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An underwater photograph showing a dense patch of brown seaweed and green seagrass in the foreground. The water is clear and greenish, with sunlight filtering through from above, creating ripples and reflections on the surface. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

PROTECT BALTIC

- why is it needed and what is the rational?

The Relationship of Society and the Sea

The relationship society and the sea is multifaceted and nuanced.

- Society can derive benefits from human activities that may have negative impacts on the marine environment.
- A dynamic tension between the need to protect the ecosystem and the desire to use it for our own short-term benefit.



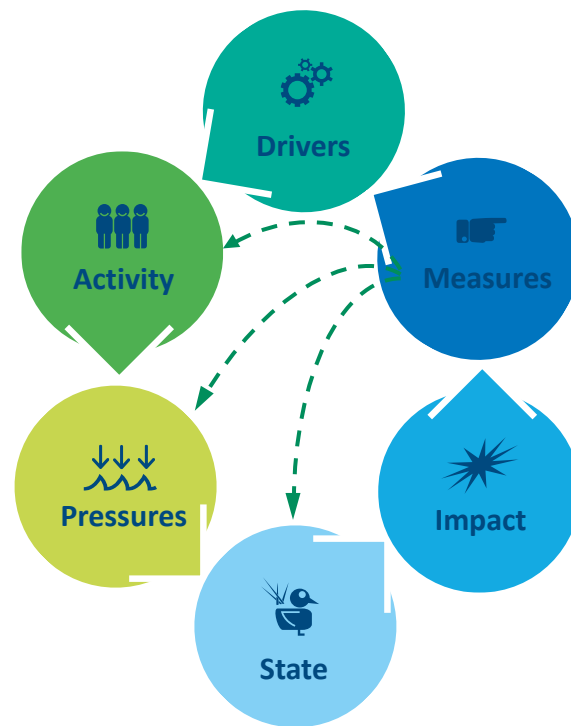
Protection, why do we need it?

- Nature and biodiversity **make life possible**, provide **health** and **social benefits** and **drive our economy**. Nature is also our best ally in **tackling the climate crisis**, and the marine environment is an integral part of the larger land-sea ecosystem.

- Several of the **sectors** utilising the Baltic Sea **depend on the quality of the environment** (including e.g. fishing, aquaculture, tourism, leisure activities etc.).

