

Agenda Item 2 Recent MSP developments

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PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING A SUBGROUP ON MSP DATA TO THE JOINT HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG

In line with the Horizontal Action Spatial Planning within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), the HELCOM-VASAB Baltic Sea Broad-Scale Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Principles (in particular Principle No 6 “High quality data and information basis”), the objective of the Flagship Project PartiSEApate to develop an MSP data exchange network, and based on the outcomes of the PartiSEApate Stakeholder Workshop on MSP Data Networks in October 2013, Germany is presently preparing a proposal for the setup of a subgroup to the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, dealing with the subject of data needs for MSP in the BSR and the development of a dedicated Regional Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI). A full proposal shall be submitted to the 9th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG in May 2014.

The Meeting is invited to take note of this initiative, any comments at this stage being very welcome.

Proposal for establishing a subgroup on MSP data to the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG

Reasoning:

For achieving coherent planning of the marine space of the Baltic Sea, extensive data exchange between the Baltic Sea states planning authorities and institutions is one of the main prerequisites. Within previous as well as on-going planning exercises, both legal and informal / project procedures with cross-border and transnational perspectives or impacts, collecting adequate and high quality data for a sound evidence base, decision making can be built on, has turned out to be one of the most demanding tasks. Several other Interreg as well as FP7 research projects, addressing MSP on several planning levels, have also emphasised the need for up-to-date, consistent, comprehensive and reliable data. European, regional and national initiatives on marine spatial data do not yet set focus sufficiently on the needs of MSP - not to mention potential sea basin specific aspects.

The Baltic Sea features a very fragmented coastal states planning jurisdiction for sea space, thus transparent, comparable and harmonised information and data is of prime significance for transnational and cross-border planning, and for achieving the goal of coherent and consistent Maritime Spatial Planning for all of the sea area.

Thus we would like the WG to support the development of a professional network for MSP data in the Baltic Sea Region by facilitating the set-up of a dedicated subgroup to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

Members:

- Representatives of national contact points for MSP;
- National MSP data experts;
- Data experts from relevant regional networks (HELCOM, VASAB etc.);
- Additional members as considered necessary,

all being well integrated into national / regional / sub-regional MSP networks, e.g. encompassing all relevant authorities, research institutions, other data providers etc. to be able to retrieve all available information relevant for planning procedures, including data from stakeholder processes, licensing procedures etc.

Tasks:

- To identify specific MSP evidence / information / data needs and data products from the planners' view point - including setting priorities and a potential hierarchy, in particular those supporting transnational and cross-border planning - through close cooperation with MSP experts from all contracting states, taking into account results and insights from completed as well as on-going MSP and sectoral planning processes and projects;
- To identify relevant data (on human activities, socio-economic and environmental issues) available for MSP from authorities and institutions from member states, regional and European sources, including e.g. HELCOM, ICES databases;
- To identify gaps in evidence, information and data available, focussing on critical gaps with regard to transnational and cross-border planning;
- To identify detailed (minimum) requirements / necessities and develop most suitable and useful solutions for - inter alia - data scope, content, attributes, formats - incl. e.g. coordinate system and language issues - of relevant data sets for

- transboundary and cross-border planning, and estimate harmonisation needs as regards existing data sets;
- To agree on measures to be taken to ensure transparency with regard to quality, reliability, accuracy, but also accessibility etc. The goal shall be to achieve the highest level possible for data and meta data provision, and get best available evidence to produce plans;
 - To serve as contact point for potential and on-going MSP data projects to secure better coordination and connection of projects' work-packages;
 - To define research priorities and support initiatives to fill critical evidence gaps (incl. relevant socio-economic and –cultural data etc.);
 - To develop terms of reference for setting up a regional spatial data infrastructure for MSP, aiming at making MSP relevant data easily available on the regional scale, by sharing it via a common hub and working towards implementation of a respective project. The German MDI-DE project* could e.g. serve as a potential role model, which leaves the data with domain experts (decentralised data storage) to maintain highest level of accuracy and reliability.

* Marine Data Infrastructure Germany, www.mdi-de.org