



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

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

DG BSAP 2-2020

Online, 11 September 2020

Document title	Comments to the overarching preamble for the updated BSAP
Code	4-2
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	4 – Overarching preamble for the updated BSAP
Submission date	10.9.2020
Submitted by	Finland
Reference	

Background

The attached document includes comments by Finland to the draft overarching preamble in document 4-1.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the comments.

Preamble

The Commission, represented by

[XYZ

...

...]

ASSEMBLED in XYZ, Germany, on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Helsinki Commission, on XX October 2021;

UNDERSCORING the value of the unique marine ecosystem of the Baltic Sea area, its exceptional hydrographical and ecological characteristics and the particular sensitivity of its living resources to environmental change;

RECALLING the provisions of the Convention on the Protection of the 1992 Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area;

RECALLING moreover the HELCOM vision of “a healthy Baltic Sea environment, with diverse biological components functioning in balance, resulting in a good environmental/ecological status and supporting a wide range of sustainable human economic and social activities” having biodiversity at its core and which builds upon concepts such as “favourable conservation status” and “good ecological and good environmental status”;

RECALLING furthermore the ~~adopted~~ HELCOM ecological objectives, which describe the good environmental/ecological status we seek to achieve for the Baltic Sea;

RECALLING the aim of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), as adopted in 2007, to restore the good environmental status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021;

Acknowledging that the work of HELCOM has led to significant environmental improvements in many areas and specifically that progress in implementing the 2007 BSAP has contributed to preventing further deterioration of the environment of the Baltic Sea;

RECOGNIZING with great concern, however, that the status of the Baltic Sea marine environment continues to be unsatisfactory as a result of pressures from human activities and that recovery is not yet sufficient to achieve the goals and ecological objectives of the BSAP ~~by the target year of 2021;~~

NOTING with concern that the effects of climate change on the Baltic Sea are already evident and that climate change will continue to have an increasingly significant impact on the Baltic Sea ecosystem, necessitating even more stringent action;

RECALLING the decision by the 2018 Brussels Ministerial Meeting to update the BSAP by 2021 at the latest, with the aim of elaborating a robust action plan for continuous achievement of the agreed HELCOM vision of a healthy Baltic Sea marine environment that will, in addition to existing commitments to be fulfilled by 2021, address new issues, on the basis of the ~~commitments made in the 2018 Ministerial Declaration and further deliberations during the BSAP updating process;~~

NOTING that, based on HELCOM monitoring and assessment work on the state of the Baltic marine environment and the further development of the four original strategic goals underpinning the 2007 BSAP, four updated strategic goals, reflecting the jointly identified major environmental problems in the Baltic Sea, have been adopted, describing the desired state of the marine environment, namely a “Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication”, “Baltic Sea unaffected by hazardous substances and litter”, “environmentally-sustainable sea-based activities”, all of which will lead to a “healthy and resilient Baltic Sea ecosystem”;

RECALLING also that, in accordance with the decision by the 2018 Ministerial Meeting, the updated BSAP should be based on the ecosystem approach, fully use the precautionary principle, be supported by fit-for-purpose scientific research, be strongly communicated with stakeholders, enable knowledge sharing between science and policy across all levels, be developed in a participatory and transparent way at regional and local levels, including all appropriate stakeholders, and give due consideration to economic and social impacts of the measures to be taken to meet its objectives;

UNDERSCORING the need to integrate environmental objectives with economic and socio-economic goals in order to advance and strengthen the three interdependent pillars of sustainable development;

ACKNOWLEDGING the significant cost implications of not taking actions against eutrophication and other threats to the Baltic Sea;

AGREEING that in selecting the necessary management measures within different sectors, focus shall be put on cost benefits and cost-efficiency taking into account economic and social sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region;

FURTHER AGREEING that the effectiveness of action taken shall continue to be evaluated by using appropriate indicators to measure the progress towards the targets, allowing for the adjustments needed to ensure that the objectives are achieved;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the environmental as well as production targets in the various segments of the present plan are based on best available knowledge at the time of its elaboration and that, in line with the principles of adaptive management, the objectives and targets should be periodically reviewed and revised using a harmonised approach and the most up-to-date information;

~~**UNDERSCORING** the importance of the science-based approach in developing and implementing the targets concerned;~~

~~**STRESSING** that HELCOM's monitoring and assessment programme will continue to contribute to an improved scientific understanding of the marine environment that will in turn feed into the periodic review of the objectives, associated targets and indicators, and will be decisive when determining the need for further management measures;~~

APPRECIATING the positive contributions made by Intergovernmental Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations through their work and to the work of HELCOM towards preserving and protecting the Baltic Sea Area and ensuring a prudent utilisation of its marine goods and services;

~~**REITERATING** the need to coordinate and harmonize the work in the context of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan with various ongoing initiatives at the regional and national levels, including the EU Marine Strategy Directive, the EU Maritime Policy, the EU Biodiversity Strategy, as well as other pertinent EU legislation and programmes and the Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation;~~

REITERATING the determination of HELCOM Contracting Parties to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development as well as the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework adopted under the Convention on Biodiversity and to engage with other relevant regional and global processes;

WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO to and seeking synergies with national legislation, international agreements and the legislation of the European Union,;

HAS AGREED TO THE FOLLOWING UPDATED BALTIC SEA ACTION PLAN AIMED AT ACHIEVING GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS IN THE BALTIC SEA BY 20XY