



Document title	Matters arising from other HELCOM groups and VASAB work
Code	2-1
Category	INF
Agenda Item	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM and VASAB work
Submission date	18.3.2019
Submitted by	HELCOM Secretariat
Reference	

Background

The document contains extracts from relevant HELCOM meetings held since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 19-2019:

- Memo of the 4th Meeting of Joint HELCOM/ Baltic Earth Expert Network on Climate Change (EN CLIME 4-2019), online meeting, 5 November 2019;
- Outcome of the 57th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HOD 57-2019), Helsinki, Finland, 10-11 December 2019;
- Responses to the questionnaire on mapping of habitats, biotope and species (EN Benthic 3a-2020), online, 5 March 2020. The responses were compiled by Finland to facilitate the HELCOM workshop on Benthic Mapping, 12-13 November 2019.
- Outcome of the 41st Meeting of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 41-2020), Helsinki, Finland, 4-5 March 2020

The HELCOM Stakeholder Conference was held in Helsinki, Finland on 3 March 2020. The conference was intended to receive feedback from various stakeholders on new measures proposed for the BSAP update, prioritize them and make own proposals. MSP related issues were considered in the section on sea-based activities. The outcome of the stakeholder conference are given in this [document](#).

The document also contains information on matters arising from VASAB work.

Action requested

The meeting is invited to

- take note of the information on the matters arising from other HELCOM groups (extracts from recent HELCOM events) and VASAB work since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 19-2019.
- exchange national experiences of accounting climate change parameters in MSP and to agree on the next steps to identify climate change parameters of regional significance for MSP and contribution to the work of EN CLIME.
- take note of the information of an upcoming workshop focused on the modelling and use of the benthic habitat data to be held in spring 2020 probably back-to-back with EN-Benthic 4-2020.

Extract from recent HELCOM events

EN CLIME 4-2019

3. *Structure of the fact sheet*

3.1. The Meeting took note of the structure of the climate change fact sheet, including structure of information for the secondary parameters (document 3-1, presentation 1). The Meeting noted that the fact sheet will be directed to a broad, non-scientific audience.

3.2. The Meeting took note that the key messages for primary parameters are under review. The Meeting discussed that based on the experience with primary parameters, the excel table template for the Key Messages is not a convenient way of working and should be replaced with word format with strict word count limits in order to keep track of edits in the document. The Meeting agreed to use the bullet points and structure of the current template, with the modification to change the order of points by placing the already occurring impacts before expected impacts and agreed to use the structure as included in document 3-1-Rev.1.

3.3. The Meeting noted that the primary parameters are currently being reviewed by Markus Meier, Co-Chair of the network. The Meeting discussed the lessons learned from work on primary parameters and noted that it is important to make very precise statements and provide peer reviewed references or other legitimated literature to each statement. The Meeting noted that without precise statements with references, back tracing of comments becomes challenging. The Meeting agreed that the rules for the BACC reports apply (e.g. concerning consensus and dissensus). The Meeting noted that the references will be provided in the Fact Sheet itself as background material. The Meeting recalled that the task is not to produce new knowledge but to compile existing information.

3.4. The Meeting noted that for the secondary parameters, wherever possible the key messages are to be presented as fully references statements, however in most cases, due to lack of precise scientific information secondary parameter key messages will be presented as “if”-statements and will build on information presented under the primary key messages.

3.5. The Meeting agreed that the first step in the work for each secondary parameter is to identify the relevant primary parameters influencing the parameter in question, and that this link is to be presented in the final fact sheet as well.

3.6. The Meeting took note of the example Marine Climate Change Impacts report cards by Marine Climate Change Impact Partnership (MCCIP), showing a visually attractive example for the Fact Sheet and the approach for confidence assessment (document 3-2).

3.7. The Meeting took note of the Guidance Note for Lead Authors of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on Consistent Treatment of Uncertainties (document 3-3) and noted that this approach is also to be used when providing confidence assessment for the key messages for secondary parameters.

3.8. The Meeting took note of the IPCC summary report Ocean and Cryosphere in a changing climate, which can be used as a basis of information for several secondary parameter key messages (document 3-4).

3.9. The Meeting took note of the list of primary and secondary parameters of the Fact Sheet (presentation 1, excel file ‘Parameter and Expert overview’). The Meeting noted that draft key messages already exist for the secondary parameters ‘Acidification’ and ‘Oxygen concentration and hypoxia’, as well as preliminary draft for the parameter ‘Pelagic Habitats’.

