



Document title	Draft of the Regional MSP Roadmap
Code	3-1
Category	DEC
Agenda Item	3 – Draft of the MSP Roadmap
Submission date	15.1.2021
Submitted by	HELCOM Secretariat
Reference	Outcome of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 21-2020

Background

As agreed by HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 21-2020 (cf. [Outcome](#), para 3.30), the MSP Roadmap Drafting Group continued to draft the Roadmap. This document contains the draft of the Regional MSP Roadmap based on the last meeting of the Drafting Group, held online on 14 January 2021.

With reference with the [Outcome](#) of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 21-2020 (para 3.30), this Meeting is invited to finalize the draft Roadmap to be submitted to HELCOM 42-2021 and VASAB CSPD/BSR.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- [Contribute](#) to the draft Roadmap,
- [Agree](#) on the draft to be submitted to HELCOM 42-2021 and VASAB CSPD/BSR.

Draft of the regional MSP Roadmap 2021-2030

Preamble

Adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting VASAB Ministerial Conference committed to the implementation of the Roadmap.

REGIONAL BALTIC MSP ROADMAP 2021-2030

AWARE of the high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space and increasing multiple pressures on marine environment and resources and RECOGNIZING the urgent need for increasing resilience to the changing climate in the Baltic Sea region.

RECALLING that Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) is a continuous participatory process of analysing and allocating spatial distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives, as well as to minimize conflicts between the sea uses.

NOTING that MSP is a cyclical and adaptive process that fosters adaptation to emerging needs and challenges, such as the climate change and a sustainable use of marine resources in the context of the circular economy and the sustainable blue economy.

RECALLING that the ecosystem-based approach is applied in MSP and thus contributes to achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Baltic Sea.

RECOGNIZING the valuable work done by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group since 2010 as the renowned regional Baltic Sea platform on Maritime Spatial Planning and ENCOURAGING the continuation of cooperation.

RECALLING the HELCOM-VASAB Baltic Sea broad-scale Maritime Spatial Planning Principles adopted by HELCOM and VASAB CSPD/BSR in 2010 and the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2013-2020 adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2013 and endorsed by VASAB Ministerial Conference in 2014.

RECOGNIZING the joint effort by the Baltic Sea countries to draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea Region and that the joint efforts have contributed to fulfilment of the Regional MSP Roadmap 2013-2020.

TAKING NOTE of the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and its update, VASAB Long Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (LTP), the EU directive on a framework for maritime spatial planning, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy. TAKING FURTHER NOTE of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030, Paris Agreement and EU Green Deal to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

EMPHASISING that the focus of the regional MSP collaboration is now shifting from drawing up of the plans to implementation, [monitoring,] evaluation and follow-up with subsequent eventual reviewing of the maritime spatial plans.

CONFIDENT and COMMITTED to implement this roadmap that will support the achievement of the Baltic Sea Region MSP Framework and HELCOM and VASAB goals, strategies and policies.

GOAL

The goal of the roadmap is strengthening the joint effort and coherence throughout the region to implement Maritime Spatial Plans, aiming for sustainable development of the Baltic Sea region and building a sound basis for an adaptive Maritime Spatial Planning process applying the ecosystem-based approach.

Objective 1 Implementation of MSPs builds knowledge base for the new MSP cycle (proposal by RU and DE)

The Baltic Sea countries collaborate in the monitoring and evaluation of their Maritime Spatial Planning processes. Special consideration will be given to the application of the ecosystem-based approach and the precautionary principle. The maintenance of an up-to-date knowledge database and the application of modern analysis tools are an important aspect of this work. The Baltic Sea countries will promote moving towards coherence of approaches to monitoring and evaluation, the improvement of assessment practices, the building of a regional MSP knowledge base and the capacity of MSP practitioners and decision-makers.

Joint actions to support implementation and follow-up of the MSP plans in relation to the regional MSP framework:

- 1.1 Develop a guiding framework to support harmonized evaluation of MSPs, including a set of definitions
 - Output: BSR evaluation framework for MSPs; common set of general definitions ("Implementation", "Knowledge Base", "MSPCycle", "Coherent MSP", "monitoring, assessment, evaluation", etc.), year 2023
- 1.2 Develop and share a concise and descriptive overview on national plans' implementation (what does implementation mean in different countries; where/when do they impact on decisions on certain projects, spatial and temporal management of activities etc.)
 - Output: overview on national MSPs implementation, if possible, inclusion in established country fiches that would have a dedicated section, 2025 and 2028.
- 1.3 Develop a regional follow up system on MSP, including monitoring of implementation at the Baltic Sea level.
 - Output: BSR follow-up system of implementation of MSPs, 2027

Joint actions to develop the knowledge base of the MSP:

- 1.4 Facilitate exchange of information on the best practices of MSP implementation, monitoring and evaluation across the BSR and other sea basins
 - Output: Regular exchange in HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG
 - Output: Conference (ca. 2023 - 2025) on Implementation of MSP in the BSR with input from other regions,
 - Output: MSP Planners Forum acting on the regular base
- 1.5 Analyse and support spatial efficiency by comparing approaches and solutions with regard to spatial use (e.g. exclusive vs multi use of space) and conflicts management
 - Output: Report on best practices/cases and recommendations on spatial efficiency and good examples of multi-use, 2027
- 1.6 Improve MSP related data retention and flows and assuring data actuality. Ensure regional compatibility of the MSP Input and Output Data
 - Output: MSP Output data is available in BASEMAPS, by 2022

