

HELCOM LIFE MPA Project

- Planning and process

Latest news:

- On 29 April MEPs approved **€5.4 billion** 2021-2027 LIFE programme budget.
- LIFE is now the most ambitious EU climate and environmental programme ever.
- Improving biodiversity a key objective.
- [Call](#) opened 13 July.
- [Information videos](#) are available on the CINEA website.

Priorities lifted by EU:

- [Priorities](#) published 25 August 2021.
- Intervention areas:
- **“Space for Nature”**
 - **improving the condition of species or habitats through area-based conservation or restoration measures, e.g.:**
 - **projects for restoring or improving natural or semi-natural habitats, or habitats of species, both within and outside existing protected areas.**
 - **creating additional protected areas (or improving the biodiversity focus and contribution of existing protected areas), ecological corridors or other green infrastructure,**
 - **testing or demonstrating new site management approaches,**
 - **projects acting on pressures, etc.**
- - **“Safeguarding our species”**
 - **improving the condition of species (or, in the case of invasive alien species, reducing their impact) through any relevant activities **other** than area-based conservation or restoration measures. Considering the broad range of threats that may act on species in addition to the degradation of their habitats, such projects may apply to a wide range of relevant measures, spanning from hard infrastructural works to awareness raising of stakeholders.**
- Further prioritisation of the proposals will be based on the policy priorities.

Policy priorities lifted by EU 1/3:

- **Priorities for LIFE support under the EU Birds and Habitats**
 - Directives Priority is given to proposals for improving the conservation status or trends of species and habitats of EU importance, notably where such projects are **implementing objectives and measures as outlined in national or regional Prioritized Action Frameworks (PAFs)**.
- Priorities for LIFE support under the Invasive Alien Species Regulation

Policy priorities lifted by EU 2/3:

- **Priorities for LIFE support under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.**
 - **a) Establishing a coherent network of protected areas:**
 - increasing the share of EU land or marine area under protection additional designations or enlargements of Natura 2000 site or nationally protected areas or improving the biodiversity focus of existing protected areas, OECMs, the set-up of ecological corridors, such as green and blue infrastructure that reduce land or seascape fragmentation and pressures/threats, and that directly contribute to the resilience, effective management, and connectivity of protected areas.
 - increasing the share of EU land or marine area under strict protection through improving the level of protection of existing protected areas or through additional designations or enlargements of Natura 2000 site or nationally protected areas.
 - **b) Implementing EU nature restoration targets for species and habitats:**
 - once Member States have submitted their commitments or pledges in relation to this target, projects that are focused on implementing any such national commitments or pledges, including through trans-national or trans-boundary approaches are given priority.

Policy priorities lifted by EU 3/3:

- **Priorities for LIFE support under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.**
 - c) Restoring degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems; prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters:
 - restoring degraded and/or carbon-rich ecosystems, e.g. seagrass meadows, are given priority for LIFE support
 - d) Improving the health and resilience of managed forests.
 - e) Reversing the decline of pollinators.
 - f) Bringing nature back to agricultural land
 - g) Greening urban and peri-urban areas
 - **h) Measuring and integrating the value of nature**
 - project proposals that lead to an effective accounting, measurement and integration of biodiversity values into public and private decision-making applying the guidance, methods, criteria and standards developed by the Commission

Project

Strategic and TRnsboundary Approaches Towards Effective Governance and Improved Capacity for Conservation in the Baltic Sea (STRATEGIC LIFE)

2023-2028

Latest news:

- No objection to SNAP from HELCOM State and Conservation Working Group (August 2021).
- Support for application from HOD (September 2021)
- Application has been registered in the CINEA application portal.

Latest news:

- Clarification of guidance from CINEA:
 - The main focus should be on implementation of BSAP. This should then be presented in relation to how it contributes to EU legislation and the BDS.

What is the context of the planned work?

- updated BSAP (on a regional level),
 - HBD and MSFD (at EU level)
 - the Biodiversity Strategy (at EU level)
 - post-2020 framework under the CBD (at global level)
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- Providing the countries around the Baltic Sea with concrete support towards implementation and the opportunity to utilize national approaches and lift them to a regional scale and vice versa.
 - A preliminary cross-check of the content of the proposal against the various commitments shows a very high convergence of the planned activities.

