



Outcome of the Sixth Meeting of the Ad hoc Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan

(DG BSAP 6-2021)

Introduction

0.1 The Sixth Meeting of the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP 6-2021) was held online on 22 April 2021.

0.2 All the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention attended the Meeting, as well as Observers from CCB, Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe 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 Draft updated BSAP

2.1 The Meeting took note of the draft updated BSAP and comments received (document 2-1-Rev.4.).

2.2 The Meeting recalled that, according to the work plan for the update of the BSAP, the draft updated BSAP is to be approved by HOD 60-2021 and adopted at the Ministerial Meeting in October 2021. The Meeting took note of the view by Russia and Sweden that the updated BSAP could still be refined even after approval by HOD 60-2021.

2.3 The Meeting took note of the NGOs comments to the draft updated Baltic Sea Action Plan and their concern regarding the lowering of ambition concerning already agreed targets and the lack of interlinkages between the segments (document 2-3).

2.4 The Meeting recalled that HELCOM 42-2021 agreed in principle on the inclusion of some of the actions in the updated BSAP (coloured dark green in document 2-1-Att.1-Rev.2).

2.5 The Meeting considered the actions in the Horizontal actions segment and agreed that the formulation of most of the actions is already satisfactory (coloured light or dark green) and can be submitted to HOD 60-2021 for approval. The Meeting noted that Germany and Russia reserve their position on action EN20 (coloured yellow) until HOD 60-2021.

2.6 The Meeting took note of the view by Sweden that the actions related to MSP are difficult to follow up while also noting the position of WWF that these actions are important as they provide a link between the segments. The Meeting further took note that the follow-up of the MSP-related actions, as well as all other actions, will be specified in the supporting document, which will include additional information on the actions.

- 2.7 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 and which were not yet provisionally agreed by HELCOM 42-2021 (coloured light green in the Excel attachment 2-1-Att.1-Rev.2). The Meeting reviewed the actions, agreed on the actions for which the formulation is already satisfactory (green in the Excel file Outcome Att.1) as well as agreed to revert actions EN03, HLE06, HLE07, SN17 and SN28 back to yellow and submit them to the relevant Segment Team meetings for finalizing the formulation. The Meeting agreed that the actions that are currently yellow in these segments should be sent for review by DG BSAP via correspondence after they have been finalized by the Segment Teams and turned green. The Meeting pointed out that also an ad-hoc meeting of DG BSAP might be called for, if deemed necessary, to resolve remaining issues with the actions.
- 2.8 The Meeting agreed that for action EE21 it should be clarified in the supporting document "the elimination means the introduction of a maximum limit for total phosphorus content with a hurdle of 0.2% to 0.5% of phosphorus by weight (as in HELCOM Recommendation 28E /7), as stated in the footnote of MD2010.
- 2.9 The Meeting invited Latvia to clarify their reservation on action SN17 by DG BSAP SEA 4-2021.
- 2.10 The Meeting took note that national consultation is still ongoing in Sweden regarding actions EN08, EE07/ EN10a/ EN10b, EN15/ EN17 and EE21.
- 2.11 The Meeting took note that Russia reserves their position on actions HLE06, HLE07 and SN28.
- 2.12 The Meeting took note of the view by the EU that some of the proposed target years for the actions are too late considering the related EU legislation and that concerning some topics the list of actions is imbalanced.
- 2.13 The Meeting took note of the concern by WWF that the actions do not cover seafloor integrity and protection of soft-bottom sediment types, currently not protected under EU Natura 2000 (Habitats Directive).
- 2.14 The Meeting took note of the position by Denmark that it is very difficult to introduce new actions at this late stage of the process of BSAP update due to the extensive national coordination needed to scrutinize any new proposals.
- 2.15 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to check the consistency of terminology used, e.g. when referring to substances of emerging concern.
- 2.16 The Meeting invited the Secretariat, if needed, to submit the actions reverted from green to yellow as well as relevant comments to the relevant Segment Team meetings already before the adoption of the Outcome of DG BSAP 6-2021 noting the timing of the Segment Team meetings.
- 2.17 The Meeting considered the proposed changes to the introduction for the Horizontal actions segment, took note of the comments received and provided guidance on how to address them as included in **Annex 2**.
- 2.18 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to draft a new version of the Horizontal actions segment introductions based on the comments received and submit them to HOD 60-2021.
- 2.19 The Meeting considered the general comments for the segment introductions by Sweden (document 2-1-Rev.4).
- 2.20 The Meeting noted that it has been emphasized that climate change should be an overarching topic for the BSAP and the links to climate change in the text boxes at the beginning of the segments convey information on the effects and impacts of climate change as related to each segment. The Meeting agreed that the links to climate change in the text boxes should be made by using a visualization and avoiding technical language.
- 2.21 The Meeting took note that linking relevant pressures and activities to the BSAP actions is done by the Working Groups as part of the collection of supplementary information for the actions. The Meeting

