



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

First Meeting of the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic
Sea Action Plan

DG BSAP 1-2020

Online, 18 June 2020

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Background

The attached document includes the detailed plan for drafting of the updated BSAP approved by HOD 58-2020.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the guidance for drafting the updated BSAP.

Drafting of the updated BSAP

Outline for the updated BSAP

The updated BSAP should be a relatively short document written in a straightforward way but should at the same time provide sufficient supporting information to facilitate future follow-up of implementation.

The outline of the updated BSAP is based on three main components as further detailed below:

1. Preamble, consisting of one overarching preamble and an introductory passage for each segment,
2. Operative sections for each segment, including segment specific preamble and introductory texts and a concrete plan for action as outlined by the relevant measures and actions,
3. Supplementary information to the agreed actions.

Aspirations will therefore be differentiated from concrete actions and the operative sections will more clearly present the plan for action. Detailed information and supporting information on the actions will be made available as supplementary material.

The updated BSAP should maintain strong links between the BSAP and global processes and commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the upcoming Convention on Biological Diversity targets, the European Common Agricultural Policy and the EU Green Deal, with the aim that HELCOM can function as one of the platforms for ensuring implementation of global commitments

A holistic approach should be used when viewing and addressing the effects of human activities and subsequent pressures affecting the Baltic Sea. In the implementation of the update BSAP, wherever possible, the consequences and trade-offs of action, respectively inaction, should be clearly presented and explained. This should be kept in mind when drafting the updated BSAP document.

Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan

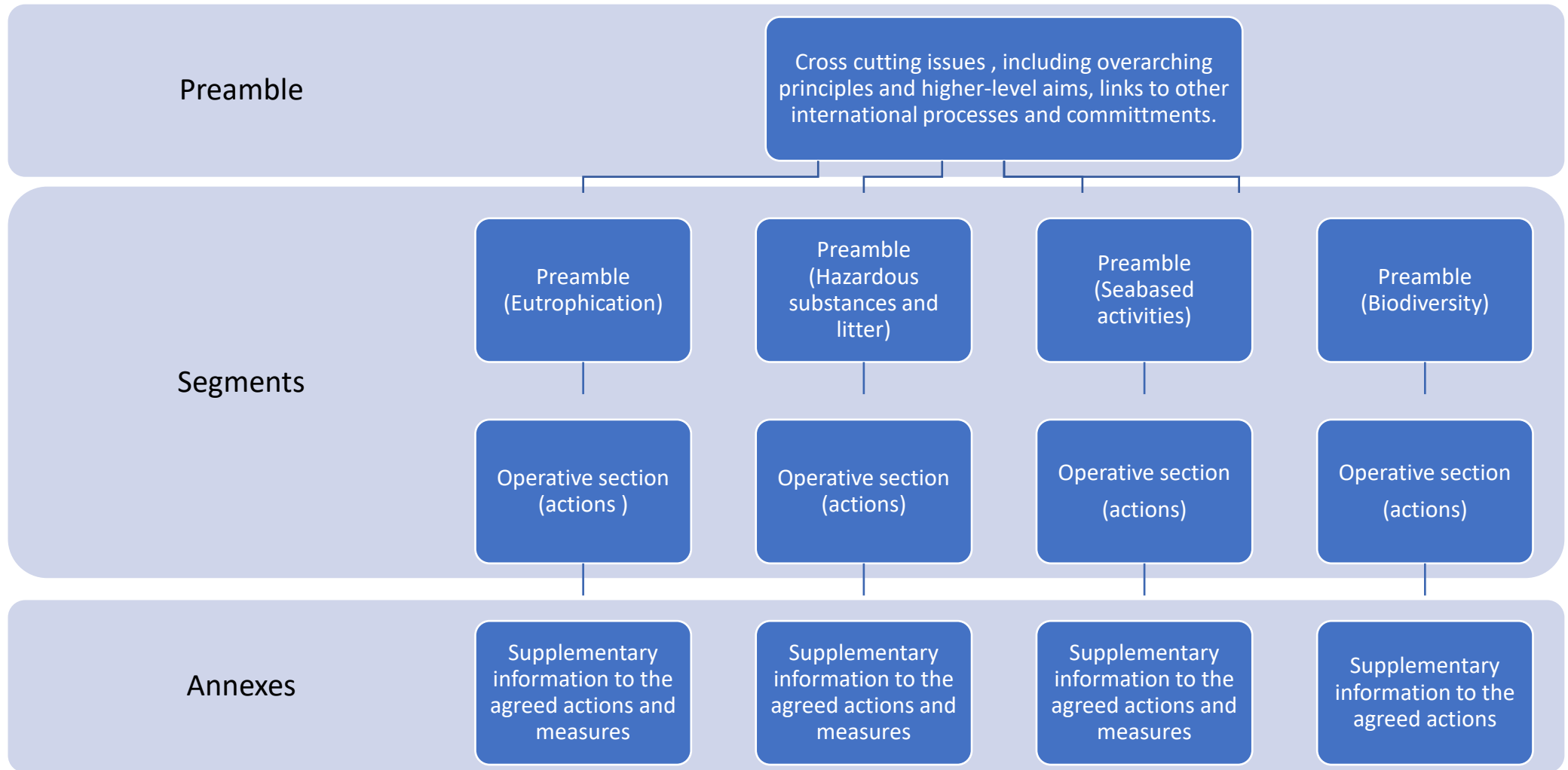


Figure 1. The outline for the structure of the updated BSAP

1) Preamble

Overarching preamble

Suggested length: Maximum 5-10 pages

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by the Drafting Group, assisted by the Secretariat, to be presented for comments to GEAR 23-2020 and HOD 59-2020.

The preamble of the BSAP will address issues that cut across the segments. The preamble should include overarching principles and higher-level aims from the Helsinki Convention, UN SDGs and other relevant policies, for example:

- **Implementation based on ecosystem approach;**
- **Reaching good environmental status;**
- **Be based on the precautionary principle;**
- **Sustainable consumption and production;**
- **Clean and environmentally sound technologies;**
- **Sustainable use of natural resources;**
- **Integration of climate change into policies.**

Climate change will be addressed as a key component of the preamble.

The preamble should also include a section explaining the rationale behind and showing the structure and function of the BSAP (e.g. what is a goal, what is an ecological objective, what is a management objective, how do they fit together, what is the rationale behind the segment division and how do the respective segments support each other, how could climate change influence them...).

There could also possibly be a timeline overview of the planned implementation of BSAP measures and actions based on the target years provided in the operative sections. For those with no specified target year, the end year of the BSAP would function as target year.

Segment Preamble

Suggested length: Maximum 2 pages including visualizations

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by Secretariat, further work to be taken on by respective lead countries in the Drafting Group. First drafts to be presented to WGs for comment in autumn 2020 and then to HOD 59-2020.

The updated BSAP will have a layered preamble which will also include segment-specific introductory text. Such text could focus on aspirations and strategic decision for the respective segment and also recall HELCOM recommendations and other relevant commitments associated to the respective segment. The aspiration to implement international conventions could also be part of the segment preamble.

The beginning of each segment could include in the same way and order:

- **Visualization of goal, ecological objectives and management objectives for segment;**
- Visualization of pressures and activities addressed by segment actions and measures (see proposals in Annex 1);
- **Link of segment to relevant climate change parameters and, if possible, key messages.;**
- Action areas;
- Link to relevant SDG;
- Include cross-references with other segments.

2) Operative sections

Operative sections, including the agreed actions, will be presented for each segment and associated goal of the updated BSAP.

With the more strategic and higher-level ambitions being expressed in introductory passages, the operative sections will focus on the plan for action.

Description of current state

Suggested length: Maximum ½ page

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by Secretariat, to be presented to WG meetings in autumn 2020 and then to HOD 59-2020.

Each operative section will be initiated by a brief description of the state of the Baltic Sea based on the latest HELCOM assessments ([Outcome HOD 56-2019, para 2.23](#)).

Description of desired state

Suggested length: Maximum ½ page

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by Secretariat, to be presented to WG meetings in autumn 2020 and then to HOD 59-2020.

This section will contain an elaboration of the HELCOM ecological objectives, representing the desired state of the environment or the acceptable level of pressure.

