BRUSSELS

MINISTERIAL MEETING 2018

HELCOM

Ministerial Declaration

Brussels, 6 March 2018

Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Declaration of the Ministers of the Environment of the Baltic Coastal Countries and the EU Environment Commissioner, HELCOM Brussels Declaration 2018

General

1. **RECALLING** the objective of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) to prevent and eliminate pollution in order to promote the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea area and the preservation of its ecological balance, and **RECALLING FURTHER** the aim of HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) to restore the good environmental status (GES) of the Baltic marine environment by 2021 to achieve the HELCOM vision for the Baltic Sea;

2. **WELCOMING** the first version of the "State of the Baltic Sea" report (2017), which presents an assessment of environmental status, pressures and impacts, as well as social and economic analyses of the use of marine waters and cost of degradation, and **AGREEING** to update the first version by June 2018, to provide the common basis to assess the progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the BSAP; **PLANNING** to prepare the next holistic assessment of the state of the Baltic Sea in 2023;

3. **NOTING** with great concern (a) that the Baltic Sea area is still heavily affected by eutrophication, resulting from multiple factors and partly due to the time lag between measures and effects; (b) that unfavourable conservation status of Baltic marine biodiversity is widespread as a result of multiple pressures from human activities, and in particular that several species, biotopes, and habitats are still in danger of becoming extinct, that most of the assessed habitats are not in good status, and that there are signs of deterioration of food webs; (c) that levels of hazardous substances continue to be elevated and a cause for concern; (d) that invasive alien species are still being introduced to the Baltic Sea, marine litter is a pressure of special concern, and other pressures such as underwater noise disturb the marine life, and (e) that around half of the seabed is potentially disturbed by human activity;

4. **NOTING** with great concern the impacts of climate change and future ocean acidification on the marine environment of the Baltic Sea, including decreasing ice cover extent and duration, rising water temperature and lowered salinity, as well as the low level of oxygen near the seabed; **NOTING** that these impacts compound existing pressures on marine ecosystems and thus make the need to reduce these pressures even more important, also so as not to further impair the ability of the seas and oceans to act as climate regulator;

5. **ACKNOWLEDGING** in this regard that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Paris Agreement sets out a global framework for action to put the world on track to avoid adverse effects of climate change by limiting global warming, and **WELCOMING** the increasing recognition of the link between oceans and climate;

6. **NOTING** that the status of the Baltic Sea marine environment continues to be unsatisfactory as a result of pressures from human activities and that recovery is not yet sufficient to achieve the goals and ecological objectives of the BSAP; **NOTING ALSO** that the most widely-distributed pressures causing impacts are excess nutrients, contamination, underwater noise, invasive alien species, excessive extraction of fish and physical disturbance, and that an analysis of cumulative pressures and impacts indicates that those tend to be higher in coastal areas than in the open sea. Furthermore, sea-dumped chemical weapons and munitions and radioactivity continue to be a cause of concern, but it is expected that concentrations of radioactive substances indicative of good status could be achieved by 2020;

7. **RECOGNIZING** that the state of the marine environment affects human welfare, and that according to the "State of the Baltic Sea" report losses in recreational values due to the deterioration of the marine environment are estimated to be 1-2 billion euros annually and **NOTING** that the high level of

eutrophication, if reduced, is estimated to result in annual economic benefits in the order of 4 billion euros that are spread across various sectors;.

8. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the progress in implementing the 2007 BSAP with nearly 70% of the regional actions and measures implemented, and 23% of the national actions completed by all Contracting Parties and 62% by some Contracting Parties, and the positive impacts it has had on preventing further deterioration, such as drastically reducing the number and volume of illegal oil spills, expected further reductions of pollution from shipping – in particular air pollution, substantially decreasing the input and deposition of cadmium, mercury and lead, and the improvement of several seal populations;

9. **WELCOMING** the progress that the Contracting Parties have made in reducing their nutrient input to the Baltic Sea from land-based sources and in addressing inputs from ships by designating the Baltic Sea as a special area under MARPOL Annexes IV and as a NOx Emission Control Area (NECA) under MARPOL Annex VI;

