2026.

Therefore, a decision to appoint the Estonian Ministry for Climate as chair for one year is proposed to the Steering Group.

#### ***Proposal for decision:***

“The Steering Group for Policy Area Hazards decides to appoint Estonia as chair from July 2025 - June 2026.”

The Steering Group approved the decision.



## 7. AOB and date for next meeting

- a. Information and discussion on the project platform HazGone.

Presentation by Heidrun Fammler, Baltic Environment Forum Deutschland.

The project platform has been granted funding by the Interreg BSR programme and will formally start up in July 2025. Several SG members have joined the platform.

*Heidrun Fammler* informed the Steering Group that the platform was now slowly starting up, although it would not formally start until July.

The platform working package teams are being created, and steering group members are invited to join - in particular the WP „Connecting upstream- and downstream solutions“.

On 25 November 2025, a joint event for the project NonHazCity 3 and the project platform Hazgone will be held in Vilnius. Additionally, the project ChemClimCircle will organise an event at the Green day in Vilnius on 26 November.



## PARTICIPANTS

Estonia	Ministry for Environment	Annika Mikomägi
Finland	Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	Jukka Mehtonen
Latvia	Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre	Maruta Vehi
Poland (Chair)	Bureau for Chemical substances	Magdalena Frydrych
PAC	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	Louise Floman
Observer	HELCOM Secretariat	Lotta Ruokanen
Observer	Swedish Chemicals Agency	Maria Linderoth
Observer	Baltic Environment Forum Deutschland	Heidrun Fammler
Strategic adviser	European Commission, DG REGIO	Johan Magnusson
Strategic adviser	Baltic Sea Strategy Point (BSP)	Tom Schumacher