



Document title	Decision making process of the Steering group of the Policy area Spatial Planning of the EUSBSR
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Agenda Item	6 - Coordination of Policy area Spatial Planning and MSP related projects and events
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Background

Within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG acts as the Policy area Spatial Planning (PA) Steering group for MSP related matters. Actions of the PA are defined in the EUSBSR Action Plan. With the latest revision that was approved in February 2021, some changes have been introduced in the operation of the Steering groups:

- All the Steering groups have to have agreed on Rules of Procedure that describe the operational framework; a 'common structure' has been provided by the EUSBSR National Coordinators' Group (NCG).
- Although non-EU countries are invited to join the Steering groups, when matters that are exclusively related with the EUSBSR are decided (e.g. deciding on actions or indicators for the Action Plan, proposing flagships, etc.) non-EU countries cannot block the decisions of the EU Member States.

So far operational framework of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG is utilised for the Steering group of PA Spatial Planning, as it is compliant with the 'common structure' provided by EUSBSR NCG. Russia, being non-EU member state but fully legitimate member of both HELCOM and VASAB, is involved in the work of this Steering group. Participation of Russia in the steering of the PA is encouraged to be continued in the future, as it serves for achieving the targets of regional cohesion of marine and territorial spatial plans in the BSR.

Action requested

The meeting is invited to take note of changes in the non-EU countries' participation in the steering of the PA Spatial Planning of the EUSBSR and future involvement of Russia in the work of the steering group.