



Document title	Initial proposal to reflect MSP in the updated HELCOM BSAP
Code	3-8
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	3 - Building up future common regional MSP framework
Submission date	16.10.2019
Submitted by	HELCOM Secretariat
Reference	

Background

According to strategic plan for the update of the BSAP and the decision by HOD 55-2018, Working Groups have initiated a review of the existing HELCOM ecological and management objectives and the development of new objectives for marine litter, underwater noise, and loss and disturbance to the seabed. Concomitantly HOD have reviewed the overarching 'BSAP structure', including its segments and goals, and agreed on a provisional structure to be used as a basis for the update of the BSAP and ongoing work by the Working Groups (para 2.23, Outcome HOD 56-2019).

This document describes possible linkages of MSP to the objectives and the new structure of BSAP. The linkages can be found especially in the suggested BSAP segments sea-based activities and biodiversity. The matrix of pressures vs activities is proposed as a background for development of MSP related actions for the updated BSAP.

The document proposes one of the possible ways to integrate MSP into structure of the forthcoming BSAP. General definitions are proposed to include to pre-amble and actions in the segments on sea-based activities and biodiversity. According to the work plan for BSAP update process, proposing of new actions for the updated BSAP starts in 2020. Form, style and structure of the BSAP text are still being discussed and a guidance on drafting of the new BSAP is anticipated after upcoming HELCOM HOD 57-2019.

Therefore, examples given in the document illustrate possible content of MSP related measures which might be included into the updated BSAP. Drafting of the text for the updated BSAP will start at later stage. Nonetheless, as MSP related actions have never been reflected in the HELCOM BSAP and the approach to MSP differs in the countries, compilation of proposals on measures is to be launched well in advance to enable thorough discussion on the content and level of specification of proposed actions.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- consider, discuss and agree on the proposed way to integrate MSP related actions into the updated BSAP;
- consider, discuss and agree on the proposed matrix of activities vs pressures which can be managed by MSP;
- discuss the level of specification of MSP related actions in the updated BSAP;
agree on the timetable for development proposals on concrete MSP related actions for inclusions to the BSAP in line with the Strategic plan for the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

Introduction

BSAP will propose measures to reduce critical human pressures and to enhance protection of biodiversity. The proposal will most likely be targeted to specify types of human activities or to specific species and habitats. MSP can importantly complement that by providing a comprehensive, cross-sectoral and spatially specific perspective. The formulations of roles of MSP in the forthcoming BSAP should reflect that added value than MSP can have.

Finally, while MSP contains an important environmental dimension and MSP in the Baltic Sea Region cannot contradict with the objectives of BSAP, MSP has also other targets. It aims to promote sustainable growth of maritime sectors, reduce conflicts and enhance synergies between activities at sea, as well as contribute to social sustainability of coastal communities.

We propose here possible text on how MSP could be addressed in preamble to the forthcoming BSAP document.

This document also presents examples of how MSP can be linked to the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) that is being updated. Drafting of the examples applies the anticipated structure of the forthcoming BSAP in which the objectives and actions will be most likely grouped into four segments like the original BSAP (link to the document 3-4 Review of the BSAP structure and HELCOM objectives). The four segments are in current formulations: Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication, Baltic Sea undisturbed by hazardous substances and litter, environmentally sustainable sea-based activities, and Status of biodiversity which ensures resilience and ecological integrity.

MSP is linked especially to reduction of pressures that are caused by sea-based activities and to protection of biodiversity. Below these two aspects are discussed in more details.

For identification of linkages between MSP and pressures caused by the sea-based activities we apply a table that was used in the BSAP update work when it was presented to HELCOM HOD meeting 56-2019 (document 2-4 HOD 56-2019). The original table identified which of the sea-based activities cause which of the human pressures. In this document below we apply the same approach to indicate how MSP could contribute to reduction of the identified pressures.

For identification of possible contributions of protection of biodiversity as this is approached in BSAP update we use a proposed list of conservation objectives that are proposed to the forthcoming meeting of HELCOM STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

MSP in BSAP preamble

Pre-amble to the BSAP identifies policy relevance of the document and establish basic principles relevant for all segments of the BSAP. As long as MSP as management tool contributes to achieving ecological objectives of different BSAP segments, in general, the role of MSP in the BSAP could be identified in the preamble together with the basic principles of its applications. The details of the use of MSP to achieve specific BSAP would be further specified in the BSAP segments. In the preamble we propose to reflect the following:

-that maritime spatial planning is a management tool utilized for integrated management of sea based human activities and thus reduce their impacts on various components of the marine environment safeguarding biodiversity, promoting the sustainable growth of maritime economies and the sustainable use of marine resources;

-that maritime spatial planning is based on a comprehensive, forward looking analysis of large sea areas with a purpose of identifying preferred and optimal locations for the sea-based activities and, thus, contributes to ecological objectives of different BSAP segments;

-that maritime spatial planning contributes to achieving good environmental status of the Baltic Sea being, based on ecosystem approach, coherent across borders and considering social, economic and cultural aspects of the inhabitants.

