



Outcome of the Fifth Meeting of the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan

(DG BSAP 5-2021)

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Outcome of the Fifth Meeting of the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan

(DG BSAP 5-2021)

Introduction

0.1 The Fifth Meeting of the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP 5-2021) was held online on 11 February 2021.

0.2 All the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention, except for Poland, attended the Meeting, as well as Observers from CCB and WWF. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Rüdiger Stempel, HELCOM Executive Secretary. Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, Associate Professional Secretary from the HELCOM Secretariat acted as secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda of the Meeting as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2 Actions in the updated BSAP

2.1 The Meeting took note of the updated guidance for drafting the updated BSAP (document 2-1, **Presentation 1**).

2.2 The Meeting took note of the connection between the HELCOM Science Agenda and BSAP (document 2-3, **Presentation 1**).

2.3 The Meeting took note that the Segment Team meetings after HELCOM 42-2021 will discuss target years for the actions (**Presentation 1**).

2.4 The Meeting took note of the actions in the horizontal actions segment (document 2-2) and further considered and developed them based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received. The Meeting agreed that the formulation of some of the actions is already satisfactory (coloured green in the sheet "Horizontal actions" in the Excel attachment to the Outcome) and that these actions can be submitted to HELCOM 42-2020 for provisional agreement. The Meeting did not support the inclusion of two proposed actions to the updated BSAP (coloured red).

2.5 The Meeting further agreed that reformulated actions for which the content is considered acceptable but which were proposed for merging will be shared for review (coded: HAE08-HAE11, HAE13-HAE14 and HAE16-HAE18), with input to be provided by **22 February 2021**. Should no objections be raised, the formulation of these actions will be considered agreed and they will be included in the submission to HELCOM 42-2020 for provisional agreement.

2.6 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of DG BSAP will focus on the actions that need further work (coded: HAE06, HAE19 and HAE20).

2.7 The Meeting considered the inclusion of actions related to hot spots and awareness raising under dedicated topics in the horizontal actions segment. The Meeting noted the importance of both topics while highlighting the need to avoid redundancy and repetition in the BSAP.

2.8 The Meeting pointed out that already now the topic of hot spots concerns both the eutrophication and hazardous substances segments and considered it is possible that the scope of hot spots might be widened in the future. The Meeting also pointed out that it is important to link awareness raising to specific topics and processes.

- 2.9 The Meeting invited Russia, with the assistance of the Secretariat, to make a text proposal on how the topic of hot spots could be included in the horizontal actions segment and submit it to HELCOM 42-2021 for consideration. The Meeting took note of the suggestion that the introductory text to the hot spot section of the horizontal action segment could consider hot spots as a tool to achieve objectives for other segments including respective references to these segments and contain commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of the JCP programme launched in 1992.
- 2.10 The Meeting invited Estonia to make a text proposal on how to include knowledge raising in the horizontal actions segment and submit it to HELCOM 42-2021 for consideration.
- 2.11 The Meeting acknowledged the actions in the Biodiversity, Eutrophication, Hazardous substances and litter, and Sea-based activities segments for which the formulation was agreed by the Segment Teams (coloured green in the Excel attachment to document 2-2).
- 2.12 The Meeting reviewed the actions and noted that the actions for which the formulation has been agreed to be satisfactory (coloured green in the Excel attachment to the Outcome) will be submitted to HELCOM 42-2021 for provisional agreement. The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to lift remaining study reservations on these actions **by 22 February 2021** or alternatively and by the same deadline make concrete text proposals or provide concrete guidance to the Segment Teams for rephrasing these actions.
- 2.13 The Meeting made new proposals for rephrasing some of the actions for which the formulations had been agreed by the Segment Teams (actions coded: HLN08, SN05, SE05, SN08/SN09, SE13, coloured blue in the Excel attachment to the Outcome), invited the Secretariat to circulate these new proposals in writing as well as invited the Contracting Parties to inform the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) of their positions on the new proposals **by 22 February 2021**. The Meeting also invited the relevant Segment Teams to reconsider two actions (coded SE35 and EN02) based on the comments received.
- 2.14 The Meeting noted concerns by Sweden with regard to amendments made by DG BSAP SEA 2-2021 to some of the maritime related actions, and the view that may need to be re-considered by DG BSAP SEA 3-2021.
- 2.15 The Meeting took note of the reservation on the actions by Latvia due to ongoing national consultations and noted that Latvia can lift its reservation on the actions concerning marine litter.
- 2.16 The Meeting noted that Denmark has a general reservation due to ongoing national coordination in relation to endorsement of all actions.
- 2.17 The Meeting took note that Sweden is planning on making a proposal for rephrasing actions on underwater noise to be submitted to DG BSAP SEA 3-2021 and invited interested parties to contact Sweden (Mattias Rust, mattias.rust@regeringskansliet.se) if they wish to take part in drafting such a proposal.
- 2.18 The Meeting took note that the EU has identified two possible gaps concerning the set of actions: 1) the focus of the actions is on protection of habitats but there are no actions to cover conservation of broad habitat types as defined under the MSFD, 2) while many actions target bycatch, actions on reducing impact on the seabed from fishing activities are lacking. The Meeting invited DG BSAP BIO and DG BSAP SEA, respectively, to consider these possible gaps.
- 2.19 Regarding possible gaps, the Meeting recalled the agreement by HOD 59-2020 that if gaps are identified in the drafting process by Segment Teams, the actions that were not endorsed could be considered with a view to filling these gaps and that, in exceptional cases where in well-grounded circumstances a clear gap is identified during further drafting in spring 2021, an additional action may be prepared and presented to HODs for consideration.
- 2.20 The Meeting took note of the proposal on strategic actions on marine litter and supported it in general (document 2-2-Add.1). The Meeting also took note of the proposal by Sweden to include an additional strategic action on a reduction target for unnecessary plastic.
- 2.21 The Meeting took note of the progress in drafting actions related to the CDB process and noted that some additional guidance may be required to support the drafting of some of these actions.