noted that after the collection has been completed, the most relevant pressures for each segment will be lifted to the text box. The Meeting agreed that the relevant pressures should be presented with visualizations.

2.22 The Meeting pointed out that while numbers used in the introductions, e.g. to describe the state or pressures, might be quickly outdated, they provide a baseline reflecting the status at the adoption of the updated BSAP. The Meeting consequently agreed that while inclusion of numbers and figures that are expected to be outdated soon should be avoided, they can be included in some cases where deemed relevant to demonstrate the situation at the time of adoption of the updated BSAP

2.23 The Meeting agreed that the section on connection to other treaties should be moved from its current place between the “current state” and “desired state” to after the section on actions and a reference should be added to the introductions pointing to where this information can be found.

2.24 The Meeting agreed that the management objectives could be followed up e.g. by linking the relevant actions to the management objectives. Such information can be included e.g. in the HELCOM Explorer and possibly expressed in association with each action through referencing objectives. The Meeting pointed out that the actions on by-catch in the Sea-based activities segment also contribute to the achievement of the related management objective under the Biodiversity segment.

2.25 The Meeting considered the introduction to the Sea-based activities segment, took note of the comments received and provided guidance for addressing the comments as included in **annex 2**.

2.26 The Meeting recalled that HELCOM 42-2021 considered proposals by Russia and Germany to change the objectives under the sea-based activities segment and tasked DG BSAP SEA 3-2021 and DG BSAP 6-2021 to continue the discussion and to propose wording for the three objectives under the sea-based segment.

2.27 The Meeting considered the proposed wording for the three objectives under the sea-based activities segment and agreed on the management objective “Minimize the input of nutrients, hazardous substances and litter from sea-based activities”.

2.28 The Meeting discussed the objectives related to underwater noise and took note that several Contracting Parties prefer to keep the original formulation and ambition of the objectives. The Meeting also took note that Russia prefers the proposed new wording and reserves their position while expressing concern on the impact of offshore wind farms as a source of underwater noise and sea-bed loss.

Agenda Item 3 Next meetings

3.1 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of the drafting group that will finalize the consideration of the remaining agenda items will be held on 5 May 2021 from 10:00 to 13:30 EEST.

Agenda Item 4 Any other business

4.1 The Meeting did not discuss any other business.

Agenda Item 5 Outcome of the Meeting

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

Annex 1. List of participants

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Annex 2. Sea-based activities segment - Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities

Visualization/text box to be added to include the following information:

Goal: Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities

Links to climate change (from the Climate Change Fact Sheet, to be reviewed)

Direct effects:

Air temperature
Water temperature
Sea ice
Solar radiation and cloudiness
Salinity
Precipitation
Oxygen
Sea level
Wind
Waves
Sediment transportation and erosion

Indirect impacts:

Shipping
Tourism
Coastal protection
Fisheries
Aquaculture
Offshore wind farms
Non-indigenous species
Coastal and migratory fish
Pelagic and demersal fish
Marine mammals
Waterbirds
Benthic habitats

SDG targets addressed (to be completed)

- 12
- 13
- 14
- [15.8]

Pressures addressed (to be reviewed based on actions):

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

- Introduction of underwater noise.

