



OUTCOME OF THE 17th MEETING OF THE HELCOM-VASAB MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING WORKING GROUP (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 17-2018)

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Introduction

0.1 The 17th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 17-2018) was held on 14-15 November 2018 in Riga, Latvia, upon invitation by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by representatives of all HELCOM and VASAB members except European Union, Lithuania and Denmark. HELCOM observers were represented by CCB. The Meeting was also attended by the European MSP Platform, Baltic Environmental Forum and Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) representing Baltic LINes as Invited Guests. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group, Mr. Joacim Johannesson, Sweden, and Ms. Katarzyna Krzywda, Poland.

0.4 The Co-Chairs opened the Meeting and welcomed the participants.

0.5 Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Professional Secretary of HELCOM, assisted by Mr. Juuso Haapaniemi, HELCOM, acted as Secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1-Rev.1, 1-2

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda (document 1-1-Rev.1) elaborated by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats in consultation with the Co-Chairs.

1.2 The Meeting agreed to consider documents 3-3 and 3-6 under Agenda Item 4.

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from other HELCOM and VASAB work

Documents: 2-1

2.1 The Meeting took note of the information on the outcomes of recent HELCOM and VASAB meetings as presented by HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats.

2.2 The Meeting took note of the information by Russia on MSP-related discussion at the Strategic Forum in St. Petersburg (October 2018) and contribution of the Head of VASAB Secretariat into the discussion.

Agenda Item 3 Regional coordination and policy follow-up

Documents: 3-1, 3-1-Rev., 3-2, 3-2-Rev.1, 3-4, 3-5, 3-8, 4-1

3.1 The Meeting considered the Draft Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the suggestion by Sweden to test the guidelines in practice. The Meeting took note of the clarification that the guidelines has already been tested and that the next test is planned by April 2019 and invited the Contracting Parties to join the test exercise.

3.3 The Meeting agreed on the Guidelines as contained in the revised document 3-2-Rev.1, to be submitted to HELCOM HODs and VASAB CSPD, respectively, for consideration, and congratulated the Baltic Sea Region MSP Data Expert Sub-Group and the Chair of this group Ms. Kristine Kedo for the achieved results.

- 3.4 The Meeting took note of the preliminary results of Baltic LINES project and discussed the use of the innovative approach to the data management to develop technical guidance for the MSP spatial data handling.
- 3.5 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the decentralized approach to data handling will assure access to the most up-to-date data and thanked the Baltic LINES project for the work done (Presentation 1)
- 3.6 The Meeting took note of the regional calendar of national MSP-related processes and meetings.
- 3.7 The Meeting was informed on the final conference of the Baltic LINES and North SEE projects in Hamburg in February 2019 and of the final conference of the Pan Baltic Scope in November 2019.
- 3.8 The Meeting invited countries to provide relevant information for the update of the calendar, which is valuable publicly available information on resources, to VASAB Secretariat (alda.nikodemusa@vasab.org) whenever this information is available.
- 3.9 The Meeting took note of the draft Cross-Border Consultation Study and reflected on the use of this study and its recommendations (document 3-7 and Presentation 2).
- 3.10 The Meeting pointed out that the Baltic Sea Region has experience in ESPOO consultations which are considered to be broader than the SEA / Environment, as a formal mechanism for consultation in broader scale.
- 3.11 The Meeting took note of the information on the ongoing process to develop a new instrument under UNCLOS on conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (document 4-1).
- 3.12 The Meeting considered the draft revised HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 'Implementation of integrated Marine and Coastal Management of Human Activities in the Baltic Sea Area' and comments provided to the draft (document 3-1-Rev.).
- 3.13 The Meeting concluded that the Recommendation, while referring to "marine management of human activities" does, *de facto*, cover also maritime spatial planning (in addition to integrated coastal management of human activities).
- 3.14 The Meeting noted that the original Recommendation was adopted at the time (in 2003) when no explicit MSP requirements existed neither in the Baltic Sea nor on European level. The Meeting therefore was of the opinion that it is important to bring the wording of the Recommendation in line with the already existing commitments on MSP in HELCOM (and elsewhere) and the ongoing regional work, to ensure the relevance of the Recommendation.
- 3.15 The Meeting clarified that HELCOM Recommendation 28E/9 "Development of the Broad-scale Maritime Spatial Planning Principles in the Baltic Sea Area" (2007) does not overlap with the proposed revised Recommendation 24/10 as it mainly addresses the development of the MSP Principles (already fulfilled requirement) and data.
- 3.16 The Meeting agreed on the amendments to the Recommendations as included in document 3-1-Rev. and agreed to propose a change to the title of the Recommendation to reflect the contents of the revised Recommendation.
- 3.17 The Meeting took note that lead country Poland expressed the wish to have the revision process concluded without any further delay and noted the plan of the State and Conservation 9-2018 to consider the draft Recommendation at its next meeting in spring 2019. The Meeting suggested the HELCOM Secretariat to submit the draft revised Recommendation to the contacts of State and Conservation WG for consideration via correspondence, and to report on progress at HOD 55-2018 with the intention to have the revision of the Recommendation finalized in time for adoption of the document at HELCOM 40-2019.
- 3.18 The Meeting agreed that the updated draft HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 should be communicated with VASAB CSPD / BSR.

