



Document title	Finalizing the rephrasing of existing HELCOM action on incidental by-catch
Code	3-5
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Agenda Item	3 – Implementation and update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan
Submission date	20.10.2020
Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

HOD 58-2020 agreed in principle on the rephrased and concretized existing HELCOM actions to be transferred to the updated BSAP with the understanding that further drafting based on the written comments will take place. The actions agreed in principle and comments by HOD 58-2020 can be found [here](#).

HOD 58-2020 invited DG BSAP and HELCOM Working Groups to continue work on those actions where the need for further work has been identified.

HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State & Conservation groups to consider the overlapping actions under environmentally sustainable sea-based activities related to incidental by-catch, and to submit a proposal for merging or further differentiation of these actions to HOD 59-2020 for agreement.

The attached document includes the existing actions related to by-catch, the rephrased actions that were presented for HOD 58-2020 as well as a new proposal for reformulation submitted by STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 for consideration of the Fish Group.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the new proposal for reformulation submitted by STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 for consideration of the Fish Group;
- finalize the remaining open action, in line with what has been agreed by HOD 58-2020 and endorse it for submission to HOD 59-2020 for provisional agreement.

Finalizing the rephrasing of existing HELCOM actions on incidental by-catch

HOD 58-2020 agreed in principle on the rephrased and concretized existing HELCOM actions to be transferred to the updated BSAP with the understanding that further drafting based on the written comments will take place.

HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State & Conservation groups to consider the overlapping actions under environmentally sustainable sea-based activities related to incidental by-catch, and to submit a proposal for merging or further differentiation of these actions to HOD 59-2020 for agreement.

The actions relevant for rephrasing are highlighted below in yellow and the request by HOD 58-2020 is included in red font color. Other actions related to the same original action are included for context but only actions highlighted in yellow are to be re-considered by the group. Please note that the division of actions into segments, themes and sub-themes is provisional.

Segment: Sea-based activities

Sub-theme: Bycatch

<p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of existing technical measures to minimise by-catch of harbour porpoises</p> <p>Origin: BSAP Implementation: Joint Status: Not accomplished HELCOM group: S&C</p>	<p>Invite the competent authorities, such as BALTFISH, to immediately, but no later than 2022, implement mitigation measures in the Baltic proper, in order for by-catch of harbour porpoise to be significantly reduced with the aim to reach by-catch rates close to zero.</p> <p>Continually test new by-catch mitigation measures, with evaluation of measures every 5 years starting in [2022], continually introduce new technical and operational by-catch mitigation measures, in cooperation with competent authorities and regularly update HELCOM questionnaire on trials of alternative fishing gears and fishing techniques.</p>
<p>Take decisive action to work towards a favourable conservation status of the harbor porpoise based on implementation of the CMS (Convention on Migratory Species) ASCOBANS (Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas) Jastarnia Plan for the harbor porpoise in the Baltic Sea, in particular by addressing the pressing problem of by-catch.</p> <p>Origin: MD 2013 Implementation: Joint Status: Not accomplished HELCOM group: S&C</p>	<p>At the latest by [2023] enhance monitoring efforts for more reliable data on fishing effort, number of by-caught individuals and by-catch rates, as stipulated in the HELCOM Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in order to assess incidental bycatches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea and for the status of populations by [2025].</p> <p>Note by the Secretariat: This action overlaps with an action on by-catch from Fish.</p> <p>HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State & Conservation groups to consider the overlapping actions under environmentally sustainable sea-based activities related to incidental by-catch, and to submit a proposal for merging or further differentiation of these actions to HOD 59-2020 for agreement. DK and FI supported the formulation by the Fish group.</p> <p>Invite the competent authorities to implement operational conservation measures for the Western Baltic population by [2024] such as permanent and/or spatial-temporal closures for relevant fishing métiers in</p>

	risk areas where technical mitigation measures are insufficient to reach conservation goals.
<p>Development and implementation of effective monitoring for by-caught birds and mammals</p> <p>Origin: BSAP Implementation: Joint Status: Partly accomplished HELCOM group: Fish</p>	<p>Development and implementation of effective data collection for by-caught birds and mammals in line with the needs identified by ICES and the identified data-gaps outlined in the HELCOM Roadmap on fisheries data</p> <p>Note by the Secretariat: This action overlaps with an action on by-catch from S&C.</p> <p><i>HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State & Conservation groups to consider the overlapping actions under environmentally sustainable sea-based activities related to incidental by-catch, and to submit a proposal for merging or further differentiation of these actions to HOD 59-2020 for agreement. DK and FI supported the formulation by the Fish group.</i></p>

STATE&CONSERVATION 13-2020 took note of the request by HOD 58-2020 and agreed on the following new formulation to be submitted for consideration of FISH 12-2020:

At the latest by [2023] enhance monitoring efforts for more reliable data on fishing effort, number of by-caught individuals and by-catch rates, in line with the needs identified by ICES and data-gaps outlined in the HELCOM Roadmap on fisheries data, in order to assess incidental bycatches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea and for the status of populations by [2025].