How does the work contribute to the Action Plan?

BSAP Action code	Target year	WP 1	WP 2	WP 3	WP 4	WP 5	WP 6	WP 7	WP 8
B1	2030								
B2	2025								
B3	2023								
B4	2026								
B5	2030								
B6	2025								
B7	2030								
B10	2024								
B14	2027								
B23	2025								
B25	2025								
B26	2023/2025								
B27	2025								
B28	2024								
B29	2025								
B31	2024								
B32	2024								
HT1	2030								
HT2	2030								
HT9	2028								
HT10	2024								
HT11	2024								
HT17	2030								
HT18	2023								
HT19	2028								
HT20	2024/2028								
HT27	2030								
HT28	2030								
S42	2024								
S45	2024								
S49	2025								
S53	2026								
S57	2030								
S64	2025								
S67	2023								
S68	2024								

SNAPs (LIFE Nature and Biodiversity)

- Strongly encouraged to team up when preparing proposals!
- Coordinated implementation of SNAPs across MS is strongly encouraged.
- All SNAPs need an allocated budget for cooperation with other MS, transnational and EU processes, especially the Biogeographic processes.
- Overlap between an IP and a SNAP in a country is not a priori excluded, as long as thematic complementarity and added value can be shown.

SNAPs (LIFE Nature and Biodiversity)

- Estimated size of a SNAP: 15-50 million.
- SNAPs are built to be flexible in what actions and costs they can cover, as long as they are well justified in the application.
- Focus should be on:
 - Institutional support and capacity building
 - Mobilization of additional finance, in particular from other EU financing instruments and programmes, i.e. needs to include a coordination on securing additional “spin-off” funding for measures complementary to the project
 - SNAPS may include concrete conservation measures, in particular if they cannot be supported through other EU funding programmes, but they should NOT be the focus of the project

SNAPs (LIFE Nature and Biodiversity)

- Indicative allocations for SNAPs have been made for the 2021-2027 period! Three step coefficients based on size of the country, in the Baltic it is as follows:
 - 10.000.000 euro: no country
 - 20.000.000 euro (= approx. 3 300 000/year): Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania (= total of 80.000.000 for 2021-2027)
 - 30.000.000 euro (= approx. 5 000 000/year): Germany, Poland, Sweden, Finland (total of 120.000.000 for 2021-2027)
- Totalling 200.000.000 euro for the 2021-2027 for the countries bordering the Baltic.
- Current estimated project budget: 7-10 million.
- **HOWEVER:** SNAPs are still competitive and there is no guarantee that countries will in the end “get” the allocated resources, so it all depends on the quality and relevance of the projects.

SNAPs (LIFE Nature and Biodiversity)