10. **REGRETTING**, however, that Maximum Allowable Inputs of phosphorus are exceeded in six out of seven sub-basins and of nitrogen in four out of seven sub-basins of the Baltic Sea;

11. **REITERATING** the agreed actions and measures in the BSAP and the Moscow (2010) and Copenhagen (2013) Ministerial Declarations, **WE RE-AFFIRM** our strong commitment to strengthen the implementation of the BSAP and the follow-up declarations, by 2021, as pledged by HELCOM at the United Nations Ocean Conference on Sustainable Development Goal 14 (the UN Ocean) in 2017;

12. **WITHOUT PREJUDICE** to and seeking synergies with national legislation, international agreements and legislation of the European Union, **WE EXPRESS** our strong political support for implementing this Declaration;

13. **WE DO HEREBY ADOPT** this HELCOM Brussels Ministerial Declaration.

14. **EXPRESSING CONCERN** that, despite all current efforts that we made together and individually, GES for the Baltic Sea area and favourable conservation status of biodiversity are unlikely to be reached by 2021 for all aspects, **WE CONTINUE** to strive, as a first priority, for achievement of already agreed actions with renewed efforts to make decisive progress towards our 2021 goals and in particular to strengthen our efforts to address the most widely-distributed and harmful pressures;

15. **WE AGREE** to complete and fully operationalise a set of indicators used for regularly assessing the status of the marine environment including in the next holistic assessment; to advance mapping and assessment of the extent and intensity of human activities in the Baltic Sea region and improve the understanding of their impacts, including the cumulative effects on the ecosystem; and to use this information for strengthening the implementation of ecosystem-based management;

16. **WE DECIDE** to update the BSAP by 2021 at the latest, with the aim to set out a robust action plan for continuous achievement of the agreed HELCOM vision of a healthy Baltic Sea environment. **WE ALSO DECIDE** that the updated BSAP will, in addition to existing commitments to be fulfilled by 2021, address new issues, on the basis of the commitments made in this Ministerial Declaration and further deliberations during the BSAP updating process;

17. **WE REITERATE** our determination to implement the declaration *Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action* adopted by the UN General Assembly on 6 July 2017, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular its water- and ocean-related goals and targets, and **RECALL** the role of HELCOM in leading the regional efforts in this regard and in line with the Outcome of the High-Level segment of HELCOM 38-2017. **WE**, therefore, **COMMIT** to using those goals and targets as a framework in updating the BSAP;

18. **WE DECIDE** that the updated BSAP should include actions necessary for managing human activities in such a way that the current HELCOM strategic goals "Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication", "Baltic Sea with life undisturbed by hazardous substances", "Maritime activities carried out in an environmentally friendly way" and "Favourable conservation status of the Baltic Sea biodiversity" can be achieved, and that its overall objectives support relevant political processes and strengthen science-based decision-making. **WE RECOGNIZE** the economic and social benefits of achieving these objectives;

19. **WE AGREE** that the updated BSAP should be based on an ecosystem approach, fully use the precautionary principle, be supported by fit-for-purpose scientific research, be strongly communicated with stakeholders, enable knowledge sharing between science and policy across all levels, be developed in a participatory and transparent way at regional and local levels, including all appropriate stakeholders, and give due consideration to economic and social impacts of the measures to be taken to meet its objectives;

20. **WE ACKNOWLEDGE** that while we work on updating the BSAP we will at least maintain the ambition level of agreed actions and objectives.

Eutrophication

21. **WE RECALL** the Country-Allocated Reduction Targets for nutrients, which will lower nutrient inputs as specified by the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, including through implementation of measures taken under relevant EU legislation for Contracting Parties being EU Member States and under relevant national legislation in the Russian Federation;

22. **WE ACKNOWLEDGE** that due to improved data on nutrient inputs in the reference period[1], the Country-Allocated Reduction Targets for nutrients are no longer always sufficient to achieve GES of the Baltic Sea with regard to eutrophication and that, therefore, the follow-up of the nutrient reduction requirements of the BSAP should focus on national commitments based on Maximum Allowable Inputs and that this should be taken into consideration when updating the BSAP;

