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This document includes proposals by the Secretariat to the proposed ToRs for the assessment of application of the Baltic Sea Broad-Scale Maritime Spatial Planning Principles and the Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation, and achievements of regional targets for maritime spatial planning of the Regional Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2013-2020 as contained in document 4-1. The Secretariat apologizes that no feedback was provided to the ToR within the Pan Baltic Scope consultation, which was due to the lack of time.

The document also provides for some overall consideration in this Meeting on how to plan a review and possible adjustment of the common regional framework in MSP.

Pan Baltic Scope project (activity 1.1.4), *inter alia*, aims at an assessment of the MSP Principles, guidelines on transboundary consultations (...), and the MSP roadmap 2013-2020. The VASAB Secretariat is responsible for the task within the Pan Baltic Scope project, and the respective proposal for ToRs for the work is included in document 4-1.

Such an assessment is planned to contribute the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG work plan, including to assess the implementation of the Roadmap, and ultimately to possible future adjustments to update the joint regional framework for MSP.

Ecosystem approach

The MSP Principles include Ecosystem Approach as an overarching principle. Ecosystem approach is an overarching principle because it directly links to other principles such as “sustainable management”, “precautionary approach”. The Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area provides further specification on how ecosystem approach could be applied in MSP. The commitment to apply the ecosystem approach guideline is also a coherent part of the MSP Roadmap planned to be assessed.

It is not clear if the planned work in Pan Baltic Scope activity 1.1.4. aims to cover ecosystem approach when assessing implementation of the principles and the roadmap, or to what extent it will do so. Clarification on this point could be useful for the Meeting to plan accordingly.

Pan Baltic Scope project, WP 1.2. (overall lead by Latvia) includes activities to advance the implementation of the Ecosystem-Based Approach and data sharing. More specifically, the project will result in, e.g.:

- recommendations for follow-up of the HELCOM-VASAB guideline for the implementation of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP (activity 1.2.1 led by Sweden); directly links to the MSP principles and the roadmap;
- advanced implementation of cumulative impact assessments as a tool in MSP (activity 1.2.3 led by HELCOM); directly linked to the ecosystem approach and sustainable management principles;

- recommendations on how to develop a framework for social and economic analyses and the existing models for the purposes of the MSP (activity 1.2.5 led by HELCOM); directly linked to the ecosystem approach and sustainable development principles;
- as well as other reports and results on the topic.

Thus, there is work planned within the same project, concerning the same MSP documents, to deliver outcomes that are also of direct use to support possible future adjustments to update the joint regional framework for MSP. As ecosystem approach is high on the agenda and the results of the regional Baltic work, including within Pan Baltic Scope, could showcase and pave the way for possible similar approaches and solutions in other parts of Europe and beyond. Also for this reason, it would be important to keep the process of the assessment of the major HELCOM-VASAB documents streamlined (all components are covered) and synchronized (joint consideration in the MSP WG meetings).

The outcomes of WP 1.1.4. and WP 1.2 could provide HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG with information to more comprehensively evaluate progress in implementation of the principles/guidelines/roadmap and plan further work accordingly.

For instance, the proposed interactive workshops back-to-back with MSP WG meetings in autumn 2018 (on guidelines on transboundary consultations) and in autumn 2019 (on roadmap) could also be used to discuss e.g. the plans and interim/final deliverables of WP 1.2 of Pan Baltic Scope. This would especially be timely to the second workshop in 2019 and could potentially be synchronized with the planned BSAP update process (see below). In this way, the Contracting Parties will have a possibility to discuss issues that are relevant for future within a single process.

Planning for possible adjustment of the common regional framework in MSP

In other documents for this Meeting, information on the planned HELCOM process to update the Baltic Sea Action Plan is presented (cf. document 2-1 on the Ministerial Meeting outcome; document 2-2 on the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, and document 4-2 on status of the BSAP implementation). These documents and the process also concern maritime spatial planning. The updated Baltic Sea Action Plan will be adopted at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in the second part of 2021 (under the German chairmanship in HELCOM). A high-level segment of the annual meeting of HELCOM is planned for March 2020, providing a possibility to support the BSAP update process. While the details of the BSAP update process are yet to be developed, it can already be stated that as far as MSP is concerned and on the working level, the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG will be tasked to be engaged.

While the results of projects and studies will be useful to provide background information and proposals, the process will be driven by the Contracting Parties.

Taken the above into account, it might be timely for the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to start planning and arranging for a process for the HELCOM-VASAB MSP to review and assess the work within the current timeframe and propose any adjustments to the existing framework as needed and appropriate (new period – beyond 2020).¹

¹ On the HELCOM side, the current mandate of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG is up to 2021, to be followed by evaluation of the results and decision on further work (HOD 50-2016 in June 2016 supported the 5 years prolongation of the mandate, while noting the decision by VASAB to prolong the mandate of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP group by three years).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

In relation to a Pan Baltic Scope project level work:

- clarify if any aspects of ecosystem approach are to be included in the foreseen work proposed in document 4-1;
- discuss and clarify what opportunities the MSP WG and the HELCOM Secretariat will have to comment and review steps/each of the draft deliverables (for the three documents) of the project activity (e.g. to review proposed methodology, etc., this could be more explicitly mentioned in the table on page 6) and contribute to the planning of the proposed interactive workshops;
- agree that the foreseen work and deliverables under Pan Baltic Scope WP 1.2 should also feed into possible future adjustments to update the joint regional framework for MSP (the same purpose as in document 4-1);

On the WG level:

- As deliverables of the activities as included in document 4-1 will likely also concern HELCOM (“indication of possible future tasks”), the HELCOM Secretariat proposes HELCOM is added as an organization that can provide comments (cf. step 4 in the table p. 6); this **in addition to** a possibility for consultation with Pan Baltic Scope project because for HELCOM it involves a different process;
- agree that the planned interactive project workshop in 2019 on MSP roadmap could be a joint Pan Baltic Scope and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG workshop, prepared jointly, and that it could also cover results of WP 1.2 for a more comprehensive discussion on the roadmap and possibly also serving the BSAP update;
- agree to create a general overview of a process, including a timeline, to arrive at possible adjustment of the common MSP regional framework, taking into account but not limited to the activities listed above, to serve consideration and planning within HELCOM-VASAB MSP;
- task HELCOM and VASAB Secretariat to prepare a draft of the overview in coordination with the Co-Chairs for the next WG meeting.