

# Baltic Sea2Land Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan

31.12.2023

**Interreg**  
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by  
the European Union



BLUE ECONOMY

**Baltic Sea2Land**



Title: Baltic Sea2Land Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan

Output of Activity: 1.1 (Deliverable 1.1)

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Please use this reference for citations: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. (2023). Baltic Sea2Land Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan. [Online] Baltic Sea2Land, <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/balticsea2land/>.

The production of the *Baltic Sea2Land Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan* was supported by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027 - through the Subsidy contract for the project #C018 Baltic Sea2Land of Interreg Baltic Sea Region. The content of this document represents only the views of the author and is his/her sole responsibility. The document does not reflect the views of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme, the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme and its' representatives do not accept any responsibility for the further use of this document and its' contents.

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## Introduction

The Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan is Deliverable 1.1 of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme project #C018 “Fostering integrated governance for the joint sustainable use of human and natural capital in the near shore zone” (Baltic Sea2Land). This deliverable was built on the foundation of the main results of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme project #R098 “Land-sea interactions advancing Blue Growth in Baltic Sea coastal areas” (Land-Sea-Act) via desk-study development project partner co-creation processes.

The main foundational material of this document is the “Multi-Level Governance Agenda for Blue Economy and Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea Region”, which outlines the main principles (*Figure 1*) and stages of the multi-level governance process, as well as gives suggestions for helpful methods, tools and academic literature for each stage of the governance process (*Figure 2*).

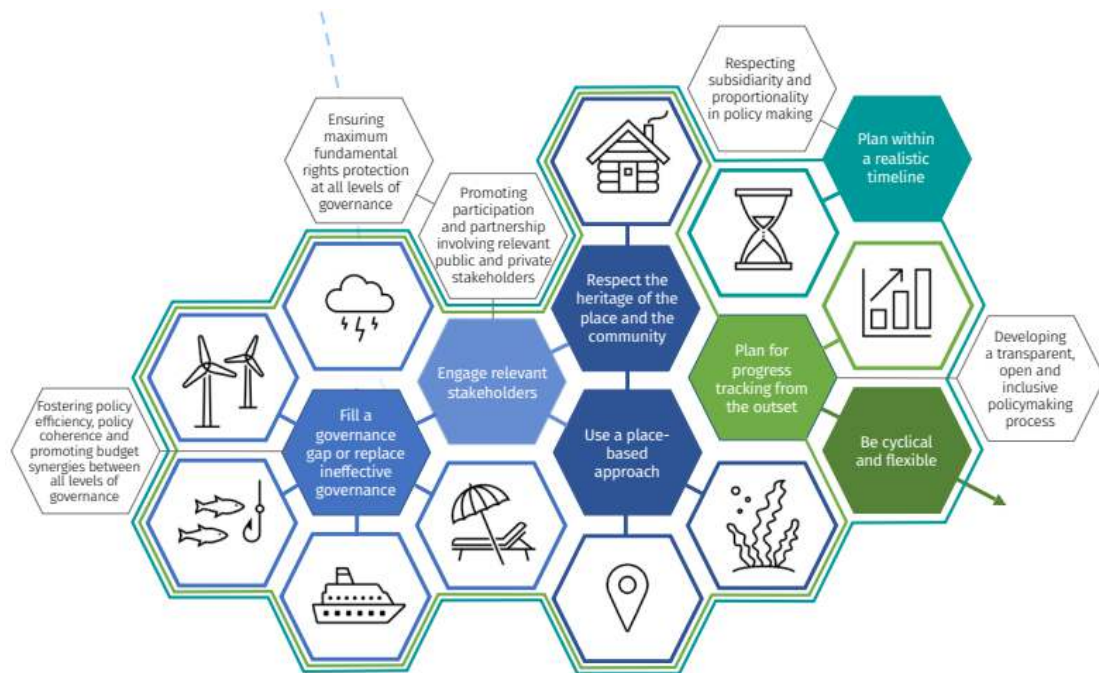


Figure 1. Multi-level governance principles for blue economy and spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region.

