



## OUTCOME OF THE 48TH MEETING OF HEADS OF DELEGATION (HELCOM HOD)

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## OUTCOME OF THE 48TH MEETING OF HEADS OF DELEGATION (HELCOM HOD)

### Introduction

- 0.1 The 48th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation was held in Tallinn, Estonia, on 10-11 June 2015.
- 0.2 The Meeting was attended by participants from all Contracting Parties as well by Observers from Baltic Farmers' Forum on Environment (BFFE), Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), Oceana and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1** to this Outcome.
- 0.3 The Meeting was chaired by the Chair of the Helsinki Commission, Mr. Harry Liiv.

### Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1, 1-2

- 1.1 After noting added proposals from Sweden, Estonia and Russia as items remarked under 5 - Any other business, The Meeting adopted the Agenda as contained in document 1-1.

### Agenda Item 2 Next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting

Documents: 2-1

- 2.1 The Meeting took note of the updated Roadmap on HELCOM activities to support planning of HELCOM actions and milestones, with the view to consider the emerging milestones and deliverables that would require high-level attention (document 2-1), and agreed on the adjustments to the Roadmap, also taking into account the outcome of this meeting.
- 2.2 The Meeting discussed the next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting and underlined the importance of Ministerial Meetings for HELCOM work and also as a means to attract political attention to marine environment protection and increase the visibility of HELCOM.
- 2.3 The Meeting agreed that the next Ministerial Meeting should focus on a few issues and be well prepared so that the ministers can make a substantial contribution to future HELCOM work. The Meeting considered the forthcoming 2nd Holistic Assessment to be a useful background for ministerial discussions.
- 2.4 The Meeting agreed that the years 2017-2018 are possible for the next Ministerial Meeting and that the timing of other international meetings and the annual HELCOM meeting must be taken into consideration when setting the exact date. The Meeting decided to come back to the timing and theme of the next Ministerial Meeting during HOD 49-2015 in December.

### Agenda Item 3 Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups

#### **Marine litter**

Documents: 3-1

- 3.1 The Meeting considered and endorsed the proposed Annex with regional actions and voluntary national actions as part of HELCOM Recommendation 36-1 "Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML)" (Attachment 1 of document 3-1), with the following amendments:

- in the first paragraph on page 3, to insert “Contracting Parties agreed to start implementation of actions....via a lead country/actor approach”;
- in the last paragraph on page 3, to remove the text in brackets and add the text “The action plan will be reviewed as necessary”;
- add to the action RL10 “taking into account the measures which are implemented nationally”

as included in **Annex 2** to this Outcome.

3.2 The Meeting agreed on the reporting formats and definitions to the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (Attachment 2 of document 3-1).

3.3 The Meeting thanked Germany for leading, with the assistance of the Secretariat, the efforts to develop the Regional Action Plan.

3.4 The Meeting highlighted the importance of leadership in making the agreed actions operational and in implementation of the Annex in general, and

- welcomed that Sweden and Poland have already offered to lead actions RL7 and RS5, and RL8, respectively;
- welcomed the information by Poland and WWF Poland that they are ready to lead the action on retrieval of the ghost nets from the Baltic Sea;
- welcomed the offer by Estonia to consider how they could contribute to actions RL11 and RL14;
- took note of the information by Germany that they are not in the position to offer a lead for any specific activities at this moment in time, but Germany does its best to try providing general support for the implementation of the Action Plan;
- took note that Finland is still considering if they can offer the leadership for any of the actions;
- took note that Denmark will carry out national investigation regarding microplastics.

3.5 The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to consider leading additional actions in the Annex and requested nomination of national contact points for different actions.

3.6 The Meeting emphasized the role of information exchange between OSPAR and HELCOM to coordinate activities on RAP ML implementation as well as took note of the information by EU regarding the relevant ongoing activities at the European level, including on microplastics.

3.7 The Meeting took note of the information by CCB on their activities related to marine litter.

3.8 The Meeting noted that PRESSURE 3-2015 is planned to devote part of its meeting to marine litter, among other topics, which will be an opportunity to look into the implementation plan for the RAP ML.

### ***Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (Fish)***

Documents: 3-4

3.9 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the First Meeting of the Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (doc. 3-11) presented by Mr. Marcin Ruciński, Chair of the Fish group, and noted that discussions have progressed on a few topics such as recreational fisheries, in addition to the main issue of finalizing the Recommendation on aquaculture.

3.10 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties, if they wish so, to provide further input to the work plan of the Group as well as to contribute to scoping of the work of the task force on migratory fish species, and took note of the suggestion by Sweden for the Fish group to enhance cooperation with OSPAR and ICES.

3.11 The Meeting noted that the next meeting of the Group is planned to focus, among others, on by-catch, follow-up of the ICES Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) advice on fisheries intensity, and recreational fisheries.

3.12 The Meeting approved holding the next meeting of the Group (FISH 3-2015) on 26-27 November 2015 in Warsaw, Poland.

**HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable aquaculture**

Documents: 3-18, 3-18-Add.1, 3-18-Rev.1

3.13 The Meeting considered the proposed new HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable aquaculture (document 3-18) and proposals by Denmark to the Recommendation (doc. 3-18-Add.1).

3.14 The Meeting recalled the HELCOM decision (Outcome of HELCOM 36-2015, paragraph 2.16) to finalize the Recommendation at this meeting. The Meeting thanked the Fish group for their work and all Contracting Parties for their efforts to limit the number of the still open issues and agreed to deal with these still open issues during the Meeting.

3.15 The Meeting took note of the comment by Russia that regulations by IMO regarding transportation of the species should be taken into account and the position by Germany on the need to include the sub-title referring to BAT/BEP to the title of the Recommendation.

3.16 The Meeting decided to set up a drafting group, consisting of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden and EU, led by the Chair of the Fish group, to discuss and propose solutions to the open issues.

3.17 The Meeting considered the outcome of the drafting group (doc. 3-18-Rev.1), noted that this final version of the Recommendation represents a compromise and balanced proposal and invited the Contracting Parties to confirm their readiness to adopt it at HELCOM 37-2016. The study reservation by all Contracting Parties should be clarified **by 14 August 2015** by notifying the Secretariat ([dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi](mailto:dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi)). The Chair plead the Contracting Parties to make their utmost to lift the study reservation.