MSP and sea-based activities in the BSAP

MSP has a lot of potential to contribute to BSAP's management objectives regarding sea-based activities and even to actions to reduce pressures caused by the sea-based activities.

The following table (Table 1) gives a draft overview of MSP's potential contributions to reduce the pressures. The table is (slightly modified) from a table in a document that was presented to HELCOM HOD 56-2019 meeting applies the structure. The original table identified which sea-based activities are linked to which groups of pressures. The cells in the Table 1 below when highlighted in grey fill indicate that MSP can influence directly to reduce the pressure. These cells give also some examples of how MSP could do that. The cells that include text, e.g. "Not usually addressed in MSP", but which are not highlighted are such pressures that are not typically the basis for addressing the human activity in question in MSP. The highlighted and not-highlighted cells are the ones that were marked in the original table to indicate a linkage between a sea-based activity and a pressure. Blank cells indicate a lack of any linkage between a sea-based activity and a pressure.

The potential role of MSP in reduction of human pressures naturally depends/ on the national approach to MSP, e.g. which sea-based activities are addressed and which or not – and how. Therefore, the following table would have slightly different contents, if prepared for each country separately.

Table 1 Human activities which can be managed by MSP tools to reduce specific environmental pressure.

	PRESSURES								
Sea-based activities	Nutrients	Hazardous substances	Litter	Loss and disturbance of seabed	Disturbance of species	Extraction and mortality of species	Intro Non Indigenous Species	Underwater noise	
Shipping	Not usually addressed in MSP	Safety of shipping is addressed in planning of energy and other infrastructure at sea. Risk of accidents is reduced, thus <u>indirectly</u> reduce risk of input of hazardous substances.	Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP (note, dredging is below as a separate sea-based activity)	Rerouting to avoid disturbance (possible recommendation in MSP)*		Not usually addressed in MSP	Rerouting or speed limits away from valuable nature areas to reduce the impacts of underwater noise (possible recommendation in MSP)*	
Extraction of living resources		Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP	Locate activities away from valuable nature areas (e.g. seaweed extraction), Indicate areas to avoid bottom trawling (possible recommendation in MSP)*		Not usually addressed in MSP		Locate activity away from valuable nature areas to reduce the impacts of underwater noise	

BSAP Segment: Sea-based activities	Nutrients	Hazardous substances	Litter	Loss and disturbance of seabed	Disturbance species	Extraction and mortality of species	Intro Non Indigenous Species	Underwater noise
Extraction of non-living resources		Not usually addressed in MSP		Locate activities away from valuable nature areas Regulate/recommend extent of extraction	Locate activity away from areas where they cause disturbance to species Regulate timing of extraction			Locate activity away from valuable nature areas to reduce the impacts of underwater noise
Production and transmission of energy		Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP	Locate OREIs** away from valuable nature areas	Locate OREIs away from areas where they cause disturbance to species			Give instructions in spatial plans for minimising production of underwater noise in areas where it can cause significant impacts
Tourism and leisure infrastructure and activities		Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP	Locate tourism activities away from valuable nature areas	Locate tourism activities away from areas where they can cause disturbance to species Regulate/recommend timing of activities			Locate activity away from valuable nature areas to reduce the impacts of underwater noise

BSAP Segment: Sea-based activities	Nutrients	Hazardous substances	Litter	Loss and disturbance of seabed	Disturbance of species	Extraction and mortality of species	Intro Non Indigenous Species	Underwater noise
Restructuring of seabed morphology (dredging)	Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP		Locate dredging and dumberg of dredged material away from valuable nature areas	Locate dredging and dumberg of dredged material away from areas where they can disturb species Regulate/recommend timing of activities			Locate activity away from valuable nature areas to reduce the impacts of underwater noise
Aquaculture	Locate aquaculture away from areas that are particularly vulnerable to eutrophication Regulate or recommend extent of the aquaculture activity (e.g. amount of production or emissions)	Not usually addressed in MSP	Not usually addressed in MSP	Locate aquaculture away from vulnerable areas			Not usually addressed in MSP	

* MSP typically has no mandate to regulate directly shipping or fishing, but can recommend avoidance of harmful activities and in some cases forbid them

** Offshore Renewable Energy Installation (wind turbines, transformers and cables)

Table 1 maps human activities which can be managed by MSP tools to reduce specific environmental pressure considered under various BSAP segments. But concrete actions related to application of MSP to achieve objectives of BSAP should be formulated at later stage and proposed by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP group for inclusion into the updated BSAP.

