# CURRENT ISSUES OF USING THE COASTAL AREAS OF THE BALTIC SEA (THE EXAMPLE OF RUSSIA AND POLAND)

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#### Summary

The article proves that the existing threats to coastal marine areas that are notable for significant vulnerability to human activity require changes in Russian water legislation, which must introduce the category "coastal territories" and clarify the regime of permissions, restrictions and prohibitions within them. This will make it possible to more effectively regulate the economic, environmental and social aspects of the use and protection of the marine environment and coastal areas. For Russian water law, a number of legal structures that are successfully used in Polish water law are of interest, including the allocation of two zones with special legal regime on the coast, environmental planning of the use and protection of the coast and sea waters, as well as a set of measures to ensure sustainable development of coastal areas.

Keywords: coastal area; coastal line; protected water area; shoreline.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The productive, but fragile ecosystems of the seashore and adjacent territories are under heavy anthropogenic pressure. The European seacoast is a sphere of intensive industrial, transport, recreational, agricultural and other production activities. At the same time, the location and economic activities are not always environmentally friendly. The international community has long been aware of this problem.

As early as in the decisions of the United Nations International Conference on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) it was

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emphasized that it was necessary to create an effective system of integrated coastal area management in the coastal countries and regions.

The coastal area is located in a rather fragile border zone between the hydrosphere and the lithosphere.<sup>1</sup> This is not just a sphere of interaction between water and land, but a much more complex structure, including geographical, ecological, economic and social systems. As noted by the European Commission, "coastal territory is a space where human interaction with the environment is carried out with particular intensity"; "The coastal marine area is a zone where the sea contacts the land, and it involves natural complexes - both the coast and the adjacent marine area within the boundaries allowing for the environmentally balanced development of coastal areas, that preserves coastal and marine landscapes and ecosystems from pollution and destruction, i.e. this is the territory with limited and regulated business and other activities".<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the water legislation of the Russian Federation does not contain a definition of a "coastal territory", although its territory is washed by the waters of 12 seas, 3 oceans, as well as the inland Caspian Sea.

The total coastline of the Russian seas is 60,985 km, and the marine area within the RF jurisdiction is about 8.6 million square km, including 660 km of the Baltic Sea.<sup>3</sup>

The Baltic Sea coast possesses a number of favorable factors (maritime climate, medicinal mineral waters and therapeutic peat mud, sandy beaches) to ensure both the prevention and treatment of various diseases, as well as provide for active recreation and entertainment. A unique service of Kaliningrad resorts, for example, is amber treatment. Under the 1992 Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention), Russia pledged to take all necessary measures in the Baltic Sea area and in coastal ecosystems to preserve natural habitats, biological diversity, and to safeguard environmental processes in order to ensure sustainable use and protection of natural resources. Meanwhile, in the Russian part of the Baltic Sea there are a number of unsolved environmental problems associated with the intense destruction of the coastline, which is caused by both natural causes and the effects of human activities.

In particular, within the boundaries of the Kaliningrad region, 73.3 km of the coastline are susceptible to permanent destruction, among which 8 sections of the coast are identified as endangered, where there is an immediate threat of emergency situations. 12.1 km of the coastline (about 16.5 %) are under the permanent protection of the existing coastal fortifications (dams, promenades, artificial front dunes). These structures protect the natural shores of resort towns and seaside settlements from

<sup>1</sup> Jordan Diamond *et al., The Past, Present, and Future of California's Coastal Act: Overcoming Division to Comprehensively Manage the Coast* (Berkley: Center for Law, Energy & the Environment Publications, 2017), 46.

<sup>2</sup> Elena G. Kropinova, Elvira P. Afanasieva, "Sustainable development of coastal areas as a basis for integrated coastal zone management", *Bulletin of the I. Kant Baltic Federal University*, 1 (2014): 142.

<sup>3</sup> State report "On the condition and use of water resources of the Russian Federation in 2009" (Moscow: NIA-PRIRODA, 2010), 46-47.

destruction. The other 61.2 km (or 83.5 %) remain unprotected. Therefore, as part of measures for the construction and restoration of environmental protection facilities, it is planned to build and reconstruct hydrotechnical structures, beach and shore protection structures, which are likely to increase the effectiveness of the system for protecting coastal territories from the negative impact of sea waters.<sup>4</sup> Since Russia borders on Poland, at the moment both countries have common problems related to in terms of protecting the environment of the Baltic Sea and its shores, and are looking for viable solutions. Russia and other Baltic countries have a need to develop common approaches to the protection and use of the coast of the continent, which seems very relevant in the context of current climate change issues.

Considering the common problems of land use and coastal protection in all the Baltic Sea countries, including Russia and Poland, in the first part of the article we examine legal measures aimed at regulating the coastal regime in Russia; in the second part we consider the legal regulation of the use and protection of the sea coast in Poland; in the third part we will conduct a comparative legal study of this experience of the two countries.

