

Draft Agenda



Venue: Liepājas Latviešu biedrības nams, Rožu laukums 5/6, Liepāja, LV-3401

DAY 1 | 28.10.2025

Opening of conference

Laura Anteina, Director General, Nature Conservation Agency, Latvia

Session 1: Designating protected areas in Europe's seas

A broad stage-setting session discussing the approaches, achievements and challenges related to the practical implementation of the spatial marine biodiversity conservation measures in fulfilment of the EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030: criteria for designating, applying different categories of protection zones, and assessing effectiveness of protective measures.

Gita Strode, Nature Conservation Agency: Political insight in MPAs

Jannica Haldin, HELCOM, Finland: The Status of MPA in the Baltic

Ingrīda Andersone, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology, Latvia: Mapping and 3D designing

Andris Avotiņš, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR": The LIFE REEF proposal for redressing the Latvian MPA network

Darius Daunys, Klaipeda University, Lithuania: Lithuanian experience

Leonardo Tunesi, Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research / Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Italy: The experience in the Mediterranean and beyond.

Session 2: Integration of the network of MPAs into marine spatial planning and integrated coastal management

The process of Marine Spatial Planning in the EU is governed by the Directive 2014/89/EU - Maritime Spatial Planning. The MSP Directive establishes a flexible framework for identifying optimal solutions. According to the provision of the MSP Directive, the Member States are currently in the process of reviewing the initial plans. With the expectation of a

fast expansion of the so-called Blue Economy, particularly the Marine Renewable Energy, it is of utmost importance to harmonise the marine spatial planning with the conservation of marine biodiversity. In the Baltic Sea area, the two competent intergovernmental bodies, HELCOM and VASAB, have established a joint MSP WG. This session will examine the aspirations, solutions and lessons learned at different scales and settings.

Daniel Depellegrin, IH Cantabria, Spain: The overall framework

Jan Schmidtbauer Crona tbc, SWAM, HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, Sweden: The achievements and lessons learned in the Baltic and Sweden

Solvita Strāķe, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology, Latvia: The achievements and lessons learned in Latvia through LIFE REEF

Session 3: Pressure and impact analysis

Human activities create various types of multiple pressures on the ecosystem state. These pressures serve as a mechanism of change that first affects the natural system and then the social system, specifically ecosystem service supply and human welfare. This session will explore methods and tools for assessing the pressures that human activities have on marine and coastal ecosystems, including cumulative impacts, to improve MPA designation and wider ecosystem-based planning processes. Applied examples or case studies will illustrate how scientific analysis and knowledge can improve conservation efforts and decision-making in the marine context.

Chiara Silvestrini, University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Aurelija Armoskaite, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology, Latvia

Ida Maria Bonnevie, Aalborg University, Denmark

Francisco R. Barboza, Estonian Marine Institute, University of Tartu, Estonia

DAY 2 | 29.10.2025

Session 4: Coastal fisheries management in MPAs

Coastal fisheries are essential for the socioeconomic support of coastal communities and are often linked to cultural heritage. However, there are often spatial overlaps between coastal fishing activities and MPAs. This session will highlight these interactions and evaluate management approaches to minimise their impact on nature conservation goals. It will also demonstrate the implications of MPA measures, including the establishment of no-take zones, for fish populations and coastal fisheries.

Ivars Putnis, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"

Ulf Bergstrom, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences tbc

Julius Morkunas, Klaipeda University

Loreta Rozenfelde, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"

Session 5: Stakeholder engagement in establishing the MPAs network: sharing the best experience and lessons learned

Organizing spatial protection of marine diversity cuts across strong interests of multiple stakeholders. These include both the historically established and socioeconomically important industries, such as shipping and fisheries and the rapidly developing "new" ones, as marine renewable energy and marine and coastal recreation and tourism. These are crucial for local communities. On the other hand, proper citizen involvement enhances data gathering and the real-life enforcement of protective measures. In these circumstances, it is critical to implement an inclusive, patient and

balanced two-way stakeholder communication at all steps of establishing the MPAs. This session will share the best practices in this field.

Edvards Kušners, Latvijas Banka: Why to protect the nature and how to justify it with finances?

Gunta Gabrāne, Nature Conservation Agency, LIFE REEF: Challenges with stakeholders in LIFE REEF project

Victor Gutierrez Lopez, LIFE INTEMARES, Spain: Experience in Spain, Mediterranean and Atlantic Region

Jānis Ločmelis, Investment and Development Agency of Latvia: Wind Park development in marine waters vs nature protection

Session 6: Final panel discussion, summary and closing off

Panellists:

Ivars Putnis

Solvita Strāķe

Ingrīda Andersone

Aurelija Armoskaite

Gunta Gabrāne

Day 3 | 30.10.2025

Session 7: Field trip

Organising committee

Gunta Gabrāne, Nature Conservation Agency

Ilze Sabule, Nature Conservation Agency

Andris Avotiņš, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"

Ivars Putnis, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"

Andris Andrušaitis, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology

Aurēlija Armoskaite, Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology

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