23. **RECOGNIZING** with concern the sustained high nutrient input especially from agriculture, **WE DECIDE** to engage, as a priority, in further enhanced cooperation with the agricultural sector in the Baltic Sea area with the aim of further reducing land-based nutrient inputs in the Baltic Sea, as well as to engage with the relevant river basin authorities to better align national and international nutrient reduction requirements of the BSAP with those of coastal waters, whilst seeking synergies between relevant regimes;

24. **RECOGNIZING** with concern that large amounts of nutrients have accumulated in the Baltic Sea during the past decades due to anthropogenic activities, resulting in an enhanced internal flux of nutrients between sediments and sea water thereby exacerbating eutrophication;

25. **WE ENCOURAGE**, as a first step, further improving the knowledge base regarding the nature and dynamics of internal nutrient reserves.

26. **WE ENCOURAGE**, as a second step, undertaking research on the potential of measures to manage internal nutrient reserves that have accumulated in the sediments due to anthropogenic activities in the last decades; **WE EMPHASIZE** that the risks to ecosystem and human health stemming from measures to manage internal nutrient reserves, as well as the long-term sustainability of their effects, need to be considered and thoroughly evaluated; **WE ALSO ENCOURAGE** in parallel developing and applying a risk assessment framework in HELCOM to meet the necessary environmental requirements for measures planned for the open sea and any other measures having potentially significant transboundary effects;

[1] Pre-BSAP period (1997-2003).

WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE the need to elaborate in line with the Helsinki Convention commonly agreed regional principles as guidance for internal nutrient reserves management.

Nutrient recycling strategy

27. **BEING AWARE** that replacement of nitrogen fertilizer could contribute to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and that phosphorus is a limited natural resource and a critical raw material, for which recycling methods for use in agricultural production already exist; **RECOGNISING** also that nutrient resources are not optimally managed everywhere and that there is a need to improve both recycling of nutrients and their efficiency of use, **WE COMMIT** to elaborating by 2020 a Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy that aims for reduced nutrient inputs to and eutrophication of the Baltic Sea and:
    - focuses on measures at source rather than end-of-pipe solutions;
    - is based on the best available scientific knowledge on sustainable management and processing of nutrients in agriculture by safe recycling of nutrients especially from manure and sewage;
    - promotes environmentally safe nutrient recycling in the Baltic Sea region, taking into account principles of circular economy, geographical and socio-economic conditions, as well as spatial distribution of nutrient stocks and their flows, whilst respecting objectives and geographical scales already defined under other legal frameworks;
    - gives guidance on risk assessments and solutions to prevent potentially harmful consequences from the application of recycled products and on technological processes of nutrients recycling;
    - helps to identify regional challenges, applicability and added value for the whole Baltic Sea region;
    - is established with a step-by-step approach and proposes a common vision and objectives for nutrient recycling;
28. **WE DECIDE** to also develop, as a follow-up to the Strategy, possible nutrient recycling measures to be included in the updated BSAP.

Marine litter and circular economy

29. **BEING CONCERNED** that marine litter, and in particular plastic waste, continues to be a problem in the Baltic Sea, **WE STRESS** the importance of eliminating discharges of litter from land and sea-based sources to the Baltic Sea;
30. **WE ARE DETERMINED** to combat marine litter through coordinated implementation of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan;
31. **WE RE-COMMIT** to preventing and reducing marine litter from land and sea-based sources and to achieving a significant quantitative reduction by 2025. To that end **WE COMMIT** to regional work on developing baselines and threshold values for maximum levels of marine litter in the Baltic Sea, in close coordination with work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora. If additional efforts are needed to achieve those levels, **WE COMMIT** to developing ambitious, regionally coordinated, quantitative targets to reduce input of litter;
32. **WE ALSO COMMIT** to strengthening regional research and developing harmonised monitoring methods on the sources, distribution, amounts and impacts of marine litter including micro-plastics, in coherence with similar work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora, and to improving assessment of the effectiveness of measures;
33. **WE SUPPORT** measures aimed at preventing plastics, including micro-plastics, from contaminating the marine and coastal environment, at addressing the entire lifecycle of products, and at examining efficient

and cost-effective options to reduce plastic and micro-plastic releases from products and processes into the environment;

34. **WE DECIDE** to develop appropriate measures to address micro-plastics in riverine inputs, urban waste water effluents as well as storm water based on an increased knowledge on the scale of the problem.

