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Background

HOD 58-2020 requested DG BSAP to propose a structure for the horizontal actions segment. DG BSAP 3-2020 agreed on the overall structure of the horizontal actions segment including a joint introduction to the segment followed by topic-wise sections and also agreed that the order of topics should be climate change, monitoring, MSP, economic and social analyses (ESA) and financing. DG BSAP 3-2020 invited the Secretariat, in cooperation with the relevant HELCOM groups, to draft the introductory texts for topics of the horizontal actions segment. HOD 58A-2020 agreed in general on the proposed outline for the financing section that is a part of the horizontal actions segment, and invited Finland and Sweden, with the help of the Secretariat, to submit the first draft of the financing section to HOD 59-2020.

The attached document includes the draft introductory texts for the horizontal actions segment that were submitted to HOD 59-2020 as part of the first full draft of the updated BSAP.

The introductory texts for MSP and ESA have been drafted in cooperation with the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and ESA Network, respectively. The introductory text for climate change is pending the finalization of the Climate Change Fact Sheet.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of and comment the draft introductory texts for the horizontal actions segment.

Horizontal actions

Introduction

To achieve the ultimate aim of the updated BSAP, good environmental status for the Baltic sea, the Plan formulates four goals. While there are interlinkages between all of these goals and the measures required to achieve them, they are nevertheless sufficiently distinct and distinguishable to be addressed in separate segments of the Plan. By contrast, the topics included in this segment are by their nature cross-cutting, or “horizontal”, thus potentially affecting the implementation of all elements of the Plan as a whole. The topics under BSAP which have been identified as cross-cutting are:

- Climate change;
- Monitoring;
- Maritime spatial planning (MSP);
- Economic and social analyses (ESA);
- Financing.

Each of these five topics is relevant to the achievement of the various goals of the updated BSAP, respectively the Plan as a whole. In some cases, there are unidirectional, bidirectional or multidirectional causal relationships. Thus, there are interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity loss while the effects of e.g. shipping contribute to climate change. Monitoring and socio-economic analyses, for their part, serve to examine and quantify the direct and indirect effects of the implementation of, or failure to implement, the measures included in the Plan. Against the background of HELCOM findings on the current state of the Baltic Sea and cumulative environmental impacts, the role of MPAs and other aspects of ecosystem-based management, MSP is a key and increasingly important instrument in working towards GES. Finally, the successful implementation of the Plan is contingent on the availability of sufficient funding.

These examples serve to illustrate the cross-cutting character of these topics, due to which they are addressed in depth in the present joint horizontal segment.

Climate change

[The High-level Segment of HELCOM 41-2020 emphasized the importance of recognizing climate change as a cross-cutting topic and the need for more knowledge on the impacts and consequence of climate change. The BSAP should therefore also be regarded as a climate adaptation instrument to strengthen the resilience of the Baltic Sea ecosystem and minimize negative effects of climate change on society.]

The HELCOM Climate Change Fact Sheet is in the process of being finalized and is intended to function as a supporting/background document to the updated BSAP. The introductions and conclusion sections of the Fact Sheet are intended to be used as a basis for drafting the introduction to this section.]

Monitoring

Monitoring is a well-established function of the Helsinki Convention, with coordinated monitoring of physical, chemical and biological variables of the open sea of the Baltic Sea carried out since 1979. The data stemming from these joint monitoring programmes functions as the backbone supporting much of HELCOM's other work. It provides the basis for understanding a wide variety of parameters as well as consideration of transboundary impacts, such as eutrophication or hazardous substances and the state of transboundary features such as mobile species.

HELCOM monitoring is closely linked to periodical environmental assessments and is directly supported by the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy. The Strategy sets out the basis for how the HELCOM Contracting Parties commit themselves to design and carry out their national monitoring programmes and work together to produce and update joint assessments. The HELCOM monitoring then provides the necessary data needed for the regular assessments of the state of the Baltic Sea, the human pressures and their impacts affecting the state. It also enables evaluations of the extent to which measures are effective and contributes to the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and the progress towards the visions, goals and objectives of the BSAP. For those CPs who are also EU member states the joint monitoring also contributes to fulfilling the requirements of the EU MSFD or WFD, HD and BD.

HELCOM monitoring can also be utilized to detect climate change and its impacts on the Baltic Sea marine ecosystem over time. Sites with relevant long-term data records are sustained, whilst accommodating improved data collection techniques where appropriate, thus maintaining long term data series needed to identify change over time. This can enable assessment of the ability of the marine environment to cope with, adapt to or recover from the effects of climate changes.

