Baltic Sea Region
MSP Data Expert Sub-Group
2nd meeting

19-20/01/2016
Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH)
Hamburg, Germany

DECISIONS

General

1. Agreement of Decision paper from 1st meeting.
2. Brief introduction of BONUS call 2015 “Blue Baltic”:
   a. Themes called for BONUS call invites project applications to support MSP from local to BSR scale applying the ecosystem approach in MSP and exploring the needs and establishing a region-wide data exchange network;
   b. preregistration of project applications is by 9th February 2016, deadline of submitting project application by 10th March 2016;
   c. Kira Gee (University of Liverpool) is taking leading part in preparing project application, institutes from Finland & Russia have expressed their willingness to take a part, looking for other partners;
3. Data group discussed activities of possible BONUS project on MSP data:
   a. To generate possible appropriate data sharing prototype or model in order to prove the feasibility and viability of such data sharing;
   b. Identification of gaps where data exchange is not possible or burdened and filling the gaps with necessary data collection etc.;
   c. Acknowledging that national marine data structures are not well developed, it would be valuable to cooperate on coherent information data platforms which are in accordance to the INSPIRE directive (environmental data could be taken as a test case);
   d. Harmonisation of several data sets to make them better understandable.

Presentations:

4. Insight into MSP Directive:
   a. When preparing maritime spatial plans, Member States (MS) shall take into consideration relevant interactions of activities and uses;
   b. Without prejudice to MS`s competences, Directive indicates possible activities, uses and interests – MS are not obliged to plan all of them, they are only examples;
   c. MS shall cooperate with the aim of ensuring that maritime spatial plans are coherent and coordinated across the marine region concerned; cooperations should be realized within existing networks and structures – HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group serves as the main body to coordinate MSP issues in Baltic Sea region;
   d. MS shall organise the use of the best available data, and decide how to organise the sharing of information, necessary for maritime spatial plans; there is no obligation to exchange particular data sets – everything is let to MS as long as the goal of transboundary agreed and coherent MSP is achieved;
   e. Sharing of information should be clarified within the MSP process (how to share and where to get the data to prepare MSP) – it is not prescribed which data should be shared and how they could be shared;
   f. MSP Directive has referenced to the use of relevant instruments and tools that are already available under other EU policies, such as those mentioned in INSPIRE Directive.
   g. INSPIRE directive puts an obligation to MS to share specific data & develop data sets,

h. There are 34 INSPIRE themes for spatial data sets and 21 of them relate to maritime areas and are relevant to MSP;
i. Although INSPIRE themes cover a lot from scope of MSP data, they insufficiently serve the MSP needs;
j. INSPIRE themes use public data, part of data can be only viewed, not accessed; some data is still missing;
k. Web services (geoportals etc.) are considered as most convenient way to obtain data.

5. EMODnet Human Activities (presented by Alessandro Pititto) – EC project since 2009, provides public available harmonised spatial data on the sea and sea-bed for MSP, research, industries, academies etc. at EU level in order to compare the situation among European seas.
6. Vessel traffic density from AIS data could become more required data for MSP purposes (to assess impact of shipping on marine environment).
7. EMODnet is collecting feedback from stakeholders in order to improve the layout and fine-tuning of the EMODnet website – Data group members are invited to fill the questionnaire in the EMODnet website.
8. CONTIS – BSH database which provides information and data about human activities in German EEZ for MSP purposes. Now the update of the CONTIS is going on to make it use also for support of application procedures for offshore wind farms and related infrastructure, as well as to improve the input data for wider use / exploitation of data;
9. The German Marine Data Infrastructure (MDI-DE) – is a supra-institutional network for the integration of marine data from all relevant data sources. MDI-DE is part of German Central geoportal – central metadata catalogue that leads to local infrastructure nodes providing data and services (*data remains with its originators*):
10. "HELCOM Dataset collation for assessing sea uses and impact of human activities on the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea" - regional datasets on sea use and human activities will be gathered and will be used in HELCOM work and assessments (such as on maritime activities and Second holistic assessment of the ecosystem health). Many data sets are regularly updated already in HELCOM, therefore only few data sets will be required from countries. Collected and updated datasets will be published in HELCOM Map and Data service as far as possible. In the next meeting Leena will bring updated info of the topic.
11. In Estonia, in order to observe human activities in the sea, the long-term uses (such as cables, marine lines, dumping sites etc.) might be registered in marine cadastre.