### 2. COASTAL LEGISLATION IN RUSSIA

### 2.1. The concept of "legal regime" in the Russian academic doctrine

The legal regimes issue as a general theoretical phenomenon was addressed by Malko, Matuzov, Mokhov, Alekseev, Rodionov, Shamsumova and other researchers.<sup>5</sup> The "legal regime" in Russian research is understood as "a special regulation established by the legislation, represented by a specific set of legal instruments, which, using an optimal combination of incentive and limiting elements, creates a specific degree of auspiciousness or disadvantage in order for the subjects to freely implement their rights".<sup>6</sup> The category "legal regime" is closely connected with the "legal regulation mechanism" concept, which focuses on a system of legal tools organized in the most consistent way in order to overcome obstacles that burden the interests of legal entities. While the mechanism of legal regulation is a legal category that shows how legal regulation is carried out, then the legal regime is largely a substantive description of specific regulatory tools designed to organize a certain area of human activity. Legal regime is a specific mechanism of legal regulation, its special

<sup>4</sup> RF government Decree of 07.12.2001 № 866 (as amended on 02.23.2018) "On the Federal Target Program for the Development of the Kaliningrad Region up to 2020". *Reference Legal System "Consultant Plus"*, appeal date 25.09.2019.

<sup>5</sup> N.I. Matuzov, Alexander V. Mal'ko, "Legal regimes: theory and practice", *Pravovedenie*, 4 (1996): 16-29; Emma Faysalovna Shamsumova, *Legal regimes (theoretical aspect)*, doctoral dissertation (Yekaterinburg: Ural law Institute of the Ministry of internal Affairs of Russia, 2001), 213; Sergey Sergeevich Alekseev, *Theory of law* (Moscow: BEK, 1995), 170; Alexander A. Mokhov, *The combination of private and public interests in the legal regulation of medical practice* (Saint Petersburg: Legal center Press, 2003), 34-35.

<sup>6</sup> O. S. Rodionov, *The mechanism for establishing legal regimes by the Russian legislation*, doctoral dissertation (Saratov: Saratov state Academy of law, 2001), 13-14.

order, aimed at specific types of subjects and objects, which hardly refer to individual situations, but rather to the wider socially significant social processes (states) in which these subjects and objects interact.<sup>7</sup> As it as noted by Malko and Rodionov, the following features are inherent in legal regimes: "1) they are established by law and provided for by the state; 2) they aim at a specific way to regulate specific areas of social relations, highlighting in the temporal and spatial boundaries of certain subjects and objects of law; 3) represent a special order of legal regulation, consisting of a set of legal means and characterized by a certain combination of them; 4) create a specific degree of auspiciousness or non-auspiciousness to meet the interests of subjects and their associations".<sup>8</sup>

Legal regime is a kind of social regime.<sup>9</sup> As defined, its main feature is that it is created, fixed, regulated by law and can cover objects of various legal nature: property of legal entities, land plots, elections to the authorities, real estate objects, territories, where the federal law establishes a special procedure for the use and protection, etc. This list is not exhaustive and develops in two directions: it defines new regimes or specifies the existing ones.<sup>10</sup>

One of the types of legal regimes aimed at creating a special procedure for the use and protection of certain territories (not classified as specially protected) will be the legal regime of the Baltic Sea coast, by which we propose to understand the procedure for using and protecting coastal natural objects established by international and national legislation implying the establishment of a specific set of permissions, restrictions and prohibitions applicable to all types of economic activity in order to ensure sustainable development of the Baltic region.

### 2.2. Category "coastal strip" in Russian water law

The Russian law does not specify the term "coast", as well as special legal regimes determining the use and protection of the Baltic Sea coastal areas. In Russia, there are general (framework) principles and norms relating to the protection of any coastal strip, covering all sea coasts, including the Baltic Sea coast:

1) surface water bodies consist of surface water and land covered by them within the coastline. The coastline (boundary of the water body) is determined: for the sea by the constant water level, and in the case of periodic changes in the water level by the maximum outflow line; for rivers, streams, canals, lakes, flooded quarry by the mean multi-year water level in the period when the water bodies are not covered with ice; for a pond, reservoir by a normal retaining water level; for swamps it is set along the boundary of the peat deposit at zero depth (Article 5 of the Water Code). However, the coastline is not easy to practically establish for all water bodies, since the public

<sup>7</sup> Matuzov, Mal'ko, Legal regimes: theory and practice, 25-26.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander V. Mal'ko, O. S. Rodionov, "The mechanism for establishing legal regimes by the Russian legislation", *Journal of Russian Law*, 9 (2001): 19.

<sup>9</sup> Inna Sergeyevna Barzilova, "The concept and legal nature of legal regimes", *Lex Russica* 95, 11 (2013), 1169-1175.

<sup>10</sup> Galina S. Belyaeva, "On the issue of classification of legal regimes", *Current issues of Russian law*, 2 (2012): 4-10.

monitoring of water bodies in recent years has not been carried out regularly, and is not applicable to all water bodies. In many small bodies of water and waterways, the mean annual level of water in the ice-free period was not monitored, as was the case with many ponds.<sup>11</sup>

2) the strip of land along the coastline (border) of a public water body (coastal strip) is intended for the common use of citizens. Given that it strongly resembles a public land servitude.<sup>12</sup>

The width of the shoreline of public water bodies is twenty meters, with the exception of the shoreline of canals, as well as rivers and streams, the length of which from the source to the mouth is no more than 10 km. The width of the coastal canals, as well as rivers and streams, the length of which from the source to the mouth of no more than 10 km, is 5 meters. The main point of this legal structure is that every citizen has the right to use (without using motorized vehicles) the coastal strip of public water bodies for movement and stay around them, including recreational and sport fishing and mooring of floating equipment (Art. 6 of Water Code of the Russian Federation). At the same time, the right to use the coastal strip does not extend over specially protected natural territories, territories of hydraulic structures,<sup>13</sup> land plots on which land reclamation facilities are located, right of way roads and railways, land plots fortified with special structures and some other objects (Para. 8, Article 10 of the Code of Inland Water Transport of the Russian Federation of March 7, 2001 No. 24-FZ).

