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Background

The attached document contains a progress report of the project Baltic SCOPE – Towards coherence and cross-order solutions in Baltic Maritime Spatial Plans.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to

- take note of the report,
- raise issues for Baltic SCOPE partnership to consider,
- discuss how the work and results of the project can inform national and transnational maritime spatial planning,
- take note that the 2nd Baltic MSP Forum will be held in November 2016 with the final public conference of Baltic SCOPE.

Baltic SCOPE progress report

Baltic SCOPE is a collaboration to achieve coherence and cross-border solutions in Baltic maritime spatial plans. The collaboration unites maritime spatial planning authorities and pan-Baltic organizations to find planning solutions to transboundary issues and improve the maritime spatial planning processes. The two-year collaboration is funded by the ten partners and the European Commission DG MARE.

Advancements on evidence, exchange and evaluation

Basis for solutions

- Topics and geographical focus areas chosen. Topic papers elaborated on Shipping, Environment, Fisheries and Energy based on input from sector authorities in the countries.
- Assessment reports for the two case study areas Southwest and the Central Baltic respectively, indicating hot spots and hot topics identified, sketching common objectives for cross-border cooperation and providing a detailed overview of the work done during the preparatory phase
- Matrix of interests on Southwest areas.
- Baltic-wide planning evidence on shipping.
- Set up a server with enough memory and processor to handle necessary AIS data. Started production of high-resolution density maps on monthly shipping intensity.
- Report on lessons from cross-border planning on land.
- Task force on Ecosystem-based Approach set up to draft an interpretation of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP based on HELCOM VASAB “Guidelines on Ecosystem-based Approach” to find a similar understanding.

Networks and operational exchange

- Four out of six countries explicitly says they have harvested advantages of being part in each other planning processes; sharing ideas and experiences on how to advance national work and knowledge.
- Operational exchange between planners, with questions and ideas for how to hold national stakeholders meeting, for example between Poland and Sweden.
- Participants have established network with national agencies and experts for Energy, Shipping, Environment and Fisheries in participating countries, as well as with ministries in own country.
- Planning evidence and topic papers will be useful also in the national planning.
- Exchange with BONUS BaltSpace project at four meetings.
- Focus areas in Southwest to be used to conduct an initial analysis and specification of data requirements for cross-border solutions in MSP by members BSR MSP Data Expert Group.
- Presented Baltic SCOPE at two EU MSP expert group meetings.

Monitoring & Evaluation draft

- Draft evaluation and monitoring framework for transboundary aspects on MSP and suggestions for suitable criteria and indicators, based on:
 - review of existing knowledge on monitoring and evaluating as well as policy documents
 - interview with case participants about processes and practices of transboundary interactions and collaboration coordinated with BaltSpace project, to support preparation of the framework
 - input from EUSBSR Annual Forum and PlanBothnia.

Lessons learned

Lessons learned so far and recommendations are to be discussed at partner meeting in March.

Upcoming events

- Cross-border thematic meetings with national institutional stakeholders

- Joint planners meeting in September
- Partner meetings in March and June, concluding partner meeting in December
- European Maritime Day workshop and exhibition stand
- Baltic MSP Forum in November will feature Baltic SCOPE's last public conference, which will partly aim at collecting contributions and comments on a practical level, in the spirit of the 1st Baltic MSP Forum.

Issues to manage

- Coordination and resources between MSP projects. (Gave birth to the idea of a new concept: The One Week Workweek; five consecutive days were maritime spatial planners and specialists come together to work joint workdays.)
- Changes in administrations.