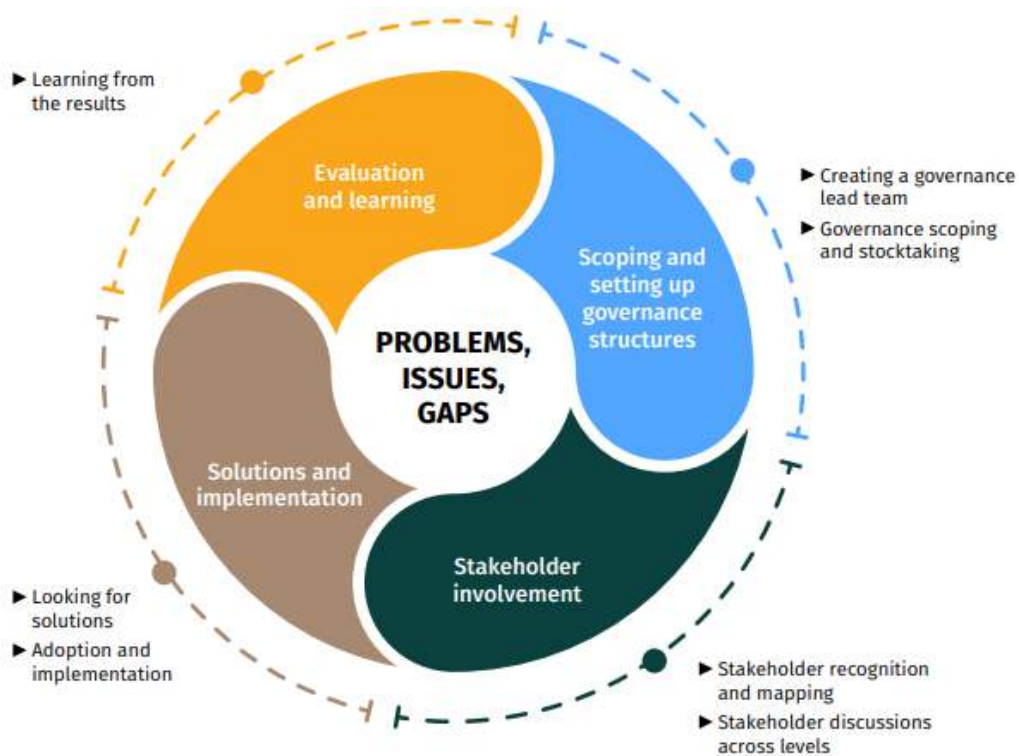


Figure 2. Governance stages for blue economy and spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region.

The Agenda, while drawing on a wide range of Land-Sea-Act project experiences and external materials, does not offer suggestions or decision-making paths as to how the right methods, tools and materials should be chosen and requires extensive reading and further research to apply in practice. These factors can limit the uptake and accessibility of the Agenda to move towards implementing multi-level governance.

The Multi-level Governance Implementation Plan aims to turn the foundational documents and the collection of valuable tools and methods mentioned in them into an actionable decision-making mechanism that is first to be applied to the pilot cases of the Baltic Sea2Land project and then transferred for use outside the project. Thus, the Implementation Plan describes the development and contents of such a mechanism – the Multi-Level Governance Tool – and then in a concise timeline it outlines the steps that will be taken to implement multi-level governance for blue economy and spatial planning in project pilots and beyond.

# 1 Multi-Level Governance Tool development

The development of the Multi-Level Governance Tool began with a thorough review and analysis of the key results of the Land-Sea-Act project<sup>1</sup>. These materials were consulted throughout the development process, alongside other documents, research, case studies, guidelines and strategic documents. These materials are referenced directly in the Multi-Level Governance Tool under the corresponding section where it was used to create tasks and guidance in the Tool and/or inspired partner brainstorming that resulted in the creation of tasks/guidance.

Four rounds of consultation and co-creation with project partners and associated partners were held:

1. **15th and 16th of May**, participants: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV), Kurzeme Planning Region (LV), Baltic Environmental Forum Germany (DE), Regional Council of Southwest Finland (FI), Tallinn University (EE), Institute of Oceanology Polish Academy of Sciences (PL), State Regional Development Agency (Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea – VASAB) (LV), Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia (LV), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission HELCOM (FI).
  - a. The 1<sup>st</sup> MLG schema version (Annex 1) was a direct schematisation of the Multi-Level Governance Agenda putting the base procedures that should be utilised in the planning process in the right order and outlining the key interlinkages between process steps.
  - b. At this stage it was deemed that the schema is difficult to understand without someone explaining (it does not stand on its own); it only outlines established planning processes, which are indeed hard to follow, but can be thought out logically, this is more helpful for those new to the field; the outlined processes are not yet supported by structured material; one cannot easily navigate the schema and it would not be easy to use only the part that is needed at the moment.
2. **2nd and 8th of June**, participants: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV), State Regional Development Agency (Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea – VASAB) (LV), Kurzeme Planning Region (LV), Saaremaa Municipality (EE), City of Fehmarn (DE), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission HELCOM (FI), Baltic Environmental Forum Germany (DE), Tallinn University (EE), Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia (LV), Association “Klaipeda Region” (LT).
  - a. The 2<sup>nd</sup> MLG schema version (Annex 2) was based on the comments of the 1<sup>st</sup> version – the construction of the schema was refined by visually separating different stages of the planning process and ensuring that

