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<b>Document title</b>	Proposed new actions for the updated BSAP
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## Background

To support the selection of new measures and actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan, an invitation to submit synopses on potential new HELCOM actions was put forward in spring 2019 to the Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects and HELCOM Observers. As a first step, the HELCOM Working Groups conducted a technical review on the proposals for new actions, and as a second step, they were evaluated at the HELCOM BSAP UP workshops. The evaluation of the new actions in the workshops focused on the effectiveness of the measures and whether the actions are supported for the updated BSAP. The synopses that were evaluated are available in the dedicated [workspace](#) where they can be sorted according to the workshop and breakout session.

### *BSAP UP workshop on hazardous substances and litter*

The BSAP UP workshop on hazardous substances and litter for the consideration of proposed new actions, held on 24-25 August 2020, evaluated the proposals for new actions related to hazardous substances and litter. There was one action in the session on hazardous substances and two actions on litter that are of relevance to the Fish group. A summary of the general discussion in the workshop can be found in the workshop Notes and the evaluation of the synopses in the two breakout sessions is included in the Annexes to the Notes (see link to the workshop site [here](#)).

### *BSAP UP workshop on biodiversity*

The BSAP UP workshop on biodiversity, including extraction of species and spatial measures, for the consideration of proposed new actions was held on 31 August – 2 September 2020. There were actions evaluated in the following breakout groups that fall also under the mandate of the Fish group: 1) Spatial conservation, 2) Conservation and restoration of species, 3) Restoration of habitats, 5) Managing human activities, 6) Fisheries. A summary of the general discussion in the workshop can be found in the workshop Notes and the evaluation of the synopses in the breakout groups is included in the Annexes to the Notes (see link to the workshop site [here](#)).

### *BSAP UP workshop on maritime activities*

The BSAP UP workshop on maritime activities, including underwater noise, non-indigenous species and response actions, for the consideration of proposed new actions was held on 2 – 4 September 2020. There was one action evaluated in the breakout group 3) Seabed disturbance and hydrography that is relevant for the Fish group. A summary of the general discussion in the workshop can be found in the workshop Notes and the evaluation of the synopses in the breakout groups is included in the Annexes to the Notes (see link to the workshop site [here](#)).

### *Summary of the proposals of relevance for the Fish group*

The evaluation of the synopses of relevance to the Fish group is contained attachment “3-7-Att.1 Proposed new actions for the updated BSAP”. The comments by STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 and PRESSURE 13-2020 are included for the actions that were also reviewed by these groups.

This document contains a list that includes both the existing actions that were in principle agreed by HOD 58-2020 to be transferred to the updated BSAP and the proposed new actions discussed at the BSAP UP workshops

### **Action requested**

The Meeting is invited to:

- consider the outcomes of the BSAP UP Workshops;
- further elaborate and endorse for submission to HOD 59-2020 the proposed new actions taking into account the outcomes of the BSAP UP Workshops;
- identify possible gaps in the set of measures for the updated BSAP and propose measures to fill the gaps, as well as agree on a process for assessing the proposed measures in a similar manner to those submitted through the synopses; and
- take note that further work on the proposed new actions will take place in DG BSAP and HOD meetings, in line with the BSAP updated workplan.

## Existing and proposed new actions

The following list includes the existing (rephrased) actions that were in principle agreed by HOD 58-2020 to be transferred to the updated BSAP and the proposed new actions submitted as synopses. The evaluation of the new actions by the BSAP UP Workshops is contained in the attached Excel table. For the full list existing actions to be transferred, please see [document 4-9-Rev.1](#) from HOD 58-2020

The actions have been divided under provisional themes and sub-themes.

