

Overview of HELCOM matters related to harbour porpoise

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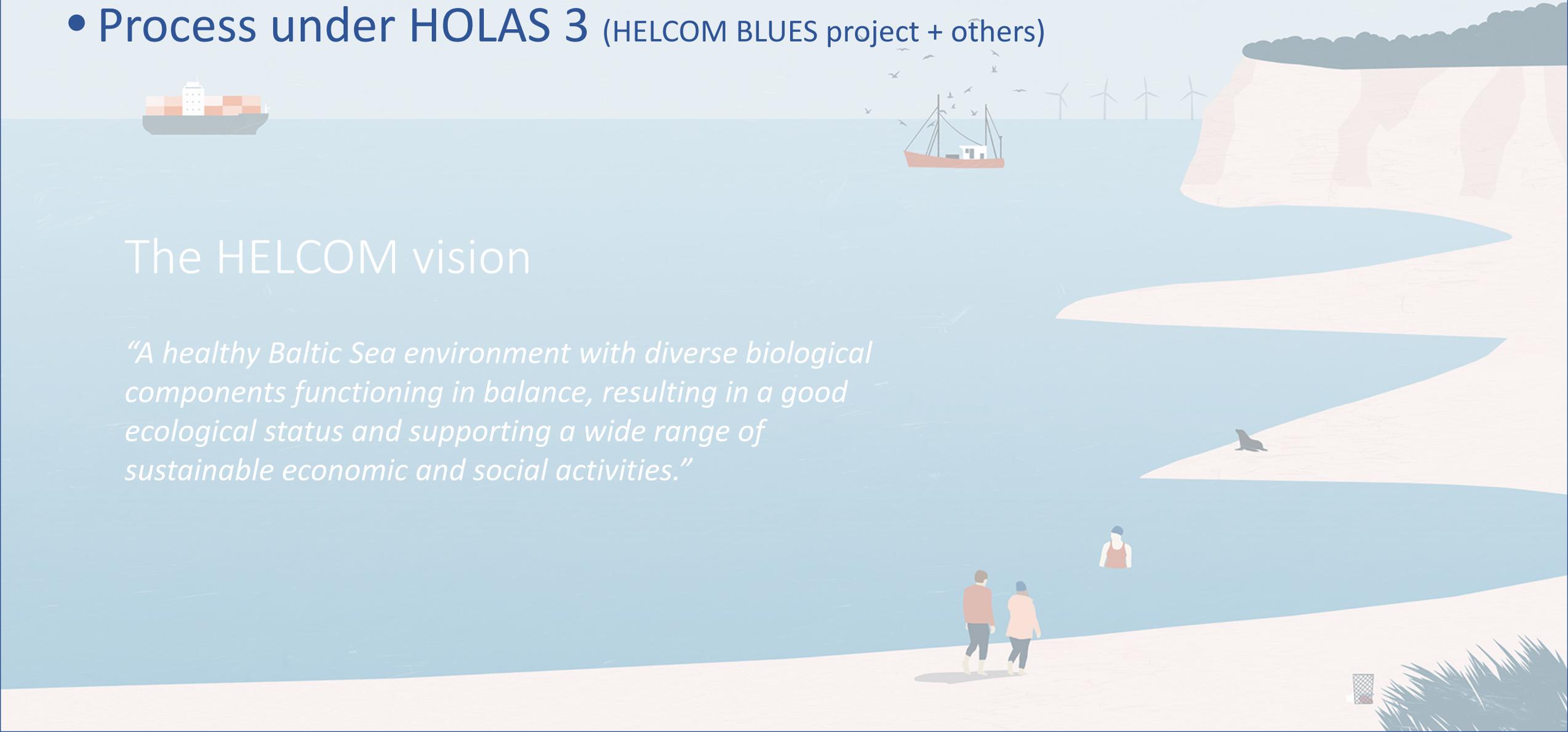
29 March 2020, 18th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group



- **New Baltic Sea Action Plan** (segments: Biodiversity + Sea-based activities)
- **Process under HOLAS 3** (HELCOM BLUES project + others)

The HELCOM 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 economic and social activities.”