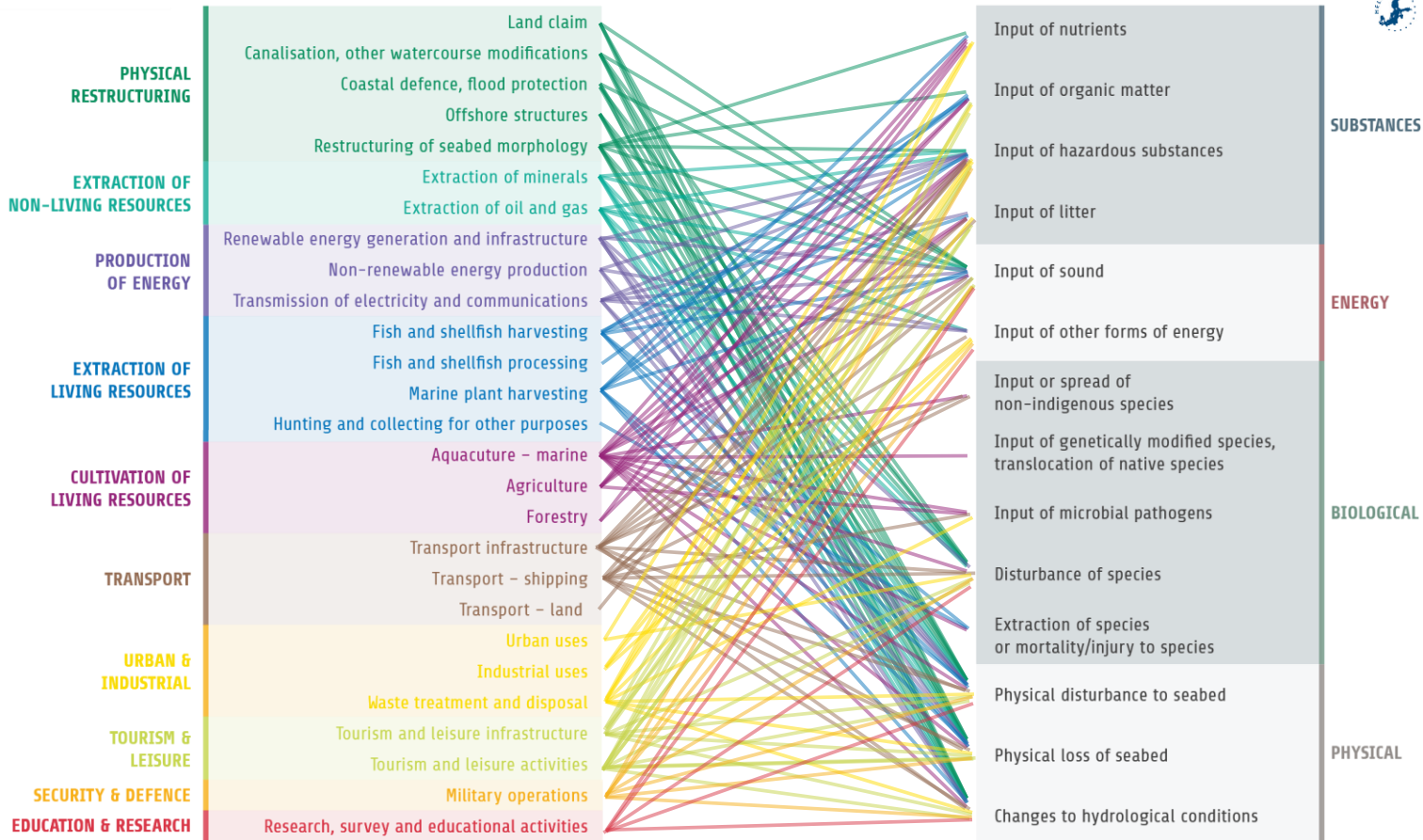
- The practice of protecting, i.e **leaving space for**, the natural environment from negative impacts.

- This is done by **limiting activities and pressures**, or **improving the status** of the environment directly.