3.19 The Meeting requested HELCOM Secretariat to edit the document to assure its terminological consistency throughout the text and correctness and validity of the references before its submission to State and Conservation WG.

3.20 The Countries were invited to check changes in the list of national MSP focal points for transboundary consultation and joint planning in the Baltic Sea Region countries (**Annex 3**) and to inform the HELCOM (florent.nicolas@helcom.fi) and VASAB Secretariats (elina.veidemane@vasab.org) in case of any changes.

3.21 The Meeting took note of the national updates on new MSP developments:

Estonia: Initial outline and Memorandum on impact assessment has been issued and document on the issues to be circulated to the Baltic Sea states. The first draft of the plan will be prepared by next February and public consultations will start next March. Offshore energy theme in Hiiu MSP has been abolished by National court, all other themes are still legally binding.

Finland: compiled a “Blue Economic Profile” report which is available in Finnish and development of future scenarios will start both in Finland and in Åland in the spring of 2019. The first drafts of plans will be available in spring 2019 for Finland and in early autumn for Åland.

Germany: at the stage of conceptual development. The information on national offshore development plan will be presented later to the Meeting.

Latvia: national plan has been published for inter-institutional consultations. The official comments are expected in two weeks and the final draft is planned to be adopted by the Government by the end of January 2019 at latest.

Poland: Public consultations on the first version of MSP has been completed and comments received. The work on the second version is on-going. The second version is planned to be ready by the end of the year and submitted for national consultation. The international consultation meeting is planned to be organized in the end of March 2019.

Russia: The Ministry of Ecology and Natural resources developed the methodology for transboundary MSP of Russian areas in Baltic and Barents Seas with Sweden, Norway and Finland. The documents are in the final stages of review and will be delivered to the countries for reviewing.

Sweden: First formal consultation round including ESPOO consultation has been finished and analysing of the received feedback is ongoing. The final 3 months long review stage will be launched in 14 March.

3.22 The Meeting took note of the presentation of the first draft of German national offshore site development plan (Presentation 3).

3.23 The Meeting took note of the clarification regarding relations between the presented offshore site development and already existing MSP and specific parameters of energy-generating appliances.

3.24 The Meeting also discussed the navigation safety rules between and inside the areas designated for energy wind farms as well as the safety rules for cables within and outside the wind farms.

