



## Workplan of the HELCOM Expert Group on Sturgeon Remediation (HELCOM EG Stur), 2025-2026

*Approved by the HELCOM Working Group on Biodiversity, Protection and Restoration via correspondence in June 2025.*

No	Task	Lead, responsible bodies, and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
	Theme: Restoration of Baltic Sea biodiversity			
1	<p>B18: Restore functional populations of Baltic sturgeon by 2029 implementing the HELCOM Baltic Sea Sturgeon Action Plan.</p> <p>National/Joint</p>	<p>Lead: EG Stur</p> <p>Responsible body: WG BioDiv</p> <p>Contributing: WG Fish, EG Fish-M</p>	<p>The next steps are included in the Action Plan</p> <p>2025: agree and publish regional database for sturgeon by-catch, initiate possible development of regional sturgeon assessment as indicator on by-catch pressure</p> <p>Monitoring guidelines to be published under HELCOM monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Joint release protocol</p>	<p>Consistent ex-situ conservation programme is implemented, taking advantage of the specimens already secured. (National measure)</p> <p><a href="#">Adoption of the Recommendation on large river restoration.</a></p> <p>In situ conservation programme is implemented and enforced, preventing further loss of the remaining specimens. (National measure)</p> <p>A strategic long-term monitoring programme for population development and habitat use, to support adaptive management, is in place in all relevant countries. (National supporting action)</p> <p>A dedicated programme on habitat protection and rehabilitation has been developed, in order to ensure that spawning and nursery sites meet the needs of the species and are accessible for the respective life cycle stages. (Joint supporting action)</p> <p>A dedicated programme on habitat protection and rehabilitation, ensuring that spawning and nursery sites meet the needs of the species and are accessible for the respective life cycle stages, has been implemented where relevant. (National measure)</p> <p>Successful, self-sustaining, re-introduced population of Baltic sturgeon is in its potential spawning rivers and in key areas of its former natural range. (National measure)</p>

## National Actions

The following actions are of relevance for the remit of the Expert Group, but their implementation is under the sole competence of the respective Contracting Party. Tasks of the Expert Group are focused on supporting the work, where relevant, and tracking the level and method of implementation, sharing best practices and troubleshooting.

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Topic: Conservation of fish				
2	<p>BSAP B16: To strengthen native strains and to reinstate migratory fish species:</p> <p>-By 2023 identify rivers where management measures for migratory fish species, including eel, would have the greatest positive impact.</p> <p>-Starting from 2023, in line with relevant international commitments, iteratively review and prioritize effective mitigation measures in the identified rivers and/or dams, including removal of dams and migration barriers where relevant and possible, especially in small waterways.</p> <p>-Develop and implement habitat restoration plans of spawning sites for anadromous species in relevant rivers by 2025.</p> <p>National</p>	<p>Lead: Contracting Parties</p> <p>Responsible: WG Fish</p> <p>Contributing: EG Fish-M, EG Stur</p>	<p>Contracting Parties to inform the WG Fish in 2023 on identified rivers, that the Contracting Party deems the most appropriate for possible further measures for the improvement of the status of the migratory fish species.</p> <p>BALTFISH has taken initiative on eel by sending a letter to the EC suggesting concrete measures.</p> <p>ICES advice on European eel (published 3.11.2022) to be considered in the context of implementing this action.</p> <p>Draft HELCOM Recommendation on managing large rivers to ensure river connectivity for fish migration in relation to eel to be considered in the context of implementing this action.</p> <p>In advance of EG Fish-M session in 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intersessional process to ask EG Fish-M members to provide national data/information on the important waterbodies (rivers and lakes)</li> <li>• to compile material on waterbodies that are crucial to be able to make the identification and prioritization.</li> <li>• guidance material for CPs to consider (incl. important factors such as migration barriers etc.) when defining</li> </ul>	<p>By 2023 rivers, where management measures for migratory fish species, including eel, would have the greatest positive impact, have been identified.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are widely in place including removal of dams and migration barriers where relevant. Where this is not possible, mitigation measures at dams (e.g. in connection with hydropower plants), especially in small waterways are being prioritized and applied by 2023.</p> <p>By 2025 national habitat restoration plans in relevant rivers are in place, in order to strengthen native strains and to reinstate migratory fish species.</p> <p>Migration barriers have been removed or mitigated by 2024 in at least three rivers of each</p>

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			<p>where measures would be the most effective for the identification and prioritization.</p> <p>EU NRR to be referenced to ensure timely identification of habitats to be restored/protected (Art. 9, 14, 15)</p>	Baltic Sea coastal countries, as applicable.