Memorandum

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Report on Denmark's implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, BSAP

1 Introduction

In this report, Denmark provides an account of the status of implementation of the goals defined in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, BSAP with special focus on the obligations relating to the reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus as well as on designation of a continuous network of protected marine areas; preparation of management plans for the protected areas; and the Danish management of fishery resources.

Together with results achieved under Action Plans I-III for the Aquatic Environment and 'Miljømilliard' ('the environmental billion'), the coming River Basin Management Plans will focus Danish initiatives on ecological goals in accordance with the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan 2007 and the OSPAR strategy for limitations on phosphorus and nitrogen pollution in marine areas.

2 Denmark's implementation of the obligations to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, BSAP

In the autumn of 2009, Denmark informed the HELCOM countries bordering the Baltic Sea of its government's Green Growth agreement. One of the 'raisons d'etre' of the forthcoming River Basin Management Plans is to implement this agreement. As part of a consultation round on the plans, supplementary information will be prepared that will explain how Denmark will achieve good ecological conditions in its aquatic environments.

The improvement of environmental conditions in watercourses, lakes, and coastal waters which the River Basin Management Plans seek to achieve will help realise the goals set out in various international agreements, including those intended to prevent and eliminate pollution of marine environments.

Reduction targets in the BSAP and Green Growth agreement
The BSAP contains several overall N and P reduction targets. Each of the Baltic Sea countries is also allocated specific targets. Denmark has been given a provisional total target for reducing discharge to the HELCOM areas in the territorial waters up to the Skagen-Marsstrand boundary by 17,210 tonnes N and 16 tonnes P before 2021. It is further stipulated that the total discharge from all countries to the Kattegat and Bælthavet (the Danish straits) must be reduced by 20,000 and 15,000 tonnes N respectively, before 2021. The BSAP does not stipulate specific reduction targets for air-borne deposits.

The Green Growth agreement, on which the new River Basin Management Plans are based, aims to reduce nitrogen inputs by 19,000 tons and will thus effect a reduction of the water-borne load to the inner territorial waters (corresponding to the HELCOM region) of approx. 18,000[1] tonnes N.

With regard to phosphorus, the Green Growth agreement lists initiatives to reduce discharges to the aquatic environment by 210 tonnes P, which is first and foremost expected to relate to lakes. However, the majorities of measures envisaged to achieve a reduction in P inputs are general in character and can also be expected to result in a reduction of P discharge to marine aquatic areas. The aim is for actions within the coming River Basin Management Plans to be implemented in 2012 and to have had an impact by 2015.

Status
The preliminary BSAP reduction targets are based on the average discharge from land between 1997 and 2003. It has been agreed that reduction targets will be updated using more recent discharge figures.

The National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) has observed a drop in Denmark's total discharge of both N and P on average during 1997-2003 and 2000-2006. A reduction of 4,773 tonnes has been registered for nitrogen, while the reduction in discharge of phosphorus is 149 tonnes.

The updated reduction allocations determined by the average discharge during 2000-2006 can thus be set at 12,437 tonnes N based on the difference between the provisional BSAP reduction targets of 17,210 tonnes N and the drop in discharge of 4,773 tonnes N. The Green Growth agreement

[1] The Green Growth agreement targets approx. 19,000 tonnes N for all of Denmark, plus initiatives from wastewater treatment plants such that the total for the inner territorial waters comprises 18,000 tonnes N.

thus aims for a reduction in N load from land that is approx. 5,500 tonnes greater than that set by the BSAP. Already today the target for P reductions has been exceeded.

Thus the initiatives in the River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the Water Framework Directive enable Denmark to meet the remainder of the BSAP nutrients reduction allocations.

3 The River Basin Management Plans

Denmark is in the process of finalising the River Basin Management Plans which EU countries must draw up in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive. At the present time, draft versions of the River Basin Management Plans have been sent out to public authorities for an eight week consultation round. Later this year, the consultations will be followed up by a six-month public hearing that must be conducted before the plans can be finally passed.

A water resource plan proposal has been drawn up for each of Denmark's 23 main river Basin s. The main river Basin s follow Denmark's natural water boundaries, and the proposed plans contain environmental targets for the individual bodies of water as well as proposals on how to meet the targets.

The national initiatives to achieve the targets in the first Water Resource plan period, and the measures for achieving them are laid down in the government agreements on Green Growth (2009) and Green Growth 2.0 (2010).

The targets are thus:
- *a 19,000 tonnes reduction in nitrogen discharge to fjords and coastal waters*
- *a 210 tonnes reduction phosphorus discharge to lakes*
- *improved animal and plant life in 7,300 km watercourses, and*
- *improved wastewater treatment from point sources and in open countryside.*

At the present time, measures have been defined to achieve a 9,000 tonnes reduction in nitrogen inputs to fjords and coastal waters. No later than 2011, a committee must submit a proposal explaining how to achieve the reduction of the remaining 10,000 tonnes of nitrogen.

Each draft Water Resource plan defines targets for the environmental condition of the lakes, watercourses, coastal waters and groundwater in that region. The programme of measures under the draft plan outlines the way in which improvements must be achieved.