3) information about the water body, including the description of the coastline location (the border of the water body), the part of intended water use is the background of the water use agreement (article 13 of the Water Code of the Russian Federation).<sup>14</sup>

4) The duties of local governments (urban settlements, urban districts, municipal districts) include the establishment of rules for the use of public water bodies located on their territory for personal and domestic needs, including the provision of free access for citizens to public water bodies and their coastal zones, as well as raising public awareness about restrictions on public water bodies located within their borders.

5) information on the coastline location (boundaries of the water body) is included in the state water register.

6) The legislation provides additional requirements for the use of the coastal strip for navigation. So, the coastal strip can be used to launch navigation and construct navigation-supportive buildings and structures; to establish shore-based navigation equipment; to cut trees and shrubs growing on the coastal strip to ensure the safety of navigation, etc. It is not allowed to use the coastal strip for economic and other activities if they may affect the safety of navigation (Article 10 of the KVVT of the

<sup>11</sup> Dmitriy Olegovich Sivakov, *Water law: educational and practical manual* (Moscow: Usticinform, 2007), 13.

<sup>12</sup> A.N. Kudaktin *et al.*, "A new approach to the legal status of water bodies in Russia", *Current issues of research and education*, 6-1 (2009): 114.

<sup>13</sup> Hydrotechnical facilities are dams, buildings of hydroelectric power plants, water discharge, drainage facilities, facilities designed to protect against floods and destruction of banks, etc.

<sup>14</sup> V.E. Luk'yanenko, "The procedure for the conclusion, execution and liability of the parties under a water use agreement", *Agrarian and land law*, 5 (2007): 49-57.

Russian Federation of 07.03.2001).

7) individuals and legal entities engaged in construction, dredging, blasting, drilling and other work related to changing the bottom and banks of water bodies are required to take measures to protect water bodies and prevent their pollution and clogging. Protection zones are established with special conditions for water use and use of coastal areas (including areas adjacent to hydropower objects) to ensure safe and trouble-free water use and operation of hydropower facilities in the coastal areas.

8) water protection zones are territories that adjoin the coastline (water body boundaries) of seas, rivers, streams, canals, lakes, reservoirs and which establish a special regime for carrying out economic and other activities in order to prevent pollution, clogging, sedimentation of specified water bodies and depletion of their waters, as well as the preservation of the habitat of aquatic biological resources and other objects of flora and fauna (Article 65 of the Water Code of the Russian Federation). Outside the territories of cities and other populated areas, the width of the water protection zone of rivers, streams, canals, lakes, reservoirs and the width of their coastal protective strip are established from the location of the corresponding coastline (boundary of the water body), and the width of the water protection zone of the seas and their coastal protective strip from the maximum tide line.

9) one of the measures to prevent the negative water impact and eliminate its effects is to introduce flood control measures, including measures to increase the carrying capacity of river channels, dredging and straightening, clearing water bodies, levelling the banks of water bodies, their biogenic consolidation, strengthening sandy banks with gravel. Clause 7 of article 67.1 of the RF Water Code stipulates that it is the owners of water bodies who must take measures to prevent the negative water impact and eliminate its consequences rather than the owners of land plots. Such measures in relation to water bodies that are in federal ownership, property of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, property of municipalities should be implemented by the executive bodies of state power or local self-government bodies within their powers. Thus, the RF Water Code does not encourage unauthorized actions on water bodies and in their immediate environment, even if they are aimed at protecting property from the harmful effects of water, since the processes of destruction can be not only spontaneous, but also caused by human actions to change the water regime of water bodies, i.e. protective structures against the shore erosion should not intensify the erosion of other places.15

### 2.3. The legal regime of the coastal strip in the Russian research context

A brief review of the Russian legislation given above brings about several important conclusions:

1) The Russian legislator considers it important to establish clear boundaries of

<sup>15</sup> Elmira Faatovna Nigmatullina, "On correspondence between economy and environmental security in the context of global climate change" in: *Current issues of protecting social and economic human rights in Russia, the CIS and the countries of the European Union: materials of an international scientific conference* Volgograd, June 6-7, 2014, Volgograd Institute of Business, Vol. 1. (Volgograd: VolgGMU publishing house, 2014), 214.

the coastline and the coastal strip, which are identified in the water register, and are an essential condition of the water use contract.

2) all the rules on the legal regime of the coastal strip relate to the use or protection of water bodies. The rules concerning the conclusion of a water use contract, the operation of hydraulic structures, and the free public access to the coastal strip refer to the issues of use (and restrictions on such use). No less specific are the norms for the protection of water bodies, which can be classified into two groups.

