

Promoting regional and inter-regional co-operation on environmental security: The HELCOM experience

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16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, Part 1
Vienna, 29th January 2008



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Why protect the Baltic Sea?

- Intrinsic value
- A healthy sea has many social and economic values, e.g. provides many services and resources:
 - Climate regulation
 - Natural resources (food, genetic resources, regeneration)
 - Recreational/cultural values



Approaches to protection

- New evolving concepts
 - Ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities
 - Large marine ecosystem
- Goals: conserve ecosystem services
- Cross-sectoral and holistic
- Ecosystem at the core of policies



Implementation

- Large marine ecosystems should be addressed at regional and sub-regional levels
- Regional marine conventions and commissions play important role:
 - Comprehensive and overarching agreements
 - Long experience
 - Extensive information base



HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

- Adopted on 15 November 2007 in Krakow, Poland
- Regional application of the **Ecosystem Approach**
- Regional programme of measures aimed at obtaining a healthy Baltic Sea



HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

The foundation

VISION

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

GOALS

Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication	Baltic Sea life undisturbed by hazardous substances	Favourable conservation status of Baltic Sea biodiversity	Maritime activities in the Baltic Sea carried out in an environmentally friendly way
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OBJECTIVES

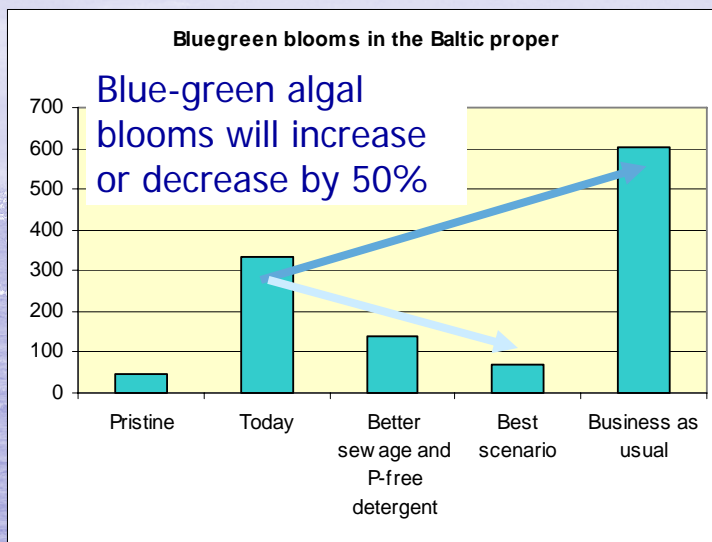
Concentrations of nutrients close to natural levels	Concentrations of hazardous substances close to natural levels	Natural marine and coastal landscapes	Enforcement of international regulations -No illegal pollution
Clear water	All fish safe to eat		Safe maritime traffic without accidental pollution
Natural level of algal blooms	Healthy wildlife	Thriving and balanced communities of plants and animals	Efficient emergency and response capability
Natural distribution and occurrence of plants and animals			Minimum sewage pollution from ships
			No introductions of alien species from ships
Natural oxygen levels	Radioactivity at pre-Chernobyl level	Viable populations of species	Minimum air pollution from ships
			Zero discharges from offshore platforms
			Minimum threats from offshore installations



HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

Effects of actions

Bluegreen blooms in the Baltic proper



HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan Stakeholder participation

- Goal:
 - Cross-sectoral approach
 - Integration of environmental objectives into other sector policies
- Input from:
 - Non-HELCOM states in the catchment area
 - International organisations
 - Scientists
 - Industry
 - NGOs, etc.

HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan Outcome

- Practical example of implementation of the ecosystem approach
- Quantification of characteristics of a healthy Baltic Sea
- Integrated approach for sectoral goals
- System for evaluating efficiency of measures
- Joint input from Baltic Sea states to other international fora, e.g. EU, IMO
- Fulfillment of HELCOM and other international obligations

Inter-regional co-operation

HELCOM examples:

- Twinning agreement with Nairobi Convention
- Co-operation with OSPAR (e.g. marine protected areas network)
- Co-operation with Black Sea Commission (monitoring and assessment procedures)
- Co-operations with Mediterranean Action Plan (development of ecological objectives)

Recommendations

- Support for inter-regional co-operation
- Sharing experiences helps to
 - Identify common issues
 - Identify cross-regional issues
 - Share best practices and models
- Learning from each other saves valuable time and resources!

Thank you!

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Adopted HELCOM Baltic Sea Action
Plan is available from www.helcom.fi