Actions

Suggested length: No page limitation

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by WGs in spring and autumn 2020, assisted by the Secretariat. The existing actions to be presented for comments and endorsement to HOD 58-2020 and all actions to be presented for comments to HOD 59-2020.

Overall, the targets and actions included in the updated BSAP should be practical, realistic, concrete and result-oriented, while maintaining a high level of ambition. In order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the actions included in the BSAP these should focus on targeting the sources of the problems, *inter alia*, human activities such as agriculture or fisheries, rather than dealing with the resulting symptoms. The actions to be included in the updated BSAP should also primarily target the main challenges facing the Baltic Sea environment. To ensure reaching the goal of the plan, actions should contain provisions to address new or emerging pressures.

With regard to the formulation of actions, to facilitate the reading and to clearly outline the plan for action the following has been agreed:

- Initiating words (WE AGREE, WE PROMOTE) will not be used in the operative segments;
- More detailed information on actions such as any lengthier descriptions of rationale behind them and potential effects of their implementation is to be provide as supplementary material;
- Actions should be formulated as concrete as possible in terms of aim or output and should specify a target year for implementation;
- Measures that can contribute directly to improving the state of the Baltic Sea will be presented separate from those actions that are aimed at supporting implementation of actions or other HELCOM activities (e.g. actions related to databases, mapping, assessments, guidelines).

However, HOD 57-2019 noted that that it may not always be clear how such a differentiation should be made and that it will be necessary to consider this from case to case.

With this approach the operative sections will include a straightforward plan of actions to be followed up by future reporting, structured according to the objectives and a common outline for each segment.

3) Supplementary information to the agreed actions

Suggested length: No page limitations

Suggested division of tasks in 2020: First draft to be prepared by WGs in autumn 2020, assisted by Secretariat. Draft to be presented to HOD 59-2020.

In addition to the main BSAP document additional information and guidance for future assessment of implementation can be annexed as supplementary material. Such information could summarize the agreed actions and also include e.g.:

- rationale behind actions;
- tentative information on effect of actions;
- if feasible, indicators to follow-up the implementation of the action.

The last point, to agree on 'indicators' for when an action is to be considered as accomplished would greatly facilitate the future follow-up and reporting but will depend on availability of time. Indicators for when actions are considered accomplished regionally is included in the HELCOM Explorer for the existing actions.

An example of how supplementary material could be collated in tabular form is provided in Table 1. The supplementary material could also be provided in the form of fact sheets if more practicable.

Table 1. Example of the supplementary information that could be provided for the agreed actions

Action	Target year	Rationale	Potential effect (if available)	Implemented by	Indicator for achievement

Supporting documents for the implementation of the updated BSAP

Supporting documents in this context include existing HELCOM documents, as well as documents which are to be adopted alongside the updated BSAP, which contain agreement on actions and/or measures e.g. HELCOM Recommendations, roadmaps, topic specific action plans, strategies etc. Documents that are adopted alongside the updated BSAP will remain as separate documents and not merged with the main BSAP document. Such documents will function as concrete support for implementing and achieving the overall visions and objectives of the updated BSAP. These supporting documents complement the BSAP document by offering the possibility to:

- allow for a higher level of specificity in outlining the planned work, setting targets and timelines etc. for a given topic;
- provide a more dynamic format for implementation, as they can be amended and updated as deemed necessary throughout the BSAP period;

- allow for continuity of work as some types of supporting documents e.g. HELCOM Recommendations, are not timebound.

However, the updated BSAP should include strategic decisions and central points from the RAPs and underlined that the follow-up of the RAPs should also be established when said RAP is adopted. This is also valid for other supporting documents.

Supporting documents that are expected to be adopted together with the updated BSAP include:

- Climate change fact sheet;
- Underwater noise action plan;
- Updated Marine Litter Action Plan;
- Regional MSP roadmap.

Other supporting documents include for example:

- Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy

[Additional information for the BSAP update process](#)

In addition to the HELCOM documents adopted alongside the adoption of the updated BSAP, there is also additional material that can be published as background information for the BSAP update process. Such material includes the summary report for the methodology and results of the sufficiency of measures (SOM) analysis, as well as the topic-specific reports that provide detailed information and results for each topic covered in the SOM analysis.

