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<b>Document title</b>	Concretization of existing HELCOM actions
<b>Code</b>	4-6
<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4 – Implementation and update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan
<b>Submission date</b>	6.4.2020
<b>Submitted by</b>	Secretariat
<b>Reference</b>	

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## Background

The 2018 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration includes a number of paragraphs related to activities under the mandate of the GEAR Group. These paragraphs give the direction for HELCOM work in the upcoming years, but some need further specification in order to be turned into concrete tasks for the Group or associated networks. This could include e.g. to define type of development work and products (e.g. targets for indicators, guideline, assessment) required to reach the goals of the Declaration and target years for achieving them. The aim is that the concretized actions that are not carried out by the end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP to be agreed in 2021.

GEAR 20-2019 recalled that the 2018 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration includes a number of paragraphs related to activities under the mandate of the GEAR Group. These paragraphs give the direction for HELCOM work in the upcoming years, but some need further specification in order to be turned into concrete tasks for the Group or associated networks. The aim is that the concretized actions that are not carried out by the end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP to be agreed in 2021. The meeting agreed to postpone the discussion on the initial proposals for concretized actions to GEAR 21-2019. Contracting Parties were invited to provide comments and concrete suggestions to the actions. No comments were received.

GEAR 21-2019 considered the proposals on concretized HELCOM actions and agreed that the actions are to be presented as work in progress at HOD 57-2020. The meeting invited EN-ESA to provide proposals for concretizations to the three first actions outlined in the document, possibly using the ESA roadmap. The meeting agreed that for the remaining two actions GEAR contacts will provide suggestions for concretizations to the Secretariat by for review and subsequent approval at an intersessional GEAR online meeting on 27 February 2020 (GEAR 21B-2020). The proposals by EN ESA were received prior to the deadline and sent to GEAR for review on 7 February 2020. Further input was provided by Denmark by the extended deadline of 20 February 2020.

The GEAR 21B-2020 discussed the proposals in relation to para. 52 and 53 from the HELCOM 2018 Ministerial Declaration and agreed not to include any actions in the updated BSAP but to refer to the contents of these statements as part of the preamble of the updated BSAP and in connection with the HELCOM Science Agenda respectively (further details available in **Annex 1** in this document). The meeting appreciated the work done by the EN-ESA in relation to the provision of proposals on concretized actions (as outlined in column B in **Annex 1**). The meeting provided comments and further guidance as contained in column 3 of **Annex 1**.

GEAR 21B-2020 further discussed a way forward to finalise the process of concretization of actions and agreed to invite EN-ESA to further work on the proposals for para. 49, 50 and 51 based on the guidance provided by the Meeting and additional guidance to be provided by the Secretariat in line with HOD 57-2019 decisions ([Outcome of HOD 57-2019](#), para. 3.4) so that EN ESA provide further elaborated proposals by **10 April 2020**, to be submitted to GEAR 22-2020 for consideration. The meeting encouraged national representatives from EN-ESA and GEAR WG to communicate on this task to ensure its achievement.

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the resulting changes in working mode, as well as recent changes in tasks at the Secretariat in relation to the BSAP Update, it has not been possible to arrange an EN ESA meeting and still meet the deadline set by GEAR 21B-2020. The Secretariat is now elaborating an alternative plan, which would allow for the concretized action to be shared with HOD 58-2020 for approval in accordance with the BSAP Update workplan. The alternative plan will be to be shared with GEAR for approval, in the form of an addendum to this document.

#### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the change in plan for endorsement of the concretized actions and note that an alternative plan will be prepared by the Secretariat and submitted for approval as an addendum to this document.

## Annex 1 Concretization and rephrasing of paragraphs from MD 2018 related to GEAR Group

This table contains the remaining existing actions under the remit of the GEAR requiring concretization, the original proposals by EN ESA and the guidance provided by GEAR 21B-2020.

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Proposal for concretized actions to include in update BSAP	GEAR 21B-2020
<p>49. <b>WE RECOGNIZE</b> that knowledge on the relationship between the state of the marine environment and human well-being is essential for applying the ecosystem approach to management of human activities and in maritime spatial planning in the region, as well as for implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appoint a responsible person to participate in the HELCOM EN ESA from each Contracting Party and include expert(s) on social dimension of economic and social analyses. Provide resources for setting up and maintaining a dedicated open-access website to disseminate information on relevant projects, resources and results for Baltic Sea economic and social analyses.</li> <li>2. Improve the integration of economic and social analyses to other HELCOM work strands and communication across HELCOM groups and networks.</li> <li>3. Improve the use of the results of economic and social analyses in the decisions regarding the protection and spatial planning of the Baltic Sea.</li> </ol>	<p>In relation to the three proposals: Reference to the application of the ecosystem approach to management of human activities to be included in the BSAP update.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To be kept for now as <i>“Setting up and maintaining a dedicated open-access website to disseminate information on relevant projects, resources and results for Baltic Sea economic and social analyses.”</i>, but there is a need to evaluate the level of detail/specification which is suitable for the actions to be included in the BSAP update.</li> </ol> <p>2 and 3: To be merged. Rephrase it to be more concrete so that the “improvement” can be measured, including addition of deadlines.</p>

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Proposal for concretized actions to include in update BSAP	GEAR 21B-2020
<p>50. To this end, <b>WE AGREE</b> to further develop and carry out coordinated regional economic and social assessments, including mapping, valuation, and analysis of ecosystem services and natural capital accounting, taking advantage of improved methods and comparability of data;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set up and implement a plan how to proceed with marine accounts for the Baltic Sea, including organize communication with representatives of statistical offices of the Contracting Parties, explore options to link the data collected by national statistical offices and health authorities on human well-being with the data on the marine environment, and apply the methods and standards of ecosystem accounting in the assessment of marine ecosystem services and their value.</li> <li>2. Continue developing socioeconomic assessments of marine ecosystem services, including the spatial distribution of benefits from ecosystem services, supporting the integration these into policy making.</li> <li>3. Develop methods to use the existing data sets on marine environment and human well-being (valuation studies and other data sources) in social and economic analyses.</li> </ol>	<p>Relevant action, but its added value for the BSAP update is not clear. There is a need to shorten the action and make it more concrete so that a clear target and target year is indicated.</p>
<p>51. <b>WE ALSO AGREE</b> to encourage further coordinated research to support cost of degradation analyses, cost-effectiveness analyses of regional measures, and assessment of cost and benefits related to achieving GES covering the entire Baltic Sea region;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop regional methods and assessments for economic and social analyses to support ecosystem-based management and MSP in the Baltic Sea region.</li> <li>2. Assess comprehensively the economic benefits and costs of achieving GES in the Baltic Sea with coordinated valuation and cost-effectiveness studies.</li> <li>3. Improve the coordination of national economic analyses in the Contracting Parties to advance the comparability of analyses and results across countries.</li> </ol>	<p>Third proposal to read: <i>“Improve the coordination between Contracting Parties on economic analyses to advance the comparability of analyses and results across countries.”</i></p> <p>Rephrasing needed to be more concrete including target and target years. Consider merging with actions included under 50.</p>