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<b>Document title</b>	Accomplished and upcoming activities of the BSAP update
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<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4 – Implementation and update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan
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## Background

In accordance with the [Strategic plan](#) the BSAP update has so far focused on evaluating the implementation of existing HELCOM actions and agreements and to develop and agree on a framework for the updated BSAP. HELCOM activities, such as the analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) and the HELCOM ACTION project, are also underway with the development of supporting information for the update process. In 2020 the BSAP update enters a phase where the content of the new plan should be created, including the formulation of new actions.

This document provides an overview of already implemented activities and the timing of upcoming activities and decisions in 2020.

Note that the BSAP up workshops planned for May 2020 have been postponed due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions to the following dates:

Hazardous substances: August 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Eutrophication: August 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Biodiversity: August 31<sup>st</sup> – Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> (lunchtime), 2020

Sea-based: Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> (afternoon) – Sept 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

A joint day for the Biodiversity and Sea-based workshops, focussing on shared topics, is still under consideration.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information and use it as appropriate in the planning of work for the BSAP update.

## Background

The document makes reference to activities agreed through the [Strategic plan](#) for the BSAP update. Alignment of ongoing work with the strategic plan for the BSAP update

In accordance with the Strategic Plan, the BSAP update has now completed the ‘formulation phase’ in which HELCOM Working Groups have focused on evaluating the status of implementing the current BSAP and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013. As part of the formulation phase, the structure of the BSAP has also been reviewed and HOD 56-2019 agreed on a provisional adjustment to the BSAP structure. The adjustment of the BSAP structure also included the review and revision of HELCOM objectives which has been carried out by Working Groups and a set of new and revised objectives were provisionally agreed at HOD 57-2019. The adjusted BSAP structure and objectives are presented in [document 4-2](#).

The work has now moved into the ‘Creating the content phase’, in which HELCOM Working Groups will finalize the review of existing HELCOM actions. The ongoing analysis of sufficiency of existing measures to improve the state of the Baltic Sea was initiated by the HELCOM SOM Platform and ACTION project in 2019 and the preliminary results will be available in spring 2020.

In 2020, the ‘Renaissance phase’ is also initiated which is the main phase for proposing new actions for the updated BSAP as outlined in the following sections.

### Three phases of the BSAP update

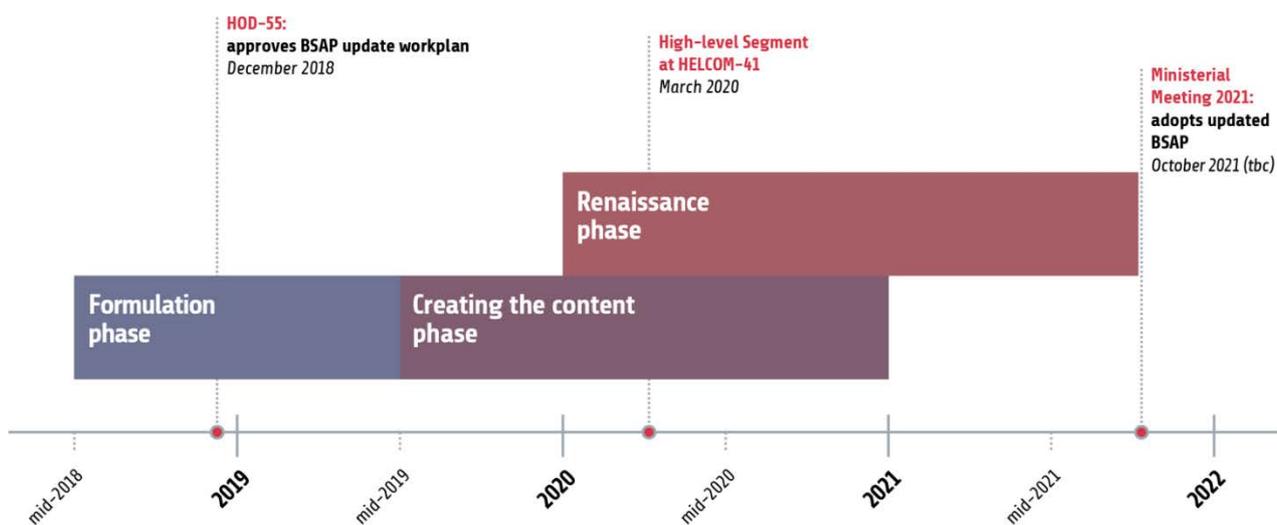


Figure 1. The three phases of the BSAP update according to the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update, agreed at HOD 54-2018.