**Group on the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (Gear)**

Documents: 3-14

3.18 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of GEAR 10-2015 and GEAR 11-2015 in general (doc. 3-14).

3.19 The Meeting noted that a workshop led by the Intersessional Group on Programmes of Measures (IG PoM) will be held on 28 October 2015 to finalize a proposal on topics in need of further regional coordination of measures and that the outcome will be included in the 'Joint HELCOM document on regional coordination of Programmes of Measures' that will be finalized by the end of this year. HELCOM Working Groups have been asked to provide technical input to the list of proposed topics, and Chairs of Working Groups will be invited to the Workshop.

3.20 The Meeting supported the Gear conclusion regarding future HELCOM work on environmental targets to be focused, as a first step, on joint principles for environmental targets related to damage to seafloor.

3.21 The Meeting approved organizing the IG PoM Workshop on 28 October and GEAR 12-2015 on 29-30 October 2015, in Warsaw, Poland.

3.22 The Meeting noted that the Baltic BOOST application submitted in response to the European Commission call on ENV/MSFD Action Plans/2014 has not been selected for funding and regretted the situation since the project was meant to support a number of important activities in HELCOM, such as the development of assessment tools, guidelines and principles to address damage to the seafloor. The Meeting agreed that the Secretariat will continuously seek for other funding opportunities so these activities could be started.

3.23 The Meeting welcomed the information on the financing opportunity for the Secretariat to apply for a direct grant from the EU to support HOLAS II and agreed that the Secretariat will develop an application to apply for the grant focusing on those components of HOLAS II that have not sufficient resources yet.

**Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (Pressure)**

Documents: 3-2, 3-3, 3-5, 3-6, 3-10, 3-12, 3-15, 3-15-Add.1, 3-29

3.24 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the Second Meeting of the Pressure Working Group (doc. 3-5) presented by the Chair of the group Mr. Lars Sonesten.

3.25 The Meeting thanked Minna Pyhälä, Assisting Professional Secretary, for her contribution to the work of HELCOM during more than 10 years.

3.26 The Meeting regretted the lack of participation of the representatives of the river basin commissions in the workshop on transboundary input and retention on 19 May 2015. The Meeting encouraged the Pressure group to further seek for suitable ways of cooperation for both the improvement of data and actions to reduce inputs.

3.27 The Meeting noted the willingness of a number of Contracting Parties to support the work on HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable handling of sewage sludge.

3.28 The Meeting approved arranging the next meeting of the WG to focus on hazardous substances, and marine litter and underwater noise on 7-9 October 2015. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Denmark to host the Pressure group meeting. Denmark will confirm the hosting of the meeting as soon as possible.

3.29 The Meeting approved arranging PRESSURE 4-2016 in the period 18-21 April 2016 (in Sweden).

3.30 The Meeting agreed in general on the approach to the future production of PLC data and assessment products so that they are timely and complementary to each other and meet policy needs (doc. 3-2) with the understanding that the frequency of assessment products is still an open issue. The Meeting took note of the view by Germany that less frequent MAI/CART assessments are preferred by Germany. The Meeting noted that the Pressure WG will continue discussing the target year for PLC-7 in its next meeting.

3.31 The Meeting took note that Germany regretted not having been able to attend the PRESSURE 2-2015 meeting and will send more specific comments in writing to the Pressure WG Chair and the Secretariat.

3.32 The Meeting noted that the Pressure WG has started the work to establish more clear and effective processes, with timelines, for elaboration of PLC products, including procedures for releasing the reported PLC-water data and accepting the filled in and consolidated dataset, with the aim to better synchronize and time future PLC work. The Meeting supported future systematic work on developing standard regular procedures of the Pollution Load Compilation for efficient use of resources, and adjusting working arrangements as the work on the PLC database within the PLUS project is progressing.

3.33 The Meeting considered the draft assessment on progress towards fulfilment of CART (doc. 3-15) and thanked DCE Denmark and BNI Sweden as well as the Secretariat for this work.

3.34 The Meeting noted that Germany, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Russia have requested some clarification on the data before the assessment can be published on the website. The Meeting requested these Contracting Parties to submit detailed questions for clarifications to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) **by 25 June 2015**.

3.35 The Meeting took note of the remark by Poland recalling that the Polish Country Allocated Reduction Targets were accepted as indicative due to the ongoing national consultations to be finalized as soon as possible, which Poland requests to be reflected in the CART assessment. The Secretariat will check that this footnote from the Ministerial Meeting is included in the assessment.

3.36 The Meeting took note of a suggestion by Germany that there can be a longer assessment period than 3 years and that input reduction to neighboring sub-basins could have been accounted for. The Meeting noted that it will not be possible within the current assessment to change methodology or update the data as e.g. time-consuming statistical analysis has been performed on the data set; however; any suggestions for improvement of the assessment should be discussed in the Pressure group in the context of the next update of MAI/CART.

3.37 The Meeting took note of the plea by the Pressure Chair that good quality PLC data provided by the Contracting Parties on time is crucial for consistent and comparable results of the PLC assessments.