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<sup>1</sup> <https://land-sea.eu/results/>

stages not relevant for the user can be skipped. Additionally, the schema was formatted to reflect response-based decision-making (a certain response leads to a certain next step)

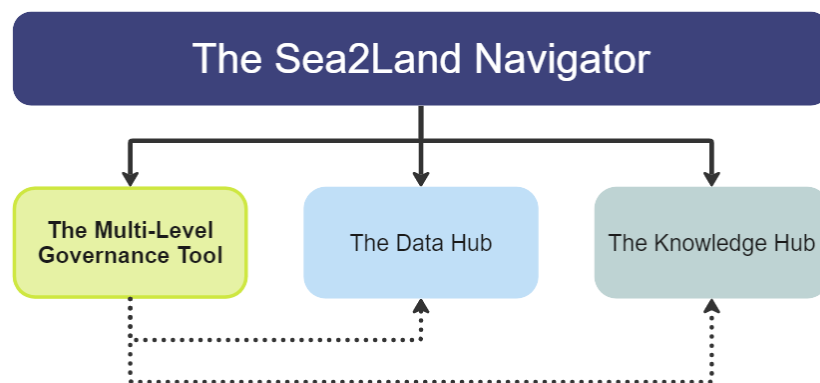
- b. The new approach was agreed upon by partners, it was also agreed that the schema can now be enriched with concrete tasks and materials. The key suggestion for future development included that at every stage of the planning process the schema should create a stakeholder engagement “gateway” – a task/question that makes the user consider unusual stakeholders/improved engagement practices. It was also noted that use of language should be carefully considered and widely tested (language should be simple, enriched with term definitions and illustration of concepts for users who most likely will not be native English speakers). At this point it was also decided that the schema must become the MLG Tool and also be implemented as a digital tool, which uses the schema as a digital tool blueprint, on the Sea2Land Navigator platform.
3. **9th and 11th of October**, participants: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission HELCOM (FI), Baltic Environmental Forum Germany (DE), Association “Klaipeda Region” (LT), Institute of Oceanology Polish Academy of Sciences (PL), Tallinn University (EE), Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania (LT), Saaremaa Municipality (EE), Kurzeme Planning Region (LV), Regional Council of Southwest Finland (FI), State Regional Development Agency (Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea – VASAB) (LV).
  - a. The 3<sup>rd</sup> MLG schema version (Annex 3) elaborated the outline and format of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MLG schema version with detailed tasks and points of engagement with other parts of the Sea2Land Navigator - Knowledge Hub (collection of documents, methods, tools etc.) and Data Hub (spatial data, maps and quantitative data) in the first two MLG Tool sections. This elaboration also showed how the Tool, each of its sections will be introduced, how alternatives to tasks will be given and how each of the tasks will feed information into the following tasks. In sections beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> two anticipated tasks to be elaborated were introduced.
  - b. It was agreed with partners to continue to develop the schema in the same nature as it had been done in the first two sections. Partners gave ideas on how to make the schema more inclusive of different contexts (consideration of additional sectors, exclusion of less relevant ones, instruction enhancements etc.)

4. **7th, 8th and 11th of December**, participants: Saaremaa Municipality (EE), Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia (LV), Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission HELCOM (FI), Institute of Oceanology Polish Academy of Sciences (PL), Tallinn University (EE), The Association of Sea Cities and Municipalities (PL), Kurzeme Planning Region (LV), State Regional Development Agency (Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea – VASAB) (LV), Baltic Environmental Forum Germany (DE), Regional Council of Southwest Finland (FI).
- a. The [4<sup>th</sup> MLG schema version](#) is an expanded version of the 3<sup>rd</sup> MLG schema version, wherein all sections were elaborated with tasks, suggestions and questions. This schema version was able to serve as the MLG Tool – partners can take tasks, tables, templates, questions and suggestions of the schema to adapt for pilot activities. Additionally, this version now provides all content and connections between elements for the schema to serve as a blueprint for the digital version of the MLG Tool.
  - b. Partners engaged with the tasks and methods presented in the tool practically and already employed them to analyse some of the information they had prepared about their pilots. Through attempting to interpret and complete tasks partners indicated areas of improvement in terms used, streamlined instructions and gave suggestions for supplemental tasks in the schema. Refinements were made based on their feedback.



