WWF

REPORT

2018

Baltic Sea Action Plan Scorecard 2018

WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Despite many years of international, national, local and civil society effort, the recovery of the Baltic Sea cannot be taken for granted.

The Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) – widely heralded as the most important agreement to protect and restore our region's marine environment – was triggered by the political concerns of the mid-2000s and the growing willingness of countries to work together and increase their level of commitment and action. It was with great public enthusiasm that countries jointly agreed, in November 2007, to launch this innovative approach to save the Baltic Sea.

Today, however, there are only three years remaining before we reach the target year of 2021 for achieving a healthy Baltic Sea, and the ambitious visions and goals still seem far away. Of course, many aspects regarding the Baltic Sea environment are improving. The emission trends of many pollutants are decreasing thanks to technical measures and strengthened legislation. Some species that were declining are now recovering. Protected areas are increasing in number. But overall, the Baltic Sea environment remains in a critical state due to lack of efficient delivery of measures and management, and several iconic species, including the harbour porpoise, are still threatened or endangered.

Countries are still not delivering

"Unsatisfactory implementation has consistently delayed and prevented the recovery of the Baltic Sea, as clearly shown in 'State of the Baltic Sea 2017' report (2017)."

Despite their expressed ambitions, countries are still not delivering on the political leadership necessary to achieve the original promises of the BSAP. Clear targets were set to monitor and safeguard the implementation progress. National Implementation Plans (NIPs) were developed and reviewed by the Ministerial Meeting of 2010. These were further reviewed by the Ministerial Meeting of 2013 to see if implementation of the NIPs would be sufficient to reach the BSAP goals in time. Neither review fulfilled the initial purpose. A BSAP Implementation Group was established prematurely and consequently abandoned; and no subsequent major effort has been made to secure the financing necessary for BSAP implementation.

Unsatisfactory implementation has consistently delayed and prevented the recovery of the Baltic Sea, as clearly shown in the "State of the Baltic Sea 2017" report by HELCOM also known as "HOLAS II"[1]. Achieving the original BSAP objectives is not a question of time. It is a question of implementation. The clock is ticking, and today, more than ever before, action is needed to overcome new and growing challenges, including the increasing impacts of climate change, acidification and marine plastic pollution.

Measuring progress

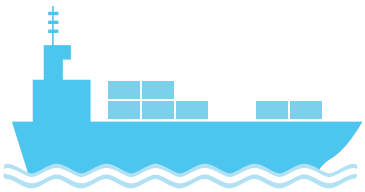
This WWF Baltic Sea Action Plan Scorecard 2018 is the latest in a sequence of Scorecards[2] aimed at assessing the progress by the nine Baltic Sea coastal countries against the BSAP commitments that were agreed more than a decade ago and identifying areas in need of strengthened implementation and greater coordinated effort.

[1] HELCOM (2017): First version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report – June 2017 – to be updated in 2018. Available at: http://stateofthebalticsea.helcom.fi

[2] See "2008 Baltic Sea Scorecard," "2009 Baltic Sea Scorecard," "Baltic Sea Scorecard 2011," and "Baltic Sea Action Plan – is it on track? 2013."

THE 2018 SCORECARD

HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR PERSISTENT FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTING THE AGREED ACTIONS OF THE BSAP



"The actions that were committed to by HELCOM countries in the 2007 BSAP, the 2010 Moscow Declaration, and the 2013 Copenhagen Declaration are not being delivered in a timely fashion."

Summary of scorecard results

- **Overall, the actions committed to by HELCOM countries** in the 2007 BSAP and later Ministerial Declarations are not being given the priority they deserve and are therefore not delivering in a timely fashion.
- **Sweden is the top ranked country and Russia is the lowest ranked country,** but all nine Baltic Sea countries have failed to make good progress on the delivery of BSAP actions.
- **Only one out of the 13 eutrophication actions** assessed have been accomplished by all nine Baltic Sea countries; namely identifying land areas critical to nutrient losses. In addition, the development of national programmes for nutrient reduction was recorded accomplished. In this scorecard, it has been re-assessed with less positive results.
- **For actions related to hazardous substances,** progress is 'on-going' – with Denmark making best progress, followed by Finland, Lithuania and Poland. However, only four out of the total ten actions have been fully accomplished by all countries.
- **Delivery on the biodiversity actions was weak across the board**. Only one-third (9 out of 26) of the actions have been accomplished between 2013–2018. These include, for example, applying and evaluating cross-sectoral MSP principles and developing conservation plan recommendations for species at risk of extinction.
- **Good progress was made on maritime activities until 2013**, with nearly half of the actions, such as ratification of MARPOL Annex VI and joint submission to IMO on nutrient discharges in sewage from shipping, had been accomplished. Since then, progress has declined with only two actions accomplished and deadlines for all but one of the maritime activities have passed.
- **Delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy in the region was also assessed**. Sweden, Finland, Germany and Russia have all made good progress in developing their policies and improving financial conditions to support the delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy. Progress elsewhere is disappointing.

Overall the results of the 2018 Scorecard are bleak and unsatisfactory. Of the 58 actions assessed, under one-third of them have been accomplished (16 out of a possible 58 actions). Insufficient progress is being made across all four key themes – eutrophication, hazardous substances, biodiversity and maritime activities – and no country has delivered on the promises contained in the BSAP and the two subsequent Ministerial Declarations (see Table 1). The only conclusion that can be reached is that the actions that were committed to by HELCOM countries in the 2007 BSAP, the 2010 Moscow Declaration, and the 2013 Copenhagen Declaration are not being given the priority they deserve and are therefore not being delivered in a timely fashion.

While the Scorecard report focuses principally on the delivery of the BSAP, an additional chapter has been included to assess the progress by countries to promote and drive economic investment and innovation towards achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy in the region.*

TABLE 1: TOTAL SCORES

BSAP Segment	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Eutrophication *(13 actions)*	–1	5	–2	0	–6	–5	–11	–10	2
Hazardous Substances *(10 actions)*	–7	2	–5	0	0	–2	0	–9	–1
Biodiversity *(26 actions)*	–16	–19	–17	–13	–13	–22	–16	–20	–10
Maritime Activities *(9 actions)*	–2	–4	–5	–1	–8	–12	–6	–4	–2
Overall Score	–26	–16	–29	–14	–27	–41	–33	–43	–11

* See pages 28–31 for the results of this assessment.

"While there are significant differences in the total scores for the countries, no single country has lagged behind all others on the delivery of actions across all four themes."

The Scorecard highlights the need for persistent focus on delivering the agreed actions of the BSAP. Note that the scoring system only allows for a positive score when actions are being delivered ahead of the agreed deadline: a "zero" score indicates progress against a deadline that has just exactly or barely been met; or it indicates work underway when the deadline has not yet been reached. A zero can be equated to "OK" performance, while a positive score indicates good to excellent performance. Negative scores reflect lack of progress or slow progress, indicated by a failure to meet the self-imposed deadlines. WWF believes that by now, more than a decade after the adoption of the BSAP, it is not unreasonable to expect that many positive and zero scores should have been achieved. For full details of the assessment and scoring see the section on Methodology on page 33.

While there are significant differences in the total scores for the countries, no single country has lagged behind all others on the delivery of actions across all four themes. Equally there is no one country that is significantly more advanced than the next across all themes.

Denmark and Finland deserve recognition for achieving positive or zero scores for two themes (eutrophication and hazardous substances), indicating that they are meeting action deadlines for those themes. However neither of these two countries tops the ranking (see Table 2). Sweden has a better overall score covering all four themes; but its "best in region" score for biodiversity is still a disappointing minus 10.

TABLE 2: OVERALL RANKING

Countries and Overall Ranking								
SE	FI	DK	DE	LT	EE	PL	LV	RU
–11	–14	–16	–26	–27	–29	–33	–41	–43

Denmark and Finland deserve recognition for achieving positive or zero scores for two themes: eutrophication and hazardous substances.

Although a few of the agreed actions have unspecified deadlines, or deadlines that are still in the future, it is nonetheless clear that efforts to deliver on biodiversity and maritime activities are falling well behind schedule, in every country. The greatest regional progress, from a scoring perspective, appears to have been made in accomplishing actions related to hazardous substances. However, it is important to bear in mind that each theme encompasses a different number of assessed actions and that each action has an individual deadline, so a comparison between themes is not appropriate.

A qualitative assessment of progress towards a Sustainable Blue Economy indicates that Sweden and Finland have made good progress, with Germany and Russia not far behind, but the other five Baltic Sea countries need to put more effort into activities that will support the development of a Sustainable Blue Economy.

The results of the Scorecard differ from HELCOM's Implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan report (2018)[3] since it focuses on a subset of BSAP actions (similar to the focus of the previous WWF BSAP Scorecards published in 2010 and 2013). Although the Scorecard does include some joint actions the emphasis is on national actions, and it does not assess actions in the areas of financing, awareness and monitoring and assessment.

[3] HELCOM (2018): Implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. Background material for the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting of 2018.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Baltic Sea is still in trouble. Even a decade after the adoption of the first Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), the HOLAS II report indicates that there have been few improvements. Despite a decade of action, the delivery of current commitments to restore the sea to Good Environmental Status (GES) is still not adequate to achieve this goal. At the same time the Baltic Sea is seriously underperforming as an economic resource.

16 OUT OF 58 ACTIONS

ASSESSED IN THIS 2018 SCORECARD, A LITTLE UNDER ONE-THIRD CAN BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

"The future of our seas is dependent not only on dedicated actions aimed at reducing pollution, limiting the impacts of maritime activities and protecting biodiversity, but on a more holistic approach."

The challenge

HELCOM has in total 177 actions under the BSAP with 49% considered accomplished, 43% partly or not accomplished and the remaining with deadlines in the future[4]. HELCOM has been successful in achieving the joint actions of the BSAP but fall short of delivery on the national actions to be implemented by the nine Baltic Sea coastal countries.

This 2018 Scorecard focuses on a subset of 58 actions related to previous scorecards. A little under one-third can be considered to have been accomplished (16 out of 58 actions), and many of the recently accomplished and outstanding actions focus on measures that will not, on its own, deliver improvement in the status of the Baltic Sea. For example, a considerable number of the accomplished actions focus on:

- **Establishing** monitoring and reporting systems
- **Developing** guidelines, targets, long-term management plans
- **Evaluating** the effectiveness of existing programmes
- **Conducting** baseline surveys
- **Ratifying** international agreements and conventions

While these are essential to the future management of the Baltic Sea, more concrete action is needed on the improvement of existing programmes and on the implementation of guidelines, agreements, recommendations and long-term management plans – which are lagging far behind.

