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Background

In order to achieve the goal of the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap (*to draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea Region by 2020 which are coherent across borders and apply the ecosystem approach*), VASAB and HELCOM have established the Baltic Sea Region MSP Data Expert Sub-group (MSP Data Expert sub-group) as a sub-group to the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group for a period of two years, i.e. until the end of 2016.

The aim of BSR MSP Data Expert sub-group is to support data, information and evidence availability for MSP processes with regard to cross-border / trans-boundary planning issues to ensure comparability of maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea Region. The BSR MSP Data Expert sub-group facilitates the work of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, as well as helps with implementation of the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020.

This document contains an extract of the outcomes of the first two meetings of the BSR MSP Data Expert sub-group held on 1-2 October 2016 and 19-20 January 2016 as well as the revised Work Plan. Documents and presentations considered by the meeting have been made available in the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information about the outcomes and the Work plan of the Baltic Sea region MSP Data Expert sub-group. In particular, the meeting is invited to discuss the initial steps in providing data availability through the Baltic Sea region.

Information about the outcomes of the Baltic Sea region MSP Data Expert Sub-Group

1. Two meetings have been held so far, chaired by Ms. **Katarzyna Krzywda** (Polish Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation).
2. Group members has discussed and agreed on framework and further tasks and adopted a Work plan.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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, 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.).
7. 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. 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 (e.g. web services);
 - 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.
8. Due to the data variety and different approaches in each country, further Data group work will be focused mainly on transboundary issues. Transboundary issues were picked based on projects, as well as on everyday work and identifying activities taking place in marine area.
9. In order to define minimum “input data” requirements, group discussed which data attributes are relevant and needed for characterising transboundary issues in MSP process.
10. General overview of national “state of play”, as well as minimum requirements of “input” and “output” data will be discussed in next meeting, which will be held on 12-13th April 2016 in Gothenburg, Sweden.



REVISED WORK PLAN OF BSR MSP DATA EXPERT SUB-GROUP

(Adopted in 20th January 2016)



No	Tasks	Outcomes
1.	1st meeting (1-2nd October 2015, Riga, LATVIA)	
1.1.	Agreement on general formalities, procedures and rules	<i>“Terms of References for a Baltic Sea Region MSP Data Expert Sub-group” “Rules of Procedure of the Helsinki Commission”</i>
1.2.	Chair election	Chair elected: Ms. Katarzyna Krzywda (Poland)
1.3.	Short presentations of MSP activities and data-use in BSR countries	Overall table of current status of MSP Data use in BSR countries
1.4.	Development and agreement of extended work plan of the Sub-Group	Revised work plan
1.5.	Agreement on MSP Data contact points and contact persons list	MSP Data Expert sub-group contact persons list.
2.	2nd meeting (19-20th January 2016, Hamburg, GERMANY)	
2.1.	Agreement on MSP Data contact persons Additional list	<i>The list stays open for further additions.</i>
2.2.	Discussion and agreement on transboundary issues and relevant basic minimum data sets for MSP	Selection of transboundary issues and compilation of basic minimum data sets based on place-based national and transnational test cases.
	Agreement on the template for General overview on national state of play of MSP Data with regard to transboundary/cross-border issues in BSR	According to the selection of transboundary issues and compilation of basic minimum data sets, proposed template of the initial overview on National state of play (data sets, formats, scope etc., including the list of relevant institutions and contact points/persons for particular data).
3.	3rd meeting (12-13th April 2016, Gothenburg, SWEDEN)	
4.	Agreement on initial overview on national state of play of MSP Data with regard to transboundary/cross-border issues in BSR	ESG members compile info about national MSP Data with regard to transboundary context prior the 3 rd meeting. During the meeting the Overview should be agreed.
4.1.	Discussion on minimums requirements for “Input data” and “output data” and sharing of this data which has relevance for	Proposed minimum “input data” requirements for transboundary MSP (scope, metadata, standards, formats, accessibility – links, websites, services etc.).
4.2.	transboundary/cross-border (planning) issues in BSR	Proposed minimum “output data” requirements/criteria etc. for transboundary MSP (maritime spatial plans).
4.3.		Indicate initial gaps in relevant data, availability (ownership, licensing, cost, legal aspects in general, language issues, harmonisation needs etc.);
5.	4th meeting (June 2016)	
5.1.	Agreement on minimum requirements for “Input and “output” data and availability of this data which has relevance for	Prepared and agreed minimum (input and output data) requirements for transboundary MSP
5.2.	transboundary/cross-border (planning) issues in BSR	Agreed an overview on the gaps in relevant data
5.3.	Discussion on Guidance for MSP Data availability	ESG should consider developing further steps for MSP Data availability in BSR – Guidance proposal
6.	Future meetings	
6.1.	The Guidance of data availability (both – input (planning evidence) and output (future uses) data) towards coherent maritime spatial plans in the BSR.	Preparation of guidance document for data availability in Baltic Sea region