2.22 The Meeting considered the questions from the Segment Team meetings (document 2-2, **Presentation 1**).

2.23 The Meeting took note that there are actions on ongoing cooperation, e.g. with IMO and EMSA, which do not have a target year and acknowledged the importance of these actions. The Meeting agreed that the actions on ongoing cooperation under all segments should be placed at the beginning of the operative section to separate them from the actions that have a clear target year.

2.24 The Meeting agreed that the cross-referencing of actions in different segments of the BSAP will be handled by coding the actions and including the relevant codes for reference, both in the lists of actions in the BSAP itself and as part of the supplementary information. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to make the first proposal on the cross-references to be reviewed by DG BSAP.

2.25 The Meeting acknowledged that some of the actions under different segments are linked in a way that an action in one segment could be a prerequisite for implementing another action in another segment and highlighted that this needs to be considered when reformulating actions, so as to not impede implementation at a later stage. The Meeting noted that the structure of implementation following the adoption of the BSAP is not aligned with the segments and that in the process of incorporating the actions into the workplans of the WGs concrete steps to ensure implementation will be identified and, should any gaps have appeared in the drafting of the actions, this can be bridged as part of this process.

2.26 The Meeting agreed that actions BE01 and BE05 should be included at the beginning of the operative section of the Biodiversity segment.

2.27 The Meeting agreed that the Segment Teams can meet based on need and encouraged the organization of written procedures including concrete text proposals instead of and/or prior to the Segment Team meetings.

Agenda Item 3 Overarching preamble and introduction

3.1 The Meeting took note of the new version of the overarching preamble and introduction drafted by the Secretariat based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received (document 3-1). The Meeting further considered and developed the overarching preamble and introduction as contained in **Annex 2** and agreed to continue discussion on the new proposals to the texts placed in brackets at HELCOM 42-2021.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the Swedish proposal for additions to the updated BSAP with regard to climate change (document 3-2).

3.3 The Meeting thanked Sweden for the proposal and welcomed it in general. The Meeting made the following comments regarding the proposal:

- The wording in the proposed paragraph 12bis for the overarching preamble should be reconsidered. NDC refers to Nationally Determined Contributions and thus might not be appropriate for HELCOM but only be used by parties to the Paris Agreement.
- The style of the proposed wordings for the horizontal actions segment should be changed to the agreed style, avoiding a formal preambular style.
- It is not clear that the proposed wording “WE agree to minimise emissions of GHG from all HELCOM processes and activities” refers to minimise emissions in the everyday work by HELCOM and the Secretariat, e.g. by organizing meetings online. The formulation of the proposal should therefore be clarified.
- The proposed wordings “WE agree to act as a forerunner for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from shipping” and “WE agree that all measures that strengthen the Baltic marine ecosystem resilience and resistance to physical changes induced by climate change should be regarded as climate adaptation measures” should be clarified.

