



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Meeting of the Hazardous substances and litter segment team

DG BSAP HZ 2-2021

Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan

Online, 19 January 2021

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Background

Document 2-1 to DG BSAP HZ 1-2020 contains the first draft of the segment specific introduction for hazardous substances and litter, as prepared by the Secretariat at the request of HOD 57-2019. At HoD 59-2020, a number of comments on the format of the segment drafts were submitted, and in the follow up, an [updated guidance document](#) was submitted by the secretariat.

This document contains a proposal by SE for a potential outline of the segment, in line with comments at HoD. It does not present a final Swedish position, but is intended as a basis for further discussion in DG BSAP HZ on the structure and outline of the segments. In line with this, please note that the listing or formulation of the actions is not final or correct, since the focus here has been mainly on the presentation.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to discuss the segment preamble for hazardous substances and litter noting the comments given by SE.

Segment hazardous substances and litter - A Baltic Sea with life undisturbed by hazardous substances and marine litter

(The red text is meant for discussion/instruction to the DG BSAP HZ and will be deleted.)

The overall HELCOM goal is to achieve a Baltic Sea with life unaffected by hazardous substances and litter.

(Potentially, more formal content can be included here, including
 - *Connection to other segments (to be inserted at a later stage)*
 - *Connection to other treaties (to be inserted at a later stage)*

E.g.

This segment mainly addresses input of these pollutants from land, whereas input from sea-based sources is addressed under segment “Environmentally sustainable sea based activities”.

Commented [LR1]: Cross Ref to other segments as well.

Current state

Hazardous substances are still a cause for concern in all parts of the Baltic Sea. In particular, levels remain too high in the assessed biota for PBDEs, mercury and cesium-137. Inputs to the Baltic Sea are decreasing for many substances, and some of the most toxic compounds are banned today. However, several persistent legacy contaminants remain in the ecosystem and new chemicals with unknown toxic effects are being used and released into the aquatic environment. Many contaminants degrade slowly, and their impacts can magnify as they accumulate within various compartments of the marine environment, including the aquatic food web.

Commented [LR2]: This section now briefly explains present state and trends. To be discussed what else to include: something brief on the main sources, if that is possible for these topics? And if relevant with regard to our actions. Otherwise a comment on the fact that the number of HZ are extremely many, of which many unknown (with quantitative indication? See EU chemicals strategy)

Marine litter is a global environmental problem and Baltic sea is not an exception. Marine litter is so far only to a limited extent assessed descriptively at the Baltic Sea scale. However, available data on litter items found on beaches, proportion of marine litter material in bottom trawl hauls and microplastic particles found in sediments and marine organisms prove that marine litter is a serious problem for the Baltic Sea. (Litter items may directly threaten marine life as lost nets and other abandoned fishing gear or enter food web as microplastic which can also be a bearer of hazardous contaminants absorbed on the surface of micro particles.)

Climate change affects input of hazardous substances and marine litter (header might be removed at a later stage)

Increase of the magnitude of extreme weather events is a key climate change parameter which might exacerbate the input of hazardous substances and litter to the marine environment. For example, heavy rains may cause malfunction of sewerage and storm water systems due to overflow.

Desired state

Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention have agreed on the following ecological objectives to describe the characteristics of a Baltic Sea in relation to hazardous substances and litter:

- Concentrations of hazardous substances close to natural levels;
- All seafood safe to eat;
- Healthy marine life;
- Minimal risk to humans and the environment from radioactivity;
- No harm to marine life from litter.

Commented [LR3]: Can potentially be elaborated briefly with additional text explanation.

Operative section – actions agreed regarding hazardous substances and marine litter

The agreed actions to reach the BSAP goals and objectives of the updated BSAP are organized according to the

following four management objectives:

- Minimise the inputs and impacts of haz subst from human sources by eliminaton, substitution, and source management
- Prevent generation of waste and its inputs to the sea
- Significantly reduce amounts of litter and microplastics on shorelines and in the sea
- (Products are designed, produced, used, reused, recycled and disposed by applying principles of circular economy to)

Minimising the inputs and impacts of hazardous substances from human sources by eliminaton, substitution, and source management

Potentially we could start by inserting “strathegic decisions” or overarching /key activities. See example: Since the topic of hazardous substances covers a large variety of substances, sources and pathways, HELCOM commits to develop, by 202x, an action plan for hazardous substances in the first instance to set priorities and identify gaps. This includes (the list below is only indicative of type of information, based on previous segment draft. The list should be developed with experts spring 2021 if the action is supported by HoD):

- o to identify actions needed by Helcom to address a limited number of groups of priority hazardous substances with proven adverse effect on marine ecosystem
- o to set a regional system for early identification of emerging contaminants
- o To set up a mechanism for regular revision of the regional priorities including criteria for inclusion or exclusion of substances from the priority list.
- o work for transformation of indicator-based evaluation to a more flexible status evaluation.
- o xxx.

