Finland - Submission of information for the review of implementation of the Programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity Notification 2008-095, January 29, 2009

1. Introduction

Finnish territorial waters and the Finnish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) cover nearly 20% (81 650 km2) of the total surface area of the Baltic Sea. Although ecologically difficult to approach as a separate entity, this area is the administrative unit in which Finnish laws apply and which Finland thus has responsibility for. Just under 300 marine species (1.4% of all well-known species) have been listed from the area, although this is a severe underestimation in several respects. Perhaps some 5 000 species of poorly known micro algae occur in the Finnish territorial waters and EEZ. Due to low salinity levels many fresh water species also thrive in the Baltic Sea.

The most serious threat facing the Baltic Sea is eutrophication. For Finnish coastal waters this is particularly true of the Gulf of Finland and the Archipelago Sea, where increased water turbidity and lowered oxygen concentrations, among other things, cause extensive changes in plant and animal communities . Eutrophication is slightly less acute in the Bothnian Sea and Bothnian Bay, where there is less loading from communities and agriculture. Of the anthropogenic nitrogen and phosphorus loading entering the Baltic Sea from Finnish territory, 45 to 80 percent originates from agriculture. Other threats to the northern parts of the Baltic Sea include harmful substances, building of infrastructure for navigation and holiday residences as well as the rising risk of oil spills due to increased transportation on the Gulf of Finland.

Within the past three decades loading from point sources has decreased substantially as a result of improved wastewater collection and treatment both in communities and the industry. There have also been attempts to control the amount of nutrients entering the Baltic Sea from arable lands (especially as a part of the agri-environmental support scheme), but these have yielded only limited results. Since 1991 Finland has actively supported the building of wastewater collection and treatment facilities in Saint Petersburg, which has been identified as the biggest single point-source polluter within the whole Baltic Sea region. During the Action Plan period risks related to oil transportation on the Gulf of Finland have been assessed and new oil spill combating equipment has been acquired.
Knowledge regarding Finnish marine underwater biodiversity has been lacking for a long time. To fill-in the largest gaps in knowledge, a large-scale survey of benthic habitats and fish breeding grounds was initiated in 2005 (see www.environment.fi/velmu). Another major research effort has been the BIREME Baltic Sea Research Programme, which between 2003 and 2005 funded 25 different research projects aiming at preventing problems caused by eutrophication and harmful substances as well as advancing the maintenance of biodiversity and sustainable use of marine resources (see www.aka.fi/bireme). During the Action Plan period the first protected underwater areas have been established and protected areas, which include above-surface marine and coastal habitats, have been substantially expanded. (Reference: Draft of Finland's 4th National Report (Ari-Pekka Auvinen, Finnish Environment Institute)

2. Table of Progress made in the implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity

Operational objectives of the programme of work	Partners identified in the programme of work	Progress made in implementation	Barriers to implement ation	Priorities for capacity-building to address the barriers
1.1:To apply appropriate policy instruments and strategies, including building of capacity, for the effective implementation of IMCAM	Regional and international organizations	Co-operation on regional development and planning in the countries around the Baltic Sea – also including Norway, Russia and Belarus – is financed through the EU's Baltic Sea Region Programme. The programme aims to increase the region's cohesion, and improve competitiveness. Project funding is granted by the Finnish Ministry of employment and the economy, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of education . In the beginning of 2009 Finland will arrange the first HELCOM workshop on **Broad Scale Marine Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea .** In the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, which was adopted in **November 2007**, HELCOM Contracting Parties committed themselves to develop, by 2010, as well as test, apply and evaluate by 2012, in co-operation with other relevant international bodies, broad-scale, cross-sectoral, marine spatial planning principles based on the Ecosystem Approach.. At the same time HELCOM adopted Recommendation 28E/9 (http://www.helcom.fi/Recommendations/en_GB/rec28E_9/) on development of broad-scale marine spatial planning principles to support the implementation of this commitment. **In 2007 HELCOM In 2005** Finland participated in BALANCE – project "Baltic Sea Management – Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Ecosystem through Spatial Planning" (2005-2007). This was an INTERREG IIIB co-funded project aimed towards development of informed marine management tools for the Baltic Sea based on spatial planning and cross-sectoral and transnational co-operation (http://balance-eu.org/). The European Parliament and Council issued a recommendation **in 2002** on integrated use and management of coastal zones, outlining the policy on control of coastal zone use and its developmental needs in an integrated manner across the whole Union. The Finnish Coastal Zone		

