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## Background

A comprehensive discussion on practical issues on maritime spatial planning (MSP) implementation and promotion of transboundary dialogue and ecosystem components in MSP in the Baltic Sea region took place at the Environmental Forum Baltic Sea Day 2018 in St. Petersburg.

The Russian Federation is a Party to the following conventions: Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention, 1992), the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention, 1992), the Framework Convention on the protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention, 2003). These conventions are aimed at solving the task of preservation and improvement of the ecological status of the seas surrounding Europe, while ensuring the economic growth of Littoral countries in accordance with the Blue Growth strategies.

One of the sessions of the Round table was devoted to the Interregional cooperation, particularly cooperation with Bucharest Convention. Participants, including representatives of Turkey and EU, discussed current status of MSP in the Black sea, common challenges as well as future plans. The participants highlighted mutual benefit of cooperation between regional sea conventions and harmonization of approaches and practical solutions. They invited HELCOM and VASAB actively cooperate with the relevant organizations, promoting the development of ecosystem based MSP in the other regions including the Black, Mediterranean, Barents and Northern Seas to use a tool to assure their sustainable use and good ecological status.

The attachment is the outcome of the round table MSP at the Baltic Sea Day 2018 in St.Petersburg.

## Action requested:

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.



Resolution of the Round Table  
 “Maritime spatial planning as a tool for  
 the preservation of the marine environment”  
 in the frame of



XIX INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM "BALTIC SEA DAY"

**Moderators:** Andrei Lappo, Ermak NW /Tālis Linkaits, VASAB, Head of Secretariat

**Number of participants:** 50

The Round table session was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2018. It was devoted to promotion of transboundary dialogue and Ecosystem Components in MSP in the Baltic Sea region. Over 50 representatives from the Russian Federation, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Finland, Sweden and Turkey participated in it.

Round table participants:

note that almost of the countries in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) have adopted legislation on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), and launched elaboration of legally binding national Maritime spatial plans. In the Russian Federation, methodological documents on the Maritime Spatial Planning that will form the basis for national legal framework in MSP are being developed. The development utilizes outcomes of bilateral cooperation with Finland, Norway and Sweden;

consider that the Baltic Sea Days in St. Petersburg have become an international Platform for regular exchange of views and latest achievements of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) countries in Maritime Spatial Planning, taking into account the state policy of the countries in the field of environmental protection and sustainable use of the Baltic Sea area;

welcome the active role of HELCOM and VASAB international organizations in strengthening the cooperation of the BSR countries to improve environmental health and assure sustainable joint use of the Baltic Sea;

realize that Maritime Spatial Planning is a tool for balancing human activities and the ecological state of the marine area, which is possible only with a common vision of long-term perspective in the Baltic Sea Region and joint political commitment;

take into account significant contribution of the Russian-Finnish-Estonian Coordinating Council for the Trilateral Cooperation on the Gulf of Finland initiated by Finland in 2013-2016 under the patronage of the Presidents of the three countries in studying the ecological state and the environmental monitoring in the Baltic Sea, and express satisfaction with the joint work continuation in this direction on the basis of the Russian-Finnish-Estonian Declaration «On Cooperation in the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Gulf of Finland and Its Maritime Regions” (2016);

take into account that work on Maritime Spatial Planning is carried out / begin in other seas shared by the EU member states and the Russian Federation.

**Recommendations:**

For the BSR countries, to make all the necessary efforts to implement the MSP Roadmap adopted at HELCOM ministerial meetings in 2013 and VASAB in 2014. The main goal for the period until 2021 is to develop the agreed national Maritime Spatial Plans of the BSR countries;

For the authorities of the BSR countries responsible for the development of MSP, to carry out their activities in full compliance with HELCOM / VASAB recommendations on the ecosystem-based approach and transboundary consultations;

For international organizations HELCOM and VASAB, to develop and strengthen their role as the coordinating MSP bodies of the BSR countries actively rely on the joint HELCOM/VASAB Working Group on MSP. To organize interaction with the structures that are coordinating the development of MSP in other European seas, in particular, the Black, Mediterranean, Barents and Northern Seas, etc. The main goal is to achieve a good ecological status and boost blue growth in the European seas, Atlantic and Arctic oceans.

For BSR states and international organizations to pay special attention to establishing of databases for the Baltic MSP.