## 2 The Multi-Level Governance Tool

As a result of the development process the Multi-Level Governance Tool serves as one of three pillars of the Sea2Land Navigator platform alongside the Knowledge Hub (catalogue of documents, methods, tools etc.) and Data Hub (collection of spatial data, maps and quantitative data). As such the Tool references and links to materials in the Knowledge Hub and Data Hub and works in tandem with them (*Figure 3*).



*Figure 3. The Multi-Level Governance Tool in the Sea2Land Navigator platform.*

The Multi-Level Governance Tool consists of an introduction to the tool (its applications, target audience and aim) and 6 sections which each denote a specific stage in the governance and planning process. Each section is first introduced underlining the importance of the particular stage and laying out what tools and tasks are explored in the section. The tools and tasks are focused on motivating and helping the user:

1. to think critically about the problems they are aiming to resolve,
2. to find all stakeholders and tailor engagement with a mindful selection of them,
3. to organise policy and/or planning co-creation processes that are creative, inclusive and interactive,
4. to organise and analyse data and information available and seek out new information.

At all points the Tool encourages to make informed decisions about what activities to engage with within the Tool and during the policymaking/planning process in general. The Multi-Level Governance Tool and all its construction and content (tasks, advice, questions, methods and points of inquiry with the Knowledge Hub and Data Hub) can be found here: [Multi-Level Governance Tool schema](#).

The following subsections lay out how the Multi-Level Governance Tool can be used and understood in its schema format and outlines how these elements will be transformed into an interactive digital tool in the Sea2Land Navigator platform.

## 2.1 Tool introduction

In the schema format engagement with the Multi-Level Governance Tool is visualised with a set symbology (*Figure 4*).

The Tool consists of explanatory texts, such as explanations of sections, instructions to tasks, questions to answer at a specific stage of the planning/governance process. The main part of the Tool, however, are the fields identified as Buttons, Fill-out fields and Interactive maps, as these are what construct tasks.



*Figure 4. The legend of the Multi-Level Governance Tool.*

When interpreting the schema version of the Tool, choosing a certain Button means that one must follow the arrow that departs from it to find the next steps. Fill-out fields indicate where open text responses are required, and Interactive maps show places where users are invited to work interactively with Data Hub maps and data. Links to Knowledge Hub indicate points where one is invited to engage with a specific section of materials/material in the Knowledge Hub.

These interactive fields and texts are often supplemented with imagery that either illustrates a concept or exemplifies how a task can be filled out.

The sections of the Tool are additionally colour coded to make it more navigable.

All contents of the Tool are currently in English, and the formulations are simplified to the specification of project partners, however, they may be subject to further editorial changes to maximise text accessibility in English and later to enable smoother Tool text translation to Baltic Sea Region languages.

## 2.2 Tool sections

Each of the Multi-Level Governance Tool sections opens with an introductory page before moving on the interactive tasks and advice (Figure 5).

**3.1**

### Situation scoping

**What is situation scoping?**  
Scoping here refers to a closer review of the situation at hand that you would like to influence through governance.  
While further steps will require to collect more information, analyse and synthesise further, this is an initial look to help you dig in the right place.

**What you can explore here?**  
- what elements/sectors are at play  
- who you should talk to in order to assess the situation appropriately  
- how jurisdictions and elements at play interact on a map

**Why is it important to explore?**  
Many coastal and maritime questions may carry underwater stones. It is crucial to be aware of them to ensure that any engagement with stakeholders and any planning solution is deliberate and thorough.

**How might you explore?**

**Finding the problem definition**

Finding the problem definition is focused on narrowing down the concrete evidence-based problems and sectors they fall under. This allows to find focus and motivation for policy or planning action.

Time requirements: not time-intensive  
Skill requirements: not skill-intensive  
Material requirements: not material-intensive

**Sectoral mapping**

Sectoral mapping refers to sectoral situation comprehension through identifying all its economic and social goalposts - two different approaches are offered - spatial and narrative

Time requirements: highly time-intensive  
Skill requirements: somewhat skill-intensive  
Material requirements: somewhat material-intensive

Find out more about sectoral mapping      Look at examples of sectoral mapping

**Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat analysis**

SWOT analysis here is enhanced with initial thematic questions to begin analysis

Time requirements: somewhat time-intensive  
Skill requirements: not skill-intensive  
Material requirements: not material-intensive

Find out more about SWOT analysis      Look at examples of SWOT analysis

**Identifying knowledge gaps**

You will be encouraged to ask questions about your governance issue that you may not have thought to ask otherwise

Time requirements: highly time-intensive  
Skill requirements: somewhat skill-intensive  
Material requirements: not material-intensive

This section seems clear, let's explore the next one      This looks interesting, let's walk through the resources and tasks here

Figure 5. The format of section introductions (example from schema).