2021 BSAP / general information

- Adopted during the



HELCOM
mm2021

HELCOM Ministerial Meeting
Lübeck, Germany • 20 October 2021
Updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan

- Actions to be implemented by 2030 by the latest
- General information + video : <https://helcom.fi/baltic-sea-action-plan/>

2021 BSAP / general information



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 economic and social activities

Goal

 Baltic Sea **ecosystem** is healthy and resilient

Goals

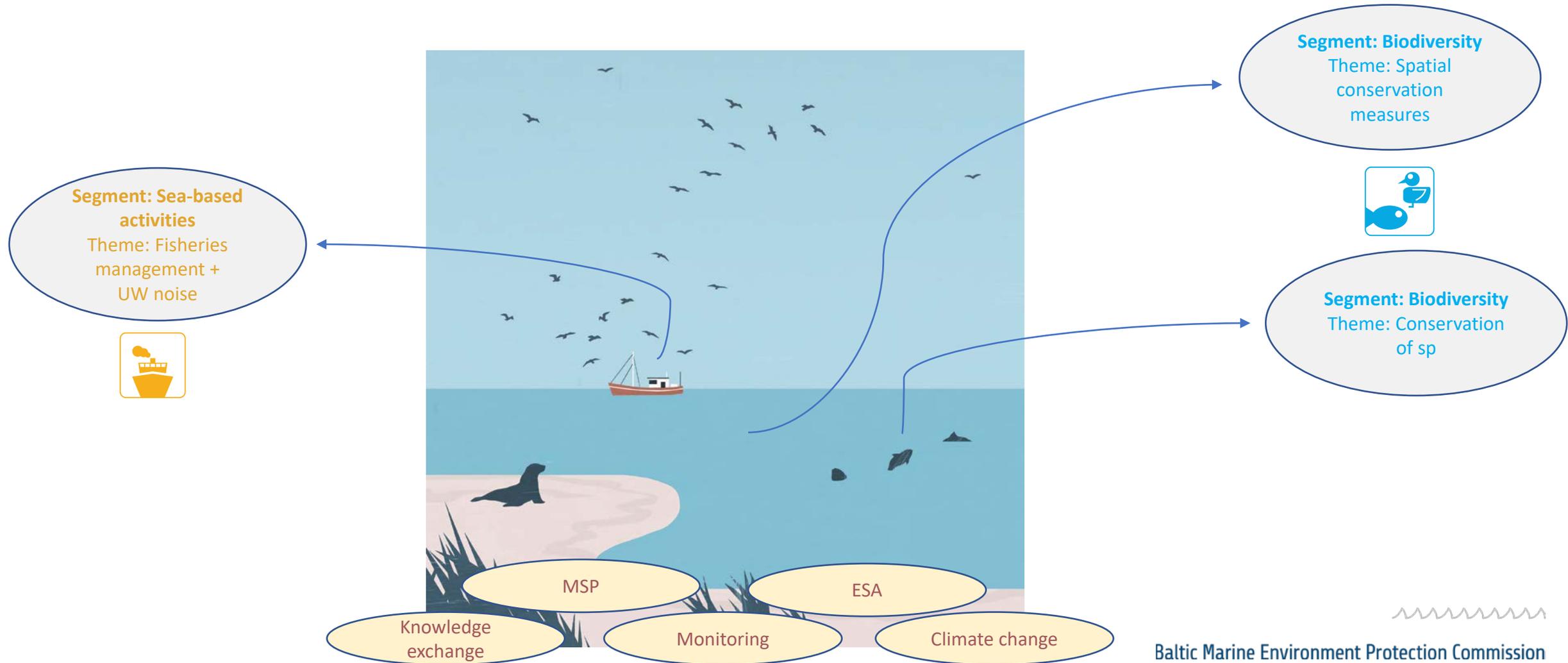
-  Baltic Sea unaffected by **hazardous substances and litter**
-  Environmentally sustainable **sea-based activities**
-  Baltic Sea unaffected by **eutrophication**

Horizontal topics

Climate change; monitoring; maritime spatial planning; economic and social analysis; financing; hot spots; knowledge exchange and awareness raising

199 actions in total!

