HELCOM

Updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan

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HELCOM structure

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

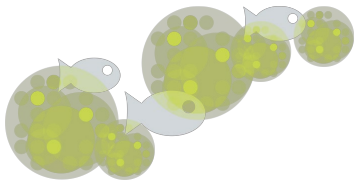
3) The **HELCOM Working Groups (WG)**, also constituted of national experts, translate the scientific findings into draft recommendations, strategies or actions

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)

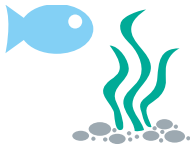
Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

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

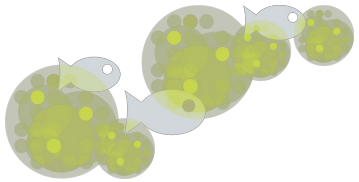
Nutrients and hazardous substances:
Reduction of inputs due to BSAP actions

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

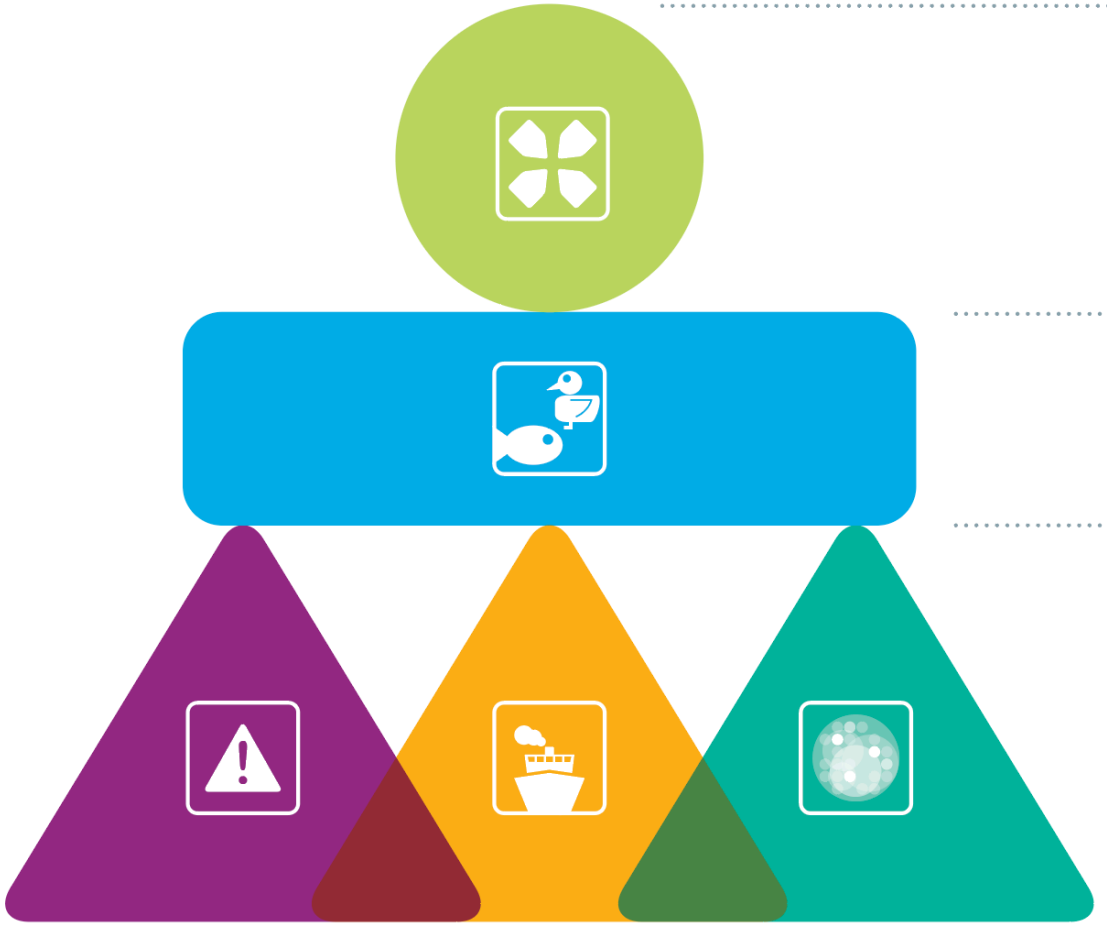
Ecosystem approach: Impacts on society from a good ecological status of the sea will be considered