Hazardous substances

35. **WE AGREE** to re-examine the effectiveness of measures and recommendations for legacy pollutants and to identify the scale of problems of contaminants of emerging concern, including micro-pollutants in coastal and marine waters and, based on this knowledge, to consider possible cost-effective mitigation measures. **WE WELCOME** the joint HELCOM-UNESCO-EUSBSR status report on pharmaceuticals in the aquatic environment in the Baltic Sea Region as the information basis for developing measures, as appropriate, to prevent pharmaceuticals from reaching the Baltic Sea, and also **WELCOME** the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) regional cooperation platform to reduce pharmaceuticals in the Baltic Sea;

36. **WE ALSO AGREE** to identify and assess further hazardous substances and contaminants from offshore sources, which may give rise to pollution effects, and develop appropriate mitigation measures.

Underwater noise

37. **WE WELCOME** the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Baltic Underwater Noise Roadmap 2015-2017, including the establishment of a joint HELCOM/OSPAR registry of licenced impulsive sound events and on-going work for a regional monitoring programme and for monitoring guidelines for continuous noise, as well as new evidence regarding potential impact of underwater noise on species in the Baltic Sea;

38. **WE EMPHASIZE** the need to further improve our understanding of the adverse impacts of underwater noise on those identified noise sensitive marine species and in particular the cumulative impacts of impulsive noise from multiple activities;

39. **WE AGREE** to develop an action plan, preferably by 2021, and regionally coordinated actions on underwater noise, aiming, in the long-term, at addressing adverse effects of underwater noise on marine species identified as sensitive to noise, whilst safeguarding the potential of the Baltic Sea for sustainable human activities;

40. **WE COMMIT** to continuing fruitful cooperation between European Regional Seas Conventions, and in particular OSPAR, in order to exchange good practices and to fill knowledge gaps, and to continuing regional work in developing scientifically sound threshold values for underwater noise that are consistent with GES for species identified as sensitive to noise in the Baltic Sea, in close coordination with work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora including UNEP Regional Seas Programme.

Seabed damage and disturbance

41. **WE AGREE** to do regional work on developing threshold values for the adverse effects of anthropogenic physical disturbance and, based on the best available scientific information in close coordination with other relevant fora, if needed to achieve GES, to develop the necessary regionally coordinated quantitative targets for the reduction of physical disturbance caused by human activities and habitat loss;

42. **WE AGREE**, based on best available scientific advice, to work together to elaborate regional and national actions aiming at delivering the necessary reductions in adverse effects of physical disturbance caused by human activities.

Biodiversity and impacts on ecosystem

43. **WE COMMIT** to increasing the protection and restoration of biodiversity, to intensifying regional, sub-regional and cross-sectoral cooperation, and to preserving and promoting the ecological balance of the Baltic Sea area with strengthened resilience, also as streamlined response to adaptation needs stemming from human-induced climate change;

44. **WE AGREE** to take actions to prevent the loss of biodiversity in the Baltic Sea and to improve the status of species, biotopes and habitats that are threatened according to the 2013 HELCOM Red Lists[2], *inter alia,* by establishing conservation plans or other relevant programmes or environmental measures for species, biotopes and habitats at risk of extinction;

45. **WE WELCOME** the significant progress made towards increasing the geographical coverage of the HELCOM marine protected areas (HELCOM MPAs) network. **WE RECALL** the HELCOM commitment to step up efforts to establish an ecologically coherent and effectively managed network of HELCOM MPAs in accordance with HELCOM Recommendation 35/1. **WE ALSO COMMIT** to improving the understanding of the role of MPAs for ecosystem services, in order to enhance cost-effectiveness of MPAs management and yield the greatest environmental benefits. **WE ALSO AGREE** to strive for full achievement of Aichi Target 11 regarding the management, ecological representativeness and connectivity of the HELCOM MPAs network;

46. **WE RECALL** the HELCOM commitment made at the UN Ocean Conference, to describe Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea in collaboration with the Convention of Biological Diversity.

