What should be done to heal the Baltic Sea?

Mr. Mikhail Durkin, HELCOM Professional Secretary

"Towards a cleaner and healthier Baltic Sea"
Public hearing of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,

21 June 2011, the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

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- What's in the Baltic Sea for us?
- HELCOM in a nutshell
- Joint strategy to reach good environmental status of the Baltic Sea
- Ecosystem health – baseline for action
- National implementation
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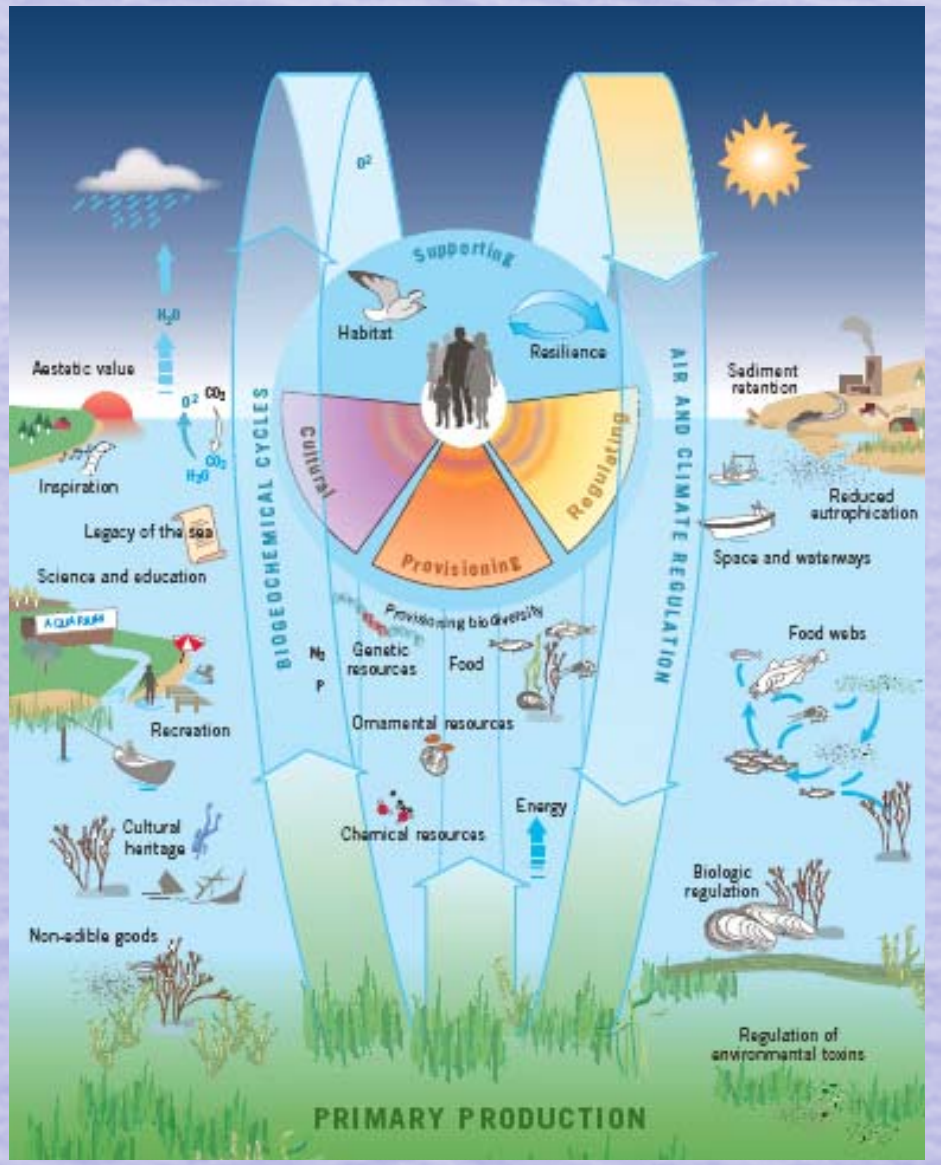
What's in the Baltic Sea for us?