Firstly, these are norms aimed at restricting environmentally hazardous activities that may affect the state of water bodies. The same group should include the norms regulating the territorial protection of water bodies through the creation of protection (around hydraulic facilities) and water protection zones. Secondly, measures to reduce the risk of negative impact of water on the condition of various natural and man-made objects (for this purpose, flood control measures and strengthening of the coast are carried out). Conducting these measures is also necessary because erosion of the coast decreases the boundaries of the coastal strip, which ultimately may entail a decrease in the size of the land plot owned by individuals and legal entities.<sup>16</sup>

3) the interrelation of property rights and changes in the coastline is one of the most discussed issues not only in Russian, but also in the international legal papers, especially in the context of contemporary global threats, including climate change. Thus, as a result of its change, the melting of Arctic and Antarctic glaciers leads to an increased sea level and the sea water advancement towards the coast. This poses a serious threat to the world coastal areas, including the Baltic Sea countries. Coastal beaches, dunes, salt marshes and adjacent plains serve as habitats and breeding grounds for fish and wild animals, and often support traditional human activities such as fishing, hunting and navigation. Many coastal areas, in particular beaches, are popular venues for a variety of recreational activities. Many coastal areas, such as dunes, barrier islands and wetlands, help alleviate coastal flooding and serve as natural buffers between the sea and adjacent private lands (including those used for building), as well as public infrastructure facilities.<sup>17</sup>

It cannot be said that this problem has completely fallen out of the sight of theory and practice. In legal science in the United States, it is noted that one of the main tools to counteract sea-level rise due to climate is the construction of artificial barrier islands grouped around the coastline as a means of absorbing wave energy created by storms, which will preserve habitats for plants and animals that populate the coastal zone. In addition to barrier islands, new wetlands can be built, usually in areas where such wetlands used to exist. Finally, the construction of special supports may be provided to reduce the intensity of the wave speed. The use of a special construction of the supports will strengthen the coastline as a means of dissipating the energy of the waves created during storms, and will provide a "protective zone" along the entire coast.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Elmira Faatovna Nigmatullina, "On the concept of favorable use of the coastal strip", *New Legal thinking*, 2 (2013), 85.

<sup>17</sup> Lara D. Guercio, "Climate Change Adaptation and Coastal Property Rights: A Massachusetts Case Study", *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 40, 2 (2013): 350.

<sup>18</sup> Lauren Coleman, "Making Soft Infrastructures a Reality in New York City: Incorporating

On the other hand, the construction of such complex engineering structures is likely to destroy the beaches under them, or the remaining thin sand tape will be blocked from the public by massive coastal defenses.<sup>19</sup> For coastal wetlands that provided sustainable habitats for many marine species and were threatened with rising sea levels, coastal defenses will prevent their death, but this may lead to a possible loss of their ecosystem function. Thus, over the entire coast, the adverse effects of climate change can be exacerbated by the consequences of the coastal defenses construction. Therefore, it is necessary to use all engineering knowledge to ensure that bank protection devices that can minimize damage to the environment.<sup>20</sup>

4) contemporary Russian legislation and environmental law doctrine do not discuss and do not take measures aimed at protecting coastal areas from the effects of climate change. Moreover, water law of Russia applies such concepts as "coastal strip" or "water protection zone", but almost does not contain norms defining the specifics of their creation in the coastal zone, does not contain a procedure for clarifying their boundaries and a list of additional prohibitions and restrictions aimed at protection of coastal ecological systems against human activities.<sup>21</sup> It does not provide for special protection measures towards the coastal marine ecosystems (landscapes) and Russian environmental legislation. Meanwhile, the ecological vulnerability of these natural complexes is beyond doubt. And although we are not supporters of the idea of developing the Coastal Code,<sup>22</sup> the need to adjust the provisions of the Water Code, supplementing it with norms on the specifics of coastal land protection, is an absolute necessity. Such lands could well become the eighth category of lands in the land fund of Russia, which would strengthen the guarantees for the protection of coastal landscapes.

### 3. LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE POLISH BALTIC SEA COAST

In the Polish research papers, the term "coast" is defined as a strip of land stretching along the coast, varying in width, and adjacent to the sea, where the forms of relief are directly or indirectly influenced by the ocean or the sea. The coasts form the boundary between land and sea and are formed under the influence of such natural factors as sea level fluctuations, geological structure and amount of sedimentary material, as well as under the influence of anthropogenic factors, including agriculture,

Unconventional Storm Defense Systems as Sea Levels Rise", *William & Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review* 36, 2 (2012): 532.

<sup>19</sup> Tricia Lee, "She Sells Seawalls Down by the Seashore", San Diego Journal of Climate & Energy Law, 5 (2013-14): 209-229.

<sup>20</sup> Meg Caldwell, Craig Holt Segall, "No Day at the Beach: Sea Level Rise, Ecosystem Loss, and Public Access Along the California Coast", *Ecology Law Quarterly*, 34 (2007): 534-535.

<sup>21</sup> Alla A. Murasheva, Alla Vdovenko, Pavel P. Lepekhin, "Coastal Area Management", *Agrarian science*, 4 (2012): 9.

<sup>22</sup> Dmitriy Olegovich Sivakov, *The legal regime of the lands of the water fund*, doctoral dissertation (Moscow: Institute of legislation and comparative law under the Government of the Russian Federation, 2004), 114-117.

urbanization and tourism.<sup>23</sup> Along the coastline of Poland, in particular, there are many areas where natural resources are linked to the sea and its biodiversity, which creates a special microclimate and landscape, while making the Baltic sea tourism the most attractive. Therefore, Poland has adopted a number of environmental laws to safeguard its natural objects and complexes. The most important of these are the national parks of Słowiński and Volyn, as well as the natural sites of 2000,<sup>24</sup> which include cliffs on the Baltic coast, White Sea Dunes and all wooded areas on coastal dunes. These areas are also the most important for the tourist economy of Poland, and therefore legislation was required to protect their natural value.

