



Document title	Draft of the Terms of Reference of the planning forum as a long-term mechanism
Code	5-1
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	5 - Intergovernmental cooperation and follow up progress in regional MSP
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Submitted by	Sweden
Reference	

Background

Draft the Terms of Reference for a Planners' forum is one of the activities within the project Capacity4MSP. The aim is to establish a long-lasting mechanism for a Planners' forum within the Baltic Sea Region. A dedicated work group is formed with representatives from BSH, Germany, Ministry of Finance, Estonia, VASAB Secretariat, HELCOM Secretariat, Submariner Network for Blue Growth, Gdynia Maritime University, Poland, Scientific and Research Institute of Maritime Spatial Planning Ermak NorthWest, Russia, Ministry of Environment and Regional Development of Latvia and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management. Finland has also commented and intends to participate in the upcoming work. A draft ToR has been discussed at Planning forums in November 2020 and March 2021. The draft will be further elaborated and finalized as a proposal from the work group during the autumn 2021 or during the finalization of Capacity4MSP.

One important part of the draft is the suggestion to organize the Planners' forum as an Expert group or Expert network under the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group.

Action requested

The Meeting will be invited to:

- Take note of the progress in drafting the Terms of Reference for a long-term mechanism
- Discuss the format of a possible long-term mechanism

Early draft 0.3: Terms of Reference for a Baltic Sea Region Maritime Spatial Planners' Forum

2021-03-17

This document is a draft for further joint elaboration.

NB: Alternative wordings are shown within brackets.

Background

Coherent planning across borders is needed to ensure efficient and optimal use of the Baltic Sea and to meet economic, social and environmental objectives. The official MSP collaboration between the Baltic Sea countries is organised through the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG. Several MSP projects in recent years have shown a need for more informal and practical knowledge exchange and cooperation among marine spatial planners to complement the official platform. Planners' forums have been performed within the frames of the previous projects and the good experiences indicate that there is a need for a lasting mechanism to support the exchange.

Objective

The Baltic Sea Region Maritime Spatial Planners' Forum (hereinafter Planners' forum)

1. looks into the future and aims to improve joint planning evidence and coherence for the next round of plans
2. facilitates knowledge exchange, discusses current issues, strengthens coherence and the application of an ecosystem-based approach and thus support the MSP cycle
3. supports cross-border MSP cooperation
4. supports and complements the work within the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, including the implementation of the Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap and the rest of the MSP framework.

Status

The Planners' forum

5. is a forum for professionals/experts involved in preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the maritime spatial plans in the Baltic Sea Region
6. is a platform to meet, discuss and exchange views and experiences and to develop a common understanding as well as advice and proposals related to the objectives above
7. is an expert sub-group ([Expert Group or Expert Network?](#)) to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG which it informs at a regular basis.

Membership

Core members of the Planners' forum

8. are maritime spatial planners from all countries in the Baltic Sea Region and the Åland Islands appointed [nominated] by competent planning authorities or the MSP contact points (coordination on national level). In general, 1-2/country + deputy. In cases where the MSP responsibility is more distributed, one additional member can be appointed
9. are representatives from the HELCOM and VASAB secretariats. In general, 1-2/secretariat + deputy.

Representatives from other organisations

10. may participate in meetings by invitation by the Chair, depending on issues to be dealt with.

The Chair

11. consists of two co-chairs jointly chairing the Planners' forum
12. is agreed [elected] by the countries of the Planners' forum for a defined period of time to be decided by the group.

Modus operandi

Forums

13. are held at least twice a year. Meetings may be held more frequently whenever necessary
14. should be held as face-to-face meetings at least once a year if possible. Additional meetings can be organised online if it is found more suitable by the Chair

- 15. are [normally] hosted by the core members of the Planners' forum on a rotational basis. Whenever possible, meetings should be held back-to-back with other events. Digital meetings are hosted by the Chair
- 16. can be organised as workshops or in any other format appropriate for the purpose
- 17. can facilitate bilateral discussions if relevant. Bilateral discussions can be organised as separate meetings.

The agenda of the Planners' forum

- 18. is decided collectively by its core members. Any member can propose agenda items
- 19. is prepared by the Chair.

A work plan for the Planners' forum

- 20. specifies the work and focus for one or more years
- 21. is prepared and agreed by all core members.

Technical and administrative support

- 22. is given by the HELCOM Secretariat and the VASAB Secretariat.

Communication

- 23. is maintained primarily by e-mail (internal, between members) and by a common online platform [the Helcom meeting portal].
- 24. Other communication channels such a specific website and the use of a hashtag may be used if necessary.

Resources needed

Basic funding for participation in meetings should be provided through national funding. External funding should be sought for the Chair and for administration. Additional funding could be attracted from projects.