- Area: 415,000 km²
- 9 Coastal States
- Catchment area:
  - 4 times sea itself
  - 14 countries
  - 85 million people
- Natural specifics:
  - low temperature
  - low water exchange rate
  - brackish water
  - sensitive to human pressures

<u>Baltic Sea value</u>:

>5 Billion Euro/year ?



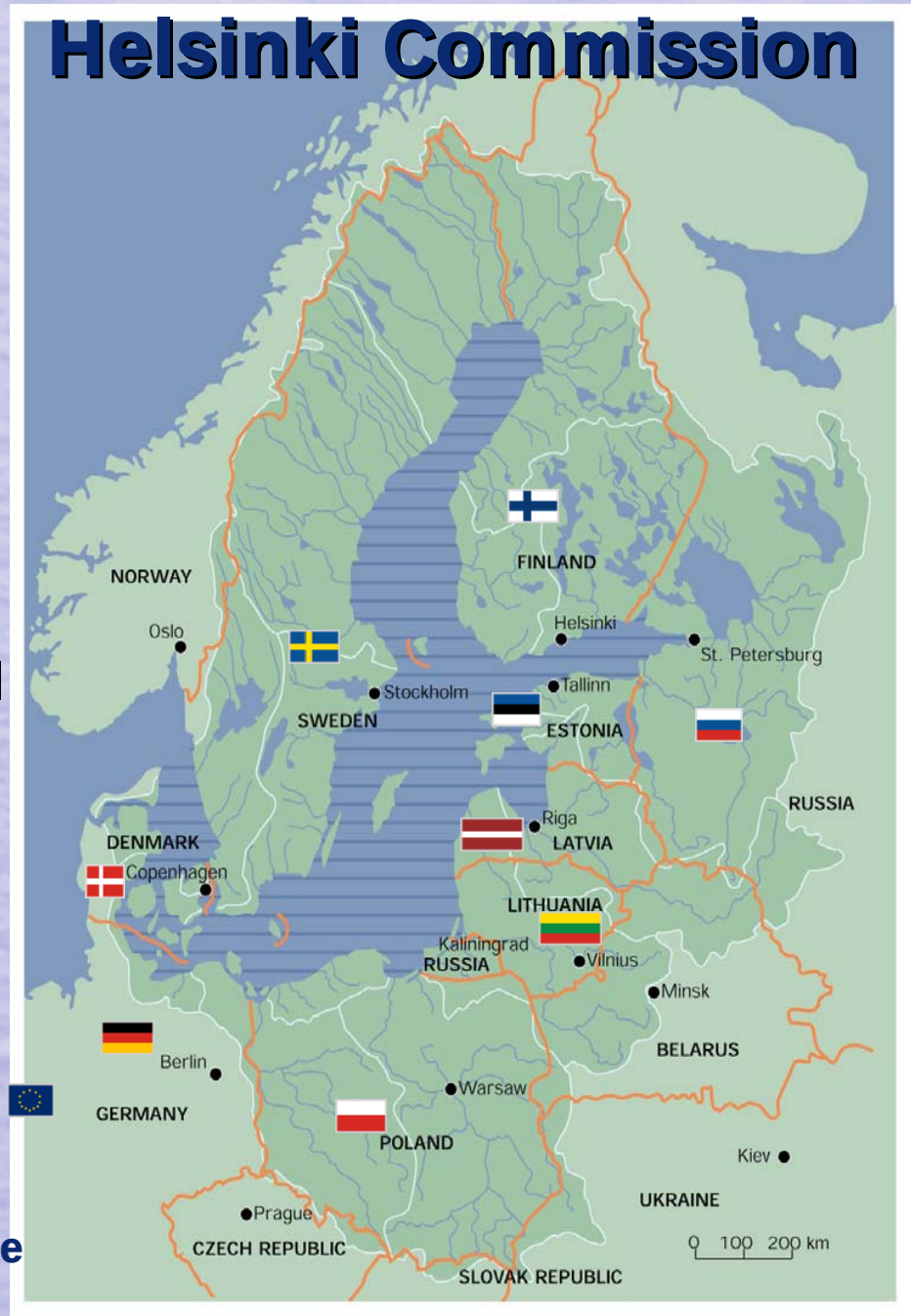
Source: What's in the Sea for me? Swedish EPA, 2009