These introductions delineate:

1. the part of the policymaking/planning process the section discusses (What is [section name]?),
2. lists questions this section can respond to (What can you explore here?),
3. appeals to potential motivations to invest time in resources in exploring this section (Why is it important to explore?),
4. Outlines the tasks and methods that will be available in the section to engage with (How might you explore?):
  - a. All task/method names are listed.
  - b. Each task/method is given a short description, link to materials to read more about it and see examples of previous use in the Knowledge Hub if applicable.
  - c. Resource requirements (time, skills and materials) are assessed categorically to prepare the user for what is ahead.

While the suggestion to always adapt the tasks and materials for specific user needs is given in each task explanation, the section introductions are intended to enable and fast-track informed decision-making.

## 2.3 Digital interactive version

The digital interactive version of the Multi-Level Governance Tool is an idea that originated from partner co-creation discussions. Thus, in the development process of the Multi-Level Governance Tool schema it was considered that its contents will have to be translated to a different format – that of the Sea2Land Navigator, which is implemented in ArcGIS Online. Therefore, the content is to be directly implemented in the digital interactive format by applying the following transformations to the Multi-Level Governance Tool schema:

1. The schema views will be transformed into webpage views that can be navigated between by pressing interactive buttons:
  - a. Where in the schema there are Buttons shown, they will be replicated in the digital interactive tool and will take the user automatically to the section that is pointed to (with an arrow or in text) in the schema.
  - b. Where only arrows are present in the schema the user will simply click on a standard “Next” button to move to the next appropriate view.
  - c. The schema views will not be combined into long scrollable webpage views to avoid overwhelming the user.
  - d. Where in the schema a Button prompts opening information previously created by user while completing other tasks, this information will be opened as an automatic embedded section in the digital interactive Tool when possible.
  - e. Where in the schema a Button prompts opening information available in the Knowledge Hub or Data Hub, this information will open as a separate tab/window in the same browser to avoid disrupted workflow when possible.
2. Where schema Buttons, Fill-out fields and Interactive maps are a part of a task, they will be implemented through embedded ArcGIS tools such as Survey123 interactive surveys. The Interactive maps will at all points be sourced from the Data Hub.
3. To enable users to complete tasks in formats other than offered directly in the digital interactive Tool when needed (or when the task is impossible to implement with available ArcGIS Online capabilities) it will contain template links (e.g. to download Excel table forms, to access a pre-prepared interactive whiteboard on Miro/Google Jamboard etc.), where the templates will reflect a format and prepared content that reflects that specific task ready for easy use.

### 3 Implementation of Multi-Level Governance

The following steps have been taken/will be taken to implement Multi-Level Governance in project pilots:

1. (RP1&RP2) Partners were given opportunity to explore and interact with the Multi-Level Governance Tool tasks together with the MLG Tool developer in a practical workshop. Additionally, all partners have been given access to MLG Tool materials to explore on their own. Thus, all piloting partners who are aiming to employ multi-level governance in their local, regional and national contexts have both participated in **creating the MLG Tool and have also gotten acquainted** with parts of the Tool others have contributed.

The MLG Tool is to be considered as a suggested collection of multi-level governance implementation options, however, for piloting partners to implement multi-level governance in their pilots, they must engage in the following activities of the Implementation Plan that will allow to tailor activities:

2. (RP3) parallel to the development of the MLG Tool a pilot reporting structure and materials were developed (the Pilot Diary). The Pilot Diary first requires piloting partners to fill out a **survey about the applicability of various multi-level governance challenges to their situation**. The survey indicates 30 challenges which piloting partners will assess for relevance to their situation (not at all/slightly/moderately/significantly/extremely) and elaborate via open comments. The challenges each correspond to either one of the issues addressed in one of the 6 MLG Tool sections or reflects on an issue that the MLG Tool addresses in general. Thus, these assessments will be able to indicate which sections of the MLG Tool should be explored by each piloting partner. Advice and ideas on how to use and adapt the materials of the MLG Tool will be given to partners accordingly. This survey is to be conducted in January 2024 (beginning of RP3).
3. (RP3) After indicating MLG challenges relevant to them, piloting partners will be invited to identify which **sections of the MLG Tool** (and other parts of the Navigator platform) they **anticipate using in the pilot**. Here they will consider which MLG challenges are most relevant to them and which MLG Tool sections they correspond to. This inquiry will produce an initial plan for each pilot on how and in which segment of the governance process they expect to implement multi-level governance with the help of the MLG Tool. It will be made clear, however, that they can arrange activities in a different order than the MLG Tool outlines them in. Additionally - this is an initial plan and later as they describe and reflect on their actual experiences with using the MLG Tool thus far (point 4) to implement multi-level governance, they will be able to

adjust their plan as multi-level governance calls for responsiveness to changing situations and flexibility. This part of the process will begin in January 2024.