- Output: Shortlisting of MSP input data themes to be regularly updated in regional portal, including climate change related spatial data, 2022
- Output: Overview on national MSP data portals, 2025
- 1.7 Establishing of links with relevant scientific frameworks and maritime knowledge; support the education of MSP planners and international educational exchange
 - Output: Regular consideration of recent scientific developments at regional MSP related events; contributing to regional MSP science and educational needs.

Objective 2. MSPs improve regional policy coherence (Proposal by LV)

This roadmap will lead the Baltic Sea countries through a new planning cycle when the implementation of adopted maritime spatial plans will be taking place. In general, this will be a period of evaluation of national MSP frameworks and regional co-operation. Therefore, in particular it is crucial to understand implications from targets of other national and EU level (e.g. Green deal) policies to the achievements of targets set in MSPs. **(to reflect the need to coordinate implementation of various relevant policies in national MSPs)**

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 2.1 The Baltic Sea countries' MSP authorities continue close collaboration [*continuously*]
 - Output: Continuous dialog utilizing various regional platform e.g. HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, MSP Planners Forum.
- 2.2 Use the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group as a platform for cooperation of MSP authorities with other HELCOM groups and sectorial stakeholders to establish a common understanding on how MSP can contribute to regional goals
 - Output: continuous dialog with sectors utilizing various regional platforms
- 2.3 Explore good practices and application of planning and policy instruments for coordination of land-sea interactions across different levels and sectors
 - Output: report on good practices addressing land-sea interactions by 2022
- 2.4 Study the relationship between various policies related to protection and sustainable use of marine resources by continuously following national MSP implementation as well as other related processes concerning marine and coastal domain (e.g. Sustainable Blue economy, Green deal)
 - Output: supplement country fiches with relevant information by 2025
- 2.5 Enhance Baltic sea level collaboration of MSP authorities and planners with various sectors to contribute to aligning sectoral policies and sectoral decision-making and by raising awareness on the role of MSP between involved stakeholders
 - Output: regular regional events, e.g. Baltic MSP forum
- 2.6 Further develop institutional framework for the intergovernmental collaboration on MSP in the BSR
 - Output: review Baltic sea regional "Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation" by 2026

2.7. Utilise the prominent role of coordinating Policy Area "Spatial Planning" within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) to improve cross-sectoral and multi-level cooperation across the region and contributing to the objectives :

- *Output: HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG acts as the Steering Group for MSP within the EUSBSR Policy Area "Spatial Planning"*

Objective 3. MSPs contribute to achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the Baltic Sea Action Plan (Proposal by SE and FI)

Maritime Spatial Planning applies an ecosystem-based approach with an aim to reduce environmental pressures of sea-based activities on the Baltic Sea ecosystem and to strengthen protection and restoration of marine species and habitats. Hereby contributing to achieving Good Environmental Status, supporting implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as the EU Biodiversity strategy 2030. This objective focuses on extended integration between MSP and environmental management and development of common impact assessment frameworks and review of EBA-guidelines.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 3.1 Update the EBA-guidelines based on shared experiences in national application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and the evaluation of EBA-implementation in the latest MSP-round and other relevant input.
 - Output: updated EBA guidelines, 2025
- 3.2 Establish cooperation between HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and HELCOM STATE and CONSERVATION to develop common language and views on Ecosystem based management and green infrastructure, cumulative assessment methods, spatial data, status assessments.
 - Output: a joint meeting of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP and State and Conservation working groups, 2022
- 3.3 Identify how MSP can support conservation and sustainable use strategies including information on MPAs and possible OECMs (Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures) or other areas of high natural values in MSP (as a basis for steering harmful activities away from such areas) and possibilities of MSP in achieving the [CBD target and] EU Biodiversity Strategy target of reaching 30% target for protected sea areas.
 - Output: Development of Green Infrastructure maps based on HOLAS III including ecosystem services, 2025 (check availability of data on ecosystem services)
 - Output: A report in country fiches how support on conservation and sustainable use strategies are included in MSP, 2023
- 3.4 Develop SEA-guidelines as a Baltic SEA-framework including themes common data, assessment methods for impact evaluation, cross-border consultations.
 - Follow-up on the sharing of environmental information and stakeholder participation as part of international consultations and the Baltic MSP Espoo procedures as carried out for the current MSPs, 2022
 - Output: SEA guidelines, 2024
- 3.5 Promote the use of methods and tools in MSP for assessing cumulative environmental and other impacts of sea-based activities.
 - Output: Stocktake and review of the existing methods and tools, 2022
 - Output: Harmonised approaches for cumulative impacts assessments, 2026

- 3.6 Evaluate how MSPs are supporting the overarching goals of the MSFD and thereby deliver to good environmental status. (to check the deadline for the EU biodiversity report)
 - Output: Report on MSP's impact on the implementation of the MSFD, including programmes of measures and achieving GES, 2026

Objective 4 MSPs contribute to sustainable blue economy (Proposal by WWF)

[Ecosystem-based Integrated Ocean Management]¹: A framework for sustainable ocean economy development. A sustainable blue economy provides social and economic benefits for current and future generations. Restores, protects and maintains the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions, and intrinsic value of marine ecosystems, and is based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows.