## 1) Chiefly achieved activities

### Adjustment to the BSAP structure

The adjustment of the overall structure of the BSAP and associated goals and objectives (cf activity 2.2) can be considered as a chiefly achieved with the provisional agreements on revised goals of HOD 56-2019 ([Outcome, para 2.23](#)) and the agreement on objectives by HELCOM 41-2020 ([Outcome, para 4.1](#)). The adjusted structure and objectives will now be used to organize meeting documents and as a framework for the drafting of the BSAP document. In case found relevant, e.g. if the continued work identifies objectives as redundant or missing, further adjustments can still be proposed during the BSAP update process.

### Reporting on HELCOM Recommendations

Working Groups proposed in 2019 to report on a sub-set of HELCOM Recommendations to support the BSAP update (cf activity 2.3). The selected Recommendations were chosen based on their relevance for the analysis of sufficiency of measures. While reporting is still missing from selected countries, the task can be considered as finalized by Working Groups for the purpose of the BSAP update. HOD 57-2019 however pointed out that the implementation gaps, both for recommendations, the current BSAP and Ministerial Declarations, should be further analysed by HELCOM Working Groups.

### SOM approach and collation of input to the analysis

The analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) was initiated in spring 2019 through the establishment of the HELCOM SOM Platform by HOD 55-2018 ([Outcome, para 3.23](#)). The framework for the approach was agreed by HOD 56-2019 ([Outcome, para 2.16](#)) and the collation of input to the analysis has been ongoing since the start of work.

Shortly, the SOM analysis will contribute to identifying gaps in existing measures to reach good environmental status and support identifying needs for new actions for the updated BSAP. The analysis is guided by the HELCOM SOM Platform, established by HOD 55-2018, and carried out through the HELCOM ACTION project<sup>1</sup> and through the lead by Contracting Parties on specific topics covered by the analysis.

The SOM analysis relies on estimating the status of the marine environment at a specific future point in time, given measures in existing policies, their implementation status and predicted development of human activities over time. Data to be used in the model has been collected from literature, models and experts.

Collation of information on existing measures in HELCOM, nationally and globally, was completed in autumn 2019 ([link to lists](#)). These lists have been used to group individual measures into a set of 'measure types' for each of the topics addressed in the SOM analysis.

Input to the SOM analysis also includes data on 1) activity-pressure contributions, 2) effectiveness of measures, 3) state-pressure linkages and 4) projections of human activities.

For activity-pressure contributions, a data-driven approach has been used for some topics (loss and disturbance to the seabed, introduction of non-indigenous species, input of nutrients). For the remaining relevant topics, an expert-based approach has been employed and activity-pressure surveys have been distributed to relevant HELCOM expert bodies and nationally nominated SOM experts.

Expert-based surveys have also been the main approach to retrieve information on effectiveness of measures and pressure-state linkages. They were implemented in December 2019 – February 2020. The expert pool was formed from the representatives of the relevant HELCOM expert networks and groups, as well as additional experts nominated by Contracting Parties (representatives of HELCOM Working Groups and SOM Platform) specifically for the task. Expert data on the effectiveness of measures will be complemented with the results of a literature review.

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<sup>1</sup> HELCOM ACTION project is co-financed by the EU and coordinated by HELCOM.

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Projected development of human activities is based on compiling relevant national and regional literature and the report was reviewed by [SOM Platform 3-2020](#).

## 2) Spring 2020

### Finalization of the review of existing HELCOM actions by Working Groups

Working Groups have had three tasks related to existing HELCOM actions from the current BSAP and HELCOM Ministerial Declarations adopted after the BSAP (cf activity 1.1 and 2.4):

- to propose rephrasing or new target years, as needed, for actions that are not likely implemented by 2021. In accordance to the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update action that are not implemented by 2021 will form the basis for the updated BSAP.
- to evaluate if agreement paragraphs from the HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 need further specifications in order to be turned into concrete actions. The aim is that concretized actions that are not carried out by end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP.
- to evaluate actions that were previously labelled as ‘too general’ to be included in the follow-up system of HELCOM actions, consider if they should be proposed to be addressed in the updated BSAP, and in that case to propose how they can be concretized.