		Strategy was prepared for the purpose of national implementation of the recommendation. In spite of good management methods, the state of the coastal zone gives increasing cause for concern. Water quality and natural diversity are changing for the worse. Population and business activity on the coast are growing, but on the other hand opportunities for practicing traditional means of livelihood are diminishing. Accident risks in maritime areas are increasing and floods and storms are also becoming stronger as a consequence of climate change. The Finnish Coastal Zone Strategy proposes means of responding to these challenges. The aim is to increase vitality of coastal areas and to improve the quality of the environment through both already existing management methods and those best suited to integrated use and care. The Strategy emphasises the coastal zone as an integrated functional entity, the development of which requires appropriate and mutually compatible measures. Finland has applied special planning procedures to control land use and development along the sensitive shores of inland lakes and the Baltic Sea since the late 1960s. Approximately 25% of Finland's shorelines are now covered by local master plans which control building permits. According to the Land Use and Building Act, new buildings may not be constructed along shores except where this is expressly permitted through local detailed plans or local master plans that also control development in shore areas. If no such planning permission exists, developers have to apply for exceptional building permits. Land use and development along shores are controlled at the provincial level through regional land use plans, and at the municipal level through local master plans and local detailed plans.		
1.2: To undertake direct action to protect the marine environment from negative impacts	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities	Finland has done its own part to reduce the pollution load of the Baltic Sea, and to contribute to control industrial and municipal point sources of pollution in the Gulf of Finland. Prosecution has been strengthened to address deliberate illegal discharges of bilge oil associated with the increase of shipping in the Baltic Sea. Concerning the Baltic Sea, domestic measures are needed to further reduce nutrient loading from Finnish agriculture. The heavy presence of dioxine in the Baltic has led to exception to EU directives for Finland (and Sweden). There is also a need to strengthen pollution prevention from ships (e.g. oil pollution, pollution from hazardous and noxious substances, waste dumping). **In December 2008** The Member States of HELCOM, including Russia as the only non-EU Member of HELCOM, have agreed to push for the designation of the Baltic Sea as a pilot area under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The overarching HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to drastically reduce pollution to the marine environment and restore its good ecological status **In June 2008** the European Union's ambitious Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) was adopted. The aim is to protect more effectively the marine environment across Europe. It aims to	Lack of Financial resources.	

achieve good environmental status of the EU's marine waters by 2021 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend. Finland will start to implement the MSFD in 2009.

In 2007 the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting adopted the Baltic Sea Action Plan. The aim of this plan is to drastically reduce pollution to the Baltic Sea and restore its good ecological status by 2021. The plan contains concrete and meaningful actions to curb eutrophication, prevent pollution involving hazardous substances, improve maritime safety and accident response capacity, and halt habitat destruction and the decline in biodiversity (http://www.helcom.fi/stc/files/BSAP/BSAP_Final.pdf).

The Finnish Government approved **November 2006** a new set of national Water Protection Policy Outlines to 2015 in a decision-in-principle that also defines measures needed to improve water quality. Its aiming to achieve good water quality by 2015. Eutrification is the primary problem and its targeting agricultural emissions. Nitrogen removal is to be intensified. Also social impacts will be considered. (http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=210839&lan=en).