In addition, while the BSAP could be considered "state of the art" when it was adopted in 2007, its commitments and the delivery of those commitments are not keeping up with the way global conservation practices are developing. The future of our seas is dependent not only on dedicated actions aimed at reducing pollution, limiting the impacts of maritime activities and protecting biodiversity, but on a more holistic approach – one that recognises that our use of the marine environment and its resources must also:

- **Provide** social and economic benefits for current and future generations
- **Restore, protect and maintain** the diversity, productivity, resilience core functions and intrinsic value of marine ecosystems
- **Be based on** clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows

[4] Based on HELCOM (2018): Implementation fo the Baltic Sea Action Plan 2018 and HELCOM Explorer database.

WITH ONLY 3 YEARS

TO GO TO THE BSAP GOAL LINE OF 2021 - BALTIC SEA REGION COUNTRIES FACE A MASSIVE CHALLENGE

Within this framework, new environmental challenges and threats must also be acknowledged and addressed:

- **The changing climate**, including warming seas, reduced ice cover, and changes in salinity
- **Ocean acidification**
- **Derelict fishing gear**
- **Underwater noise**
- **Microplastic pollution**, including regional targets on marine litter

With only three years to go to the BSAP goal line of 2021, Baltic Sea Region countries face a massive challenge.

Where does the responsibility lie

The responsibility for restoring the Baltic Sea to good environmental health and improving its performance as an economic resource belongs to everyone! The responsibility for action lies not only with the governments of the nine Baltic Sea coastal countries, but also with all the stakeholders – industry, the commercial sector, research and technology, leisure interests, the civil society as well as on all of us. Everyone has a responsibility and role to advance an aggressive agenda, one that ensures that the Baltic Sea both achieves GES and reaches its potential as an economic resource.

Despite a country-by-country responsibility for implementing remedial measures, there remains a strong need for region-scale, Baltic-specific approaches, in particular for transnational sectors and issues such as shipping, oil spill response, management of shared fish stocks and fisheries, and addressing eutrophication. But Baltic-specific approaches are needed for much more: the development of shared guidance and lessons learned, the maintenance of level playing fields with respect to all sectors, and the establishment of monitoring and reporting systems. HELCOM is most successful in influencing policy development in areas where regional coordination is a necessity.

" The responsibility for action lies not only with the governments of the nine Baltic Sea coastal countries, but also with all the stakeholders – industry, the commercial sector, research and technology, leisure interests, the civil society as well as on all of us."

The Baltic Sea is a particularly unique and sensitive sea, which in some respects needs stronger remedial measures than other European seas. Consequently, it is frustrating when the strong recommendations of HELCOM and the BSAP are in some cases overtaken by less stringent EU-requirements designed for less sensitive areas and a larger geographic scale. The desire to deliver on other drivers which move away from improving the Baltic Sea to compliance with legally binding EU legislation, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, EU Water Framework Directive and EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive must not be allowed to reduce or dilute the ambition of the BSAP.

Continued strong measures are essential to reduce further build-up of the phosphorus pool on land.

Other drivers are also important, such as global shipping regulation administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Applying global drivers to the regional context

Other drivers are also important, such as global shipping regulation administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the recent adoption by the United Nations of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the case of international shipping regulation, it has already been well-established that global standards may not be sufficient in the Baltic regional context; and Baltic Sea Region countries have been effective at setting Baltic standards with respect to sewage discharges, as well as SOx and NOx emissions. Continued cooperation and action through HELCOM is essential to delivering "fit for purpose" regional shipping standards for the Baltic.

The adoption of the SDGs now offers an opportunity for true leadership from countries in delivering region-scale implementation of the ocean-related targets applicable to the region. The importance of delivering the SDGs was recognised by the HELCOM Contracting Parties in 2017 as necessary for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea, as well as for strengthening the implementation of the BSAP, based on the ecosystem approach and the commitment to achieve a Baltic Sea in good environmental status by 2021. HELCOM Contracting Parties must firmly take hold of the opportunity to demonstrate global leadership in the delivery of the SDGs, while also integrating, in on-going and future actions, the implications and consequences of global change.

Progress and innovation

It is important to acknowledge that right now, we do not have all the answers required for the future management of the Baltic Sea. But we cannot wait for all the answers. Sound science, a progressive agenda and a commitment to environmental technological improvement will help to generate answers and solutions that cannot be provided today. Scientific knowledge must be recognized and utilized, and not undermined through weak political recommendations and commitments. Knowledge must also be allowed space to evolve. Baltic specific knowledge needs to feed into policy development, and new approaches as well as adaptive management is important to explore for the future threats facing the Baltic. HELCOM science-policy work could complement regional policy processes by sharing experiences, knowledge and expert networks. Development of innovative technological solutions can contribute to a Sustainable Blue Economy and where appropriate be scaled up across the Baltic Sea.

"While the inputs of phosphorus from the seabed are large and challenging to address, it would be wrong to assume that phosphorus inputs from land is unimportant in comparison."

Continued efforts to stop land based-sources

Since the adoption of the BSAP a decade ago, action has been taken to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus inputs to the Baltic Sea, and although the eutrophication status of most parts of the Baltic Sea remains poor and even deteriorating in some sub-basins, there have been some improvements. Over decades nutrients have accumulated in both the water and sediments of the sea, as well as in the soils of the surrounding catchment area. Many are concerned that the levels of phosphorus released from seabed sediments are so huge that action to reduce inputs from the surrounding land will have minimal effect. While the inputs of phosphorus from the seabed are large and challenging to address, it would be wrong to assume that phosphorus inputs from land is unimportant in comparison. Continued strong measures are essential to reduce and prevent further build-up of the phosphorus pool in the Baltic catchment area, which will otherwise continue to contribute to eutrophication over decades to come.

Reducing both land-based sources and internal load are essential to reducing eutrophication. Countries, that are approaching their technical and economic reduction limits of land-based sources should consider additional measures to restore the environment.

Time for delivery

The time has come for the implementation of the BSAP to be taken very seriously by Baltic Sea countries if they are to fulfill many of the agreements and commitments in a timely manner – indeed for some it is already too late. But not all is lost – a number of "low-hanging fruits" still undergoing lengthy policy negotiations can be implemented, such as port reception facilities for sewage and wastewater treatment requirements.

"There is a need for much greater investment by Baltic Sea countries and by the private sector in the future of the Baltic Sea. The rewards will include better economic performance of the sea's natural resources."

The Baltic Sea must be placed at the top of political agendas in all countries and incorporate in the political leadership the high level engagement of grass root and civil society to make full use of their interest and expertise.

There is a need for much greater investment by Baltic Sea countries and by the private sector in the future of the Baltic Sea. The rewards will include better economic performance of the sea's natural resources. Fundamental to restoring the Baltic Sea to good environmental health and reversing its under-performance as an economic resource is the delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy.

Central to the role of HELCOM is both in supporting cutting edge Baltic-specific science-policy and in influencing national, regional and global policy. There is also a need for greater accountability and transparency regarding countries' efforts to implement the BSAP. National reporting formats and database entries need to be coherent with clear standards for comparability and tracking of achievements, not to mention user friendly for public access.

THINK BEYOND 2021

TO ADDRESS BALTIC SEA CHALLENGES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Recommendations – approaching the BSAP goal line 2021:

- **The Baltic Sea coastal countries** must adopt a persistent focus to implement the agreed BSAP actions, including:
  - Placing significantly greater attention on achieving nutrient reduction targets for all sources of both nitrogen and phosphorus
  - Assessing, agreeing and implementing appropriate measures for a wide range of unaddressed hazardous substances
  - Making stronger commitment to reversing the HOLAS II report findings with respect to biodiversity and Baltic Sea food webs
  - Increasing efforts on the delivery of actions to maritime activities, particularly to address the threat from invasive, non-indigenous species
- **Countries must report promptly** and in detail on progress while HELCOM evaluates implementation gaps
- **Baltic Sea EU Members must ensure** that future reform and delivery of regional drivers, such as the CAP and CFP, allow for the specialised requirements of the Baltic Sea
- **HELCOM must provide leadership** for the delivery of a Sustainable Baltic Blue Economy
- **Countries must commit increased financing** for BSAP and Sustainable Blue Economy implementation – the investment will be rewarded

Thinking beyond 2021 to address Baltic Sea challenges

- **HELCOM and Baltic Sea coastal countries must**:
  - Revamp the BSAP to be responsive to the challenges of today and those of the future including challenges associated with global change
  - Demonstrate leadership to achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy
  - Become a flagship for the implementation of the SDGs in Baltic and global context

STATE OF THE BALTIC SEA

In 2017, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) published the first version of the second holistic assessment of the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea – "State of the Baltic Sea", commonly referred to as the "HOLAS II" report.

HOLAS II report provides a comprehensive and systemic update on the environmental situation in the Baltic Sea for the period 2011–2015.

The report provides a comprehensive and systemic ("holistic") update on the environmental situation in the Baltic Sea for the period 2011–2015. The purpose of the report is to support a regionally coordinated, adaptive management approach to improving the environmental status of the Baltic Sea. The report is to be updated further in 2018, to include new data from 2016.

The overall conclusion of the HOLAS II report is sober reading. Although there are a few signs of improvement, the goals and ecological objectives of the BSAP have not yet been achieved and the state of the Baltic Sea remains "not good".

The report also provides information on further steps needed to reach good environmental status in the Baltic Sea and to strengthen the implementation of the HELCOM BSAP by 2021. It also recognises that some of the measures put into place have not been operating long enough to have the desired effect; for example, measures to reduce nutrient loads could take several decades before the full effects can be measured.

The summary of the assessment of pressures for the sub-basins of the Baltic shows clearly that none of the sub-basins are in a good condition with respect to eutrophication, hazardous substances and indigenous species. The assessment of the state of fish, bird and seal populations by sub-basin is also "not good" for the clear majority of sub-basins. The situation is similar with respect to habitats, with pelagic habitats being in a good condition in only one sub-basin assessed, and benthic habitats in only five out of twelve sub-basins assessed to be in a good condition. With respect to fish stocks, only three of eight assessed stocks are in a good condition (see Figure 1 below).

