



Document title	Technical reviews of synopses
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Agenda Item	2 - Reviewing synopses and other actions proposed for BSAP update
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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.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20-2020 took note of the synopses relevant for the Working Group and the common guidance for making a technical review, invited the Contracting Parties to make the technical review and agreed to organize dedicated online meeting to finalize the task.

The attached document includes the guidance for making the technical review and the synopses relevant for the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group.

The measures listed in the document are from different origins. The first three are proposed as synopses to the BSAP update process. The next ones (MSP4-MSP10) are from the document 3-3 Rev. [Role of MSP in achieving regional environmental objectives and BSAP update](#) that was submitted to the 20th meeting of the Working Group. One of the measures is modified from a document "[The Baltic Shadow Plan: For the future of the Baltic Sea: NGO's key asks for the revised BSAP](#)" that has been recently published jointly by CCB and WWF. The last two measures, namely MSP 12 and 13, are such that were proposed by IOW in their response to the request to analyse the proposed measures.

At the end of this document a table lists synopses that may have linkages to MSP, but are handled by other HELCOM Groups. That list is only for information as the Working Group members may want to follow the overall development of BSAP update documents.

The attached Excel document (2-2-Att.1) contains the list of synopses relevant for the group and a compilation of the answers by Denmark, Germany, Finland, Sweden and the observer IOW.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to finalize the technical review of synopses.

Review of synopses on potential new actions for the updated BSAP

HELCOM has invited submissions of proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP with closing date at the end of 2019. As a response, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, HELCOM observers, and HELCOM and BONUS projects have submitted synopses of about 80 potential new actions. According to the BSAP work plan, HELCOM Working Groups will carry out a first review of the synopses at their regular meetings in spring 2020. Such review round aims to provide a preliminary (qualitative) evaluation focusing on the technical aspects and substance of the proposals. The review should, in this first step, be carried out from a scientific point of view and focus on technical feasibility of the measures, not legal or other aspects of feasibility.

At the BSAP UP workshops, further deliberation and evaluation of the proposals will continue based on a set of criteria agreed by the Gear Group, also taking into account the results of the ongoing analysis of sufficiency of measures. The outcome of the Working Group Meetings will be used as a basis for the BSAP UP workshops.

The Working Groups are asked to consider the proposals in their field of expertise and to give feedback on the following aspects/questions:

- 1) to suggest whether a submitted proposal is best categorized as a measure, research need, or monitoring/data need. All types of proposals will be considered in the BSAP update process but only those that can contribute directly to the reduction of pressures or improvement of the state of the environment will be considered when analysing of sufficiency of measures in the updated BSAP. Proposals related to research needs will be considered for the HELCOM Science Agenda that is under development.
- 2) to consider whether a proposal is a new measure or is already entirely/partly covered by an existing HELCOM action. In the latter case, identify if the proposal should be, or already is, taken into account in the review and revision of existing HELCOM actions.
- 3) to evaluate if the proposal is sufficiently substantiated, i.e. if appropriate supporting references and evidence of effect have been provided. This step could make use of a scale low-medium-high.
- 4) if the proposed action concerns a technical measure, evaluate if it is technically feasible to implement the proposed measure, e.g. is the proposed technique sufficiently developed and tested to be considered for practical implementation. This step could make use of a scale low-medium-high.
- 5) to identify potential gaps in the proposed new action; it could be that a measure/action has to be implemented first (before the proposed action) or some steps are missing in the proposal.
- 6) consider gaps and overlaps for the set of synopses: are there any central issues for HELCOM work that are not represented in the set of existing actions or synopses (activities, pressures, state components highlighted in HELCOM strategies, Ministerial Declarations). If yes, identify how the gap could be resolved, e.g. for a lead country to prepare additional synopses. Are there overlaps? If overlaps exist, suggest merging of proposals.

Note that no proposals will be excluded at this stage; the aim is to identify how the proposal is placed in the framework of existing HELCOM actions and make a qualitative evaluation of the technical soundness of the synopses.

