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Background

The United Nations Conference "Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14", was held on 5-9 June 2017 in New York (2017 SDG 14 Conference), co-chaired and co-funded by Sweden and Fiji.

The Conference included the plenary sessions, the partnership dialogues on seven themes and around 100 side events. The Conference adopted a document "Call for action". In addition, the outcome will include a report containing the co-chairs' summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information, in particular of the voluntary commitments, and reflect on the Conference and its outcome as well as possible follow-up, in particular taking the Ministerial Meeting into account.

1. Preparatory process in HELCOM

HELCOM High-level segment, held on 28 February 2017 on the occasion of the 38th Meeting of the Helsinki Commission, adopted "HELCOM's Implementation Outlook of the Ocean-related SDGs in the Baltic Sea - A Roadmap to Agenda 2030"[1].

The High-level segment highlighted that HELCOM targets are well aligned with SDGs and HELCOM can significantly contribute to the implementation of marine related SDGs in the Baltic Sea, also in a cross-cutting manner, and should take a coordinating role for these SDGs and make its active role visible.[2]

A new report "Measuring progress for the same targets in the Baltic Sea" identifies how HELCOM work supports the implementation of SDGs.[3]

The next possible occasion to follow up on SGDs and commitments is the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting to be held under the EU Chairmanship on 6 March 2018. The Ministerial Meeting could decide on a renewal process of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan.

2. Showcasing added value of regional cooperation at SDG 14 Conference

HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HOD 51-2016) agreed on the importance of showcasing at the SDG 14 Conference the added value of regional cooperation in Regional Sea Conventions, including the Baltic Sea being an exemplary region for policy making based on best available science, for stakeholder involvement, and for establishing partnerships for integrated management of human activities. This is supported by the recently released EU communication "International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans".

HELCOM was presented by HELCOM representative in four side events during the Oceans Conference:

1. Oceans in the 2030 Agenda: The role of regional governance

Lead organizers: German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Swedish Ministry of the Environment, United Nations Environment Programme; Co-organizers: Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability.

A presentation on integrated solutions and good-practice examples from marine regions was made by Ms Maria Laamanen, Head of Delegation to HELCOM, Ministry of the Environment, Finland.

2. Environmentally Sound Waste Management as Action against Marine Litter

Lead organizers: Sweden, co-president of the Ocean Conference, and the World Bank.

A presentation on sea-based waste – green ports and fisheries was made by Ms Anna Petersson, Chair of HELCOM MARITIME.

3. Collaboration in Public Private Partnership for a sustainable maritime future

Lead organizer: Ministry of Transport and Communications of Finland (including Finnish Transport Safety Agency); Co-organizers: World Maritime University (WMU), WWF, industry representatives: Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), Norsepower Oy Ltd, Wärtsilä Corporation.

[1] http://www.helcom.fi/Documents/HELCOM%20at%20work/Events/Outcome.pdf
[2] Paragraphs 2.1-2.7 in the HELCOM 38-2017 Outcome https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/HELCOM%2038-2017-401/MeetingDocuments/Outcome%20of%20HELCOM%2038-2017.pdf
[3] Approved by HELCOM 38-2017 and published 03.2017 http://www.helcom.fi/Lists/Publications/BSEP150.pdf

A joint presentation of case on eutrophication and wastewater by ships was made by Ms. Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Executive Secretary and Mr. David Brown, Vice President, Maritime Policy at Cruise Lines International Association.

4. Regional Marine Protected Areas networks in action

Lead organizer: Mediterranean Protected Areas Network (MedPAN); Co-organisers: CaMPAM, RMPAO, NAMPAN, WIOMSA, HELCOM, UN Enivronment/MAP, French Biodiversity Agency

A presentation on HELCOM Marine Protected areas was made by Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Executive Secretary.

Further, HELCOM Executive Secretary made a statement at the Partnership Dialogue No. 1 on addressing marine pollution, 5 June 2017, and at the Plenary session on 9 June 2017. The statements are attached in **Annex 2**.