Coastal use and effectiveness of coastal protection affect the state of marine waters, especially coastal waters, which are subject to many threats. The negative consequences, in particular, are related to industry, agriculture, land transport, urban expansion and, of course, tourism. The most important threats here are industrial and municipal wastewater discharge, solid waste, pesticides, gas and dust. Therefore, it is necessary to provide reliable protection to nature and coastal waters, taking all necessary technical measures to prevent pollution and erosion.<sup>25</sup>

The adoption of Polish legislation on the protection of coastal areas and coastal waters was driven by international law, since Poland is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)<sup>26</sup> of December 10, 1982; and the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Region of April 9, 1992 (HELCOM).<sup>27</sup>

Since 2004, Poland has been a member of the European Union and is subject to the legal provisions on coastal protection adopted in accordance with Directive 2000/60 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of October 23, 2000. They created a framework for community action on water policy (WFD). Directive 2008/56 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 established a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Maritime Strategy Framework Directive - MSFD).<sup>28</sup> In addition, measures to protect the coast are legally stipulated by the Water Law (UPW),<sup>29</sup> adopted in July 2017, and in the Law of the Republic of Poland of March 21, 1991 on the Sea Territories and Administration (UOM).<sup>30</sup> The legal status of the coastal zone is regulated by the UOM law of 1991,

26 Law Journal of 2002, No. 59, item 543.

- 28 OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, 19–40.
- 29 Law Journal of 2017, item 1566, 2180 with changes.
- 30 Law Journal of 2017, item 2205 with changes.

<sup>23</sup> Tomasz Łabuz, "Kinds of protecting sea coasts and their impact on the natural environment of the Polish Baltic coast", *Report* 3 (2013): 9.

<sup>24</sup> These areas in the European Union are regulated by the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, 7–50) and the Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, 7-25).

<sup>25</sup> A. Dodds, Adaptive Management, in: ICZM: Theory vs. Practice, Integrated Coastal Zone Management – Theory and Practice, ed. M. Forkiewicz, (Gdansk: EUROCOAST-LITTORAL, 2006), 77; Tomasz A. Łabuz, "Coastal response to climatic changes: discussion with emphasis on Southern Baltic Sea", Landform Analysis, 21 (2012): 43-55.

<sup>27</sup> Law Journal of 2000, No. 28, item 346.

and the sea area covers: 1) inland waters;<sup>31</sup> 2) territorial seas;<sup>32</sup> 3) adjacent areas; 4) exclusive economic zone. Poland is responsible for both internal waters and the territorial sea; it extends to inland waters, the airspace above them, the seabed and the bowels of the earth beneath them (UOM: Article 2). The outer boundary of the zone adjacent to the territorial sea is within the competence of the Republic of Poland, and this border is shorter than 24 nautical miles from the seashore baseline.

This article analyzes this issue, since the zone is adjacent to the coastal strip of land on the Baltic Sea coast. The coastal belt runs along the entire sea coast, and in accordance with the UOM, Article 36 it contains: (1) a technical belt, including a zone of mutual direct interaction between land and sea. This zone is designed to maintain the coast in a satisfactory condition, in accordance with the requirements of safety and environmental protection, and (2) a protective belt covering the area which can be directly affected by human activities.

The maximum and minimum widths of the technical and protective stripes and their boundaries are determined by the following factors: local conditions, land terrain and its developed forms, as well as the impact on the sea elements of the sea coast. The technical belt extends from the coastline of the sea to the land width from 10 to 1000 m, depending on the type of coast (except for areas within the boundaries of the harbour and marina). Then the protective belt covers the territory of 100-2500 meters from the border of the technical belt.

Minimum safety levels for the coast have been established to ensure coastal service and safety within the technical belt. This level is determined by the robable degree of storm impact on the coastline. Thus, the protection boundary line indicates the edge beyond which the seashore line cannot be drawn; and this is precisely defined in the legislation on environmental management adopted on April 16, 2004.<sup>33</sup>

The law lists many prohibitions within the technical belt, for example, it is prohibited to litter and pollute the territory, make fires on the beach, drive a motor vehicle or moped on the beach, and stay without permission in fenced or marked areas where hydraulic and measuring facilities are deployed. The last ban most likely encouraged banning hiking in these limited access areas with. Thus, waterworks are

<sup>31</sup> The marine internal waters are: 1) a part of the Nowowarpieński Lake and part of the Szczecin Lagoon together with Świna and Dziwna and the Kamieński Lagoon, located east of the state border between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany and the Odra river between the Szczecin Lagoon and Szczecin port waters; 2) part of the Gulf of Gdańsk closed by the baseline of the territorial sea; 3) a part of the Vistula Lagoon, located southwest of the state border between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation on this Lagoor; 4) port waters defined from the sea side by a line connecting the deepest sea facilities located at sea, forming an integral part of the port system; 5) waters between the coast line established in accordance with the provisions of the Water Law of 2017 and the baseline of the territorial sea (Article 4 of UOM).

<sup>32</sup> The territorial sea is a sea area of 12 nautical miles (22.224 m), measured from the baseline of the sea. The base line is the line connecting the relevant points that determine the lowest water level along the coast or other points designated in accordance with the principles set out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, drawn up in Montego Bay on December 10, 1982 (Article 5 of UOM).