The specific actions can be distinguished by legacy pollutants, which HELCOM already addresses such as heavy metals, dioxins etc., and actions on contaminants of emerging concern such as PFAS and pharmaceuticals.

- To be inserted connection to SDG targets (potentially in some cases there is a link to specific actions)

Commented [LR4]: To be discussed: when do we take a decision on this objective? is this possibly more of an aspiration? Not sure what BSAP actions would be linked to it (potentially Reduction of single-use plastics consumption at major events or ALDFG actions?).

Theme	Action	Rationale	Follow up The progress is measured through...
Legacy pollutants	HLE02 – reduction of dioxin emissions from small scale combustion appliances HLE06 – Minamata Convention on mercury - ratification HLE07 – Minamata Convention on mercury - implementation HLE08 – mercury emissions from energy sector HLE09 – mercury in dredged material HLE10 – mercury from dentistry HLE11 – mercury from waste HLE17 – restricted use of perfluorinated alkyl substances, phenolic compounds with endocrine disrupting effects and chlorinated paraffins HLN01 – metallic lead in fishing equipment Reference to: HNL11 – TBT removal from ships and leisure boats Further actions on legacy pollutants are listed under other segments and include the following actions: include reference to actions from sea-based activities]		
Contaminants of emerging	Contaminants of emerging concern are being identified via target and non-target screening projects for new hazardous substances. They		

Commented [LR5]: Comment on the table: Here a decision is needed on whether to use annexes or not, the below proposal is made keeping in mind FI comment at HoD. This will influence outline and whether action abbreviations can be used or not (as in below example). The alternative table outline proposed by DE and SE to DG BSAP on Hazardous substances would be much shorter.

Depending on decision, each action might need a separate row.

A list with short names of actions gives a good overview. However, in that case a longer description is needed elsewhere.

In the list there seems to be a mix of supporting actions and actions with effect in the environment. Do we need to separate further:

- Concrete measures (per substance group)
- General measures (emissions, procurement, awareness)
- Monitoring/screening

Do we need to separate between new and old?

<p>concern</p>	<p>are addressed by the following actions on substance groups:</p> <p>HNL02 – persistent pharmaceuticals – prescription compulsory</p> <p>HNL07 – biocide antifouling paint – leisure boats and commercial vessels</p> <p>HNL08 – fire fighting foam containing PFAS – limit use at sea</p> <p>HNL13 – collection of obsolete pharmaceuticals</p> <p>Further identification and listing of contaminants of emerging concern and especially those among pharmaceuticals is undertaken by the following actions:</p> <p>HLE01 – identify priority pharmaceuticals with subsequent integration as indicators on state and pressure</p> <p>HLE03 – address substances of emerging concern by screening campaigns (starting from 2021)</p> <p>HLE21 – relevant monitoring for the impact of hazardous substances</p> <p>HLN03 – prioritization of pharmaceuticals for risk reduction</p> <p>HLN09 – investigate databases on the environmental impact of pharmaceuticals</p> <p>HLN10 – guideline for environmental monitoring of pharmaceuticals</p> <p>Further actions on contaminants of emerging concern are listed under other segments and include the following actions: (list here actions from sea based activities)</p>		
<p>General, hazardous substances</p>	<p>A number of overall measures on hazardous substances do not refer to a specific substance group but aim at reducing emissions and inputs of hazardous substances in general. For these it needs to be identified, which groups of substances are addressed by them and to which extend they overlap. This could be done by the envisaged HLN06 – Action plan on hazardous substances.</p> <p>HLE04 – national programmes on hazardous substances with a particular focus on hazardous substances which are not adequately regulated by other policies</p> <p>HLE05 – List of planned and implemented measures for sectors, pathways,...</p> <p>HLE12 – establishment of chemical product register</p>		

Commented [LR6]: (to check whether it should be listed in Sea based instead)

Commented [LR7]: (to check whether it should be listed in Sea based instead. This potentially goes for several below)

