

The HELCOM Network of Baltic Sea Protected Areas (Pearls of the Baltic Sea Region)

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HELCOM Stakeholder Conference, 3 March 2010, Helsinki

Ecological coherence and management of the network of the Baltic Sea marine protected areas

Outline:

1. Historical Review
2. Joint Ministerial Meeting in Bremen, June 2003
3. Status of the BSPA Network as of February 2010
4. Status of Management and Protection as of July 2009
5. Conclusions
6. Recommendations

Historical Review

HELCOM Recommendation 15/5 on the establishment of a system of Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA) 1994

A first suite of 62 preliminary BSPAs was agreed upon.

RECOMMENDS

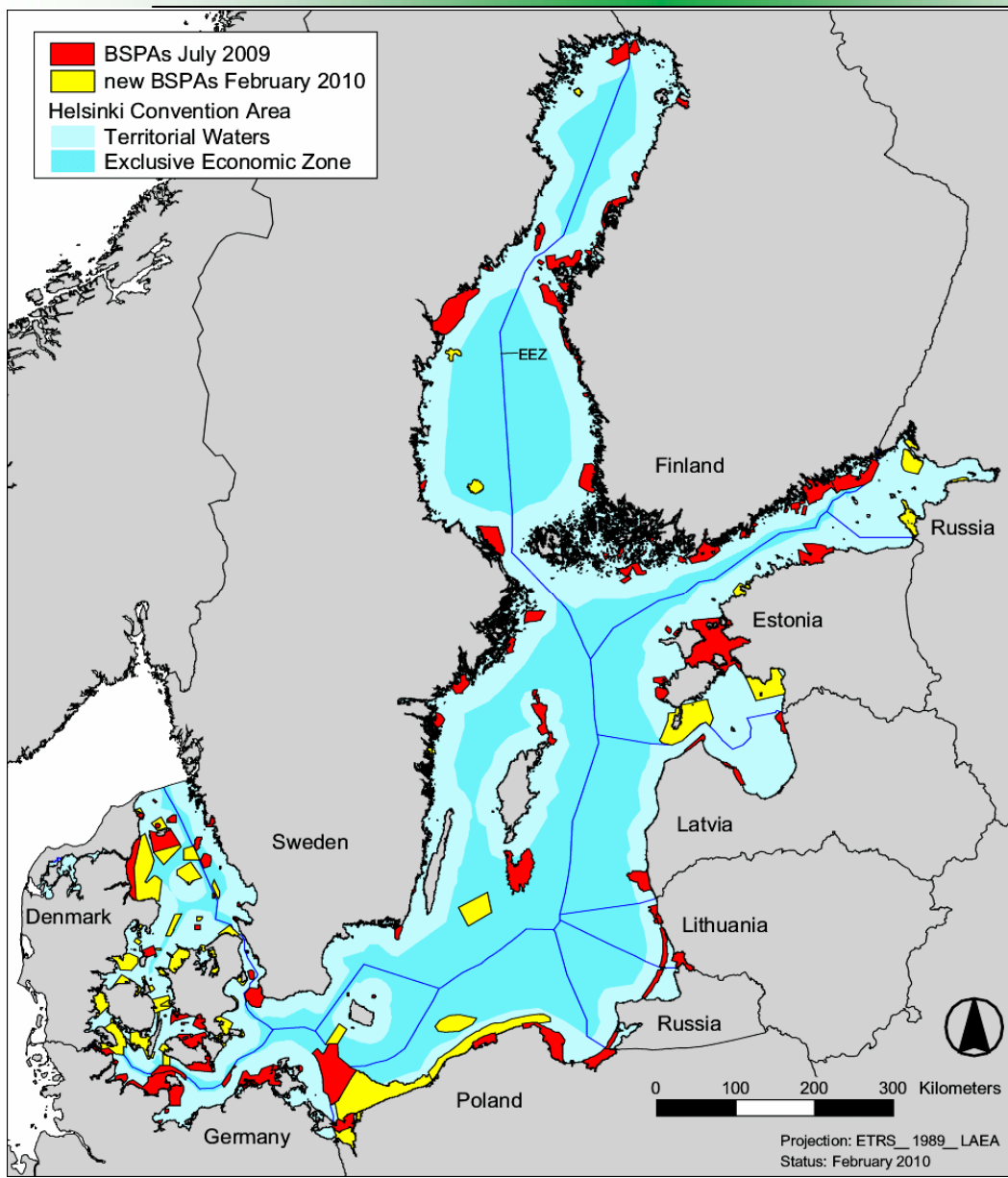
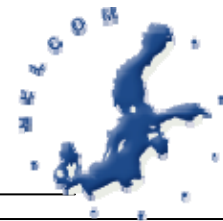
that this system of BSPA's be gradually developed ... Special attention shall be paid to including additional coastal terrestrial areas and to including marine areas outside the territorial waters...

