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<b>Document title</b>	Introduction to the Sea-based activities segment
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## Background

### Guidance by HOD 59-2020

HOD 59-2020 discussed the introductions and the descriptions of the current and desired state for the segments on eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter, sea-based activities, and biodiversity and provided the following general guidance for the Segment Teams for further drafting in spring 2021:

- A stronger link between the goals, objectives and actions and the content of the introduction of the respective segment is needed with the segment introduction providing clear links to the goals, management objectives and actions for the segment in question. The goal and ecological objectives should function as the basis for presenting the desired state.
- The introductions should, wherever possible, strive to outline the strategic framing of the segment and include aspirations and strategic agreements. Actions under each segment formulated in a general way could be used as a starting point for formulating such strategic statements. The final placement of aspirations and strategic agreements within the segments will be decided at a later stage.
- Wherever possible, harmonization across segments should be strived for, though the length of the introductions may vary. The same subheadings should be used for each section to guide the drafting, ensuring that an uninitiated reader can follow the content across segments. These sub-headings function as place holders but could be considered for removal at a later stage, once the texts are in place.
- The section on Current state (currently included as part of the Operative section of each segment) should be moved to the general introduction and included as general background for each segment
- Introductions should be kept as short as possible and be drafted under the assumption that the reader is informed regarding the topics. To this end, the following concretized guidance was provided:
  - o Topics included in the visualization/text box should not be repeated in the text of the introduction (i.e. objectives, climate change, SDGs, addressed activities, addressed pressures and cross-referencing to other segments);
  - o Wherever possible visualization should be preferred over text, e.g. *Action areas* currently presented as part of the introductory text could also be included as part of the visualization/information box.
  - o The section on links to other treaties should be as short as possible.
- How to present the content of the current text box needs further development as part of the further process, e.g. SDG targets could be presented in relation to which specific objectives they relate to.

### Process in spring 2021

HOD 59-2020 noted the study reservations by Estonia and Denmark regarding the content of the segment introductory texts. HOD 59-2020 acknowledged that the introductions will be presented for final approval at HOD 60-2021 and, taking this into consideration, agreed that further work on the texts can continue in spring 2021 under the auspice of DG BSAP and the respective DG BSAP Segment Teams, with support from the Secretariat.

HOD 59-2020 agreed on the following process for further work:

- The Secretariat is to implement editorial changes and harmonize content across segments, based on this guidance from HOD 59-2020, prior to submission of the introductions to respective Segment Team meetings in early 2021.
- The introductions will be further considered and developed in the respective Segment Teams in spring 2021, based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received in the review processes in 2020. Special focus in the Segment Teams should be on identifying strategic decisions.
- Further developed drafts will be presented for review by DG BSAP and guidance by HELCOM 42-2021.
- The segment introductions will be drafted further by DG BSAP Segment Teams and DG BSAP based on guidance by HELCOM 42-2021.,
- Final approval of the introductions will take place at HOD 60-2021.

### Consideration of the segment introduction in DG BSAP SEA 2-2021

The attached document includes the segment introduction and the description of the desired state that has been revised by the Secretariat based on the guidance by HOD 59-2020. The attachment is also available in Word format. The previous version of the segment introduction, including comments from the relevant Working Groups and DG BSAP SEA 1-2020, can be found in HOD 58-2020 [document 5-8](#) (starting on page 34).

The members of the Segment Team may provide comments to the introduction to the Secretariat ([susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi](mailto:susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi)) **by 8 January 2021**. Comments received by the deadline will be presented to the Meeting.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider and develop further the segment introduction for the sea-based activities segment based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received in the review processes in 2020.

## Sea-based activities

The draft introduction has been revised based on guidance by HOD 59-2020, taking into account comments made by MARITIME 20-2020, RESPONSE 28-2020, FISH 12-2020 and DG BSAP SEA 1-2020.

## Segment sea-based activities - Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities

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

Goal: Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities

### 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 harm to marine life from manmade noise

### Management objectives

- Minimize loss and disturbance to seabed habitats
- Minimize noise to levels that do not adversely affect marine life
- No introductions of non-indigenous species
- Minimize the contribution to eutrophication and 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

Links to climate change effects and impacts (to be added based on work by EN CLIME)

SDG targets addressed (to be completed)

- 12
- 14

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 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 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.

## Description of current state

Sustainable management of sea-based activities is essential for achieving good environmental status of the Baltic Sea. Sea-based activities include all human undertakings at sea, from commercial shipping and recreational boating, construction work and dredging, 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, as do impacts from fisheries and aquaculture and various construction and exploration activities. Only three out of nine Baltic fish stocks are in good status with respect to both biomass and fishing mortality. As a result of multiple activities, about 40% of the Baltic Sea seabed is estimated as potentially disturbed. In addition, a number of currently unregulated pressures are to be addressed.

Although there has been significant progress in many areas of sea-based activities, it is clear that further actions are needed. International regulations concerning emissions and discharges from ships have become more stringent over the past years. Energy efficiency of ships is improving overall and a downward trend is also evident for other types of emissions and discharges. Nevertheless, shipping still contributes to roughly 300.000 tonnes of nitrogen oxides, 10.000 tonnes of sulphur oxides and 10.000 tonnes of particulate matter to the Baltic Sea. Also, certain types of pressures are still largely unregulated, such as underwater noise and the discharge of food waste and grey water from ships. Underwater noise from various sea-based activities, the discharge of cargo residues and the use of toxic anti-fouling systems are examples of other threats to the Baltic Sea for which the current regulatory framework is relaxed at best.

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 development, in particular considering the increasing likelihood of accidents as a result of increased traffic and extreme weather conditions due to climate change.

## ACTION AREAS/STRATEGIC DECISIONS

[tentative, to be replaced by more specific wording when new information on actions is available:]

Key actions areas of the segment focus, *inter alia*, on minimizing the inputs from the transportation sector regarding nutrients, hazardous substances and marine litter. Other focal areas include ensuring best practises and regulations to avoid harm to marine life from underwater noise, reducing the level of disturbance to the seabed from sea-based activities, reducing bycatches and safeguarding foodweb integrity by applying the ecosystem based approach in fisheries, and enforcing regulations to halt the introduction of non-indigenous species through e.g. ballast water and biofouling.

Many pressures can be reduced, or even eliminated, by regulation and technical innovation. Another important component is to formulate and implement actions so that they can support the development of environmentally sustainable economic and social activities.

#### 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 etc)

*[other relevant examples to be added as well?]*

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

### Operative section – HELCOM leads for sustainable sea-based activities

#### Description of desired state

HELCOM has the ambition to work continuously for the Baltic Sea to be a forerunner in the field of environmentally sustainable maritime activities, including shipping, fisheries and infrastructure.

Implementing the actions of the sea-based activities segment aims to reach:

*[3-4 sentences, to be developed]*

The development of environmentally sustainable sea-based activities 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 sustainable human economic and social activities in the Baltic Sea region.