<sup>33</sup> Law Journal of 2018, item 142, 10, 650.

protected from erosion, fire and other damage for the environment, especially from pollution and the presence of hazardous facilities.

All prohibited activities in these protected areas require the permission of the Director of the Maritime Administration, which regulates the construction of water bodies, changes in spatial development, development and afforestation (UOM: Article 37).

The coastal waters of Poland adjoin the coastal zone of the Baltic Sea, and they are defined both in the European WFD and in the Polish UPW. In WFD, "coastal waters include surface waters on the bottom side of the line, each point of which is located one nautical mile towards the sea from the nearest point of the baseline, from which the width of territorial waters is measured. Then, when necessary, it extends to the outer boundary of the transitional waters" (WFD: Article 2). On the contrary, article 26 of the UPW on coastal waters, excludes the internal sea waters of the Gdansk Bay and the adjacent territorial sea waters. "These coastal waters belong exclusively to the state and are a single part of the surface waters." Coastal waters are also protected as "sea waters". General guidelines on the protection and management of all types of waters, including coastal waters, are expressly enshrined in the Water Framework Directive and in Polish water legislation. The above-mentioned Directive lays down the basis for the protection of waters by: (1) protecting and preventing their further deterioration, including adjacent wetlands; (2) long-term protection of available water resources; (3) the gradual reduction of pollution of existing waters and the prevention of their further pollution; and (4) the protection of all territorial and marine waters (WFD: Article 1).

The rules laid down in this Directive are aimed at reducing adverse conditions in aquatic ecosystems and dependent terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands. They also support sustainable water use to ensure the long-term protection of existing water resources.<sup>34</sup> The overall goal of these protective measures is to secure water resources, including coastal waters, both qualitatively and quantitatively by reducing discharges and gradually eliminating emissions and loss of priority substances.<sup>35</sup>

The protection of marine waters, including coastal waters in Poland, is also subject to the guidelines of the UNCLOS and HELCOM conventions. The UNCLOS guidelines confirm that "a coastal state has sovereign rights in the exclusive economic zone for the purpose of research, exploitation and protection of natural resources, protection and preservation of the marine environment,<sup>36</sup> and, in particular, prevention, reduction and control of pollution".

<sup>34</sup> Janina Ciechanowicz-McLean, "Water Framework Directive and the protection of the marine environment", *Prawo Morskie*, 29 (2013): 107-115; Pawel Błaszczak, "Water Framework Directive: Implementation strategy", *Coastline Reports*, 6 (2005): 87-99; Dorota Pyć, "The principle of sustainable development and environmental protection in the area of the Baltic Sea", *Prawo Morskie*, 12 (1996): 91-92.

<sup>35</sup> Bartosz Rakoczy (ed.), *Water Law, Comment, Article 61a Sea waters – general issues*, LEX, (Warszawa: Wolters Kluver, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Janusz Symonides, "30 Years of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea", *Prawo Morskie*, 28 (2012): 7-32; Jacek Barcik, Tadeusz Srogosz, *International Public Law*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (Warszawa: C.H. Beck. 2014), 233-235.

This guideline was adopted to prevent deterioration, both of the usable seawater quality and of all its related elements. If a state is informed about accidents that threaten the marine environment or cause damage to it as a result of pollution, it must immediately notify other states that may be affected, as well as all other relevant international organizations.<sup>37</sup> This obligation is also enforceable in accordance with the 2017 Polish water legislation. The HELCOM Convention, in contrast, directly relates to the protection of the coastal waters of the Baltic Sea. The most important objectives of this Convention include the elimination of more than one hundred significant sources of pollution of the Baltic Sea, "located not only on the coast, but also in the catchment area (hot spots) through investment activities and the suspension of harmful activities; training on lagoons and coastal wetlands management, as well as maintaining an integrated ecosystem approach to achieving a favorable condition of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea".<sup>38</sup> Poland is also obligated to comply with EU requirements under the 2008 Maritime Strategy Framework (MSFD). This Directive establishes the necessary measures to achieve and maintain a good ecological state of the marine environment no later than 2020. Thus, marine strategies should be developed and implemented to: 1) protect and preserve the marine environment, prevent its deterioration and, when practicable, restore marine ecosystems in areas adversely affected, and 2) reduce and prevent marine pollution in result of human activity.39

An indication of good ecological condition means such a condition of marine waters, which is provided by ecologically diverse oceans and seas that are clean, healthy and productive, and this good environment ensures the sustainable use of the marine resources, thereby ensuring its potential for current and future generations. This protects the structure, functions and processes of the elements of marine ecosystems, marine species and habitats, as well as the hydromorphological, physical and chemical properties of ecosystems, including those properties that are the result of human activity (MSFD: Art. 3).

In order to adequately protect sea water, Polish water legislation defines environmental protection objectives and the criteria for the environmental condition of sea water, similar to MSFD, and requires the development of a compatible sea strategy. This strategy includes: (1) a preliminary assessment of the ecological state of sea waters, (2) a set of properties characteristic of a healthy ecological state of sea waters, (3) a set of environmental objectives for sea waters, and (4) monitoring of sea water and a national program protection of these waters.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, environmental objectives for marine waters will be achieved by complying with the provisions specified in the marine waters protection program (UPW: Art.