First OSPAR/HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2003

Joint work programme on MPAs includes:

1. Achieve by 2010 an ecologically coherent Network of well managed MPAs. OSPAR and HELCOM agreed on the following criteria to be assessed: adequacy, representativity, replication, and connectivity
2. Develop guidance for the management of MPAs
3. Collaborate with other international forums and marine conventions
4. Ensure participation of relevant stakeholders

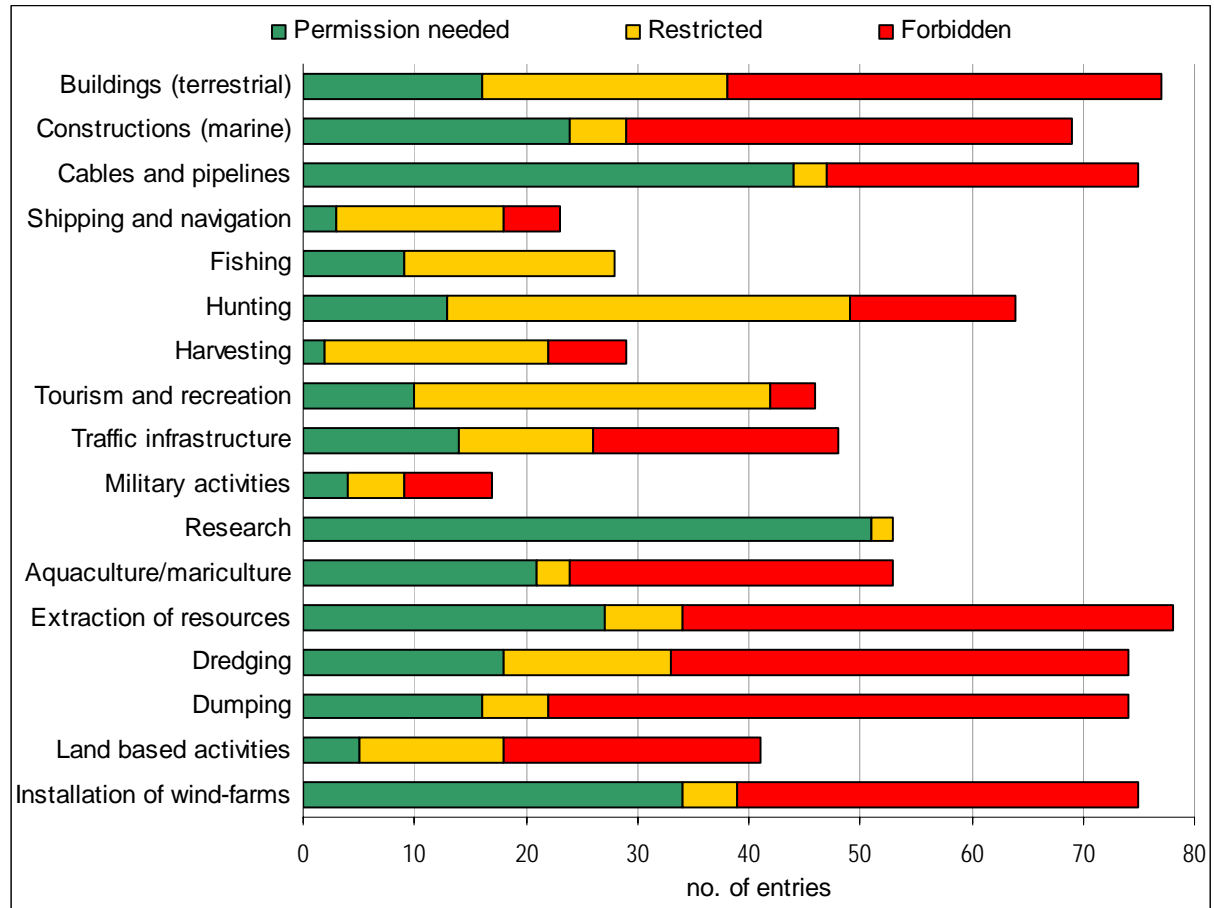
Status of BSPA Network as of Feb. 2010



Date	No. of BSPAs	Marine Area covered by BSPAs
Feb. 2010	159	10,4
Dec. 2009	104	7,0
2008	89	5,5
2004	78	3,9



Status of Management and Protection as of July 2009



Number of times an activity was chosen from the predefined list of regulated activities, combined for nearshore and offshore BSPAs.