4. (RP3&RP4) After outlining their initial plans, piloting partners will start active work on their pilots. To regularly **record work done and to reflect on it**, each piloting partner will regularly fill out a reflective questionnaire. A part of this questionnaire is focused on the use and non-use of the MLG Tool to complete piloting activities. This step will show which sections of the MLG Tool piloting partners end up using, how and with what success (a.k.a. segments of the governance process where they work on implementing multi-level governance). Based on partner reflections on the implementation of multi-level governance, the MLG Tool developer will provide guidance and support on how piloting partners can further employ the advice, tasks and methods proposed by the MLG Tool in future activities. This will be done **every 3 months** during RP3 and RP4 from January until December 2024.
5. (RP3&RP4) While piloting partners implement the MLG Tool for their cases, **parties not within project consortium will be invited to implement parts** (e.g. a single task from a single section) **of the MLG Tool** to test multi-level governance implementation ideas and opportunities presented by the tool in wider Baltic Sea Region contexts. Events such as the European Maritime Day 2024 will be used when possible (events subject to application), as well as collaborations with interested parties in contact with project consortium currently (Interreg BSR project Beach-SOS, associated partners) and in the future. Project and MLG Tool promotion and stakeholder engagement will be developed throughout RP4 and RP5 from January until December 2024.
6. (RP4) After the piloting experience and the multi-level governance implementation in pilots, piloting partners will be asked to **reflect on which multi-level governance challenges were addressed** in their piloting experience.
7. (RP5) Reflections made in the previous steps (point 4, 5 and 6) and project deliverable 2.4 “Evaluation Report on the Sea2Land Navigator Solution” will be used to **improve the MLG Tool** for the final Sea2Land Navigator platform (deliverable 2.5) to ensure improved future multi-level governance implementation for blue economy and spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region. These improvements will be made by amending the 4<sup>th</sup> schema version as well as the MLG Tool digital implementation version based on piloting partner experiences.

Figure 6 illustrates the Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan.