<sup>37</sup> Tadeusz Jasudowicz, "For the «human dimension» of international law of the sea", *Prawo Morskie*, 6 (1993): 37-59; Tadeusz Jasudowicz. "Good Neighborhood" in the Convention of 1982 of the Law of the Sea", *Prawo Morskie*, 4 (1990): 53-74.

<sup>38</sup> Zdislaw Brodecki (ed.), Regions, Subregion of Baltic Sea, Baltic protection (Warsaw: LexisNexis 2005); Dorota Pyć, "Principles of maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management", Prawo Morskie, 29 (2013): 118-135.

<sup>39</sup> Rakoczy (ed.), Water Law, Comment, Article 61a Sea waters – general issues, LEX 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Rakoczy (ed.), Water Law, Comment, Article 61a Sea waters - general issues.

145). A preliminary assessment of the ecological status of marine waters includes: 1) an analysis of the main characteristics and properties of marine waters and the current state of the marine environment, including habitat types and biological characteristics of marine waters; 2) analysis of the prevailing pressure and effects on marine waters, including pressure and anthropogenic impacts, as well as their cumulative and synergistic effects, and 3) economic and social analysis of the use of marine waters and costs associated with the degradation of the marine environment. Documented analysis is prepared by the competent authority of the environmental inspectorate (UPW: Articles 150 and 151). In addition, the set of properties necessary for assessing the good condition of marine waters should include indicators and their qualitative or quantitative characteristics and criteria for the good ecological status of marine waters. They must also comply with the order of classification of indicators for the signs indicated above in analytical paragraphs 1 and 3, and methods for assessing the ecological status of marine waters (UPW: Article 153).

A set of environmental objectives for sea water defines environmental tasks for sea water. The relevant document discusses the characteristics and properties of sea waters, the list of threats to sea waters, as well as the properties and consequences of environmental impacts that have a transboundary impact on the Baltic Sea waters (UPW: Article 156). Finally, the program for the sea water protection identifies the main activities required to achieve and maintain a good ecological state of sea water, special measures and a network of sea areas covered by forms of nature protection (UPW: Article 159). The documents were designed by the Polish Institute of Water Resources (UPW: Articles 156,160). Polish law assumes that bank protection is carried out by preserving the coast during construction, preserving and protecting coastal fortifications, and maintaining dunes and protective afforestation within a technical belt. However, at the same time, the maintenance of coastal areas and waters cannot violate environmental objectives or the existing good condition of these waters or any conditions arising from the protection of waters (UPW: Articles 228, 229). Polish criminal law also provides for the protection of the coastal zone, prohibits the destruction or damage to sea shores and facilities that form the coastline. This specifically determines that sea walls are not considered water structures. All violations of the law are punishable by a fine, restriction of liberty or imprisonment for up to one year (UPW: Articles 230, 475).

In conclusion, it should be noted that proper coastal zone management and protection are important for the protection of Polish coastal waters and the avoidance of international sanctions. This is possible only if the legal documents created both for the sea and for the coastal areas are observed, while observing the rules and prohibitions that limit any pollution and damage to the coast. Following these principles will ensure the comprehensive protection of the waters of the Baltic Sea and comply with all guidelines at the national, European and international levels. Finally, these principles will ensure the preservation of Poland's valuable natural resources, in particular, its economic development and control over the tourism sector. This is the most effective strategy for Poland and for cooperation with neighboring countries along the Baltic coast.

## 4. COMPARATIVE LEGAL STUDY OF THE MODE OF USE AND PROTECTION OF COASTAL AREAS IN RUSSIA AND POLAND

The study leads to the following conclusions:

1) Polish law contains a number of requirements and rules reflecting the national specifics of coastal protection and marine waters, including the legal category "coast", which is not defined in Russia. One of the methods of protecting natural coastal complexes is setting up protected areas, in which Russia and Poland coincide. For example, the Curonian Spit National Park on the Baltic coast has been created in Russia.

2) Russia and Poland are parties to many international agreements, for example, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (entered into force for Russia on April 11, 1997) or the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Region (approved by the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of October 15, 1998). However, Russia is not subject to directives and other legal acts of the European Union, which coordinate the activities of the Baltic countries in the protection of marine waters and coastal areas. In this part, it is advisable to deepen international cooperation between Russia and the EU in terms of environmental protection of the Baltic Sea.

3) both in Russia, in Poland, a separate area of coastal marine territory protection is (1) regulation of economic activity on the coast; (2) regulation of discharges of polluted wastewater into the sea; (3) protection of the marine waters of the Baltic Sea in order to prevent the negative impact on their part on the state of coastal ecosystems.

4) it is worth considering Poland's experience in terms of "coastal zoning" (although such a term is not used), associated with the separation of a technical belt and protective belt on the coastal territory, each of which has its own tasks, and within which its own limitations and bans. In Russia, only coastal strips and water protection zones are provided for the sea coasts, which fulfil similar tasks, but differ from Polish belts in terms of size<sup>41</sup> and legal regime.

5) Both in Russia and Poland, the main focus of the law is on the prevention of "classic threats" associated with pollution of coastal areas and water areas by dumping industrial, agricultural and other harmful substances. Given a high priority of such work, it should still be noted that both countries do not engage in developing strategies to counter the new threats caused by global climate change, which will inevitably affect the interests of both countries due to the increase in the Baltic Sea level and changes in the coastline which will refer to the issues of property and spatial planning.