3.10. The Meeting took note of the EN CLIME workspace, which is used as a platform for drafting the key messages for primary and secondary parameters, and includes the time line and administrative

documents for the expert network. The Meeting encouraged all new network members to sign up to the HELCOM Meeting Portal in order to get access to the workspace.

4. Mapping of expertise

4.1. The Meeting took note of the current expertise in EN CLIME as provided in document 'Parameter and Expert overview' and the expertise of the participants of the Meeting. The Meeting updated the listed expertise, and the updated 'Parameter and Expert overview', which is a living document and available via the EN CLIME workspace.

4.2. The Meeting asked the experts to check their contact details and expertise in the excel file and to provide any updates or corrections to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi).

4.3. The Meeting took note of the gaps in expertise. The Meeting noted that there are currently no experts nominated to work for the parameters 'Microbial community and -processes' and 'Human health', and that more experts would be needed also for 'Ecotoxicology', 'Tourism', 'Built structures', 'Aquaculture', 'Patogens' and 'Marine Protected Areas'.

4.4. The Meeting invited the experts of the network to look for experts especially for the identified topics, and inform the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi), and the Co-Chairs Clarisse Kehler-Siebert (clarisse.kehrer.siebert@gmail.com) and Markus Meier (markus.meier@io-warnemuende.de) on any additional experts who could contribute to the work.

5. Planning coming work

5.1. The Meeting took note of the outline of coming work, provided in the work plan for the Expert Network (document 2-1, presentation 1), and noted that the work will start by first defining all the relevant primary parameters affecting each secondary parameter.

5.22. The Meeting took note that the drafts for primary parameters are available in the workspace, to be used for the secondary parameter work.

5.23. The Meeting took note that any questions regarding the process can be sent to Clarisse Kehler-Siebert, Markus Meier and Petra Kääriä.

HOD 57-2019

Agenda Item 3 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

MSP in the updated BSAP

3.22 The Meeting discussed whether Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) should be addressed in a management objective. Most participants were of the view that as a tool, MSP should not be addressed in an objective but that the role and application of MSP in HELCOM could instead be covered in the text of a segment of the updated BSAP. The Meeting proposed to keep the objective for the time being and mandated the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to elaborate a proposal regarding integration of the MSP into the updated BSAP, taking into account deliberations of HOD 57-2019.

Guidance regarding style of writing and structuring of the updated BSAP.

3.27 The Meeting considered document 3-5 on how to draft the updated BSAP (Presentation 1). The Meeting supported in general that the updated BSAP should be a relatively short and easy to read document. The Meeting furthermore supported the proposal on the style of writing, including having a layered preamble with segment-specific introductory text.

3.28 The Meeting agreed to write the operative sections on each segment in a more straightforward way, as outlined in document 3-5, and to include more detailed information on actions as

supplementary information to the main BSAP document. The Meeting noted that at this stage it may however be difficult to identify the Working Groups that will implement the actions as proposed in document 3-5.

3.29 The Meeting supported differentiating actions to improve the Baltic Sea from activities that support the implementation of such actions, however noting that it may not always be clear how such a differentiation should be made and that it will be necessary to consider this from case to case.

3.30 The Meeting discussed how Regional Action Plans on specific topics, i.e. litter and noise, could be linked to the updated BSAP. The Meeting agreed that these RAPs should remain as separate documents and that the updated BSAP should include strategic decisions and central points from the RAPs and they could be adopted in the revised RAP on marine litter and the new RAP on underwater noise, which is under development. The Meeting underlined that the follow-up of the RAPs should also be established when they are adopted.

3.31 The Meeting discussed how to draft the updated BSAP, with the aim of having a first full draft available at HOD in December 2020 and noted that proposals on the formulation of actions will be provided by the HELCOM Working Groups, based on ongoing activities to review existing actions and proposals on new actions to be considered in spring 2020 and further worked on at autumn meetings in 2020.