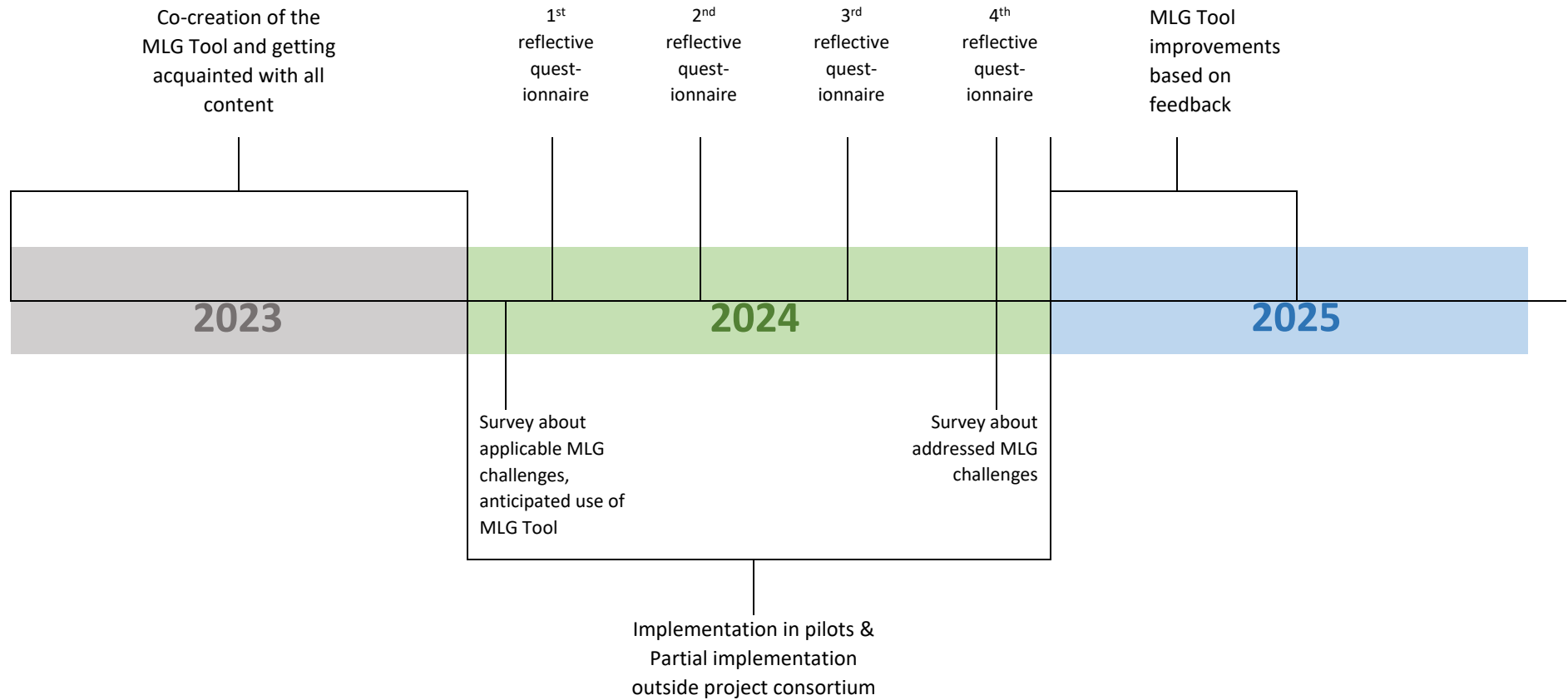
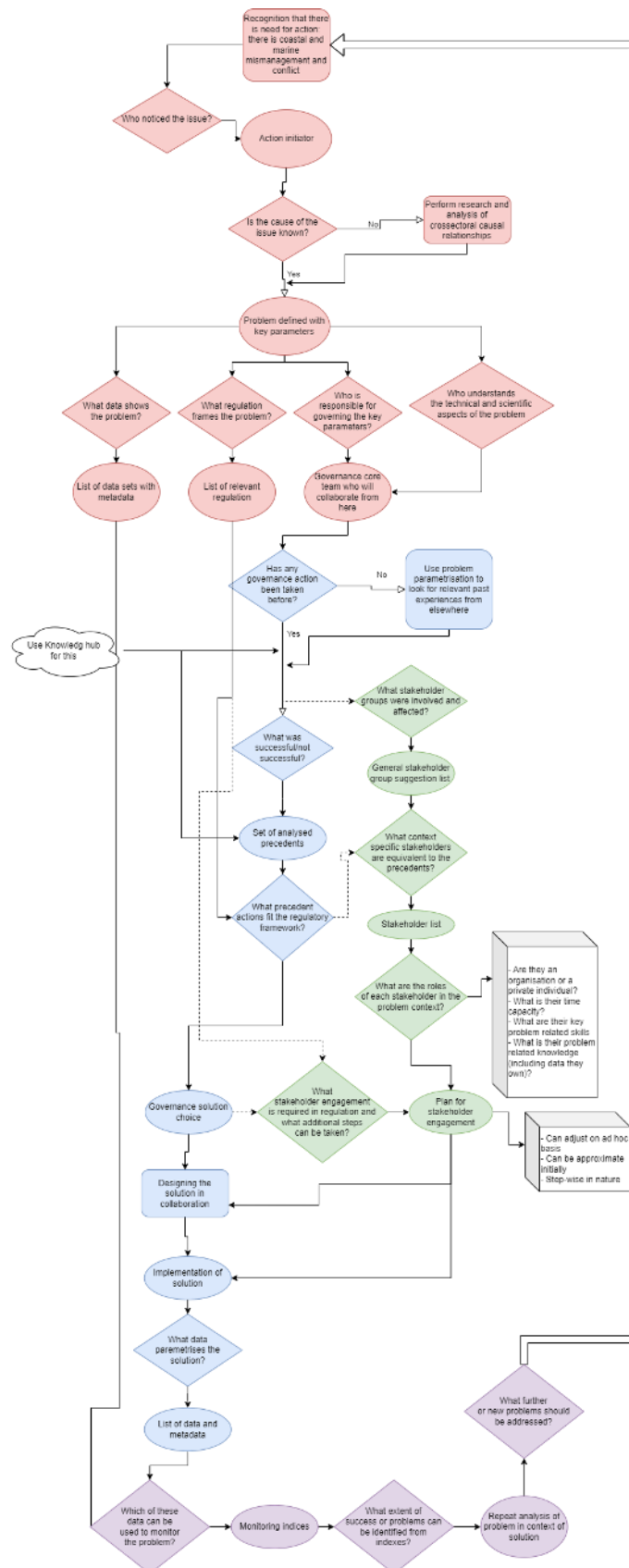


Figure 6. Multi-Level Governance Implementation Plan timeline.