3.25 The Meeting took note of the outcomes from MSP-related HELCOM meetings (SAFE NAV, MARITIME and FISH Groups).

3.26 The Meeting took note of the MSP-related topics in the work of HELCOM State & Conservation Working Group.

3.27 The Meeting took note of the information that the HELCOM-OSPAR-ICES Joint Working Group on Seabirds will have a workshop in November 2018 with the goal to compile available information on birds' migration routes and that this information will be further available for the MSP work.

3.28 The Meeting welcomed the increasing cooperation between HELCOM work groups in relation to MSP in the region and, particularly, valued the contribution of State and Conservation group into the application of ecosystem approach in MSP.

Agenda Item 4 Follow-up on implementation and planning for future

Documents: 3-3, 3-6, 3-7, 4-1, 4-2

- 4.1 The Meeting took note of the Strategic plan for the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) as approved by HOD 54-2018 and presented by the HELCOM Executive Secretary (Presentation 4 and Annex 1 of document 3-3).
- 4.2 The Meeting noted that the updated Action Plan will be adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in autumn 2021 and that working groups, including HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, are requested to contribute to the update process according to their mandates and areas of expertise. Proposals for revisions of the existing joint and national actions, as needed, and for new actions, are to be developed between autumn 2019 – end of 2020. A dedicated Project Manager for the BSAP update, Ms. Ulla-Li Zweifel, has been employed to the HELCOM Secretariat to support the work.
- 4.3 The Meeting considered the draft work plan for the BSAP update (Annex 2 of document 3-3) and had no comments to it.
- 4.4 The Meeting noted that according to the strategic plan for the BSAP update, the HELCOM countries will be requested to report on the accomplishment of the BSAP, follow-up commitments and HELCOM Recommendations, including those related to MSP, in 2020.
- 4.5 The Meeting considered the not-yet accomplished actions related to MSP (Annex 3 of document 3-3) and how the level of accomplishment of the actions with a future target year can be achieved and concluded on the actions as included in **Annex 2** to the Outcome.
- 4.6 Regarding one of the actions (cf. action X in Annex 3 of document 3-3) the Meeting pointed out that easy access to fisheries data remains a challenge, while such data, regularly updated, are needed for MSP. The Meeting suggested that expanding the action to cover data on other human activities could be considered.
- 4.7 The Meeting recognized the challenge to evaluate the level of accomplishment of the commitment to establish coherent MSP that apply ecosystem-based approach. At the same time the Meeting acknowledged the importance of having a follow-up system in place to track the progress of this commitment. The Meeting highlighted the ongoing work in the Pan Baltic Scope project that could be used to support this upcoming task.
- 4.8 The Meeting considered the overview of MSP commitments that have so far not been included in the HELCOM follow-up system (cf. HELCOM Explorer created in 2016) as presented in Annex 4 of document 3-3 and agreed that there is no need for their reporting at this point of time.
- 4.9 The Meeting took note of the information on the started work to evaluate the application of Baltic Sea Broad-scale MSP Principles and Guidelines for transboundary consultation, public participation and cooperation, as well as implementation of the Regional Baltic Sea MSP Roadmap within the Pan Baltic Scope activity led by VASAB (document 3-6, presentation 5).
- 4.10 The Meeting clarified that the Pan Baltic Scope project is evaluating the application of the guidelines on ecosystem-based approach in its other activities (ecosystem-based toolbox) and encouraged close cooperation between those involved in the two strands of activities in the project. The Meeting pointed out that the relevant information from another project is to be utilized in the evaluation.
- 4.11 The Meeting appreciated the ongoing work in the Pan Baltic Scope project and its intended contribution to the upcoming consideration of a future (post-2020/2021) MSP agenda by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP.
- 4.12 The Meeting agreed that two interactive workshops on MSP will be organized back-to-back, or as part of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meetings in 2019, in order to consider and start developing proposals for updated and new regional MSP actions and commitments based on outputs from the Pan Baltic Scope project, and other projects and material, as suitable, taking into account the update of the BSAP and relevant VASAB processes, respectively. The Meeting agreed that active contribution to the assessment is expected.