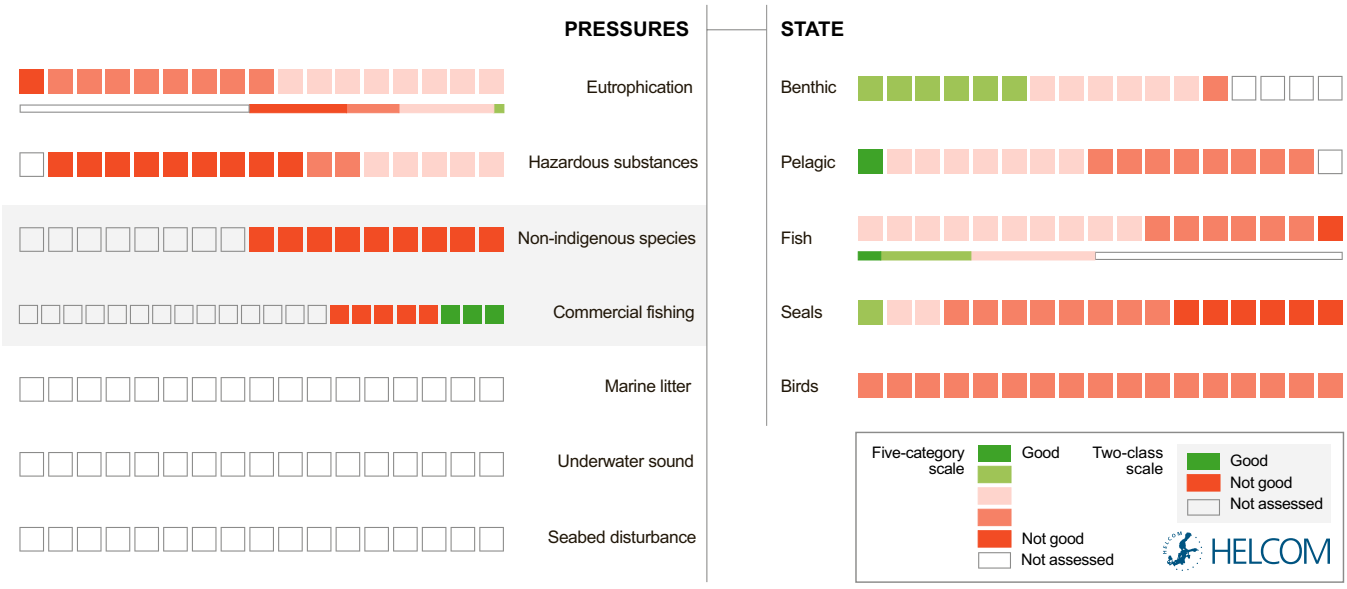


Figure 1: Summary of the assessment of pressures and status for the Baltic Sea from HELCOM HOLAS II report (2017).

From plastic bags to pesticides – most of the waste we produce on land eventually reaches the sea, either through deliberate dumping or from run-off through drains and rivers. Still very little is known on the effects and impact much of the waste has when entering the Baltic Sea food web.

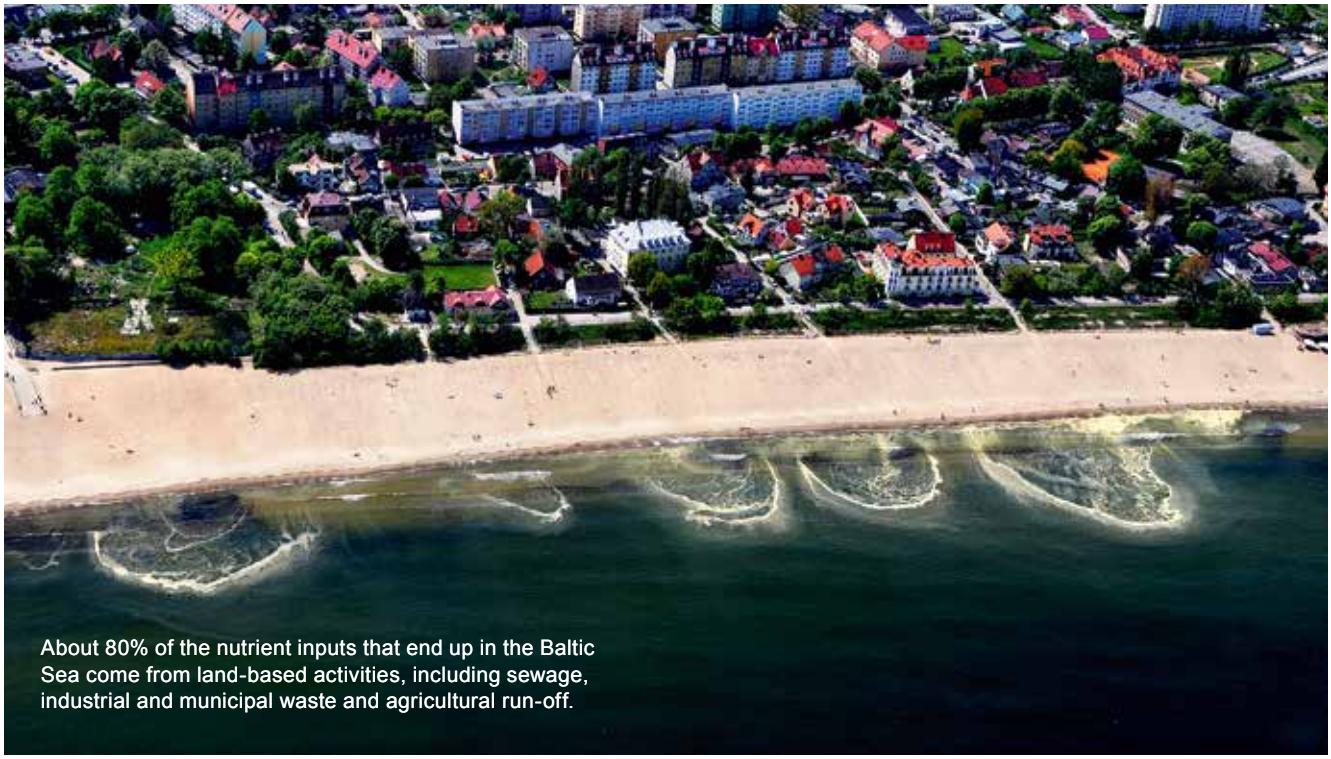
"The degradation of the Baltic Sea not only affects the wildlife and habitats but has consequences for the human population too."

The report shows the highest potential environmental impacts occur in the southwestern part of the Baltic Sea, and that the greatest impact on marine wildlife is due to the concentration of nutrients, contamination, underwater noise, non-indigenous species and the extraction of fish. Other pressures are also relevant but are less widely distributed.

The degradation of the Baltic Sea not only affects the wildlife and habitats but has consequences for the human population too. The HOLAS II report notes that welfare for citizens could improve by 3.8–4.4 billion euros annually if good eutrophication status was achieved, and by 1.8–2.6 billion euros annually if the state of marine vegetation and fish stocks improved to good status. The current economic losses to recreation values around the Baltic Sea are estimated to 1–2 billion euros annually.

These figures underline the importance for governments to shift their priorities and to see the investment potential gains resulting from their actions, rather than the cost of addressing the marine impacts they are faced with today.

EUTROPHICATION



About 80% of the nutrient inputs that end up in the Baltic Sea come from land-based activities, including sewage, industrial and municipal waste and agricultural run-off.

HOLAS II ASSESSMENT

- 95% of the Baltic Sea is still affected by eutrophication
- Land-based sources of nutrient inputs have been reduced, but fall short of meeting the Countries' Allocated Reduction Targets
- The eutrophication status of the Baltic Sea has deteriorated in seven of seventeen open-sea assessment units between 2011 and 2015

Eutrophication has been identified as the single biggest threat to the Baltic Sea. It leads to excessive algal blooms and causes dead zones where the lack of dissolved oxygen disables reproduction of several species. Excessive loads of nutrients from land-based sources within the catchment of Baltic Sea countries – including agriculture, industrial or municipal wastewater plants, or airborne deposition – are the main cause of eutrophication. To curb the trends, inputs of nitrogen and phosphorus to the sea must continue to decrease.

The strategic goal of HELCOM is to have a Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication, described by the following ecological objectives:

- Concentrations of nutrients close to natural levels
- Clear Water
- Natural level of algal blooms
- Natural distribution and occurrence of plants and animals
- Natural oxygen levels

Deadline not yet passed:	
–1	No action or unreported
0	Implementation in progress
1	Action implemented ahead of time

Deadline already passed:	
–3	No action or unreported
–2	Implementation in progress
0	Action implemented

TABLE 3: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST EUTROPHICATION ACTIONS

Origin	Action	Deadline	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Nutrient reduction programmes											
BSAP	National programmes on nutrient reduction	2010	–2	0	–2	0	0	0	–2	0	–3
BSAP	Evaluation of effectiveness of national programmes for reduction of nutrients and need for additional measures, in order to reach the country-wide reduction targets	2013	–3	–2	–2	0	–3	0	–2	0	0
BSAP	Progress towards reaching of CARTs to diminish nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea to the maximum allowable level: ***nitrogen***	2021	–1	0	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1
BSAP	Progress towards reaching of CARTs to diminish nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea to the maximum allowable level: ***phosphorus***	2021	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1
Municipal waste water nutrient reductions											
BSAP	Advanced municipal waste water treatment	2010	0	0	–2	–2	–3	–3	–3	–2	0
BSAP	HELCOM Recommendation 28E/6 “On site treatment for single family homes, small businesses and scattered settlements” (transitional / final)	2017/ 2021	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	Elimination of phosphorous in detergents for consumer use	2015	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	–2	1
Agricultural nutrient reduction											
MD 2013	Agreement on national level on measures to reduce nutrient surplus in fertilization practices	2018	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	–1	1
MD 2013	Establish national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure	2016*	1	1	1	–2	1	–2	–2	–3	1
MD 2013	Promote and advance towards applying annual nutrient accounting at farm level	2018	1	1	0	1	–1	0	0	–1	1
BSAP	Implement and enforce the provisions of part 2 of Annex III Prevention of pollution from agriculture	Not specified	0	1	1	1	–1	0	–1	0	1
BSAP	Initiate activity to identify areas critical to N and P losses to enable directed measures	Not specified	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
BSAP	All installations for the intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs as well as other agricultural activities in compliance with part 2, Annex III of the Helsinki Convention	Not specified	0	1	1	1	0	0	–1	0	1
Total score			–1	5	–2	0	–6	–5	–11	–10	2

* Some countries implemented the action before the deadline.

