
Document title	CCB's Guiding Recommendations for Source-to-sea Restoration in Riverine, Coastal and Marine Ecosystems
Code	2-6
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Agenda Item	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM work, strategic level guidance and coordination of HELCOM processes
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Background

On 18th August 2024, the Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR) came into effect, establishing legally binding and quantifiable targets for 2030. Under the NRR, EU Member States are required to implement restoration and habitat re-establishment measures gradually. **These measures shall cover at least 20% of land and sea areas in the EU by 2030, and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050 (Art.1(2)). It also requires MS to assist in restoring at least 25 000 km of free-flowing rivers by 2030 (Art. 9).**

By the 1st of September 2026, Member States shall submit Nature Restoration Plans (NRP) for their territories, including exclusive economic zones (EEZ), indicating how NRR targets will be implemented and achieved. CCB believes that, for MS to effectively fulfil nature restoration obligations under the NRR, the development of NRPs and implementation of measures must be done from an **ecosystem perspective and with cross-border thinking. Moreover, measures in place must deliver actual source-to-sea restoration of all riverine, coastal, and marine ecosystems in the Baltic Sea catchment area.**

CCB has developed guiding recommendations (**Attachment 1 of this document**) for the development of NRPs, the achievement of restoration targets and, ultimately, GES in the Baltic Sea catchment area. Moreover, CCB has elaborated a list of tailored ecosystem-specific recommendations for riverine, coastal, and marine restoration (active and passive), to contribute to the importance of the land-to-sea connection. Lastly, an overview of the timeline and deadlines for NRR for these ecosystems have been matched to the Baltic Sea Action Plan targets, and NRR habitats and species in the Baltic Sea catchment area (under NRR Annex I and II) have been listed. CCB's guiding recommendations were already presented and discussed at IC BIODIV WG 6-2025 and IC SOURCE-TO-SEA WG 6-2025.

To achieve the goals of the NRR in the Baltic Sea, it is essential to **establish a common regional understanding and develop clear guidelines.** Most importantly, NRPs should set targets that are both ambitious and achievable for the entire catchment area. Ultimately, the achievement of a GES of the Baltic Sea and the surrounding landscape should be considered as a precondition and the ultimate goal of nature restoration in the Baltic Sea catchment area.

Action requested

The Session is invited to

- note CCB's Guiding Recommendations on source-to-sea restoration and reflect on their contribution to the development of a HELCOM Restoration Action Plan and HELCOM's role in aiding NRR implementation;
- share progress on the development on NRPs, including considerations for source-to-sea restoration;

- consider and discuss the need for collaboration with other relevant HELCOM Working Groups for riverine, coastal and marine restoration, as well as how a potential regional common understanding on restoration will consider the entire catchment area.