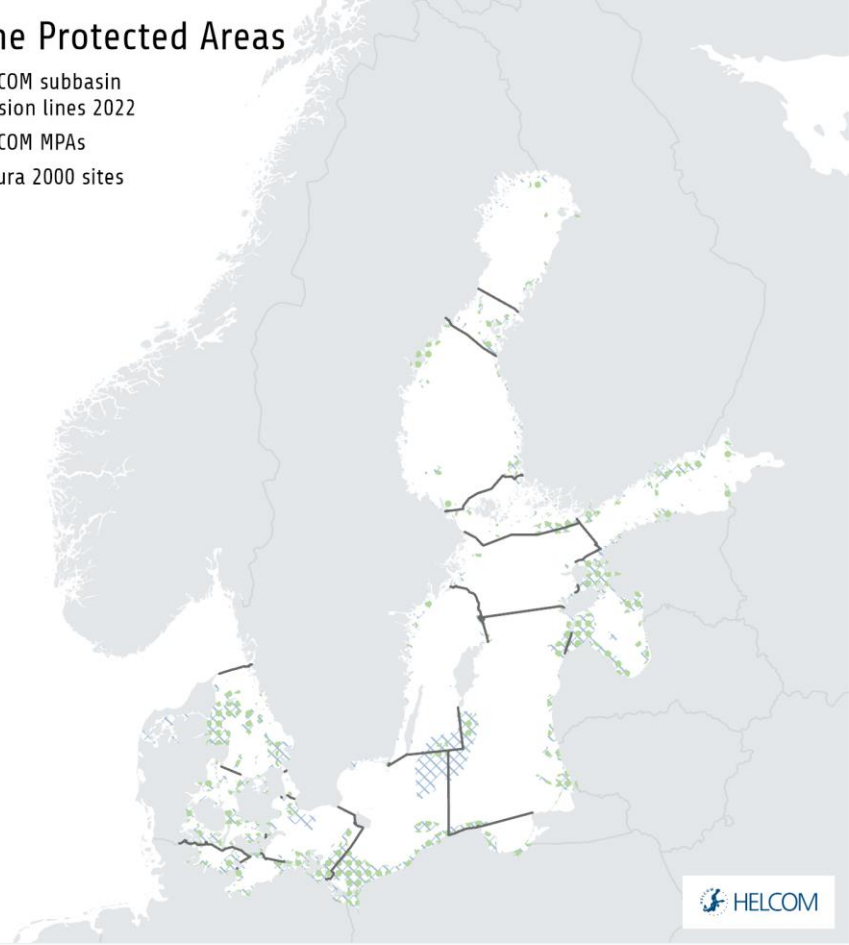
HUMAN ACTIVITIES

PRESSURES



Marine Protected Areas

- HELCOM subbasin division lines 2022
- HELCOM MPAs
- ▣▣▣ Natura 2000 sites



Current situation – the good

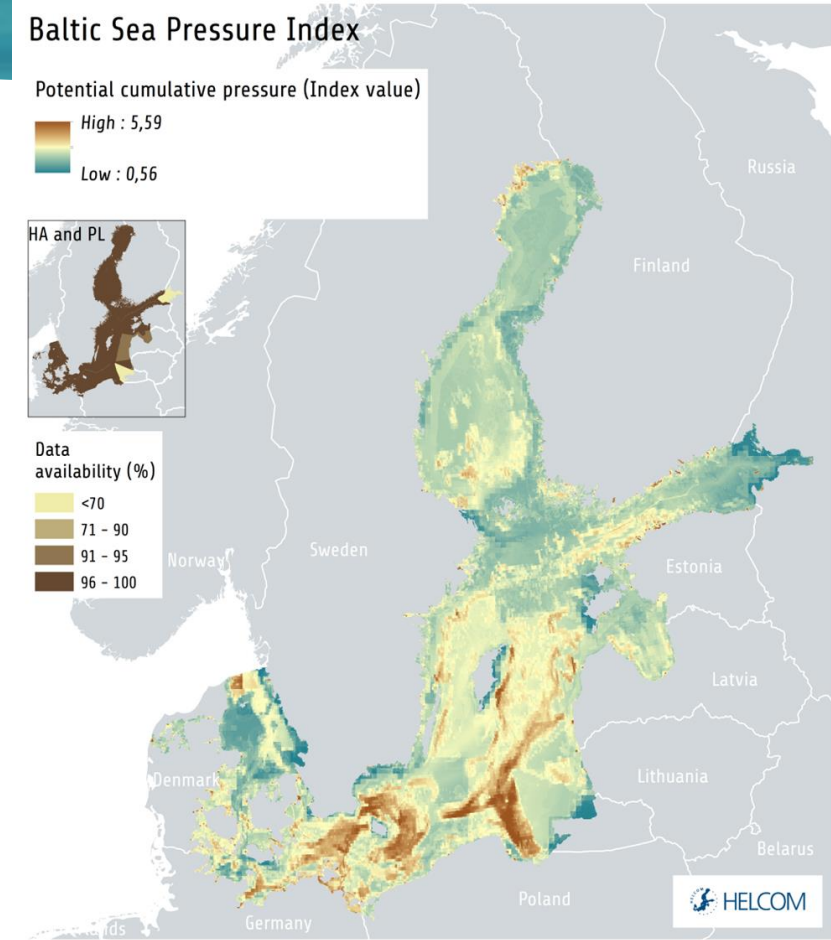
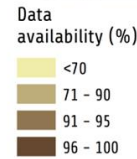
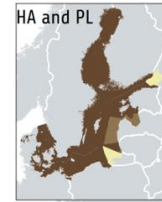
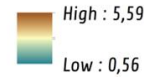
- First region in the world to reach the global 10% target.
- As of December 2022, the Baltic MPA network covers approximately 16.5% of the Baltic Sea.
- Included in this are 178 HELCOM MPAs (i.e. part of a recognised transboundary MPA network), amounting to about 13.2% of the Baltic Sea.