Maritime spatial planning

Maritime Spatial Planning is a process to support integrated management of sea-based human activities and thus reduce their negative impacts on various components of the marine environment, contributing to the achievement of goals and objectives of different BSAP segments. It safeguards biodiversity, promotes sustainable use of marine resources and balances interests of stakeholders also considering international environmental commitments. As an integrated tool MSP contributes to climate change adaptation and mitigation increasing the climate resilience.

Maritime Spatial Planning has important added value to the BSAP as it is the only process that considers spatial perspective. Unlike marine protection measures that focus on single human activities or components of marine ecosystems, MSP is based on a comprehensive, coherent across borders and forward-looking analysis of marine space use with a purpose of identifying preferred and optimal locations for sea-based activities.

Maritime Spatial Planning supports sustainable development and sustainable blue/marine economy applying an ecosystem-based approach. It also considers social, economic, cultural and other relevant aspects and enhances marine nature values, facilitates nature conservation and improves marine ecosystem services.

Economic and social analyses

Economic and social analyses of the environment provide tools for demonstrating the interaction between the ecosystem and the social-economic system. They illustrate the importance of the Baltic Sea marine environment to people and society, the well-being of current and future generations, and national and regional economies.

Economic and social analyses reveal the market and non-market benefits people obtain from the use and existence of marine and coastal areas. For instance, they show the economic values of human activities and the benefits people derive from the knowledge that the Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and its species are

thriving. They show what it costs to implement measures to improve the state of the environment, and help identifying the cost-effective way of achieving environmental goals, thus supporting the efficient use of society's limited resources. Combined information on the benefits and costs enables assessing the economic efficiency of policies and environmental objectives.

In recent years, economic and social aspects of protecting the Baltic Sea have been advanced within HELCOM by establishing the HELCOM expert network on economic and social analyses (ESA) and carrying out regional economic and social analyses of the use of marine waters, costs of degradation from not achieving a good status of the marine environment, and sufficiency, effectiveness and costs of measures. However, methodological and practical challenges and knowledge gaps remain, as existing economic and social analyses do not cover all the relevant and important aspects of how the marine environment and people are related.

The BSAP includes a commitment to use and further advance the regional economic and social analyses for policy support. The actions for economic and social analyses in the BSAP describe priority areas for developing and implementing these analyses for the Baltic Sea region. Implementing the actions supports the further integration of economic and social considerations to the protection of the Baltic Sea. The actions provide regionally coherent data and results to support ecosystem-based management, sustainable use of marine resources, and development of efficient regional and national policies, including the BSAP and maritime spatial planning.

Financing

The economic benefits of achieving a good status with regard to eutrophication, biodiversity and other aspect of the ecosystem in the Baltic Sea are evident and documented by impressive figures.

Costs of protecting the Baltic Sea (**text to be added based on the work of the ESA network**)

Cost-effectiveness of measures to be included in the updated BSAP (**text to be added possibly from the work of the ESA network and ACTION project**)

In this respect, all Contracting Parties and HELCOM Observers shall investigate how to make available funding for the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, taking into account especially the need to connect priorities within the different sectors in which projects are being chosen for financing.

It should be underlined that increased public and private investment is necessary for actions according to the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan and to achieve a healthy Baltic Sea. Providing appropriate economic incentives is a central measure to incentivize such investments.

The private sector, financial institutions as well as non-profit foundations are therefore invited to join in the efforts to restore the good environmental status of the Baltic Sea, which also supports a growing sustainable blue economy in the region.

Contracting Parties will mobilise available private and public funding sources to implement the BSAP [as appropriate] and where possible also mobilise external funding in the context of *inter alia* the World Bank, the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, The Blue Action Fund, the Nordic Investment Bank and others.

The EU and those of its member states that are Parties to the Convention will dedicate funding to the implementation of the updated HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, notably through programmes funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds in the 2021-2027 programming period and by funding adequate measures under the Common Agricultural Policy. They commit to taking into account priorities of

the revised Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) and its Policy Areas aiming to save the Baltic Sea in the programming and implementation of post-2020 relevant programs;

In that context, the Baltic Sea Action Plan Fund hosted by NIB/NEFCO shall be a tool for supporting the implementation of the updated BSAP and Contracting Parties will contribute to the Fund, with a view to replenishing the Fund so that it can provide funding to all actors interested in contributing to the aims and objectives of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.