The new outlines define needs and objectives for the period until 2015, aiming:

- to reduce the nutrient loads that cause eutrophication
- to reduce the risks caused by hazardous substances
- to protect groundwater bodies
- to protect aquatic biodiversity
- to restore ecologically damaged water bodies

The Ministry of Environment has the supreme responsibility for the management and supervision of the response against pollution caused by oil and other harmful substances. Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) is the competent government pollution response authority in Finland. It is in charge of measures against pollution incidents at open sea and whenever severity of an incident so necessitates. More information about oil and chemical pollution prevention and response: Oil and chemical spill response in Finland http://www.miljo.fi/download.asp?contentid=18074&lan=en . Finland implements the "Polluter-Pays Principle". In cases when the polluter cannot be identified, the national Oil Pollution Fund can cover the costs for oil pollution response. The national fund can finance also the authorities equipment purchases that are made to enhance the national oil pollution response preparedness. More information: http://www.miljo.fi/default.asp?contentid=120659&lan=en.

In June 2005 the Ministry of the Environment approved an action plan that presents the actions needed to meet the objectives of the below mentioned programme. (http://www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=53579&lan=en)

		In 2004 the new Act on the Management of Water Resources came into force. This legislation primarily aims to meet the obligations of the EU's Water Framework Directive with regard to the management of water resources (http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2004/en20041299.pdf). **In 2002** the Finnish Government approved Finland's Programme for the Protection of the Baltic Sea (http://www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=14976&lan=en). In order to achieve a good ecological state in the Baltic Sea, steps will be taken in six main areas, viz.: combating eutrophication, decreasing the risks of hazardous substances, curbing the risks caused by various uses of the Baltic Sea, preserving and increasing biodiversity, increasing environmental awareness, and research and follow-up. Discharges will be cut both in Finland and, with the aid of international cooperation, in countries in adjacent regions. **In 2000** The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), which came into force covering surface waters and groundwater. The WFD aims to protect, enhance and restore surface waters and groundwater. Research into the ecological impacts of lake and watercourse restoration will be intensified as part of Finland's implementation of the WFD.		
1.3: To develop guidelines for ecosystem evaluation and assessment, paying attention to the need to identify and select indicators, including social and abiotic indicators that distinguish between natural and human-induced effects.	Regional Seas conventions and action plans	**In 2004-2005** the development of biodiversity in Finland was assessed. The evaluation was based on 75 purpose-made indicators, which were structured according to the so-called DPSIR-framework and dealt with the state and change of biodiversity as well as with the factors affecting the change. For marine areas there has been only a preliminary list of indicators, based on HELCOM work (look below). The list consist of 12 indicators; four indicators measuring pressure (human) , four indicators measuring the state and two measuring state and effects and two measuring actions. For coastal areas there is a list of 8 indicator: two for pressure (human), two for state, two for state and effects and two for actions. The development indicators and adding new indicators for Baltic Sea and coastal areas are in progress. The aim of the HELCOM environmental Indicator Fact Sheets is to provide information on the recent state of and trends in the Baltic marine environment. (http://www.helcom.fi/environment2/ifs/en_GB/cover/) In the near future, one important function of the indicators will be to show how the ecological quality objectives (EcoQOs) set by HELCOM are met. Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs), associated indicators and target levels of these indicators are central tools in identifying, striving towards and achieving a healthy ecosystem. EcoQOs are tools in implementing the ecosystem approach to which HELCOM has committed itself by the Bremen Ministerial Declaration of 2003.		
2.1: To promote ecosystem approaches to the conservation and sustainable use of	FAO	**In 2007** the Finnish Management Plan for the Finnish Seal Populations in the Baltic Sea was finalised. The aim is to maintain seals as a permanent component of the marine environment and its diverse community of living organisms, as well as a valuable natural resource which can be utilised in a sustainable way. The management plan consists of two parts. Part I establishes the background to the management of the seal populations and present status of the grey and Baltic ringed seal in		

