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MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE IN MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING THROUGHOUT THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Stakeholder Workshop on Spatial Data Infrastructure and Network Building for MSP in the Baltic Sea

Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH)
15-16 October 2013, Hamburg, Germany

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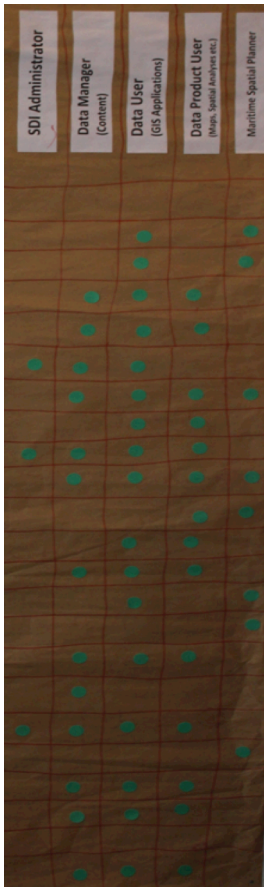
Goals of the workshop:

- To get an overview on activities on a pan-Baltic scale and related initiatives on European level
- interests of Maritime Spatial Planners / Data holders/providers,
- perception of prospects / problems
- To explore and discuss the feasibility of developing a Pan-Baltic MSP data network
- To identify main organizational/legal/technical/content related issues for Pan-Baltic MSP data network to be addressed and respective framework to be developed
- To develop draft recommendations for how to organize and manage data exchange and a data network for MSP purposes within the Baltic Sea Region
- To outline recommendations for further steps to be taken towards this objective.

Participants:
In total 21 persons participated in the workshop:

BSR:	
Finland	HELCOM
Germany	BSH, Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht (HZG), sustainable projects GmbH
Latvia	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development; Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia (BEF)
Poland	Maritime Office Szczecin; Maritime Office Gdynia, Maritime Institute Gdansk; Regionalne Biuri Gospadarski Przestrzennej; Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy
Outside BSR:	
The Netherlands	Water Management Centre
United Kingdom	Marine Management Organisation (MMO)



Thereof (multiple assignments were possible – see picture)

SDI Administrator	3
Data Manager (Content)	13
Data User (GIS Applications)	17
Data Product User	14
Maritime Spatial Planner	8

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Brief information on what was presented at the workshop
(all presentations available as PDF-documents on PSP-website:
http://www.partiseapate.eu/dialogue/data-network/):

1. Anda Ruskule, Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) Latvia, provided an overview of the objectives and activities of the PartiSEApate project in general and the stakeholder workshops in particular.
2. Duncan Hume, Marine Management Organisation (MMO), explained the procedure of developing the evidence base for marine planning in England.
3. Dennis von Schaardenburg gave information on the Dutch developments in marine data management.
4. Nerijus Blazauskas (handed in after the event), Klaipeda University, reported on the example of the Lithuanian-Latvian-Russian transboundary planning experience and the respective MSP data links
5. Kai Soetje, BSH, gave a comprehensive overview on European and national initiatives on maritime and marine data which might be relevant for MSP.
6. Manuel Frias Vega, HELCOM, explained the structure, content and management and further development of the HELCOM marine data infrastructure.
7. Bettina Käppeler, BSH, summarised the findings and recommendations from the previous Interreg project BaltSeaPlan for MSP spatial data and a respective BSR spatial data infrastructure.
8. Jürgen Schulz-Ohlberg and Miriam Müller, BSH, illustrated the structure of the BSH spatial data infrastructure, and the BSH Continental Shelf Information System (CONTIS) on maritime activities.
9. Manfred Zeiler, BSH, gave more detailed insight into the issue of Marine Geology for MSP, the Shelf Geo-Explorer data base and further projects, which will enhance and broaden the geological evidence base.
10. Johannes Melles, BSH, explained the set-up of the MDI-DE project (Marine Data Infrastructure Germany), that could provide a role model for a similar transnational network in the BSR.
11. Juliusz Gajewski, Maritime Institute Gdansk, talked about the Polish marine data policy.

