

Resolution of the Roundtable on Maritime Spatial Planning

XV International Environmental Forum - Baltic Sea Day, 19-21 March 2014, St. Petersburg, Russia

A Roundtable on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) was held during the XV International Environmental Forum - Baltic Sea Day on Wednesday 19 March 2014 in St. Petersburg, Russia. The Roundtable was attended by ca. 70 participants. The Roundtable was organized as part of the Gulf of Finland Year 2014. The session was moderated by Ms. Anita Mäkinen, Finnish Transport Safety Agency, Co-chair of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group, and Mr. Andrey Lappo, Research and Design Institute of Urban Development, Russia.

The morning session of the Roundtable was titled *MSP as a tool to balance human activities and the ecological features of the Baltic Sea* and in the afternoon a number of presentations were made under the title *More MSP activities needed to solve the Baltic Sea problems- ways forward*. At the end of the day the discussion focused on three ongoing MSP projects in the Baltic Sea Region, namely GAP2, PartiSEApate and Baltwise.

The presentations during the Roundtable covered important issues like the legal framework of MSP both in European Union and the Russian Federation. Further, examples on large scale MSP exercises in the Baltic Sea were described and the construction of the Nord Stream gas pipeline was presented as an example of the first pan-Baltic MSP exercise followed by presentations on biodiversity and geodiversity of the Baltic Sea given as well as on human activities, eutrophication and fisheries in relation to MSP.

Conclusions

There is now a momentum for Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) for the whole Baltic Sea as the European MSP framework directive is almost finalized and will be launched in May 2014 and there is a draft Concept for MSP Legislation in Russian Federation.

Due to the importance of transborder collaboration in MSP, and to benefit the MSP process in the whole Baltic Sea area, it is important that the European and Russian MSP legislation will be harmonized as far as possible.

The role of the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group in implementation of MSP in the whole Baltic Sea area should be strengthened and the Regional Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2013-2020, which was adopted by the HELCOM Ministerial meeting in October 2013, should be implemented.

It is important to understand that MSP is not only a new additional way to protect Baltic marine nature but a tool to ensure blue growth in the region.

The overall methodology for implementing MSP is still under development. It is also important to understand that the whole concept of MSP is a process where both cross-sectoral and transborder actors are involved.

The participants of the MSP Roundtable considered that it is important for the further development of MSP in the Baltic Sea to focus on the following issues:

- In addition to gathering of discrete data, to move towards spatial analysis based on the data and appropriate zoning of water areas;
- Development and application of methods for predicting the environmental impact of ongoing and planned anthropogenic activities;
- Transnational unification of formats for maps and data in a single geographic information system of the Baltic Sea.