Current situation – the not so good

- Incomplete knowledge base for decision making and designation.
- Gaps in governance.
- Insufficient use of adaptive management.
- **It took 30 years to get where we are, now we need to double it in 7 years.**
- **But it isn't about getting to 30%, it's about getting there in a way that actually provides the biodiversity benefits.**

Baltic Sea Pressure Index

Potential cumulative pressure (Index value)

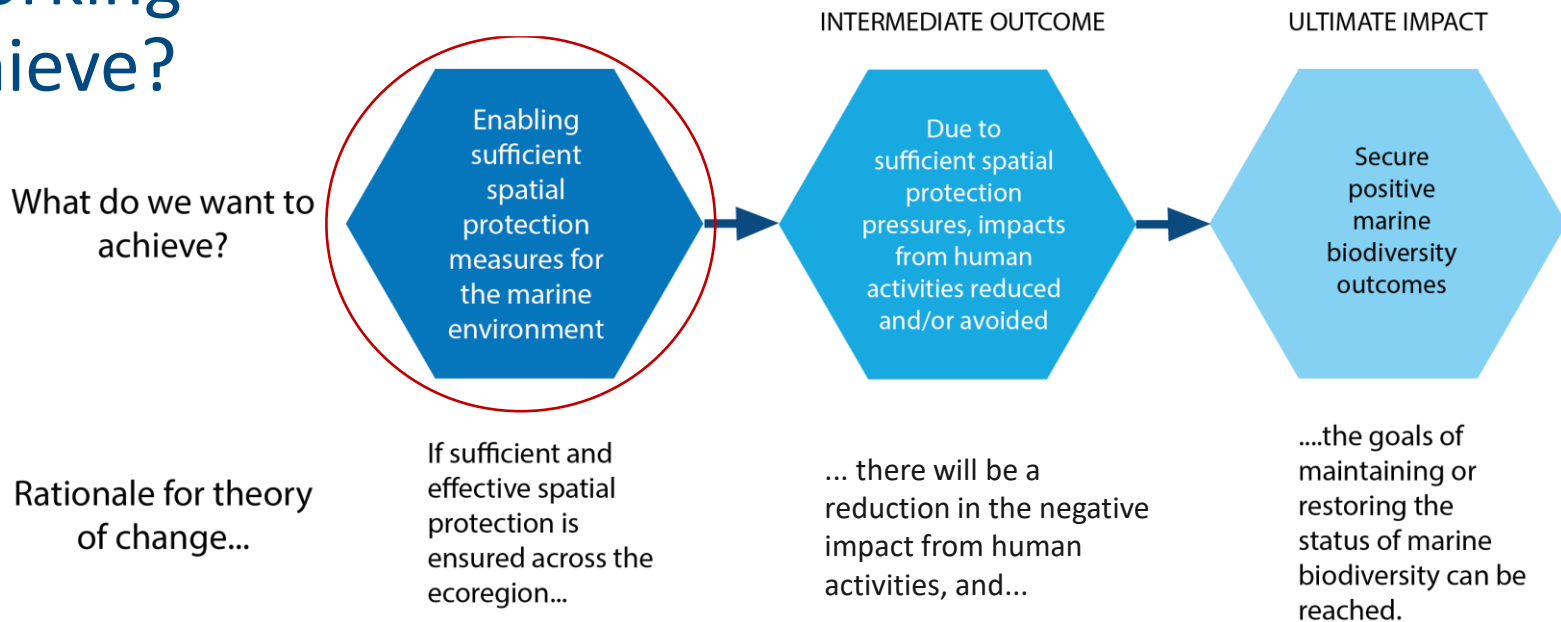


An underwater photograph showing a dense patch of seaweed and seagrass in the foreground. The water is clear and greenish, with sunlight filtering through, creating ripples and reflections on the surface. The seaweed is dark brown and yellowish, while the seagrass is bright green.