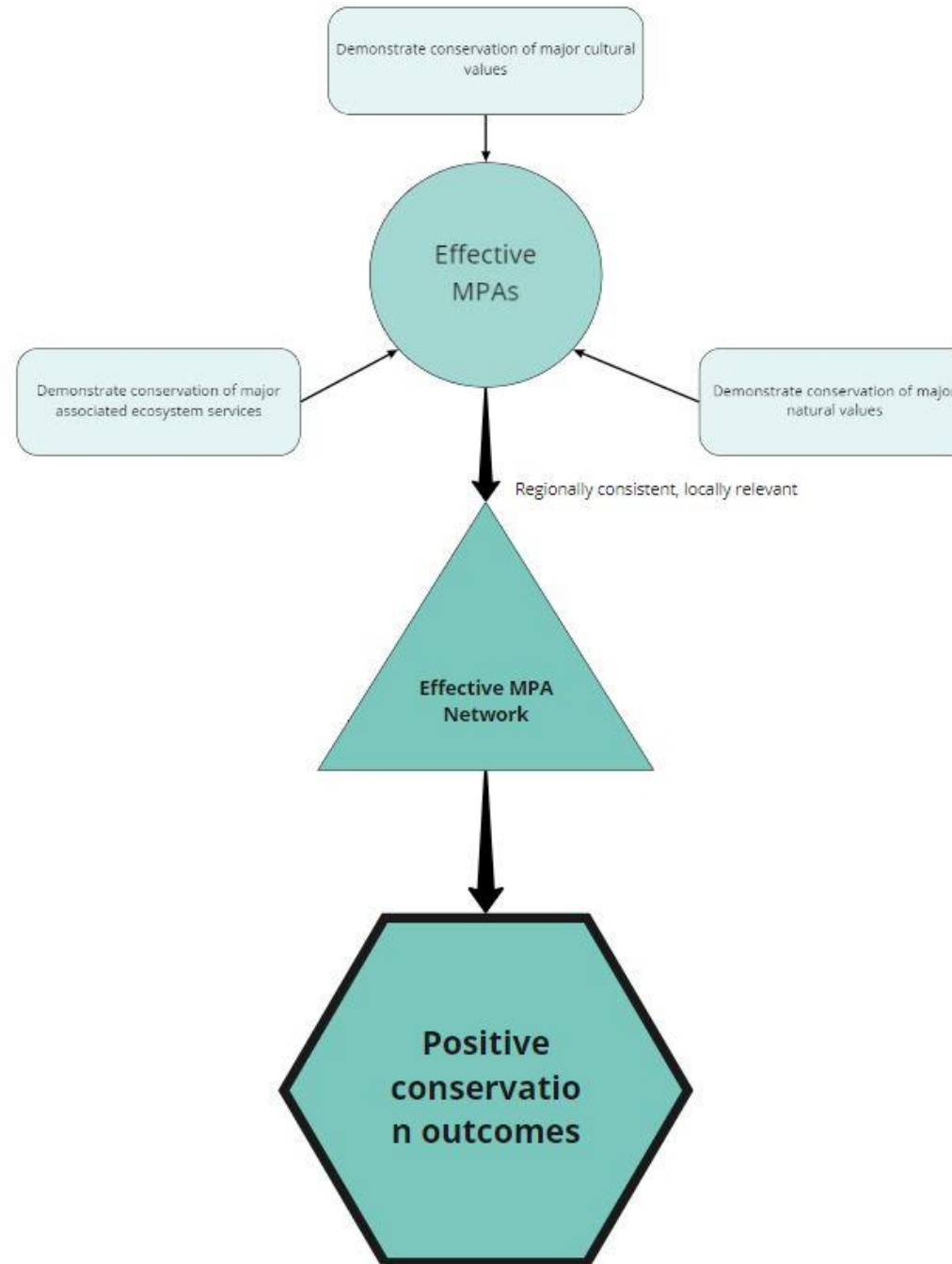
Clarification of guidance from CINEA:

- a regional level application such as STRATEGIC LIFE is not considered to be a national application by the MS partnering under the project, and consequently does not limit the opportunities of MS to apply for other SNAPs under future calls. The CINEA representative concluded that penalising MS in such a way for endeavouring to take transboundary action would go against the intention of the LIFE programme, which encourages transboundary cooperation.
- HELCOM is not considered to be a Finnish entity, i.e. the budget is not counted towards the Finnish allocations. The 60% proportion of the project budget which relates to national contributions (i.e. 60% of the total budget for a country) would possibly count towards the preliminary allocations.