RESPONSE TEMPLATE:

Proposed measure: XX		
Question	Response option	Comments/suggestions
1. Is the submitted proposal best categorized as a measure, research need, or monitoring/data need	Measure / research need / monitoring or data need	...
2. Is it a new measure or entirely/partly covered by an existing HELCOM action	New measure / Partly covered by existing action/Covered by existing action	[Clarify the potential overlap]
3. Is the proposal sufficiently substantiated	Low-medium-high	...
4. Is it technically feasible to implement the proposed measure	Low-medium-high (or Not applicable)	...
5 Potential gaps in the proposed new action	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential gap. The submitters could be asked to complement the synopsis]

Consideration of the set synopses		
6a. Potential gap in the set of proposed new actions	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential gap and propose how it could be resolved]
6b. Potential overlap between proposed new actions	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential overlap]

Overview of proposals

An overview of proposals relevant for the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group are listed in the table below. The full text of each proposal is available further below and can be reached by clicking the titles in the table.

The three first proposed measures were submitted as synopses to the BSAP update process. The measures MSP4-MSP10 are from the document 3-3 Rev. [Role of MSP in achieving regional environmental objectives and BSAP update](#) that was submitted to the 20th meeting of the Working Group. The measure MSP11 is modified from a document "[The Baltic Shadow Plan](#): For the future of the Baltic Sea: NGO's key asks for the revised BSAP" that has been recently published jointly by CCB and WWF. The last two measures, namely MSP 12 and 13, are such that were proposed by IOW in their response to the request to analyse the proposed measures.

At the end of this document a table lists synopses that may have linkages to MSP, but are handled by other HELCOM Groups. That list is only for information as the Working Group members may want to follow the overall development of BSAP update documents.

Title	Submitted by	Considered also by Working group
MSP1. Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) applying an ecosystem-based approach to support BSAP-objectives and targets and contributing to sustainable sea-based activities	Pan Baltic Scope	
MSP2. Areas around windfarms as potential refugia	ACTION Project	Fish, State&Conservation

Title	Submitted by	Considered also by Working group
MSP3. A holistic systems perspective for all HELCOM BSAP measures	Andrea Morf	
MSP4. MSP plans can steer sea-based activities by a) allocating space for certain types of activities; b) forbidding particular sea-based activities in specific areas; or c) setting conditions or restrictions on sea-based activities in specific areas.	Secretariat	
MSP5. MSP does not necessarily address all sea-based activities in all countries in similar ways and can do this with different levels of steering capacity.	Secretariat	
MSP6. MSP should apply a precautionary approach with an aim of steering activities away from areas that have known to have high natural values to protected them from potential harm.	Secretariat	
MSP7. MSP plans and accompanying documents can be used to signal areas with high natural value without presenting specific planning solutions.	Secretariat	
MSP8. MSP planning decisions should forbid or at least recommend avoiding sea-based activities in specific areas, if the activities are known to cause serious damage or disturbance to habitats and species found in the areas in question.	Secretariat	
MSP9. MSP planning decisions can also be used for giving or recommending conditions and restrictions on conducting sea-based activities in specific areas.	Secretariat	
MSP10. Formulation of the planning decisions should take into account anthropogenic pressures such as loss and disturbance of seabed, disturbance on habitats and species and underwater noise in relation to known vulnerabilities of habitats and species.	Secretariat	
MSP11. Benefits of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) beyond nature protection should be included as the basis of ecosystem-based approach in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).	CCB/WWF	
NEW MSP12. Beside MSP, landscape planning in the sea should be introduced where it does not yet exist. Otherwise MSP threatens to be reduced only as planning of human activities.	IOW	
NEW MSP 13. Due to the long-term perspective inherent in planning, MSP can make very good contributions to climate change.	IOW	

Measures received as synopses



The following three measures were proposed as synopses.