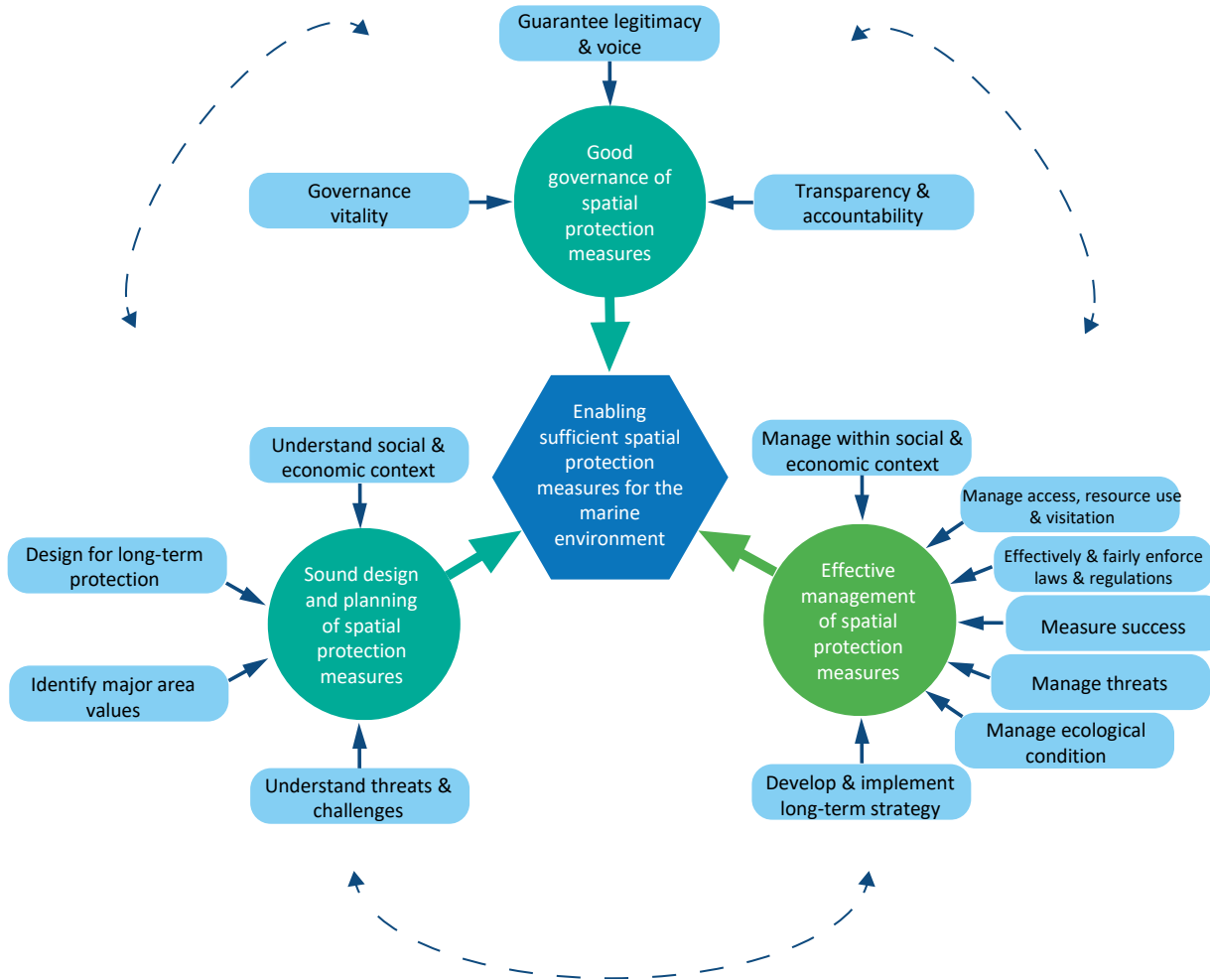
PROTECT BALTIC - what do we do?