Session 1 Existing national Spatial Data Infrastructure / Experience with Data Bases for MSP
➔ Examples of national approaches to establish data and evidence base for MSP

Session 2: Examples of European and Regional/national Initiatives to deliver and boost Maritime and Marine Knowledge and Data
➔Examples on European and Baltic level of Marine Data Initiatives and Portals incl. Recommendations of BaltSeaPlan for Pan-Baltic Data

Guiding questions:
- Which aspects of the initiatives, projects and existing SD Infrastructure presented do you assess as most important and useful for a potential SDI for MSP in the Baltic Sea – in particular when considering trans-boundary planning and consultation ?
- Which problems do you see ?
- Which further suggestions with regard to the general framework and potential set-up would you make to overcome problems and facilitate trans-boundary data and information exchange for MSP in the BSR ?

Session 3: Administrative and technical Requirements of Spatial Data Infrastructures for MSP – Examples of Marine Data Networks, Databases and Data Policy

Guiding questions:
Administration / Coordination Issues

- How can the current situation of governance and administration, availability, accessibility and practical ways of exchange of data for MSP with regard to trans-boundary planning issues be described / assessed ?
- How would an ideal / visionary situation look like and how can we start to achieve a good spatial data exchange environment ?

Technical / Quality Issues and Criteria

- Which (minimum) information and data (scope, content) do we need for MSP in a trans-boundary context?
- Which minimum requirements should be met in terms of technical and quality criteria with regard to exchange of data within the BSR ? (formats, processing, reliability, comparability, harmonisation, visualisation etc. of data).

Discussion after session 1 and 2

Based on the examples presented, discussion focused on several major issues that seem most important when thinking about data needs, data infrastructure and data sharing. When assessing the suitability of existent European and Baltic marine data projects and initiatives for MSP and their different approaches to data holding and data sharing, the initial decision has to be taken between a centralised system (e.g. HELCOM) – one database for all MSP related data, for which data has to be collected from data owners regularly - and a decentralised system (e.g. MDI-DE) where the data remains with the owners, is being maintained there and made accessible by a joint data portal and custom-made services.
Another important issue seems to be priority setting with regard to data compilation for MSP, focussing on the data which is really essential for the process, generates information and evidence needed for decision making. This includes – if no other sources seem to be available yet – to make use of "informal data" to broaden the knowledge base. This does not excuse planners from conducting thorough quality assessment of data submitted or compiled, though, given potentially less reliable and comprehensive data availability for marine space compared to terrestrial planning. Problems are seen in the lack of uniform responsibility for creating MSP (on national/regional level), as well as general problems with compatibility of data (with regard to formats, languages, structure of data – different scales and quality).

Discussion after session 3:

During the second discussion session participants raised more detailed issues with regard to

a) Organizational and governance issues such as accessibility, cooperation with other European initiatives and between neighbouring countries

A Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) for MSP relying on decentralised data storage should be set up – in cooperation with transnational cooperation and existing initiatives such as HELCOM, to the EUSBSR and

others, which may still be unlinked. The data and data products and services shall be made accessible via a joint BSR MSP data portal. Where reasonable, connections should also be made to EMODnet portals. A central SDI such as HELCOM database may save management resources, but for the sake of level of accuracy, currentness of data etc., these should be compiled and maintained by the domain experts.
Various EU initiatives addressing marine spatial data shall be made use of as far as possible – projects may be useful to broaden the data and knowledge base, but only with a clear and limited purpose.
Lessons learnt within national and international cooperation projects, such as MDI-DE or the Lithuanian-Latvian – Russian transboundary experience shall serve as an important starting point when developing the SDI and the administrative framework. Consideration shall be given to the lack of uniform responsibility for creating MSP e.g. on national or regional level and the problems that might imply for data provision and data use.

b) scope of data and data availability, hierarchy and priority setting with regard to data compilation

