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<b>Document title</b>	Baltic SCOPE project
<b>Code</b>	2-15
<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 - Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies
<b>Submission date</b>	18.2.2015
<b>Submitted by</b>	Executive Secretary
<b>Reference</b>	HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 10-2015

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## Background

HELCOM is participating as a partner in the project Baltic SCOPE –Towards coherence and cross-border solutions in Baltic Maritime Spatial Plans, which was submitted to the EU call for proposals MARE/2014/22 within the deadline 14 November 2014.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 10-2015 was informed orally by the European Commission that the project had been granted funding. The project is currently preparing for signatures of the contract, estimated to take place during the next weeks. The implementation period will be 18 months from the date included in the final contract.

The Lead partner of the initiative is the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, SwAM. Partners include Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency/BSH (Germany), Maritime Office in Szczecin (Poland), Danish Nature Agency (Denmark), Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia (Latvia), Estonian Ministry of the Interior (Estonia), State Regional Development Agency/VASAB (Latvia), Nordregio (Intergovernmental), Finnish Environment Institute/SYKE (Finland) and HELCOM.

The attachment includes a short description of the initiative.

## Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the project activity.

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**Baltic SCOPE –Towards coherence and cross-border solutions in Baltic Maritime Spatial Plans**

Call for proposals MARE/2014/22, Lot 2: Baltic Sea November 2014

As part of the ongoing activities within the field of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), HELCOM is participating as a partner in the project Baltic SCOPE –Towards coherence and cross-border solutions in Baltic Maritime Spatial Plans, which was submitted to the EU call for proposals MARE/2014/22 within the deadline 14 November 2014.

The Lead partner of the initiative is the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, SwAM. Partners include Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency/BSH (Germany), Maritime Office in Szczecin (Poland), Danish Nature Agency (Denmark), Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia (Latvia), Estonian Ministry of the Interior (Estonia), State Regional Development Agency/VASAB (Latvia), Nordregio (Intergovernmental), Finnish Environment Institute/SYKE (Finland) and HELCOM.

Taking ongoing MSP processes in the participating countries as a starting point, the project will focus on cross-border consultations for two “real” MSP cases: i) South-West Sweden bordering Denmark, Germany and Poland, and ii) the Latvian sea border with Sweden and Estonia. A series of meetings will be organised among planners and relevant institutional stakeholders to work on transboundary topics in a systematic step-by-step approach. This enables the project to provide real planning solutions for real transboundary issues and a template for dealing with similar issues elsewhere.

A key benefit of this approach is that it will equip planners from the participating countries to take on board transnational considerations when developing their national MSPs. This means that national maritime spatial plans can be prepared based on in-depth information provided by neighbouring countries and common solutions found in joint discussions, leading to greater alignment of national plans.

Up and above the solutions developed for the case study areas, the project will also deliver a set of generic good practices, methods and results which will be filtered into the Baltic MSP process fostered by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG. These lessons learnt and recommendations will be generated through a comparative analysis of the two cases on the basis of a systematic, integrated research process. The project will also generate recommendations for evaluating the MSP process.

Moreover, it will also generate recommendations for implementing an ecosystem based approach to MSP, the use and exchange of data in MSP, the SEA process and institutional stakeholder consultation. Maritime uses to be covered are likely to include shipping, energy, fishery and nature protection areas, although the exact issues and uses to be covered will ultimately depend on the start-up phase where the most pertinent transnational “hot topics” will be identified.

HELCOM, with experiences in regional data exchange will provide input regarding transnational guidance on best practices for the use and exchange of AIS based GIS data on maritime activities. HELCOM will provide the project with maritime GIS data, especially on ship movements in the region based on the HELCOM AIS network. As such it will participate in workshops related to data and data exchange, acting as an observer and provider of practical input on these issues. The HELCOM Secretariat will also in a publication draw together lesson learnt on the use of maritime activities data in Baltic Sea MSP, including the case study areas.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 10-2015 was informed by the European Commission that the project had been granted funding. The project is currently preparing for signatures of the contract, estimated to take place during the next weeks. The implementation period will be 18 months from the date included in the final contract. The total estimated budget of the action is euro 2 653 749, HELCOM share of the total budget is euro 156 250.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 10-2015 further supported the Baltic SCOPE project as flagship project under HA Spatial Planning, and DG Regio is to consider the proposal to make a recommendation to the High Level Group, who makes the final decision on the flagship status.