- 3.38 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to inform the Contracting Parties on the status of the clarifications with a view to seek approval of the CART assessment for publishing by HOD via correspondence.
- 3.39 The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to be more actively involved in the work of the HELCOM Pressure group, which is the relevant platform for discussion on the data quality and uncertainty of PLC.
- 3.40 The Meeting took note of the infographic made by the Secretariat based on the data from the CART assessment (doc 2-15-Add1). The Meeting took note of a suggestion by Denmark that the key message should more clearly indicate that reductions are needed also from shipping and by Russia that the presentation should be simplified and more clear. The Meeting requested that the infographic should be finalized and made public only once the CART assessment has been published.
- 3.41 The Meeting took note of the information provided by Sweden (doc. 3-10) on internal load of plant nutrients in the Baltic Sea, inviting other Contracting Parties to consider how sea-based measures could complement land-based measures to reach MAI and participate in developing suitable projects.
- 3.42 The Meeting considered the project proposal to operationalize the MAI-CART follow-up assessments (documents 3-3 and 3-29) and agreed on the future operationalization in principle. The Meeting supported the presented Scenario 2 for the operationalization (automation when feasible and as far as possible) as it has the benefit of providing access to the tools by all Contracting Parties, possibly to be implemented in phases. The Meeting agreed that the HELCOM budget could be used for this work, as partial contribution and as far as funding is available, some other sources of funding could be sought and requested the Contracting Parties to consider co-funding the project.
- 3.43 The Meeting agreed on the next update of MAI and CART to be based on data up to 2014 to be able to benefit from some synergies in work under PLC-6.
- 3.44 The Meeting considered the proposed work plan on preparing a roadmap to building a knowledge base on underwater noise (doc. 3-6).
- 3.45 The Meeting took note of the information by Russia regarding consideration of the underwater noise issues by IMO, including adoption by MEPC 66 of non-mandatory voluntary guidelines to reduce noise from commercial shipping and that within IMO setting future targets for underwater sound levels emanating from ships was considered premature and difficult to evaluate at that time. The Meeting also took note of the information by Finland that in their view the Baltic Sea countries could in the future provide input to the IMO work through a joint regional approach.
- 3.46 The Meeting agreed on the work plan, however, decided that it should be amended so the focus should be given first to the work on monitoring, review of existing knowledge and investigating the significance of different sources of noise as well as HELCOM indicators, while the work on mitigation options and environmental targets should be started with preparing an overview of measures in IMO, OSPAR and other relevant forums. The Meeting requested the roadmap to be presented to Pressure, Maritime and State&Conservation groups with a view of endorsing it at the HOD 49-2015 meeting in December 2015.
- 3.47 The Meeting noted that for the time being the work on underwater noise will be carried out as a regular activity within working groups since no resources can be made available within the rejected Baltic BOOST application.
- 3.48 The Meeting took note of and supported the new initiative to prepare the regional status report regarding pharmaceuticals in the Baltic Sea (doc. 3-12) as a joint activity between HELCOM and EUSBSR PA Hazards.
- 3.49 The Meeting took note of the information by Denmark regarding ongoing studies on the contamination of the environment by medical substances. The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to contribute to the preparation of the regional status report on pharmaceuticals. The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to offer leadership for the work on the compilation and analysis of the data on the state of contamination of the Baltic Sea environment, sources and pathways of pharmaceuticals into the environment and preparation of the final regional status report.

**Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri)**

Documents: 3-22, 3-23, 3-25

3.50 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the Second Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri) in general (doc. 3-22), and more specifically:

- noted the considerations by the Group regarding the revision of Part II of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention (paragraph 3.8);
- approved organizing a workshop on nutrient content in manure on 19-20 November 2015, to be hosted by Finland;
- approved organizing the next meeting of the Group (AGRI 3-2016) in early April 2016 in Estonia.

3.51 The Meeting thanked the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany for well organized AGRI group meeting in Braunschweig, Germany.

3.52 The Meeting took note of the proposals by CCB for the scope of the review and updating of part II of Annex III (Prevention of pollution from agriculture) of the Helsinki Convention (doc. 3-25).

3.53 The Meeting considered and agreed on the proposal for agri-environmental advisor (doc. 3-23), attached as **Annex 3** to this Outcome.

**Core indicators**

Documents: 3-13, 3-17, 3-17-Corr.1, 3-21, 3-26

3.54 The Meeting considered the core indicator GES-boundary adoption and agreement on further development on the set of indicators (doc. 3-17 and 3-17-Corr.1) as well as the summary of GES-boundaries recommended for adoption (doc. 3-26).

3.55 The Meeting welcomed the work done in the CORESET II project, and noted the technical review of the State and Conservation Group, and the recommendation from Gear Group on the further development and use of core indicators.

3.56 In this respect, the European Union pointed out that any agreement that the EU delegation will give within the context of HELCOM is formally without prejudice to the European Commission's role under the EU Treaty to assess the implementation and compliance of EU Member States with EU law and the assessments that the European Commission is required to make in accordance with Articles 12 and 16 MSFD after EU Member States have officially reported to the European Commission.

3.57 The Meeting took note that Estonia lifted the study reservation on the indicator on 'Trends in arrival of new non-indigenous species'.

3.58 The Meeting took note that Finland lifted the study reservation on using secondary GES-boundaries for hazardous substance indicators. Finland informed that they could not accept that the GES boundary for ringed seals distribution is based on ice coverage as presented to State and Conservation 2-2015 where it was agreed that the issue will require future expert work. The position of Finland on this indicator will depend on the outcome of ongoing consultation among experts.

3.59 The Meeting took note that Denmark will carry out an interministerial coordination process during 2015 regarding core indicators and GES boundaries and that the Danish study reservation remains until this process is completed by end of the year. Denmark pointed out that this should not hinder the ongoing work and development of assessment tools in the HOLAS II project.

3.60 The Meeting took note that in Germany a national meeting to discuss core indicators and GES boundaries will be held in the end of June and that Germany aims at clarifying their general and specific study reservations based on this meeting and by the end of July. The Meeting noted that Germany will provide detailed comments on a number of indicators and requested the Secretariat to ensure that proposed changes are communicated to relevant experts from the Contracting Parties.

3.61 The Meeting recalled the view of Germany that bio-effect indicators should be considered as supplementary indicators.

3.62 The Meeting noted the view of Sweden to give priority to the further development of indicators related to benthic- and pelagic habitats and to consider the interactions within and between the ecosystem components of these two habitats.

3.63 Taking note of the study reservations from Denmark and Germany, the Meeting agreed on indicators and GES- boundaries and further development of the set of indicators as contained in **Annex 4** to this Outcome, including their use in HOLAS II assessment according to the recommendation by the Gear Group (document 3-17), and the publication of agreed core indicator reports at the HELCOM website as they become ready for publishing.