The poor state of the Baltic Sea

- **Eutrophication:**
  - decreases water quality, enhances toxic blooms, changes underwater habitats, and has impacts on fisheries
- **High levels of toxins:**
  - Toxins accumulate in food web resulting in marine mammals and fish suffer from reproductive and immunological disorders. Some Baltic fish are unsafe for human consumption
- **Intentional and accidental oil spills:**
  - polluting beaches, killing marine birds and mammals

HELCOM

- **Intergovernmental organisation**
  - governing body of Helsinki Convention (1992)
- **Watershed approach**
  - 9 coastal states + EU
  - UA, BY, SK, CZ, NO
- **Regional environmental policy-maker**
  - pollution prevention,
  - nature conservation,
  - safety of navigation
  - ecosystem approach
- **Voluntary commitment and legal obligation**
  - EU exclusive competence in fisheries and agriculture
  - MSFD coordination



HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

EUTROPHICATION

- Nutrients on natural levels
- Natural levels of oxygen and algal blooms
- Natural distribution of fauna and flora

BIODIVERSITY

- Viable populations of species
- Natural marine and coastal landscapes
- Thriving and balanced communities

MARITIME TRAFFIC

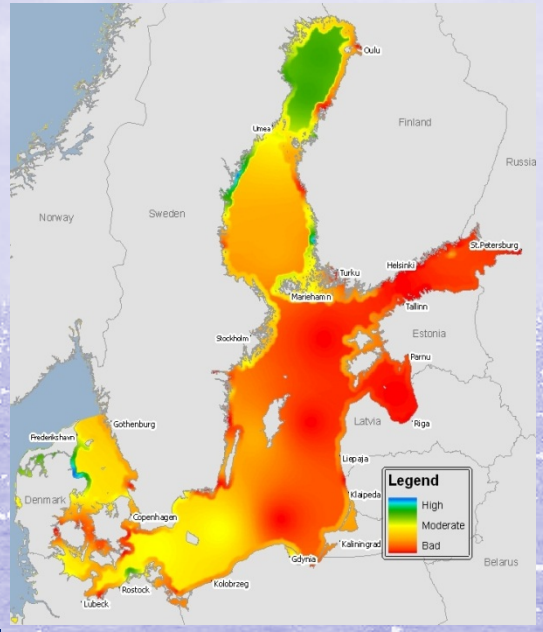
- No alien species
- Minimum sewage and air pollution
- No illegal or accidental discharges

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

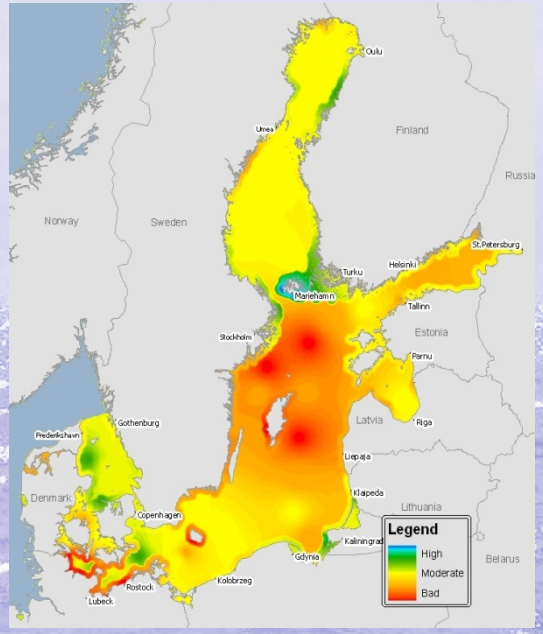
- Hazardous substances on natural levels
- Healthy wildlife
- All fish healthy to eat

HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment of the Ecosystem Health of the Baltic Sea 2003-2007