marine and coastal living resources, including the identification of key variables or interactions, for the purpose of assessing and monitoring, first, components of biological diversity; second, the sustainable use of such components; and, third, ecosystem effects.		national and international legislation. The second part consists of the management plan itself and present the outlines of the seal management policy, which is based on seal biology and socio-economic factors regarded as significant. http://www.mmm.fi/attachments/5lPRusizK/5sxiKHp2V/Files/CurrentFile/4b_Hylkeen_enkku_nettiin.pdf **In 2006** The Council of State approved *the new National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Finland 2006-2016* in its decision-in-principle. The National Strategy accompanied by an Action Plan for the conservation of biodiversity represent Finland´s vision of and commitment for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Finland is the first EU member state to renew its national biodiversity strategy. http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=253390&lan=en&clan=en The link to the National Strategy and action plan - Saving nature for people: http://www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=75624&lan=en . Marine and coastal areas: The lack of information on marine biodiversity and the insufficiency of data on regionally, locally and species specifically ecologically significant areas represents the most critical hindrance to the sustainable use of marine and coastal areas. The planning of coastal areas in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, as required by the ICZM, requires extensive accurate data on underwater conditions, as well as coastal areas. Accurate data on submarine biotopes and species is also needed in order to define the conservation statuses of marine biotopes and the need for further measures. To produce such data, the Ministry of the Environment launched in 2004 the Finnish Inventory Programme for the Underwater Marine Environment (VELMU) (look at point 3.5). **In 2006** HELCOM adopted a new seal recommendation (CONSERVATION OF SEALS IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA, Rec 27/28, http://www.helcom.fi/Recommendations/en_GB/rec27-28_2/). **In 2001** seven seal reserves were established by statute in state-owned sea waters. The main purpose of these reserves is to protect Grey Seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) and their habitats. Some of these areas are also important for the preservation of the Ringed Seal (*Phoca hispida botnica*). Rocky islets which are the seal's habitat are also valuable marine biotopes. The established reserves are all totally or partially part of the Natura 2000 network.. Established seal reserves not only protect but also further the research of seals and the tracking of seal populations.		
2.2: To make available to the	UNDOALOS , UNEP, IOC	Finland does not hold areas beyond national jurisdiction.		

Parties information on marine genetic resources in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction and, as appropriate, on coastal and marine genetic resources under national jurisdiction from publicly available information sources.		There are measures for the conservation of the genotypes for the most important fish farming species and other fish (both marine and freshwater). The Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute maintains a living gene bank (parent fisheries) containing 16 species or varieties of fish of 64 different stocks, and a milt bank containing male individuals of 12 species or varieties of fish of 42 different stocks. This information is not yet however available to the public.		
2.3: To gather and assimilate information on, build capacity to mitigate the effects of, and to promote policy development, implementation strategies and actions to address: (i) the biological and socio-economic consequences of physical degradation and destruction of key marine and coastal habitats including mangrove	International Coral Reef Initiative and its partners, UNEP-RSP, IOC	i) **In 2008** the first assessment of habitat types in Finland was completed. Some 400 (53 habitat types of the Baltic Sea and its coast) habitat types were classified according to their risk of human-induced decline and deterioration in Finland. The assessment showed the most significant reasons for habitat types being threatened. Eutrophication of water bodies is the greatest reason in the underwater habitat types of the Baltic Sea and also very significant in the coastal habitat types and inland waters. The impacts of water engineering mainly concern the habitat types of the Baltic Sea and inland waters, and many of the coastal habitat types. The expert groups have given proposals on measures to be taken in the future in order to improve the state of the habitat types. The 70 proposals (13 for Baltic Sea and coastal habitats) made by the expert groups act as a starting point in a separate and broadly-based process, which is will be started later and will put the results of the assessment in action. Improvement is needed on many levels: international co-operation is essential in questions of climate change and eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. The suggested measures concern the protection, management, and restoration of habitat types, as well as the land use, sustainable use of natural resources, the state of the environment, and research and monitoring (http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=17435&lan=en). In 2005 the Baltic Sea, with the exception of Russian waters and the Russian economic zone, was designated a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The PSSA status includes special protective measures to control international maritime activities. The Baltic Sea has also been defined as a "special area" according to several annexes to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78), which		