3.64 The Meeting considered and agreed that the further indicator development in HELCOM (doc. 3-13 and 3-21) will be based on a Lead Country approach and appointed national experts and that the development should be taken forward using HELCOM expert groups, projects and networks as a platform for the development of the indicators. The Contracting Parties were invited to inform the Secretariat on their possibility to take on the lead or co-lead in the indicator development and to appoint national experts **by 30 June 2015**, also including any confirmation of the same experts continuation as in CORESET II.

3.65 The Meeting requested HELCOM groups, projects and networks to prioritize their role as platform for development of indicators and providers of support for HELCOM assessments and to make arrangements for the work as necessary. The Meeting noted that to improve communication on a national level, information on the ongoing work and tasks of the groups in HELCOM would be useful.

3.66 The Meeting agreed to establish a new HELCOM expert network on hazardous substances. The Meeting agreed to seek opportunities for cooperation with OSPAR as well as to investigate the possibility for a project related to hazardous substances in cooperation with the EUSBSR PA Hazards.

3.67 The Meeting requested nominations of experts to the hazardous substances network as well as expert contacts on underwater noise and birds and update the list of contacts of HELCOM Groups as indicated in document 3-21.

#### ***Working Group on State of the Environment and Nature Conservation (State and Conservation)***

Documents: 3-7, 3-8, 3-9, 3-11, 3-16

3.68 The Meeting took note of the outcome of State and Conservation 2-2015 in general (doc. 3-8), and more specifically:

- noted that the Contracting Parties have been requested to take the lead for developing guidelines for those monitoring programmes that are not covered by existing HELCOM expert groups and projects or leadership;
- noted the need for developing data arrangements for future updating of core indicators and to support the holistic assessment and supported the steps agreed by State & Conservation to improve data flow in HELCOM;
- noted that Attachment 4 of the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy will be revised according to the proposed modification of the division of Åland Sea and Western Gotland Basin;
- noted the progress with establishment of the modernized HELCOM MPA database and encouraged the Contracting Parties to update the information in the database **by 1 September 2015** to cater for the planned analysis of ecological coherence of the MPA network that will be carried out by the end of 2015;
- agreed that the next meeting of the State and Conservation group will be held on 9-13 November 2015 in Helsinki, Finland.

3.69 The Meeting considered the draft HELCOM Recommendation on conservation of Baltic Sea species categorized as threatened according to the HELCOM Red List (doc. 3-7) that was adopted at HELCOM 36-2015 pending a study reservation by Denmark.

3.70 The Meeting took note that the Danish study reservation remains and was informed that the reservation is based on two concerns. The first concern is that since the Kattegat and Danish Straits are transitional areas many species are naturally rare since they are living on the limit of their distribution area. The second concern is the three fixed years for achievements of specific actions, included in paragraph 1 of

the “Recommends” part, since the implementation of the Recommendation is anticipated to require significant time and resources.

3.71 The Meeting appreciated the explanations and was of the view that these two concerns should be possible to resolve with the view of adopting the Recommendation at HELCOM 37-2016.

3.72 The Meeting welcomed the offer of the Lead Country Germany to seek a solution together with Denmark and other interested countries and that an amended version of the Recommendation should be presented to State and Conservation 3-2015 with the view of endorsing the Recommendation at HOD 49-2015 for adoption at HELCOM 37-2016.

3.73 The Meeting welcomed the draft HELCOM Recommendation on ‘Co-operation and coordination of research vessel based monitoring in off-shore areas and procedures for granting permits for monitoring and research activities’ (doc. 3-16).

3.74 The Meeting noted that Denmark and Germany could not provide a national view on the Recommendation at this time and will inform the Secretariat on their position **by 10 July 2015**.

3.75 The Meeting noted that the aim to grant permits to monitoring and research vessels, addressed under paragraph d) of the “Recommends” part, needs further consideration. The Meeting invited the Co-Chair of State and Conservation and the Secretariat to develop paragraph d) with the view of presenting the new proposal at State and Conservation 3-2015 and adoption at HELCOM 37-2016.

3.76 The Meeting discussed issues related to the management of Grey Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) in the Baltic Sea (doc. 3-11) and the proposal by Denmark to develop a joint management plan of grey seals. The Meeting noted the information that grey seals are now again breeding in Danish waters resulting in conflicts with local fishermen and a national need to regulate the grey seal population has been identified. The high mobility of grey seals was also presented as a reason for considering a common management plan.

3.77 The Meeting noted the view of Finland and Germany that HELCOM Recommendation 27/28-2 provides sufficient guidance for actions needed at the national level and that a joint management plan is not required in the Baltic Sea and that this view was supported by Lithuania.

3.78 The Meeting noted that Estonia and Sweden supported the proposal by Denmark to mandate the HELCOM Seal Expert Group discuss and follow-up the proposal contained in doc. 3-11.

3.79 The Meeting endorsed the project proposal for the HELCOM project ‘Zooplankton Indicator Integration to Monitoring in the Baltic Sea’ (HELCOM ZEN ZIIM) for the period 2015-2017 (doc. 3-9), attached as **Annex 5** to this Outcome.

### ***Maritime Working Group (Maritime)***

Documents: 3-19, 3-20, 3-24, 3-30

3.80 The Meeting considered the revisions of the HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions as carried out within the TG BALLAST (doc. 3-19) presented by the Secretariat.

3.81 The Meeting recalled that the HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions (HELCOM-OSPAR JHP) was agreed by the nine Helsinki Convention Contracting Parties in 2013 at the Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting and that the fifteen OSPAR Convention Contracting Parties agreed on the same document at the 2013 OSPAR Commission Meeting. The HELCOM-OSPAR JHP adopted in 2013 included a risk assessment model (decision tree), common sampling procedure for alien species in ports, criteria for regional target species, an initial target species list, an administrative procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions as well as an online database/decision support tool hosted by HELCOM and OSPAR.

3.82 The Meeting recalled also that the joint HELCOM-OSPAR document was revised during the last HELCOM-OSPAR TG BALLAST 5-2014 meeting (Madrid, December 2014), based on experiences within the Contracting Parties and projects such as BALSAM and HELCOM ALIENS 2 & 3.