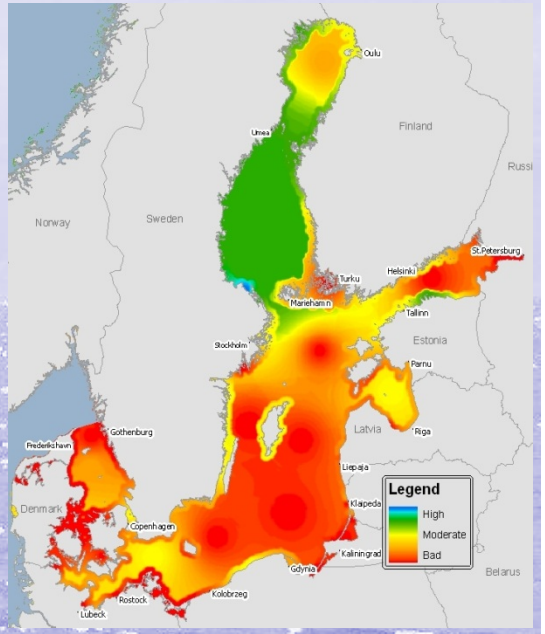
Eutrophication - HEAT



Hazardous substances - CHASE

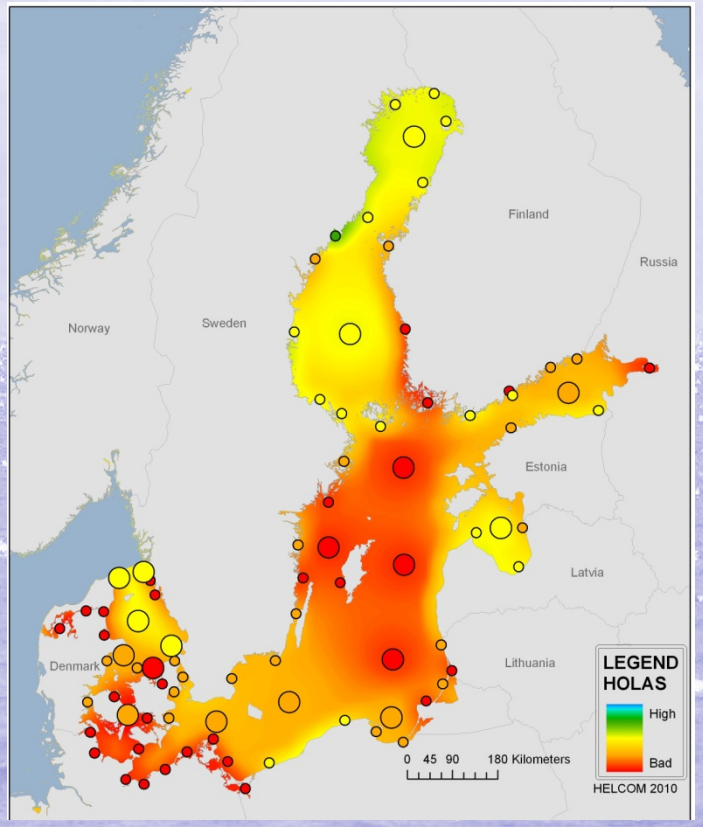


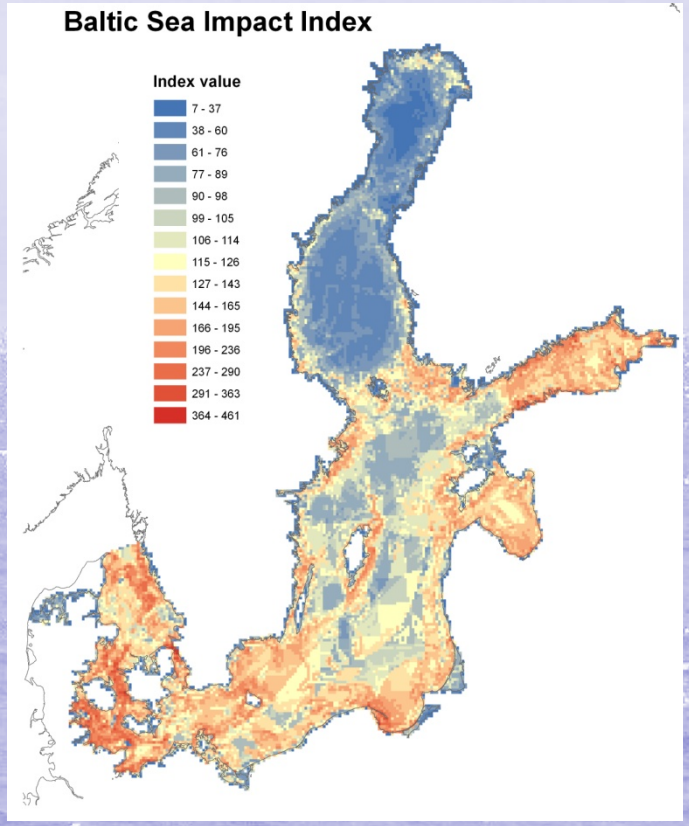
Biodiversity - BEAT



- **An overview of the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea in 2003-2007, including status, pressures and economic analysis**
- **A baseline for assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the measures of the HELCOM BSAP**

Ecosystem health status of the entire sea is impaired and anthropogenic pressures impact all sub-basins

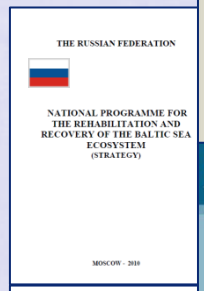


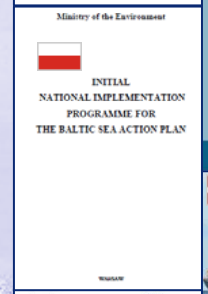


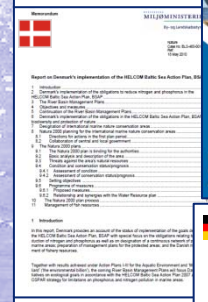
Economic analysis concluded that actions to improve the state are costly but there is a great risk that non-action will result in even higher costs.

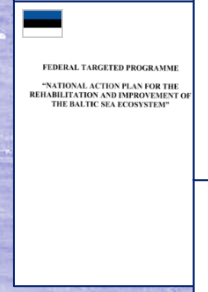
BSAP National Implementation

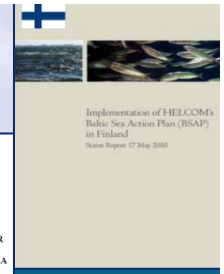
- **2010 Moscow, Ministerial Meeting**
  - 9 NIPs for Eutrophication and Hazardous Substances Segments
  - Overall status of implementation of the HELCOM BSAP
- **2011 High-level segment, HELCOM**
  - Outlook for implementation: good examples, need for further action
