

The Baltic Sea Action Plan

A new environmental strategy for the Baltic Sea region



HELCOM implementing the ecosystem approach in the Baltic Sea Area

HELCOM, the intergovernmental organization of the Baltic Sea states and the European Community has worked for 30 years to protect the Baltic Sea. In November 2007, HELCOM adopted an overarching action plan to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic Sea by 2021. The Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) implements the ecosystem approach and

contributes to the implementation of the CBD in the region. It sets an ambitious target of achieving a good ecological status of the Baltic Sea – a sea with diverse biological components functioning in balance and supporting a wide range of sustainable human economic and social activities. The plan contains concrete and meaningful

actions to curb eutrophication, prevent pollution involving hazardous substances, improve maritime safety and accident response capacity, and halt habitat destruction and the decline in biodiversity. Biodiversity lies in the core of the strategy serving as a controlling element for the performance of the whole action plan.

What did we achieve?

BSAP objective: Natural marine and coastal landscapes.

HELCOM has already designated 86 Baltic Sea Protected Areas (map on left).

BSAP target: By 2010, to have an ecologically coherent and well-managed network of HELCOM Baltic Sea Protected Areas.

Action: Designation of new protected areas, including off-shore areas. Currently, the network of protected areas covers 6.5% of the Baltic Sea equalling a total of 29,113 km².

BSAP target: By 2012 to have common broad-scale spatial planning principles for protecting the marine environment and reconciling various interests concerning sustainable use of coastal and offshore areas.

Action: Measures to develop marine spatial planning and to expand HELCOM's regional GIS work.

BSAP objective: Thriving and balanced communities of plants and animals, as well as viable populations of species.

HELCOM has already recovered populations of some top predators and other key species.

BSAP target: By 2009, breeding and restocking activities for salmon and sea trout are developed and applied and therefore genetic variability of these species is ensured.

Action: Active conservation of at least ten salmon rivers and reintroduction of native salmon at least in four rivers.

BSAP target: By 2021, extension of the spatial distribution and abundance of the characteristic habitat-forming species to its natural range.

Action: By 2013, to increase protection by mapping of potential and actual habitats and by developing a common approach for mitigation of negative impacts.

BSAP objective: A sea unaffected by eutrophication and healthy wildlife free of hazardous substances.

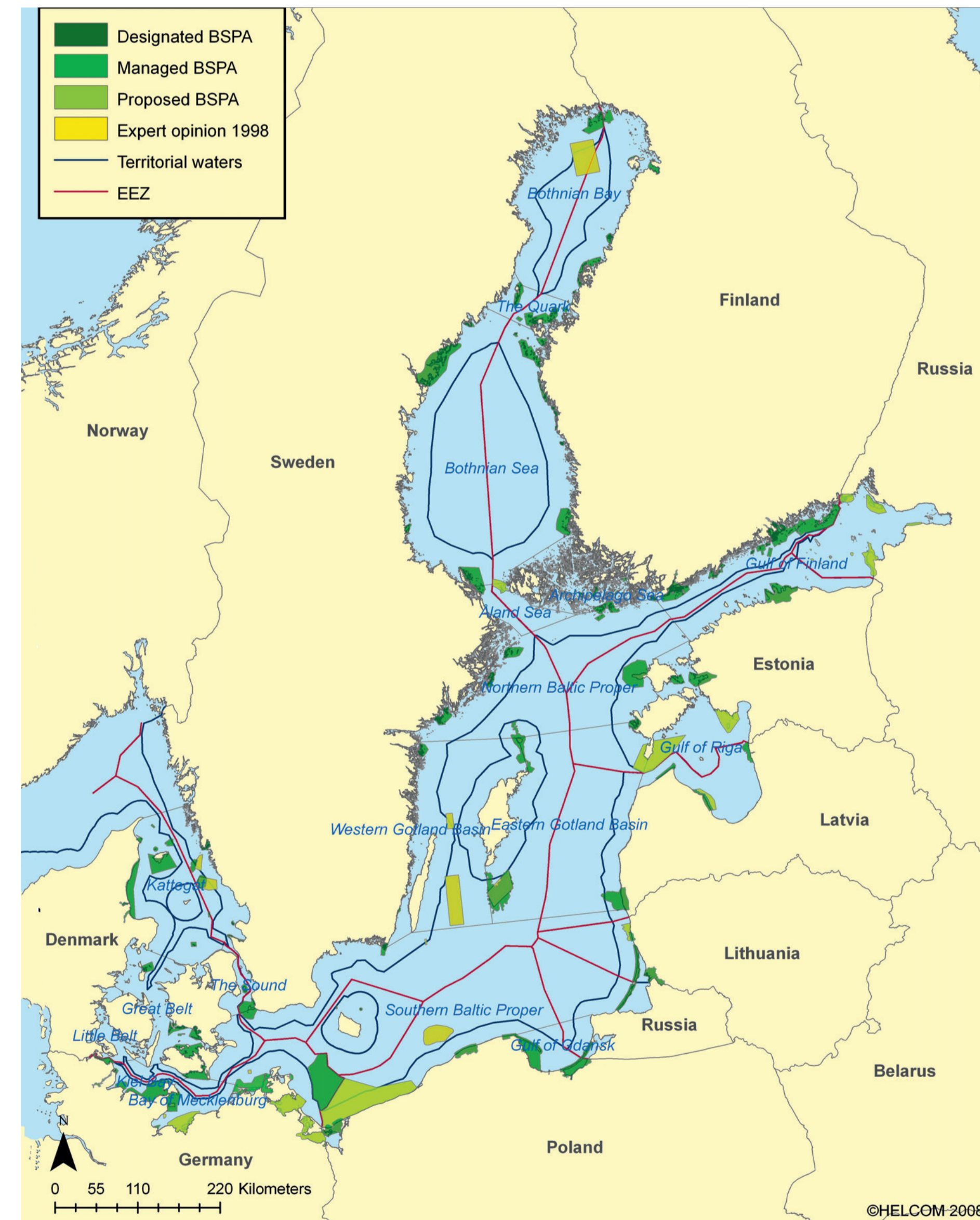
HELCOM has already achieved almost a 50% reduction of discharges of nutrients and hazardous substances from point sources since the 1980s, adopted stricter regulations for shipping.

BSAP target: No introductions of alien species from ships.

Action: Early implementation of the provisions of the Ballast Water Management Convention, and its ratification by all the Baltic Sea countries by 2013.

BSAP provisional target: To reduce inputs of phosphorus by 15,250 tonnes and nitrogen by 135,000 tonnes.

Action: By 2016, to take measures to reduce nutrient pollution by more efficient waste water treatment, agricultural run-off and introduce phosphorus free detergents.



2010 Biodiversity Target

- 1 Promote conservation of ecosystems & habitats
- 2 Promote the conservation of species diversity
- 3 Promote the conservation of genetic diversity
- 4 Promote sustainable use and consumption
- 5 Reduce pressures from habitat loss
- 6 Control threats from invasive alien species
- 7 Address challenges from climate change and pollution
- 8 Maintain capacity of ecosystems to provide services
- 9 Maintain cultural diversity of indigenous & local communities
- 10 Ensure fair & equitable benefit sharing from genetic resources
- 11 Ensure provision of adequate resources