ONLY ONE BSAP ACTION

– NATIONAL PROGRAMMES ON NUTRIENT REDUCTION HAS BEEN CONSIDERED FULLY ACCOMPLISHED IN 2013

Action for the elimination of phosphorus in detergents for consumer use is now accomplished (with the exception of Russia).

What has been done

The 2018 Scorecard assessment of progress focuses on the actions expected to be taken as part of nutrient reduction programmes, including municipal waste water nutrient reductions and agricultural nutrient reduction. Several new actions on agricultural nutrient reduction have been included in this Scorecard for the first time, based on commitments in the 2013 HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration.

Previously only one BSAP action, the establishment of national programmes on nutrient reduction, had been considered fully accomplished in 2013[5]. In this Scorecard, two further actions are now assessed as accomplished – the elimination of phosphorus in detergents for consumer use (with the exception of Russia); and identifying areas critical to N and P losses. The deadline for phosphorus free detergents was originally set to be 2010 but was later revised to 2015. This shift in date has allowed the EU Member States to show a result of having delivered the action ahead of the BSAP deadline, since they were obligated to implement EU Regulation 259/2012[6]. Also interesting to note is that while EU Member countries have adopted the EU Nitrates Directive[7], implementation is deficient. The scoring, which is based on reporting by national governments, indicates that all countries have achieved the action, but the EU has nonetheless initiated infringement procedures against Germany and Poland[8].

Assessment results

The overall assessment of implementing the actions aimed at reducing eutrophication is very poor. Only Denmark and Sweden have a positive score, and disappointingly all countries are failing, with Poland and Russia significantly behind, in the delivery of the agreed actions to reduce nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea.

Even the one fully accomplished action in 2013, on national programmes for nutrient reduction, has now been reassessed, with less inspiring results. This is because the original action assessment, related to the development of national programmes for provisional Country Allocated Reduction Targets for nitrogen and phosphorus (known as CARTs[9]), has been revised, and further analysis of national programmes indicates that while they have been developed by all countries they are not necessarily in place to achieve the desired outcomes. Poland's indicative CART, accepted in 2013, has yet to be confirmed. Much greater effort is needed to deliver national nutrient reduction programmes and to achieve the CARTs for both nitrogen and phosphorus.

Achieving the HELCOM goals for wastewater treatment is a long way off. The status of current wastewater treatment varies widely, and the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive has considerably lower requirements than HELCOM recommendations. For example, there are no EU requirements for small wastewater treatment plants or for single family homes.

EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive has no requirements for small wastewater treatment plants or for single family homes.

[5] Baltic Sea Action Plan – is it on track? WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme, 2013.

[6] Regulation (EU) No 259/2012 amending Regulation (EC) No 648/2004 as regards the use of phosphates and other phosphorus compounds in consumer laundry detergents and consumer automatic dishwasher detergents.

[7] Council Directive 91/676/EEC concerning the protection of waters against pollution causes by nitrates from agricultural sources.

[8] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1453_en.htm and http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-48_en.htm

[9] CART – Country Allocated Reduction Targets is an indicator for how much nutrient inputs the HELCOM countries need to reduce comparing to a reference period (1997-2003) under the HELCOM regional Nutrient Reduction Scheme.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

A tanker with chemicals is entering the Kiel harbour. Kiel Bay is among the four most contaminated areas of the Baltic Sea.

HOLAS II ASSESSMENT

- Trends in emissions are improving for hazardous substances yet overall contamination has not changed since 2010
- Four most contaminated areas are Arkona Basin, Eastern Gotland Basin, NW coast of Bothnian Sea and Kiel Bay, and concentrations of contaminants are higher in organisms than in the sediment or water column
- 70% of the litter items in the Baltic Sea are derived from plastic material

The Baltic Sea has suffered extensive exposure to chemicals since the beginning of industrialization in the region. The brackish, low-salt environment, along with the thirty year or more timeframe required for water exchange, make the Baltic Sea uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of hazardous substances. The overall HELCOM BSAP goal is to achieve a Baltic Sea with life undisturbed by hazardous substances. As a result, the BSAP included actions to both assess emissions and their consequences, and to reduce emissions. The strategic goal of HELCOM is to have a Baltic Sea with life undisturbed by hazardous substances, described by four ecological objectives:

- Concentrations of hazardous substances close to natural levels
- All fish safe to eat
- Healthy wildlife
- Radioactivity at pre-Chernobyl level

The HOLAS II assessment finds that while there are improving trends with respect to a number of hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea, current levels of these substances remain high and continue to cause concern.

What has been done

This 2018 Scorecard assessment of progress focuses on actions taken on hazardous substances reduction programmes; on restrictions placed on specific substances and on countries' delivery of international agreements.

As of the 2013 Scorecard, two actions had been achieved including the development of national programmes to reduce pollution by hazardous substances, and the ratification of the Stockholm POPs Convention. A further four actions have been completed since 2013 including:

- Screening of the occurrence and sources of selected hazardous substances (2 actions)
- Introduction of bans on the use, production and marketing of endosulphan pentabromodiphenylether (pentaBDE) and octabromodiphenylether (octaBDE)
- An assessment of the possibility of introducing restrictions on the cadmium content of fertilisers

"The national programmes are now focused on eliminating hazardous substances, whereas previously the focus was on reducing hazardous substances."

Assessment results

Although many of the BSAP actions reviewed during this assessment have deadlines that have passed, the reporting by many of the countries indicates that progress towards delivery on actions is still "on-going". The scoring results range between two (for Denmark) to minus nine (for Russia), with both Denmark and Poland making good progress in terms of delivering on actions on hazardous substances since the last WWF Scorecard in 2013[10]. It is clear however that more work is needed in several areas to ensure that levels of hazardous substances in the Baltic continue to be reduced.

As with the other assessments, some of the actions have evolved since the BSAP was first adopted; for example, the national programmes are now focused on eliminating hazardous substances, whereas previously the focus was on reducing hazardous substances. A serious concern arises however on the introduction of use restrictions, and/or substitutions, and/or bans on priority substances. Despite a wide range of hazardous substances being specifically addressed for action in the BSAP, the HELCOM Explorer database includes only action on endosulfan, pentabromodiphenyl ether (pentaBDE) and octabromodiphenylether (octaBDE). There is no information available on measures and progress in restricting, substituting or banning:

- Medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (MCCP) C14 – 17,
- Octylphenols (OP) / octylphenol ethoxylates (OPE),
- Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE), and
- Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD),

despite these being identified in the BSAP, with the intention of use restrictions or substitutions if relevant assessments showed the need. Nor is there information in HELCOM Explorer database on the strict restrictions envisaged in the BSAP for:

- Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS),
- Nonylphenol (NP) / nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPE), and
- Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCP) C10 – 13.

[10] Baltic Sea Action Plan – is it on track? WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme, 2013.

TABLE 4: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ACTIONS

Origin	Action	Deadline	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Hazardous substances reduction programmes											
BSAP	National programmes to eliminate hazardous substances	2010	–3	0	0	0	0	–2	0	–3	0
MD 2013	Evaluation of effectiveness of national programmes to eliminate hazardous substances	2013	–3	0	–2	0	0	0	0	–3	–2
BSAP	Develop in 2008 specific efficiency requirements and emission limit values for small scale combustion appliances in relation to HELCOM Recommendation 28E-8 (Reduction of dioxins and other hazardous substances)	Not specified	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	–1	1
BSAP	Screening of the occurrence and sources of selected hazardous substances (2 actions)	2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	Establishment of chemical product registers to be built upon, e.g. the EU regulatory framework for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals, REACH (EC1907/2006)	2010	–3	0	–3	0	0	0	0	–2	0
Restrictions on specified substances											
BSAP	Introduction of ban on the use production and marketing of endosulphan, pentaBDE and octaBDE	2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	Restrictions on cadmium content in fertilizers	2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delivery of international agreements											
BSAP	Ratification of the UNEP 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury	Not specified	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
BSAP	Implementation of the UNEP 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury	Not specified	0	0	–1	–1	–1	–1	0	0	–1
Total score			–7	2	–5	0	0	–2	0	–9	–1

Deadline not yet passed:	
–1	No action or unreported
0	Implementation in progress
1	Action implemented ahead of time

Deadline already passed:	
–3	No action or unreported
–2	Implementation in progress
0	Action implemented