It could also be considered if publishing a short background report on the process of updating the BSAP would be useful in order to document the various steps in the process for future needs and for interested stakeholders.

Annex 1 Information for inclusion in the segments

Preliminary activity-pressure linkages based on mapping of land-based and sea-based activities vs proposed BSAP segments and the pressures they are causing; from document 2-4, HOD 56-2019. Goals have been updated based on outcome of HOD 57-2019. The lists will be compared to and complemented with information on the contribution of activities to pressures collected through the analysis of sufficiency of measures. The WGs will be invited to review the pressures and activities to be associated with each segment in the autumn 2020 meetings noting that there can be overlap across the segments.

Box 1. Eutrophication; input from land-based activities

Goal addressed:

- Baltic Sea unaffected by Eutrophication

Pressures addressed:

- Input of nutrients and organic matter

Cross-references with other segments:

- Reaching the objectives for eutrophication is a necessity to meet the goal of a 'Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient';
- Reaching the goal and objectives for sea-based activities is a requirement for reaching the goal for eutrophication.

Tentative activities addressed by HELCOM actions:

- Agriculture;
- Forestry;
- Urban land uses (e.g. stormwater);
- Waste treatment and disposal (including waste water treatment);
- Aquaculture, land-based.

Box 2. Hazardous substances and litter, input from land-based activities

Goal addressed:

- Baltic sea unaffected by Hazardous substances and litter

Cross-references with other segments:

- Reaching the objectives for hazardous substances and litter is a necessity to meet the goal of a 'Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient';
- Reaching the goal for sea-based activities is a requirement for reaching the goal for hazardous substances and litter.

Pressures addressed:

- Input of hazardous substances;
- Input of litter.

Tentative activities addressed by HELCOM actions with regard to;

- 1) Input of hazardous substances:
 - Agriculture (e.g. pesticides, pharmaceuticals);
 - Forestry;
 - Industrial uses (e.g. oil and gas refineries, industrial plants);
 - Waste treatment and disposal (including waste water treatment);
 - Production of energy (fossil fuel, nuclear);
 - Transportation.
- 2) Input of litter:
 - Industrial uses (e.g. oil and gas refineries, industrial plants)
 - Waste treatment and disposal (including wastewater treatment)
 - Tourism and leisure infrastructure and activities
 - Urban uses (e.g. construction sites)
 - Transportation (e.g. release from tires)

Box 3. Sea-based activities, including Maritime

Goal addressed:

- Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities

Cross-references with other segments:

- Reaching objectives for sea-based activities a necessity to meet the goal of a 'Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient';
- Reaching the goal for sea-based activities is a requirement for reaching the goal for eutrophication and hazardous substances and litter.

Pressures addressed:

- Input of nutrients;
- Input of hazardous substances;
- Input of marine litter;
- Loss and disturbance to the seabed;
- Disturbance of species;
- Extraction and mortality species (e.g. extraction of target species, incidental catches);
- Introduction of non-indigenous species;
- Introduction of underwater noise.

Tentative activities addressed by HELCOM actions:

- Shipping (e.g. transport and transport infrastructure);
- Production and transport of energy (e.g. operational wind farms, transmission cables);
- Tourism and leisure infrastructure and activities;
- Extraction of living resources (e.g. fishing, hunting, marine plant extraction);
- Extraction of non-living resources (e.g. mineral extraction, oil and gas extraction);
- Restructuring of coastline and seabed morphology (e.g. dredging);
- Aquaculture, marine (including infrastructure).

Box 4. Biodiversity

Goal addressed:

- Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient

Cross-reference to other segments:

- A healthy and resilient Baltic Sea ecosystem is the ultimate objective of the Baltic Sea Action Plan against which its entire performance is measured¹;
- Achieving the goal of a "Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient" requires that the goals of all other segments are met.

Pressures addressed:

- Not applicable; human activities and associated pressures are addressed in other segments.

Tentative activities addressed:

- Marine Protected Areas;
- Restoration of habitats;
- Reintroduction of species;
- Conservation and management plans.

¹ Note that this sentence is a proposed rewrite of the what was written in the original document 2-4 to HOD 56-2019. Original text was: Biodiversity serves as a holistic controlling element for the performance of the whole Action Plan.