The River Basin Management Plans cover the entire water cycle and all types of water bodies: lakes, watercourses, coastal waters, fjords and groundwater. The River Basin Management Plans have been designed to meet the needs of the individual water bodies. The plans have binding targets and a clear deadlines – the first period runs until 2015.
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In the plan proposals, the various measures are "apportioned". As far as possible, measures that optimally improve the environment with maximum cost-effectiveness will be applied. General measures, i.e., those that are applied throughout the country, will be used in addition to more targeted measures.

The State has chief responsibility for measures relating to agriculture. These are primarily general measures which will be implemented through new legislation on catch crops, buffer zones and other cultivation regulations (general measures).

Implementation of the Water Resource plan initiatives using targeted measures is primarily undertaken by the municipalities, which already administrate environmental legislation in several initiative areas. The municipalities have the expertise and carry responsibility for implementation in wetlands, watercourses, groundwater and wastewater. This will involve the implementation of new initiatives and the use of the Water Resource plan as the foundation and framework on which new environmental permits and environmental approvals are based.

The municipalities will be able to consider measures other than those defined in the River Basin Management Plans , on condition that such means are equally effective and that the municipality meets any additional costs.

In connection with this, the municipalities must draw up a municipal action plan in which they describe in detail the means of implementing the programme of measures under Water Resource plan within their geographic region.

If the municipal action plan does not fully satisfy the programme of measures , the State may raise objections to the plan. The River Basin Management Plans are binding for the authorities.

The initiatives will receive funding from the European Rural Development Programme, the Danish Miljømilliard II, and others.
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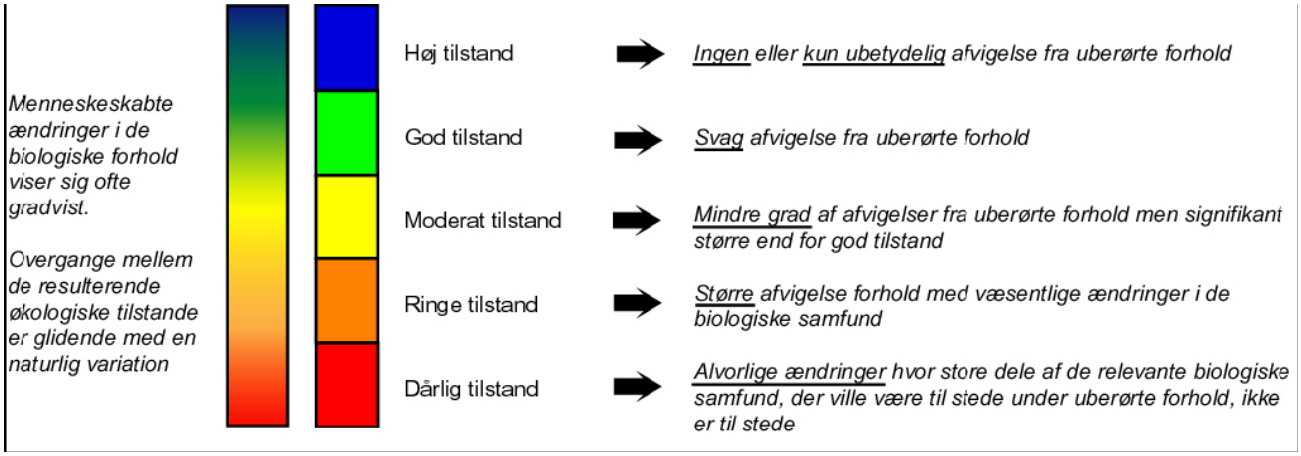
4 Objectives and measures

The River Basin Management Plans have been drawn up in compliance with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive. Consequently, the status of surface water is classified as high, good, moderate, poor, or bad. The status of surface water is a general status description that consists of both ecological and chemical status descriptions. If surface water is to be classified as good, both the ecological status and chemical status must be classified as good.



The River Basin Management Plans provide a number of tools (measures) for ensuring that the quality of our water meets EU standards.

As previously mentioned, measures have been defined for achieving a 9,000 tonne reduction in nitrogen inputs into fjords and coastal waters, whilst a committee will submit proposals no later than 2011 on how to achieve the reduction of the remaining 10,000 tonnes of nitrogen.

The main measures for achieving the 9,000 tonnes reduction in nitrogen from agriculture are:

- the establishment of 10,000 ha wetlands
- 10-metre spraying-, fertiliser- and cultivation-free buffer zones along watercourses and lakes (equivalent to 50,000 ha)
- neutralisation of the nitrogen effect due to urban development
- new regulations for soil cultivation in the autumn
- the requirement that catch crops cannot be replaced by less effective winter green fields (in total 140,000 ha)
- a ban on ploughing grass fields during certain periods

For sources other than agriculture, the most important measures for reducing nitrogen discharge are**:**

- improved treatment of wastewater discharge from scattered population areas
- a reduction in stormwater overflow from shared sewage systems
- improvements in older, smaller municipal sewage treatment plants
- measures directed at fish farms
- a reduction in industrial discharges.

Measures for achieving the environmental targets for lakes and watercourses are:

- a reduction in phosphorus discharge of 210 tonnes – primarily by setting up 3,000 ha phosphorus river valleys
- a reduction in management, or rehabilitation of watercourses, in order to improve plant and animal life
- the incorporation of waste water in the sewage system or improved treatment, thereby reducing the discharge of organic compounds that cause oxygen depletion in watercourses.