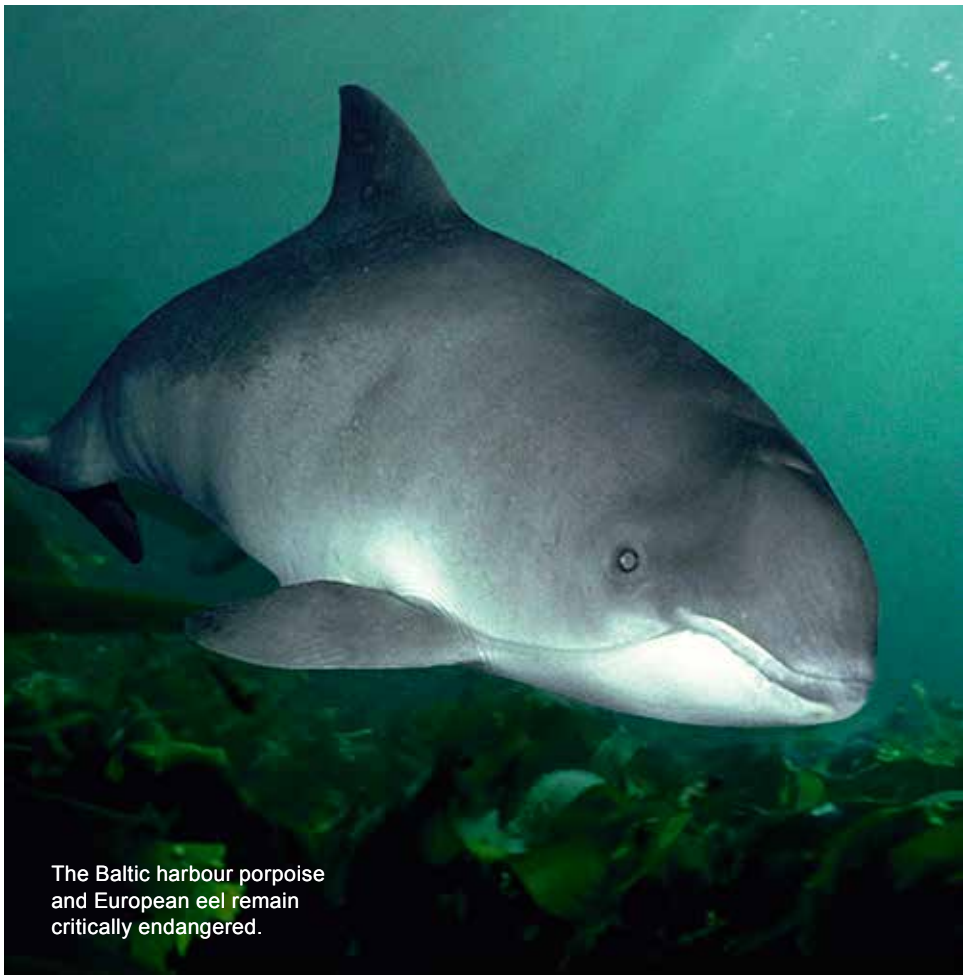
A further concern is that there is a danger of missing detail if actions become too generalised. For example, when the BSAP was adopted in 2007 it included action on the application of strict restrictions on the use of mercury in products, as well as from processes and supporting work towards further limiting and (where feasible) totally banning mercury in products and from processes. The focus has now changed to purely ratify and implement the Minamata Convention. While the implementation of the Minamata Convention will capture a range of actions, the specific detail on progress is lost.

Finally, Germany has assumed that actions to reduce pollution from hazardous substances in the framework of relevant existing EU or national regulations and policies will also deliver the actions from the BSAP; thus Germany has not developed a specific national programme to deliver on BSAP actions. This has implications for three actions in the assessment shown in Table 4 above, and results in Germany being allocated a very low score.

BIODIVERSITY

HOLAS II ASSESSMENT

- Inadequate status of species in all levels of the food web
- The Baltic harbour porpoise and European eel remain critically endangered
- Migratory species, salmon and trout in most areas are in poor status
- Three out of the 8 commercial fish stocks are in good status with respect to biomass and fishing mortality rates



The Baltic harbour porpoise and European eel remain critically endangered.

"The Baltic Sea has a unique combination of habitats and wildlife adapted to its brackish conditions. Protecting it is central to ensuring the stability of the Baltic ecosystem, including its structures, functions and ecological processes."

The Baltic Sea has a unique combination of habitats and wildlife adapted to its brackish conditions. Because the Baltic Sea biodiversity is inherently low in species numbers, protecting it is central to ensuring the stability of the Baltic ecosystem, including its structures, functions and ecological processes. The BSAP aims to align the goal of "favourable conservation status of marine biodiversity" with the goals and objectives of international regulations addressing biodiversity and nature conservation. HELCOM's overall goal of favourable conservation status of Baltic Sea biodiversity is described by three ecological objectives:

- Natural marine and coastal landscapes
- Thriving and balanced communities of plants and animals
- Viable populations of species

The HOLAS II report indicates however that there remain wide-reaching environmental impacts on species throughout the Baltic and throughout the food web. Future expansion of agriculture, maritime transport, offshore wind farms and other human activities will if not managed carefully, place further stress on the ecosystems of the Baltic Sea[11].

[11] http://wwf.panda.org/wwfnews/?194764/Future-trends-in-the-Baltic-Sea

By 2018, a further nine actions have been completed including recommendation for conservation plans for species at risk of extinction but has still to be adopted.

What has been done

This 2018 Scorecard assessment of progress to improve the status of the Baltic Sea's biodiversity focuses on actions related to maritime spatial planning, designation of marine protected areas, protection of HELCOM Red List species, as well as a number of actions relevant to fisheries including interactions with marine mammals and fish management plans. For most actions, the HELCOM Explorer database was consulted on actions completed. However, to supplement the assessment of MPAs, the data was cross-referenced with information from the HELCOM MPA database.

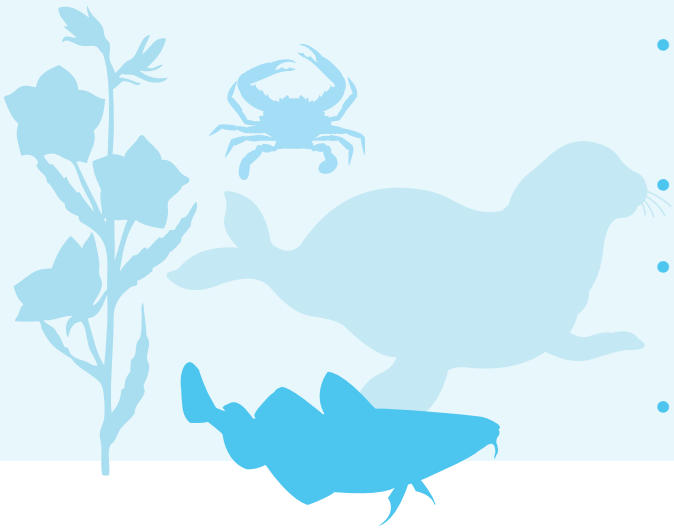
Before the Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting in 2013, only a handful of actions on Biodiversity reviewed for the 2013 Scorecard had been completed. By 2018, a further nine actions have been fully completed (see Box 1). This leaves approximately two-thirds of actions considered by this assessment not yet fully accomplished, including several actions with deadlines long passed, including:

- The development and implementation of MPA management plans
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of technical measures to minimise harbour porpoise bycatch
- The development and implementation of long-term management plans for salmon, sea trout and eel

BOX 1: COMPLETED BIODIVERSITY ACTIONS

Completed at time of 2013 Scorecard:

- Develop Maritime Spatial Planning Principles
- Second assessment of ecological coherence of the BSPA network (HELCOM MPA network)
- Comprehensive HELCOM Red List of Baltic Sea species
- Assessment of the conservation status of non-commercial fish species
- Coordinated reporting system of harbour porpoise



Completed at time of 2018 Scorecard:

- Test, apply and evaluate broad-scale, cross-sectoral, MSP principles based on the ecosystem approach
- Draft and adopt guidelines on transboundary consultations and cooperation, public participation for MSP with transboundary dimensions and application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP (2 actions)
- Third assessment of ecological coherence of the HELCOM MPA network
- Develop regional targets for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the completion and further development of a set of HELCOM core indicators for biodiversity and their monitoring
- Develop a new HELCOM Recommendation for conservation plans for species at risk of extinction
- Immediate action for development of long-term management plans for commercially exploited fish species (flatfish and pelagic species: sprat and herring) so that they are within safe biological limits (2 actions)
- Implement existing long-term management plan for cod

TABLE 5: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST BIODIVERSITY ACTIONS

Origin	Action	Deadline	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Maritime Spatial Planning											
BSAP	Test, apply and evaluate broadscale, cross-sectoral, maritime spatial planning principles based on the ecosystem approach	**2010**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
MD 2013	Draw up and apply maritime spatial plans throughout the Baltic Sea region by 2020	**2020**	**0**	**–1**	**1**	**–1**	**1**	**0**	**–1**	**–1**	**–1**
2013 MSP Roadmap	National frameworks for coherent MSP are in place in all Baltic Sea countries by 2017	**2017**	**0**	**–2**	**0**	**–2**	**0**	**–2**	**0**	**–2**	**0**
2013 MSP Roadmap	Draft and adopt Guidelines on – transboundary consultations and cooperation, – public participation for MSP with transboundary dimensions, – application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP (2 actions)	**2015**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
2013 MSP Road–map	Apply Guidelines on the application of Ecosystem Approach in transnationally coherent MSP	**2018**	**1**	**–1**	**–1**	**–1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**–1**	**–1**
HELCOM Marine Protected Areas											
BSAP	Designate new sites especially in offshore areas beyond territorial waters	**Not specified**	**–1**	**–1**	**–1**	**1**	**1**	**–1**	**–1**	**–1**	**–1**
MD 2010	At least 10% of marine area of all subbasins including EEZ area is covered by MPAs	**Not specified**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
BSAP	Assessment of ecological coherence of the HELCOM MPA network and update assessment by 2015 (2 actions)	**2010/ 2015**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
BSAP	Develop and apply by 2015 management plans or measures for all existing HELCOM MPAs	**2015***	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–3**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**
HELCOM Red List of Baltic Species											
MD 2013	Develop regional targets for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the completion and further development of a set of HELCOM core indicators for biodiversity and their monitoring	**2015**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
MD 2013	Develop a new HELCOM Recommendation for conservation plans for **species** at risk of extinction	**2015**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
MD 2013	Develop a new HELCOM Recommendation for conservation plans for **habitats** and **biotopes** at risk of extinction	**2015**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**	**–2**

Origin	Action	Deadline	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Fisheries and marine mammal interactions											
MD 2013	Decisive action to work towards a favourable conservation status of the harbour porpoise based on implementation of the CMS ASCOBANS Jastarnia Plan	Not specified	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1	–1
BSAP	Evaluation of effectiveness of technical measures to minimise bycatch of harbour porpoises	2008	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3
BSAP	Effective monitoring and reporting systems for by-caught birds and mammals (2 actions)	Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fisheries											
BSAP	Immediate action for development of long-term management plans for commercially exploited fish stocks so that they are within safe biological limits and reach agreed targets (**salmon**)	2010	–3	–2	–3	0	–3	–3	–3	–2	0
BSAP	Immediate action for development of long-term management plans for commercially exploited fish species (**sea trout**) so that they are within safe biological limits	2010	–3	–3	–3	0	–3	–3	–3	–3	0
BSAP	Immediate action for development of long-term management plans for commercially exploited fish species (pelagic species: **sprat** and **herring, flatfish**) so that they are within safe biological limits (2 actions)	2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	Implement existing long-term management plans for **eel**	2012	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–3	–2
BSAP	Implement existing long-term management plans for **cod**	2012	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	National programs for the conservation of eel stocks to ensure successful eel migrations from the Baltic Sea drainage basis on national spawning grounds	Not specified	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
BSAP	Restoration plans including restoration of spawning sites and migration routes in suitable rivers to reinstate migratory fish species	2010	1	1	1	1	1	–1	1	0	1
BSAP	Development of long-term management plans for coastal fish species	2012	–3	–2	–3	–3	–3	–3	–2	0	0
Total score			–16	–19	–17	–13	–13	–22	–16	–20	–10

Deadline not yet passed:	
–1	No action or unreported
0	Implementation in progress
1	Action implemented ahead of time

Deadline already passed:	
–3	No action or unreported
–2	Implementation in progress
0	Action implemented

*Or 5 years after designation.