Agenda Item 4 Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups

Gear group

4.35 The Meeting took note of the information that the proposed dates for the workshop on Cumulative Impacts Assessment and Ecosystem Analysis in the Baltic Sea Region (23-24 April 2020) overlap with the dates for PRESSURE 12-2020. The Meeting invited the Secretariat and the Gear group to consider alternative dates for the workshop, possibly back-to-back with an MSP workshop on cumulative impacts assessment currently being planned for autumn 2020.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG

4.85 The Meeting took note of the Outcome of the 19th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 19-2019) held on 28-29 October 2019 in St. Petersburg, Russia (document 4-7).

4.86 The Meeting approved the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG Work Plan for the period 2020-2021 as contained in Annex 6 to this Outcome noting that the Work Plan is still pending approval by VASAB CSPD/BSR.

4.87 The Meeting agreed to convene the next meeting of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20-2020) in Poland on 1-2 April 2020.

EN Benthic 3a-2020

(Responses to the [questionnaire on mapping of habitats, biotope and species](#))

Based on your mapping, do you feel that that you are able to recognize your most valuable protected areas and their characteristics?

German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation: YES, with few exceptions.

Denmark (Ministry of Environment and Food): Yes, with a certain degree of confidence based on the confidence (distance between survey lines and depth) of the mapping project. We have developed a confidence map.

Estonia (Estonian Marine Institute): Borders of protected areas are defined in national legislation. There has not been any coherence or representativity or effectiveness analyses performed for current MPA network on national level. What concerns identification and inventory of marine nature values this has been carried out on project basis. There has been mapping activities to cover existing marine NATURA 2000 areas (e.g. NEMA - Inventory and development of monitoring programme for nature values in Estonian marine areas). Large part of mapping effort so far has been undertaken in connection to EIA projects of offshore energy, aquaculture and other installations. In general, mapping effort is undertaken with the aim of describing the features defining the habitat of interest or other nature value. So, each mapping project is designed to provide maximum information concerning the target habitat or species. Methodology of mapping can vary, depending on the project aims and availability of resources but in general follows the main principles.

Latvia (Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology): Initially the Natura 2000 sites were chosen based on bird resting and feeding places. Only later the underlying underwater habitats were mapped. So, there are other hardbottom substrates which are not mapped and therefore there might be as valuable habitats as in the MPAs.

The Geological Survey of Sweden: We are still working on high-resolution substrate (10 m) and how to assess %-cover directly, not only probability. The Baltic model needs more data from other countries.

The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management: No

Finland (Parks & Wildlife Finland, Finnish Environment Institute): Historically, due to lack of underwater information, most of our marine protected areas has been established based on other values (e.g. sea birds, seals, terrestrial nature) and according to recent study, only 1/3 of our underwater values are inside current protection areas. We still lack data enough of underwater characteristics in spatial terms, and we feel that some of the high value areas might still be undiscovered due to lack of knowledge and mapping data. The data collected in VELMU has been used to identify ecologically important marine areas (EMMA work) and valuable areas for protection has also been identified ([Virtanen et al. 2018](#)).

Do you have an experience on cross-border co-operation regarding mapping? If yes, what kind of?

German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation: Unfortunately, no.

Denmark (Ministry of Environment and Food): No, not yet.

Estonia (Estonian Marine Institute): No cross-border benthic habitat mapping has been conducted by Estonia so far. At the same time Estonia has been participating in different projects dealing with developing methods for benthic habitat mapping and monitoring (“Marine Protected Areas in the Eastern Baltic Sea” (LIFE Project), “Innovative approaches for marine biodiversity monitoring and assessment of conservation status of nature values in the Baltic Sea” (MARMONI Project); Baltic Sea Pilot Project: Testing new concepts for integrated environmental monitoring of the Baltic Sea (BALSAM) etc.

Latvia (Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology): No.

The Geological Survey of Sweden: Interreg project SeamBoth; mapping the whole marine environment including substrates and habitats in the northern Bothnian bay, collaboration between Sweden and Finland. <https://seamboth.com/>

The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management: SeamBoth, SeaGIS.

The Swedish University of Agricultural Science: Kvarken flada.

Finland (Parks & Wildlife Finland): Our teams in Quark area and Bothnian bay are doing/have been doing good cross-border co-operation with Swedish authorities and experts in several projects like SeaGis2, Kvarken flada, SeamBoth. We share quite many habitats and species and deal with same kind of problems and challenges for example with SWE, EE and RUS, and we feel that possible co-operation would benefit us all.

