

## The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Steering Group of the EUSBSR Policy Area Spatial Planning on Maritime Spatial Planning

09 April 2025, Rostock, Germany

(6-2025 SG EUSBSR PA SP on MSP)

The Steering Group (SG) was attended by representatives Estonia, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, as well as by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats. HELCOM observers were represented by Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB). The Session was also attended by invited guests representing the BalticSea2Land project, the EU MSP Platform, MSP4BIO project, ReMap project as well as the PERMAGOV project.

The SG was chaired by the Co-Chair of the Working Group; Kai Trümpler, Germany and by the Vice-Chair of the Working Group, Penina Blankett, Finland. Coordinators of Policy Area Spatial Planning Tina Šipkēvica (VASAB Secretariat) and Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky (HELCOM Secretariat) acted as secretaries of the SG. Since the Steering Group meeting is an integral part of the sixth informal consultation Steering Group of the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (IC HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 6-2024), documents submitted to the Steering Group meeting and presentations are numbered accordingly.

### Information on recent developments and activities related to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Action Plan and Policy area (PA) Spatial Planning

1. The Steering Group noted the information on the developments and activities related to the EUSBSR and PA Spatial Planning (document 6-1) and the results of the Planners' Forum (document 6-4, presentation 7).

### Follow-up the implementation of PASPS project and the workplan for 2025-2026

2. The Steering Group noted the overview of projects that contribute to the implementation of the Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2021-2030 (document 6-3). The Session welcomed the proposal from the Secretariats to combine this excel in the future with the developments and activities (document 6-1 to this session) as an attachment.

### Progress in the work of the BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-Group

3. The Steering Group noted the information on the progress in the work of the BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-Group as presented as the Chair of the ESG (document 5-2). The Steering Group welcomed the information and thanked the group for the work done.

4. The Steering Group considered the proposal by the BSR MSP Data ESG on Annex 2 of the Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure and recommended it for approval (document 5-1 Rev.1).

5. The Steering Group acknowledged that once agreed changes of the MSP output data structure are technically implemented, some automated data flows between [Basemaps](#) and EMODnet relevant services might become inactive. However, the Steering Group noted that these links can be restored shortly.

6. The Steering Group considered proposals on the scope and timeline for the revision of the Guidelines on transboundary output data (document 5-1 Rev.1) and recommended revising the Guidelines as proposed in the document. The Steering Group invited the BSR MSP Data ESG to consider the guidelines intersessionally and further invited the ESG to submit a revised version of the Guidelines to IC HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 7-2025.

7. The Steering Group acknowledged that despite currently proposed revision being primarily editorial some substantial proposals might occur when the document is scrutinized by experts.

8. The Steering Group noted the last developments of the EU Technical Expert Group (TEG) on data for MSP shared orally by the HELCOM Secretariat.

9. The Steering Group took note that HELCOM Senior Data Manager Joni Kaitaranta, who is currently co-chairing the TEG on data for MSP, will be leaving his post at the HELCOM Secretariat. The Steering Group highly valued his work and input to the development of regional work related to data, as well as contribution to the work of EU TEG on MSP for data.

#### Planners' Forum and identification of project ideas

10. The Steering Group reflected on the consideration of the maritime defence topic at the 6th Planners' Forum, taking note that [Symbiosis project](#) (of European Defence Agency) has developed a tool to check whether areas designated for offshore energy might have any issues with defence tasks and activities. The Session proposed that question can be considered as a follow up of the maritime defence topic at the next Planners' Forum. The Steering Group took note that security will be addressed at the 5th Baltic Sea MSP Forum and that organizers are already in contact with Symbiosis project regarding their contribution to the agenda.

#### Follow-up and progress of regional projects and/or initiatives – outputs of high regional significance

11. The Steering Group noted the overview of projects that contribute to the implementation of the Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2021-2030 (document 6-3). The Session welcomed the proposal from the Secretariats to combine this excel in the future with the developments and activities (document 6-1 to this session) as an attachment.

12. The Steering Group noted the update on the progress of MSP4BIO project presented by the project lead partner, invited guest to this session (presentation 8).