- **2013 Denmark, Ministerial Meeting**
  - to assess progress in reaching the targets and efficiency of actions
  - to devise additional actions, if needed

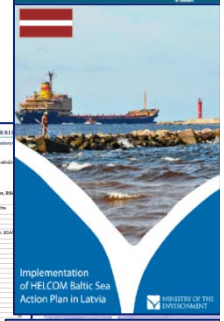


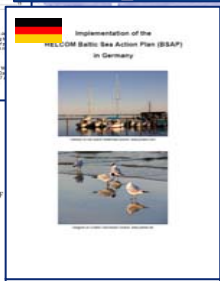


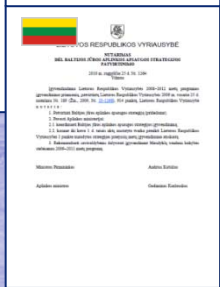












Examples of implementation

- Major investments into waste water treatment
  - St.Petersburg, Riga, Szczecin, Kaunas
  - Exchange of experiences - PURE Project (EU)
- Phase-out of P-containing detergents
  - Sweden, Latvia, (Germany, Finland)
  - Proposed EU legislation
- Special Area for sewage under MARPOL
  - Port reception facilities in major passenger ports to be place by 2013 (2015 latest)
- Better knowledge on occurrence and sources of hazardous substances
  - Screening of sources and pathways – COHIBA Project (EU)
- List of priority salmon and sea trout rivers
  - Proposals for habitat restoration – SALAR (EU)
- Assessment of sub-regional risks of accidents involving oil and harmful substance
  - BRISK Project (EU)
- Assessment of risks of hazardous substances and nutrients leaching from Russia
  - BaltHazar Project (EU Parliament Pilot Project Facility)

