Maritime Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea Region

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Head of VASAB Secretariat

13 February 2019, Hamburg
VASAB- Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea

- Cooperation of ministers of 11 Baltic Sea Region countries responsible for spatial planning and development
- Intergovernmental network founded in 1992
- VASAB Long –Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the BSR
- MSP – one of VASAB priorities

2030: Territorial cohesion perspective
Joint Efforts in MSP

- Joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG established in October 2010

- All countries around the Baltic Sea are represented

- Well established rules and procedures on how to work

- Guided by Ministerial level decisions
  - 2018 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting
  - 2014 VASAB Ministerial Conference
Overview on MSP Status in the Baltic Sea
Pan Baltic Scope project Activity 1.1.4.

**Overall aim:** assess implementation of common regional MSP framework and indicate necessary improvements

**Main output:** Assessment and evaluation report on MSP Roadmap, MSP Principles and Guidelines on Transboundary Consultation
Assessment of the application of Baltic Sea Common Regional MSP Framework.

First Findings.

Kristina Veidemane, Baltic Environmental Forum - Latvia

13 February 2019, Hamburg
Common Regional MSP Framework

Goal: MSP throughout the BSR by 2020 which are COHERENT across borders and apply the ecosystem approach

MSP Principles (10)
Adopted 2010

MSP Roadmap 2013-2020 (7 steps)

Guidelines on Transboundary Consultation
Adopted June 2016

Guidelines on Ecosystem based approach
Adopted June 2016
Methods applied

Components

- Assessment Report
- MSP Principles
- Guidelines
- Roadmap

Methods

- Desk study
- Survey
- Interviews

- Interactive workshop (March 2019)
- Interactive workshop (Autumn 2019)

Collect opinions
Discussion on future mandate and workplan
Baltic MSP Roadmap (2013-2020)

1. Intergovernmental cooperation on MSP
2. Public participation
3. Ecosystem approach in MSP
4. Information and data for MSP
5. Education for MSP
6. National and Baltic Sea regional frameworks for MSP in place
7. Evaluation and follow-up

Drafting and adopting Guidelines

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG
Baltic Sea broad-scale MSP principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baltic Sea MSP principles</th>
<th>EU MSP Directive, minimum requirements and the text.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sustainable management</td>
<td>(b) take into account environmental, economic and social aspects, as well as safety aspects</td>
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<td>2. Ecosystem approach</td>
<td>Recital (13); Article 5.; point 1.</td>
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<td>3. Long term perspective and objectives</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>4. Precautionary Principle</td>
<td>Recital (14)</td>
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<td>5. Participation and Transparency</td>
<td>(d) ensure the involvement of stakeholders</td>
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<td>6. High quality data and information basis</td>
<td>e) organise the use of the best available data</td>
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<td>7. Transnational coordination and consultation</td>
<td>(f) ensure trans-boundary cooperation (g) promote cooperation with third countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Coherent terrestrial and maritime spatial planning</td>
<td>(a) take into account land-sea interactions (c) aim to promote coherence between maritime spatial planning and the resulting plan or plans and other processes, such as integrated coastal management or equivalent formal or informal practices</td>
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<td>9. Planning adapted to characteristics and special conditions at different areas</td>
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<td>10. Continuous planning</td>
<td>plans shall be reviewed by Member States at least every ten years (article 6.; point 3)</td>
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Survey with focus on the Guidelines on Transboundary consultation cooperation

_target group_: responsible authority of MSP in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, Russia.

_Time_: January, 2019

_Key issues_: 
- how transboundary consultation is organized
- to which extent Guidelines are being implemented
- main challenges to implement guidelines
- suggestions for improvements
Scope of the transboundary consultation

• Overall aims and objectives of maritime spatial plans
• Environmental impact assessment (strategic)
• Socioeconomic aspects: trends and future perspectives
• Potential Conflicts and Synergies
• Full maritime spatial plan
Timing of the transboundary consultation

In the same time with launch/start of the national process:
- Stocktaking/assessment of current situation completed (FI, LV, SWE)
- Main aims and objectives drafted (PL)
- Scenarios or alternatives for maritime spatial use drafted (EE)

Draft version of the maritime spatial plan prepared (DE)

Other participants:
- DK, RU, LT
Coherent maritime spatial plans

• Shipping line and maritime traffic: continuity of the lines from own country to the neighbouring country
• Cables and pipe lines
• Production of renewable energy
• Nature conservation interests
• Maritime tourism (ferry lines)

• Management of Fish resources
• Environmental pollution
Information and communication

- Direct communication with the competent authorities of neighbouring countries by phone or in relevant events and occasions
- Arranging meeting for competent authorities of neighbouring countries for MSP to explain the nature of the maritime spatial plan and to discuss potential conflicts and synergies
- Taking part in the meetings arranged by neighbouring country

Countries are satisfied (fully or with some improvement needs) with efforts in PROVIDING INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION to the neighbouring countries
Language of communication with neighbouring countries

• information is sent in **English** to the neighbouring countries – most common practice

• information is sent in **national language** of a neighbouring country (all documents are translated by DE to PL; summaries by other countries)

• information is not translated; the sent letter contains a link to published document in the language of the country that develops MSP (the whole document or related background documents)
Most critical in consultation process

• Different data format, no access to the project plan in GIS format which would facilitate the assessment of the coherence

• The most important issues are environmental and economic activities impact of neighboring countries in the context of impact on national interests:
Good example

- Transboundary consultation process organized by Sweden
- Polish MSP review process
- Response of Latvia on comments from Sweden

To be avoided

- Too many formal meetings and letters. There should be informal collaborations to have constructive results.
- Presentation of finished materials only at meetings without prior review.
- Changing of the MSP contact point without informing the concerned countries.
Response to the received comments

• A formal letter is sent to the neighbouring country to inform to what extent their remarks have been taken into consideration in the process of drafting the plan

• A formal letter also justifies the remarks that have not been taken into account in the drafting the plan

• A cross-border meeting is organised to discuss the conflicting issues

• A transnational meeting is organised to discuss the conflicting issues
Informal transboundary cooperation processes

• HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG – is official platform, nevertheless countries see this also as platform for sharing experience and knowledge beyond the official platform
• bi-lateral committees on Spatial planning (DE/PL)
• projects (Baltic & Pan-Baltic Scope, Interreg)
• Field trip for participants to demonstrate Finnish underwater biodiversity research
Benefits from informal cooperation process

• It facilitates the informal supply of information outside the narrow confines of (potentially restrictive) formal channels
• Informal discussions can be initiated as a useful vehicle for brokering common solutions
• Build trust, and also to know who to communicate with during formal processes
• A better understanding of my neighbours planning system.
• Identification and prevention of transboundary conflicts at an early stage
Evaluation of the Pan-Baltic cooperation on MSP

• Role of HELCOM and VASAB
  • Mainly significant and very significant; 1 country neutral and 1 country slightly insignificant
  • To inform about the process and for networking
  • Important role in cooperation with Russia

• Need for cooperation on:
  • Data infrastructure, exchange
  • Ecosystem approach
  • MSP process and content
  • Blue Growth