3.83 The Meeting noted that the same document (3-19) has been submitted for adoption by the OSPAR Commission without amendments.

- 3.84 The Meeting endorsed the revisions of the HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions (doc. 3-19).
- 3.85 The Meeting took note of the report of the HELCOM ad hoc Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management (CG BALLAST) (doc. 3-30).
- 3.86 The Meeting took note that the ad hoc Correspondence Group has come to an agreement on the interpretation of the IMO Resolution A.1088(28) and accordingly, no additional measures are needed in the Baltic Sea area before the D-2 regulations will be enforced and there is no need to establish ballast water exchange areas in the Baltic Sea.
- 3.87 The Meeting recalled that the initial list of the Baltic Sea target species for BWMC A-4 exemptions was adopted in 2013, that a draft revised list was provided under the lead of Finland according to the results TG BALLAST 5-2014 meeting in December 2014 and that after the HELCOM 36-2015 meeting the draft revised list was further amended within the Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management (CG BALLAST).
- 3.88 The Meeting considered the current draft of the target species list as included in doc. 3-20.
- 3.89 The Meeting noted that Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Russian Federation and Sweden have expressed (in the CG BALLAST) that they are ready to use the updated target species list as included in doc. 3-20 to grant exemptions, taking into account that, like the entire HELCOM-OSPAR JHP, the list is a living document which need to be developed/updated together by all interested CPs.
- 3.90 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Lithuania and Estonia to contribute to the next round of HELCOM-OSPAR JHP revisions with new proposals regarding BWMC A-4 Risk assessment Target Species criteria and the Baltic Sea Target Species list.
- 3.91 The Meeting took note that the first opportunity to provide such input would be the next meeting of the joint HELCOM-OSPAR group (TG BALLAST 6-2015) which will take place during mid-September 2015 in Poland, and invited Estonia and Lithuania together with the Secretariat to consider practical arrangements for the work to be carried out prior to the meeting of TG BALLAST.
- 3.92 The Meeting took note that in the long run there is a need to formalize a procedure and responsibilities to update the A-4 target species list within HELCOM and OSPAR.
- 3.93 The Meeting took note of the invitation to a technical meeting between the Baltic Sea countries and the North Sea countries working towards parallel NECA applications, to be held in Helsinki, Finland, 30 June 2015 (doc. 3-24).
- 3.94 The Meeting regretted that a Life application on the issue of Ballast water management with the participation of HELCOM and OSPAR as well as more than 10 other partners covering relevant private and public sectors, was not funded. The Meeting agreed that other sources of funding should be found for this important topic and recommended that another suitable call for re-submitting the application, *mutatis mutandis*, should be sought for.
- 3.95 The Meeting took note of the offer by the project consortium ENVISUM (Environmental Impact of Low Emission Shipping: Measurements and Modelling Strategies) to involve HELCOM as a partner according to an email consultation on the ENVISUM project initiated by the Executive Secretary on 8 June, to be concluded by 17 June 2015.

#### **Response Working Group (Response)**

Documents: 3-28

- 3.96 The Meeting took note of the outcome of RESPONSE 20-2015 which took place in Brussels on 1-3 June 2015 (doc. 3-28) in general , and more specifically:
- on exchange of Baltic POLREP messages (Rec. 36/3) the meeting stressed that implementation requires resources and the involvement of the Russian Federation in more detailed discussions on their preferred technical solution is essential for meaningful progress. A correspondence group under the chairmanship of Mr. Ojars Gerke, Latvian Coast Guard Service, was established (Annex 3 of the

RESPONSE 20-2015 outcome). The Chair of the CG will consider and call for next steps in consultation with the Response Chair (§§ 12.1-12.10);

- that there is an ongoing process to revise the HELCOM Recommendations for national (Rec.31/1 ) and sub-regional (Rec. 28E/12) response capacity and that according to RESPONSE these should be considered together and that as a first step a draft map of response sub-regions for these calculations was produced by RESPONSE 20-2015 (§ 6.5);
- that the revision of the Response Manual vol. II on chemical spill response (as agreed at the 2013 Ministerial Declaration) is progressing under the new chair Mr. Klaus Daginnus, Germany, but needs resources for substantial work (§§ 10.1-10.3);
- that there is recent process with drafting the HELCOM Assessment on Maritime Activities in the Baltic to be finalized by the end of 2016, a product considered important for the work of the Response Working Group, that first drafts will be available by MARITIME 15-2015 (23-25 November 2015), and that activities within the MSP related SCOPE project are capable of providing support for the process (§ 14.1).

3.97 The Meeting took note that the SUBMERGED assessment work is progressing and invited the Contracting Parties to provide input particularly on the chapter on dumped waste/lost cargo.

3.98 The Meeting took note that the issue of tools for more regular regional risk assessments of maritime traffic is an important topic with potential to bridge over regional seas of the world and that the HELCOM RESPONSE could seek for funding.

3.99 The Meeting approved organizing the next meeting of the Response Working Group tentatively on 15-17 March 2016 in Sweden.

#### ***BSAP follow-up***

Documents: 3-27

3.100 The Meeting considered the follow-up system for HELCOM agreements (doc. 3-27) and noted that actions related to State and Conservation, Pressure and Response Group have already been reviewed and supported by these Working Groups and for other Groups the review has been initiated to be finalized in September 2015.

3.101 The Meeting noted that since it was a late document, the Contracting Parties had not been able to consult the document nationally and it was agreed that comments should be provided to the Secretariat **by 10 September 2015**.

3.102 The Meeting concluded that it would not be possible for the Contracting Parties to accomplish reporting by October 2015 as indicated in the proposed timetable. The Meeting noted that the intention of the proposed timetable has been to use the new follow-up system for producing a status of the implementation of HELCOM commitments for the 'Joint document on regional coordination of Programmes of Measures' and for this purpose it would have to be finalized by March 2016 and would require reporting by the end of 2015 at the latest.

3.103 The Meeting requested the next meeting of the Gear Group to consider the updated proposal based on the comments from Contracting Parties.

3.104 The Meeting stressed the importance of communication of results and noted that the Secretariat will present a proposal for presentation of results to HOD 49-2015.