Tentative activities addressed by HELCOM actions (to be reviewed based on 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).

Cross reference with other segments:

- Reaching objectives for sea-based activities 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 eutrophication and hazardous substances and litter.

Commented [SK1]: Proposal by CCB and WWF to add "Building of infrastructure and other industry (e.g. building of offshore wind parks, pipelines);" and "Incidental bycatch"

Note by the Secretariat: The WGs are currently linking the actions to relevant activities and pressures after which it will be checked which activities are relevant for this section.

Description of current state

Sustainable management of sea-based activities is essential for achieving good environmental status of the Baltic Sea. Sea-based activities comprise all human operations and constructions at sea, from commercial shipping and recreational boating, construction work and dredging, energy production to fisheries and the extraction of minerals, oil and gas. Achieving the overall strategic goal of the segment thus requires cooperation on a wide range of topics and involves several objectives and actors.

Emissions and discharges from shipping continue to have harmful impacts on the Baltic Sea environment, despite the reinforced international regulations concerning maritime traffic. Energy efficiency of ships is improving, and a downward trend is also evident for other types of emissions and discharges. Nevertheless, shipping still contributes to significant amounts of nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides and particulate matter to the Baltic Sea, leading to pollution and eutrophication of the marine environment. Further, shipping causes adverse environmental effects from inter alia underwater noise, biofouling, scrubber discharges and grey water discharges which are not yet covered by mandatory international regulations.

Oil spills observed by aerial surveillance have been decreasing in both numbers and size, and while preparedness and response to spills of oil and hazardous noxious substances at sea and on shore is rather advanced in the Baltic Sea, there is still a need for improvement. Annual reports show an increasing number of spills of unidentified chemical substances and novel fuel types, for which response options need to be developed, in particular considering the increasing likelihood of accidents as a result of increased traffic and extreme weather conditions due to climate change.

Fishing takes place in large areas in the Baltic Sea, with direct effects on target species as well as on protected species and habitats. Currently, the majority of Baltic Sea fish stocks are not in good status with respect to biomass and fishing mortality. Physical disturbance to the seabed from bottom trawling and bycatches of birds, marine mammals and non-target fish species in fishing gear constitute other pressures on the ecosystem, which need to be reduced. Further, intensive fishing results in shifts in the food web, alterations in size-age distribution, as well as reductions in reproductive capacity and resilience of both fish and other marine organisms.

In addition to shipping and fishing, direct activities such as mineral extraction, dredging, installation of offshore wind farms, other forms of marine energy production, and laying of underwater cables and pipelines have negative effects on the marine environment, including physical disturbance and loss of the seabed. As

Commented [LMS2]: DK

Commented [SK3R2]: DG BSAP 6: The aim was to mention issues that are not covered by mandatory international regulation. There are IMO guidelines on EGCS which are directly referenced in MARPOL Annex VI and administrations of contracting Member States are effectively bound to consider them. Thus there is a difference to the other topics listed here.

a result of these multiple activities, about 40% of the Baltic Sea seabed is estimated as potentially disturbed, with many underwater biotopes and species in unfavourable conservation status. Together with submerged hazardous objects (sea-dumped munitions, warfare materials and wrecks containing oil), activities causing disturbance to the seabed contribute to the potential release of harmful substances that may affect the marine environment and activities in the Baltic Sea. Submerged hazardous objects besides being sources of pollution also pose physical obstacles on the seafloor and a risk factor for maritime workers. The above mentioned activities, including the operation of offshore windfarms and aquaculture facilities, also affect organisms through the effects of noise and may cause hazards and disturbance to sea birds and other marine life.