When setting up the SDI, prioritisation should be conducted before creating the SDI, and it has to be defined what really is essential, from the user side and not only the supply side, – with the concrete purpose and evidence to be generated in mind. Data should be assessed as to relevance for generating information and evidence for decision making. Thus data needs may be limited. In the case of a Pan-Baltic SDI for MSP the focus may be set onto really relevant transboundary and cross-border issues.
A detailed specification of data needed for MSP has to be developed – and respective agreements have to be concluded. These data details should be as concrete as possible from the beginning.
When looking at the scope of data, minimum requirements should consider not only human activities, but also cultural and social and economic aspects, along with environmental data. Latter should also comprise seasonal data or annual differences as well as assignments to spatial levels (e.g. for migrating birds), if these are deemed relevant for decision making.
The data scope should be reviewed by the partners within the MSP data network, and new data be made available through the data portal when needed.

c) technical and quality criteria, accuracy, comparability, scale, standards and formats

Data made available by the data portal and used for the data products and services have to be harmonised and made compatible with regard to quality in general, accuracy, comparability, formats, language, structure, scale (as needed for national and transnational levels of planning). Thus unified provisions shall be achieved, though a dedicated EU Directive such as INSPIRE, MSFD, and MSP has not been regarded as desirable . OGC standards should be applied. Data should be as up-to-date as possible.
A thorough quality assessment of all data within the SDI has to be secured, though it may be sensible to use e.g. low resolution data for MSP in case better quality data not being available yet. When using data from different projects, effort shall be put into overcoming redundancies of data regarding the same phenomena.

d) importance of metadata

A strong focus has to be given to developing common standards for metadata, document them well, and agree on criteria on how data may be interpreted or analysed, e.g. with regard to significance, accuracy etc., thus making data from different sources easier to assess and compare. Data misuse and misinterpretations shall be prevented to the greatest possible extent. Metadata as well as data should be linked to all reports and evidence created.

Vision of an ideal situation with regard to administration and coordination:

➔ PAN-BALTIC SDI FOR MSP ESTABLISHED

- Pan-Baltic MSP-Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group / Baltic MSP Data Expert Group established(HELCM/(VASAB MSP WG Subgroup)
- MSP Data Portal and Spatial Infrastructure is flagship project of BSRS, sufficient resources for task dedicated
- Clear political mandate for task of setting up National Data Contact Points
- Stakeholder driven process (acc. to requirements, definitions…)
- All data used in MSP processes made available / transparent
- Agreements on accessibility of non-public data
- Metadata according to agreed standards available
- Process of dealing with shifts of requirements established (future potentials, change ??)
- Data Content /Format /Standards have been defined and agreed on
- Adequate Data "Products" for MSP available
- Links to further evidence established

Overall Conclusions / Key findings:

- **Need to set up a Pan-Baltic Spatial Data Infrastructure for MSP (with all relevant BSR states agencies and institutions + HELCOM, VASAB, ICES, EMODnet etc.) to allow for easy exchange of relevant data for MSP - for which MDI-DE may be a good model**
- Need for national MSP data contact points
- Need to have common data standards for data exchange, at least for issues of transboundary relevance
- Need to fill gap with regard to relevant socio-economic and –cultural data
- Need to set priorities for data compilation – with the concrete purpose and evidence to be generated in mind
- Need to align Workflow and Dataflow
- Importance of having strong Metadata, to create transparency on data significance, reliability etc.
- Data from publicly funded work should be freely accessible
- Projects on MSP Data should be better streamlined and connected

Setting up a Pan-Baltic Spatial Data Infrastructure for MSP:

➔ **How to get there ?**

- Proposal: Establishing a HELCOM/VASAB WG on MSP – Subgroup, LV and DE volunteer to make proposal for TOR, objectives, milestones etc., in line with EUSBSR ➔ shall be presented to HELCOM/VASAB WG on MSP-meeting 28/29th January 2014.

- Data products needed for MSP with regard to questions of planners to be answered should be discussed in a dedicated PSP Workshop (focus on transboundary MSP issues).

➔ **Further Tasks:**

1. Setting up of expert group on harmonisation of data and metadata for data exchange (focussing on transboundary MSP issues) ,
2. Initialising national inventories of main MSP issues and resp. available data / metadata and additional information etc.