6) Russian legislation does not provide for the specifics of the protection of the sea coast, since the Water Code of the Russian Federation lacks a framework definition of "coastal marine areas". Meanwhile, it seems that the Water Code of the Russian Federation should be supplemented with the corresponding article providing for the specificity of the protection of coastal areas and waters.

<sup>41</sup> In Poland, the size of the technical belt can be up to 1.000 m, and the protective belt can be up to 2.500 m. At the same time, in Russia the size of the coastal strip is 20 m.

7) The experience of Poland can be noted for the development of various concepts of environmental policy aimed at ensuring the protection of the waters of the Baltic Sea, which is not the case in Russia, although such documents could be useful for coordinating the work of federal and regional executive authorities. In this regard, it seems appropriate to supplement Russian water law with the category of "marine spatial planning", which could allow integrated planning of the use and protection of sea waters and coastal areas, with restrictions and prohibitions on certain human activities, which will achieve a balance of and environmental interests.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Existing threats to coastal areas that differ in significant vulnerability from human activities require changes to the Russian water legislation, the effectiveness of which largely depends on the implementation of international cooperation agreements. Relevant legal norms in national law form an interdisciplinary institution that regulates the economic, environmental and social aspects of the use and protection of the marine environment and coastal areas. For Russian water law, many legal constructions existing in Polish water law may be of interest, including the allocation of two zones with special legal regime on the coast, environmental planning for the use and protection of the coast and sea waters, a set of measures to ensure the sustainable development of coastal territories, etc.

Given the size and specificity of individual Russian territories with access to the sea, and the uniqueness of the current environmental situation there, it seems expedient to develop the environmental legislation of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation capable of reflecting and taking into account these specificities.

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Sažetak

# AKTUALNA PITANJA KORIŠTENJA PRIOBALNOG PODRUČJA BALTIČKOG MORA (PRIMJER RUSIJE I POLJSKE)

Članak dokazuje kako su postojeće prijetnje priobalnom morskom području značajne zbog ranjivosti ljudske aktivnosti te traže promjene u ruskom pomorskom zakonodavstvu koje mora uvesti kategoriju "priobalnih područja" i unutar njega pojasniti režim dozvola, ograničenja i zabrana. To će omogućiti učinkovitiju regulaciju ekonomskih, okolišnih i društvenih aspekata korištenja i zaštite morskog okoliša i priobalnih područja. Za rusko pomorsko pravo od interesa je određeni broj pravnih struktura koje su uspješno implementirane u poljsko pomorsko zakonodavstvo, uključujući alokaciju dviju zona u posebnom pravnom režimu na obali, planiranje korištenja i zaštite priobalja i morskih voda, kao i set mjera koje osiguravaju održiv razvoj priobalnih područja.

*Ključne riječi:* priobalno područje; obalna crta; zaštićeno područje voda; obala.

Zusammenfassung

## AKTUELLE FRAGEN DER NUTZUNG VON KÜSTENGEBIETEN DER OSTSEE (BEISPIEL VON RUSSLAND UND POLEN)

In diesem Beitrag wird aufgezeigt, dass die vorhandene Gefährdung der Küstengebiete durch menschliche Tätigkeit verschlimmert wurde, weshalb für die Änderung der russischen Gesetzgebung durch die Einführung der Kategorie der "Küstengebiete" mit einem klarstrukturierten System der Genehmigungen, Beschränkungen und Untersagungen plädiert wird. Dies wird eine wirksame

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Regulierung der wirtschaftlichen, umweltbetreffenden und Gesellschaftsaspekte und Schutz der Meeresumgebung und Küstengewässergebiete zur Folge haben. Für das russische Seerecht sind einige Regelungen die in der polnischen Seegesetzgebung erfolgreich implementiert wurden besonders interessant, einschließlich der Allokation von zwei Zonen im Sonderregime an der Küste, Planung der Nutzung und Schutz der Küsten- und Meeresgewässer, sowie eine Reihe von Maßnahmen die nachhaltige Entwicklung der Küstengewässergebiete gewährleisten.

Schlüsselwörter: Küstengebiet; Küstenlinie; Wasserschutzgebiet; Küste.

Riassunto

# QUESTIONI ATTUALI DELL'USO DELLE AREE COSTIERE DEL MAR BALTICO (GLI ESEMPI DELLA RUSSIA E DELLA POLONIA)

Quest'articolo prova che le esistenti minacce che rendono vulnerabili le aree marine costiere causate dalle attività umane richiedono cambiamenti nella legislazione russa sulle acque, la quale dovrebbe introdurre la categoria dei "territori costieri" e fare chiarezza sul regime dei permessi, delle restrizioni e dei divieti entro di essi. Questo creerà le condizioni per regolare più efficacemente l'economia, gli aspetti ambientali e sociali dell'uso e della protezione degli ambienti marini e delle aree costiere. Per il diritto russo sulle acque, un numero di strutture legali che sono usate con successo nel diritto polacco sulle acque sono di interesse, comprese l'allocazione delle due zone con un regime giuridico speciale sulla costa, la pianificazione ambientale dell'uso e della protezione della costa e delle acque marine, come anche una serie di misure per assicurare uno sviluppo sostenibile dell'area costiera.

*Parole chiave:* area costiera; linea costiera; area acquatica protetta; fascia litorale.