# Updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan

Markus Helavuori, Professional Secretary

# HEl
# strı

## The 10 Contracting Parties (CPs)

DK EE EU FI DE

LV LT PL RU SE

*Each Contracting Party designates its own Head of Delegation as well as members of the Working Groups and of the Expert Groups and Networks*

*The Contracting Parties signed the first Helsinki Convention in 1974 and updated it in 1992. The current Convention entered into force in 2000.*

## Helsinki Convention

*The set of guiding principles and obligations signed by the Contracting Parties on the protection of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea*

## HELCOM Secretariat

*Coordinates the work and meetings of the Helsinki Commission and ensures CPs meet their obligations under the Helsinki Convention*

## Helsinki Commission (HELCOM)

*HELCOM chairmanship rotates every two years between the Contracting Parties (CPs)*

**Heads of Delegation**
*Permanently represent the CPs and are decision-makers*

**HELCOM Working Groups**
*Develop recommendations, policies & strategies*

**Expert Groups & Networks**
*Provide scientific and technical underpinnings*

## Decision making in HELCOM

*The highest decision-making body in HELCOM is the Ministerial Meeting (the meeting of the HELCOM line ministers of each CP) that takes place every three years.*

*The Helsinki Commission meets annually (except when a Ministerial Meeting takes place) and is also entitled to make decisions. Its participants are designated by the CPs.*

*The Heads of Delegation meet twice per year and are also authorised to make decisions on behalf of the CPs.*

# Decision making process in HELCOM: a bottom-up, science-based approach

1) A **mandate or impulse** to look into a **specific issue** is usually given by the CPs

2) The **HELCOM Expert Groups** constituted of national experts provide the scientific or technical background

3) The **HELCOM Working Groups (WG)**, also constituted of national experts, translate the scientific findings into draft recommendations, strategies or actions

4) The **Heads of Delegation** formally approve the work of the Working Groups

5) Sometimes, decision are taken at **a higher level**: Annual Meeting of the Helsinki Commission, Ministerial Meeting (every three years)

# Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

*To restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021*

*Baltic Sea unaffected by* ***eutrophication***

*Baltic Sea undisturbed by* ***hazardous substances***

*Favourable status of Baltic Sea* ***biodiversity***

*Environmentally friendly* ***maritime activities***

# Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

*HELCOM's programme of actions for a healthier Baltic Sea*

**Science-based actions:**
BSAP is based on long-term vision and actions, underpinned by solid science

**Regional and cross-sectoral acceptance:**
The BSAP is widely accepted accross the Baltic Sea region

**Nutrients and hazardous substances:**
Reduction of inputs due to BSAP actions

**Protection of biodiversity:**
Improvements can be linked to the BSAP, such as for seals

**Cleaner and safer shipping:**
Less maritime accidents and spills

# Progress yes, but…

**The Baltic Sea is not in a good state:**
Environmental goals set by the BSAP will not be fully reached by 2021

**Eutrophication:**
Still the major pressure despite trends of nutrient reduction

**New challenges:**

- Marine litter (plastics and other)
- Underwater noise
- Pharmaceuticals
- Seabed disturbance
- Climate change

**Reasons for delay:**

- Ecosystem lag
- New challenges
- Some measures haven't been implemented yet
- Some measures might not be sufficient

# By 2021: Update of the BSAP

**Based on a strong political mandate:** Update decided by Ministerial Meeting 2018

**Evolution, not revolution:** Based on current plan, same ambition level, existing commitments

**Ecosystem approach:** Impacts on society from a good ecological status of the sea will be considered

**Managing human activities:** MM2018: “Include actions necessary for managing human activities [to meet the HELCOM goals]”

**Adapting the plan to the current HELCOM topics:** Marine litter, underwater noise, seabed loss, biodiversity conservation, climate change…

**Global targets and committments:** SDGs, Aichi targets, MSFD considered in the update

# Updated structure and objectives

**Vision**

a healthy Baltic Sea environment with diverse biological components functioning in balance, resulting in a good ecological status and supporting a wide range of sustainable economic and social activities.

**Goal**

Baltic Sea **ecosystem** is healthy and resilient

**Goals**

Baltic Sea undisturbed by **hazardous substances and litter**

Environmentally sustainable **sea-based activities**

Baltic Sea unaffected by **eutrophication**

# Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

## *Ongoing activities*

**BSAP implementation:**
Review of implementation of current BSAP. Update existing actions as needed.

**Sufficiency of measures:**
What is the effect of implementing current agreements?
Are we doing enough?
Where are the gaps?

**Propose new actions:**
100+ synopses on tentative new actions submitted by countries, HELCOM groups, observers, regional projects.

# Proposals for new actions related to shipping

Ballast Water
Biofouling
Grey water
Food waste
Sewage from cargo ships
Cargo residues and hold washwaters
Scrubber washwaters
Underwater noise
Marine litter, no-special-fee
Dry bulk fertilizer handling in ports
Resurveys
Loss and disturbance of the seabed
GHG
Etc.

HOD 58: Proposal on existing actions for the updated BSAP
HOD 59: First full draft of the updated BSAP
BSAP UP workshop on sea-based activities 2-4.9.2020
MARITIME 19A-2020: Proposal on existing actions for the updated BSAP, Review of synopses
Continued SOM analysis
MARITIME 20-2020 [19-22.10.2020]: Further deliberation on actions
31.1.20
1.3.20
1.4.20
1.5.20
1.6.20
1.7.20
1.8.20
31.8.20
1.10.20
31.10.20
1.12.20
31.12.20
31.1.21

# Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

## *Update by 2021*

HELCOM