2021 BSAP and harbour porpoise





Biodiversity



Biodiversity goal

“Baltic Sea ecosystem is healthy and resilient”



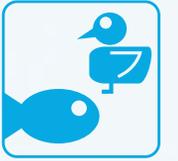
Ecological objectives

- Viable populations of all native species
- Natural distribution, occurrence and quality of habitats and associated communities
- Functional, healthy and resilient food webs



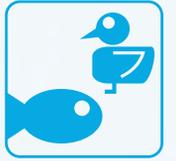
Management objectives

- Effectively managed and ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas
- Minimize disturbance of species, their habitats and migration routes from human activities
- Human induced mortality, including hunting, fishing, and incidental bycatch, does not threaten the viability of marine life
- Effective and coordinated conservation plans and measures for threatened species, habitats, biotopes, and biotope complexes
- Reduce or prevent human pressures that lead to imbalance in the foodweb



- 35 Actions
- Themes:
 - Spatial conservation measures
 - Spatial conservation management
 - Coherence of the marine protected area (MPA) network
 - **Conservation of species**
 - Conservation of waterbirds
 - Conservation of fish
 - Conservation of seals
 - Red listed species
 - Conservation of habitats and biotopes
 - Red listed habitats and biotopes
 - Enabling ecosystem-based management
 - Indicators





2021 BSAP / Actions directly related to HP

- Segment: Biodiversity



Theme: Conservation of species

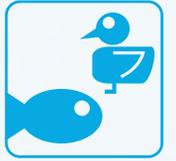
B8

By 2022 at the latest, specify knowledge gaps on all threats to the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise population, and by 2023 for the western Baltic population, including by-catch and areas of high by-catch risk, underwater noise, contaminants and prey depletion. Knowledge gaps related to areas of high by-catch risk are to be addressed and by 2028 at the latest additional areas of high by-catch risk for both Baltic Sea populations are to be determined. To strengthen the Baltic harbour porpoise population, by 2025 identify possible mitigation measures for threats other than by-catch and implement such measures as they become available.

Cross-reference to actions in other segments

S43 S44 S45 S46 S47 S48

→ cf. Slides 12 + 13



2021 BSAP / Actions directly related to HP

- Segment: Biodiversity

Topic: Red listed species

B22

Update the HELCOM Red List Assessments by 2024, including identifying the main individual and cumulative pressures and underlying human activities affecting the red listed species.

B23

By 2025 develop, and by 2027 implement, and enforce compliance with ecologically relevant conservation plans or other relevant programmes or measures, limiting direct and indirect pressures stemming from human activities for threatened and declining species. These will include joint or regionally agreed conservation measures for migrating species.

B24

Develop tools for and regularly assess the effectiveness of other conservation measures for species besides marine protected areas (MPAs), with the first assessment to be done by 2025, as well as assess the effect on species through risk and status assessments by 2029.



Sea-based activities



Sea-based activities goal

“Environmentally sustainable sea-based activities”



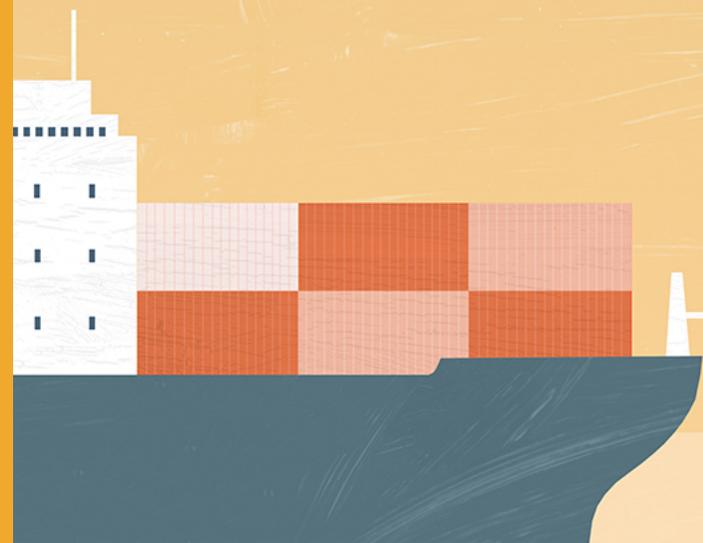
Ecological objectives

- No or minimal disturbance to biodiversity and the ecosystem
- Activities affecting seabed habitats do not threaten the viability of species' populations and communities
- No or minimal harm to marine life from man-made noise



