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Background

HELCOM and VASAB are co-coordinators of Horizontal Action (HA) Spatial Planning of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). The joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group acts as the steering committee for the HA Spatial Planning concerning MSP issues. Both Secretariats assist the WG in this role, by e.g. keeping the group informed of activities related to the (EUSBSR) and HA Spatial Planning (such as funding opportunities and meetings) and representing the HA in various meetings and processes as needed.

EC has initiated the revision process of the EUSBSR Action Plan in order to consider achievements and challenges for both thematic and governance issues, the relevance of Strategy's objectives, sub-objectives and targets, as well as set the future tasks. The current suggestion is to abolish all Horizontal Action and either include them as cross-cutting themes or as Policy Areas. Regarding the current Horizontal Action Spatial Planning the proposal is to include it as a Policy Area Horizontal Action,

Policy Area (PA) and Horizontal Action coordinators were asked to outline descriptions of their action plans for the updated EUSBSR Action Plan. The previous version of the action plan for Spatial Planning was distributed and agreed among the HELCOM-VASAB WG. The overall goal of the PA "Spatial Planning" is to achieve territorial cohesion perspective in the BSR by 2030. The strategic goal of the PA "Spatial Planning" is to draw up and apply transboundary, ecosystem based maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region by 2020/2021.

The previous version of the PA Spatial Planning action plan was commented by DG REGIO and Finnish Presidency of the EUSBSR. Some minor changes were proposed. There was also a general request to all PAs to include climate change as a topic to be address and also to ensure collaboration with non-EU countries. This request follows form a proposal to abolish Horizontal Actions Climate and Neighbours and include their respective themes as cross-cutting issues.

This document presents the latest modifications to description of the PA Spatial Planning. The HELCOM-VASAB WG is invited to approve the modifications. The approval will follow a tacit procedure, but this topic is included also as a meeting item in case a country wishes to comment it. There is a very tight schedule with the procedure: Policy Area coordinators are expected to deliver their last modification by June 19th, 2020.

Action requested

The meeting is invited to take note and agree on the proposed additions to the description of the Policy Area Spatial Planning.

Policy Area Spatial Planning in EUSBSR Action Plan

Policy Area Spatial Planning

Policy Area Coordinator: Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea, VASAB, Latvia; The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission HELCOM), Finland.

- VASAB (for land-based spatial planning issues)
- HELCOM & VASAB (for maritime spatial planning issues)

1. EUSBSR Objectives

The overall goal of PA 'Spatial Planning' is to increase **territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea region**. In 2030, the Region shall be a better-integrated and more coherent macro-region, with reduced socio-economic development divides between its individual parts and global challenges that have been turned into assets. To achieve this, PA is encouraging the use of maritime and land-based spatial planning as well as integrated/territorial approach to development policies in all Member States around the Baltic Sea and develop a common approach for cross-border cooperation.

Spatial planning is an integrative process to influence the future spatial distribution of human activities. It aims to ensure functional integration across multiple scales (macro-regional, national, regional, local levels) and different sectors of public policy in order to balance demands for development with the need to protect the environment, to reduce the vulnerability of spatial development and spatial structures to adverse climate change impacts and to achieve social and economic objectives. Spatial planning is therefore an important tool for promoting sustainable development and improving the quality of life.

2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This PA is contributing to SDGs 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14.

3. EU or other policy framework:

PA Spatial Planning is related to the following EU- regional - and international strategic frameworks:

- Territorial Agenda 2030 of the European Union: A future for all places. (Draft December 2019, adoption foreseen at an informal ministerial meeting on Dec. 1st 2020);
- Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning;
- A European Green Deal for the European Union that is the Commission's commitment from 2019 to tackling climate and environmental-related challenges with a goal of making the EU climate neutral in 2050;
- VASAB Long Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the BSR and Tallinn Declaration 2014;
- HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;
- Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap and the new Roadmap 2021-2027.

4. Involvement of stakeholders

At steering groups: National ministries and/or agencies responsible for spatial planning and development, maritime spatial planning and environment issues.

Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP): HELCOM jointly with VASAB is coordinating the MSP part of HA. The joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group acts as the Steering Committee for the MSP related activities of HA and it includes representatives from relevant ministries and authorities of all Baltic Sea countries Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden as well as from the EU. According to the Mandate for the Working Group, its meetings take place up to three times a year. The outcomes of the meetings can be found in the HELCOM Meeting Portal and on the VASAB website.

Land-based: VASAB is the coordinator of land-based spatial planning component of the PA. VASAB Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region (CSPD/BSR) composed of senior civil servants of the respective ministries of 10 countries of the Region (Belarus, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden) as well as representatives of regions acts as steering group for the land-based spatial planning activities, in close cooperation with the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

At implementation level: additionally to the mentioned ones above, also national/regional ministries and/or agencies from related sectors (e.g., transport, energy), regional and local municipalities, research institutions – through application of PA policy recommendations and using PA reports, as well as participation in Flagships and other cooperation projects.

5. Key PA achievement so far

PA is represented by two well-established macro-regional networks involving both EU and non-EU countries:

- VASAB prepares policy options for the territorial development of the BSR and provides forum for exchange know-how on spatial planning and development among the BSR countries;
- HELCOM is an environmental policy maker for the Baltic Sea area and it develops common management solutions and actions to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental cooperation.