4.13 The Meeting tasked HELCOM to be involved in the planning process of the interactive workshops in consultation with the Co-Chairs.

Agenda Item 5 Ecosystem-based approach in MSP

Documents: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5

5.1 The Meeting took note of the Implementation of the timetable for future cooperation on Green Infrastructure/Blue Corridors in MSP and marine environmental management and agreed that the work is going on according to the agreed work plan.

5.2 The Meeting discussed the progress of Green infrastructure activity in Pan Baltic Scope project and welcomed the work done by Latvia to prepare the agenda of the workshop on Green infrastructure.

5.3 The Meeting took note that the draft agenda has already been circulated via HELCOM network, in particular to FISH group, and that the final version of the agenda will be circulated in upcoming week after some technical formalities have been set.

5.4 The Meeting took note of the information on mapping of the areas of high ecological value and ecosystem services.

5.5 The Meeting also discussed the criteria used to identify elements of infrastructure and noted that mainly criteria used for EBSA are applied but the discussion on criteria is still open.

5.6 The Meeting took note of the information by Sweden regarding progress in ecosystem-based approach activities under the Pan Baltic Scope project and the potential use of its outcomes to update the Guidelines on ecosystem-based approach.

5.7 The Meeting took note of the Pan Baltic Scope project work illustrating the link between environmental pressures and human activities.

5.8 The Meeting took note of the report on HELCOM Baltic Sea Impact Index and its use in Maritime Spatial Planning.

5.9 The Meeting welcomed the presented information as an example of Baltic-wide approach to assess environmental pressures, which might also be utilized for national spatial plans. The Meeting also welcomed the ongoing HELCOM work to advance relevant scientific basis and compile valuable information e.g. on sensitivity of ecosystem components.

5.10 The Meeting took note of the results of the seabed's damage assessment in the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report - "[Thematic assessment of cumulative impacts on the Baltic Sea 2011-2016](#)",

5.11 The Meeting took note of the information on the data on human activities causing damage to the seafloor, compiled by HELCOM, and discussed the role of MSP in reduction of physical seabed damage.

5.12 The Meeting took note of the information by Finland regarding the ongoing national work to evaluate environment impact of sand and gravel extraction on the seabed. A working group has been set in Finland which intended to provide guidelines for sustainable sand and gravel extractions. A [study assessing of the impacts of seabed mineral extraction in the deep sea and coastal marine environments](#) has been recently published.

5.13 The Meeting also pointed out the relevance of the issue to the MSFD and that in many cases there is a knowledge gap with regard to threshold values for environmental losses and disturbances caused to seabed by various human activities.

5.14 The Meeting concluded that the reflection of the effect of activities on the sea floor in national MSPs is still under discussion in all countries and has to be addressed at regional level also.

5.15 The Meeting took note of the information on the dedicated HELCOM work on climate change.

5.16 The Meeting was informed of the on-going national consultations in Latvia on climate change policy framework and the effect of ambitious climate change related targets on MSP and the other marine activities.

5.17 The Meeting also took note that climate change parameters and their effect on ecosystem is currently under consideration in Swedish MSPs.

5.18 The Meeting welcomed the initiative to bring climate change related issues to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP group's agenda and highlighted the valued of regionally coherent approach to the climate change scenarios. The Meeting agreed to return to the discussion on how the issue is considered in national MSPs at the next HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG meeting, where countries will be invited to exchange national experiences and identify climate change parameters of regional significance for MSP.

Agenda Item 6 MSP-related projects and events

Documents: 6-1, 6-2 and 6-2-Rev.1

6.1 The Meeting took note of the developments and activities related to the EUSBSR and HA Spatial Planning: report prepared in October 2018 (document 6-1).

6.2 The Meeting considered a concept of the project platform (Presentation 6) and discussed objectives and activities as well as regional policies which project platform can contribute to and processes which could be supported by project results.