3.4 The Meeting invited Sweden to submit a background document outlining the reasoning underpinning the proposal as well as a new proposal on the wording to HELCOM 42-2021 based on the comments by DG BSAP 5-2021.

3.5 The Meeting took note that while CCB supports the proposed strategic decisions on climate change, the view of CCB is that the relevant steps for reaching these goals are lacking in the operative section.

3.6 The Meeting agreed that there is a need for further discussion on the concept of strategic decisions at HELCOM 42-2021.

Agenda Item 4 Segment introductions

4.1 The Meeting took note of the segment introductions that were further drafted by the Secretariat based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received (document 4-1).

4.2 The Meeting took note of comments to the horizontal actions segment by Denmark and Germany as included in **Annex 3** and agreed to continue the discussion on the proposed changes at HELCOM 42-2021.

4.3 The Meeting took note of the proposal by CCB to include a mention of insurance companies to the passage on financing and invited CCB to submit a written proposal including background information to HELCOM 42-2021.

4.4 The Meeting agreed that the ecological objectives should be removed from the text boxes in the segment introductions and be placed in the description of the desired state, with subsequent descriptive elaboration on the ecological objectives.

4.5 The Meeting took note that Estonia is not yet able to lift their study reservation on the tables on nutrient input ceilings in the introduction to the Eutrophication segment. The Meeting highlighted the importance of the nutrient reduction targets that have already been agreed on in the current BSAP while now they are made more specific and updated based on the latest information.

4.6 The Meeting agreed that the text and tables on input ceilings for transboundary rivers and other sources and accounting for extra reductions in the introduction to the Eutrophication segment are too technical for the introductory part. The Meeting recommended to simplify tables and place them together with other technical aspects related to implementation of the HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme in an annex either to the segment or to the BSAP.

4.7 The Meeting pointed out that the content included under the title “action areas/strategic decisions” currently varies across the segments and should be better harmonized. With respect to the eutrophication segment, the Meeting recommended to move the description of nutrients sources from the text on strategic decisions to the “description of current state” and focus the strategic decision section on targets related to the input of nutrients as the central pillar of the HELCOM work on eutrophication.

4.8 The Meeting took note of the comment by Sweden that action areas differ largely between segments and could be removed. Parts of the content could instead be reformulated for strategic statements/decisions and be moved to the operative section. Gaps should not be included in BSAP that should be focused on solutions. The action list was also proposed to be structured in thematic blocks in line with objectives and possibly with subthemes as appropriate.

4.9 The Meeting took note of the comment by Germany to the introduction to the Sea-based activities segment pointing out that it is not correct to refer to discharge of ballast water, food waste, cargo residues and AFS as largely unregulated. The Meeting noted that Germany offered to send a proposal for a reformulation of this sentence after the meeting.

4.10 The Meeting took note of the comment by Russia to the introduction to the Sea-based activities segment proposing to include offshore wind farms to both the description of current and desired state.

4.11 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to submit new versions of the segment introductions to HELCOM 42-2021 taking into account the guidance and comments given.

4.12 The Meeting took note of the proposal by Germany to change one of the management objectives of the Sea-based activities segment to “Minimize the contribution to eutrophication and THE INPUT OF hazardous substances and litter” and the proposal by Russia to change one of the ecological and one of the management objectives of the Sea-based activities segment to “No OR MINIMAL harm to marine life from manmade noise” and “Minimize noise to ACCEPTABLE levels that do not SERIOUSLY affect marine life” respectively.

4.13 The Meeting recalled that HELCOM 41-2020 agreed on the set of HELCOM objectives for the updated BSAP, taking note that there may be need for adjustments to individual objectives or proposals on additional objectives as found relevant in the further BSAP update process.

4.14 The Meeting agreed to revisit the proposals by Germany and Russia on adjusting the objectives at HELCOM 42-2021 while recalling that HOD 59-2020 agreed that the main focus of the drafting in spring 2021 should be on the actions.