Measures relating to groundwater:

The Water plans identify areas where water extraction must be reduced so that water is secured for watercourses. This includes both water extraction for general water supply and water extraction for watering fields.
Reduction of water extraction will be implemented when water extraction licences come up for renewal.

5 Continuation of the River Basin Management Plans

January 2010 saw the start of the consultation rounds for the River Basin Management Plans. The process is divided into two stages:

Pre-consultation
Pre-consultation ran for eight weeks until 11 March 2010. During this time, the municipalities, regions and state authorities reviewed the plans from a technical viewpoint to ensure that all the figures and prerequisites are correct and based on the most recent data, particularly from the municipalities.

After the eight week consultation round, the Danish Agency for Spatial and Environmental Planning Environmental Centres will update the 23 River Basin Management Plans so that they incorporate the technical reports from the municipalities.

Public hearing
Once the River Basin Management Plans have been updated, they will be sent out for public hearing. This lasts for six months, during which everybody is welcome to contribute and participate. After the hearing and further adaptation of the plans based on the results of the hearing, the final plans will be passed by the Minister for the Environment.

Action plans
The municipalities must draw up proposals for action plans defining how they will achieve the targets set in the River Basin Management Plans no later than 6 months after the River Basin Management Plans have been finally passed. The action plans must be sent out for public consultation for at least eight weeks before they can be finally passed.

The municipalities must pass their action plans no later than 1 year after the River Basin Management Plans have been passed. Hereafter, the municipalities must implement the plans.

Cooperation
The major actions will be implemented in close and positive collaboration between the State and the municipalities. As mentioned previously the municipalities must take responsibility for the majority of tasks. An example of this cooperation is the agreement with KL (Local Government Denmark) signed by the Minister for the Environment prior to Christmas 2009 that stipulated that municipalities must assume responsibility for re-establishing wetlands.

6 Denmark's implementation of the obligations in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, BSAP, for biodiversity and protection of nature

A list of actions has been compiled in order to meet the goals of biodiversity and conservation of nature, and associated ecological objectives. These include:

- designation of marine Natura 2000 sites as Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA) no later than 2009, and designation of further BSPA no later than 2010, particularly in the exclusive economic zone, so that there is a continuous network of protected ecological areas, and
- to have drawn up management plans for BSPA areas by 2010.

In addition to this, the measures contained in the remaining sections of the Baltic Sea Action Plan on eutrophication, environmental pollutants and maritime activities must be fully implemented if the plan's goal of biodiversity and conservation of nature is to be met.

7 Designation of international marine nature conservation areas

Denmark has designated international marine nature conservation areas in order to comply with the provisions in the European Natura 2000 Directives and other international obligations, including the Baltic Sea Action Plan. In Denmark, the central legislation governing designation and management of international nature conservation areas is the Environmental Objectives Act[2] and the Habitat Order[3].

The international nature conservation areas include bird conservation areas, habitats, and Ramsar areas. Bird conservation areas (SPA areas[4]) and habitats (SCI areas[5]) are incorporated in the continuous, European ecological network called Natura 2000.

Internationally designated marine nature conservation areas coincide with some Danish Natura 2000 sites. In 2004, the Danish marine habitats that were designated at that time were included on the European Commission's SCI list (Sites of Community Importance). In the autumn of 2009, Denmark submitted a proposal to the European Commission for additional marine habitats.

In nominating additional marine habitats, Denmark[6] has designated new marine habitats and expanded existing marine habitats. Denmark has now designated almost 23% of the Danish Baltic Sea waters as Natura 2000 sites.

Eight completely new marine habitats have been designated in Danish territorial waters, of which four are completely new areas in the Baltic Sea. The four new areas in the Baltic Sea are Mejl Flak, Gilleleje Flak and Tragten; Fehmarn Belt; Adler Ground; and Rønne Banke. Of the existing habitats, 13 have been expanded to a greater or lesser extent. Twelve of these areas lie in the Baltic Sea.

The Danish Natura 2000 sites (habitat and bird conservation areas) are presented in Figure 1.

[2] Order on the Environmental Objectives Act, etc. for bodies of water and international nature conservation areas (Environmental Objectives Act).
[3] Order No. 408 of 1 May 2007 on designation and administration of international nature conservation areas and protection of certain species.
[4] SPA areas (Special Protection Areas)
[5] SCI areas (Sites of Community Importance).
[6] Order No. 63 of 11 January 2010 on amendment of the order on designation and administration of international nature conservation areas.