NEW NATURA 2000 MPAS

HAVE RECENTLY BEEN DESIGNATED BY SWEDEN AND COULD BE ADDED TO THE HELCOM MPA NETWORK

Assessment results

Several new actions have been included in the 2018 Scorecard, specifically actions addressing maritime spatial planning (MSP) and commercial fisheries. MSP actions are comparatively new with a number of deadlines yet to be reached. Generally, good progress is being made in this area, with several actions being achieved ahead of, or in line with, the agreed BSAP deadline. Although, the HELCOM Explorer database indicates that Estonia has fully accomplished the action to draw up and apply MSP, when in fact only two counties have plans and progress elsewhere in Estonia has been slow.

It is also disappointing not to be able to assess progress of the application of MSP guidelines on transboundary consultations and cooperation, as well as on public participation, since the deadline is this year. Actions taken are generally aligned with the delivery of the components of EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive[12].

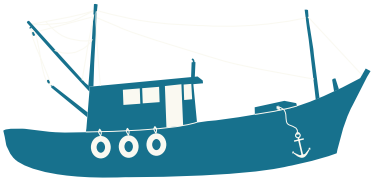
The assessment of HELCOM Marine Protected Areas actions also draws on progress recorded in the HELCOM MPA database. Although some countries, have made good progress in designating their coastal waters and exclusive economic zones in the past, that progress is not recognised by this assessment, which only looks at new sites since 2013. In particular, Germany (30%), Poland (24%) and Denmark (23%) have made good progress in designating more areas to MPAs in their waters[13]. Progress on the designation of further HELCOM MPAs since 2013 is very disappointing, with only two countries, Finland and Lithuania, designating new sites. Three countries – Finland, Sweden and Russia – have not yet designated 10% of their waters as HELCOM MPAs; however Sweden has recently designated new Natura 2000 MPAs which could be added to the HELCOM MPA network[14]. Furthermore, none of the countries assessed have developed or implemented management plans for all sites by the 2015 deadline set by the Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting in 2013, and also required by the HELCOM Recommendation 35/1, which entered into force in 2014.

[12] EU Directive (2014/89/EU) establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning.

[13] WWF, 2016. Scorecard 2016 Marine Protected Areas in the Baltic Sea.

[14] http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2017/12/regeringsuppdrag-for-att-starka-skyddet-for-marina-omraden/

"The assessment of the development of long-term management plans for commercial fisheries is very mixed, with good results for pelagic species, flatfish and cod, but poor results for salmon, sea trout and eels."



While some good progress has been made to deliver actions focused on the HELCOM Red List of Baltic Species, these are all joint actions and do not require action at a national level. It is disappointing to note, however, that a new HELCOM Recommendation on conservation plans for habitats and biotopes at risk of extinction has been developed but could not be adopted, due to lack of international agreement.

It is particularly concerning that there has been such limited progress with respect to actions aimed at minimising the interaction of fisheries with marine mammals and seabirds. Although some actions have been delivered, an evaluation of the effectiveness of technical measures, or of the effective monitoring and reporting systems for by-catch of birds and mammals, has yet to be comprehensively implemented. The adoption in August 2016 of a revised CMS ASCOBANS Jastarnia Plan including comprehensive actions is very welcome – but the next phase of implementation is critical.

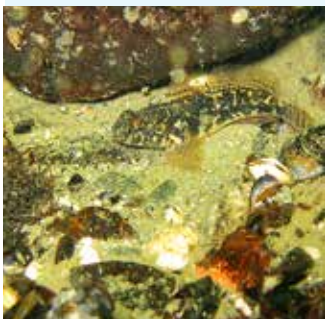
The assessment of the development of long-term management plans for commercial fisheries is very mixed, with good results for pelagic species, flatfish and cod, but poor results for salmon, sea trout and eels. Conversely, national actions on European eel management plans appear to indicate good progress. However, the reality on the ground is very different where implementation of national plans has not yet resulted in the anticipated change in eel populations which remain in a critical condition[15]. With respect to fisheries restorations, the assessment shows varied results: many countries having delivered restoration plans ahead of time, but on the development of long-term management plans for coastal fisheries, there has been poor progress.

[15] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-461-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF

MARITIME ACTIVITIES

HOLAS II ASSESSMENT

- 14 new non-indigenous species have been recorded between 2001 and 2015
- Non-indigenous species have expanded to new Baltic Sea sub-basins
- Pollution from oil spills have decreased
- Underwater sound is among the most widely distributed pressures coinciding with vessel traffic



BETWEEN 2010 & 2015

14 NEW NON-INDIGENOUS SPECIES HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN THE BALTIC SEA

The Baltic Sea is already one of the busiest seas in the world, and shipping traffic is predicted to more than double in the coming years. This heavy traffic is funnelled through narrow straits and happens in shallow waters that are partly covered with ice for a significant part of the year. These conditions make the Baltic Sea a difficult area to navigate and lead to an increased risk of shipping incidents.

The main negative environmental effects of shipping and other activities at sea include air pollution, illegal and accidental discharges of oil, hazardous substances and sewage discharge, and the introduction of non-indigenous, invasive species via ships' ballast water and hulls. The strategic goal of HELCOM is to have maritime activities in the Baltic Sea carried out in an environmentally friendly way, with eight objectives agreed, including:

- Minimum air pollution from ships
- Minimum sewage pollution from ships
- No introduction of alien species from ships
- Efficient emergency and response capability

Despite these objectives, the HOLAS II assessment reports that from 2011 to 2015, fourteen new non-indigenous species have been recorded in the Baltic Sea and the ranges of previously recorded non-indigenous species have expanded. There is, however, some good news that the number of pollution events from oil spills has decreased.

What has been done

The 2018 Scorecard assessment of progress to reduce the impact of maritime activities and improve the status of the Baltic Sea focuses on emissions, discharges and spills from shipping. For the majority of actions, the HELCOM Explorer database was the main source of data. To supplement the assessment of ratification of instruments, IMO data on the status of conventions[16] was reviewed.

In the 2013 Scorecard, good progress had been made with respect to delivery of actions relating to reducing the impact of maritime activities, but this progress has not been repeated for maritime activities in the 2018 Scorecard. The assessment for this latest Scorecard indicates that there is still considerable work to do, with only two further actions having been fully completed by 2018 (see Box 2).

Assessment results

Progress has been made in addressing nitrogen oxide emissions from Baltic shipping, albeit after the original deadline. It is particularly disappointing that four Baltic Sea countries have still not ratified the Ballast Water Management Convention (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland). Progress has been mixed with respect to the upgrading of port waste reception facilities for sewage discharges in passenger ports – both priority and secondary ports – and integrating oiled wildlife into oil spill response/contingency planning. The deadlines for these actions are long passed.

Deadline not yet passed:	
–1	No action or unreported
0	Implementation in progress
1	Action implemented ahead of time

Deadline already passed:	
–3	No action or unreported
–2	Implementation in progress
0	Action implemented

[16] http://www.imo.org/en/About/Conventions/StatusOfConventions/Pages/Default.aspx

BOX 2: COMPLETED MARITIME ACTIVITIES ACTIONS

Completed at time of 2013 Scorecard:

- Ratification of the Anti-fouling Systems Convention
- Extension of monitoring of non-compliant ships entering the HELCOM area using AIS
- Ratification of MARPOL Annex VI
- A joint submission to IMO on tighter regulations concerning SOx emissions from ships
- A joint submission to IMO regarding nutrient discharges in sewage
- Request for vessels to conduct voluntary ballast water exchange before arriving in the OSPAR or HELCOM area
- Development of criteria risk scenarios to consider ballast water management options
- Strengthen sub-regional cooperation for oil spill response
- Harmonized aerial and satellite surveillance in the Baltic Sea
- Implementation of the Offshore Action Plan for the list of red and black chemicals

Completed at time of 2018 Scorecard:

- A joint submission to IMO on tighter regulations concerning NOx emissions from ships
- Compilation of a list of non-indigenous, cryptogenic and harmful native species

TABLE 6: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST MARITIME ACTIVITIES ACTIONS

Origin	Action	Deadline	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
MARPOL Annex VI											
BSAP	Joint submissions to IMO in order to tighten regulations concerning NOx emissions from ships within the revision of Annex VI to MARPOL 73/78	2011	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sewage reception facilities											
BSAP	Implement the Roadmap for upgrading port reception facilities for sewage in passenger ports in the Baltic Sea Area: Priority Ports	2013	0	0	0	N/A**	N/A	–3	0	N/A	N/A
	Implement the Roadmap for upgrading port reception facilities for sewage in passenger ports in the Baltic Sea Area: Secondary Ports	2013	–2	–3	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	–2
Ballast Water Management Convention											
BSAP	Ratification of the Ballast Water Management Convention	2013*	0	1	–2	0	–3	–3	–2	1	1
BSAP	Compilation of a list of non-indigenous, cryptogenic and harmful native species	2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BSAP	Conducting of baseline surveys of prevailing environmental conditions in major ports	2008	0	–2	–3	0	0	–2	0	–2	0
BSAP	Adjust HELCOM monitoring programme on non-indigenous species	2010	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2	–2
Oil spill response											
BSAP	Integrating oiled wildlife response into response / contingency planning	2016*	1	1	1	1	–3	–3	–2	–2	1
BSAP	Develop best practices for shoreline response	Not specified	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Total score			–2	–4	–5	–1	–8	–12	–6	–4	–2

* Some countries implemented the action before the deadline.

** N/A Not applicable is used when no priority or secondary ports have been identified in a country.

DELIVERING A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY

Not only is the Baltic Sea still degraded following decades of poor management and misuse, it is seriously under-performing as an economic resource.

