**PROTECT
BALTIC**
Preserve Revive Thrive

PROTECT BALTIC
Work Package Leads

WP1: Project management and coordination

Jannica Haldin,
Project Manager
HELCOM Secretariat

Cecilia Nyman,
Project Coordinator
HELCOM Secretariat

The Project Management Team consists of **Jannica Haldin** as the Project Manager and **Cecilia Nyman** as the Project Coordinator.

The team is responsible under WP1 for the overall project coordination, day-to-day management, meeting organisation and execution, ensuring the most inclusive and integrated approaches are used, and links are established with the Advisory Board.

They continuously work with the WP task teams to ensure internal adherence to the key deadlines and quality standards. The team will support the WPs to identify any potential challenges or barriers well in advance and devise mitigation measures to ensure the integrity of the project.

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WP2: Data and WP8: MPA Portal

Kimmo Koivumäki fronts WPs 2 and 8. WP2 is the collation of data to establish a knowledge base for optimizing marine spatial protection. It focuses on data management, collection, and collation, including a data management plan, regional data calls, and gathering information on species, habitats, and human pressures.

Additionally, it aims to collect MPA-related management data and conduct a gap analysis to identify further needs, ensuring comprehensive, high-quality data for transparency and research.

WP8 is the building and updating of a regional portal for MPA information to improve regional capacity of actors in marine protection. This involves defining portal requirements, analyzing and updating the existing MPA database, and developing the online user interface. The process follows agile development methods, ensuring it meets the needs of MPA managers and users while integrating key functionalities and data models.

Kimmo Koivumäki,
GIS Data Specialist
HELCOM Secretariat

WP3: Spatial modelling

WP3 has two phases and is led by *Roland Pesch* from Jade University.

Phase 1 focuses on data and model development and involves creating high-resolution environmental datasets for the Baltic Sea, using remote sensing and 3D modeling, including satellite imagery. This data will then be used to develop distribution models for key species, biotopes, and habitats. The WP will then focus on modeling and quantifying human-induced threats to marine life.

In Phase 2, WP3 will project future species and habitat distributions based on environmental scenarios. It will also identify present and future biodiversity hotspots and areas of resilience using spatial conservation prioritization.

Overall, WP3 plays a pivotal role in providing the scientific foundation needed for effective conservation and management of the Baltic Sea ecosystem.

Roland Pesch,
Jade University

WP4: Ecosystem services and valuation

*Lois Watt,
Project Researcher
HELCOM Secretariat*

Led by **Lois Watt**, WP4 progresses and assesses ecosystem services and their value to society. This work package will develop a versatile methodology to assess ecosystem services in the Baltic Sea. This approach involves identifying, mapping, quantifying, and valuing ecosystem services to support marine conservation and optimize the Marine Protected Area (MPA) network.

WP4 collaborates across disciplines to create the methodology, considering the role of species, habitats and human activities. It also explores how habitat quality and location affect ecosystem services.

The work package applies the methodology to identify key areas for ecosystem service production within and outside MPAs, aiding decisions about MPA network expansion, and demonstrating the socioeconomic value of ecosystem services.

WP4 then identifies future data and methodology needs through a gap analysis, facilitating ongoing ecosystem service assessment improvements.

WP5: Coherence

*Charlotte Berkström,
Swedish University of
Agricultural Sciences*

WP5, led by **Charlotte Berkström**, focuses on enhancing the ecological coherence of the Baltic Sea's Marine Protected Area (MPA) network. It aims to ensure effective protection of biodiversity, ecosystem services, and climate refugia while considering human activities.

The work begins with revising ecological coherence criteria and targets, aligning them with current scientific knowledge and environmental goals. WP5 develops connectivity models to understand species and habitat interactions within the Baltic Sea.

The next phase assesses the coherence of the HELCOM MPA network, emphasizing representativity, replication, adequacy, and connectivity, with a focus on species and habitat distribution. WP5 reviews this to identify possible improvements.

In the subsequent phase, spatial prioritization analysis pinpoints areas for MPA network expansion, balancing new and existing protection, considering criteria like ecosystem services and climate refugia, and aligning with WP6 targets.

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WP6: Adaptive management

WP6 will create a shared framework for the MPA network in the Baltic Sea and support the capacity of protection actors. Due to its breadth, this WP has been subdivided into four categories dealing with Governance led by **Jannica Haldin**, Management led by **Darius Daunys**, Monitoring led by **Georg Martin**, and Restoration led by **Lasse Kurvinen**.

Governance: This part aims to foster a shared regional understanding of MPAs, establish common terminology, and set ecologically relevant protection targets and indicators. It also identifies threats and pressures on Baltic Sea ecosystems and assesses the efficiency of existing protection measures. The goal is to optimize the network by identifying areas that need protection.

*Jannica Haldin,
Project Manager
HELCOM Secretariat
Governance lead*

*Darius Daunys,
Klaipedos Universitetas
Management lead*

Management: WP6 updates guidelines for MPA management based on current knowledge, develops a methodology for management effectiveness assessment (MEA), and tests the MEA method in national case studies. It assesses the management effectiveness of the entire Baltic Sea MPA network and supports the development of a Regional Restoration Action Plan and toolbox.

Monitoring: This component reviews existing monitoring systems in Baltic Sea MPAs, explores innovative monitoring tools and methods, and develops a comprehensive monitoring framework and guidelines for the entire MPA network.

Restoration: This component contributes to the development of a Regional Restoration Action Plan and toolbox, emphasizing regional priorities, methods, costs, and feasibility.

*Georg Martin,
Estonian Marine Institute,
University of Tartu
Monitoring lead*

*Lasse Kurvinen,
Metsähallitus Parks &
Wildlife Finland
Restoration lead*

WP6's holistic approach seeks to strengthen governance, enhance management, establish robust monitoring mechanisms, and promote restoration, all essential for achieving the goal of restoring ocean and water health by 2030.

WP7: Legislation

Henrik Ringbom
Åbo Akademi University

Henrik Ringbom leads WP 7, which aims to improve understanding of, and propose solutions to address barriers in the legislative framework for marine protection.

WP7 focuses on assessing international and EU legal frameworks relevant to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Baltic Sea, aligning them with protection targets set by the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and the EU Biodiversity Strategy. It evaluates the compatibility of legal instruments like the Birds and Habitats Directives, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and Common Fisheries Policy with MPA goals.

It will also create country profiles for Baltic EU member states, showcasing how these nations use legal frameworks to safeguard MPAs.

In the final phase, WP7 will produce a legal guidance document that offers recommendations and alternatives for MPA designation and protection under existing legislation, fostering cross-country knowledge sharing and collaboration.

WP9: Communication and WP10: Sustainability

Paul Trouth
Communication Coordinator
HELCOM Secretariat

WP 9, led by ***Paul Trouth***, focuses on vital aspects of communication, outreach, and dissemination to amplify project impact. It encompasses tasks like devising a communication strategy, crafting a visual identity, setting up a project website, and leveraging social media for wider engagement. It also includes the development of an augmented reality app, and initiatives like webinars, conferences, videos, and publications to enhance project visibility and knowledge sharing.

WP 10 is integral for long-term project success. It centres on sustainability and exploitation to maximize outcomes. WP10 involves creating a sustainability strategy, maintaining ongoing communication with policy stakeholders, and seeking collaboration with other projects for enhanced marine protection in the Baltic Sea.