Actions to achieve the objective:

- 4.1 Share experiences in guiding sectoral development to minimize economic losses and weakening ecosystem services, identify actions that can be enhanced on the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) level through implementation of MSP and apply them in the view of sustainable blue economy, including cross-border perspective.
 - Output: Report/Guiding document on good practices for sectoral sustainable development , 2026
- 4.2 Investigate the linkage between environmental and social-economic dimensions through an ecosystem services analysis with cross-border MSP perspective.
 - Output: joint analysis of ecosystem services in relation to MSP in order to achieve sustainable blue economy, 2027
- 4.3 Encourage participatory and transparent processes with all stakeholders of sea use to ensure successful integrated and holistic MSP and marine management towards sustainable blue economy.
 - Output: Countries apply and test guidelines for stakeholder participation, and eventually update the guideline if needed, 2025
- 4.4 Update the future oriented report on marine and maritime activities and developments of Baltic Sea regional importance.
 - Output: Updated future-oriented report on marine and maritime activities and developments 2028

Objective 5 Spatial planning contributes to climate change mitigation, adaptation and, thus, increase resilience of the Baltic Sea Region (Proposal by SE)

Climate change is a global challenge which has to be addressed in MSP. There is a need to get a better joint understanding of how sectors and the marine environment will be affected by climate change and to strengthen the role of MSP to adapt to climate change and contribute to measures of climate change mitigation.

Actions to achieve the objective:

¹ The term is not commonly used in HELCOM-VASAB framework. The explanation by WWF is given in **Annex 2**.

- 5.1 Explore how MSP related sectors will be affected by climate change including how climate change might impact human activities under different future scenarios, aiming at developing MSP-strategies for increasing maritime sectors capacity to adapt to expected climate change impacts.
 - Output: A discussion paper as guidance for strategic ways for integrating climate change adaptation into MSP for the next planning cycle, 2025, coordinate timing with mid-term evaluations of national adaptation strategies

- 5.2 Explore how MSP can contribute to climate change mitigation and [nationally determined contribution in terms of Paris Agreement].
 - Output: Stocktaking on national experiences, 2025

- 5.3 Identify how MSP can support adaptive conservation strategies to cater for spatial changes in ecosystems (e.g. migration of species, change of critical conditions for habitats), including the further exploration of the potential for including climate refugia in MSP for the entire Baltic Sea.
 - Output: Information document on MSP's role in adaptative conservation strategies, including best practices, 2026
 - [Output: Modelled maps of climate change impact on marine ecosystem (depending on HOLAS III outcome), 2026]

Follow up of the Roadmap implementation

NOTE: An initial proposal on the Roadmap implementation will be submitted to HELCOM-VASAB MSP 21A-2021 later by the Secretariat.

Annex 1.

Possible subtitles to structure actions under each objective (to be integrated in the Roadmap).

Objective 1 Implementation of MSPs builds knowledge base for the new MSP cycle

- Joint overall framework on follow up of MSP implementation
- Outline of a Baltic sea-level process for the follow up
- MSP data collaboration is updated to fit the new needs and new technologies

Objective 2. MSPs improve regional policy coherence

- Enhanced collaboration between MSP authorities in implementation of MSP and with sectors
- Joint understanding of MSP's relationship with other policy frameworks, including land-sea interaction

Objective 3. MSPs contribute to achieving progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea set in the Baltic Sea Action Plan

- New and updated guidelines and methods to apply EBA in MSP
- Achieve better understanding on how MSP can contribute to the achievement of GES and other conservation targets

Objective 4 MSPs contribute to sustainable blue economy

- Established understanding of MSP's contribution to the development of maritime sectors towards sustainability

Objective 5 Spatial planning contributes to climate change mitigation, adaptation and, thus, increase resilience of the Baltic Sea Region

- Strategic understanding on how impacts of climate change influence MSP planning
- Practical understanding on how MSP can contribute to both climate change mitigation and adaptation

Annex 2.

Ecosystem Based Integrated Ocean Management (EB-IOM) is an adaptive approach for governing human activities in marine and coastal areas, rooted in the ecosystem approach, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a strong focus on improving the ecological status of the ocean, and on strategic integration across governance, knowledge and stakeholders. It is a conglomerate of multiple concepts and tools such as Marine Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), that reinforce each other by sharing a focus on more holistic and strategic management, with the ecosystem approach(EA)/ecosystem-based management (EBM) at its core.

EB-IOM represents the overarching framework for sustainable ocean planning and management, within which national (and transboundary) MSP, ICZM and other tools operate, and should not focus solely on EEZs but also include land-based activities and pressures and consider areas beyond national jurisdiction.