In a series of reports on the Baltic Sea's marine- and maritime-based or sustainable "Blue" economy, WWF has previously documented the enormous value that would be unlocked by better management, smart investment, and accelerated innovation in our region. Governments as well as private sector actors have an essential role to play in converting that potential – which includes hundreds of thousands of new jobs, billions in future revenue, and new technologically-based environmental solutions – into a prosperous and sustainable Blue Economy in the Baltic region[17]. Realizing this vision requires a much greater commitment to creating a healthy, resilient and productive Baltic Sea, and this commitment will also pay off in the form of dramatic positive impacts on regional employment and income. As noted in the WWF report "All Hands on Deck"[18]:

"It is necessary to see the Baltic Sea as an irreplaceable and uniquely valuable natural and economic asset. Restoring the sea to good status should be seen not as an "environmental cost" but as a long-term investment in our region's economic future – an investment that will create jobs, income and global export opportunities for regional companies."

HOLAS II identifies that the recreational benefits of the Baltic Sea are estimated at a little under 15 billion euros annually, but the current losses in recreation value due to deterioration of the marine environment are estimated at 1–2 billion euros annually. The cost of degradation in the Baltic sea region due to eutrophication is estimated as total losses of around 3.8–4.4 billion euros annually.

To support policy-makers and business decision-makers in moving towards this highly preferable future for our region, WWF introduced a set of Principles for a Sustainable Blue Economy in 2015. The Principles, which were developed through a global consultation process, have quickly been adopted by other international actors as a guide for priority-setting and action. They formed the basis for the Baltic Sea roadmap described in "All Hands on Deck" (See Box 3).

HOLAS II ASSESSMENT

- The tourism sector employs 180,000 people in the coastal areas of the Baltic Sea
- The total recreational benefits in the Baltic Sea region are 15 billion euros/year
- Citizen welfare could improve by 3.8–4.4 billion euro/year if good eutrophication status was achieved

€1-2 BILLION ANNUALLY

ARE ESTIMATED AS LOSSES IN RECREATION VALUE DUE TO THE DETERIORATION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

[17] https://www.bcg.com/industries/social-impact/saving-baltic-sea.aspx

[18] http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?254101/All-Hands-on-Deck-Setting-Course-to-a-Sustainable-Blue-Economy-in-the-Baltic-Sea-Region

BOX 3: WWF's PRINCIPLES FOR A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY

A Sustainable Blue Economy is a marine-based economy that ….

- Provides social and economic benefits for current and future generations.
- Restores, protects and maintains the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions and intrinsic value of marine ecosystems.
- Is based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows.

A Sustainable Blue Economy is governed by public and private processes that are ….

- Inclusive.
- Well-informed, precautionary and adaptive.
- Accountable and transparent.
- Holistic, cross-sectoral and long-term.
- Innovative and proactive.

To create a Sustainable Blue Economy, public and private actions must ….

- Set clear, measurable, and internally consistent goals and targets for a Sustainable Blue Economy.
- Assess and communicate their performance on these goals and targets.
- Create a level economic and legislative playing field that provides the Blue Economy with adequate incentives and rules.
- Plan, manage and effectively govern the use of marine space and resources, applying inclusive methods and the ecosystem approach.
- Develop and apply standards, guidelines and best practices, that support a Sustainable Blue Economy.
- Recognise that the maritime and land-based economies are interlinked and that many of the threats facing marine environments originate on land.

"Current regional policy frames lack the comprehensiveness and clarity of guidance that all economic and actors in our region need."

Incentivizing private sector actors to move more resolutely toward a vision requires leadership. In the past few years, both HELCOM and the European Commission (EC) have advanced policy agendas that have an impact on the development of a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Baltic Sea, but neither of these influential regional bodies goes far enough. Current regional policy frames, which are essentially advisory, lack the comprehensiveness and clarity of guidance that all economic and actors in our region need.

Many challenges need to be addressed

In 2014, the EC adopted a Sustainable Blue Growth agenda for the Baltic Sea Region which highlighted the potential for developing the maritime economy in the Baltic Sea Region. While the subsequent report "Towards an implementation strategy for the Sustainable Growth Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region" fails to recognise the value of investing in environmental restoration for the return that healthy, resilient and productive ecosystems will provide, it does identify environmental regulation as a core driver and challenge. In particular, for future shipping operations in the Baltic it includes in a 2030 shipping vision the need for shipping and port operations to be environmentally sound, and for lower CO_2, SO_x and NO_x emissions from shipping. The on-going challenges caused by eutrophication and pollutants are also recognised as drivers and challenges to be addressed by 2030 in the blue bioeconomy vision. Measures include the removal of biomass (seaweed or reeds) along the coastline to remediate "eutrophication hotspots" and development of mussel farms to provide environmental services such as increased water transparency and nutrient uptake while also supplying high-quality feed products for agri- and aquaculture.

Mussels can be used not only to produce seafood but recycle nutrients back to the land.

When it comes to setting policies that truly incentivize economic investment and innovation, however, it is the countries that must take the lead. With that requirement in mind, is increased awareness and interest in the "Blue Growth" or "Sustainable Blue Economy" potential of the region being translated into increased action and protection by Baltic Sea countries? Have strategies for promoting a Sustainable Blue Economy, along with measurable goals, been developed? Is financing available for the delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy? Table 7 presents WWF's brief assessment of progress by Baltic Sea Region countries towards a Sustainable Blue Economy.

TABLE 7: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY ACTIONS

Sustainable Blue Economy	DE	DK	EE	FI	LT	LV	PL	RU	SE
Development of a National Maritime Strategy	1	0	1	1	–1	–1	1	1	1
Strategy for promoting a Sustainable Blue Economy (part of Maritime Strategy or other form)	1	–1	0	1	0	–1	0	0	1
Clear, measurable goals for a Sustainable Blue Economy	1	–1	–1	1	–1	–1	–1	1	1
Allocated budget and resources in relevant sector ministries and agencies to support implementation of the maritime strategy and targets for reaching a Sustainable Blue Economy	0	–1	–1	1	–1	–1	0	1	1
Assessment and communication of performance on goals and targets for establishing a Sustainable Blue Economy	–1	–1	–1	1	–1	–1	–1	–1	1
Guidelines for cooperation between relevant sectors to develop goals and targets to establishing a Sustainable Blue Economy	0	–1	–1	–1	–1	0	–1	–1	1
Financing available for research and development of projects that are aimed at developing maritime sectors in a sustainable way (clean technologies, renewable energy, circular material flows)	0	0	–1	1	0	0	–1	1	1
Total score	2	–5	–4	5	–5	–5	–3	2	7

Scoring	
1	Action is addressed in principle
0	Action is addressed in part or through an alternative effort, for example, EU funded projects which will contribute to developing maritime sectors in a sustainable way
–1	No specific action currently identified

"Finland has taken steps to establish a Bioeconomy Strategy that aims to generate new economic growth and new jobs from an increase in the bioeconomy business sector while protecting the sustainability of ecosystems."

While this assessment focuses principally on the development and delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy, it is also about national-level communication on a Sustainable Blue Economy. Whereas a reporting database provided most of the data for the BSAP assessment, this assessment is based on the feedback from environmental non-governmental organisation staff in each country. Inevitably, the assessment is subjective. However, inclusivity and transparency are essential components for developing a Sustainable Blue Economy. If national governments are not communicating effectively across stakeholders, they cannot be considered to be delivering a Sustainable Blue Economy.

From this snapshot of progress towards the development of the policy and financial conditions for the delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy, it is apparent that Sweden and Finland have made good progress, with Germany and Russia not too far behind. These four countries all appear to have initially followed the steps outlined in the assessment – development of a National Marine Strategy, as well as a strategy with clear, measurable goals to promote a Sustainable Blue Economy, and provision of funds to support implementation. It is the later steps, that are not yet in place, including assessment and communication on performance, guidelines for cooperation and financing for research and development aimed at developing maritime sectors in a sustainable way. Finland has taken steps to also establish a Bioeconomy Strategy that aims to generate new economic growth and new jobs from an increase in the bioeconomy business sector while protecting the sustainability of ecosystems. In addition, Sweden has established a new "Blue Center" to promote research and pilot projects in this area[19].

Disappointingly, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland have made little progress. Denmark, Estonia and Poland have each prepared a Maritime Strategy, but Denmark's is now considered to be out of date, and was in any case little more than a list of maritime policies. None of these five countries have, as yet, developed a comprehensive strategy. A number of countries do envisage the use of EU funds to drive projects of particular relevance to developing a Sustainable Blue Economy.

[19] http://campusgotland.uu.se/samverkan/blatt-centrum/

"The development of Sustainable Blue Economy strategies, incentives and innovative approaches should not be an add-on to existing BSAP commitments."

What should be done?

Inevitably the assessment of progress towards the delivery of a Sustainable Blue Economy is qualitative as there is not a lot of information available and no requirement for progress reporting. The disparity between progress in Sweden and Finland, and Denmark, Latvia and Lithuania is a concern. While recognising that the concept of a Sustainable Blue Economy is comparatively new, the fact that Sweden has completed all the actions used in this assessment indicates that progress is possible. For a Sustainable Blue Economy to be achieved across the Baltic Sea, along with new jobs, increased revenue, and new technologically-based environmental solutions, it is essential that all countries develop strategies including clear, measurable goals, together with the necessary political will and incentives to maritime sectors for the implementation of a Sustainable Blue Economy.

The development of innovative solutions that can contribute to a Sustainable Blue Economy, particularly if scaled up across the Baltic Sea, will also be valuable and need to be encouraged to meet the challenges faced in the region and wider afield to improve restoration and efficient management of the marine environment.

The development of Sustainable Blue Economy strategies, incentives and innovative projects should not be an add-on to existing BSAP commitments. That development should instead encompass the actions needed to eliminate eutrophication and contamination by hazardous substances, to protect the ecosystem and its biodiversity and to manage maritime activities strategically and with minimal environmental impact. As the BSAP is reviewed and further commitments are established, leadership from HELCOM, including guidance and guidelines to deliver a Sustainable Baltic Blue Economy, must be a top priority.

The Baltic Sea is a particularly unique and sensitive sea, which in some respects needs stronger remedial measures than other European seas.