<p>Title</p> <p><i>Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) applying an ecosystem-based approach to support BSAP-objectives and targets and contributing to sustainable sea-based activities</i></p>
<p>Submitted by:</p> <p>The Pan Baltic Scope Project</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) applies an ecosystem-based approach to contribute to sustainable use of marine resources and the protection of the marine environment. MSP can thus support the achievement of the BSAP-goals and targets. MSP is a process and tool for spatial governance/steering of sea-based human activities. Through this steering MSP can influence anthropogenic pressures, pressures resulting from human activity, on marine habitats and species. MSP can also enhance nature conservation objectives, thereby supporting effective networks that extend beyond designated marine protected areas alone. In accordance with the EU's MSP directive the member states are preparing MSP plans latest in March 2021, which means that when the updated BSAP comes into force all Baltic Sea waters except for Russia are spatially planned. This can provide for a significant added value to implementation of also the BSAP.</p>
<p>Activity:</p> <p>MSP has potential to influence a number of activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offshore structures (other than for oil/gas/renewables) Restructuring of seabed morphology (dredging, beach replenishment, sea-based deposit of dredged material) Extraction of minerals (rock, metal ores, gravel, sand, shell) Renewable energy generation (wind, wave and tidal power), including infrastructure Transmission of electricity and communications (cables) Aquaculture – marine, including infrastructure Transport – shipping (incl. anchoring, mooring) Transport – shipping infrastructure (harbours, ports, ship-building) Urban uses (land use) Tourism and leisure infrastructure (piers, marinas)
<p>Pressures:</p> <p>MSP has potential to influence a number of pressures, most of them regulated by law. Climate change should be added.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disturbance of species: Visual, presence, boating, recreational activities, above-water noise Disturbance of species: Other (e.g. barriers, collision) Extraction of target fish and shellfish species and incidental fish catches Physical disturbance to seabed (temporary or reversible and recovers within 12 y) Physical loss (due to permanent change of seabed substrate or morphology and to extraction of seabed substrate) Changes to hydrological conditions Input of other substances (e.g. synthetic substances, non-synthetic substances, radionuclides) — diffuse sources, point sources, atmospheric deposition, acute events Input of anthropogenic sound (impulsive, continuous) Input of other forms of energy (including electromagnetic fields, light and heat) Loss of, or change to, natural biological communities due to cultivation of animal or plant species

<p>State</p> <p>MSP has potential to impact activities affecting pressures affecting the state of the marine environment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seabed habitats Pelagic habitats Birds Mammals Fish Red listed species and habitats Hazardous substances Noise
<p>Extent of impact</p> <p>The application of MSP is carried out at the national level while coordination is carried out at the Baltic wide scale. Scale varies between contracting parties. Interaction between national, regional and local planning may also be relevant depending on the planning context.</p> <p>All Baltic Sea countries except Russia have their marine waters spatially planned by March 2021. This means that when the updated BSAP comes into force, this measure covers almost the whole Baltic Sea waters with the limitations in some coastal waters.</p>
<p>Effectiveness of measure</p> <p>MSP, offers the potential for a holistic spatial planning approach that can steer or guide future uses of sea areas. MSP will influence the spatial distribution and locations of wide range of sea based activities, many of which may have environmental impacts. It is hence essential that MSP as a governance tool is used in line with BSAP-goals and targets, as well as other relevant environmental objectives. MSP is a relatively new form of coordinating the marine sectors activities. Few practical examples of how MSP has contributed to sustainable use are available.</p>
<p>Cost, cost-effectiveness of measure:</p> <p>MSP is already carried out by contracting parties. How MSP is carried out effectively is a significant factor in the future. MSP, applying an ecosystem-based approach, will contribute to long term cost-effectiveness and likely towards supporting Good Environmental Status. Additional costs may relate to development of planning evidence, cost for staff involved in environmental integration in MSP, costs related to impact assessments or costs related to trade-offs between uses.</p>
<p>Feasibility:</p> <p>Ecosystem based MSP is feasible and a formal cooperation procedure is established in the BSR through the HELCOM-VASAB MSP working group. Common guidelines on ecosystem based MSP are agreed.</p>
<p>Follow-up of measure:</p> <p>Criteria for follow up have to be developed. The issue of follow up is included in the HELCOM/VASAB MSP work group's workplan.</p>
<p>Background material:</p> <p>Information is available on the Pan Baltic Scope project website: www.panbalticscope.eu Particularly relevant information on green infrastructure and cumulative assessments in MSP, monitoring and evaluation, Ecosystem-Based MSP-handbook and guidance including Strategic Environmental Assessment and economic and social analysis. In addition to recommendations on HELCOM/VASAB MSP WG EBA guidelines revision and an EBA in MSP and SEA inclusive handbook.</p>

References

- www.panbalticscope.eu
- Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area, HELCOM and VASAB 2016
- HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 24/10 IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA
<https://helcom.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Rec-24-10-R.pdf>