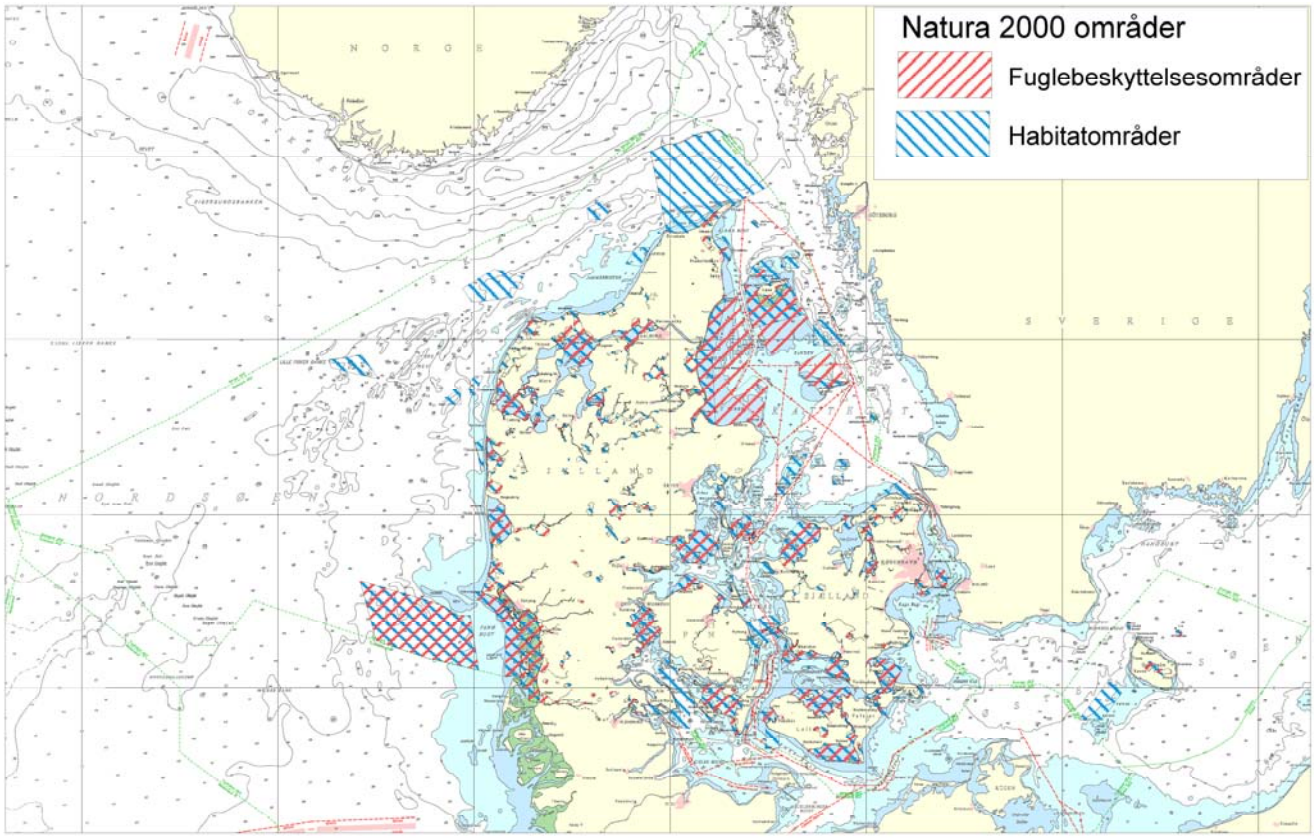


Figure 1: Danish Natura 2000 sites (habitat and bird conservation areas).

In accordance with the provisions of the Baltic Sea Action Plan on biodiversity and nature conservation, Denmark has designated the Danish marine Natura 2000 sites in the Baltic Sea as Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPAs). Hence, Denmark now considers that it has met its obligations under the section on biodiversity in the Baltic Sea Action Plan to designate protected areas.

8 Natura 2000 planning for the international marine nature conservation areas

In the same way as designation of international nature conservation areas, management of international marine nature conservation areas by Denmark has been undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the European Natura 2000 Directives. The Habitat Directive requirements for active endeavours to achieve favourable conservation status in the designated habitats are pursuant to the provisions of the Environment Objectives Act for compilation of management plans, the so-called Natura 2000 plans. Danish management of the nature conservation areas covers the relevant elements of the Baltic Sea Action Plan provisions for achieving the objectives of favourable conservation status and biodiversity in the Baltic Sea.

In June 2009, the Danish government signed the agreement on Green Growth. One of the main concerns of Green Growth is a Denmark 2020 Environment and Nature Plan, which also aims to implement the provisions of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. The outcomes of the Environment and Nature Plan include:

- a 19,000 tonnes reduction in nitrogen discharge between 2010 and 2015, the equivalent of one third of present levels
- a 210 tonnes reduction in phosphorus from 2010 to 2015
- a market-oriented system with tradable nitrogen quotas[7]
- a substantial reduction in the harmful effects of pesticides on human beings, animals and plants
- a reorganisation of pesticide tax to take environmental concerns into account
- improved countryside stewardship and management of approx. 145,000 ha private and public Natura 2000 sites
  75,000 ha hectares of new-designated nature areas by 2015.

Means of achieving the environment and nature targets in the Green Growth agreement include the coming River Basin Management Plans and Natura 2000 plans. The plans will meet the obligations pursuant to the European Water Framework Directive and the Natura 2000 Directives.

The Natura 2000 plans were initially drawn up for the Danish habitat and bird conservation areas that were included on the European Commission SCI list and SPA lists in 2004.