Climate change

47. **WE STRESS** the need for research and adaptive management to strengthen the resilience of the Baltic Sea in the face of climate change impacts. **WE AGREE** to increase HELCOM's preparedness to respond to climate change impacts, by taking foreseen climate change impacts into account when updating the BSAP and by exploring the needs and possibilities to further adapt HELCOM's policies and recommendations 1) in line with existing objectives of protection of the marine environment and sustainable use of marine resources, also under the changing climate, and 2) to maximise the capacity of the Baltic Sea ecosystem to contribute to mitigation of climate change through blue carbon storage;

48. **WE EMPHASIZE** the need to further strengthen the scientific understanding of the impacts of climate change together with multiple other stressors on the Baltic Sea marine environment, and **AGREE** that HELCOM should take action to bridge this knowledge to policy and practice.

Implementation of the ecosystem approach

49. **WE RECOGNIZE** that knowledge on the relationship between the state of the marine environment and human well-being is essential for applying the ecosystem approach to management of human activities and in maritime spatial planning in the region, as well as for implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity;

50. To this end, **WE AGREE** to further develop and carry out coordinated regional economic and social assessments, including mapping, valuation, and analysis of ecosystem services and natural capital accounting, taking advantage of improved methods and comparability of data;

51. **WE ALSO AGREE** to encourage further coordinated research to support cost of degradation analyses, cost-effectiveness analyses of regional measures, and assessment of cost and benefits related to achieving GES covering the entire Baltic Sea region;

[2] BSEP No. 138 and 140.

52. **WE EMPHASIZE** that the implementation of the ecosystem approach will enable the transition towards a sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services by present and future generations, to the benefit of the effective implementation of marine policies as well as maritime spatial planning, and will lay the grounds for a sustainable blue economy;

53. **WE RECOGNISE** that BONUS, the joint Baltic Sea Research and Development programme, has enhanced research capacity in the Baltic Sea region and provided an important platform for cooperation in research activities as well as useful research for science based decision-making and **WELCOME** further cooperation to strengthen joint research programmes, under the umbrella of JPI (Joint Programming Initiative) Oceans.

Improving regional ocean governance

54. **WE WELCOME** the great successes already achieved in regional cooperation and governance, for instance in the fields of maritime transport, maritime spatial planning, and research:

    - In particular, **WE WELCOME** the progress made in addressing the environmental impact of the maritime transport sector in the Baltic Sea via (a) the collaborative long-term effort to designate the Baltic Sea as a NOx Emission Control Area (NECA), (b) HELCOM commitment at the UN Ocean Conference on NECA and to promote green shipping technology and use of alternative fuels, including LNG, and (c) the recent International Maritime Organization (IMO) decision on the date of enforcement of the Baltic Sea as a special area under MARPOL Annex IV[3];

    - **WE ALSO RECOGNISE** the Baltic Sea region as a forerunner in regional cooperation on ecosystem-based maritime spatial planning (MSP) and regional governance, involving HELCOM and VASAB and facilitated by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group, and the important contribution MSP can make to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, thus enabling a transition to a sustainable ocean-based economy;

    - **WE APPRECIATE** the constructive cooperation with other partners in the region, including the Council of the Baltic Sea States, and UNDERLINE in this context the many successful cooperation projects developed within the "Northern Dimension" Environmental Partnership (NDEP), EUSBSR or within the BONUS Research Programme as well as different projects within the cross-border cooperation programmes and initiatives by cities and municipalities in areas of common interest;

    - **WE DECIDE** to continue the concrete cooperation on HELCOM Hotspots with the aim to eliminate the remaining hotspots. **WE WELCOME** recent efforts made so far in addressing those hotspots via multi-stakeholder cooperation, such as for the Krasnyi Bor landfill involving NEFCO;