3. Voluntary commitments

Voluntary commitments are one of the core elements of The Ocean Conference, aiming to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its seven targets. 1328 commitments were registered https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/.

HELCOM voluntary commitments

Contracting Parties agreed on four HELCOM voluntary commitments, which were registered in the Conference registry:

- Designation and enhancement of implementation of the Baltic Sea as NOx Emission Control Area for ships and public-private partnership
- Strengthening the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to support ocean-related SDGs
- Identification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea
- Regional Seas Programme for ocean-related SDGs

Full text of the HELCOM commitments is included in **Annex 1**.

Voluntary commitments by HELCOM Contracting Parties

A number of HELCOM Contracting Parties have made voluntary commitments related to the Baltic Sea.

Denmark

- Marine Protected Areas in Kattegat
- Reducing marine litter

The Danish commitments will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 "Regional Action Plan on marine litter"
- HELCOM Recommendation 35/1 "System of coastal and marine Baltic Sea protected areas (MPAs)"

European Union

- Strengthening regional cooperation to support implementation of SDG 14
- Preventing and significantly reducing marine litter in EU Member States' waters
- Achieve the good environmental status of EU Member States' marine waters by 2020
- Full deployment of European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) by 2020
- Promoting a structured dialogue on cruise tourism between cruise operators, ports and port cities

The European Union commitments will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 "Regional Action Plan on marine litter"
- HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) goal to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021
- HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy
- IMO regulation to ban discharges of untreated sewage from passenger ships according to BSAP

Estonia

- Establishing marine protected areas in Estonian EEZ
- Establishing regional plans for aquaculture in Estonian marine areas
- Creating the regulatory system to allow for and promote the use of LNG as an alternative fuel
- Improving the stormwater discharge systems to decrease the load of nutrients, hazardous substances and litter to the sea
- Identifying impacts of climate change on Estonian marine environment and the assessment of cumulative effects of human activities on marine ecosystems
- Increasing knowledge and awareness on alien species
- Building up the national infrastructure to ensure the effective implementation of the Ballast Water Convention
- Establishing electronic notification systems for the effective use of fishing gear
- Establishing integrated nitrogen management systems for the Gulf of Riga
- Public awareness and information campaign on marine litter and prevention of plastics in the sea
- Marine litter action plan for ports and harbours

The Estonian commitments will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Recommendation 35/1 "System of coastal and marine Baltic Sea protected areas (MPAs)"
- HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 "Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region"
- HELCOM Recommendation 23/5 "Reduction of discharges from urban areas by the proper management of storm water systems"
- HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013: 9(M) on promoting the use of green technologies and alternative fuels by ships
- HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 "Regional Action Plan on marine litter"
- Regional Baltic Sea plan for harmonized ratification and implementation for the 2004 IMO Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC)
- HELCOM Nutrient Reduction Scheme

Finland

- Marine Information and Data for Users - www.MarineFinland.fi

The Finnish commitment will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy

Germany

- Installation of a German air monitoring network to support MARPOL Annex-VI compliance monitoring
- Reducing air pollution from vessels serving the German Federal Administration

The German commitments will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013: 9(M) and 10(M) on promoting the use of green technologies and alternative fuels by ships and the enforcement of the more stringent limits for SOx emissions from ships

Russia

- St. Petersburg Initiative (SPbI)

The Russian commitment will contribute to implementing:

- HELCOM Recommendation 28E/5 "Municipal wastewater treatment"
- HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013: 9(M) on promoting the use of green technologies and alternative fuels by ships

Sweden

- Meeting Sweden's MPA target
- Cross-boundary and inter-sectorial solutions for ecosystem-based marine spatial planning: the Symphony method
- Responsible plastic management
- Securing social-, economic- and environmental sustainability in the Swedish Maritime Strategy
- Development of ecosystem-based management of fish and fisheries in Sweden
- The Swedish Government intends to implement appropriate and relevant conservation measures regarding fisheries in order to reach conservation objectives in all marine protected areas by 2020
- Support development of a Source to Sea Approach to land based pollution including marine litter
- Connecting and Protecting Our Seas: Initiatives in the Baltic and the Mediterranean
- Industry and research driven development and introduction of selective and low impact fishing gears
- Environmental monitoring with one of the world's most modern research vessels
- Ban plastic microbeads in cosmetics jointly with Finland from the Baltic Sea as well as other countries

