



Transnational stakeholders meeting on the concept for maritime spatial planning in the Lithuanian Sea and its potential impacts on sea use in Latvia

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Hotel Fontaine Royal, Stūrmaņu 1, Liepāja

Summary Report

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Goals of the workshop:

- to discuss with stakeholders the current state of the Lithuanian MSP process, key concepts, applied MSP stocktake principles, priorities and the different MSP concept solutions for the Lithuanian sea space,
- to define existing sea uses and address future developments that require cross-border coordination in order to avoid conflict situations, and
- to identify potential cooperation synergies for new/future spatial uses at the LT/LV sea border.

Participants

43 persons participated in the workshop

Latvia	Baltic Environmental Forum, Kurzeme Planning Region, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology, VASAB Secretariat, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Economics, Environmental State Bureau, Maritime Administration of Latvia, State Land Service, Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, Rucava county municipality, Nica county municipality, Pavilosta county municipality, Liepāja city municipality, Freeport of Riga Authority, Freeport of Ventpils Authority, University of Liepāja, Spatial and Regional Development Research Center at Riga Technical University, Latvenergo AS, Association of Latvian Transit Business, Latvian Maritime Community
Lithuania	Coastal Research and Planning Institute (CORPI-KU)

Meeting overview

The meeting started with introduction with goals and activities and participation possibilities in next discussions and workshops organised in frame of the project “PartiSEApate” by A. Ruskule (Baltic Environmental Forum – Latvia) . A. Ruskule explained also to participants what MSP is and why it is needed, and why cross border consultations and cooperation are needed.



The meeting was followed by a lecture on MSP principles and concept solutions in the Lithuanian maritime space by N. Blažauskas, Klaipeda University, CORPI

- **Aim and objectives of the plan** is to supplement the Lithuanian General Territorial Plan¹ with marine spatial solutions, stocktake the existing natural resources and current use and protection of those in order to set strategic priorities for future use, protection and development of Lithuanian marine areas.
- **Planning process** is composed by four parts:
 1. analysis of current state of marine resources and existing uses
 2. preparation of conceptual solutions (Alternative A and B)
 3. SEA on proposed concept solutions in order to select the most suitable solutions;
 4. preparation of the final spatial maritime development concept to be integrated into the General Plan of the Republic of Lithuania

• **Current and potential future uses of the Lithuanian sea space**

	Current uses	Emerging/future uses
1	Shipping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four dedicated shipping routes 	Offshore Wind energy (OWE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 OWE suitable areas are currently under EIA
2	Port <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multipurpose deep-water port of Klaipėda • dedicated offshore dumping sites for dredged soil 	Energy transition/engineering infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NORDBALT HVDC cable connecting LT and SE • Future requirements to connect OWE with land and/or offshore grid
3	Recreational port <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reconstruction in Šventoji (including roadsteads, anchorages) • dedicated offshore dumping sites for dredged soil 	Ports development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of Klaipeda port • LNG terminal construction & accommodation of LNG tankers • New dumping sites • Reconstruction of Šventoji port • Establishment of marinas network along Baltic Sea coast
4	Nature protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO World Heritage site • Natura 2000 sites 	Oil prospects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil fields in the Lithuania marine areas
5	oil terminals in Būtingė and Klaipėda	Nature Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for expansion of NATURA 2000 towards Lithuanian offshore areas
6	Cabling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • underwater telecommunication cables 	
7	oil pipeline at Būtingė oil terminal	
8	Military <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offshore military polygons 	
9	Fishery	

- **Concept solutions** for supplementing the General Plan with the marine extent were based on MSP principles of sustainability, pan Baltic thinking, spatial efficiency and connectivity thinking in line with international MSP standards.
- The distribution of marine resources and natural, cultural and socio – economic assets were developed upon two alternative concepts (Alternative A and B) according to main priorities, functional zones determining future development trends and spatial allocation of future uses
- Overview:

Alternative A	Alternative B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear division of priorities in northern and southern part. • Development is foreseen in the north – elevations in Klaipėda- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no clear division of the priorities. • Development and conservation priorities remain the subject of

¹ Lithuanian General Territorial Plan was prepared and approved by Parliament of Lithuania Republic by the Resolution No. IX-1154 on 29th of October, 2002. Solutions of General plan are in force until 2020. According to the Law of spatial planning (Žin., 2002, Nr. 110-4852) those solutions can be supplemented or corrected during the whole period from 2002 till 2020. Since 2011-06-30 the Parliament of Lithuania Republic has issued the Resolution No. XI-1571 „Concerning Supplement of the General Plan of Republic of Lithuania by marine areas“.