Land-based spatial planning is carried out by all BSR countries at national and/or regional and local level. PA ensures a joint framework to follow up territorial development trends and challenges, to build a territorial cohesion perspective for the BSR in the 2030, as well as to propose concrete actions to stimulate territorial development potentials to overcome existing gaps.

Widely recognized BSR collaboration on maritime spatial planning (MSP) within the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group has turned the Baltic Sea region a global forerunner in regional cooperation and governance on MSP applying ecosystem-based approach.

6. Actions for the PA

Action 1: Strengthening territorial cohesion in the BSR through land-based spatial planning				
Description: VASAB Long Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (LTP) sets the main framework for PA. In order to implement LTP within the EUSBSR and achieve coherent development of the Baltic Sea region, PA aims to: <u>1. Take action in the fight against climate change and address environmental challenges in a systemic way.</u> <u>21.</u> contribute to better adaptation of strategies to different types of areas and propose specific approaches for a diverse urban pattern by ensuring pan-Baltic dialogue; <u>32.</u> underline the need to apply place-based approaches to territorial development policies as well as effective use of functional area's concept and territorial impact assessment tools by acting as a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices, thereby contributing to the implementation of the Territorial Agenda for the EU from 2021 on; <u>43.</u> observe the territorial development processes in the Region by using and advancing territorial development monitoring solutions, inter alia developed within projects of the ESPON programme; <u>45.</u> encourage transnational actions improving accessibility and connectivity of the Region using potential of TEN-T for regional development and observe regional effects of the European transport infrastructure development. <u>5. Contribute to adaptation and resilience to climate change in spatial planning process.</u>				
Timing: ongoing				
Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/deadline	Data source
<i>Increased the knowledge on land-based spatial planning in the BSR</i>	<i>Number* of workshops, thematic monitoring reports and possibly policy statements (*according to the chairmanship priorities)</i>	<i>By 2019 at least one thematic seminar has been organized per year, two thematic monitoring reports have been elaborated</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>VASAB CSPD/BSR, national ministries, ESPON, project reports of European Territorial Cooperation programmes</i>
Flagship on-going or planned within this action: MARA – Mobility and Accessibility in Rural Areas” (flagship of PA) SUMBA – Sustainable Urban Mobility and Commuting in the Baltic Cities” (Flagship of HA Climate)				
Project (s) and other action (s) are planned within this action: VASAB currently is discussing a possible update of the Long-Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (process has been initiated in January 2019). This process might suggest new priorities / actions/ tasks for PA.				
Current and planned funding sources for the PA activities: Interreg BSR programme, Interreg Central and South Baltic programmes, ESPON programme, VASAB's own budget				

Action 2: Ensuring coherent maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea				
Description: The Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020, along with VASAB LTP and HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan sets the framework for MSP cooperation and defines the necessary steps to achieve the goal to draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the BSR which are coherent across borders and apply the ecosystem-based approach to contribute to <u>reaching jointly agreed environmental and climate goals.</u> <u>Transboundary coherency of spatial plans implies strengthening of cooperation with non-EU neighbouring countries and organizations.</u>				
Timing: ongoing				
Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/deadline	Data source
<u>Maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea are coherent</u>	<i>Elaborated and applied maritime spatial plans</i>	<i>In 2019 all EU countries in the BSR are engaged into MSP.</i>	<u>Maritime spatial plans elaborated and applied</u>	<i>EC DG MARE, national ministries,</i>

Commented [RV1]: There was a request by DG REGIO to add to all PA description that they will address climate change and collaboration with non-EU countries.

This is because the current Horizontal Actions HA Climate and HA Neighbours are suggested to be abandoned. These topics are now suggested to be cross-cutting themes for all policie areas.

We would like to add also environmental goals here as those are the ones most relevant for EBA.

across borders and apply the ecosystem-based approach.	throughout the BSR.	Maritime spatial plans covering whole national marine waters in the Baltic Sea are adopted in 3 countries.	throughout the Baltic Sea in 2020/2021.	HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, European Territorial Cooperation programmes' reports.
Flagship on-going or planned within this action: Capacity4MSP (2019-2021), planned				
Project (s) and other action (s) are planned within this action: Current Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020 includes an agreed goal: "to draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea Region by 2020 which are coherent across borders and apply ecosystem-based approach". According to the Work plan 2020-2021 of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group, the elaboration of new Roadmap for 2020+ will be carried out by 2021. In the period after 2020 focus of the activities on MSP will move from preparation of the plans to their implementation and to follow up of effectiveness. There will be important updates for the overall policy frameworks. An update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is going on and a new Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap is under development. Both documents are expected to be adopted by the end of 2021. Also, an -possible- update of the VASAB LTP has started. is currently being discussed.				
BSR MSP Data group works on establishing the joint BSR MSP webmap where adopted maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea will be available.				
Capacity4MSP project platform (ongoing till September 2021, funded by Interreg BSR Programme)				
Current and planned funding sources for the PA activities: EU Commission's DG MARE, Interreg BSR Programme, joint Baltic Sea research and development Programme (BONUS), Interreg Central Baltic Programme, VASAB's and HELCOM's own budget				