4.15 The Meeting considered whether there should be references included in the segment introductions and agreed that there could be limited use of references included as footnotes with a maximum of 10 references per segment as a guiding limit.

Agenda Item 5 Next meetings

5.1 The Meeting agreed that the meeting of DG BSAP will be held after the Segment Team meetings have been held in the end of March or beginning of April and invited the Secretariat to make a doodle poll to schedule the date.

Agenda Item 6 Any other business

6.1 The Meeting did not discuss any other business.

Agenda Item 7 Outcome of the Meeting

7.1 The draft outcome was prepared by the Secretariat and adopted via correspondence.

Annex 1. List of participants

Name	Representing	Name of organization	Email address
Nathia Brandtberg	Denmark	Ministry of Environment	nathb@mfvm.dk
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Rene Reisner	Estonia	Ministry of the Environment	rene.reisner@envir.ee
Liis Kikas	Estonia	Ministry of the Environment	Liis.Kikas@envir.ee
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Maria Laamanen	Finland	Ministry of the Environment	maria.laamanen@ym.fi
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Susanne Heitmüller	Germany, Chair of MARITIME	Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH)	susanne.heitmueller@bsh.de
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Nils Höglund	HELCOM Observer	CCB	nils.hoglund@ccb.se
Aleksei Lotman	HELCOM Observer	(ELF on behalf of) WWF	alex@elfond.ee

Rüdiger Stempel	Chair of DG BSAP	HELCOM Secretariat	rudiger.stempel@helcom.fi
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Annex 2. Overarching preamble and introduction

Draft overarching preamble for the updated BSAP

1. We, the Ministers of the Environment of the Baltic Sea coastal states and the Commissioner for the Environment of the European Commission, assembled in Lübeck, Germany, on XY October 2021, on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Helsinki Commission:
2. **RECALL** the provisions of the 1992 Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention);
3. **REITERATE** the commitment of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention to restoring a thriving and resilient Baltic Sea ecosystem, as expressed in the HELCOM vision of “a healthy Baltic Sea environment, with diverse biological components functioning in balance, resulting in good environmental status and supporting a wide range of sustainable human economic and social activities”;
4. **ACKNOWLEDGE** that the work of HELCOM has led to significant environmental improvements in many areas and specifically that progress in implementing the 2007 Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) has contributed to preventing further deterioration of the environment of the Baltic Sea;
5. **NOTE** with great concern, however, that the goals of the 2007 BSAP were not achieved by 2021 as envisioned, and that the Baltic Sea area is still heavily affected by multiple pressures caused by human activities;
6. **NOTE**, in particular, that: (a) eutrophication, which results from excess nutrient loading to the sea and, partly due to the time lag between measures and effects, continues to heavily impact on the Baltic Sea; (b) levels of hazardous substances are still elevated [or unknown] and a cause for concern; (c) invasive alien species are still being introduced into the Baltic Sea; (d) marine litter is a pressure of special concern; (e) around half of the seabed is potentially disturbed by human activity ; (f) other pressures such as underwater noise disturb marine life; (g) overall the unfavourable conservation status of Baltic marine biodiversity is widespread as a result of human activities, with several species still in danger of becoming extinct, a poor status of most of the assessed habitats and various biotopes and habitats at risk of disappearing, as well as food webs showing signs of deterioration;
7. **REITERATE**, moreover, 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, among other things in the global framework established by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, as well as continued research and adaptive management to mitigate the effects, of and strengthen the resilience of the Baltic Sea to climate change;
8. **UNDERScore** that we must continue to strive for good environmental status since the current state of the Baltic Sea marine environment remains unsatisfactory as a result of pressures from land- and sea-based human activities and that recovery is not yet sufficient to achieve the goals of the BSAP;
9. **RECALL** 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 that will retain at least the level of ambition of the 2007 plan and will address new issues in addition to the existing commitments to be fulfilled by 2021 and will be aimed at achieving the agreed HELCOM vision of a healthy Baltic Sea marine environment;

[STRESS the continued need to safeguard the safety of navigation and with a view to prevent accidents and pollution from ships]

~~9-10.~~ **RECALL** also the Declaration adopted by the Ministers of the Environment, Maritime Economy, Agriculture and Fisheries of EU Baltic Sea Member States and of the Commissioner for ‘Environment, Oceans and Fisheries’ on September 28, 2020 committing to jointly boosting efforts to bring the Baltic to a good environmental status;