The assessment and scoring was carried out using data available through HELCOM's publically available Explorer database. The analysis focuses on reported progress within the same four themes as used in previous WWF Scorecards, i.e. eutrophication, hazardous substances, biodiversity and maritime activities.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment focuses on a subset of 58 actions related to previous scorecards of national actions. The assessment does not analyse the environmental status of the Baltic Sea, or changes in it, but focuses instead on the delivery of the implementation of actions included in the BSAP along with subsequent additions and evolutions of actions incorporated within the Moscow and Copenhagen Ministerial Declarations.

Reporting of progress of actions

The assessment and scoring were carried out using data available through HELCOM's publicly available Explorer database[20]. This database has been developed since the 2013 WWF Scorecard, and includes both joint actions and national actions for each country. The dataset available in the HELCOM Explorer database is largely based on reporting by countries in 2015 and early 2016. So for some actions, the data available is already as much as two years old. It should also be noted that there exist multiple reporting channels to HELCOM and correlation between different routes may be incomplete. The assessment for a few actions was cross-referenced with more recent data which was readily available from other datasets, for example the HELCOM MPA database and the IMO website. Also, for a number of actions additional information was provided directly by the HELCOM Secretariat based on the latest reporting to HELCOM up until the 24th January 2018. The accuracy of the Scorecard assessment is inevitably limited to the quality of reporting by countries.

The analysis focuses on reported progress within the same four themes as used in previous WWF Scorecards, i.e. eutrophication, hazardous substances, biodiversity and maritime activities[21]. The primary focus is on actions that had been assessed in 2010 and 2013, however many of the BSAP actions had been described in a general manner, and have subsequently evolved into a more specific form. In these cases, more detailed actions have been substituted in the 2018 assessment. In a few instances the wording of actions reflects the wording used in the HELCOM Explorer database instead of the BSAP or the Moscow or Copenhagen Ministerial Declarations..

Scoring

Actions previously assessed as having been achieved by WWF 2013 Scorecard are referred to in the Scorecard to recognise the progress that has been previously achieved, but are not included in the assessment.

The scoring for actions assessed as part of the 2018 Scorecard was divided up according to the action deadline. The scoring for actions where the deadline had already passed ranged from minus three (–3) where there has been no action or no report of action, minus two (–2) where implementation is in progress, to zero (0) when action has been implemented but after the published deadline.

The scoring for actions where the deadline has not yet passed ranged from minus one (–1) where there has been no action or unreported, zero (0) where implementation is in progress, to one (+1) where action has been completed ahead of time.

SINCE THE 2013 WWF SCORECARD

HELCOM EXPLORER DATABASE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND INCLUDES BOTH JOINT ACTIONS AND NATIONAL ACTIONS FOR EACH COUNTRY

For a number of actions additional information was provided directly by the HELCOM Secretariat based on the latest reporting to HELCOM up until the 24th January 2018. The accuracy of the Scorecard assessment is however, inevitably limited to the quality of reporting by countries.

[20] http://maps.helcom.fi/website/HELCOMexplorer/index.html

[21] WWF Baltic Sea Scorecard 2011 and WWF Baltic Sea Action Plan – is it on track? 2013

"For some actions, the deadline for delivery of an action has been amended between the adoption of the BSAP and the latest 2013 Ministerial Declaration."

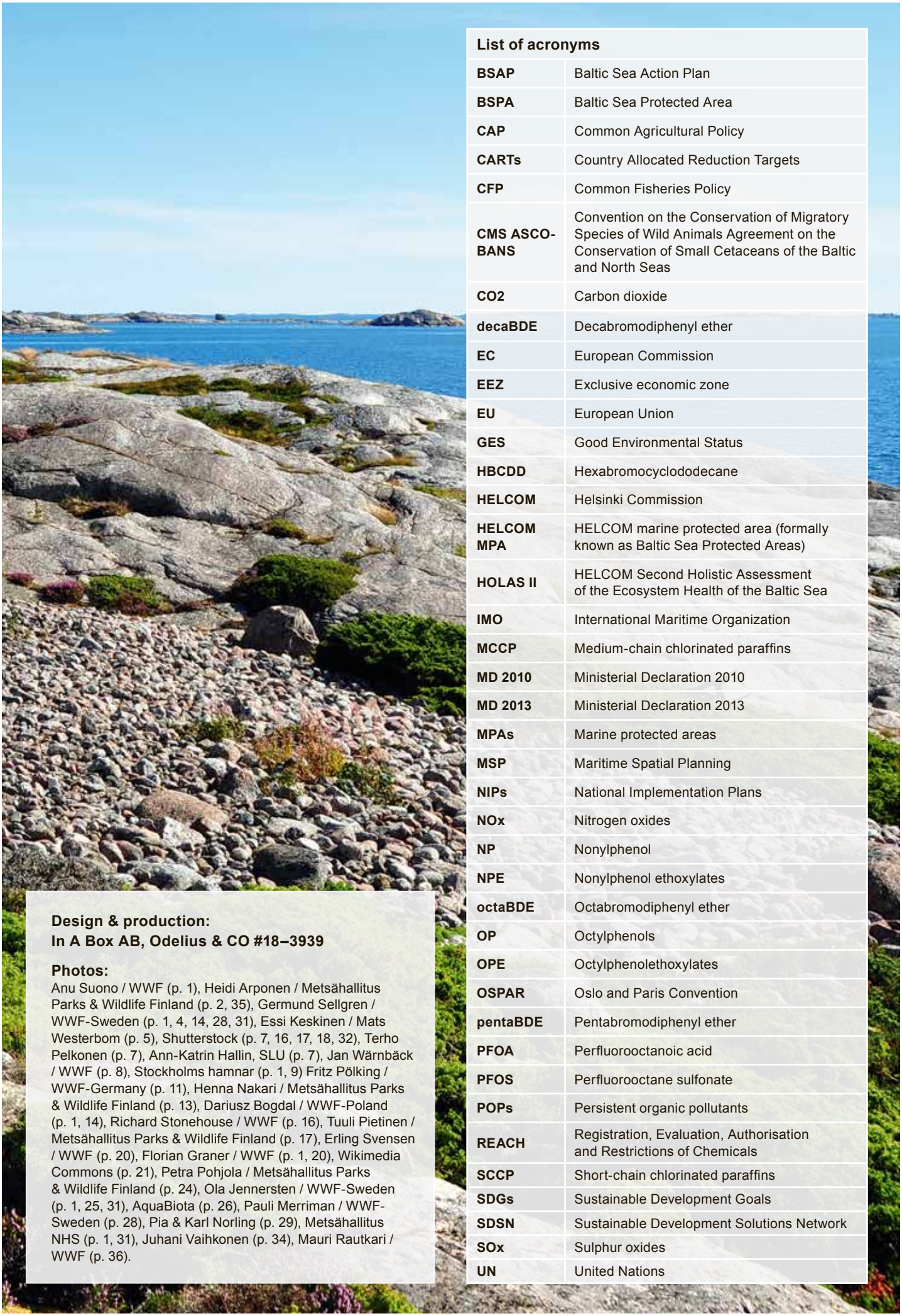
In a few cases, the scoring for a particular action draws on both systems – if for example a number of countries accomplished the action ahead of the deadline, but the deadline has since passed before the remaining countries have completed their efforts.

For some actions, the deadline for delivery of an action has been amended between the adoption of the BSAP and the latest 2013 Ministerial Declaration. For example, the original deadline for developing and using phosphorus free detergents for consumer use was 2010, and later revised to 2015. In such cases the revised deadline is used to assess progress and provide a score. This is frustrating as it often "lets countries off the hook" to progress the action in a timely manner and it inhibits comparison between Scorecards.

Difficulties with assessment

A number of difficulties have been experienced with the analysis of the data, including a lack of reporting in the HELCOM Explorer database. Some BSAP actions are not included in the database and for a number of actions the reporting included in the HELCOM Explorer database is either incomplete or out of date. It appears that countries have either not submitted reports or have not updated the information supplied. Inevitably this will lead to under-scoring for individual countries. In instances where a problem was identified the HELCOM Secretariat attempted to provide clarity or updates on status, and in some cases alternative sources of data were used, but this could not be done for every action where the information was suspected to be out of date.

The results have been scored based on the best knowledge provided by the HELCOM Explorer database. Some actions over the years have changed, been split into a number of additional new actions or combined without explanation, making the tracking of the accomplishment problematic. Increased transparency and improved reporting and monitoring systems need to be established.



List of acronyms	
BSAP	Baltic Sea Action Plan
BSPA	Baltic Sea Protected Area
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CARTs	Country Allocated Reduction Targets
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CMS ASCOBANS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas
CO2	Carbon dioxide
decaBDE	Decabromodiphenyl ether
EC	European Commission
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
EU	European Union
GES	Good Environmental Status
HBCDD	Hexabromocyclododecane
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
HELCOM MPA	HELCOM marine protected area (formally known as Baltic Sea Protected Areas)
HOLAS II	HELCOM Second Holistic Assessment of the Ecosystem Health of the Baltic Sea
IMO	International Maritime Organization
MCCP	Medium-chain chlorinated paraffins
MD 2010	Ministerial Declaration 2010
MD 2013	Ministerial Declaration 2013
MPAs	Marine protected areas
MSP	Maritime Spatial Planning
NIPs	National Implementation Plans
NOx	Nitrogen oxides
NP	Nonylphenol
NPE	Nonylphenol ethoxylates
octaBDE	Octabromodiphenyl ether
OP	Octylphenols
OPE	Octylphenolethoxylates
OSPAR	Oslo and Paris Convention
pentaBDE	Pentabromodiphenyl ether
PFOA	Perfluorooctanoic acid
PFOS	Perfluorooctane sulfonate
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals
SCCP	Short-chain chlorinated paraffins
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SOx	Sulphur oxides
UN	United Nations

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WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme

DELIVERING RESULTS

We are an active and effective change agent for the conservation and sustainable management of the Baltic Sea

COOPERATION

We promote constructive interactions to create awareness, spread ideas and stimulate discussion among stakeholders and partners

REGIONAL NETWORK

We represent the largest membership network in the region and are present in every country surrounding the Baltic Sea

INFLUENCE REGIONAL POLICY

We are a diligent watchdog that monitors how governments manage our common resource, the Baltic Sea

WWF

Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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