<p>Ventspils plateau and Klaipėda Bank are prioritized for new Būtingė port development, extraction of oil, development of offshore wind energy parks and relevant infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern part – Curonian-Sambian plateau is reserved for nature conservation purposes mainly. <p>(see map http://www.partiseapate.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/0.017628001356937584.pdf)</p>	<p>case by case solutions/planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This alternative does not foresee the possible development of Būtingė port, meaning that port related activities will continue to be organized through the Klaipėda port. <p>(see map http://www.partiseapate.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/0.640827001356937599.pdf)</p>
<p>Common solutions for alternative A + B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of protected areas in the nearshore zone is finished; Exploration and extraction of the mineral resources is executed in whole marine areas of Lithuania except nearshore zone and protected areas; Central part of EEZ – deepest parts including Gdansk and Gotland basins and their slopes – are devoted to navigation and fishing purposes also reserved for unspecified national purposes and future developments; Nearshore zone (20m isobath) is prioritized for recreation, nearshore fishery, marinas development and tourism purposes; 	

- Alternative A and B are under SEA in order to provide a final draft of the concept for agreement on national and transnational level. The content of the ongoing SEA is to address adverse impacts to natural and socio – economic environment by the proposed marine solutions, define advantages/disadvantages, ensure proper consultation with authorities, stakeholders and public and take into account their proposals in the final draft.
- Proposed solutions for the final draft of the concept were evaluated from both alternatives and joined into a common priority zoning concept and mapping of spatial solutions.
- The zoning concept foresees 4 zoning areas:
 - Near shore zone: nature protection, ports and marinas development;
 - Northern part (20-50 m water depth zone): new developments (including oil, wind energy, offshore grid infrastructure);
 - Southern part (20-50 m water depth zone): nature protection;
 - Central part: navigation and fishery and reserved space for future (unknown) activities.

The last presentation by I. Urtāne (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional development, Department of Spatial Planning) illustrated the current situation regarding MSP implementation in Latvia

- Existing Latvian legislation foresees legal frame for development of MSP in Latvian sea waters and MSP development process should start in January 2014. Responsible for MSP development, establishment and monitoring are Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development with contribution of Latvian Hydrological Institute. At the moment ministry is looking for possibilities to ensure funding of MSP development and implementation.

Within three different working groups potential conflicts/ synergies at cross-border scale during development of MSP were discussed with the following results:

- conflicts and synergies in Planning Process**
 - The current Lithuanian MSP concept solutions foresee two alternative deepwater port facilities in front of Klaipėda or Būtingė, however, locations as mapped are used to illustrate the proposal, no exact coordinate is defined at the current stage. A full SEA is in process and will be ready with the final version of the MSP concept solutions by November 2013.
 - It was stressed from Latvian side that environmental concerns rise from deepwater port development especially in terms of erosion processes and potential oil spillages towards the Latvian coast.



- In Lithuania the most relevant discussion points on national level at the current stage of the process are:
 1. Environmental protection issues in relation to any other sea use;
 2. Compensation to fishery and other related management measures for the sector;
 3. Development of deepwater port facilities (Klaipeda or Būtinge) on which discussion was launched with coastal communities and municipalities.
- It was noted that the approved new shipping route in Lithuania from Klaipeda Seaport towards north does not match Latvian shipping routes. It was noticed that at the current state there has not been any reflection by Latvian responsible authorities on this issues.
- Transboundary consultation will be launched after the full SEA and finalized documentation on MSP concept solutions will be ready. Later follows the approval of the project at Lithuanian Parliament and Government. Interministerial supervision Group composed by Vice - Ministers was created for the Lithuanian MSP process. It was stated (from Latvian side) that a similar experience from the LT MSP process could be implemented for the Latvian MSP process and that joined LT/LV Interministerial Working group can be set up for crossborder consultation.
- The zoning of historical/traditional sea uses were left as priority areas as long as they do not produce adverse environmental and socio – economic effects. For new activities different zones were designated. Regulation of activities is not in the scope of the document. The document is only meant to prioritize areas and Lithuanian government is responsible for regulation of each of the new sea uses. MSP concept solutions are based on the Law of Terrestrial General Plan, but it in the ongoing MSP process it was realized that different/additional solutions are required for the marine environment.
- It was noticed that at the LT/LV seaborder already joined datasets from different projects e.g. Natura Life Project and BaltSEApplan already exist. However there is the requirement to use official trusted data. It was stressed that in order to ensure connectivity in the crossborder area, data requirements from Lithuanian planners to Latvia should focus on biological maps/values, bathymetry maps and infrastructure development in order to address conflict situation.
- The Latvia-Lithuania seaborder agreement is still a relevant issue for the seaborder area. According to Franckx (2001) the agreement was signed by both parties in 1999, it was ratified by the Lithuanian Parliament, but is still awaiting ratification by the Latvian Parliament. Key issue in the agreement is Article 4, as it concerns with the distribution of natural resources in the seaborder (e.g. oil prospects). In this context the need to define solutions on how to deal with the presence of oil prospects at the seaborder was stressed by several participants.
- It was further stated that the data requirements and harmonization is essential and that especially symbology and colour codes applied in the Lithuanian MSP concept solutions could be adopted for the Latvian MSP stocktake as well. Lithuania legislation foresees the application of a scale of 1:400.000 for the MSP plan, but more detailed scale maps are produced for nearshore areas (Dutch MSP experience) and are indeed needed for transnational consultation.
- Future/new activities require development of joined environmental monitoring programs in order to enforce preparedness against anthropogenic induced risk in the crossborder area, such as oil spills and coastal erosion. A potential way to enforce crossborder cooperation in terms of nature protection is the development of a regional action plan to ensure GES.