~~10-11.~~ **AFFIRM** that, in order to address all relevant aspects of the ecosystem and the emerging challenges of marine management, the goals underpinning the updated BSAP are a “Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication”, a “Baltic Sea unaffected by hazardous substances and litter”, supporting “environmentally-sustainable sea-based activities”, all of which will lead to a “healthy and resilient Baltic Sea ecosystem”;

~~11-12.~~ **ACKNOWLEDGE** the significant cost implications of not taking action against the varied threats to the Baltic Sea ecosystem and **NOTE**, for example, that according to the most recent “State of the Baltic Sea” report losses in recreational values alone due to the deterioration of the marine environment are estimated to be 1-2 billion euros annually and that a significant amelioration of the undesirable status regarding eutrophication, is estimated to result in annual economic benefits in the order of 4 billion Euros across all relevant sectors of the economy;

~~12-13.~~ **UNDERSCORE**, therefore, the socio-economic benefits good environmental status of the Baltic Sea and of ~~of~~ implementing the measures and actions contained in the BSAP with a view to achieving good environmental status;

~~13-14.~~ **STRESS** that the achievement of good environmental status for the Baltic Sea will require major efforts and transformational change in all sectors of the economy affecting the sea, including agriculture, fisheries, tourism, logistics, transportation and manufacturing, and necessitates among other things an increase in efficiency in the use of resources and a transition to a clean and sustainable circular economy and carbon neutrality;

~~14-15.~~ **UNDERSCORE** the need to integrate environmental objectives with social and economic as well as socio-economic goals in order to advance sustainable development and **STRESS** the need for coherent spatial planning of human activities at sea across the region, applying an ecosystem-based approach;

~~15-16.~~ **STRESS** the continued need for strong regional and cross-sectoral cooperation in working towards achieving good environmental status, involving relevant international, European and national organizations, financing [and insurance] institutions, scientific and research institutions, civil society and the private sector;

~~16-17.~~ **ACKNOWLEDGE** the positive contributions made by intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations towards preserving and protecting the Baltic Sea Area and working towards a prudent utilisation of its marine goods and services and

~~17-18.~~ **NOTE** with gratification that the updated BSAP was developed in a participatory and transparent way at the, involving all appropriate stakeholders

~~18-19.~~ **WELCOME** that it is based on the ecosystem approach, the precautionary principle, and relevant scientific research, enables knowledge sharing between science and policy across all levels, and gives due consideration to economic and social impacts of the measures to be taken to meet its objectives;

~~19-20.~~ **REITERATE** 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 and **STRESS** the role of HELCOM in leading the regional efforts to this effect and as an important and recognized contributor in the context of international ocean governance;

~~20-21.~~ **REITERATE** the need to coordinate and harmonize the work in the context of the HELCOM BSAP, our strategic programme of measures and action, with various political and instruments and ongoing initiatives at the international, European, regional and national levels, including in particular the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the European Green Deal, as well as all other pertinent EU legislation and programmes and all pertinent legislation and policies of the Russian Federation, including the Maritime Doctrine and the Strategy for development of maritime activities until 2030 of the Russian Federation;

~~21-22.~~ **AGREE** 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;

~~22-23.~~ **ACKNOWLEDGE** that the environmental 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 targets should be periodically reviewed and revised using a harmonised approach and the most up-to-date information;

~~23-24.~~ **STRESS** the continued validity of existing HELCOM Recommendations also after adoption of the present BSAP;

~~24-25.~~ **AGREE** to realize all actions and commitments in the updated BSAP by the dates specified in the plan, with a view to finalizing implementation of the BSAP as a whole by 2030 at the latest;

~~25-26.~~ **WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO**, and seeking synergies with, national legislation, international agreements and the legislation of the European Union, as well as the legislation of the Russian Federation;

~~26-27.~~ **ADOPT THE FOLLOWING UPDATED BALTIC SEA ACTION PLAN, AIMED AT ACHIEVING GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS IN THE BALTIC SEA**

About

The Baltic Sea Action Plan, or BSAP, is HELCOM's strategic programme of measures and actions for achieving good environmental status of our sea, ultimately leading to a Baltic in a healthy state.