6.3 The Meeting suggested that deepening of the knowledge base is the major goal of the project platform and highlighted that the role of HELCOM and ecosystem component should be better reflected in the final project proposal. The Meeting also pointed out that traditional uses of marine resources and also "new sea uses" should be considered in the final project proposal.

6.4 The Meeting took note that the EU MSP Platform welcomes the project concept suggesting to consider setting links with an already approved project platform on blue economy and to pay attention to organization of cross-sectoral workshops to fully utilize expertise of various MSP-related European networks.

6.5 The Meeting took note that Russia considers participation in such type of a projects as a good opportunity for enhancing international cooperation and involvement of Russian national experts into regional processes. Russia expressed the willingness to join the MSP project platform as associated partner.

6.6 The Meeting supported the project platform idea and agreed that HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG will serve as a Reference group to the project platform. The Meeting clarified that the role of the group would be to assure relevance of the project outcomes to the regional policies and involvement of all HELCOM Contracting Parties and VASAB members into consideration of the project deliverables. The Meeting agreed to issue a letter of support signed by the Co-chairs.

6.7 The Meeting welcomed the offer by VASAB Secretariat to lead the project platform and agreed to provide written input to the project platform proposal by 30 November 2018 to VASAB Secretariat (elina.veidemane@vasab.org) with copy to HELCOM Secretariat (Florent.Nicolas@helcom.fi).

Agenda Item 7 Any other business

7.1 The Meeting took note of the invitation by Germany to the final conference of NorthSEE and Baltic LINes Interreg projects which will be held in 13-14 February 2019 in Hamburg, Germany. Germany informed the Meeting that the conference website www.connectingseas.eu will be operational shortly.

7.2 The EU MSP Platform thanked HELCOM-VASAB MSP group for maintaining of the updated information on the national MSP status of the Baltic Sea countries (country fiches). The EU MSP Platform also informed that the Platform is following up all MSP process across the Europe and that this information is public. The Meeting was invited to share information on the planned MSP-related events.

7.3 The Meeting took note of the offer by Germany and Poland to consider the opportunity to host HELCOM-VASAB MSP 18-2019 during the week 25-29 March 2019. Germany and Poland will inform HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats about the place of the next meeting by 27 November 2018.

Agenda Item 8 Outcome of the Meeting

8.1 The Meeting considered and adopted the Outcome.

Annex 1 List of Participants

Representing	Name	Organization	E-mail address
Chair	Joacim Johannesson	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	joacim.johannesson@havochvatten.se
Chair	Katarzyna Krzywda	Ministry of Maritime and Inland Navigation	katarzyna.krzywda@mgm.gov.pl
Contracting Parties			
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Finland	Penina Blankett	Ministry of the Environment	penina.blankett@ym.fi
Finland	Stefan Husa	Ålands landskapsregering	stefan.husa@regeringen.ax
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Germany	Carla Kuhmann	Federal Agency of Nature Conservation	
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Observers			
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Invited guests			
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Annex 2 Suggestion on the follow-up of implementation of the regional and national MSP-related actions of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP).