ecosystems, tropical and cold-water coral-reef ecosystems, seamount ecosystems and seagrass ecosystems including identification and promotion of management practices, methodologies and policies to reduce and mitigate impacts upon marine and coastal biological diversity and to restore mangrove forests and rehabilitate damaged coral reef;		means stricter requirements for maritime transport than in other areas. Integrated water resources management and high standards of water protection based on the ecosystem approach are necessities in Finland, where water bodies are highly vulnerable to environmental changes. Water management is based on long-term planning and targets, and involves wide-ranging co-operation with many different stakeholders. The knowledge base for planning has been established through intensive research and monitoring. Many special research tools such as mathematical models and geographical information systems have been developed in Finland. (Integrated Water Resource Management.pdf (739 kb) ii) (ii) the impacts of mangrove forest destruction, coral bleaching and related mortality on coral-reef ecosystems and the human communities which depend upon coral-reef services, including through financial and technical assistance. Finland supported activities to strengthen management and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems in South Asia and the Andaman Sea,(primarily Indonesia (Aceh), Maldives and Sri Lanka, as well as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Thailand). Implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Global Marine Programme, the project focused on (i) improving the management of coastal ecosystems including coral reefs and mangroves, specifically in relation to the impacts of climate change, the Indian Ocean tsunami and other large scale hazards, including through research and capacity building; (ii) promoting sustainable use by developing and applying methods for facilitating livelihood diversification among coastal communities; and (iii) strengthening capacity of local resource users and managers to mitigate impacts of human activities on coastal ecosystems and improving awareness of those impacts. Project duration: June 2006 – February 2009 Total budget: EUR 620,000		Look at the main column: Progress made.
2.4: To enhance the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of marine living resources in areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction	United Nations General Assembly and other relevant international and regional organizations	Finland actively participates together with other EU member states, in the work to come to an agreement on an international level on the conservation and sustainable use of biological biodiversity in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Finland also takes part in the UN meetings concerning the issue.		
3.1: To establish	Regional and	**In 2008** Finland has assessed possibility to expand the Natura 2000 network into Finland's exclusive	The establishmen	

and strengthen national and regional systems of marine and coastal protected areas integrated into a global network and as a contribution to globally agreed goals.	international organizations	economic zone in accordance with decisions taken by the European Commission together with EU member states. According to the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan , **approved in 2007**, Finland as well as othere HELCOM contracting parties needs to se up an ecologically coherent network of effectively managed protected areas together with the other Baltic coastal countries by 2010. A joint OSPAR-HELCOM ministerial meeting **in 2003** set a target for the establishment of an ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas across the Baltic and the NE Atlantic by 2010. The network aims to conserve threatened and declining marine habitats and species, also considering the objectives defined for the EU's Natura 2000 network. **Governments decisions (-98, -99,-02,-04,-05 and -06)** on the EU Natura 2000 network have added significantly to Finland's network of marine protected areas. Finland's Natura 2000 network includes many areas important for coastal and marine biotopes and species. In 1998 when most of Finland's Natura 2000 network was approved the Government resolve that 22 of the network's marine areas would also be nominated for the Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA) network of HELCOM.	t of a sufficient network of representativ e and high quality protected areas is still hampered by a lack of data, however, since knowledge of aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity is still limited in Finland, as in other parts of the world.	
3.2*:* To enhance the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction	UNDOALOS	Finland actively participates together with other EU member states, in the work to come to an agreement on an international level on the conservation and sustainable use of biological biodiversity in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Finland also takes part in the UN meetings concerning the issue.		
3.3: To achieve effective management of existing marine and coastal protected areas	Regional and international organizations	**In 2004** a comprehensive international Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of the Finnish protected area system was commissioned by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services (NHS). One marine site was evaluated; the Archipelago national park in the Southwestern Archipelago. The report of the evaluation was published in 2005 (*Brian Gilligan, Nigel Dudley, Antonio Fernandez de Tejada, Heikki Toivonen 2005: Management Efectiveness Evaluation of Finland's Protected Areas. Nature Protection Publications of Metsähallitus. Series A 147.)* The evaluation gives the general rating that Finland's protected areas are well managed. However, the evaluators give, as		