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

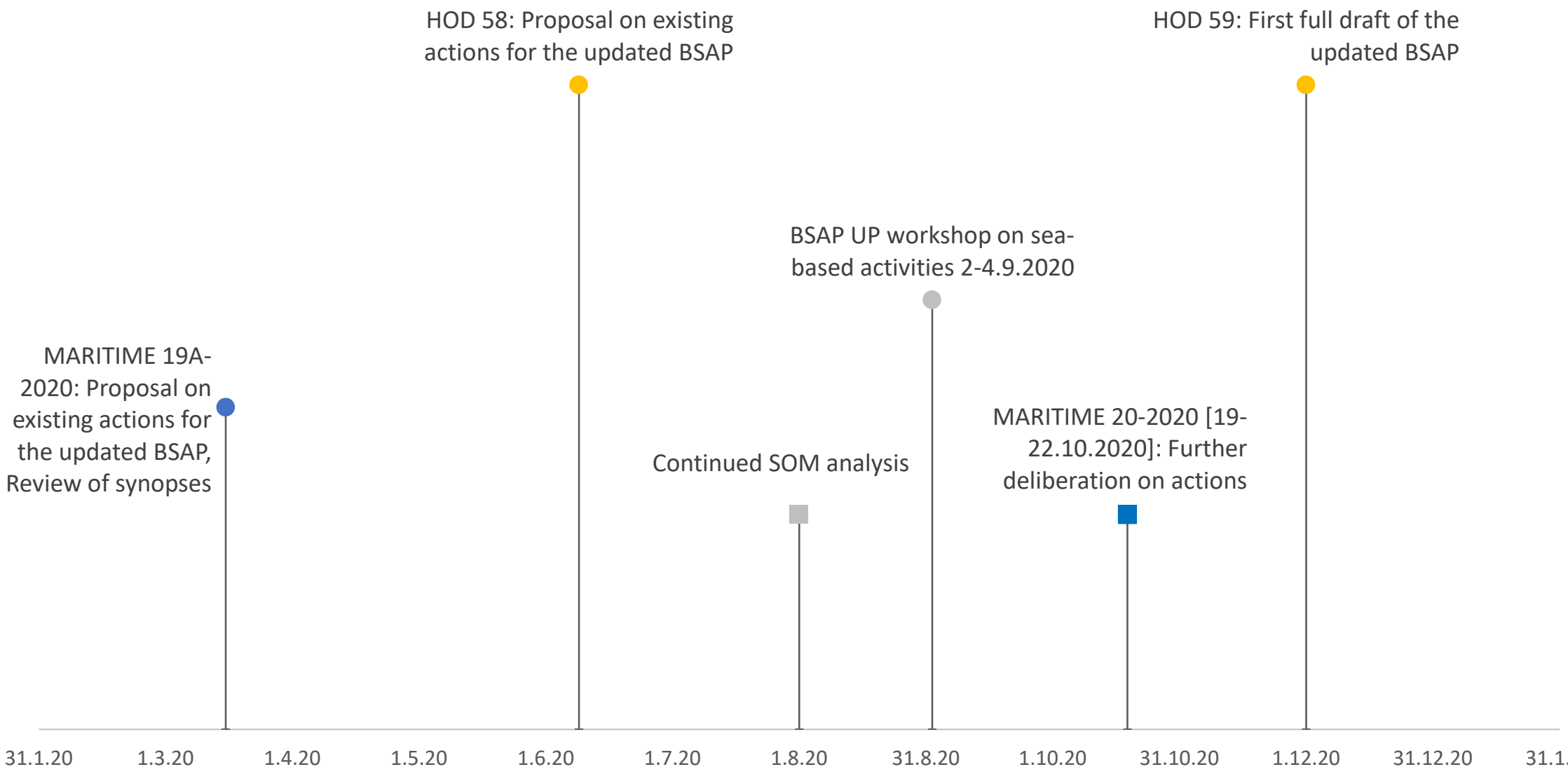
BSAP implementation:
Review of implementation of current BSAP. Update existing actions as needed.

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

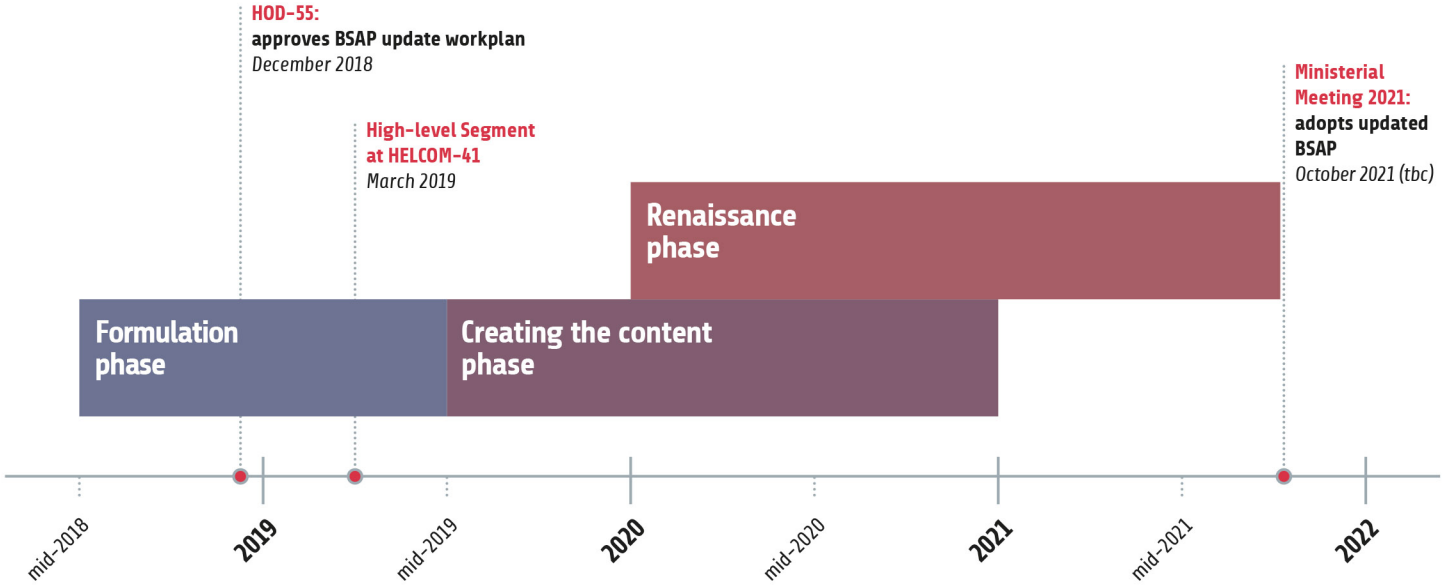
Ballast Water
Biofouling
Grey water
Food waste
Sewage from cargo ships
Cargo residues and hold washwaters
Scrubber washwaters
Underwater noise
Marine litter, no-special-fee
Dry bulk fertilizer handling in ports
Resurveys
Loss and disturbance of the seabed
GHG
Etc.


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

Three phases of the BSAP update



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