13. The Steering Group welcomed the work done in the project highlighting that the project has a lot of deliverables which are to be thoroughly considered to identify how they contribute to the implementation of the Baltic Sea Roadmap objectives and other regional needs. The Steering Group took note of the suggestions that project deliverables can be used for the update of country fiches (deliverable 4.1), and for producing policy messages under task 3.4 of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG's workplan.

14. The Steering Group stressed that the project has number of outcomes related to SEA which should be used by SEABAS project to develop recommendations for the Baltic Sea SEA framework.

15. The Steering Group noted the update on the progress of ReMAP project by the HELCOM Secretariat (presentation 9) and the invitation to attend project's Final Conference in Helsinki in October 2025.

16. The Steering Group welcomed project results highlighting that they can be used under MSP and MSFD national processes as the developed tools will be available online. The Session further

pointed out that ReMAP directly contributes to SEABAS project platform in relation to the development of the CIA methodology as a central axis of SEA procedure.

17. The Steering Group recalled information on the Baltic PlaNet project platform objectives which will support the WG and a new initiative to establish the Land-based Planners' Forum (document 6-5, presentation 10).

18. The Steering Group noted the update on the progress of BalticSea2Land project shared orally by an invited guest representing the project.

19. The Steering Group pointed out that stakeholders' engagement is one of the key tasks within the SEA procedure and that Navigator tool may be a valuable input in the SEA which is to be fully utilized by SEABAS and Baltic PlaNet project platforms (of Interreg BSR programme).

20. The Steering Group took note that BalticSea2Land final conference as 5th Baltic MSP Forum will be arranged on 11-12 November 2025 in Riga and encouraged participants to participate in the event.

21. The Steering Group noted the information on the implementation of the NESBp project WP2 "Ocean governance" on dialogue platform between North Sea and Baltic Sea (document 6-2). The Session exchanged views on the potential topics and formats for the cross-sea basin dialogue and its contribution to the implementation of regional policy commitments.

22. The Steering Group recognized high value of the cross-regional dialogue or both regions and recommended to seek synergies on such developments as harmonized methodological approaches, data management and tools for CIA fully utilizing resources of ongoing projects.

23. The Steering Group recommended that topics related to regional governance may address organization of science-policy dialogue considering how project results can be utilized for the development of regional policy frameworks.

24. The Steering Group recommended planner's forum as an appropriate platform for consideration of practical aspects. Also, the Steering Group acknowledged that the data expert group can be one of the formats for practical cooperation and supported the idea of arranging a joint session between data experts from both sea basins. The joint session may address also issue related organization of such expert cooperation, its benefits, required resources include an overview of the work done by the Baltic Sea MSP DATA expert group.

25. The Steering Group agreed that the cross-sea basin dialogue is an opportunity to share experience on basic principles and approaches to organization of regional collaboration in MSP, which might be beneficial not only for GNSBI but also for the Baltic Sea increasing the effectiveness of regional cooperation. The Session pointed out that EBA Guidelines and organization of related regional work might be considered as potential topic for the discussion on ocean governance. Interaction with sectors and organization of cross-sectorial dialog is one of the topics for the cooperation where the Baltic Sea region can learn from the North Sea experience. The topic on of the support of early planning dialogue can be addressed using planners' forum as an example.

26. The Steering Group also suggested such practical aspects of the dialogue as knowledge exchange related to blue economy and multi-use as well as transport sector and MSP. The Steering Group also took note that a dataset on fisheries has been developed in the North Sea which can be one of the topics for the practical discussion.

27. The Steering Group highlighted the role of Denmark, Germany and Sweden acting as liaison between two regions and facilitating cross-sea basin dialogue.



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#### Any other issues related to the work of the Steering Group

30. The Steering Group noted that the HELCOM Secretariat is seeking a Data Coordinator and that applications can be sent by 13 April 2025. Additional information related to this vacancy can be found on the HELCOM [website](#).

31. The Steering Group wished that HELCOM Secretariat will find opportunity to continue cooperation with the EU TEG on data for MSP

32. The Session took note that there is an [open vacancy](#) at the HELCOM Secretariat for a project researcher working for ReMAP and NESBp projects, due to Deborah Shinoda and Kemal Pınarbaşı leaving their posts soon. The Session thanked Deborah and Kemal for their great work and valuable inputs to the regional policy work.