The text below gives example of actions which might be proposed:

While preparing and updating maritime spatial plans:

- to use the means provided by spatial plans with a purpose of protecting areas of high natural value;*
- to reduce pressures to marine environment by giving in the planning decisions conditions on how the sea-based activities can be practiced in specific areas;*
- to identify, quantify and monitor the types and extent of pressures caused by sea-based activities in areas covered by MSP plans as the information basis for developing spatial planning solutions that aim at reducing the pressures.*
- other proposals.*

While preparing and updating maritime spatial plans the means provided by spatial plans can be used to protect areas of high natural value from pressures caused by sea-based activities. A particular benefit of MSP planning is that it takes a comprehensive, cross-sectoral view on the sea-based activities while also considering existing knowledge on the areas with high natural valuable, including green infrastructure. Furthermore, MSP should consider cumulative pressures caused by the sea-based activities, provided that suitable methods and data for assessing cumulative impacts are available.

MSP can reduce pressures to marine environment by steering those human activities that cause significant pressures away from areas with high natural value or recommend to avoid such areas. MSP planning decisions can also set conditions on how the sea-based activities can be practiced in specific areas.

It is also important to identify, quantify and monitor the types and extent of pressures caused by sea-based activities in areas covered by MSP plans as the information basis for developing spatial planning solutions that aim at reducing the pressures.

In addition to the above more general level observations it is possible to describe MSP's contribution to address particular types of sea-based activities. The below examples are specially to give a basis for comparing benefits and limitation of describing how MSP can contribute to the objectives of BSAP on a general level and on a more detailed level.

Shipping:

- to use the means provided by spatial plans with a purpose of limiting vessels traffic in areas where it can disturb species or can cause harmful levels of underwater noise.*
- in areas of high natural values where shipping cannot be avoided, to recommend to ship operators speed limits in order to reduce the human pressures following seasonal movements of the relevant species.*

Extraction of living resources:

- to produce planning decisions that will lead to reduction or avoidance of disturbance on seabed. This can be achieved by indicating in the MSP plans areas where such activities, e.g. bottom trawling, should be avoided.*

Impacts of energy production:

-to locate offshore energy installations away from valuable nature areas and to locate them away from areas where they cause disturbance to species.

-to give instructions in spatial plans for minimising production of underwater noise in areas where it can cause significant impacts.

MSP and protection of biodiversity on BSAP

MSP can contribute also to BSAP objectives on the protection of biodiversity. In the BSAP update process especially the HELCOM STATE & CONSERVATION group is contributing to the process. Conservation objectives will be proposed to the forthcoming meeting of the group (State & Conservation 12-2019). The suggested objectives are listed in the following table with comments on possible linkages to MSP.

Table 2. Potential contribution of MSP to achieve BSAP’s conservation objectives

Suggested conservation objectives for S&C 12-2019	Potential contribution of MSP to those objectives
An effectively managed, ecological coherent and representative network of marine protected areas	MSP takes into account the existing and suggested MPA areas. MSP seldom suggests new protected areas.
Ecosystem-based planning of ecologically important areas outside MPAs	This is strongly linked to MSP as MSP’s are expected to apply ecosystem-based approach. MSPs can contribute substantially to this objective.
Minimized disturbance of species by human activities, including access to migration routes	Possible environmental impacts of human activities are taken into account when MSP plans allocate sea areas for different human activities. This consideration includes possible disturbance of species, including migratory routes when such information is available. This is included above in the sea-based activity section.
Human induced mortality of species at sustainable level	Not MSP-related
Effective and regional coordinated conservation plans and measures for threatened species and habitats	Can be taken into account in MSP, but such conservation plans are not suggested by the MSP plans.
The food web is balanced in species composition and total abundance	Not MSP-related
The food web is assessed holistically as an interconnected system	Not MSP related

Based on the table 2 above the possibilities that MSP can provide for achieving conservation objectives are for instance:

While preparing and implementing maritime spatial plans the existing and suggested marine protected areas are taken into account. MSP can considerably support ecosystem-based planning of ecologically important areas outside of marine protected areas by ensuring that

requirements for this are taken fully into account in preparation and implementation of maritime spatial plans and that the plans do not contradict with this objective.

More detailed MSP measures are mainly included in the approach to reduce pressures caused by the sea-based activities.