Although there has been significant progress in many areas of sea-based activities, it is clear that further actions are needed. The expansion of sea-based activities through emerging maritime sectors further results in several pressures for which regulatory frameworks are either nascent or not in place. The cumulative effects of existing and new sea-based activities need to be evaluated, and an ecosystem-based approach implemented, where the carrying capacity of the ecosystem, and the need to set limits for human activities, is acknowledged.

Connection to other treaties

Relevant treaties to be reflected in bullet form (e.g. Various IMO conventions, MSFD, CFP, ASCOBANS/CMS, WTO, CBD, EU Biodiversity Strategy, OSPAR, NASCO etc.)

National and regional recommendations and regulations developed within HELCOM are important in complementing the international regulatory frameworks.

Description of desired state

The desired state of the Baltic Sea regarding sustainable and safe sea-based activities is described by the ecological objectives:

- No or minimal disturbance to biodiversity and ecosystem
- Activities affecting seabed habitats do not threaten the viability of species' populations and communities
- No **or minimal** harm to marine life from manmade noise
- ||

In order to reach this desired state, the following management objectives are to be met:

- Minimize loss and disturbance to seabed habitats
- Minimize noise to **acceptable** levels that do not **adversely** **seriously** affect marine life
- No introductions of non-indigenous species
- **Minimize the contribution to eutrophication and to pollution (the input of) by hazardous substances and litter. Minimize the input of nutrients, hazardous substances and litter from sea-based activities**

Alternative proposals for the above objective, as provided at and after HELCOM 42-2021:

Minimize the contribution to eutrophication and pollution by hazardous substances and litter

Minimize the causes of eutrophication and (input of) hazardous substances and litter

Minimize the contribution to eutrophication and to the level of hazardous substances and marine litter

Commented [LMS4]: DK: Bonn agreement

Commented [MH5]: DG BSAP SEA 3-2021 proposed that safety should also be mentioned.

Commented [SK6]: CCB and WWF: The "desired state" should be "no harm". It is the goal that we thrive for and should not be watered down at this stage.

Commented [MH7]: DG BSAP SEA 3-2021 noted a proposal to include "quiet areas" as an ecological objective

Commented [SK8]: CCB and WWF: acceptable for whom?

Commented [SK9]: CCB and WWF: Either formulate as "do not adversely affect" or as "do not harm".

Commented [SK10]: DG BSAP 6: Agreed

~~Minimize the input of nutrients, hazardous substances and littering of the marine environment from sea-based human activities.~~

~~Minimize the input of nutrients, hazardous substances and litter~~

- Enforce international regulations – no illegal discharges
- Safe maritime traffic without accidental pollution
- Effective emergency and response capabilities
- Minimize harmful air emissions
- Zero discharges from offshore platforms
- Ensure sustainable use of the marine resources
-

Commented [MH11]: The Meeting noted a proposal on including a by-catch related action, noting that several actions under this segment address by-catch. In this context it was, however, noted that a related objective is included under the Biodiversity segment of the draft updated BSAP.

Implementing the actions of the sea-based activities segment is one of the key factors for enabling the vision of the Baltic Sea Action Plan to reach a healthy Baltic Sea environment, and for supporting a wide range of activities in the Baltic Sea region that does not compromise ecological, societal, and long-term economic sustainability. HELCOM has the ambition to work continuously for the Baltic Sea to be a forerunner in the field of environmentally sustainable sea-based activities, including shipping, fisheries, offshore wind farms and infrastructure. HELCOM recognises the need for significant expansion of offshore wind energy to reach the climate targets for 2030 and 2050, and will take action to ensure that the expansion of the offshore sector is achieved sustainably and with respect to our commitments to ensure a healthy marine environment and its biodiversity acknowledges the need to put further emphasis on co-existence between offshore wind production and biodiversity. Apart from implementing the actions set out in the Baltic Sea Action Plan, this will also require implementation of inter alia the Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise and enforcement of applicable national, regional and international regulations in the field of sea-based activities, as well as active voluntary commitments by industry.

Commented [SK12]: Include heading on reaching the desired state.