- Underwater cultural heritage was mentioned as an “early bird” issue in the Lithuanian MSP process, requiring further investigation and how to deal with the publication of exact coordinates of ship wrecks in the Lithuanian maritime space and how to tackle piracy. In the LT MSP plan, measures are included on how to protect underwater heritage.
- Former mine fields are still remaining from WW1 and WW2 and are taken into account in the LT MSP Concept solution maps. It was stressed that any future activity in proximity of the mine fields will require careful assessment before initiated. It was assumed that in proximity Latvian ports, as part of former Soviet Union, also similar issue can arise.

2. conflicts and synergies in borderland

The most important already existing and potentially increasing conflict in Latvian borderland were identified in anthropogenic impact on natural assets and processes from existing economical activities, which can increase in future according to Lithuanian MSP. Changes in natural assets and processes affect not only coastal erosion and pollution, but also other sectors related to recreation, nature conservation/protection and landscape preservation, which are stated long-term aims in coastal municipalities at the borderland. The following solutions were identified within the working group:

- transnational agreement between Lithuania and Latvia on sea use priorities
- long-term aims and priorities of coastal municipalities have to be taken into account
- involvement of coastal municipalities into transnational consultation process at least from Rucava until Pāvilosta
- development and implementation of joined monitoring system
- establishment of a joined (crossborder) GIS network

3. conflicts and synergies for different economical sea uses and activities

Potential conflicts between LT/LV can arise from all economic sea uses, but it was noticed that at the current state economic activities are not intensive and crossborder conflicts are not on agenda yet. The Working group also mentioned that economic activities will be a future discussion topic in the area and that a transnational coordination system could be a solution to avoid conflicts. The following synergies were identified by the working group:

- Officially LT/LV seaborder have to be ratified. Potential conflict situations can rise due to the presence of oil prospects, oil extraction and fishery. A “Royalty” agreement between countries have to be considered to regulate oil extraction profit in the conflicting area.
- An agreement on ferries routes and ro-ro cargo ships is required in order to avoid conflict situations between sectors requiring stationary constructions.

Findings/Conclusions

- The meeting evidenced a congruence of issues in relation to the LT MSP process between LT and LV stakeholders. In particular nature protection and deepwater facilities development at Būtinge – Šventoji area are the most relevant issues for both stakeholder groups and require more in depth crossborder consultations.
- The Latvian – Lithuanian Seaborder Agreement is still an unsolved/uncertain issue, which might have influence on the transnational MSP consultation process especially concerning Article 4 of the Agreement, which concerns natural resources in seaborder areas and whether ratification by



Latvian side of the agreement should be precondition for crossborder consultation on economic development plans for the seaborder segment.

- Synergies refer to the integration of potential LT/LV OWE park development using joined cable connections, ensure land – sea integration (e.g. cabling) through Būtinge port, where pipelines, cables and infrastructure already exist. Concerns on OWE are mainly related to the uncertain development perspective of the sector in Latvia. In terms of environmental protection, several proposals were made for the development of joined environmental monitoring programs for new sea uses and the development of a joined (crossborder) regional action plan to ensure GES. On decisional level the Lithuanian experience of creating an Interministerial Panel of Vice – Ministries for the MSP process is applicable in Latvian side as well and furthermore could be used for crossborder consultation purposes.
- Data availability on biological conditions and infrastructure development are essential to avoid conflict situations and are fundamental to ensure planning continuity in the seaborder area. Especially in LT/LV model case where both countries face different planning stages, data availability from neighbouring countries was seen as an essential aspect to ensure connectivity and facilitate crossborder consultation. Furthermore the sharing of experience on mapping scales, color code, symbology from the LT MSP concept solutions could be valuable approach for the LV MSP in order to facilitate harmonization of planning in the seaborder segment.
- Agreements on priorities of sea uses have to be discussed and agreed between countries as well, to avoid conflicts already on strategical level. At the moment there are contradictions between coastal long-term visions and interests in Latvia and effects of the Lithuanian MSP concept solutions in the LV borderland.

Reference

Blažauskas N., 2013. *Supplement of the General Plan of Republic of Lithuania by marine areas. Summary: Current state, conceptual solutions and strategic environmental assessment* (unpublished).

Franckx, E. (2001). Baltic Sea: new maritime boundaries concluded in the eastern Baltic Sea since 1998 *Int. J. Mar. Coast. Law* 16(4): 645-654