		commissioned, a number of recommendations for improvements, summed up into ten areas of suggested actions http://www.metsa.fi/sivustot/metsa/SiteAttachments/MEESummarypdf.pdf Already established protected areas and areas which are part of nature conservation programmes are managed by Metsähallitus under the principles of protected area management. Finland's state-owned waters have been managed by Metsähallitus, Natural Heritage Services from 1995**. Look also in point 3.5.** More information: Principles of Protected Area Management in Finland . Guidelines on the Aims, Function and Management of State-owned Protected Areas. (http://julkaisut.metsa.fi/julkaisut/pdf/luo/b054.pdf)		
3.4: To provide support for and facilitate monitoring of national and regional systems of marine and coastal protected areas	UNEP-WCMC	**In 2007** Finland gave its second report (period: 2001-2006) on implementation of the Habitats Directive (Article 17). The second Habitats Directive report focuses on a first assessment of conservation status of all habitats and species of Community interest. The reporting format set by the European Commission requires a separate analysis for each species and each habitat in each biogeographic region which that country covers. The Directive also requires regular monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the conservation measures taken. The English summary (pages 395-426) can be found behind this link: http://www.miljo.fi/download.asp?contentid=90567&lan=fi There is not yet comprehensive monitoring system just for marine and coastal protected areas. In management plans for some areas, there is also monitoring include. But there is monitoring programmes in the marine and coastal areas, basically monitoring the state of environment (e.g. eutrification and hazardous substances). The HELCOM BSPA (Baltic Sea Protected Areas) Database is designed to centralise relevant information on the Baltic Sea Protected Areas. The database includes general information on the sites and lists of species, habitats, biotopes and biotope complexes. (http://bspa.helcom.fi/). Finland has 22 BSPA (also Natura 2000 sites) and has provided data on these areas. VELMU programme (look point 3.5)		
3.5: To facilitate research and monitoring activities that reflect identified global knowledge gaps and priority information needs of	Regional and international organizations, including research organizations	**In 2004** The Ministry of Environment launched The Finnish Inventory Programme for the Underwater Marine Environment (VELMU). The programme is being conducted in cooperation with other organisations within the environmental administration, other ministries, Metsähallitus, universities, research institutes, nongovernmental organisations and stakeholders' associations. The main objectives of this programme is: • To get an overview of the most important biotopes of our marine and coastal areas and of the distribution and the range of different species by 2014. • To store biological, geological and physical underwater information in a way that it can easily	Funding	

management of marine and coastal protected areas.		be utilized • To increase the knowledge and awareness relating to underwater marine environment • To build a co-operation network, which will guarantee the continuity of the inventories after the programme. The information gathered under VELMU -programme will be of central importance both for the planning of nature conservation and for the exploitation of natural resources -> www.environment.fi/velmu The main aim of Metsähallitus marine biological work is to make inventories on natural features of marine areas. Metsähallitus runs the Marine Inventory Programme MERLIN, which produces data on species and natural habitat types in coopertation with the VELMU project (look above). This data is made use of in planning the management and sustainable use of the state-owned sea areas, especially recreational use of marine and coastal areas, and conserving their biodiversity.		
4.1: To promote use of techniques, which minimize adverse impact of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity.	FAO	The Finnish Government approved **November 2006** a new set of national Water Protection Policy Outlines to 2015 in a decision-in-principle that also defines measures needed to improve water quality. Its aiming to achieve good water quality by 2015. Fish farms still release significant nutrient loads, especially in the Archipelago Sea, in spite of intensified water protection measures. These loads must be further reduced: • through controls on the location of fish farms, • improved feeding methods, and • intensified water protection measures in land-based fish farms. New environmental objectives to be defined jointly together with the fish farming industry on a voluntary basis will complement existing policy instruments. • Catching coarse fish in the waters around fish farms could also help to reduce nutrient loads. (http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=210839&lan=en)		
5.1: To achieve better understanding of the pathways and the causes of the introduction of alien species and the impact of such introductions on biological diversity.	IMO, Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP)	Research is ongoing, main target on the effects of key invasive species, which differ from country and area to another. (Finland concentrates studies presently on *Mnemiopsis leidyi, Cercopagis pengoi, Marenzelleria spp., Alexandrium spp.)* Baltic Sea is regularly monitored, with the resultant t data complied in the Baltic Sea Alien Species database. (http://www.corpi.ku.lt/nemo/mainnemo.html)		

