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This document has been prepared by the Pan Baltic Scope project activity lead within its WP1.1.1.

Background

Planning Forum is the main hub in the project [Pan Baltic Scope](#) (2018-2019). It acts as a platform for collaboration on planning issues identified by the planning authorities and regional organisations supported by the scientific community. The issues are both general and specific. Planning Forum is informal, supportive and based on needs of the planning authorities in charge of national MSP. The forum also guides and informs the other activities in Pan Baltic Scope. The activities present their work in the Forum and test their deliverables to get feedback. The Planning Forum uses a flexible approach. It organizes meetings periodically, where the partners beforehand decide on topics and areas to focus on, or if needed urgent matters are also shared and dealt with. Four planning forum meetings have been organised so far. Two first meetings were used to identify and decide upon issues and jointly develop a work plan and appoint task forces. Planning Forum also includes the opportunity for hosting consultation on plan proposals. In June 2018 Sweden hosted a plan consultation when all neighbouring countries were invited. When needed and depending on questions or issues to discuss, Planning forum is broken down to lateral meetings, including two or more countries. Three lateral meetings have been organized so far; between Sweden and Denmark; between Poland and Denmark and between Estonia and Germany.

This document gives an overall view of the concept of Planning Forum and describes shortly issues discussed so far in the Pan Baltic Scope project. It is presented to the Meeting for information and possibility to provide comments, and for consideration regarding applicability in the further work of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

Action requested

The meeting is invited to:

- take note of the document, and if consider to also
- provide comments in order to support of the further work of the Pan Baltic Scope.

Planning Forum Pan Baltic Scope

Key messages

- Pan Baltic Scope provides a platform for continuous exchange of information between Maritime Spatial Planning authorities in the Baltic Sea Region. Thereby gives the opportunity for a deeper understanding of each other's national MSP processes, framework for planning system, actual planning and decision-making.
- Hands-on discussion in the Planning Forum on current issues based on the country's needs, support actual implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in Member States within the Baltic Sea Region.
- Improved planning evidence and interpretation of these will, in the long run, contribute to a better alignment of maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea Region.

Introduction

Tasks appointed for the Planning Forum

- organise periodical meetings in a Planning Forum matching the needs of the member states national maritime spatial planning processes
- organise trans-border consultation on plan proposals
- identify topics and/or geographical areas for closer border collaboration
- carry out case studies when needed or organise meetings/workshops for hands-on work
- develop recommendations on sub-regional or site-specific planning issues and solution while also pointing out limits for common solutions
- guide, inform and provide input to the other activities in WP1 and to the further development of the tools and methods being worked out in WP1.2 and WP1.3
- Conclusions & guidance related to planning issues will be compiled in a final Planning Forum report, to be finalised by late autumn 2019.

Done so far

In **February** and **March** 2018 a work plan was outlined, where goals, expectations and expected results from the Activity was discussed and decided upon. Contact persons for each activity appointed as well as proposed task forces on specific topics discussed.

For all the meetings onwards, short reporting from Activities status, ongoing work and planned work in order to look for synergies and avoid overlap, as well as a round the table update regarding current issues in member states maritime spatial planning. If identified at meeting, a need to go deeper into a current issue, the overarching motto in Planning Forum is *“Be flexible! Bring in other issues when needed.”*

In **June** meeting **2018** Terms of reference on how to work decided. Issues to handle discussed. First Consultation of plan proposal took place; the Swedish plans presented and discussed with all neighboring countries. In following up, Sweden have expressed that:

- *“The cross border consultation with neighbouring countries in June, contributed to valuable input to the national process developing the review version of our national plan proposals.*
- *“The exchange of views and experience in Pan Baltic Scope has informed the further development of the Swedish national planning process”.*

At **September** meeting, **2018** timetable for issues and topics decided. Taskforces appointed, lead and participants decided. Lead partner in Baltic LINes shared suggestions regarding shipping routes, discussed and noted by the member states. Templates for reporting from lateral meetings and task forces decided. It was agreed that a task force will prepare questions to discuss regarding the issue, and then we will simply document the discussion in the Planners Forum. The following task forces leaders was appointed and decided:

- #2 Cross-border fisheries: Latvia, with help from Sweden, will take lead on preparing for, on the February-meeting. @Inguna
- #4 Fishery-wind energy Poland will take lead and prepare for, on the late May-meeting. @Marta

For the lateral meetings it was decided on a need for a common structure to report back from lateral meetings. Capture the essence and outcome of meetings, in a way institutionalize our work, make it non-dependent on people. Will be part of documentation for future planners. It's a format for reporting back, not a guideline for the agenda of the meeting. However, a well-structured document will help the

learning process. Thus, it was also proposed to add headings/questions regarding: “*recommendations to share from the meeting*”, and “*what’s next, points to follow up*”. Planning Forum agreed to use the template. It should be used according to need, only the parts applicable to the meeting. The planning forum also discussed on and suggested on two sets of recommendations:

- Activity recommendations (optional, if applicable or foreseen in their plans). Here, activity leaders should seek feedback from Planning Forum, then formulate their own recommendations.
- Project recommendations (whole project agree on). These are for ourselves and future planners. Developed in the BSR, but might be applicable in other regions too. Should be discussed/developed in the Planning Forum/Partners meeting.