The Swedish commitments will contribute to implementing e.g.:

- HELCOM Recommendation 37/2 "Conservation of Baltic Sea species categorized as threatened according to the 2013 HELCOM red List"
- HELCOM Recommendation 35/1 on HELCOM Marine Protected Areas
- HELCOM Recommendation 17-2 "Protection of Harbour Porpoise in the Baltic Sea area"
- HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013: 2(MSP) on applying ecosystem approach in Maritime Spatial Planning, and Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area
- HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013 on ecosystem-based fisheries (12(B)-17(B))
- HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 "Regional Action Plan on marine litter"
- HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy

4. Call for action

The Conference adopted "Call for action" document as contained in **Annex 3**. There will also be a report containing the co-chairs' summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14.

Annex 1 HELCOM voluntary commitments

Designation and enhancement of implementation of the Baltic Sea as NOx Emission Control Area for ships and public-private partnership (#OceanAction15614)

HELCOM countries have committed to cutting 80% of NOx emissions from ships operating in the Baltic Sea in order to combat the problem of eutrophication in the region. HELCOM together with its partners will promote the green shipping technology and use of alternative fuels to further reduce harmful exhaust gas emissions and greenhouse gases from ships.

The International Maritime Organization approved the Baltic Sea NOx Emission Control Area (NECA) proposal by the HELCOM countries in 2016 with an effective date of 1 January 2021. The North Sea NECA has been agreed in parallel. The final IMO agreement on the adoption of the two NECAs is expected in July 2017.

Eutrophication, caused by excessive inputs of nutrients, is a serious environmental concern and a priority for action by the Baltic Sea countries working in HELCOM. The measure will result in reduction of 22,000 tons of annual total nitrogen deposition to the whole region, as a combined effect of the Baltic and North Seas NECAs. Out of this, 7,000 tons is estimated to be reduced directly to the sea surface.

The NECA regulations target new ships built on or after 2021 and do not address existing ships. A two-decade long period of fleet renewal is needed before the regulation will show the full effect. Parallel work to promote the green shipping technology and use of alternative fuels, as means of compliance with NECA, will be undertaken by HELCOM and in the region to facilitate emission reductions ahead of the regulatory schedule.

A regional public-private partnership on green technology and alternative fuels for shipping called HELCOM GREEN TEAM has been established for this purpose. The NECA regulation brings a new momentum and a demand to intensify the public-private partnership. The new work plan of the partnership, adopted in 2017, aims to promote public and private co-operation at national and Baltic Sea levels to enhance development and uptake of green technology and alternative fuels in shipping, including LNG. The work will be undertaken jointly by HELCOM countries in co-operation with other regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, the industry and research community.

Strengthening the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to support ocean-related SDGs (#OceanAction17174)

The HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is an ambitious programme to restore the good ecological status of the marine environment by 2021, adopted in HELCOM in 2007. The commitment is to strengthen the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, based on the ecosystem approach, to fulfil the 2030 Agenda in the Baltic Sea.

Until 2016, about 60% of the agreed joint regional actions in the Plan had been carried out, with successes in setting up a nutrient reduction scheme, curbing airborne emission and discharges from shipping, tackling some hazardous substances, piloting ecosystem approach in maritime spatial planning, and covering 11.8% of the Baltic with marine protected areas. All these examples showcase the added value of a regional approach, addressing more than one target of SDG 14 in a coherent way. Policy making based on commonly agreed principles and best available science, paired with a transparent and participatory stakeholder involvement, as well as partnerships for integrated management of human activities, are proven factors underlying these HELCOM achievements.

40 regional actions are still to be completed. Between 30 and 65 percent of the national actions of the Baltic Sea Action Plan have been accomplished by the countries.