At the start of 2020 all Working Groups are underway with the evaluations and final proposals are expected to be prepared by regular Working Group meetings or intersessional meetings held in the first two quarters of 2020. The proposals will be used as supporting information to the BSAP UP workshops (see below) and presented for endorsement to HOD in June 2020.

### Technical review of synopses by Working Groups

As agreed by HELCOM 40-2019, proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP can be submitted by Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects, Observers, according to an agreed format. By end of January 2020, 73 synopses were received. The proposals will in a first step be reviewed by HELCOM Working Groups in spring 2020, including to identify possible gaps in the proposals. This review step will provide the first opportunity for the Working Groups to jointly discuss proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP. Deliberations on new actions will continue throughout 2020.

### Validation of input to the SOM analysis by Working Groups

The data from the expert surveys on activity-pressure contributions, effectiveness of measures and pressure-state linkages, as well as the literature review on the effectiveness of measures will be validated by HELCOM Working Groups in spring 2020. The validation will take place intersessionally (via email correspondence) or in the WG spring meetings, depending on the timing of the meeting. Topic-specific summary statistics and distributions of the responses will be presented for validation. The data will also include summary information of the background of the respondents, i.e. their country, organization type, field and years of experience.

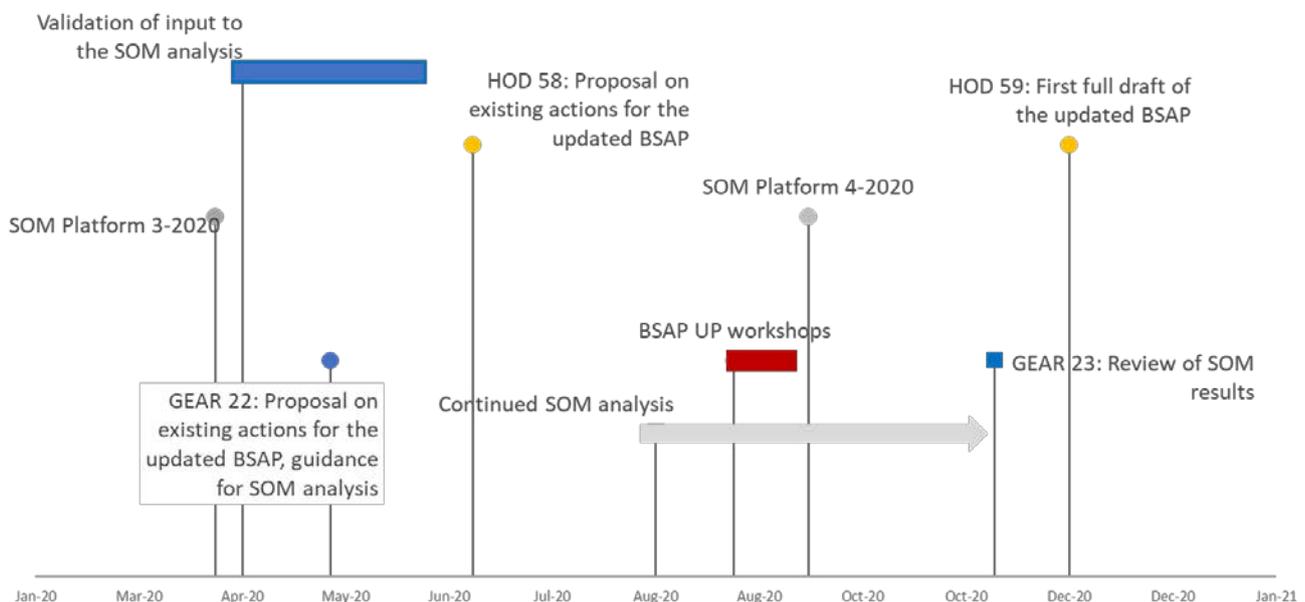
### SOM analysis and HELCOM SOM Platform 3-2020

The ongoing analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) is presented in detail on a dedicated page at the [HELCOM website](#), as well as [a webinar](#) given in January 2020. Preliminary results of the SOM analysis will be available in spring 2020. The first results were discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM SOM Platform, held online on 24-26 March and the meeting also prepared for the BSAP UP workshops.

In addition to overall descriptions of the SOM methodology and results, topic-specific reports describing the methodology and findings for each topic will be prepared with the assistance of SOM topic teams, when they have been established. Contributions to these topic-specific reports are appreciated.