A management plan must be drawn up for each Natura 2000 area. Proposals have been drawn up for 246 Natura plans, of which approx. 70 cover the marine Natura 2000 sites that are situated in the Baltic Sea. Some of the Natura 2000 plans cover marine areas exclusively, while other Natura 2000 plans cover both land and marine areas. The Natura 2000 plans[8] are concrete, and set the framework for the focus in the coming years.

During the first plan period 2010-2015, management plans will not be drawn up for new-designated habitat areas. And in areas in which the habitat areas have been greatly expanded, plans will only be drawn up in the first plan period for the existing designation. Management plans for the new-designated areas and for the greatly expanded existing areas will be drawn up during the second plan period in 2015.

A basic analysis has been performed for each Natura 2000 site which describes the designation criteria, the status of the area's natural habitats and species, as well as the threats against them.

The basic analyses are the foundations on which the Natura 2000 plans are prepared, and if the authorities are to take decisions that affect individual areas, data from these analyses must be incorporated as part of the decision-making basis.

The Natura 2000 plans aim to secure favourable conservation status for the threatened species and habitats that exist in each area. Targets must therefore be set for each natural habitat and species.

Complying with the Habitat and Bird Conservation Directive requirements for "favourable conservation status" is a task that will span many years and necessitate extensive initiatives. It is therefore necessary to prioritise and direct the efforts for each plan period. The national Danish prioritisation of the initiatives during the first plan period focuses on securing the status of the natural environ-

[7] Analyses will be instigated that will supplement the exploratory work defined in Green Growth on a system with tradable nitrogen quotas, including examination of the advantages and disadvantages of a quota model compared to alternatives in order to determine the remaining initiative requirements and to select specific measures.
[8] The Natura 2000 plans are available on the Agency for Spatial and Environmental Planning website http://www.blst.dk/Vandognatur/

ment of designated natural habitats and the populations of designated species. The initiatives in the first plan period are defined as four proposals.

8.1 Directions for actions in the first plan period

The Natura 2000 plan must set out specific guidelines for actions in the first plan period for each conservation area, while taking into account the overall objective. Actions may extend past the plan period, but they must be implemented now.

Achieving the goal of "favourable conservation status" is a task that will span many years and necessitate extensive initiatives. It is therefore necessary to prioritise and direct the efforts for each plan period. The national prioritisation of actions during the first plan period focuses on securing the status of the natural environment of designated natural habitats and the populations of designated species. Due to differences in natural conditions, actions will be implemented differently in the various regions.

Direction 1: Securing the status of the natural environment of existing natural areas and species in conservation areas
According to the Directives, the natural habitats and species on which the designation is based must have a favourable conservation status. It is therefore an obligation to ensure that the natural environment has at least the same status as when the Directive entered into force. This often necessitates continuous operational efforts and a permanent initiative against nutrient pollution in existing nature areas in order to maintain or re-establish their status.

Direction 2: Securing small nature areas
Small nature areas are often in a bad natural state, partly because they are so small that the impact of surrounding areas is significant. An expansion of small nature areas within conservation areas and perhaps linking of areas via dispersion corridors and stepping stones may be necessary to maintain the natural environment in the long term.

Direction 3: Securing natural habitats and habitats that can be destroyed within the law
Natural habitats and habitats that are not protected against activities that could destroy them must be secured. This applies for example to natural habitats in forests, and reefs and carbonate mounds - 'bubbling reefs' in the seas. In addition, some of the species under the Directives will have unprotected habitats which it may be necessary to secure, such as relating to certain bird species.

Direction 4: Initiatives for threatened natural habitats and species
Natural habitats and species, whose nation-wide status is in danger of being considerably reduced during the first plan period, and where there is a danger that they will disappear from the Danish countryside in the long term, may require a habitat re-establishment initiative and/or dedicated management. Threatened natural habitats and species include raised bogs, common shore hermits and black terns.

8.2 Collaboration of central and local government

The Environmental Objectives Act stipulates the distribution or work so that central government has the overall responsibility for ensuring Denmark's international obligations, while local government assumes responsibility for the citizen-oriented tasks and most of the actual exercising of authority and enforcement.

In the marine area, guidelines for the initiatives affecting land-based activities and for which the municipalities have authority will be addressed to the municipalities, while actions under the jurisdiction of a sector ministry will be addressed to thereto.

The Natura 2000 plan sets out guidelines based on central prioritisations so that on the one hand central government ensures that Denmark's international obligations are met, and on the other respects the need for local government to assume responsibility and facilitate effective management.

The state plan is a binding framework for the planning and implementation of plans by local government and state authorities.

9 The Natura 2000 plans

The Danish Natura 2000 plans are developed in accordance with identical paradigms for all Natura 2000 areas. This means that the structure of the 246 Danish Natura 2000 plans, of which approx. 70 plans apply to sites that are partially or wholly marine and located in the Baltic Sea, is uniform.