Management objectives

- Minimize loss and disturbance to seabed habitats
- Minimize noise to levels that do not adversely affect marine life
- No introductions of non-indigenous species
- Minimize the input of nutrients, hazardous substances and litter from sea-based activities
- Enforce international regulations – no illegal discharges
- Safe maritime traffic without accidental pollution
- Effective emergency and response capabilities
- Minimize harmful air emissions
- Zero discharges from offshore platforms
- Ensure sustainable use of the marine resources





- 67 Actions
- Themes:
 - Maritime activities
 - Discharges from offshore platforms
 - Maritime safety
 - Non-indigenous species
 - Recreational boating
 - Pollution from ships
 - Response
 - **Fisheries management**
 - By-catch
 - Fish stock management
 - **Underwater noise**
 - Seabed loss and disturbance





2021 BSAP / Actions directly related to HP

- Segment: "Sea-based activities"

Theme: Fisheries Management

Topic: By-catch

- S43: Reduce negative impacts of fishing activities / fisheries management / 0 by-catch
- S44: Mitigation measure in Baltic proper to significantly reduce by-catch / 2022
- S45: Operational conservation measures for Belt Sea population / 2024
- S46: Effective mitigation measures to minimize by-catch in the Baltic Sea / cooperation with Baltic Sea Fisheries Forum (BALTFISH) + evaluation + adjustment of measures by 2025
- S47: Continuous test of new technical and operational by-catch mitigation measures / evaluation every 5 years from 2023
- S48: Develop and implement effective data collection on incidentally by-catch in line with ICES



2021 BSAP / Actions directly related to HP

- Segment: "Sea-based activities"

Theme: Underwater noise

- S57: Addressing adverse effects of underwater noise on marine species
- S59: Reduce the impact of impulsive underwater noise on marine biodiversity
- S61: Develop and implement threshold values and assessment methods for adverse effects of impulsive and ambient noise for marine life, in coop. with OSPAR, the EU and relevant expert groups, by 2023 for marine mammals (2026 for other relevant sp groups).