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## Agenda Item 4 HELCOM institutional and organisational matters

Documents:

4.1 The Meeting took note of the information by the Executive Secretary on streamlining the Secretariat so that it can better support the working groups dealing with marine policies and cross-cutting issues and flexibly adjust to the changing working environment as well as on the necessity to strengthen the data expertise of the Secretariat on a permanent basis due to the growing importance and volume of data related tasks and processes, including the need to work towards future alignment with INSPIRE technical standards.

## Agenda Item 5 Any other business

Documents: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3

5.1 The Meeting took note of the information on planned events within HELCOM and other forums (doc. 5-1) with the inclusion of

- oiled wildlife response expert group meeting of the NOWPAP MERRAC in Vladivostok, Russia on 20-22 October 2015, where Russia aims to present Baltic Sea good practices;
- a conference on sustainable in-land aquaculture and Best Available Techniques (BAT) to be organized by CCB, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation and other partners on 11-12 November 2015 in Sweden;
- the XVII Baltic Sea Day to take place on 16-18 March 2016 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the invitation by WWF to attend the Greener Agriculture for a Bluer Baltic Sea (GABBS) Conference in Stralsund, Germany, 5-6 November 2015.

5.3 The Meeting recalled the the Rules of Procedure regarding submission of documents to HELCOM meetings and noted that the scheduling of meetings of Working Groups has to be optimized in order to avoid late submission of documents to meetings of HODs. As an outcome of streamlining such meetings should preferably be held at the latest 4 weeks before HOD meetings. The Meeting decided to re-schedule the next HOD meeting and have it on 10-11 December 2015.

5.4 The Meeting took note of the information on WWF Principles for a Sustainable Blue Economy (doc. 5-2).

5.5 The Meeting considered and approved the progress report on HELCOM communication activities in the first half of 2015 (doc. 5-3) and requested those Contracting Parties who haven't yet provided the information to appoint their communication focal point contacts.

5.6 The Meeting took note of the information from Sweden on a smart phone friendly pilot Citizen's reporting system for alien species & harbour porpoise developed and the comment by Finland on a similar system hosted by SYKE for reporting alien species. SYKE was encouraged to be in contact with the Swedish authorities.

5.7 The Meeting took note of the information by the Russian Federation on the 16<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Day, which took place on 18-20 March 2015 in St. Petersburg, Russia, and was attended by ca. 500 participants.

5.8 The Meeting took note of the proposal by Estonia to consider the application of procedures for meetings for online meetings.

5.9 The Meeting took note of the information by Russia on a conference in Kaliningrad on 20 May 2015 for presentation of the Environmental report of the Kaliningrad oblast where the issue related to the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan was discussed.

5.10 The Meeting took note of the statement by the European Union as included in **Annex 6**.

5.11 The Meeting thanked Mr. Andrzej Jagusiewicz, the outgoing Polish Head of Delegation since 2008, for his devoted contribution to the HELCOM work and for the benefit of the Baltic Sea.

5.12 The Meeting thanked Estonia for the excellent organization of the meeting and their hospitality.

#### Agenda Item 6                      Next meeting(s)

Documents:

6.1 The Meeting agreed to hold the next meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HELCOM HOD 49-2015) in Helsinki, Finland, at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat, on 10-11 December 2015.

6.2 The Meeting took note of the suggestion by the Executive Secretary to focus a possible Stakeholder Conference in March next year on marine litter and invited the Heads of Delegation to consider the proposal.

#### Agenda Item 7                      Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 7-1

7.1 The Meeting adopted the Outcome of the Meeting as contained in document 7-1.

## Annex 1

## List of Participants

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Representing	Name	Organization	E-mail address
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<b>Chairs of HELCOM Groups</b>			
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## Annex 2

### (Annex to the RAP ML)

#### ACTIONS TO REDUCE THE INPUT AND PRESENCE OF MARINE LITTER IN THE BALTIC SEA AS PART OF THE HELCOM REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER (RAP ML)

##### 1. Types of actions

In line with HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 “The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML)” the Contracting Parties agreed to start implementation of actions on marine litter as included in this Annex to be further developed jointly, assisted by the relevant HELCOM subsidiary bodies including via a lead country/actor approach. In a follow up process to implement the RAP ML, the intention is to develop appropriate actions into concrete measures to prevent and reduce marine litter. In doing so, cost-effectiveness of measures and ongoing activities which can be used for the implementation should be considered.

The actions are divided into regional actions and voluntary national actions.

The regional actions are those, requiring a joint approach by Contracting Parties and of a large-scale, widespread and transboundary character. The joint approach could be, for instance, to address other organizations or institutions having the specific competence to act (e.g. exclusive competences of the European Union, the International Maritime Organization regarding new regulations for shipping).

The voluntary national actions are primarily of national concern and responsibility of the Contracting Parties. They are presented in the format of a pick list for the Contracting Parties to voluntarily select for their implementation according to national relevancy. The voluntary national actions are part of the list with the aim to exchange information and coordinate measures.

Both types of actions are divided into three themes: (i) actions to combat land-based and (ii) sea-based sources of marine litter which include also actions on removal and disposal of litter already present in the marine environment, and (iii) actions for education and outreach. Producing less litter by means of smart production is treated as an integral theme.

The list of actions has been developed through a bottom-up approach whereby a wide array of experts and stakeholders were consulted. Available information on main items and composition of marine litter found in the coastal and marine environments, and amounts and sources of marine litter in the Baltic Sea, has been taken into account. Thus, the list represents areas in which, to the best knowledge, the Contracting Parties need to act, jointly or individually. Further, each of the regional actions include further specification based on first considerations during the workshops for the development of the RAP ML. These specifications can be further worked out with regard to kind of envisaged products or processes for the single actions that are to be delivered or conducted, and are up to amendments according to needs and capacities of Contracting Parties through a lead country approach.

The Contracting Parties agreed to reach a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea by 2020/2021, and the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated in 2021.