### Provisional segment: sea-based activities

<b>Theme: Fisheries management</b>
<b>Existing actions</b>
To update and harmonize the 2016 BALTFIMPA decision-support tool approach with ongoing initiatives e.g. in ICES on a seafloor assessment framework for the Baltic Sea. This tool should also provide options on how to reduce the possible negative impact of fisheries on conservation values in the most cost-effective way, including in marine protected areas
Develop guidance in cooperation with the Regional Coordination Groups within the EU Data Collection Framework and ICES on how to improve data collected on recreational fisheries in a cost-effective way, with a view to evaluate the impacts of recreational fisheries on the marine environment, where there is a need.
Identify fish species for which there is a need for better data for identified purposes, e.g. GES, and enable fishermen to record catches of relevant species in dedicated programmes
<b>Proposed new actions</b>
Analysis of pressures affecting fish stocks
Comment by FISH: The Meeting agreed that the title of this action should be rephrased as e.g. follows: Analysis of pressures affecting fish stocks in order to identify complementary measures
Conclude a complete set of indicators for the assessment of fish stock health, also including size and age distribution
Comment by FISH: The Meeting agreed to revise the title as follows: Initiate the process with the aim to conclude a more complete set of criteria to indicate the health of a fish stock, besides fishing pressure and biomass criteria also including size and age distribution.
Concrete steps to make progress on cooperation between HELCOM and fisheries management (e.g. Baltfish) to improve implementation of BSAP
Comment by FISH: The Meeting noted that the aim of the proposed action is not clearly reflected in the title. The Meeting proposed to revise the title as follows: Further elaborate cooperation between BALTFISH and relevant HELCOM working groups to facilitate achieving of good environmental status.
Phase out all recreational fishing on eel by 2022
<b>Sub-theme: By-catch</b>
<b>Existing actions</b>
Reduce the negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem and to this end, support the development of fisheries management including technical measures to minimize unwanted by-catch of fish, birds and marine mammals and achieve the close to zero target for by-catch rates of relevant species, e.g. harbour porpoise
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
<i>HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State &amp; 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>Invite the competent authorities, such as BALTIFISH, 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><i>(Rephrased by S&amp;C)</i></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><i>(Rephrased by S&amp;C)</i></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]. <i>(Rephrased by S&amp;C)</i></p> <p><i>HOD 58-2020 instructed the Fish and State &amp; 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.</i></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 risk areas where technical mitigation measures are insufficient to reach conservation goals.</p> <p><i>(Rephrased by S&amp;C)</i></p>
<p><b><i>Proposed new actions</i></b></p>
<p>Mandatory use of Acoustic Deterrent Devices or other effective mitigation measures to minimize bycatch of the Baltic Sea harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)</p>
<p>Collect representative data on by-catch of birds, mammals and non-targeted fish species on species level</p>
<p>Ensure effective implementation of the Landing Obligation (LO) as required by Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)</p> <p>Comment by FISH: The Meeting noted that with its current formulation, the action is not appropriate for the BSAP, but that revision to focus on selective fishing gear could be a possibility e.g. as follows "Take action to avoid unwanted catches."</p>
<p>Development of alternative fishing gear to replace gillnets</p> <p>Comment by FISH: The Meeting agreed that the title should be adjusted to reflect more clearly that the aim is to reduce bycatch of harbour porpoise and birds and to be seal-safe, as well as to reflect that such developments of fishing gear has already been undertaken for a number of years but needs to be intensified, e.g. as follows: Develop and promote the use of alternative fishing gear to replace gillnets with the aim of avoiding incidental by-catch of mammals and seabirds, and to be seal-safe.</p>
<p><b><i>Sub-theme: Fish stock management</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>Existing actions</i></b></p>
<p>Competent authorities to establish long-term national management plans for salmon stocks by 2023 and implement them at the latest by 2025 so that they reach set targets, including but not limited to smolt production, genetic diversity and distribution throughout the river habitat</p>
<p>Competent authorities to improve data related to sea trout stocks with the view to establish and implement long-term national management plans for sea trout stocks at latest by 2025 so that they reach set targets, including but not limited to recruitment status, genetic diversity and distribution throughout the river habitat</p>
<p>Define necessary complementary measures supporting the EU multi-annual plans of cod, sprat and herring (Regulation (EU) 2016/1139) for Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States, in order to improve cod size/age-range</p>
<p><b><i>Proposed new actions</i></b></p>
<p>A set of 7 measures for coastal fish: Coastal fish measure 4. Establishment of no-take areas</p>
<p>A set of 7 measures for coastal fish: Coastal fish measure 5. Seasonal closures</p>

A set of 7 measures for coastal fish: Coastal fish measure 6. Catch regulations
National environmental permitting authorities to take into account possible impacts on weak migratory fish stocks, particularly salmon, as recognized by ICES or nationally, and how this may compromise the ability to reach agreed river specific fish population targets
Comment by FISH: The Meeting proposed that the title may need clarification, e.g. as follows: National environmental permitting authorities should consider possible impacts on weak migratory fish stocks, particularly salmon, as recognized by ICES or nationally, and ensure that granting permits for activities in and near rivers does not compromise the ability to reach agreed river specific fish population targets
<b>Sub-theme: Seal-Fisheries interactions</b>
<i>Existing actions</i>
Sharing of information and implementation among Contracting Parties, BALTFISH and BSAC on the implementation of non-lethal mitigation measures or ways to manage seals-fisheries interactions.
<b>Theme: Seabed disturbance</b>
<i>Proposed new actions</i>
Establishment of a regionally agreed method for assessing in what ways loss and disturbance is causing negative effects on the marine environment.
Comment by FISH: The Meeting proposed to rephrase the title as follows: "Implement a common approach to assessing and addressing negative effects on the marine environment caused by loss and disturbance of the seabed building on and utilizing the ICES advice and work by relevant expert groups.
No further expansion of fishing effort to areas not already impacted by existing fishing activities
Comment by FISH: The Meeting noted that the title does not reflect the intention of the synopsis, focusing on seabed disturbance.
Reduction of fishing pressure and development of Good Environmental Status delineation, supported by no go areas to determine benthic species recovery and potentially natural communities
Comment by FISH: The Meeting considered the need to reformulate the title to reflect more clearly the intentions described in the synopsis.
<b>Theme: Underwater noise</b>
<i>Existing actions</i>
Develop and implement threshold values and assessment methods for adverse effect of impulsive and ambient noise for marine life, in cooperation with OSPAR and relevant EU expert groups, by [2023] at latest for marine mammals and by [2026] for other relevant species groups. (Rephrased by S&C)
Implementing mitigation measures according to existing Best Environmental Practice and Best Available Technique for continuous and impulsive noise in the Baltic as soon as they become available, but at the latest by [XXXX] (Rephrased by S&C)
Implement regular and regional harmonized monitoring of ambient and impulsive noise [by 2023] to follow up effects of mitigation measures. (Rephrased by S&C)
<i>Proposed new actions</i>
Guidelines and regulation of the design and use of acoustic deterrent devices
Comment by FISH: The Meeting proposed that the title should be reformulated as follows: "Development and implementation of guidelines for the design and use of acoustic deterrent devices to avoid detrimental impacts on the environment from underwater noise. "