THIRD HELCOM
HOLISTIC ASSESSMENT
OF THE BALTIC SEA
2016-2021

H O L A S 3



Eutrophication



Biodiversity



**Hazardous
substances**



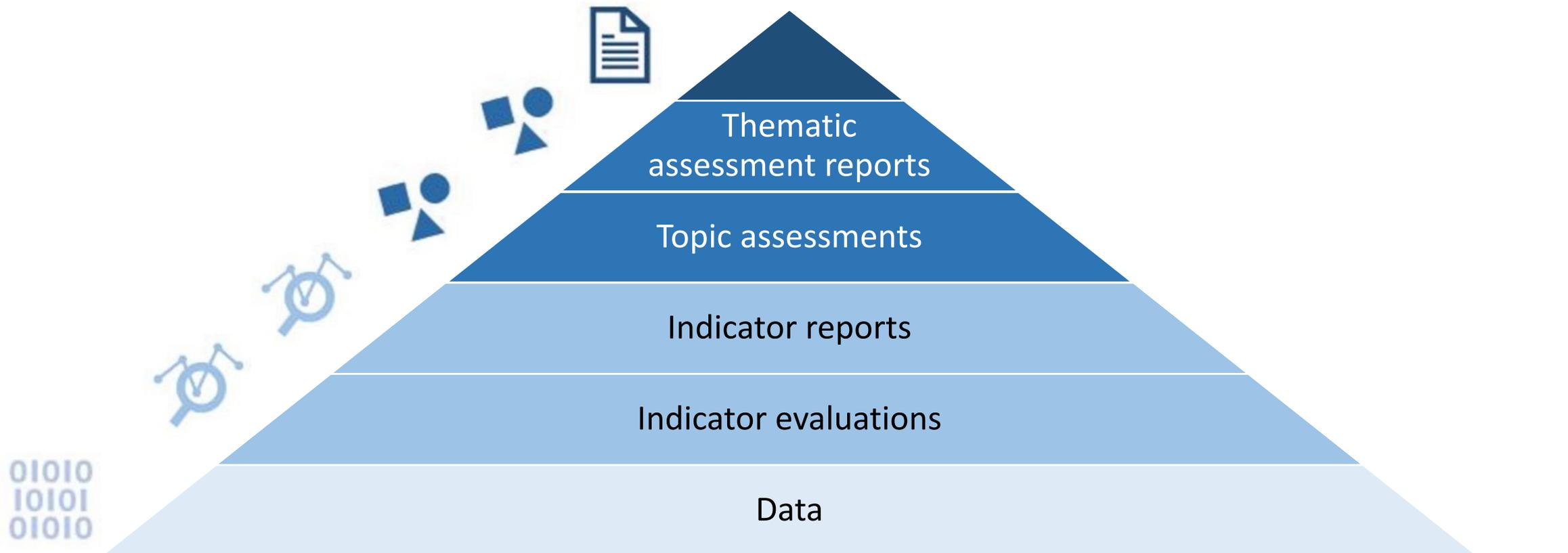
**Economic and
social analyses**



**Spatial pressures
and impacts**



HOLAS 3: flow and process



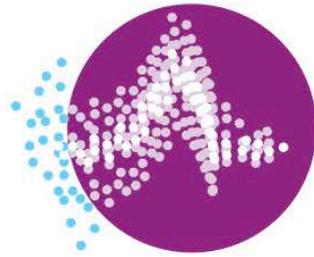
HOLAS 3 : Thematic assessments



Eutrophication



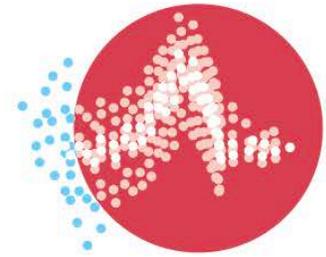
Biodiversity



**Hazardous
substances**



**Economic and
social analyses**

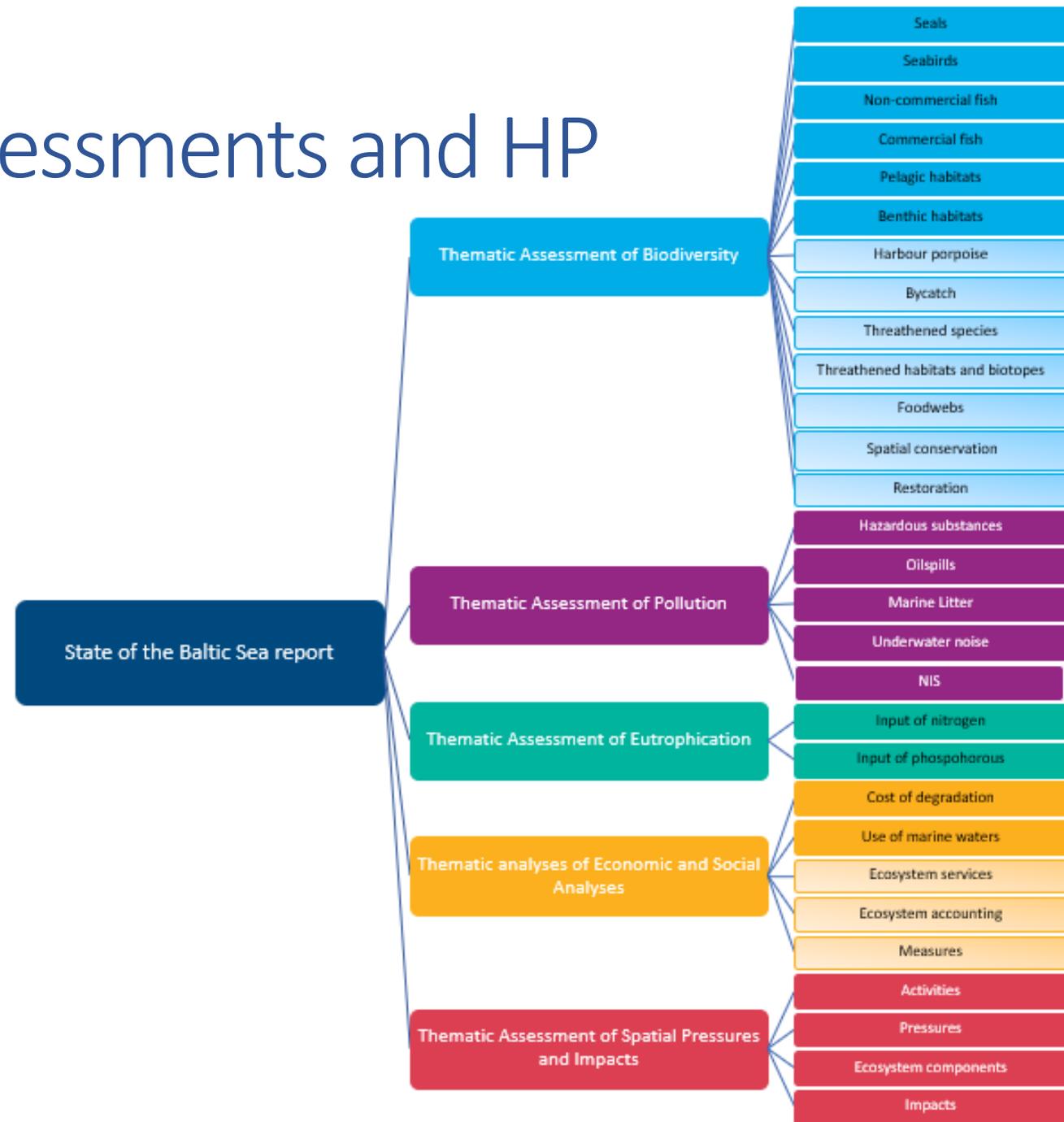


**Spatial pressures
and impacts**



HOLAS 3 : Thematic assessments and HP

- Focusing on presenting methods and results in detail (focusing on the **WHAT** and the **HOW**).
- Ongoing work on indicators for HP (abundance, distribution, by-catch)



HOLAS 3 : support from HELCOM BLUES



- Supporting HOLAS 3 on **biodiversity, litter, underwater noise** and **effective regional measures** for the Baltic Sea Area
- On harbour porpoise (work to be proposed to STATE & CONSERVATION 16-2022):
 - Belt Sea pop.: **harmonization** between HELCOM and OSPAR for assessment of **trends in abundance**
 - Baltic Sea proper pop.: **expert-based qualitative assessments of abundance** and distribution
 - Inclusion into the integrated assessment of biodiversity – BEAT tool
 - Assessment of noise sensitive species
 - + Many other topics (Data accessibility, effectiveness of measures, marine litter, etc.)



HOLAS 3 : support from HELCOM BLUES



- Also work on bycatch with additional support from Sweden (Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management + Swedish Museum of National History) **on porpoise work**
→ Targeting an improved indicator-based evaluation for HOLAS 3 (by-catch)
- **Upcoming:** proposals to STATE & CONSERVATION 16-2022
 - Threshold value for bycatch in the Baltic Proper population (Red Listed)
 - Threshold value for the Belt Sea population (“modified potential biological removal” or equivalent approach in progress)
 - Risk mapping exploring crossover of population distribution and fishing effort, building on earlier work in the HELCOM ACTION project.



Other work related to HP / EG MAMA

- **Passive acoustic monitoring** data → HELCOM Biodiversity database (<https://maps.helcom.fi/website/biodiversity/>)
- Improvements of the **Guidelines for reporting records** of harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea for the **HELCOM/ASCOBANS** harbour porpoise database (<https://maps.helcom.fi/website/biodiversity/>)
- Discussions on **accounting harbour porpoise in MSP** (offshore wind farms / MPAs): further discussion on the ASCOBANS AC26 decision on establishing an intersessional working group to develop guidelines for **cetacean-friendly MSP** and draft resolution for the Meeting of Parties (MOP10).





Thank you!
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