BSAP Implementation: Eutrophication

Achievements and promising areas	Need of further actions
• Large-scale investments in major WWTPs (>2000 PE)	• More projects for WWTPs < 2000 PE
• Legal and voluntary regulation of P-free detergents	• Public awareness • EU legislation
• Tax-reductions for sewerage in scattered areas	• Information exchange on available options
• Agro-environmental schemes	• Tailor-made solutions
• Buffer zones and restoration of wetlands	• Identification of nutrient risk areas
• Priority measures to reduce transboundary pollution	• Broader engagement in multi- and bilateral work
• Special Area for sewage in the Baltic Sea	• Reception facilities to be provided

BSAP Implementation: Hazardous

Achievements and promising areas	Need of further actions
• Most of BSAP substances are regulated at EU and global scale	• Biological effects • Threshold values • Emerging substances
• Voluntary agreements with industries on substitution	• Sharing knowledge • Stakeholder involvement
• Several national chemical products' registers available	• Compilation of region-wide use and discharge
• Hull-washing for small boats to minimise impact of anti-fouling paints	• Development of alternative AFSExchange of experience
• Rehabilitation of old landfills and contaminated lands	• Inventory of contaminated areas
• Assessment of cost-efficient measures	• Development of recovery options

BSAP Implementation: Biodiversity

Achievements and promising areas	Need of further actions
• >10% of Baltic marine areas is designated as MPAs	• Management measures, including for fisheries
• Progress in habitat and seascape mapping	• Coordination of activities
• Restoration of natural habitats to protect migratory and threatened species	• Involvement of sport fishermen and water authorities
• Development of Baltic-wide principles of broad-scale Maritime Spatial Planning	• Testing at sub-regional basis • Stakeholders involvement
• Environmental measures within Common Fisheries Policy (and its revision)	• Baltic eel population restoration measures

BSAP Implementation: Maritime

Achievements and promising areas	Need of further actions
• Well-regulated sector within international frameworks	• Strengthen regional inputs
• Proposal for Nitrogen Emission Control Area	• Stakeholder dialogue
• Joint implementation of Ballast Water Management	• Awareness raising
• Joint enforcement of illegal discharges and non-compliant ships	• Strengthen surveillance capacities • Information campaigns
• Economic incentives for ship-generated wastes	• “Fishing for litter”
• Joint response capacities and preparedness, including sub-regional cooperation and shoreline response	• Coordinated places of refuge • Response to chemical accidents

Conclusions - Joint actions needed

- Tailor-made solutions for the Baltic – regional approach
- Political commitment
- Broader stakeholder dialogue
- Earmarked financing
- Transboundary pollution to be addressed

Thank you!

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National Implementation Programmes are available at:
http://www.helcom.fi/BSAP/Implementation/en_GB/Implementation/

Sharing experience in sewage treatment

- Additional costs of advanced requirements are small
- Awareness raising on environmental objectives and gains from additional treatment measures
- Advanced nutrient-removal is cheaper with upgraded basic technology
- Promoting environmental excellence and creating additional competitive advantages
- HELCOM “List of Green Spots” of environmental improvements vs “Hot Spots” of biggest polluters

Port reception facilities for ship-generated sewage

- Legal framework in place
- Need of reception capacities
- HELCOM priority passenger ports (Tallinn, Rostock, Copenhagen, Riga and Gdynia) should be addressed first – 95% of cruise sewage
- Variety of tailor-made solutions – direct discharge, tank barges, road tankers
- Fair play of the waste burden between ports
- Harmonized application of the “no-special-fee”
- Efficient cost sharing between ports and cities
- Possible contribution to the new “List of Green Spots”.