HELCOM will continue implementation of these agreed actions that will contribute to the implementation of SDG 14. For instance, this includes:

- speeding up the implementation of the marine litter regional action plan, continuing its battle against eutrophication and planning towards the elaboration of a regional action plan on underwater noise, to fulfil SDG 14.1,
- ensuring close cooperation on any maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea area and management plans for all marine protected areas, to fulfil SDG 14.2 and 14.5,
- supporting sustainable agricultural practices, to contribute to SDG 2.4, and ecosystem-related fishery measures, towards SDG 14.4 and 14.6.

More generally, HELCOM will strive for more resilient marine ecosystems to be better prepared for human-induced climate change challenges. It will also promote further regional development of socio-economic analyses to create tailor-made connecting points between implementation of different SDGs.

For years, HELCOM has developed regional indicators and assessments to measure the environmental status of the Baltic Sea, which can also be used for the future regional work on the implementation of SDGs.

The adoption of the Baltic Sea Action Plan was the first bold attempt by a regional marine protection convention to implement the ecosystem approach. The protection of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea is no longer seen as an event-driven pollution reduction approach to be taken sector-by-sector. Instead, the starting point is the ecosystem itself, and a shared concept of a healthy sea with a good ecological status. This vision determines the need for further reductions in pollution loads, the extent of various human activities, as well as the conservation of marine biodiversity, and where needed and possible, the restoration, of the ecosystem of the Baltic Sea Area. The cross-sectoral plan identifies the specific actions needed to achieve agreed targets within a given timeframe for the main environmental priorities.

Identification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea (#OceanAction18382)

The commitment is to identify Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea. A regional workshop will be organized in 2018 for this purpose.

The EBSAs are expected to contribute to fulfilling the regional goal of drawing up and applying maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region which are coherent across borders and apply the ecosystem approach.

Marine protected areas in the Baltic Sea are taken into account in maritime spatial planning. The areal coverage of HELCOM Marine Protected Areas reached almost 12% of the Baltic Sea in 2016.

EBSA can provide further useful information that can be used for actions to safeguard the species and habitats in these areas including within spatial planning processes as may be decided individually or collectively by the countries concerned. Other potential benefits of EBSA are new possibilities for bilateral collaboration and protection of transboundary marine areas.

Identification of EBSAs will be done according to the established scientific criteria adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The EBSA workshop will be hosted by Finland and convened by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in cooperation with HELCOM.

Regional Seas Programme for ocean-related SDGs (#OceanAction19228)

Objectives:

UN Environment established the Regional Seas Programme in 1974 to address the accelerating marine pollution through the cooperation of neighbouring countries sharing common bodies of water. Currently,

18 regions participate in the Programme, of which 14 Regional Seas programmes are underpinned by legally binding conventions.

The 18 regions are: Antarctic, Arctic, Baltic, Black Sea, Caspian, Eastern Africa, East Asian Seas, Mediterranean, North-East Atlantic, North-East Pacific, Northwest Pacific, Pacific, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, ROPME Sea Area, South Asian Seas, South-East Pacific, Western Africa and Wider Caribbean.

As a response to the Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development, the Regional Seas Programme aims to assist Member States in achieving the ocean-related SDGs by coordinating national actions at the regional level. Thus the Regional Seas programmes set the Regional Seas Strategic Directions (2017-2020) and decided to:

1. Reduce marine pollution of all kinds in line with the SDG Goal 14.1.
2. Create increased resilience of people, marine and coastal ecosystems, and their health and productivity, in line with the SDG Goal 13 and decisions made at the UNFCCC COP21.
3. Develop integrated, ecosystem-based regional ocean policies and strategies for sustainable use of marine and coastal resources, paying close attention to blue growth.
4. Enhance effectiveness of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans as regional platforms for supporting integrated ocean policies and management.

At the 18th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in 2016, the Regional Seas programmes decided to prepare outlook documents which propose how they will support their respective participating countries in the implementation and monitoring of the ocean-related SDGs. These outlook documents will be the guiding documents for future actions towards achieving the SDGs, setting clear regional baselines and targets.