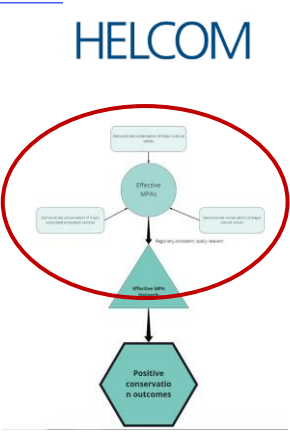
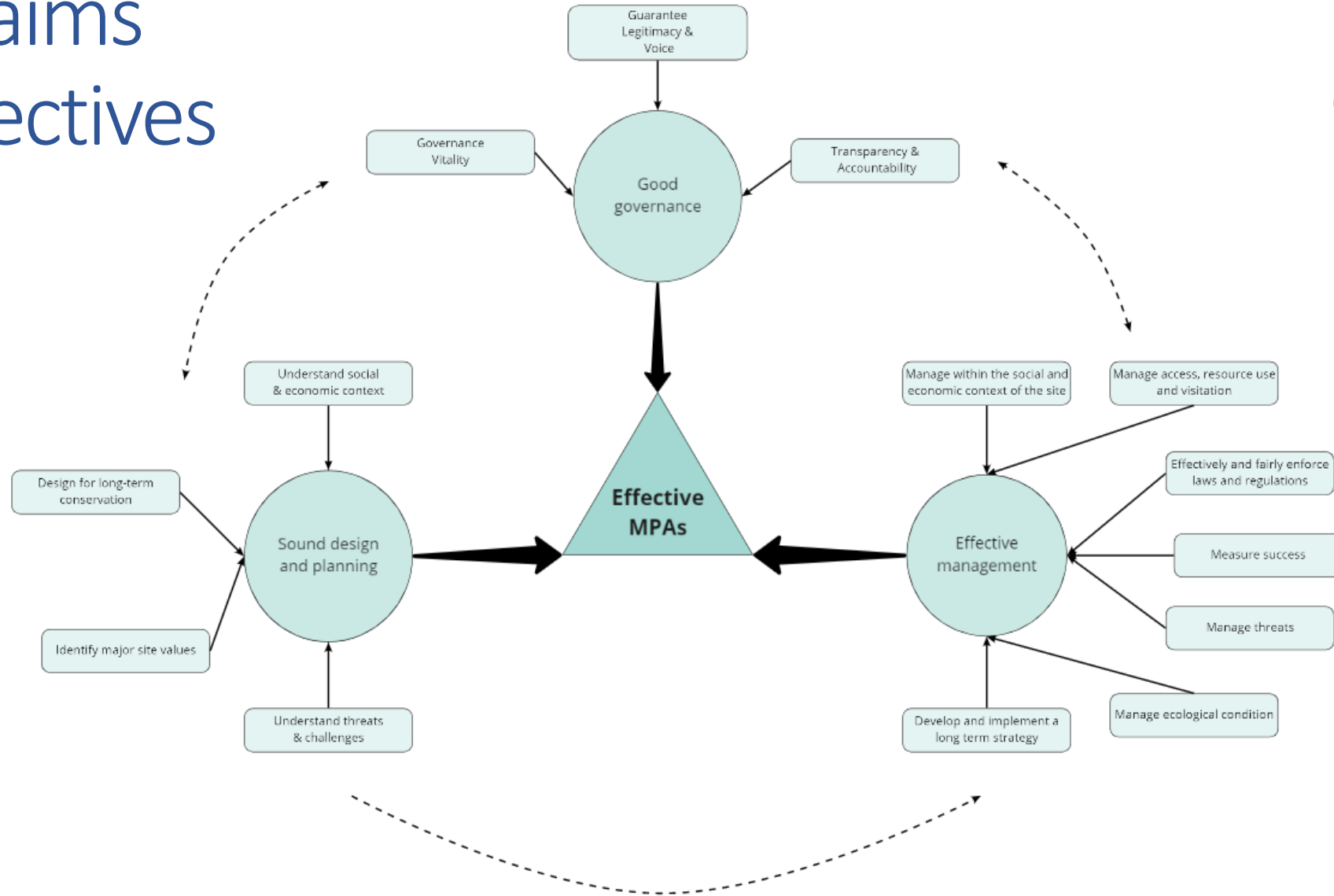
Application timeline

- Two step approval process:
 - Call opening: 13 July 2021
 - Deadline for submission (concept note): 19 October 2021 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)
 - Information on evaluation results (concept note): End November – Beginning December 2021
 - Consultation i.e. Q&A phase: December 2021 - March 2022
 - Deadline for submission of full application: 07 April 2022 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)
 - Information on evaluation results: June - July 2022
 - GA signature: November-December 2022

Project aims and objectives



Project aims and objectives



Project process and logic

Project logic and process

Framework and evidence base

Ensure infrastructure, framework and evidence base to improve practical implementation of conservation measures across the Baltic Sea region.

