

**Contribution to the report of the Secretary-General, “Oceans and the law of the sea”, on the topic of “Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic”**

Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission ([HELCOM](#)) governs the Helsinki Convention. HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP, 2007–2021), the ongoing scheme applying ecosystem approach to the management of human activities, has kept its place as the key reference point in any action related to Baltic marine protection.

In 2014 HELCOM celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and completed streamlining process, resulting in better capacity to coordinate and manage the requirements of its Contracting Parties – also across different sectors with more economic, scientific or social impetus.

A key HELCOM task is to regionally coordinate implementation of the legislative and policy frameworks in European and global contexts, e.g. EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD); Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of North West Federal District of Russia; International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Moreover, HELCOM cooperates with other Conventions, Programmes and initiatives, e.g. in the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and Mediterranean (REMPEC).

In 2014 HELCOM continued work in **Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)**, also in integrating environmental, social and economic dimensions. HELCOM and Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea (VASAB) have a stable working procedure since 2010. The countries have agreed on the regional Roadmap for MSP (2013–20) and on Guidelines on ecosystem approach in MSP.

Work on the second **holistic assessment** of the Baltic Sea started, with the key aim to integrate a socio-economic analysis into the comprehensive evaluation of the status of the sea. The work will build on HELCOM **core indicators** – also on human activities – now close to finalization. The **Monitoring Manual**, a web based compilation for coordinated monitoring for the entire sea area, was launched in 2014.

The regional action plan for **marine litter** is expected to be ready in early 2015. Within **fisheries sector** HELCOM continues joint meetings with a focus on a new Recommendation on **aquaculture**.

A core component of HELCOM work is the **nutrient reduction scheme**, updated in 2013 to contain annual targets per country to cut harmful loads. Studies have confirmed that implementing the scheme has economic benefits even with the stricter new targets. **Agriculture** is a sector with both nutrient reduction and economic potential, particularly within **nutrient recycling**.

A new HELCOM sub-group with evident links to business, technology, research, and administration will deal with efforts on green technologies and **alternative fuels for ships**. HELCOM finalized an assessment of **ports’ reception of ship sewage**, as the IMO regulation on passenger ships’ sewage expects enactment.