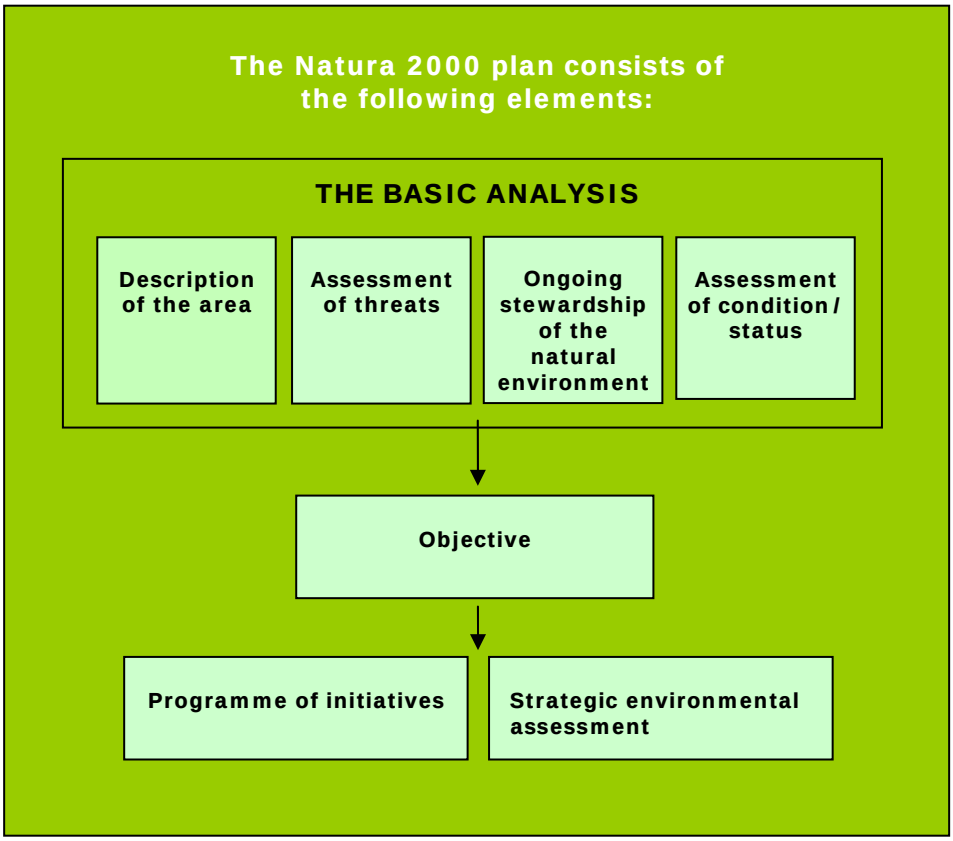


Figure 2. Structure of a Natura 2000 plan.

Because the paradigm has been prepared based on terrestrial Natura 2000 areas, adjustments have been made for exclusively marine Natura 2000 plans. Because many of the Danish Natura

2000 plans cover both terrestrial and marine areas, this is reflected in the Natura 2000 plans for the areas.

The following describes the content of a typical Natura plan.

Each Natura 2000 plan covers the "designation criteria", i.e. the natural habitats and species on which the area designation is based. The Natura 2000 plans are presented in Figure 2.

9.1 The Natura 2000 plan is binding for the authorities

The Natura 2000 plan is binding for all authorities and must form the basis for all their area operations, management of natural environments and execution of their powers pursuant to other legislation. The plan is expected to be sent out for public consultation in 2010, after which the municipalities and relevant state authorities will draw up binding action plans that will secure implementation of the Natura 2000 plan. Direct state follow up in the form of executive orders, etc.. will however be based on the Natura 2000 plan. Public land owners can elect to implement Natura 2000 directly within their operation and stewardship plans.

The plan's objectives are binding, and must be used at impact assessment when exercising authority, cf. Danish Ministry of the Environment Order no. 408 of 1 May 2007 on designation and administration of international nature conservation areas and protection of certain species.

Similarly, the guidelines for the programme of measures are binding and form the basis for public authorities' obligations.

9.2 Basic analysis and description of the area

In 2006, basic analyses were undertaken for all Natura 2000 sites. A basic analysis for a Natura 2000 area contains a description of the area with existing maps of the natural habitats and species habitats for which the area has been designated. In addition, the basic analysis presents an assessment of the status and a provisional assessment of threats against the area's natural resources. The basic analyses are stand-alone documents which, for some areas, may be supplemented during preparation of the Natura 2000 plans if new knowledge has been acquired about the area after performing the basic analyses.

The Natura 2000 plans include a brief description of the area that is based in part on the basic analysis.

9.3 Threats against the area's natural resources

This section of the Natura 2000 plan lists the threats where threats is understood to mean the impact on the natural habitats and species that comprise the designation criteria for the Natura 2000 area. In this context, threats are factors that are actually present and have an impact which individually or in combination could prevent the natural habitats and species from attaining a favourable conservation status. In addition, there may also be factors with potential impact that are known to have been present in the area periodically, but are not currently present. Other impact factors that are regulated by international legislation, or in other contexts, and therefore are not a matter for the Natura 2000 plan, may also be presented but are not covered by the Natura 2000 initiatives programme.

The following threats are examples from the marine Natura 2000 plans:

Nutrient pollution caused by nitrogen and phosphorus from the soil and surrounding territorial waters, as well as excessive nitrogen concentrations in the air that negatively affects vegetation on stone reefs and bubbling reefs.

The sea is affected by *environmentally-hazardous substances*. The environmentally-hazardous substances thus comprise a potential threat to the area's marine habitats. Grounding or collision with subsequent oil leakage is similarly a potential threat to the marine environment, birds and seals.