55. **WE WELCOME** the Baltic Sea 2030 Action Plan of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and **AGREE** to strengthen regional governance, and **WE COMMIT** to enhancing cooperation, policy coherence and coordination at all levels for delivering water- and ocean-related SDGs under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular:

    - in maritime transport, **WE COMMIT** to improving the availability of adequate port reception facilities in the region for delivery of sewage and other ship-generated waste;

    - **WE REITERATE** the common goal of all Baltic Sea countries to establish, by 2020[4], maritime spatial plans that are coherent across borders and apply the ecosystem approach, and in this regard, **STRESS**

[3] 1 June 2019 for new IMO registered passenger ships and 1 June 2021 for existing passenger ships with an extension until 1 June 2023 for direct passages between St. Petersburg area in Russia and the North Sea

[4] The corresponding deadline, for contracting parties that are EU Member States, in Directive 2014/89/EU establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning is 2021.

the importance of further cooperation in using the agreed principles, guidelines, concepts and mechanisms for planning purposes and developing them further as needed, whilst investigating existing obstacles that impede more rapid development in this field;

- **WE AGREE** to strengthen cooperation on ship hull fouling solutions with regard both to preventing the introduction of invasive alien species and to hazardous substances in anti-fouling systems;

- **WE AGREE** to strengthen coordination and cooperation mechanisms with fishery bodies active in the Baltic Sea region, in particular BALTFISH, and the Baltic Sea Advisory Council, to seek synergies with the work carried out by ICES, and to aim to ensure coherence between marine and fisheries management measures;

- **WE STRIVE** to raise awareness on the state of the Baltic Sea area, enhance ocean literacy, and support transparency, networks and campaigns;

- **WE AGREE** to enhance local initiatives and cooperation, and to support joint efforts of governments, science, business, civil society and financial institutions, for the implementation of the BSAP and SDGs, in particular SDG 14, and in this regard **WE TAKE NOTE** of examples such as the St Petersburg Initiative established by the Heads of Governments of the Baltic Sea States in 2013;

- **WE ENDEAVOUR** to explore further synergies of HELCOM Monitoring System with other relevant monitoring activities;

56. **WE STRIVE** for joint approaches and synergies among HELCOM and relevant multilateral environmental agreements including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species and the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas. **WE STRESS** the importance of transboundary cooperation, transparency, and information-sharing among Contracting Parties in order to assess, prevent, mitigate, and compensate the impacts arising from human activities such as nuclear energy projects, offshore projects of oil drilling and construction of gas pipelines, in line with international legislation;

57. **WE WELCOME** the entry into force of the Ballast Water Management Convention on 8 September 2017 and **COMMIT** to regionally supporting its ratification by Baltic Sea States which have not done yet so, and to enhancing harmonized implementation of this Convention and other relevant IMO instruments, including MARPOL, in the region;

58. **ACKNOWLEDGING** that projects on issues of common interest under the EUSBSR and NDEP have given substantial contribution to the implementation of the BSAP, **WE WILL CONTINUE** the constructive cooperation with actors involved in this framework to contribute to the implementation of the BSAP and endeavour to ensure synergies between the priorities of the BSAP, of the EUSBSR Action Plan and of the NDEP activities, as well as national strategic planning documents of Contracting Parties, also in the future;

59. **WE AGREE** to strengthen the fruitful cooperation with OSPAR on transboundary issues and common challenges to gain efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of SDGs such as ballast water management and introduction of invasive alien species, the issue of underwater noise, micro-plastic, migratory birds, MPA network and management, and threatened and endangered species;

60. **WE AGREE** to step up the cooperation with other Regional Sea Conventions and relevant River Basin authorities in our work to reach SDGs, and **RECOGNIZE** the opportunities for increased knowledge, efficiency gains and effectiveness when jointly addressing implementation challenges, including the work on regional seas indicators on the implementation of SDG 14;

61. **WE ARE DETERMINED** to continue working together in HELCOM to deliver our common objectives until 2030 and beyond efficiently and effectively; and to this end **WE WILL CONTINUE** to work to strengthen

the cross-sectorial, regional and inter-regional partnerships and to mobilize financing to support the implementation of the BSAP and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.