HELCOM 41-2020

Agenda Item 2 High-level segment with a focus on the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and HELCOM global outreach including voluntary commitments to UN Ocean Conference 2020

High-level segment

2.1 The high-level representatives of the HELCOM Contracting Parties: Katrine Nissen (Denmark), Harry Liiv (Estonia), Veronica Manfredi (EU), Terhi Lehtonen (Finland), Jochen Flasbarth (Germany), Silvija Nora Kalnins (Latvia), Vitalijus Auglys (Lithuania), Katarzyna Krzywda (Poland), Nuritdin Inamov (Russia) and Gunvor G Eriksson (Sweden) deliberated on the following topics, as included in the updated outline (document 2-1):

- The update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP);
- HELCOM outreach including HELCOM contribution to the 2020 UN Ocean Conference, including the HELCOM Voluntary Commitments;
- The HELCOM Science Agenda.

Agenda Item 5 Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies

5.19 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the first HELCOM Chairpersons meeting, which took place on 2 March 2020, and considered the need for face-to-face meetings of the chairpersons of HELCOM main groups, namely Gear, Maritime, Pressure, State and Conservation, Response, Agri, Fish and HELCOMVASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group, in the future. The Meeting recognized the usefulness of organizing such meetings, but also agreed that consideration should be given to having specific tasks on the agenda to resolve, as well as the possibilities of conducting the meetings online. The Meeting endorsed in principle the organization of such meetings on an annual basis and, if needed, more often, depending on the needs as determined by the Secretariat in consultation with the Working Group Chairs (documents 5-2 and 5-15).

Matters arising from VASAB work

- VASAB jointly with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Pan Baltic Scope collaboration and University of Latvia organized [Maritime Spatial Planning Forum "Global Meets Regional"](#) that took place on 19 – 21 November in Riga. It gathered together 300 participants from 44 countries with different backgrounds and interests related to MSP. The Forum had more than 70 speakers and 12 thematic workshops. A particular plenary was dedicated to the young professionals that work on research topics related to MSP. Event served as a joint event of the 4th International MSP Forum, 3rd Baltic MSP Forum as well as the closing conference of Pan Baltic Scope collaboration. Next – 4th Baltic MSP Forum is intended to be in June 2021 in Latvia, to be jointly organized with ["Capacity4MSP" project platform](#) and ["Land-Sea-Act" project](#).
- Back-to-back with MSP Forum "Global Meets Regional" VASAB as lead partner of ['Capacity4MSP: Strengthening the capacity of MSP stakeholders and decision makers'](#) platform project organized its kick-off event on 21-22 November 2019. The project platform aims to strengthen the capacity of maritime spatial planning stakeholders, policy- and decision-makers through intensified dialogue activities and amplifying gained knowledge in MSP. Capacity4MSP builds on the results of the current and recently completed MSP projects and ongoing MSP processes, as well as supports MSP policy building in the BSR. Capacity4MSP kick-off meeting served as a first meeting for the project partners to come together and set the goals for further work.
- Via written procedure on 27 January 2020 VASAB CSPD/BSR adopted two documents which were agreed by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG in its 19th meeting:
 - o the Work Plan 2020-2021 of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working group;
 - o adjustments to the Terms of Reference of the BSR MSP Data Expert Sub-group.
- VASAB Secretariat jointly with HELCOM Secretariat has submitted a request for the prolongation of ["Horizontal Action "Spatial Planning" support 3" \(HASPS3\)](#) project upon the invitation of Interreg BSR Joint Secretariat/Managing Authority. Prolongation would allow extend the project implementation by 9 months (i.e., by June 2021) and increase the project's budget for 69 000 EUR (out of which 85% is ERDF funding, 15% is project partners' own contribution). Prolongation will allow to achieve the objectives of HASPS 3 and continue to carry out the tasks described in the project application (such as coordination of HA's Steering groups, strengthening the implementation of VASAB Long Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (LTP) within EUSBSR framework, enhancing linkages of implementation of MSP Roadmap and EU MSP Directive; improving visibility and outreach of HA in the BSR and beyond etc.). Additionally, it will support more effective implementation of the revised EUSBSR Action Plan which is foreseen to be approved until the end of May 2020.
- Initially intended VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting in May'2020, as well as VASAB's representation in several events is postponed due to the COVID-19. VASAB Secretariat carefully follows the recommendations of the authorities and has introduced remote working from home till further notifications.