Initially adopted by the HELCOM Contracting Parties – the nine Baltic Sea countries plus the European Union – on 15 November 2007 during the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting held in Krakow, Poland, the original BSAP had set 2021 as the target year for achieving its ecological objectives – which weren't fully met by then as indicated by various HELCOM assessments.

But because the BSAP has, nonetheless, delivered unprecedented results and considerably improved the ecological state of the Baltic Sea, the HELCOM Contracting Parties decided to update the plan. The revised BSAP was consequently adopted during the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting held in Lübeck, Germany on 20 October 2021.

The updated BSAP is based on the initial plan, maintaining the same level of ambition and retaining all previously agreed on actions that are still to be implemented.

The update is also an opportunity to include new actions and measures to strengthen existing efforts and to address emerging or previously unaddressed challenges such as marine litter ~~and plastics~~, pharmaceuticals, underwater noise, disturbance to the seabed, and the effects of climate change.

Guided by the HELCOM vision of *“a healthy Baltic Sea environment with diverse biological components functioning in balance, resulting in a good ecological status and supporting a wide range of sustainable economic and social activities”*, the updated BSAP is structured in four segments, each with its specific goals (Figure 1):

- **Biodiversity**, with its goal *“Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient”*,
- **Hazardous substances and litter**, with its goal *“Baltic Sea unaffected by hazardous substances and litter”*,
- **Sea-based activities**, with its goal of *“Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities”*, and
- **Eutrophication**, with its goal of *“Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication”*.

Each segment further contains a number of ecological objectives depicting a desired state to be attained, as well as a number of management objectives and concrete measures and actions to be implemented by 2030 at the latest.

The division of the main segments seeks to reflect the pressures stemming from land (“Eutrophication”, and “Hazardous substances and litter”) and from our activities at sea (“Sea-based activities”), as well as the state of the environment (“Biodiversity”).

These segments are interconnected, as the pressures on the Baltic Sea directly influence the state of the environment. In consequence, attaining the goal under the biodiversity segment also relies on the successful implementation of the actions included under the three pressures segments.

A cross-cutting issue affecting all segments, climate change features prominently in the updated BSAP, in the horizontal actions segment. Because other human-induced pressures already weaken the marine ecosystem, the Baltic Sea is particularly vulnerable to changes in the climate. Measures are therefore needed within all

segments to strengthen the overall resilience of the Baltic Sea to be able to respond to the effects of climate change.

In addition, the horizontal actions segment also contains actions and measures on monitoring, maritime spatial planning, economic and social analysis, and financing, all having an incidence on the four main segments.