5.2: To put in place mechanisms to control all pathways, including shipping, trade and mariculture, for potential invasive alien species in the marine and coastal environment.	IMO, the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), FAO, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	**In 2008** the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry established a working group to prepare the national strategy and action plan for alien species, as stated in the *National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Finland 2006-2016* **(look at point 2.1.)** Finland has signed the, but not yet ratified, the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water and Sediments of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which aims to prevent the spread of harmful invasive alien species in ships' ballast water. In the HELCOM BSAP (Baltic Sea Action Plan) **from 2007** the aim is that all Baltic Sea countries will ratify the Convention preferably by 2010, but in all cases not later than 2013. Finland has participated actively in the HELCOM work on alien species in the Baltic Sea by working both in HELCOM HABITAT and HELCOM MARITIME groups.		
***5.3*:** To maintain an incident list on introductions of alien species		HELCOM is compiling a list for the Baltic on introduced alien species during 2008. No information on a list on incidents themselves.		
6.1: To assemble a database of initiatives on programme elements through a cooperative approach with relevant organizations and bodies, with special emphasis on integrated marine and coastal areas management.		Finland is actively involved in the "Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators (SEBI 2010)" project with the European Environment Agency (EEA). More information of the project can be found at: http://biodiversity-chm.eea.europa.eu/information/indicator/F1090245995 The first report is available at: http://reports.eea.europa.eu/technical_report_2007_11/en/ Finland continues to work also in close cooperation with the UNEP-WCMC.		
6.2: To undertake effective collaboration,	Relevant conventions, organizations and agencies,	Finland is a party to all of the global and regional international conventions and processes that affect Finland in which the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are significant objectives. Finland takes part in policymaking within the decisionmaking organs of these conventions and processes, usually in co-ordination with other EU member states.		

cooperation and harmonization of initiatives with relevant conventions, organizations and agencies while recognising their independent mandates.	coordinating units of Regional Seas conventions and action plans.	Co-operation on nature conservation including marine environment has been part of bilateral environmental protection cooperation between Finland and Estonia. Co-operation and exchanges of information between Finnish and Estonian specialist have been benefited nature conservation in both countries. This bilateral co-operation between Finland and Estonia and Finland and Russia has expanded into trilateral co-operation between all three countries, particularly with respect to the marine environment of the Gulf of Finland. The working committees, working groups and financing instruments of the Nordic Council of Ministers together form a permanent co-operation framework for promoting biodiversity in the Nordic Countries and also in the Baltic Countries and Russia. The Nordic Environment Action Plan 2005-2008 lays the foundations for Nordic co-operation in the environment sector in the Nordic Region and in relation to the Adjacent Areas, the Arctic Region, the EU and other international forums. The programme places additional emphasis on both sectoral integration and co-operation between the various working groups in the environment sector. The Environment Action Plan focuses on four main themes; I) the environment and health, II) the sea, III) nature, the cultural environment an outdoor activities, and IV) sustainable development in production and consumption (http://www.norden.org/miljoe/uk/miljoe.pdf). Finland is actively involved in the work of the Arctic Council Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) working group, which aims to conserve the circumpolar environment. Finland has actively implemented the marine environmental protection conventions covering the Baltic Sea (HELCOM) and also partly the NE Atlantic (OSPAR). Finland is also actively involved in the work of ASCOBANS (Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas) and IWC (International Whaling Commission) .		