

Results of the Baltic Sea EBSA workshop

held in Helsinki 19-24 February 2018

HELCOM State & Conservation 8-2018

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What is EBSA?

Ecologically or Bologically Significant Marine Areas

”Special areas in the ocean that serve important purposes, in one way or another, to support the healthy functioning of oceans and the many services that it provides.”

A concept developed within the framework of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

What is EBSA?

The application of the EBSA criteria is a *scientific and technical exercise*, carried out in a workshop.

EBSA process is *iterative and ongoing*, additional areas may be described as meeting the EBSA criteria in future regional or sub-regional workshops.

EBSAs *are not Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)*, and the CBD process of describing EBSAs does not require, legally or otherwise, that they should be designated as MPAs.

What is EBSA?

Described using a set of 7 criteria

Uniqueness or Rarity

Special importance for life history stages of species

Importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats

Vulnerability, Fragility, Sensitivity, or Slow recovery

Biological Productivity

Biological Diversity

Naturalness

Criteria used on a scale of High / Medium / Low

Baltic Sea EBSA workshop

~30 participants from 7 HELCOM countries and NGOs

[Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Sweden + BirdLife International, Coalition Clean Baltic, Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative, ICCA (Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas and Territories) Consortium, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, WWF Finland + CBD and HELCOM Secretariats and a technical team from the Duke University Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab & SYKE]

The workshop was co-chaired by Ms. Penina Blankett, Finland, and Mr. Dieter Boedeker, Germany



The Workshop results

Nine areas meeting the EBSA criteria

Northern Bothnian Bay

Kvarken Archipelago

Åland Sea, Åland Islands and the Archipelago Sea of Finland

Eastern Gulf of Finland

Inner Sea of West Estonian Archipelago

Southeastern Baltic Sea Shallows

Southern Gotland Harbour Porpoise Area

Fehmarn Belt

Fladen and Stora and Lilla Middelgrund.

Five of these areas are transboundary areas, covering waters of two or more countries.

The described EBSAs cover 23% of the Baltic Sea waters.

The workshop could not consider the marine areas of the Baltic Sea countries not attending the workshop.

The workshop also discussed the significant diversity of indigenous peoples and local communities in the Baltic Sea region.



The Workshop results

Described EBSAs compared to HELCOM MPAs, marine area in km²

	Baltic Sea EBSAs	HELCOM MPAs
Min	616,45	0,09
Max	29314,13	3117,50
Avg	10614,11	278,50
Median	9677,75	99,83
Total	95526,99	49015,83



The Workshop results

The Outcome of the Baltic Sea EBSA workshop is available on the CBD website

The Outcome contains detailed explanations with maps and background information on the areas described

Please see: <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/EBSAWS-2018-01>

<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-22>

Next steps in the CBD EBSA process

Described EBSAs submitted for consideration to the 22nd meeting of SBSTTA on 2-7 July 2018, Montreal, Canada

From SBSTTA-22 for approval to CBD COP 14, 17-29 November 2018, in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt

Once approved, the EBSAs will be included in the CBD EBSA repository (www.cbd.int/ebsa)

A summary report will be transmitted to United Nations General Assembly as well as other relevant UN/International organisations.

Next steps in the CBD EBSA process

Side-events could be organized at CBD SBSTTA and/or CBD COP to share the information about the regional workshop and described EBSAs as well as other relevant activities of the HELCOM countries.

The outcome of the workshop is a great opportunity to highlight the fact that despite the known marine environmental problems, the unique semi-enclosed Baltic Sea does have a great ecological or biological significance.



Thank you!

For more information on the Baltic Sea EBSAs please see:

Baltic Sea EBSA Workshop documents in
<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/EBSAWS-2018-01>

SBSTTA-22 documents in
<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-22>

EBSA on the HELCOM website
<http://www.helcom.fi/action-areas/maritime-spatial-planning/ecologically-biologically-significant-areas>