Status of Management and Protection as of July 2009

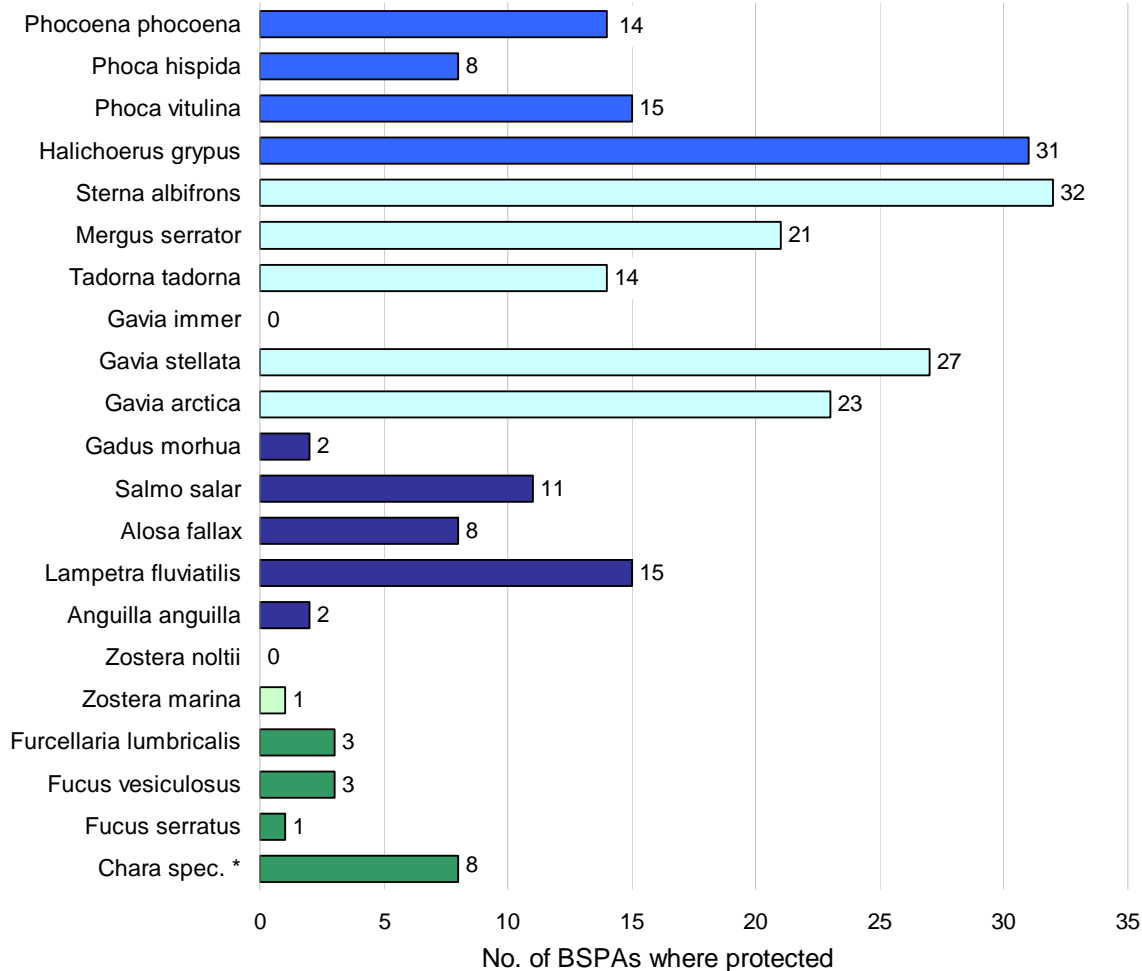


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HELCOM lists of threatened and/or declining species and biotopes/habitats in the Baltic Sea area



Helsinki Commission
Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission



* C. canescens (1), C. horrida (1), C. tomentosa (1), C. braunii (0), C. baltica (3), C. aspera (1), C. connivens (1)



Conclusions



The number of BSPAs has meanwhile increased rapidly to 159, and the authors note with great satisfaction that HELCOM met the 10% target for MPAs as agreed by the COP7 of the CBD for regional seas.

Therefore, in the year of biodiversity, the Baltic Sea is according to our knowledge the first regional sea that has reached this target.

However, despite the designation of many new BSPAs an ecologically coherent network could not be reached so far, because only few offshore sites were designated as BSPAs, and a number of important species, habitats and marine landscapes are still not receiving sufficient spatial protection.

Further, many designated BSPAs continue to lack a proper management.



Recommendations to Contracting States and HELCOM

Designate additional BSPAs (including many new offshore sites) at latest by the end of 2010 as agreed earlier.

Aiming to protect at least 10% of the Baltic Sea sub-basins through BSPAs as well.

Develop and implement management plans or – where more appropriate, measures and routines - for all BSPAs by 2012 with the explicit invitation to stakeholders and Competent Authorities to cooperate, particularly for fisheries related issues and shipping.

Make sure that in particular all threatened and/or declining species and habitats are sufficiently represented and protected by BSPAs.

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