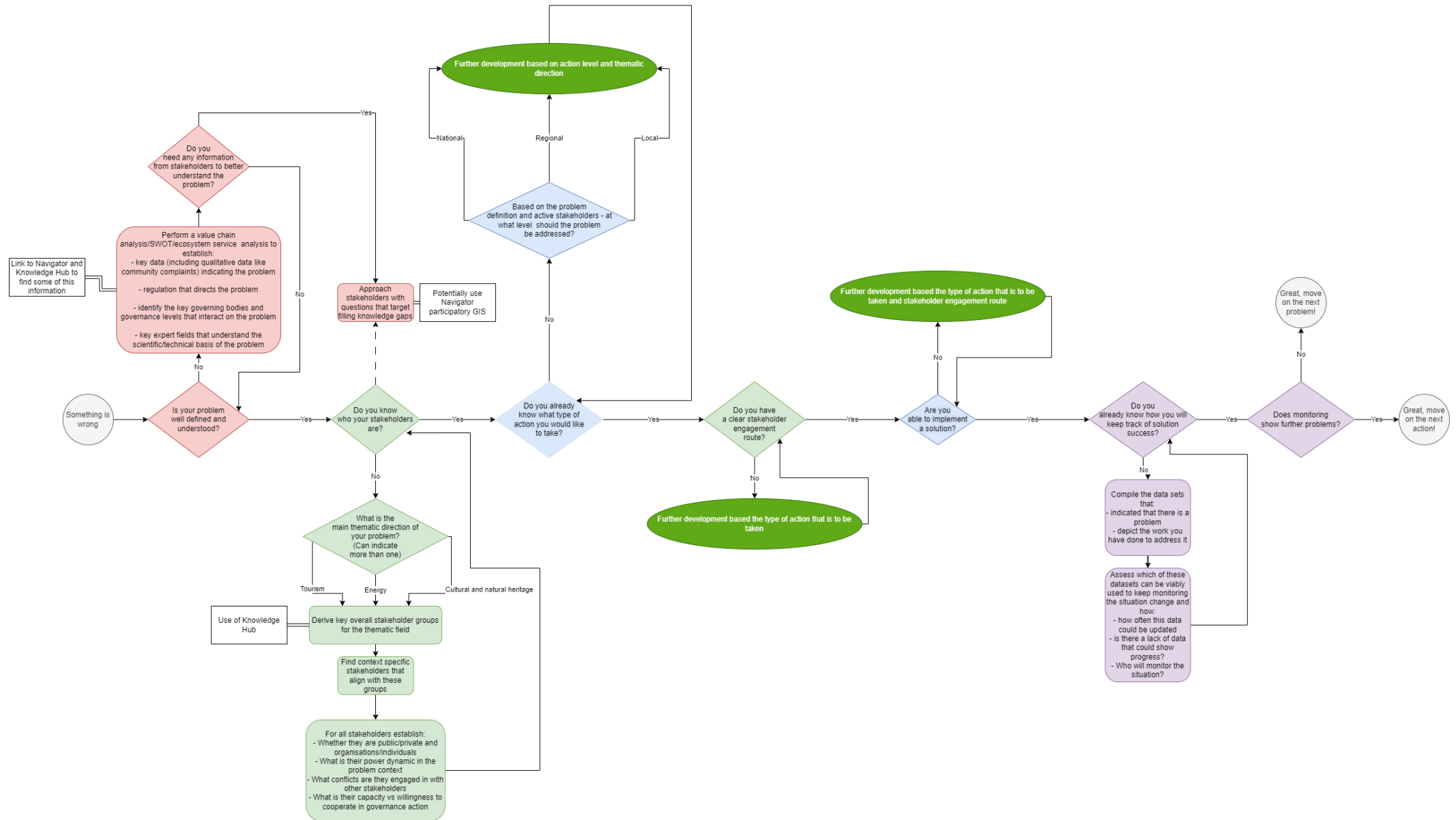


# Annexes

## Annex 1 – the 1<sup>st</sup> MLG schematisation



# Annex 2 – the 2<sup>nd</sup> MLG schema version



### **Annex 3 – the 3<sup>rd</sup> MLG schema version**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> MLG schema version (interactive):

[https://miro.com/welcomeonboard/M3FDNDI2dkJOVldqS21oSjFEZHhSRHA4eXh6Nm1hV3lpYzU1VVJSMHBOVXhXVnpWdThjYVQyU015enEwb213R3wzNDU4NzY0NTQyMzM0NDA5MDgyfDI=?share link id=522722962739](https://miro.com/welcomeonboard/M3FDNDI2dkJOVldqS21oSjFEZHhSRHA4eXh6Nm1hV3lpYzU1VVJSMHBOVXhXVnpWdThjYVQyU015enEwb213R3wzNDU4NzY0NTQyMzM0NDA5MDgyfDI=?share_link_id=522722962739)