The Regional Seas Programme continues to promote integrated, ecosystem-based approaches. Several regions have already started establishing cooperation with the Regional Fisheries Bodies. In this way, the Regional Seas programmes aim to deliver coordinated assistance to their participating countries in the region. In the coming years, the Programme aims to continue fostering cooperation mechanism with the Regional Fisheries Bodies.

The Regional Seas Programme is in the process of developing a core set of indicators to assess the state of the marine environment. The 22 indicators include 7 fisheries-related indicators. The Programme envisions coordination with the Regional Fisheries Bodies for assessing the marine environment status. Currently, scientific background study is being conducted on the indicators and it is aimed that at least two regions will start using the indicator set by 2020. Indicator-based monitoring would allow quantitative, chronological monitoring of the state of the marine environment.

The Regional Seas Programme has been supporting member states for more than 40 years. While starting new commitments for assisting member states delivery of the SDGs, the Programme is coming to the turning point to look back the past and to address challenges. Thus UN Environment will develop a guideline for effectiveness assessment so that each region will be able to strategize means to improve the delivery of their programmes.

Annex 2 Statements by HELCOM Executive Secretary at SDG 14 Conference

SDG 14 Conference, Partnership Dialogue on addressing marine pollution, 5 June 2017
Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary of HELCOM (#OceanAction15614)

The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, or HELCOM in short, is one of the 18 Regional Seas Programmes in the world. It is based on a convention, has existed for over four decades, and involves nine countries – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden - and the European Union.

A particular challenge in restoring the marine environment of the Baltic Sea is that the Baltic Sea is isolated from other sea areas and its catchment is substantially larger than the sea itself. The Baltic Sea thus serves as a sink for all kinds of pollution and it takes a long time for the environment to recover. Other semi-enclosed seas in the world face the similar challenge. Efficient regional level cooperation is in this case indispensable as most of the environmental problems are transboundary in nature.

The biggest transboundary environmental problem in the Baltic Sea is heavy eutrophication. The cost of degradation for the Baltic Sea region with respect to eutrophication is estimated at total losses of around 3.8 – 4.4 billion euros annually. Actions to reduce inputs of nutrients are thus necessary from all relevant human activities.

To this end, the Baltic Sea has recently been designated as a special area for sewage discharges from passenger ships under MARPOL Annex IV and NOx Emission Control Area under MARPOL Annex VI. The designation has been done by the International Maritime Organization, the global regulator for shipping.

However, work on these new measures has been organized regionally utilizing the HELCOM platform and involving competent maritime authorities from the Contracting Parties - from taking the first initiative and preparing technical documentation to negotiating and making proposals by the HELCOM countries to IMO.

In essence these two HELCOM initiatives have been about partnerships across three different dimensions:

- Firstly it is an example of how regional work can contribute as a constructive intermediator between coastal countries of a regional sea and the global level.
- It is also an example of close cooperation between transport and environment ministries – a form of ”cross-sectoral cooperation”, taking place within a single regional organization, in contrast to more common cooperation between different organizations.
- And thirdly, a key to success has been that all major industry groups including shipowners and ports and environmental NGOs have been involved throughout the process as official HELCOM observers, forming true regional ”public-private-partnerships”.

As a result of this work, the problem of nutrients from the shipping sector, including cruise industry, will be practically eliminated in the Baltic Sea, over a certain period of time.

Based on the HELCOM experience, one can conclude that effective cross-sectoral cooperation on ship-based pollution can be carried out on a regional level for the benefit of the marine environment and according to the existing maritime law.

A similar cross-sectoral cooperation mechanism or approach can be utilized for other topics that need to be addressed to achieve regional targets related to oceans and seas and thus contribute to the 2030 Agenda.

Statement by Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Executive Secretary
at the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, Plenary meeting 9 June 2017, New York

Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished participants,

All seas and oceans in the world are important. However for us, people leaving on the shores of the Baltic Sea, this small sea in the northern Europe is the most important one.