Commented [LR8]: (To check: whether this list mixes supporting and measures?) This category might need further divided up, see indicated in red

	<p>HLE13 – private consumers to reduce emissions of hazardous substances</p> <p>HLE14 – public awareness on handling chemicals in households</p> <p>HLE15 – chemicals of high concern in public procurement procedures</p> <p>HLE18 – manage the list of priority substances pointing out contaminants of emerging concern</p> <p>HLN05 – decreasing the emissions of hazardous substances from small scale emitters in urban areas (by chemical-smart purchasing strategies, substitution and awareness raising campaigns)</p> <p>The following actions which link to other policies should be mentioned in the preambular/introduction and not listed here under actions:</p> <p>HLE16 – policies addressing the use of chemicals (e.g. REACH, WFD, IED, Stockholm Convention etc.)</p> <p>HLE19 – work on hazardous substances under various global and EU policies as well as in RSC</p> <p>HLE20 – International Chemicals Management High Ambition Alliance (SAICM HAA)</p> <p>HLN04 – use information from EU Industrial Emissions Directive</p>		

Preventing generation of waste and its inputs to the sea

To achieve this we agree to implement the updated HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, including action x, x and x. This includes (indicative of type of statements, based on text in previous segment draft, needs developed together with experts. Could be key decisions from the RAP ML):

- o measures covering the whole lifecycle of the products from raw material to the disposal of the product and its components, striving for a circular economy approach
- o Minimizing input of microliter is through both measures at source and end-of-pipe solutions.
- o Targeted educational programmes and public campaign such as beach cleaning systematically integrated in national environmental activities.
- o Active cooperation between regional sea conventions and global treaties to address third parties beyond the region.

Commented [LR9]: May need clarified what this refers to

To be inserted connection to SDG targets (potentially in some cases there is a link to specific actions)

The specific new actions agreed (table x) will address land based sources, seabased activities (fishing, marine transports, tourism and leisure activities, historical pollution).

Theme	Action	Rationale	Follow up The progress is measured through
Land based litter (macro) (Recreational / tourism)	Ban (phasing-out) on non-degradable shot wads and information campaigns targeted at hunters Ban on mass balloon (>50 balloons) releases Ban on giving away inflated balloons free of charge Reduction of single-use plastics consumption at major events		
Land based litter (macro) Urban areas	Ban on handing out free carrier bags Development of a HELCOM guideline on establishment and operation of artificial turfs, to prevent plastic losses. Information campaign on what not to flush (addressing chemicals, pharmaceuticals and litter).		
General and supporting	Review existing knowledge of the impact of marine litter by [2022] Develop harmonise monitoring methods to evaluate quantities, composition, distribution and sources (including riverine input), of marine litter, including microlitter, by [2022], where applicable and for the rest no later than [2026]. Work should be done in close coordination with work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora." Develop common indicators, threshold values to evaluate quantities, composition, and distribution, and sources (including riverine input) of marine litter, including microlitter, by [2022], where applicable and for the rest no later than [2026]. Work should be done in close coordination with work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora.		
Microlitter	(we do not have any actions here, category to be deleted? any referencing needed?)		
Seabased	Cross referencing		

Commented [LR10]: (Could also be sorted under Urban...)

Commented [LR11]: Check if there is a need for referencing to other segments as well

Significantly reducing amounts of litter and microplastics on shorelines and in the sea

To be inserted connection to SDG targets (potentially in some cases there is a link to specific actions)

The progress is measured through the achievement towards a reduction target of xx % less marine litter on beaches, compared to year xx.

Commented [LR12]: Noting that this objective might seem to overlap the above, when it comes to sorting actions. To be considered.

Theme	Action	Rationale	Follow up The progress is measured through
Shipping	Reference to actions sea-based		

	segment, e.g. SN10 Ensure the no-special-fee system for marine litter applies to all passively fished waste		
Fisheries/aquaculture (macro litter)	Development of national and regional ALDFG mitigation policy papers and recommendations on how to approach ALDFG problem in the Baltic Sea in a systemic way . Integration of work regarding mapping of ALDFG host areas and hot spots in the Baltic Sea region, based on the results of mapping activities held within national and international initiatives (such as the MARELITT Baltic project)		
To be considered: Historical pollution (macro litter)?	ALDFG if relevant		
Microlitter	If relevant		

Commented [LR13]: check sorting of actions; might be better placed under seabased? To be considered

(However, if these are removed we have no action under this MO... do we need to revisit the MO:s?)