Commented [SK13]: SE proposal

Commented [SK14]: DK comment

Actions

While the Baltic Sea Action Plan predominantly contains concrete measures and actions to be implemented by 2030 at the latest in order to fulfil its various objectives, there are also important actions focusing on close cooperation with other organizations and that are to be continuously implemented by HELCOM and its Contracting Parties.

HELCOM continues the close cooperation with other organizations with the following actions:

Commented [SK15]: SE: Here we start by saying "these are not concrete measures/actions...." why placing them first is maybe not ideal. Needs discussed (DG BSAP?) where to put them, based on an analysis of how they will be implemented and followed up. Otherwise good that the cooperation Actions are gathered separately from the concrete measures.

Horizontal actions segment

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 the updated BSAP which have been identified as cross-cutting are:

- Climate change
- Monitoring
- Maritime spatial planning (MSP)
- Economic and social analysis (ESA)
- Hot spots
- Knowledge exchange and awareness raising
- Financing

Each of these **seven** topics is relevant to the achievement of the goals of the updated BSAP. Monitoring and ~~socio-economic analyses~~ **ESA**, 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.

Commented [LM(16)]: FIN: Spell out

Commented [AJA17]: DK: We should be consistent in the way the updated BSAP/BSAP/Plan/ HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is mentioned.

Climate change

The challenges presented by marine climate change impacts are by their nature a regional and horizontal concern, covering aspects from science to high level policy, with climate change impacts already evident in the Baltic Sea: water temperature is rising, the ice extent has decreased, and annual mean precipitation has increased over the northern part of the region. These impacts affect the nature of the sea, its ecosystems as well as the human activities depending on it and the ecosystem services it provides. For example, many wintering birds have shifted their wintering range northwards, the numbers of warm water fish species, such as sticklebacks, are increasing, the risk of infection of human-pathogenic *Vibrio* spp. has increased through surface water warming, and trawl fishing now begins earlier in the year and has increased opportunities to operate in the northern Baltic Sea.

However, the various effects of climate change are often not straightforward and can be difficult to distinguish from other anthropogenic pressures. Both climate and other human-induced pressures vary significantly between different regions in the Baltic Sea, making it unfeasible to find simple management solutions that work for the entire region. In order to mitigate these negative effects, policies thus need to account for these differences and utilise an adaptive management approach based on the best available science.

In order to support such adaptive management, climate change work within HELCOM will focus on long-term, multi-disciplinary approaches to understanding and communicating the implications of climate change for the marine and coastal environment, while keeping the lag time in transferring the quality assured science to the policy level as short-quickly as possible. HELCOM will function as the platform to bridge this knowledge to policy and practice, including through cooperation and communication with other instrument, e.g. the HELCOM cooperation to minimize negative impacts from shipping on the Baltic Sea environment includes cooperating and incentivising transition of the maritime sector. As part of this cooperation HELCOM will continue to support initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from shipping.

The ultimate aim of HELCOM work on climate change has been identified as increasing the resilience of the ecosystem of the Baltic Sea with regards to climate change impacts, thus all measures that strengthen the Baltic marine ecosystem resilience to changes induced by climate change should be regarded as climate adaptation measures.

Carbon is the currency that links the Baltic ecosystem to climate change. Globally, greenhouse gas emissions such as methane from lakes and reservoirs represent around one fifth of those from fossil fuel combustion. In order to make progress with climate change mitigation measures related to the Baltic Sea, such as increasing "blue carbon", we need to understand the carbon cycle in the Baltic Sea land-sea system and links between carbon dynamics (e.g. land-based input of organic carbon and outgassing of methane), eutrophication legacy (e.g. carbon in sediments, anoxia) and biodiversity (e.g. carbon sequestration).

Although acidification is not a current major trend in the Baltic Sea ecosystem, it is an advancing and serious trend in the world's oceans, it is directly connected to carbon dioxide emissions, and the long-term trend also in the Baltic Sea is increased acidification. Neither the carbon chemistry of the Baltic Sea, nor possible impacts of acidification on biota, are not fully understood and measures have so far not been considered.