<p>Title</p> <p><i>Areas around windfarms as potential refugia</i></p>
<p>Submitted by:</p> <p>ACTION Project and associated HELCOM ACTION WP2.2 workshop</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; gap: 20px;">   <p style="font-size: small;">Co-funded by the European Union</p> </div>
<p>Description of measure</p> <p>Maintain areas around windfarm construction free from fishing activities, particularly those impacting the seafloor, to support benthic habitats and communities and the associated food web. The role of such areas, particularly within a broader network of benthic habitats or protected zones, should be regulated and researched to understand the potential benefit in supporting Good Environmental Status. Construction of windfarms create an initial and often immediate impact on the benthic habitats, the footprint of the structures clearly creating a loss of habitat. These areas, however, may subsequently attract and provide refugia for species, mobile (e.g., pelagic) and more sedentary (e.g., benthic species). In addition, the new constructions provided by hard structures could perceivably represent habitat for certain species associated with hard substrates. More significantly, these areas may represent important staging points for certain species and the associated food webs, and processes linked with them. These areas should be tightly regulated to prevent activities (e.g., prevention of fishing or shipping) that cause disturbance of the seafloor and pelagic habitats (and associated biota), and the biodiversity and status of these zones should be monitored and researched to fully understand their potential contribution to Good Environmental Status in the Baltic Sea region.</p>
<p>Activity:</p> <p>Fish and shellfish harvesting (bottom-touching towed gears, professional, recreational) Multiple ofther activities also relevant</p>
<p>Pressure:</p> <p><i>Physical loss (due to permanent change of seabed substrate or morphology and to extraction of seabed substrate)</i> <i>Physical disturbance to seabed (temporary or reversible and recovers within 12 y)</i></p>
<p>State:</p> <p>Seabed habitats Pelagic habitats</p>
<p>Extent of impact:</p> <p>Local in most direct sense but with broader regional importance (e.g. refugia and reference areas).</p>
<p>Effectiveness of measure</p>
<p>Cost, cost-effectiveness of measure:</p>
<p>Feasibility:</p>
<p>Follow-up of measure:</p> <p>The overall impacts could be encapsulated with existing (under development) assessments, though focussed assessment on reference areas would likely be valuable.</p>

Background material:

References

Title

A holistic systems perspective for all HELCOM BSAP measures

Submitted by:

During the HELCOM Stakeholder Conference by Andrea Morf from NordRegio and further developed during the session on Sea-based measures

Description of measure

The synopsis proposes an integrative, holistic approach for thinking of the whole BSAP with a special reference to spatially differentiated MSP-like approach.

Departing in:

- Integrative Coastal and Ocean Management and marine spatial planning thinking
- Land-sea interactions both ways
- both strategic & general and specific & managerial
- Analytical systems perspective to understand and describe the management issues
- Continuous general principles
- Regularly revised measures
- Regularly revised data collection and checklists

Implying:

- Social-ecological systems view
- Differentiated in time and space (aware of 4-dimensional time-space)
 - Including past and future needs
 - Scale sensitivity
- Cross-sectoral
- Multi-level governance
- Continuous participatory process - dialogue/integrative societal debate and learning
 - Adaptive/agile management/constant checking and learning
 - Evaluation
 - Knowledge and learning - group/level specific communication (facilitation of learning)

Measures proposed originally to BSAP documents

The following measures (MSP4-MSP10) were originally presented in the document 3-3- Rev. to the HELCOM-VASAB 20-2020.

MSP4

MSP plans can steer sea-based activities by a) allocating space for certain types of activities; b) forbidding particular sea-based activities in specific areas; or c) setting conditions or restrictions on sea-based activities in specific areas. The HELCOM-VASAB [Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure in the Baltic Sea](#) suggests types of planning decisions in relation to the use of the sea areas in question: priority, reserved, allowed, restricted and forbidden. The MSP plans, especially when being more strategic, can also signal topics or areas that are found valuable for the society without presenting specific planning solutions.

MSP5

It should be noted that MSP does not necessarily address all sea-based activities in all countries in similar ways and can do this with different levels of steering capacity. Regarding some sea-based activities MSP plans can then give only recommendations. Shipping and commercial fishing are typically such sea-based activities that are not strongly steered by the MSP plans as they are regulated through international policy frameworks.

MSP6

Allocation of space for sea-based activities in MSP should apply a precautionary approach with an aim of steering activities away from areas that have known to have high natural values to protected them from potential harm.

MSP7

MSP plans and accompanying documents can be used to signal areas with high natural value without presenting specific planning solutions. Such information should inform decision-making by different authorities and private operators to take into account the natural values.

MSP8

MSP planning decisions should forbid or at least recommend avoiding sea-based activities in specific areas, if the activities are known to cause serious damage or disturbance to habitats and species found in the areas in question.

MSP9

MSP planning decisions can also be used for giving or recommending conditions and restrictions on conducting sea-based activities in specific areas. These can pertain to timing of activities, for instance to avoid disturbance during spawning or breeding periods, or to extent of the sea-based activity.