The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, or HELCOM, works to achieve a healthy marine environment and ensure the sustainable use of its resources, based on a regional convention.

HELCOM has enjoyed continuous support of its Contracting Parties for over four decades. These Contracting Parties are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and European Union.

Regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea has led to recent successes in setting up a nutrient reduction scheme, curbing airborne emission and discharges from shipping, tackling some hazardous substances, piloting ecosystem approach in maritime spatial planning, and covering 12% of the Baltic Sea with marine protected areas.

All these examples showcase the added value of a regional approach, addressing more than one target of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in a coherent way. Policy making based on commonly agreed principles and best available science, paired with a transparent and participatory stakeholder involvement, as well as partnerships for integrated management of human activities, are seen by the Contracting Parties as factors underlying these HELCOM achievements.

Despite many efforts and significant progress, status of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea is still of a great concern.

HELCOM members has pledged for this Conference a commitment to strengthen the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to support ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals. The Baltic Sea Action Plan is an ambitious programme to restore the good ecological status of the marine environment by 2021, adopted in HELCOM in 2007.

For instance, this commitment includes:

- speeding up the implementation of the marine litter regional action plan, continuing the battle against eutrophication and planning towards the elaboration of a regional action plan on underwater noise, to fulfil SDG 14.1,
- ensuring close cooperation on any maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea area and management plans for all marine protected areas, to fulfil SDG 14.2 and 14.5,
- supporting sustainable agricultural practices, to contribute to SDG 2.4, and ecosystem-related fishery measures, towards SDG 14.4 and 14.6.

More generally, HELCOM will strive for more resilient marine ecosystems to be better prepared for human-induced climate change challenges. It will also promote further regional development of social and economic analyses to create tailor-made connecting points between implementation of different Sustainable Development Goals.

For years, HELCOM has developed regional indicators and assessments to measure the environmental status of the Baltic Sea, which can also be used for the future regional work on the implementation of the SDGs.

HELCOM has also committed to identify Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea under the Convention on Biological Diversity. This process will contribute to fulfilling the regional goal of drawing up and applying maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region which are coherent across borders and apply the ecosystem approach.

Last but not least, Contracting Parties have committed to cutting 80% of NOx emissions from ships operating in the Baltic Sea in order to combat the problem of eutrophication in the region. The reduction will be achieved by the designation of the Baltic Sea as a NOx Emission Control Area under MARPOL in the International Maritime Organization. HELCOM together with its partners will promote the green shipping technology and use of alternative fuels to further reduce harmful exhaust gas emissions and greenhouse gases from ships.

Follow-up on the implementation will be an important part of efforts to reach SDG 14. HELCOM will have a possibility to do so at our Ministerial Meeting already next year. HELCOM will also continue its cooperation with other Regional Sea Conventions and Programmes as well as UN-Environment.

I thank you.

Annex 3 "Call for Action" adopted by the SDG 14 Conference

Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives, meeting in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017 at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda, with the full participation of civil society, and other relevant stakeholders, affirm our strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources tor sustainable development.

2. We are mobilised by a strong conviction that our ocean is critical to our shared future and common humanity in all its diversity. As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently, convinced that our collective action will make a meaningful difference to our people, to our planet, and to our prosperity.

3. We recognise that our ocean covers three quarters of our planet, connects our populations and markets, and forms an important part of our natural and cultural heritage. It supplies nearly half the oxygen we breathe, absorbs over a quarter of the carbon dioxide we produce, plays a vital role in the water cycle and the climate system, and is an important source of our planet's biodiversity and of ecosystem services. It contributes to sustainable development and sustainable ocean-based economies, as well as to poverty eradication, food security and nutrition, maritime trade and transportation, decent work and livelihoods.