Outcomes:

12. The main outcome of the Data group work could be a guidance document for data availability in Baltic Sea region. The document could be further developed in HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working group.
13. BSR-wide consensus is needed whether data should be exchanged through the common web services or should be shared once when presenting the maritime spatial plans in transboundary consultations.
14. Two approaches are indicated so far in data sharing:
    a. *Centralized data* collection, processing and hosting in databases (HELCOM, EMODnet) - is considered as out-of-date IT solution due to the huge recourses needed, ineffectiveness, heavy update process, hosting etc;
    b. *Decentralized IT solution* with local infrastructure nodes providing data and services (MDI-DE) - data is hosted and managed by data owner, but other users can reach the data through the web services (geoportals etc.).
15. When creating such decentralized system, one should consider:
    a. Engagement of data hosts to share the data (and such data which is useful for everybody) might be crucial;
    b. Some data sets are freely available and accessible, other are the subject of fees or with restricted use.

c. Such a system only can work if data is available/has access;
d. "*Win-win situation*" – data gains more value if it is more available for wider public (not only for individual use);
e. Harmonisation of data technical issues comes only after the agreement of cooperation;
f. Data should be provided in standardized way – data should be evaluated whether data is appropriable or is there an extra processing needed etc. (also interoperability of data use is considerable - data could be used interdisciplinary and provided for multiple uses);
g. The data originators lack information and knowledge what kind of data and which data attributes are needed for planners.
h. Only data end-users can define what is most appropriate data needed for particular purpose >> for MSP planners should give a feedback what kind of data is needed, if particular data is useful, quality and frequency is sufficient, data can be used as provided or some processing needed additionally etc.;
i. After agreement on issues mentioned above, next step is to provide access to data via web services etc.;
j. It is rational to create system where data remains with its originators (responsible ones for data quality, regular updates etc.);
k. All involved partners should sign a contract / common commitment to bring more reliability to the system.

16. Group discussed which data attributes are relevant and needed for characterising transboundary issues in MSP process (coastal issues could be neglected because were not considered as transboundary issues). Areas were picked based on projects, as well as on every-day work and identifying activities taking place in marine area. Main conclusions:
    a. Transboundary issues/themes should be structured the same way as the possible activities, uses and interests are listed in MSP Directive (Article 8);
    b. Output data could be used also as an input data for other maritime spatial plans;
    c. BSR-wide data availability solutions would support implementation of MSP Directive and work of HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working group (*MSP Roadmap, Guidelines on transboundary consultations etc.*), as well as strategic environmental assessment process in MSP.

Tasks:

17. Bettina & Miriem will complete discussed tables (not later than by end of February 2016). The tables will be supplemented with additional columns also for output data issues in BSR countries (regarding to legislation, priorities, uses etc).
18. Group members fill out the tables with relevant information (status of data in each country + contact points) not later than by **31st March 2016**). The filled tables should serve as discussion topic for the next meeting.
19. Next – 3rd meeting will be held on 12-13th April 2016 in Gothenburg, Sweden, starting at 10.00am and finishing at lunch next day; proposed presentations:
    a. MSP output data (future relevant sea-uses) and its relation to INSPIRE Directive by Jakub Szostak (PL);
    b. SEAGIS 2.0 project (Susanne will contact the project people);
    c. Introduction to HOLAS assessment by HELCOM (Leena will coordinate the speaker);
20. The 4th meeting possibly could be hosted in Estonia (not considered yet).