Commented [SK18]: DG BSAP 6: Include a section on connection to other treaties and include there a reference to the Paris Agreement.

Commented [SK19]: SE: Very few *Vibrio* are human pathogens, If you mean *Vibrio vulnificus* specifically then maybe good to write that.

Commented [SK20R19]: DG BSAP: Referring to cholera? Or is there a need to mention this at all in detail.

Commented [LM(21)]: FIN: This would simplify and shorten.

Commented [LMS22]: DK: just for shorting the text a bit, a small rephrasing could be done to this text: HELCOM cooperation to minimize negative impacts from shipping on the Baltic Sea environment includes cooperating and incentivising transition of the maritime sector such as supporting initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from shipping

Commented [LM(23)]: FIN: Should be "ecosystem"

Commented [SK24]: SE: Since the Baltic is also affected by temperature changes to a high degree, we think this sentence should be deleted.

Commented [SK25]: SE: The term "carbon dynamics" includes much more than land-based input of carbon and outgassing of methane. We therefore suggest the parenthesis to be deleted.

FIN: Response to SE comment: That is why there is "e.g.". Each of the aspects has some examples in parenthesis.

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 ~~See-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~~ing~~ and carry~~ing~~ 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 **supports** ~~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 it balances the interests of stakeholders, also considering in the light of international environmental commitments. As an integrated tool MSP contributes to climate change adaptation and mitigation increasing the climate resilience.

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

Commented [SK26]: SE: Needs rephrased, since this is not correct. MSP and many others also consider spatial aspects.

Potential rephrasing: "... in that it provides tools to manage/optimize location of activities"?

FIN: Agree but "manage/optimize" could be phrased better, possibly "as it provides a tool to interactively and cooperatively agree on an optimal spatial location of various activities."

Commented [SK27R26]: DG BSAP 6: the only process that considered multiple human activities in a spatial perspective /process that considers many spatial uses

Commented [LM(28): FIN: This belittles protection. Our action plans nationally are often very comprehensive and cover all aspects and pressures necessary. Please delete.

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, several 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 in order to use and further advance the regional economic and social analyses for policy support. BSAP. The actions cover 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 into 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.

Commented [SK29]: SE: This is very general, not BSAP specific, it does not reveal objectives, actions or other relevant parameter for BSAP. Consider deleting or shortening substantially (1 or 2 sentences would be sufficient). It also overlaps the following para.

Commented [AJA30R29]: DK agrees. A suggestion to wording could be: 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 support the decision-making in relation to environmental policies and objectives by illustrating 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.

Commented [SK31R29]: DG BSAP 6: Either DK or SE proposal is acceptable. There should be a balance with the other sections. Reduction not deletion.

Commented [SK32]: SE: Specific networks should not be mentioned in BSAP (can change, and they are not mentioned elsewhere)

Commented [SK33]: SE: In an action plan we should focus on solutions, not gaps

Commented [SK34]: SE: Do we refer to overarching preamble here?

Commented [SK35]: SE: repeated

Hot Spots

The Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (JCP) was established adopted in 1992 as the international environmental management framework for the long-term restoration of the ecological balance of the Baltic Sea. The major activity of the JCP was identifying and cleaning up pollution Hot Spots. The HELCOM Hot Spot list established in the framework of the JCP includes point sources, such as municipal facilities and industrial plants, agricultural areas and rural settlements, as well as sensitive areas such as coastal lagoons and wetlands where special environmental measures are needed.

Good progress has been made in the last three decades by cleaning up more than three quarters of the total 162 HELCOM Hot Spots. Work still remains to tackle the remaining 40 pollution sites. In general, despite the delayed implementation, the Programme demonstrates its effectiveness for prioritizing and tackling local environmental issues and, thus, contributing to the overall progress towards good environmental status of the Baltic Sea.