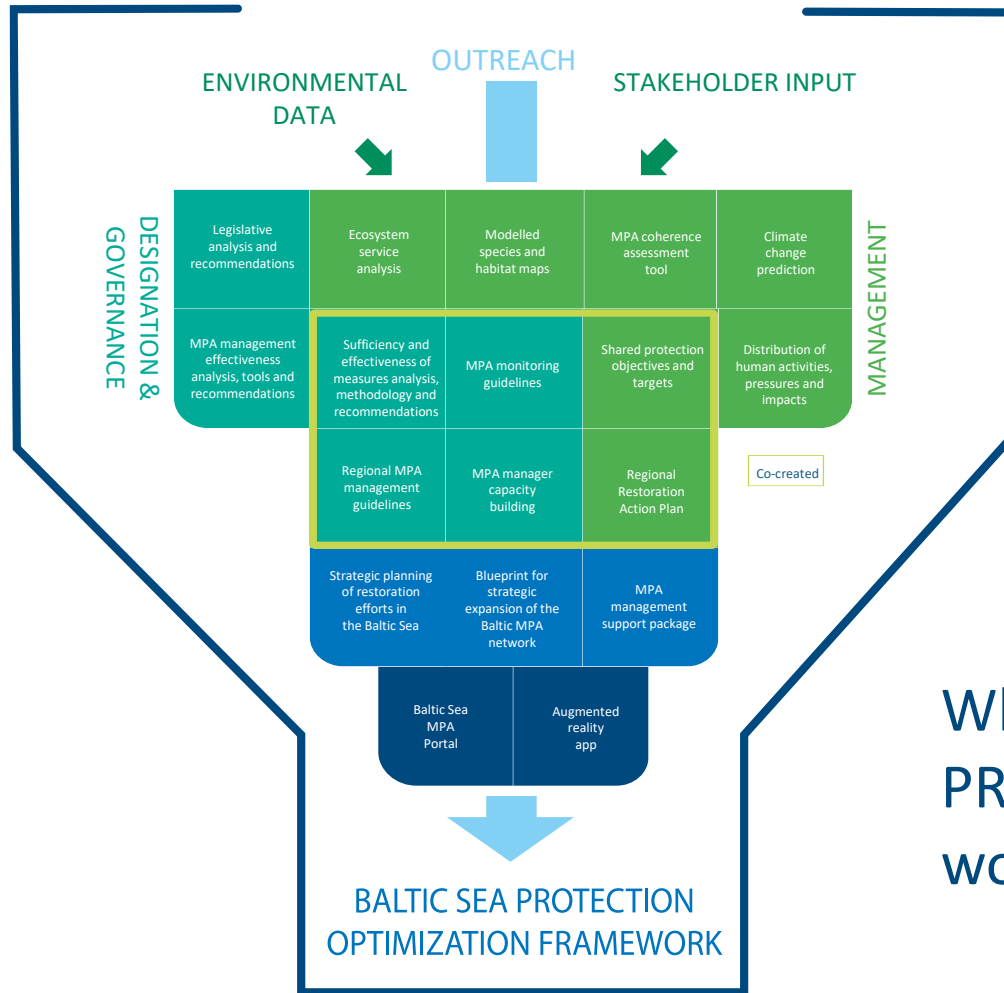
Credit: Juuso Haapaniemi

What are we working to achieve?



