

Workplan for EG Coastal Fish for 2024-2026

Adopted via correspondence in May 2024 by the HELCOM Working Group on Biodiversity, Protection and Restoration (WG BioDiv)

No	Task	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
Theme: Assessment				
1	Implement, where relevant, lessons learnt from previous holistic assessments (i.e. HOLAS) and consider them in future work (BSAP B35)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: input from IC HOLAS RevDev 1-2024, BSAP S40	Consult the feedback received from HOLAS 3 throughout the development and assessment phases for HOLAS 4 and implement changes as needed.	Long-term: Improved HOLAS 4 coastal fish assessment based on feedback from HOLAS 3.
2	Plan to execute a thematic assessment on coastal fish under the frame of HOLAS 4, based on task 1 (BSAP B35)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities:	Planning a potential project for further development of the coastal fish assessment and to support delivering a thematic assessment. Regular work during the meetings of the group	Identification of potential funding instrument and recommendations to support the next thematic assessment. Project plan prepared. Long-term: thematic assessment of coastal fish executed and results available (i.e. data and report publicly available)
3	Identify initiatives investigating the role of human impact and environmental variation on coastal fish community status (BSAP B31)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: relevant research projects, cooperation with WG Sea-based Pressures	Identification of initiatives for potential synergies/development of future work (i.e. HOLAS, thematic assessment). Regular task during the group meetings	Long-term / next workplan(s): utilize information and make a literature review for the next thematic assessment (as previously done)
4	Share information on effective management measures (e.g. Ecosystem-based management, MPAs, etc.)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish	Share and collate information on available measures to reduce impact on coastal fish (short-term)	Information on measures and their effectiveness shared with the relevant Working Group

No	Task	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
		Interlinked activities: relevant research projects, BSAP S52		
5	Based on the results of the HOLAS 3 assessment, suggest management measures with the ambition to maintain or improve the status of coastal fish species, including migratory species by 2027 (BSAP B15)	Lead: Sweden Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: BSAP S52, cooperation with WG Sea-based Pressures	Publication of the 4 th Assessment on coastal fish in the Baltic Sea.	Identification of new potential measures to be shared with the relevant Working Groups.
Theme: Data				
6	Regular update of the HELCOM Coastal fish core indicator database (COOL) to ensure that up-to-date and regular data flows are in place and to support the assessment of coastal fish species (i.e. indicators / HOLAS) / in the HELCOM Biodiversity database (BSAP B10)	Lead: Sweden Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities:	Updates sent by the Chair to the members of EG Coastal Fish prior to each meeting. The group is informed on the current status of updates during each meeting of the group	Overview of gaps and/or barriers, the rationale for these and their proposed solutions submitted to the relevant WG. Long-term: regular agreed data reporting on coastal fish data and inclusion of all relevant data in the COOL database (and HELCOM Biodiversity database)
7	Identify data gaps	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities:	Review data flows for HOLAS 3, identify possible gaps and/or barriers. Consider how these gaps etc. are affecting the quality and applicability for management of the coastal fish assessment results.	

No	Task	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
			Prepare proposals for how to address the identified gaps and/or barriers and share with WG BioDiv.	
Theme: Indicators				
8	Review and development of the current core indicators (i.e. assessment methodologies and threshold values) and plan for future work based on the workplan for the next HOLAS with a potential dedicated project(BSAP B35)	Lead: Indicators lead (Sweden) Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: BSAP S53	This long-term task would need a dedicated project (cf. task 2) and would aim to also define the work needed for the next HOLAS. Regular work to support long-term task beyond this workplan	Short-term: information on potential funding instruments for a dedicated project. Long-term: Developed core indicators, where needed and functional additional indicators or almost ready indicators for future assessments (long-term)
9	Consider the development of new indicators to support the next HOLAS (BSAP B35)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: Interlinked activities:	Regular work to support long-term task beyond this workplan	If needed and feasible, new functional indicators or almost ready indicators for future assessments (long-term work/next workplan(s))
Theme: Monitoring				
10	Discussion on the need on updating HELCOM monitoring Manual (HT6)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: WG BioDiv Interlinked activities:	Upon request from WG BioDiv	If needed, recommendations on how to update monitoring guidelines
11	Supporting relevant research to evaluate the use of alternative data sources in addition to existing fisheries independent monitoring programs	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: WG BioDiv Interlinked activities:	Needs a dedicated funded project (cf. task 2)	If funded, a more holistic assessment with fewer spatial gaps in monitoring/data
12	Review and, as needed, update the HELCOM Monitoring Guidelines for coastal fish	Lead: Sweden Responsible: WG BioDiv Interlinked activities	Review and as needed, revise the HELCOM monitoring guidelines for coastal fish, to ensure that these are current.	Long-term task: up to date HELCOM monitoring guidelines for coastal fish.

No	Task	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
13	Recommendation to expand spatial coverage of coastal fish monitoring (BSAP B15)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: S53	Regular discussion by the group on additional monitoring programs and Contracting Parties that have not previously been engaged in the network	Recommendations on how to expand coastal fish monitoring.
Theme: Information flow and policy coherence				
14	Sharing new practices from projects or national approaches relevant for coastal fish (e.g. monitoring, recreational fisheries, measures evaluation, impacts on coastal fish, etc.)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: relevant research projects and previous tasks in this workplan	Regular work during the meetings of the group	Improved knowledge for the design of future monitoring, assessments and measures on coastal fish
15	Cooperation with other HELCOM bodies for potential synergies, for example on foodwebs (BSAP B34)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities: EG Foodweb	Regular work. Cooperation with HELCOM WG Fish, EG Fish-M, EG Foodweb, EG MPA, etc. when needed and upon request	
16	Sharing information for implementing current policies (e.g. Helsinki Convention and BSAP, EU Habitats Directive and EU MSFD and the EUSBSR, etc.)	Lead: EG Coastal Fish Responsible: EG Coastal Fish Interlinked activities:	Regular exchange of information during the meetings of the group	