Facilities and activities associated with facilities can be a threat in respect of cable maintenance.

Disturbances such as that caused by human traffic affects many bird species and seals. *Disturbances* such as that caused by sailing and anchoring constitute a threat not only for bubbling reefs but also for seals and birds.

Fishing with bottom trawling equipment which causes physical destruction of the reefs and bubbling reefs, partly by removal of seabed flora and fauna, but also by the removal of hard seabed, stone and shell, is a threat against these natural marine habitats. The extent of this type of fishing is not known.

Fishing with bottom trawling equipment which causes physical destruction of sandbanks, partly by removal of seabed fauna, but also by the removal of hard seabed, stone and shell, can be a threat against this natural marine habitat. The extent of this type of fishing is not known.

Fishing with fixed equipment constitutes a threat against bubbling reefs because the equipment gets caught in the bubbling reef and breaks them or knocks them over when released. The current extent of this type of fishing is not known.

9.4 Condition and conservation status/prognosis

A system has been developed for some natural habitats which allows assessment of their actual *condition,* which is an expression of the habitat's actual nature content and a number of other measurable factors.

Conservation status for natural habitats and species on the other hand is an assessment of their potential future condition based on unchanged use or threats. It is therefore a *prognosis* which anticipates the direction in which the species and natural habitats will develop.

9.4.1 Assessment of condition

At present there is no system available for assessing the condition of natural marine habitats, birds and other species.

Designation of marine areas in Natura sites and assessment of their condition is therefore based on national monitoring reports.

The monitoring reports[9] assess the condition of the natural habitats in marine areas as unfavourable. This is due not only to the effects of excessive nutrient input, including elevated nutrient con-

[9] http://www2.dmu.dk/Pub/FR707.pdf and http://www2.dmu.dk/Pub/FR760.pdf

centrations, sporadic blooming of plankton algae, growth of eutrophication macroalgae, overshading of perennial seabed plants, oxygen depletion, and degradation of seabed fauna, but also to environmentally-hazardous substances.

A report[10] from the National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) concludes that fishing with bottom trawling equipment on stone reefs has a negative impact on the ecosystem.
The conditions for birds and marine mammals have been assessed at a national level using the reports "Conservation status for bird species covered by the European Bird Protection Directive[11]" and "Natural habitats and species covered by the European Habitat Directive"/"Species" 2004-2005[12]".

9.4.2 Assessment of conservation status/prognosis

The overall aim of the Environmental Objectives Act and the European Habitat Directive is to ensure that natural habitats and species that are designated Natura 2000 sites have a favourable conservation status.

The prognosis for the natural marine habitats and all species is based on the best available knowledge. Here, the terms *favourable*, *unfavourable* and *unknown* are used.

9.5 Setting objectives

The overall objective is to secure or re-establish a favourable conservation status for the species and natural habitats that comprise the basis on which the individual Natura 2000 areas are designated.

An ***overall objective is set*** for the area. The overall objective describes the main outcome for development of the area to secure its integrity and a favourable conservation status for the species and natural habitats. Furthermore, the objective must highlight the natural habitats and species that cover the greatest area of the site, and also highlight the occurrence of natural habitats and species that are highly important nationally and/or biogeographically. An assessment of the significance will be performed using the following criteria:
- large area, habitat or population
- few occurrences
- threatened natural habitats and species
- special Danish areas of responsibility

In addition, more ***detailed objectives are listed***, which define the long-term goals for area expansion and development of the condition of the individual natural habitats and species habitats. The goal is set based on the status which has been assessed for natural habitats and species habitats in accordance with the status assessment system. If no such system exists, the favourable conservation status must be secured or re-established based on the best available expert knowledge. Currently, no status assessment system has been developed for area and status of bird habitats. Therefore the goals for individual bird species using the designation criteria are set through an assessment of whether the size and quality of the habitat can support the population, and not on whether the bird population is actually present. The population sizes stated in the plan are set based on the official Danish notification to the Natura 2000 database in the EU.

[10] DMU rapport nr. 526. Effekter af fiskeri på stenrevs algevegetation
http://www2.dmu.dk/1_viden/2_Publikationer/3_fagrapporter/rapporter/FR526.PDF
[11] http://www2.dmu.dk/1_Viden/2_publikationer/3_Fagrapporter/rapporter/FR462.pdf
[12] http://www2.dmu.dk/1_viden/2_Publikationer/3_fagrapporter/rapporter/FR582.pdf

Both the general objective and the specific objectives apply beyond the first plan period, and describe a status that takes into consideration the potential in the local natural environment.

9.6 Programme of measures

The programme of measures describes the initiatives in the first plan period from 2010-2015.

The programme is based on the proposals for the initiatives in the first plan period, which are described in the guidelines below.

The programme of measures consists of a number of ***general guidelines*** which are intended to secure the existing natural condition. The general guidelines apply to all species and natural habitats on the designation basis, and the necessary initiatives will be delineated subsequently in the municipal/state action plans and state follow up.

In addition, the programme of measures comprises a number of ***dedicated guidelines*** which are intended to secure small areas, unprotected nature areas and particularly threatened species and natural habitats. The specific guidelines detail the initiatives that are to be incorporated into the coming action plans in these special cases.