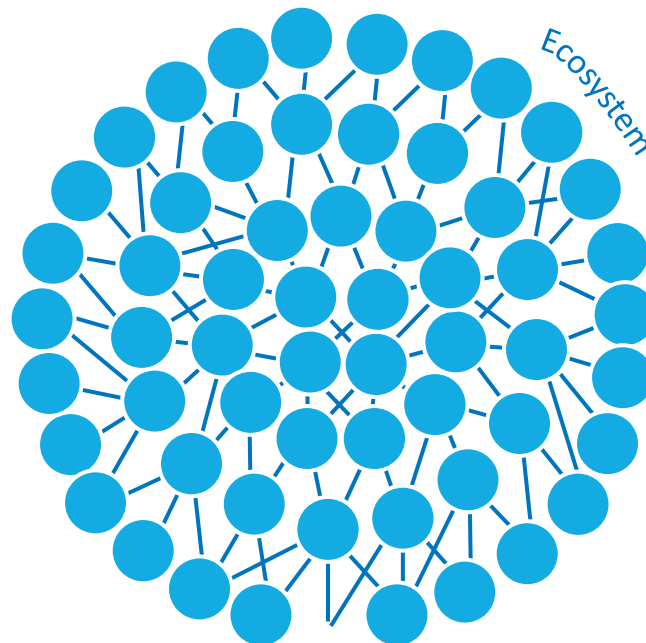
How do we get there?





What is PROTECT BALTIC working on?

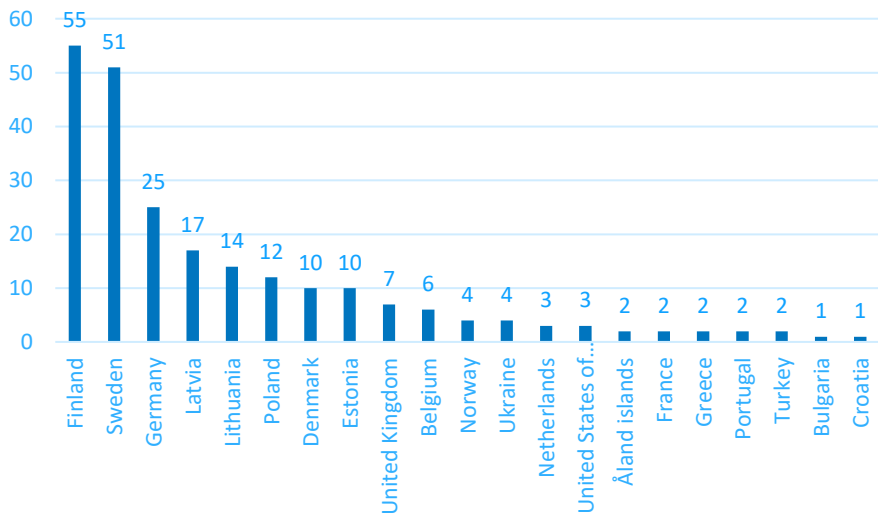
The Relationship of the Sea and Society



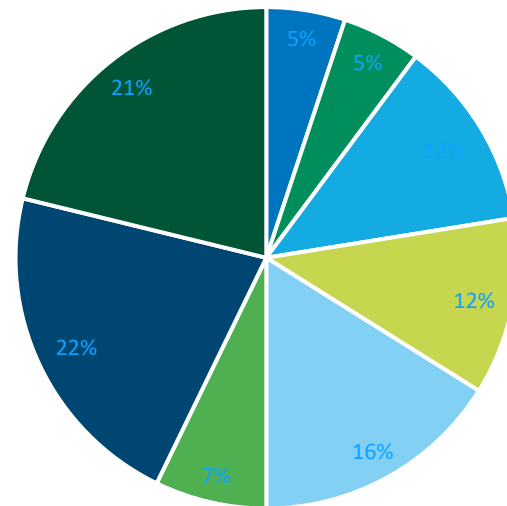
PROTECT BALTC and stakeholders


-the 2024 Baltic Stakeholder Conference

Participants per country (n=233)



- Civil society
- Educational institution
- Environmental NGO
- International organization
- National authority or ministry
- Regional body
- Scientific and research institutes
- Other



A large flock of birds, likely terns, is captured in flight over a body of water at sunset. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the horizon, casting a shimmering reflection on the water. The sky is a gradient of warm colors, from deep orange near the horizon to a pale blue at the top. The birds are silhouetted against the bright light, with their wings spread in various stages of flight. The overall scene conveys a sense of natural harmony and ecological balance.

Together, we are building a legacy
of sustainability and ecological harmony.

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