Baselines

Improved understanding of the current baseline, enabling strategic, effective and efficient implementation of conservation efforts.

Gap analysis

Improved understanding of the barriers to progress, enabling targeted strategic, effective and efficient solutions.

Optimizing the network

Ensuring support for targeted, strategic planning, designation and management of MPAs to realize the full potential of individual sites and the network as a whole.



Establishing current state and desired state of conservation

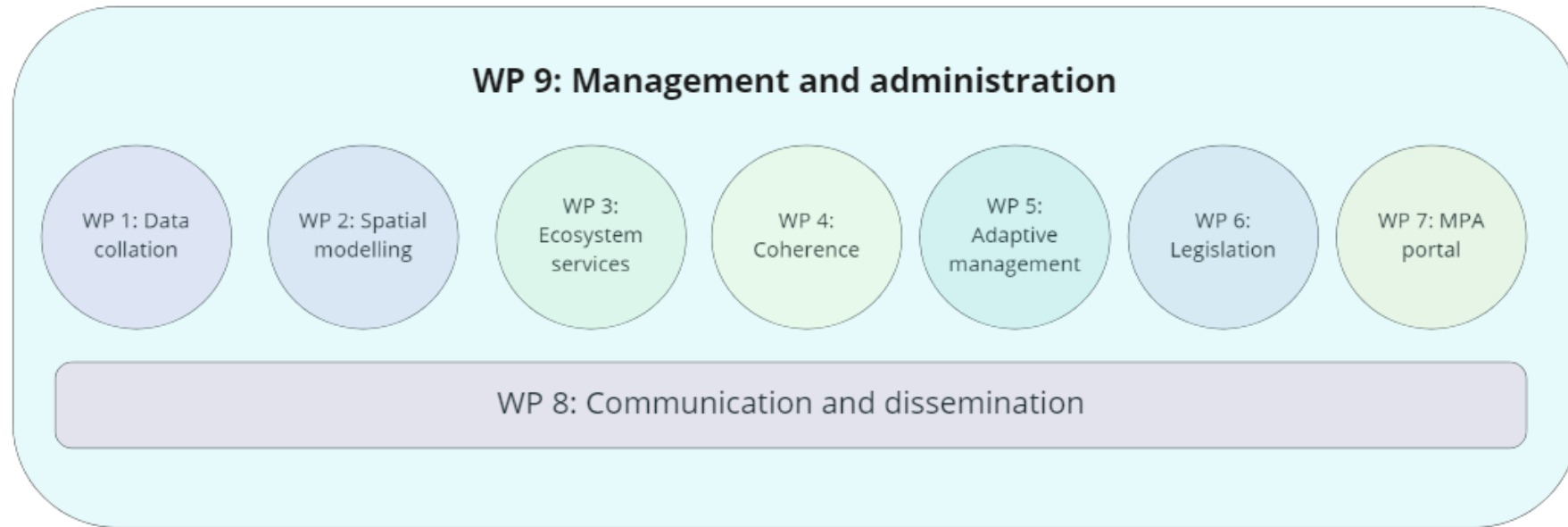
Current state vs. desired state of conservation