## Technical implementation of the updated HELCOM Explorer

One activity of the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update is to update and improve the data base and associated visualisation of status of implementation of HELCOM actions through the HELCOM Explorer (activity 2.1). HOD 57-2019 agreed on the further development of the functionality and interactive design which will be implemented by the Secretariat in spring 2020.



**Figure 2. Indicative timeline of activities in 2020. Blue denotes activities directly linked to GEAR, grey to the SOM analysis, and yellow considerations by HOD. WG representatives are also expected to participate in the BSAP UP workshop but these workshops are cross-cutting.**

### 3) Autumn 2020

#### BSAP UP workshops

BSAP UP workshops will be held to further discuss the proposals on new actions based on the following background material:

- **Lists of existing actions proposed to be included in the updated BSAP**, based on the evaluation by HELCOM Working Groups. These actions will provide the basis for the updated BSAP and will be made available for information to the workshops. From point of the SOM analysis these actions are assumed to be implemented during the timeframe of the SOM analysis.
- **Results of the SOM analysis and associated information.** In addition to identifying tentative gaps in existing measures the SOM analysis also provides information on e.g. the relative contribution of activities to pressures, most significant pressures affecting state components, pressure reductions required to achieve GES/status improvements, status improvements/pressure reductions from existing measures, and time lags between measures and environmental state.
- **Proposals on new actions based on the submission of synopses**, as evaluated from technical point of view by previous Working Group meetings.

To support the evaluation of proposals on new actions, common criteria will be used during the workshops as developed by the SOM Platform and endorsed by the GEAR Group.

The HELCOM SOM Platform has emphasized that the BSAP UP workshops should be carried out from a technical and scientific point view and not consider policy related issues. Autumn meetings of HELCOM Working Groups will continue deliberations and work further on the formulation of potential new actions for the update BSAP and prepare a consolidated proposal for HOD in December 2021. It is considered as

important that national representatives of HELCOM Working Groups attend the BSAP UP workshops for founding the validity of the outcome.

All workshops will take place at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki, Finland.

- Hazardous substances: August 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- Eutrophication: August 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- Biodiversity, loss and disturbance to the seabed, extraction of species (including by-catch, hunting), spatial measures (MPA, MSP): August 31<sup>st</sup> – Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> (lunchtime), 2020
- Sea-based including maritime activities, underwater noise, non-indigenous species, response actions): Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> (afternoon) – Sept 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### SOM analysis

The SOM analysis will continue after the BSAP UP workshops to prepare two additional supporting analyses for the selection of new actions for the updated BSAP.

- 1) The SOM analysis is planned to be re-run with the proposed new actions included. This requires however that the effectiveness of the tentative new actions can be estimated. Such re-run can indicate how far the updated BSAP can contribute to reaching good environmental status. The re-run could be done based on the outcome of the BSAP UP workshops, but if feasible also later in the process when the new actions have been agreed.
- 2) Analysis of cost-effectiveness of proposed new actions that can have a measurable effect in the marine environment. In addition to information on the effectiveness of new actions, this requires assessing their costs, either qualitatively, semi-quantitatively or quantitatively. The analysis will be carried out by the ACTION project under the guidance of the SOM Platform. The approach and need for background data was discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM SOM Platform.

### Continued deliberation on new actions for the updated BSAP by Working Groups

Working Group meetings in autumn 2020 will continue to formulate the new actions to be included in the updated BSAP, based on the outcome of BSAP UP workshops. Agreements at the Working Group level is required at this time to prepare a proposal for HOD in December 2020. Intersessional activities will be scheduled as needed. The continued SOM analysis in autumn 2020 as described above is expected to provide additional background information to support the task.

### Reporting by countries on the implementation of HELCOM agreement

In autumn 2020 Contracting Parties will be requested to report on the status of implementation of national actions from the BSAP and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013. The information will be included in the updated HELCOM Explorer together with the reporting on HELCOM Recommendations that was carried out in 2019. The role of Working Groups in the reporting is not decided.

### Drafting of the updated BSAP

In 2020 the drafting of the updated BSAP document will be initiated based on the agreement by HOD 57-2019 (see separate background document). Working Groups will contribute directly through formulation of proposed actions and supplementary material to the actions. The overall drafting of the updated BSAP will be carried out by national representatives appointed by HOD. An initial meeting to discuss the drafting process by national representatives will tentatively take place in spring 2020 but the major effort to draft the BSAP document is expected to take place in autumn 2020. A first full draft of the BSAP document is to be presented to HOD in December 2020.