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## Background

HOD 57-2019 discussed the style of writing of the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP). Accordingly, the updated BSAP should be a relatively short document written in a straightforward way but should at the same time provide sufficient supporting information to facilitate future follow-up of implementation ([Outcome, para 3.27-3.28](#))

The Secretariat was tasked to prepare an outline of how the updated BSAP will be structured to facilitate the drafting process. A proposal was shared for information with the Working Group meetings in spring 2020 and later approved by HOD 58-2020 ([Outcome, para 4.6-4.16](#)). According to the Work Plan for the BSAP update, the first full draft is to be available at HOD in December 2020.

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20-2020 suggested a text for the general preamble of the updated BSAP reflecting the role of MSP in the achieving of the BSAP goals. According to the detailed plan for drafting the updated BSAP, the general overarching preamble for the BSAP is to be drafted by the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP) in autumn 2020 and reviewed by HELCOM Gear group in November. The current draft preamble does not mention MSP explicitly, since the text of the preamble will be quite general.

The updated BSAP will have a layered preamble which will also include segment-specific introductory text. HOD 57-2019 requested the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of the introductory text for the four segments (eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter, biodiversity, sea-based activities). MSP is a cross-cutting topic that could have links to various segments.

HOD 58-2020 supported the inclusion of an additional segment focusing on horizontal actions in the updated BSAP, to be divided by subheadings representing the various identified horizontal topics and invited the DG BSAP to develop a proposed structure for the segment. HOD 58-2020 also noted that MSP might be considered for inclusion as one of the topics under the segment of horizontal actions in the updated BSAP. The overall structure of the horizontal actions segment was agreed by DG BSAP 3-2020 and DG BSAP invited the Secretariat, in cooperation with the relevant HELCOM groups, to draft the introductory texts for topics of the horizontal actions segment.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- [Take note](#) of the information on the drafting process,
- [Take note](#) of the information on the last proposal from HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20-2020,
- [Agree](#) on the way forward to draft the introductory text for the horizontal action on MSP.

## MSP in BSAP

### Drafting the BSAP

HOD 57-2019 discussed the style of writing of the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP). Accordingly, the updated BSAP should be a relatively short document written in a straightforward way but should at the same time provide sufficient supporting information to facilitate future follow-up of implementation ([Outcome, para 3.27- 3.28](#)). Overall the updated BSAP should maintain strong links with global processes and commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the upcoming Convention on Biological Diversity targets and the EU Green Deal, with the aim that HELCOM can function as one of the platforms for ensuring implementation of global commitments. A holistic approach should be used when viewing and addressing the effects of human activities and subsequent pressures affecting the Baltic Sea. Aspirations are to be differentiated from concrete actions and the operative sections more clearly present the plan for action. Detailed information and supporting information on the actions will be made available as annexes to the respective segment.

The Secretariat was tasked to prepare an outline of how the updated BSAP will be structured to facilitate the drafting process. A proposal was shared for information with the Working Group meetings in spring 2020 and later approved by HOD 58-2020 ([Outcome, para 4.6-4.16](#)). According to the Work Plan for the BSAP update, the first full draft is to be available at HOD in December 2020.

### Overarching preamble

HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 20-2020 suggested a text for the general preamble of the updated BSAP reflecting the role of MSP in the achieving of the BSAP goals. According to the detailed plan for drafting the updated BSAP, the general overarching preamble for the BSAP is to be drafted by the Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP) in autumn 2020 and reviewed by HELCOM Gear group in November. The latest draft of the overarching preamble is available [here](#) (document 4-1 from DG BSAP 3-2020). As the preamble text stays on a general level, MSP is not explicitly mentioned in the draft text.

### Segment-specific preambles

The updated BSAP will have a layered preamble which will also include segment-specific introductory texts. HOD 57-2019 requested the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of the introductory text for the four segments (eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter, biodiversity, sea-based activities). Such text could focus on aspirations and strategic decision for the respective segment and also recall other relevant legislation associated to the respective segment. This introduction should not contain more than 1200 words and will be supported by reference boxes and visualizations. Operative sections, including the agreed actions, will be presented for each segment and associated goal of the updated BSAP. With the more strategic and higher level ambitions being expressed in introductory passages, the operative sections will focus on the plan for action. Each operative section will be initiated by a brief description (maximum ½ page) of the current state of the Baltic Sea based on the latest HELCOM assessments ([Outcome HOD 56-2019, para 2.23](#) and [HOD 58-2020, para 4.8](#) and [document 4-11](#)). This will be followed by an account of the HELCOM objectives, representing the desired state of the environment or the acceptable level of pressure (maximum ½ page). The agreed actions will then be sorted thematically.

MSP is a cross-cutting topic that could have links to various segments. The Maritime Working Group commented on the first draft of the segment preamble for sea-based activities and noted that some issues in the preamble could be for the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to consider ([Outcome of MARITIME 20-2020, Annex 2](#)).

### Horizontal actions segment

HOD 58-2020 supported the inclusion of an additional segment focusing on horizontal actions in the updated BSAP, to be divided by subheadings representing the various identified horizontal topics (including actions on socio-economics and financing, climate change etc.) and invited the DG BSAP to develop a

proposed structure for the segment. HOD 58-2020 also noted that MSP might be considered for inclusion as one of the topics under the segment of horizontal actions in the updated BSAP.

DG BSAP 3-2020 discussed the overall structure of the horizontal actions segment including a joint introduction to the segment followed by topic-wise sections and agreed on it as follows:

**Overall structure of the horizontal actions segment**

- segment preamble (short introduction)
- Climate change
  - o introduction
  - o actions
- Monitoring
  - o introduction
  - o actions
- MSP
  - o introduction
  - o actions
- Economic and social analyses
  - o introduction
  - o actions
- Financing
  - o introduction
  - o actions
- Annex with supplementary information on the actions

DG BSAP 3-2020 invited the Secretariat, in cooperation with the relevant HELCOM groups, to draft the introductory texts for topics of the horizontal actions segment.