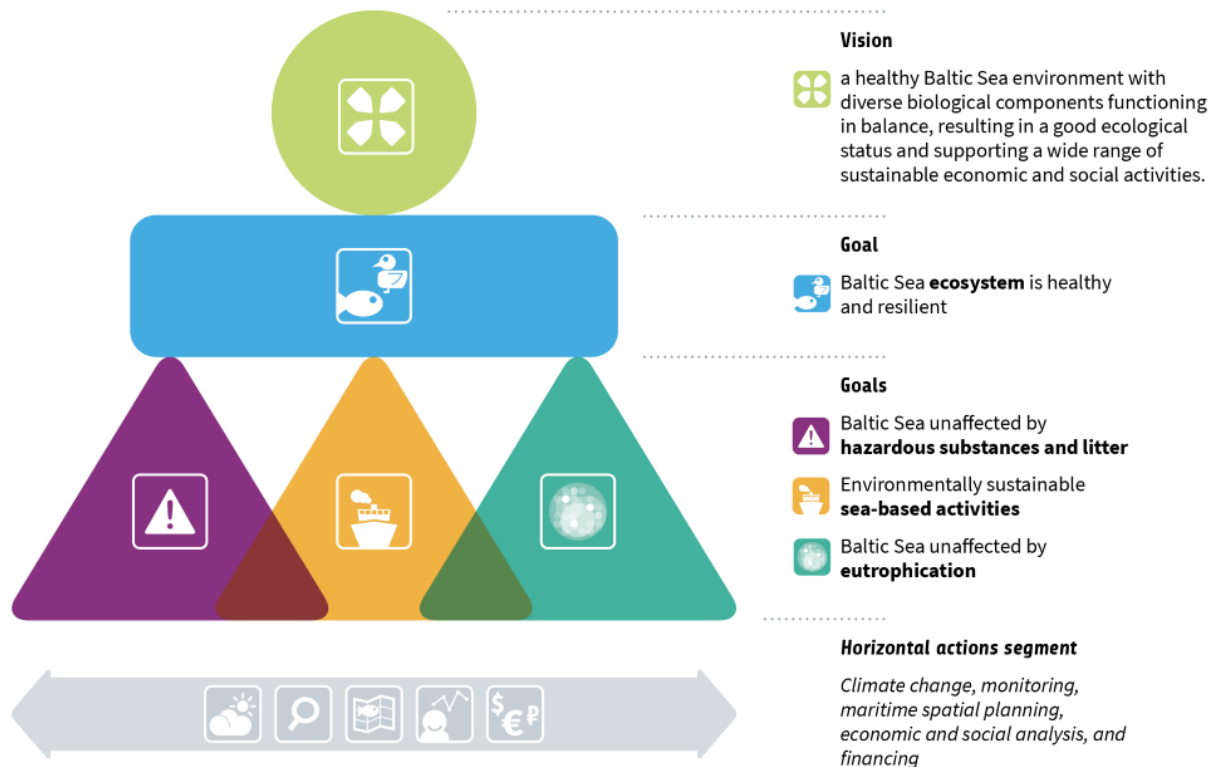


Figure 1: The structure of the updated BSAP including its vision and goals

The actions in the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan will be included in the HELCOM Explorer, which is an online tool for following up the implementation of HELCOM actions. The first reporting on the implementation of actions will take place in [2025] and the second reporting in [2029].

[Information on the annexes and the link to status assessment and some overview of foreseen status assessments taking place under the updated BSAP (HOLAS, PLC, RedList, MPA coherence etc) could still be added.]

Annex 3. Horizontal actions segment introduction

Horizontal actions

Introduction

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 analysis (ESA)
- Financing

Each of these five topics is relevant to the achievement of the goals of the updated BSAP. 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. MSP is a key and increasingly important instrument for ecosystem-based management and working towards GES. Finally, the successful implementation of the Plan is contingent on the availability of sufficient funding.

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 coordinated monitoring programmes provides the basis for understanding the state of the ecosystem and the impacts from human activities as well as the effects of measures addressing them.

The HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment 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 should help safeguard biodiversity, promote 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 analysis

Economic and social analyses of the environment can demonstrate the interaction between the ecosystem and the social-economic system. Further, economic and social analyses can be used to illustrate the importance of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea to the citizens 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, analyses 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 aspects of the Baltic Sea ecosystem are evident and documented by impressive figures. Costs of protecting the Baltic Sea can be reduced by a cost-effective allocation of measures, and in many cases, benefits have been evaluated to exceed the costs.

In this respect, all Contracting Parties and HELCOM Observers shall investigate how to make available funding [i.e. financial and non-financial contributions] 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 in order to use synergies and make best use of limited [financial] resources.-

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-would be a central measure to incentivize such investments.

The private sector, financial institutions as well as non-profit foundations and Non-Baltic Sea states 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 support mobilising available private and public funding sources to implement the BSAP [as appropriate] and where possible also promote (mobilising) external funding in the

Commented [GM1]: For clarification: This also includes any kind of contributions, e.g. free use of logistic services if provided, material, ships, staff, etc.

Commented [GM2]: How and when one can we get a kind of rough cost estimation? Who can take care of it?

Commented [GM3]: The impact of the BSAP is not limited to the Baltic Sea states. (climate, upstream countries, fishery, etc., also benefit from the BSAP-implementation.;

context of *inter alia* the World Bank, the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, The Blue Action Fund, the Nordic Investment Bank and others.

Commented [GM4]: not necessary; non-exhaustive list because of 'inter alia'

The EU and those of its member states that are Parties to the Convention will intend to dedicate funding to the implementation of the updated HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, notably where funding is available 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 and the Common Fishery 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 voluntarily 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.

Commented [SK5]: DK: it does not look like DK will be able to contribute to the BSAP fund so we cannot support this wording of the text ("will").

Commented [GM6]: Germany has stated that there will be very probably not contribution to this fund.