4. We are particularly alarmed by the adverse impacts of climate change on the ocean, including the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean and coastal acidification, deoxygenation, sea-level rise, the decrease in polar ice coverage, coastal erosion and extreme weather events. We acknowledge the need to address the adverse impacts that impair the crucial ability of the ocean to act as climate regulator, source of marine biodiversity, and as key provider of food and nutrition, tourism and ecosystem services, and as an engine for sustainable economic development and growth. We recognise, in this regard, the particular importance of the Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

5. We are committed to halting and reversing the decline in the health and productivity of our ocean and its ecosystems and to protecting and restoring its resilience and ecological integrity. We recognise that the wellbeing of present and future generations is inextricably linked to the health and productivity of our ocean.

6. We underline the integrated and indivisible character of all Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the inter-linkages and synergies between them, and reiterate the critical importance of being guided in our work by the 2030 Agenda, including the principles reaffirmed therein. We acknowledge that each country faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development, in particular least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries, small island developing States (SJDS), and African States, including coastal ones, as do others recognised in the 2030 Agenda. There are also serious challenges within many middle income countries.

7. We reiterate our commitment to achieve the targets of Goal 14 within the timelines, and the need to sustain action over the long term, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. We recognise, in particular, the special importance of certain targets in Goal 14 for SIDS and LDCs

8. We stress the need for an integrated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach as well as enhanced cooperation, coordination, and policy coherence, at all levels. We emphasise the critical importance of effective partnerships enabling collective action and reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of Goal 14 with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders.

9. We underline the need to integrate Goal 14 and its inter-related targets into national development plans and strategies, to promote national ownership and to ensure success in its implementation by involving all relevant stakeholders, including national and local authorities, members of parliament, local communities, indigenous peoples, women and youth, as well as the academic and scientific communities, business and industry. We recognise the importance of gender equality, and the crucial role of women and youth in the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

10. We stress the importance of enhancing understanding of the health and role of our ocean and the stressors on its ecosystems, including through assessments on the state of the ocean, based on science and on traditional knowledge systems. We also stress the need to further increase marine scientific research to inform and support decision-making, and to promote knowledge hubs and networks to enhance the sharing of scientific data, best practices and know-how.

11. We emphasise that our actions to implement Goal 14 should be in accordance with, reinforce and not duplicate or undermine, existing legal instruments, arrangements, processes, mechanisms or entities. We affirm the need to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.

12. We recognise that the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources require the necessary means of implementation in line with the 2030 Agenda, Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and other relevant outcomes, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. We stress the importance of the full and timely implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and, in this context, emphasise the need to enhance scientific knowledge and research, enhance capacity building at all levels, mobilise financial resources from all sources, and facilitate the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to support the implementation of Goal 14 in developing countries.

13. We call on all stakeholders to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development by taking, inter alia, the following actions on an urgent basis, including by building on existing institutions and partnerships:

(a) Approach the implementation of Goal 14 in an integrated and coordinated way and promote policies and actions that take into account the critical interlinkages among the targets of Goal 14, the potential synergies between Goal 14 and the other goals, particularly those with ocean-related targets, as well as other processes that support the implementation of Goal 14.

(b) Strengthen cooperation, policy coherence and coordination amongst institutions at all levels, including between and amongst international organisations, regional and sub-regional organisations and institutions, arrangements and programmes.

(c) Strengthen and promote effective and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, by enhancing engagement of governments with global, regional and sub-regional bodies and programmes, the scientific community, the private sector, donor community, non-governmental organisations, community groups, academic institutions, and other relevant actors.

(d) Develop comprehensive strategies to raise awareness of the natural and cultural significance of the ocean, as well as of its state and role, and of the need to further improve the knowledge of the ocean, including its importance for sustainable development and how it is impacted by anthropogenic activities.

(e) Support plans to foster ocean-related education, for example as part of education curricula, to promote ocean literacy and a culture of conservation, restoration and sustainable use of our ocean.

(f) Dedicate greater resources to marine scientific research, such as inter-disciplinary research and sustained ocean and coastal observation, as well as the collection and sharing of data and knowledge, including traditional knowledge, in order to increase our knowledge of the ocean, to better understand the relationship between climate and the health and productivity of the ocean, to strengthen the development of coordinated early warning systems on extreme weather events and phenomena, and to promote decision-making based on the best available science, to encourage scientific and technological innovation, as well as to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs.

