



Workplan of EG Zoo 2023-2024

Approved via correspondence in January 2023 by the former State & Conservation Working Group

No	Task [BSAP action, support to BSAP action lead by another group or other task from ToR]	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments [including the timeframe]	Output [for BSAP actions this will be criteria for achievement, including the deadline]
Monitoring				
1	BSAP action HT6 Regularly review, and as necessary revise HELCOM monitoring programmes (once per six years), including the level of regional coordination, in line with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) reporting cycle, to adjust them to the latest technical and scientific developments for a cost-effective joint monitoring, which fully supports the indicator-based assessment approach and monitoring of the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, and is in line with other international monitoring and reporting requirements (joint)	Lead: Country/ relevant EG(s) EG Zoo: development and proposals on updating of zooplankton monitoring programme. Responsible: GEAR	Higher level than EG Zoo.	Updated zooplankton monitoring programme (if needed, 2024). Inventory of existing coastal monitoring stations to address assessment at scale 3 for zooplankton. Revised information on data availability on microzooplankton for future work.
2	BSAP action HT8 Ensure all HELCOM monitoring programs are regionally coordinated by 2026 (joint).	Lead: Country/ EG Zoo on zooplankton issues. Responsible: GEAR.	Long-term task / for next workplan (cf. output of task 1 of this Work plan and BSAP HT6)	Consistency of monitoring programs to enable joint use of data by MS in shared basins.

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3	Work towards the harmonization of the zooplankton monitoring guidelines (joint).	Lead: Country/EG Responsible: EG Zoo	Sharing knowledge on imaging and molecular methods for zooplankton monitoring via presentations by MS laboratories/projects currently evaluating the application of ZooScan (and other imaging techniques) and eDNA for zooplankton community analysis. Exploring possibilities for alternative preservations methods.	Identifying possibilities for application/collaboration. Updated zooplankton monitoring guideline (if needed).
4	Intercalibrations as means of quality assurance should be organized, when financing is available, to keep the high standard of zooplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea, to assure the comparability of results (joint).	Lead: Germany, Finland, and Sweden (tentatively) Responsible: WG/EG	Explore funding possibilities to use third-party agencies/companies to assist with the intercalibrations activities by end of 2023. Financial support for this activity is highly needed.	Plan for intercalibration exercise (including e.g. project proposal, training courses, etc.).
5	Initiate and maintain regular training on taxonomy and other issues relevant for zooplankton work (e.g. sampling, biomass determination) to maintain and improve the quality of monitoring data (joint): visits of experts in zooplankton taxonomy to share knowledge and experience. Rotation between the countries.	Lead: EG Zoo Responsible: EG Zoo	Additional project-based funding to cover travel costs for experts is needed. By 2024, aiming at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommending bilateral visits between institutes in charge of monitoring to share knowledge. - one workshop on evaluation of the experience. 	Plan for regular training courses on taxonomy and other issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation workshop of the experience based on at least two bilateral visits to identify if this is relevant/suitable as a means of training and quality assurance. - Identifying region-specific taxonomic groups that may lead to inconsistent data due

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				to difficulties in identification.
6	Establish a common procedure to maintain a joint list of Baltic zooplankton species for all subregions (joint).	Lead: EG Zoo with support of the Secretariat Responsible: WG/EG Interlinked activities: JEG NIS	All users of the ZEN/ZIIM workspace can have access to the file [add link] and edit it. All users will have an email notification of the changes in the file collection. [Secretariat to check this function]	Testing the approach during 2023, and review of experience during a next meeting of EG Zoo. Proposal to implement a procedure to approve the new entries, for example dedicated meeting, once a year.
Data				
7	Oversee recommendations on data reporting formats for HELCOMs database (including those hosted by ICES) and other relevant related databases (e.g., WoRMS, AquaNIS, national databases, etc.) (joint).	Lead: Country/EG Responsible: EG Zoo	Harmonization of the data reporting format on sampling (e.g. wire angle, sampling efficiency, etc.) and related calculations of zooplankton abundance. ICES cooperation is required.	Updated guidelines for monitoring of zooplankton (if needed).
Indicators				
8	BSAP action B33 By 2024 develop a roadmap to fill gaps to enable a holistic assessment for all relevant ecosystem components and pressures and, by 2030 at the latest, develop and fully operationalise a set of indicators fulfilling HELCOM's needs, including the need to provide a regional platform for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (joint).	Lead: Country/ EG Zoo to provide input on zooplankton indicators and data needs Responsible: WG/EG.		Clear input from EG Zoo.

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9	Explore potential indicators-to evaluate the status of food webs to support the action B34 from BSAP.	Lead: EG Zoo + EG Foodweb + support of the Secretariat Responsible: WG/EG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate discussions on the relevance and means to address zooplankton component in food webs assessment / joint discussion with EG Foodweb (beginning in 2024, after HOLAS 3). - Explore the data availability and station coverage for coastal zooplankton monitoring across the Baltic Sea Region by end of 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory of coastal monitoring stations that are data sources.
10	BSAP action HT1 Using the HELCOM/Baltic Earth Joint Expert Network on Climate Change as a platform and through committed implementation of the HELCOM Science Agenda, improve the access of policy-makers to scientific information on the impacts of climate change together with multiple other pressures on the Baltic Sea marine environment through periodic updates of the HELCOM Climate Change Fact Sheet, and incorporate the possible effect of climate change into the holistic assessment of status as well as effectiveness of measures by 2030 at latest (joint).	Lead: EG Zoo Responsible: WG/EG	Presentation by Finland to EG Zoo in 2023 on climate-related variables (salinity and temperature) to initiate discussion on the climate as a driver of zooplankton-based indicators.	Further discussion on possible output to be held by EG Zoo.
11	Online session(s) / workshop to support the use of the R script	Lead: Latvia	Potentially back-to-back with a possible EG Zoo meeting in second half of 2023	Online session(s) / workshop(s) to share knowledge

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	developed by Baltic Data Flows project			
Assessment (Pelagic and food webs)				
12	Evaluate and improve, if needed, zooplankton biomass assessment	Lead: Country/EG Responsible: WG/EG	Presentation on the use of different biomass calculation approaches based on the work done under HELCOM BLUES project during an EG Zoo meeting by 2024. Task to continue in the future (cf. task 6)	Recommendations for changes in biomass assessment, if needed
13	Plan for the implementation of actions with later target years		[not a priority, potential review of such actions in 2023/2024]	
14	Plan for the implementation, reporting and possible revision of HELCOM Recommendations		[not a priority, potential review of such actions in 2023/2024]	