##### 2. Regional actions – HELCOM Collective Actions

The following tables compile a number of actions for the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention for joint implementation on the regional scale. Coordination on these collective actions is a key for implementing the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

An implementation plan will be subsequently prepared following a lead country approach in order to assign the actions to those countries which are willing to develop them further into concrete measures. The action plan will be revised if necessary. The desired results, or output of the actions should also be specified in course of the planning. Actions linked to the corresponding activities within OSPAR are marked with the reference to the OSPAR Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. Cooperation is ongoing between the Regional Seas in order to implement the Regional Actions Plans in a coordinated way e.g. to build on each other work and jointly plan implementation.

## 2.1 Regional actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
<b>General improved waste prevention and management</b>		
RL1	Prepare and agree on HELCOM guidelines on marine litter references to be included in national and local waste prevention and waste management plans, i.a. an element highlighting the impacts of marine litter.	Guidelines by 2017
RL2	Provide HELCOM guidelines on best practice routines with regard to cleaning and collection systems to prevent litter from land entering the aquatic environment.	Guidelines by 2017
RL3	Share best practice on waste management in order to identify and address loopholes that makes waste turn into marine litter, including the issue of landfills, regulations and enforcement:	Overview report on good waste management and loopholes, taking into consideration similar action within OSPAR by 2016.
RL4	Improvement of stormwater management in order to prevent litter, including microlitter, to enter the marine environment from heavy weather events.	By 2018 at the latest HELCOM has compiled information to give guidance on improvements of stormwater management on a local level to prevent and reduce stormwater related waste (including micro litter) entering the marine environment, taking into consideration similar action within OSPAR. If appropriate according to findings of the activity and other relevant information, amend HELCOM Recommendation 28E/5 on municipal wastewater treatment.
RL5	Establish a dialogue and negotiate on solutions with business and industry to (i) develop design improvements that reduce the negative impacts of products entering the marine environment, and (ii) reduce over-packaging and promote wise packaging	Initiatives taken by the private sector.

<b>Measures to tackle top items</b>		
<b>Micro particles</b>		
RL6	Establish an overview of the importance of the different sources of primary and secondary microplastics. Evaluate products and processes that include both primary and secondary micro plastics, such as fibres from clothing, assess if they are covered or not by legislation, and act, if appropriate, to influence the legal framework, or identify other necessary measures. .	By 2017 an overview on what products and processes contribute to the input of micro plastics to the Baltic Sea, taking into account similar action within OSPAR. By 2018 existing legislation is assessed and necessary measures identified together with relevant stakeholders.
RL7	Investigate and promote best available techniques as well as research and develop additional techniques in waste water treatment plants to prevent micro particles entering the marine environment.	By 2018 HELCOM has compiled information, and prepared a report on micro particles removal in waste water treatment plants taking into account similar action within OSPAR. If appropriate according to findings of the search and other relevant information, amend HELCOM Recommendation 28E/5 on municipal wastewater treatment.
<b>Sewage related litter including sanitary waste</b>		
RL8	Assess the importance of the contribution of upstream waste flows to the marine environment and, if needed, identify suitable actions.	By 2017 an assessment of the importance of sewage related waste coming from the upstream waste flow is produced. By 2018 share assessment with River and River Basin Commissions and identify measures including the implementation of related regulations; missing elements are identified and guidelines for improvement are presented.
<b>Expanded Polystyrene (Polystyrene Foam)</b>		
RL9	Compile information on the prevalence and sources of expanded polystyrene (EPS) in the marine environment, and engage with industry to make proposals for alternative solutions (e.g. use of other materials, establishment of deposits, return and restoration systems, overpackaging reduction).	By 2017 an overview of the most significant sources of EPS ending up in the marine environment is produced, in cooperation with OSPAR. Make recommendations to the Contracting Parties on voluntary agreements with the industry on changes in product design and applying best practices when handling EPS by 2019.

<b>Plastic bags</b>		
RL10	Define and implement appropriate instruments and incentives to reduce the use of plastic bags, including the illustration of the associated costs and environmental impacts (e.g. establishment of levies, deposit fees, taxes or bans on plastic bags). []. Support regional coordination in the Baltic Sea of the implementation of the future revised Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags, for HELCOM Contracting Parties being EU members.	By 2018 HELCOM Contracting Parties start to coordinate and inform each other about consumption of plastic bags on an annual basis. By 2019 establish a reduction target of plastic bags, taking into account the measures which are implemented nationally.
<b>Bottles and containers</b>		
RL11	Cooperate on the establishment and/or further development of deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (e.g. glass, plastics and aluminum) in the HELCOM Contracting Parties in accordance with national law as appropriate. . Investigate and strive for bilateral and multilateral solutions between the countries for establishment of such systems in relation to passenger ships. .	CPs informing in 2017 on the status/plans regarding the deposit refund systems, including on possible solutions regarding passenger ships.
<b>Actions addressing third parties</b>		
RL12	Encourage, based on existing labels such as the EU Ecolabel and the Nordic Ecolabel, exchange with international environmental certification schemes for information and inclusion of the management and prevention of marine litter in their lists of criteria.	By 2016 initiate an activity on what certification schemes could be addressed, which existing criteria could be promoted for potential inclusion in international certification systems together with ways and means how to help approving those.
RL13	HELCOM Contracting Parties to seek cooperation with the River and River Basin Commissions, as appropriate, in order to include impacts of litter on the marine environment from riverine inputs, taking into account activities in the context of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Bathing Water Directive, and beyond, when applicable. This cooperation should include the exchange of experience on best practice to prevent litter entering into water systems, in line with action RL8.	HELCOM Contracting Parties will continue cooperation with River and River basin Commissions, as appropriate, in order to integrate measures addressing the reduction of littering in river basins followed up by appropriate information exchange on the implementation of measures.
<b>Remediation and removal actions</b>		
RL14	Address landfills or dumpsites including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment due to factors such as coastal erosion and vicinity to rivers.	By 2020 a regional-wide map on landfills and dumpsites including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment is produced.
RL15	Establish an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, including cleaning beaches actions by local communities, riverbanks, pelagic and surface sea areas, ports, marinas and inland waterways, in cooperation with relevant fora. Develop best practice on environmental friendly technologies and methods for cleaning.	Coordinate with other RSCs in order to set up an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in the different marine compartments and rivers.