Reaching desired state of conservation

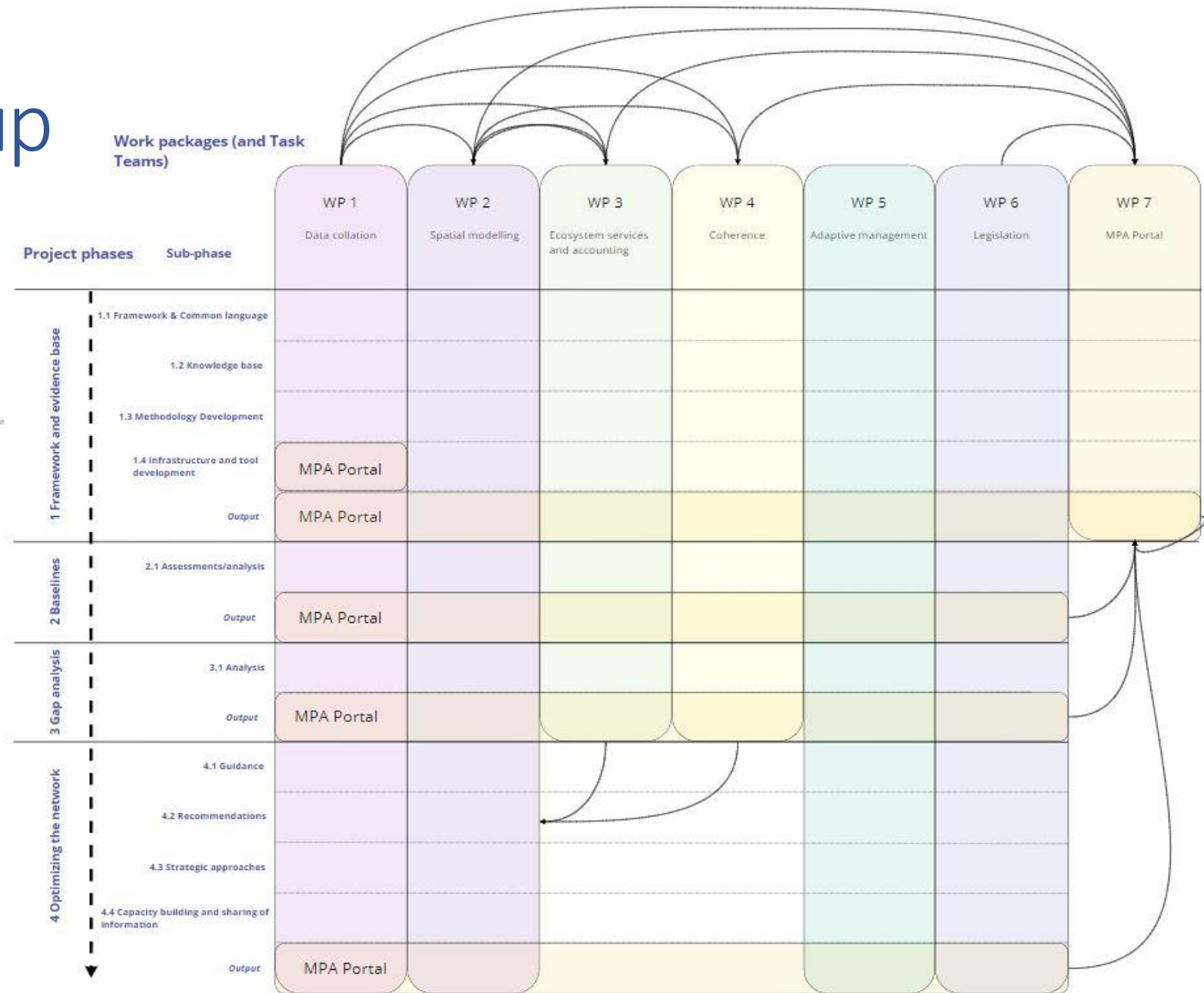
Project setup



Project setup



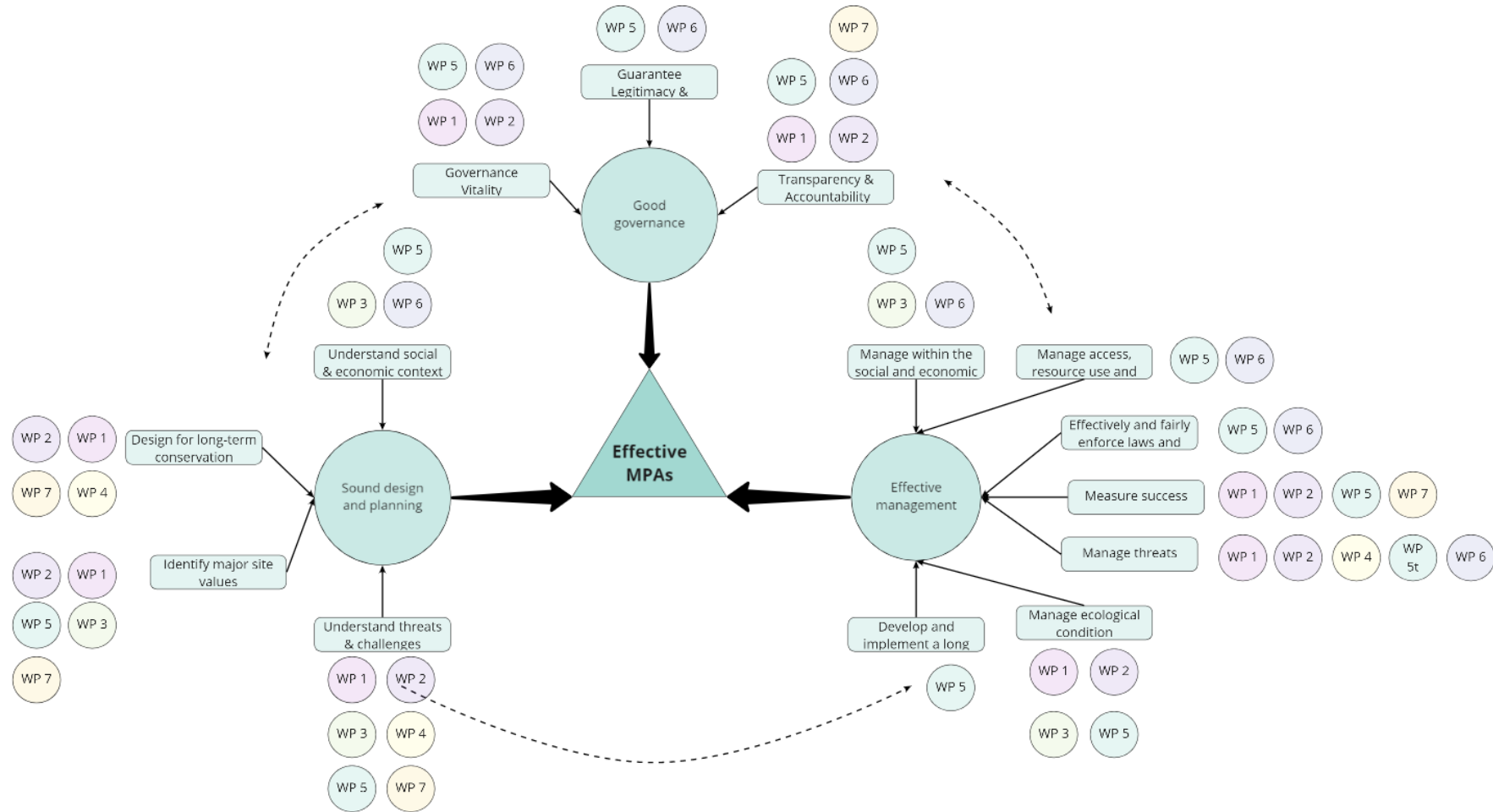
Project setup



Project phases (LIFE requirement)

				2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Phase 1	Framework and common language	Sub-phase 1.1	Framework and common language						
		Sub-phase 1.2	Knowledge base						
		Sub-phase 1.3	Methodology development						
		Sub-phase 1.4	Infrastrucutre and tool development						
Phase 2	Baselines	Sub-phase 2.1	Assessment and analysis						
Phase 3	Gap analysis	Sub-phase 3.1	Analysis						
Phase 4	Optimizing the network	Sub-phase 4.1	Guidance						
		Sub-phase 4.2	Recommendations						
		Sub-phase 4.3	Strategic approaches						
		Sub-phase 4.4	Capacity building and information sharing						

How does the work contribute to the objectives?