In the effort to renew "hot spots" as an international tool to address topical environmental issues in the region, the scope of the programme should be widened to include also emerging challenges such as marine litter and underwater noise. Criteria for identification of new hot spots and their removal from the HELCOM list should be advanced and tailored for various types of sites and areas on land and at sea. However, the criteria for removal of hot spots included in the JCP programme (1992) should remain unchanged to avoid moving target. Newly developed criteria should be transparent and applicable either to national or international financial instruments in developing investment programmes and following up their implementation. The tool is also to be utilized to strengthen cooperation with non-HELCOM countries in the Baltic Sea catchment area.

Commented [SK36]: SE: this is almost an action in itself, explaining how to carry out EN20. we need to discuss how to place/phrased this type of statements (similar exists for RAPs)

Commented [SK37R36]: DG BSAP 6: To shorten the text, keep referral to the new hot spots and criteria work. Not to mention marine litter but be more general.

Knowledge exchange and awareness raising

Knowledge exchange and awareness raising are increasingly recognised as key factors ~~facilitating promoting~~ the social, environmental and economic impacts of measures, thus improving the sustainable management of natural resources and the goods and services they provide, and in turn ensuring ~~the~~ well-being of the people that depend on them. When done successfully, knowledge exchange and awareness raising increase the likelihood that knowledge and evidence will be used in policy ~~and practice~~ decisions, thus increasing the success of those decisions in meeting their objectives. ~~The delivery of Delivering~~ messages to stakeholders and ~~the~~ general public, should be ~~based on science and centrally coordinated to~~ cover all important topics and avoid exclusion of information.

Commented [LM(38)]: FIN: What does "practice decisions" mean? We propose to delete.

Commented [LM(39)]: FIN: It would be important to emphasize that only well established, i.e., science-base information should be shared.

Commented [LM(40)]: FIN: This raises questions: what does this mean? The Secretariat, nationally?

Commented [LM(41)]: FIN: These are tricky as messages are often focus on only a particular topic and by nature don't cover all important topics and do exclude information. If the intention is to emphasize that the messages should stick to and not twist the truth, then another wording should be found.

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. The 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. On the other hand, it should also be borne in mind that the cost of insufficient protection can be substantial as the polluter-pays principle is one of the fundamental principles and obligations enshrined in Article 3.4 of the Helsinki Convention.

Commented [AJA42]: Would it be wrong to mention all the segments? And not "just" biodiversity and eutrofication?

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 to achieve the actions and objectives of the updated for actions according to the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan and thereby to achieve a healthy Baltic Sea. Providing appropriate economic incentives is/would be a central measure to incentivize such investments.

Commented [AJA43]: Consider deleting. It is not the task of HELCOM to provide economic incentives. However, HELCOM could support by identify public and private economic and regulatory incentives, and increase the use of incentives – this relates to HAE19

The private sector, financial institutions as well as non-profit foundations and Nonnon-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 context of *inter alia* the World Bank, the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), The Blue Action Fund, the Nordic Investment Bank and others.

Commented [SK44]: EE would prefer using the word promote in both places in this sentence, or use the original wording.

Commented [SK45]: EE would prefer to avoid German phrases in the English version of the BSAP text, because these are not commonly understandable to all nations; possible a translation could be added in brackets

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 Fisheries 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 as well as the Strategy for social economic development of the North-West Federal District of the Russian Federation;

Commented [SK46]: EE: We are not able to say at this stage, that we "will intend to dedicate funding". Proposal for rephrasing: shall make efforts to

Commented [LMS47R46]: DK propose to delete "will".

Commented [SK48R46]: SE not in favour of deleting "will".

In that context, the Baltic Sea Action Plan Fund hosted by NIB/NEFCO shall can be a tool for supporting the implementation of the updated BSAP as well as Interreg Baltic Sea Programme 2021-2027 and Contracting Parties and other possible contributors will can 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 [SK49]: DG BSAP 6: To be moved to another paragraph.