Implementation of regional MSP related actions as assessed in 2016	
Actions	Comments
<p>1. Continue to work to develop common procedures to facilitate the sharing of aggregated data on fisheries activities in the Baltic Sea in an applicable format for the purpose of assessing pressures on marine and coastal ecosystems e.g. to be applied in maritime spatial planning</p>	<p>The action remains valid, as data on fisheries are highly relevant for MSP, but it continues to be challenging to have easy access to data (and on a regular basis), both on regional and national level, and is not cost free. It could be considered if to open this action to cover data also on other activities. Spatial planners are users of the data, but other groups should be addressed to accomplish this action. The Baltic SCOPE project (i.e. Central Baltic case, study including Estonia, Latvia and Sweden), shown that the fisheries dataset were available from the different national fishery institutes but the format was different: it was hard to use these dataset.</p>
<p>2. Jointly develop by 2010, as well as test, apply and evaluate by 2012, in cooperation with other relevant international bodies, broad-scale, cross-sectoral, marine spatial planning principles based on the Ecosystem Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whereby all Contracting Parties and relevant HELCOM bodies shall co-operatively participate; • Thereby giving guidance for the planning and ensuring the protection of the marine environment and nature, including habitats and seafloor integrity; • Securing sustainable use of marine resources by reducing user conflicts and adverse impacts of human activities 	<p>(accomplished)</p>
<p>3. Establish a joint, co-chaired HELCOM-VASAB Working Group on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) which will develop and adopt its terms of references by 2010, in this way also enabling coordination and integration of the MSP related actions and projects implementation</p>	<p>(accomplished)</p>
<p>4. The joint HELCOM-VASAB Working Group to finalise, for adoption by HELCOM and VASAB in 2010, a set of joint HELCOM-VASAB broad-scale transboundary Maritime Spatial Planning principles</p>	<p>(accomplished)</p>

based on the document on Maritime Spatial Planning	
5. Draft and adopt by 2015 Baltic Sea regional "Guidelines on transboundary consultations and cooperation in the field of MSP" and the "Guidelines on public participation for MSP with transboundary dimensions"	(accomplished)
6. Draft and adopt by 2015 procedurally oriented Baltic Sea regional "Guidelines on the application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP"	(accomplished)
7. Update the Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), if necessary, in 2014 after HELCOM and VASAB ministerial meetings and assess the implementation of this Roadmap 2016, 2018 and 2020	Planned
Implementation of national MSP related actions as assessed in 2016	
Actions	Comments
1. Draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region by 2020, which are coherent across the borders and apply the ecosystem approach, cooperate in the field of MSP using inter alia the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG framework	Evaluating the coherence of plans across the region and application of ecosystem approach is an important topic in MSP (and a legal requirement under the MSP Directive as far as EU countries are concerned). A system to follow up the action is needed. Results of the projects, in particular Pan Baltic Scope and former project BalticSCOPE, can be of use to start evaluating this action (cf. document 3-6 for this meeting).
2. Apply by 2018 Baltic Sea regional "Guidelines on transboundary consultations and cooperation in the field of MSP". Apply by 2018 Baltic Sea regional "Guidelines on public participation for MSP with transboundary dimensions"	The Pan Baltic Scope project will offer material to support evaluation of this action.
3. Apply by 2018 Baltic Sea regional "Guidelines on the application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP"	The Pan Baltic Scope project will offer material to support evaluation of this action.
4. Identify by 2013 competent contact points for MSP for the purpose of transboundary consultation and joint planning	This can be considered accomplished by the EU member state countries according to the requirements of the MSP Directive.
5. National frameworks for coherent MSP are in place in all Baltic Sea countries by 2017	This can be considered accomplished by the EU member state countries according to the requirements of the MSP Directive.

Annex 3 List of National MSP Contact Points in the Baltic Sea Region countries

Country	Title of the component authority	Name of the responsible person	Telephone number	E-mail address
Denmark	Danish Maritime Authority, Ministry of Business and Growth	Suzanne Dael Senior Adviser on Maritime Spatial Planning	+45 7219 6222	ssd@dma.dk
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Finland	Ministry of the Environment	Tiina Tihlman Ministerial Adviser	+358 29 5250296 +358 50 3041548	tiina.tihlman@ym.fi
Germany	Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH)	Kai Trümpler Head of Unit Maritime Spatial Planning	+494031903520	kai.truempler@bsh.de
	State Chancellery of the State Schleswig-Holstein	Frank Liebreuz	+494319881734	frank.liebreuz@stk.landsh.de
	Ministry for Energy, Infrastructure and Spatial Development Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Petra Schmidt-Kaden	+49 385 5888400	petra.schmidt-kaden@em.mv-regierung.de
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