An important reflection is that we need to adopt existing recommendations, not always develop new ones, better to have fewer but really good ones, that is used.

Current and most pressing issues were also discussed, such as:

- How to deal with uncertainties surrounding offshore winds (Estonia issue)
- How to make a digital plan legally binding (Danish issue)
- Sharing the concept used: national Governmental forums
- How to deal with outcome from consultation.

In **February** meeting, 2019 apart from updating current status on Activities as well as most pressing issues, focus was on Activity Cumulative impact and Cross-border fisheries. 2nd edition of Lessons learned survey was also presented by Nordregio.

Cumulative impacts

Lena Bergström from HELCOM presented the content of “*Current state of cumulative impact assessments in the Baltic Sea*” and urged the participants for final feedback on the document by 13th of March. Current environmental status is based on sub-basins in the Baltic Sea. In Pan Baltic Scope we need to work towards increasing capacity in doing MSP. Not harmonise approach in all countries but there has to be understanding between the countries. Data availability differs. CEA shows where we have the most pressures. HOLAS II project base for the assessment. Gives an overarching picture of where the most pressures in the BSR occur. Possible to group pressures into different categories, you can either make assessments based on human activities, or on actual measurements. Most human activities cause several pressures, high level of complexity. The activity have developed a tool to carry out test studies, easy to use, also works for non-professionals. Timetable: now working on the report. Final draft ready for comment in May, and will be ready to publish in November.

Cross border fisheries, Workshop: Fisheries in MSP – from national and cross border perspective

Presentations by Latvia, Finland-Satakunta, Åland, Sweden, Poland and Denmark. The issue/task was to look on how countries deal with fisheries in national MSP – data, stakeholders and solutions in the plans.

Conclusions and lessons learned from the presentations and discussions:

Open sea fisheries: Most likely no specific *zoning* is expected in MSPs across Baltic sea for fisheries – no planning for fisheries.

What is important to have best possible data on:

- Fish stock important areas - here results from Essential Fish Habitats (EFH) activities within the Green Infrastructure activity I Pan Baltic Scope should bring much value and should be considered in national MSP.
- It's important to acknowledge cross border interests – fishermen fishing in other country's EZZ.

Coastal fisheries: Very important issue - relation of (land-sea-interaction) coastal fisheries and coastal culture/economy (communities, towns and villages). Especially for countries where MSP covers all waters and local municipalities communities need to display their interests in plans (e.g. Latvia).

Fisheries in general: Fisheries still take substantial part in economies. Among fishermen, experts and planners still big issue is communication & awareness build on trust and knowledge, what eventually is crucial for agreements and decision making.

Bilateral meetings in short

Denmark-Poland: Polen presented Polish-Danish bilateral meeting on planning issues in the so called "grey zone" in September last year. Challenge when people are exchanged in institutions responsible for MSP. During the September meeting, Poland informed the new participants from Danish Maritime Authority on the stage of progress of works on MSP, Denmark presented the MSP planning process, so the meeting was more informative. On 19th of November, agreement on "grey zone" between the countries was signed – still need to go through national parliaments. Waiting for government to decide, will hopefully be finalized in June, in time for the international consultation meeting in Poland. However, believe there will still be some issues to discuss concerning some "leftover areas", which are important for shipping in Poland etc. Waiting for the forthcoming discussions, but Poland expressed that happy that the biggest issue is solved!



Germany-Estonia: Detailed discussion about Offshore Wind Farms, how to deal with lack of environmental data. Follow up meeting after the Planning Forum #4. Discussions on how impact assessments are dealing with different themes and what the results in Germany are of the impact assessments. Which mitigation and monitoring measures that have been determined. It was noted that there is some difference in standards between Baltic Sea and North Sea. They are not entirely different but attention is paid to some environmental differences between the two. E.g. in the Baltic Sea, the monitoring of bat migration is a requirement in the “Standard Investigation of the impacts of offshore wind turbines on the marine environment (STUK 4)” because there is evidence that bat migration may occur in the EEZ. In the North Sea, bat migration monitoring is not a requirement because there are not yet the same level of evidence.