Current consortium structure

- Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden.
- Coordinator: HELCOM Secretariat
- 22 partners, 1 subcontractor

	Content partners:	Authority:
HELCOM:	HELCOM Secretariat	NA
Estonia:	Estonian marine institute	Ministry for the Environment(?)
Finland:	Finnish Environment Institut Forest and Park Services Åbo Akademi	Ministry for the Environment
Germany:	Deutsches Meeresmuseum Institute for Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Research Jade University for Applied Sciences Bioconsult Gavia Eco Research Meerezoologie	Germany Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
Sweden:	Swedish Agricultural University	Swedish Water and Marine Management
NGO:	Clean Coalition Baltic	NA
Lithuania:	Klaipeda University	State Service for Protected Areas
Latvia		Latvian Institute for Aquatic Ecology
Denmark:	Aarhus University	Ministry for the Environment
Subcontractor:	Foundations of Success	

Latest version of concept note

- Workspace link
- [MIRO board link](#)

Latest budget overview

- Current total budget: 7.250.506 euro
- Still missing budgets from several partners.

- Total budget estimate: 7-10 million, currently 7.7 million
- Coordinator contribution: currently ~2.7 million
- Subcontracting: -

Coordinator budget:

- ~2.7 million.
- In addition to their own 40% own financing the partners provide a proportionate contribution towards covering the remaining percentage of the 40% co-financing for the coordinator not already covered by dedicated time of existing staff.
- Divided proportionately across the partners.
- Includes full time coordination and project management (LIFE requirement), financial reporting, communication and outreach support, tool development, data management, resources for capacity building, two stakeholder conferences as well as dedicated expert support across workpackages.

Concept note practicalities:

- DL 19 October 2021
- Character and page limits: 45 pages
- supporting documents can be provided as an annex and do not count towards the page limit
- minimum font size — Arial 9 points
- page size: A4
- margins (top, bottom, left and right): at least 15 mm (not including headers & footers).

Concept note practicalities:

- Concept note criteria:
 - 1) Implementation of eligible plans and strategies**
 - 2) Territorial coverage**
 - 3) Coordination of complimentary funds**
 - 4) Involvement of key stakeholders**
- These are yes/no criteria, and all need to be fulfilled in order to move on to the next stage.
- A visual overview of the project and the planned workflows is to be included.

SMART approach for all projects

- SMART: **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely**
- Cross-check each task and work package

Full application practicalities:

- DL 7 April 2022
- Full proposal: 200 pages
- supporting documents can be provided as an annex and do not count towards the page limit
- minimum font size — Arial 9 points
- page size: A4
- margins (top, bottom, left and right): at least 15 mm (not including headers & footers).

Full application practicalities:

- Full proposal award criteria same as SAPs:
 - 1) Relevance
 - 2) Quality
 - 3) Complementary funding
 - 4) Impact
 - 5) Resources
- Each criteria will be scored 0-20, all criteria have the same weight.

Full application practicalities:

- Possible bonuses:
 - Synergies between LIFE sub-programmes
 - Outermost regions or areas with specific needs or vulnerabilities
 - Upscaling results of other EU funded projects (ACTION, BLUES, Finnish IP...)
 - Exceptional catalytic potential
 - Transnational cooperation

Up next:

- Modifying existing text and drafting for concept note.
- Establishing a concept note budget, including proportional contributions for Secretariat.
- Getting confirmation from the national authorities.
- Collecting and filling in Part A information.
- Securing co-financing.

Timeline

- **Closing of call, concept note: 19 October 2021.**
- **August 2021:**
 - Review of project plan with possible partners, clarifying resource implications and duration of tasks.
 - Amendments and modification of project plan based on partner input.
 - **Draft description and timeline of work for each task and work package together with possible partners.**
 - **Amend overall project timeline to incorporate task specific timelines.**
 - Collating information on daily rates from possible partners where this is missing.
 - Confirmation on possibility to co-finance by partners cont.
 - Updated draft budget.
 - Seeking approval from HELCOM Heads of Delegation.
- **September 2021:**
 - Confirmation of participation by national authorities.
 - Confirmation on possibility to co-finance by partners cont.
 - Amended concept note sent for review and approval by partners.
 - Approval of partner budgets.
 - Final preparations for submission.
- **October 2021:**
 - Review and revision of draft final Concept Note by partners.
 - Submission

Thank you for your attention!