(g) Accelerate actions to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris, plastics and microplastics, nutrient pollution, untreated wastewater, solid waste discharges, hazardous substances, pollution from ships, and abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear, as well as to address, as appropriate, the adverse impacts of other human-related activities on the ocean and on marine life, such as ship strikes, underwater noise and invasive alien species.

(h) Promote waste prevention and minimization, develop sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopt the 3Rs- reduce, reuse and recycle- including through incentivising market-based solutions to reduce waste and its generation, improving mechanisms for environmentally-sound waste management, disposal and recycling, and developing alternatives such as reusable or recyclable products, or products biodegradable under natural conditions.

(i) Implement long-term and robust strategies to reduce the use of plastics and microplastics, particularly plastic bags and single use plastics, including by partnering with stakeholders at relevant levels to address their production, marketing and use.

(j) Support the use of effective and appropriate area-based management tools, including marine protected areas and other integrated, cross-sectoral approaches, including marine spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, based on best available science, as well as stakeholder engagement and applying the precautionary and ecosystem approaches, consistent with international law and in accordance with national legislation, to enhance ocean resilience and better conserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity.

(k) Develop and implement effective adaptation and mitigation measures that contribute to increasing and supporting resilience to ocean and coastal acidification, sea-level rise, and increase in ocean temperatures, and to addressing the other harmful impacts of climate change on the ocean as well as coastal and blue carbon ecosystems such as mangroves, tidal marshes, seagrass, and coral reefs, and wider interconnected ecosystems impacting on our ocean, and ensure the implementation of relevant obligations and commitments.

(l) Enhance sustainable fisheries management, including to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics, through the implementation of science-based management measures, monitoring, control and enforcement, supporting the consumption of fish sourced from sustainably managed fisheries, and through precautionary and ecosystem approaches as appropriate, as well as strengthening cooperation and coordination, including through, as appropriate, regional fisheries management organisations, bodies and arrangements.

(m) End destructive fishing practices and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, addressing their root causes and holding actors and beneficiaries accountable by taking appropriate actions, so as to deprive them of benefits of such activities, and effectively implementing flag State obligations as well as relevant port State obligations.

(n) Accelerate further work and strengthen cooperation and coordination on the development of interoperable catch documentation schemes and traceability of fish products.

(o) Strengthen capacity building and technical assistance provided to small-scale and artisanal fishers in developing countries, to enable and enhance their access to marine resources and markets and improve the socio-economic situation of fishers and fish workers within the context of sustainable fisheries management.

(p) Act decisively to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, including through accelerating work to complete negotiations at the World Trade Organization on this issue, recognising that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of those negotiations.

(q) Support the promotion and strengthening of sustainable ocean-based economies, which inter alia build on sustainable activities such as fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, maritime transportation, renewable energies, marine biotechnology, and sea water desalination, as means to achieve the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, in particular for SIDS and LDCs.

(r) Increase efforts to mobilise the means necessary for the development of sustainable ocean-related activities and the implementation of Goal 14, particularly in developing countries, in line with the 2030 Agenda, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other relevant outcomes.

(s) Actively engage in discussions and the exchange of views in the Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 69/292 on the development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, so that the General Assembly can, before the end of its seventy-second session, taking into account the report of the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly, decide on the convening and on the starting date of an intergovernmental conference.

(t) Welcome follow-up on the partnership dialogues and commit to implement our respective voluntary commitments made in the context of the Conference.

(u) Contribute to the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda by providing an input to the high-level political forum on sustainable development on the implementation of Goal 14, including on opportunities to strengthen progress in the future.

(v) Consider further ways and means to support the timely and effective implementation of Goal 14, taking into account the discussions at the high-level political forum during its first cycle.

14. We strongly call upon the UN Secretary-General to continue his efforts to support the implementation of Goal 14, in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular by enhancing interagency coordination and coherence throughout the UN system on ocean issues, taking into consideration the work of UN-Oceans.