MSP10

Formulation of the planning decisions that aim to forbid or give conditions or restrictions to sea-based activities should take into account anthropogenic pressures such as loss and disturbance of seabed, disturbance on habitats and species and underwater noise in relation to known vulnerabilities of habitats and species. Furthermore, planning decisions should be used for minimising emissions of nutrients caused by sea-based activities in areas that are particularly vulnerable to eutrophication.

Measure proposed by CCB and WWF

The measure MSP 11 was originally presented in a document "[The Baltic Shadow Plan](#): For the future of the Baltic Sea: NGO's key asks for the revised BSAP" that has been recently published jointly by CCB and WWF.

MSP11

Benefits of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) beyond nature protection should be included as the basis of ecosystem-based approach in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).

Measures proposed by IOW

The last two measures, namely MSP 12 and 13, are such that were proposed by IOW in their response to the request to analyse the proposed measures.

MSP12

Beside MSP, landscape planning in the sea should be introduced where it does not yet exist. Otherwise MSP threatens to be reduced only as planning of human activities.

MSP13

Furthermore, due to the long-term perspective inherent in planning, MSP can make very good contributions to climate change.

Synopses taken up by other HELCOM groups with relevance to MSP

The table on next pages introduce synopses that may have relevance to MSP, but are taken up by other HELCOM groups. This list is only for information.



Title	Submitted by	Tentative WG to review	Topic	Potential relevance to MSP
A set of 7 measures for coastal fish	SLU Aqua	Fish, State&Conservation	Fisheries management, habitat restoration, spatial conservation	One measure on enhanced protection of coastal fish habitats)
Adoption of a moratorium on seabed mining in the Baltic Sea, including a moratorium on developing additional permissive regulations and exploitation and exploration contracts.	CCB	Pressure	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	Would affect seabed mining's future in the BSR
Designate no-use marine protected areas, that also function as scientific reference areas	ACTION project WP3	State&Conservation	spatial conservation	To be taken into account in MSP planning
Development of standards for quality of seafloor habitat mapping and products	Denmark	State&Conservation, Pressure, Fish	Mapping and monitoring	Improve MSP's knowledge base
Establish an effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected system of highly protected marine protected areas (MPAs), covering a minimum of 30 % of the Baltic Sea area by 2030. All MPAs shall include fully closed zones (complying with IUCN 1a category1) or be fully closed in their entirety, depending on the conservation objectives and needs of the specific site.	CCB	State&Conservation	Spatial conservation	Considerable increase of MPA's surface areas and development of MPA network would affect future MSP planning
Establishment of a regionally agreed method for assessing in what ways loss and disturbance is causing negative effects on the marine environment. (seabed)	CCB	State&Conservation, Pressure, Fish	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	Improve MSP's knowledge base

Identify and limit the negative effects on migratory birds from wind and wave energy production at sea	Denmark	State&Conservation	Conservation/restoration of species	Improve MSP's knowledge base
Implement appropriate protective curtains for the dredging operations to prevent dispersal and spread of material	ACTION project WP2	Pressure	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	
Improved coastal planning to concentrate movement of smaller vessels in sensitive and shallow coastal areas	ACTION project WP2	Maritime	Management of human activities, MSP	Planning of coastal shipping. Was directed also to MSP group, but was taken up by the MARITIME
Improved regulation and reporting of small-scale dredging	ACTION project WP2	Pressure	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	Could affect how dredging is addressed in MSP
Joint action to form a common understanding of ecosystem based management by 2023	CCB	State&Conservation, All	Management of human activities	Development of EBA
Limit and preclude dredging/extraction near protected areas and increased buffer zones round sensitive areas	ACTION project WP2	Pressure	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	Would affect how dredging and extraction of aggregates is addressed in MSP
Produce sensitivity maps for threatened wintering and breeding bird species according to the HELCOM Red List 2013 for the whole Baltic Sea region.	BirdLife, JWG Birds	State&Conservation	Conservation/restoration of species, Birds	Improve MSP's knowledge base
Protect functionally important ecosystem elements and ecologically significant areas in order to create a regionally coherent network	ACTION project WP3	State&Conservation	Spatial conservation	Would affect how nature conservation is addressed in MSP.
Updating the efforts to limit the impacts of dredging, sediment extraction and other bottom disturbing activities in the Baltic Sea	CCB	Pressure	Loss and disturbance to the seabed	Would affect how dredging and extraction of aggregates is addressed in MSP