The programme of measures does not impose binding obligations on local governments, the Forest and Nature Agency or state land owners to use the measures and initiatives for securing the necessary actions. The measures and initiatives are prioritised and specified in the action plans or other follow-up activities.

9.6.1 Proposed measures

Local governments, the Forest and Nature Agency, and state land owners/authorities draw up action plans, select measures and undertake actual management within the frameworks of the programme of measures.

9.6.2 Relationship and synergies with the Water Resource plan

The coming River Basin Management Plans will contribute to the effort for improving water quality, including reductions in the discharge of nutrients and management of xenobiotic substances in large lakes, watercourses, fjords and coastal waters.

10 The Natura 2000 plan process

In January 2010, the 246 Natura 2000 plans were sent out to local government and other public authorities for an eight week consultation round. The Danish Ministry of the Environment subsequently updates the Natura 2000 plan to take into account the technical reports of the local governments and other public authorities.

Once the Natura 2000 plan has been updated, it will be sent out for the six-month public hearing. After this consultation round, the Danish Ministry of the Environment compiles and publishes the final integrated Natura 200 plan.

After the final Natura 2000 plan has been published, each Natura 2000 plan will comprise the management plans for the BSPA areas which are also Natura 2000 areas. With the drafting of management plans for the BSPA areas and the publication of the final Natura plan, Denmark considers that it has met its obligations under the section on biodiversity in the Baltic Sea Action Plan .

11 Management of fish resources

The conditions for the Danish fishing industry are regulated in part through the EU fisheries policy and in part through national political initiatives and national legislation. The following must be particularly emphasised in regard to the Baltic Sea Action Plan:

the EU Common Fisheries Policy is founded on the principle of caution in order to protect and conserve live aquatic resources and to minimise the impact of fisheries on marine ecosystems.

The EU Common Fisheries Policy is currently undergoing revision, which should be concluded by the end of 2012. The Danish government has submitted a consultation report to the EU green book on reform of the common fisheries policy[13].

Denmark emphasises the need for future fisheries policies to resolve the problems of discards and introduce a fish quota system with fully-documented fishing. Emphasis is also given to the continued development of multiannual management plans in which the main principle is gradual attainment of maximally sustainable exploitation. The goal is a reformed and simplified common fisheries policy that secures sustainable exploitation of the fish populations and protection of ecosystems, and which meets the agreed international long-term environmental objectives. The reformed common fisheries policy must therefore secure sustainable fishing based on ecosystem access.

With regard to long-term management plans, the plans for salmon and pelagic populations in the Baltic Sea are currently being drawn up and the European Commission is expected to submit draft plans this year. Since 2008, cod populations have been regulated in accordance with a re-establishment/long-term management plan[14].

Similarly, a long-term plan has been passed for the cod populations in the North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat, the eastern section of the English Channel and the territorial waters west of Scotland and the Irish Sea.[15] In November 2008, Denmark and Sweden signed an agreement on the introduction of areas closed to cod fishing in the Abnegate and northern Resound that came into force on 1 January 2009. The effect of these closed areas will be assessed after three years.

Denmark is participating in the Helcom SALAR project on salmon and sea trout.

Denmark has drawn up a management plan for eel based on the Council Regulation (EC) no. 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 on the measures for re-establishment of populations of European eel. The Danish plan was approved by the Commission in 2009.

In spring 2009, the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries identified the Baltic Sea as suitable for focused initiatives to eliminate discards because these territorial waters contain few fish species and involve a limited number of countries. In the summer of 2009, the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries held a workshop on the prerequisites for and implications of a ban

[13] Read the full version of the Government's consultation report for the EU green book on reform of the Common Fisheries Policy here: http://www.fvm.dk/Reform_af_den_faelles_fiskeripolitik.aspx?ID=43244

[14] The Council Regulation (EC) no. 1098/2007 of 18 September 2007 on establishing a multiannual plan for the cod stocks in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks.

[15] The Council Regulation (EC) No. 1342/2008 of 18 December 2008 on establishing a long-term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting those cod stocks.

on discards. Moreover, Denmark is responsible for a flagship project on the elimination of discards under the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea.

In 2010, as an extension of this initiative, a technical working group has been established to focus on cod fisheries in which representatives from the Commission, the Baltic Sea countries, the Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Committee and experts will examine ways in which a ban on discards might be implemented using measures such as closed areas, improved selectivity of equipment, minimum catch size, etc.

Development of selective tools is an important instrument that could secure sustainable fisheries and obviate the problem of discards. The purpose of selective fishing techniques is to enable sorting the catch both with respect to size and species. The techniques can also help to eliminate bicatches of marine mammals. It is therefore important to promote the research, development and application of selective fishing techniques. The Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries is actively engaged in the development of solutions to the issues surrounding selective techniques and the elimination of discards in conjunction with reforming the Common Fisheries Policy.

With regard to combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries (IUU), Denmark is implementing the Council Regulation on an EU scheme to prevent, avoid and stop IUU fisheries that came into effect on 1 January 2010. The IUU Regulation applies to all import and landing of fish and fish products from non-member States, and all re-export to non-member States.