## Provisional segment: Biodiversity

<b>Theme: Spatial Conservation</b>
<i>Existing actions</i>
Development, implementation and information sharing of management measures for fisheries inside marine protected areas

<b>Proposed new actions</b>
Areas around windfarms as potential refugia
Comment by FISH: The Meeting considered the title not to reflect the aim of the proposal, and that it is slightly misleading in talking about refugia and instead of no take zones.
<b>Theme: Protection of species</b>
<b>Existing actions</b>
Initiate implementation by 2022 of a Baltic coordinated programme of protective measures ensuring successful eel migrations, aligned with CMS, the EU Eel Regulation and other relevant instruments, including a monitoring and post-evaluation process of levels of pressures affecting eel that begins no later than 2024
By [2022] at the latest, identify knowledge gaps and identify and determine high-risk areas for by-catch of harbour porpoise; (Rephrased by S&C)
To regularly assess the state of the coastal fish community through selected coastal fish species and groups, the next assessment to be available by [target year of next FISH-PRO assessment]. (Rephrased by S&C)
To develop and coordinate monitoring and assessment methods, where ecologically relevant, of coastal fish populations and communities, also including threatened and declining species by [2023]. (Rephrased by S&C)
By [2027] implement management measures with the view to achieve good environmental status for coastal fish, including threatened and declining coastal fish species. (Rephrased by S&C)
<b>Theme: Protection and restoration of habitats</b>
<b>Existing actions</b>
Develop and implement habitat restoration plans (including spawning sites and migration routes) in relevant rivers by 2025 to strengthen native strains and to reinstate migratory fish species
<b>Proposed new actions</b>
Measures related to restoration of coastal habitats: 12. Biomanipulation to remove cyprinids and sticklebacks and rehabilitate coastal ecosystem function
Comment by FISH: Meeting proposed to reformulate the action as follows: "Investigate and trial biomanipulation by removing cyprinids and sticklebacks as a method for rehabilitating coastal ecosystems"
A set of 7 measures for coastal fish: Coastal fish measure 7. Follow-up and knowledge sharing
Removal of unnecessary dams and migration barriers, especially in small waterways
Comment by FISH: The Meeting noted that the word "unnecessary" is very subjective and consideration should be given to defining it, or rephrasing by linking more to the aim to mitigate negative impacts of such barriers.
Alternative proposal from S&C 13: Removal of dams and migration barriers where relevant, and applying mitigation measures in other cases, especially in small waterways.
Prioritising mitigation measures in rivers for eel and other fish migration
Comment by Fish: The Meeting proposed to revise the title as follows: Prioritising mitigation measures at dams (e.g. in connection with hydropower plants) for eel and other fish migration
Restocking of marine areas with fry of European Eel ( <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> )

### Provisional segment: Hazardous substances and litter

<b>Theme: Hazardous substances</b>
<b>Proposed new actions</b>
Ban on import and sale of metallic lead in fishing equipment
<b>Theme: Litter</b>
<b>Proposed new actions</b>

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.

Comment by FISH: The Meeting agreed that there may be a need to propose a revision of the title, possibly by making reference to the RAP ML. The Meeting also noted in general that a decision should be made with regard to whether actions closely related to the RAP ML should be included in the updated BSAP or if they should be implemented through the RAP ML.

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)

Comment by FISH: The Meeting agreed that the title of the proposal should be revised to mention a shared reporting system for ALDFG and updating the HELCOM map and data service (MADS)

Development of strategies for preventing fishing gear loss in the Baltic Sea by analyzing the fishing strategic context and available options for fishing gear marking

Comment by FISH: The Meeting discussed the need to clarify in the title whether the proposed action also concerns implementation of strategies, and whether that should be done nationally or regionally.

### Provisional segment: horizontal actions

#### **Theme: Ecosystem-based management**

#### *Proposed new actions*

Public awareness of potential impact of human activities on coastal ecosystems

Comment by FISH: The Meeting noted that the title is very general making it difficult to understand what the action relates to.

Agree to collect fisheries data on both large and small-scale vessels