## 2.2. Regional actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
<b>Actions addressing shipping related waste</b>		
RS1	Development of best practice on the disposal of old pleasure boats (i.e. intentional disposal of the boats at the ending of their lifetime in the sea and on shore).	Best practice developed by 2018
RS2	Develop best practice in relation to inspections for MARPOL Annex V, including harmonized management of data. Support regional coordination of IMO regulations in accordance with EU requirements for those HELCOM countries which are EU members.	Best practice developed in cooperation with Paris MoU by 2017
RS3	Further work on implementation and harmonization of the no-special-fee system in ports of the Baltic Sea countries, addressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– gaps in existing regulations,</li> <li>– enforcement and practices concerning shipping,</li> <li>– port reception facilities auditing to assess adequacy of garbage collection,</li> <li>– fair waste burden sharing between ports.</li> </ul>	Evaluate the implementation of HELCOM Recommendation (28E-10), starting 2016
<b>Actions addressing waste delivery in ports/marinas</b>		
RS4	Implementation of the ISO standard (ISO 201070:2013) in relation to port reception facilities. Differentiate according to the size of the port. Promote the development of regional statistics on waste collected in ports based on existing information as far as possible.	Assess how many ports are operating according to ISO standards and to propose action as appropriate by 2017.
<b>Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture</b>		
RS5	Promote and disseminate best practice in relation to all relevant aspects of waste management within the fishing sector (including e.g. waste management on board, waste management at harbors and operational losses/net cuttings).	By 2018, based on the OSPAR outcome, select best practices to be disseminated in the Baltic Sea.
RS6	Through a multinational project, such as the MARELITT Baltic project, together with the fishing industry and other stakeholders, develop and promote best practice in relation to ALDFG and derelict fishing gear and their removal.	Best Practice developed by 2017, the issues is promoted within HELCOM-EUSBSR cooperation
RS7	Compile information and elaborate guidelines on best practices to reduce the input of ALDFG from commercial and recreational fishing to the Baltic Sea taking into account geographical particularities; utilize UNEP RSC report and FAO on ALDFG as a starting point and focus on regional specifics	Guidelines developed by 2017 taking into account geographical particularities.
RS8	Identify the options to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industry, which could contribute to marine litter, including deposit schemes and extended producer responsibility.	Late 2016 assess the use of OSPAR document and in consultation with the Baltic Sea Advisory Council consider and agree on the way forward to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industries.
RS9	Investigate the use and prevalence of dolly ropes (bunches of polyethylene threads used to protect the cod end of demersal trawl nets from abrasions; synthetic fibre) in the areas of the Baltic Sea where they are used and consider the need to act.	Consider the outcome of the study on the impact of dolly ropes currently under development by the Netherlands. Baltic Sea Advisory Council is to be invited to be involved in this activity.

Remediation and removal measures		
RS10	Mapping of snagging sites or historic dumping grounds and a risk assessment for identifying where accumulation of ghost nets pose a threat to the environment and should be removed.	As part of the assessment to be developed by HELCOM SUBMERGED by 2016. Mapping by 2017. Risk assessment by 2018.
RS11	Based on the risk assessment conducted in RS10 and identification of accumulation areas, initiate removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land.	The aim is to increase the removal and disposal of the nets, and that statistics are available to confirm the increasing trend.
RS12	Enter into the partnership with international and regional organizations (e.g. KIMO, NABU, OSPAR Commission) as well as port authorities, to encourage implementation of passive Fishing for Litter schemes, to collect litter caught in fishing nets during normal fishing activities.	Increasing trends in the number of vessels from the fishing sector involved in the schemes.

### 2.3. Regional actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
<b>General improved waste prevention and management</b>		
RE1	To prepare information sheets to assist Contracting Parties in developing material for education programs, especially for professional seafarers including fishermen, highlighting the marine litter problem and including codes of practice in cooperation with relevant organisations including IMO.	Information sheets to be prepared by 2016
RE2	HELCOM website to be updated periodically based on the input from Contracting Parties on marine litter management activities.	2015 initial information uploaded (simplified BSAP follow up system)
RE3	Develop a communication strategy for this Regional Action Plan linked in a coherent way with national initiatives/actions. This will include linking the HELCOM website to relevant projects and initiatives.	2016

### 3. Voluntary national actions

The following tables compile a number of proposed actions for the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention for voluntary implementation. These actions aim at information exchange and coordination but are primarily of national concern and in the responsibility of the Contracting Parties.

Therefore, the following lists of actions can be seen as a pick list for possible actions which can be chosen, according to national findings, e.g. for inclusion in the national programmes of measures (PoM) to fulfill the requirements of the MSFD for those Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States.

### 3.1. Voluntary national actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
<b>General improved waste prevention and management</b>	
NL1	National and local waste prevention and waste management plans: * to include a reference to marine litter * to include an element highlighting the impacts of marine litter * to consider the cleaning and cleansing provision/infrastructure in municipalities by the coast or rivers and to make the necessary improvements to prevent sources and pathways of litter from land entering the aquatic environment.
NL2	Promote Extended Producer Responsibility Strategies requiring producers, manufacturers, brand owners and first importers to be responsible for the entire life-cycle of the product with measures prioritizing the hierarchy of waste management in order to encourage companies to design products with long durability for reuse, recycling and materials reduction in weight and toxicity. Focus to be made on items frequently found in the marine environment.
NL3	Improvement of stormwater management in order to prevent litter, including microlitter, from heavy weather events and to enter the marine environment.
<b>Measures to tackle top items</b>	
<b>Micro particles</b>	
NL4	Encourage voluntary reporting of companies on their products formulas (i.e. that they do not contain micro particles) towards HELCOM Contracting Parties. Bring in certification schemes, such as Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel, Nordic Ecolabel, etc. Promote a no-littering policy in national parks and protected areas, i.e. visitors should carry out everything they carry in.
NL5	Establish an overview of the importance of the different sources of primary and secondary microplastics. Evaluate products and processes that include both primary and secondary micro plastics, assess if they are covered or not by legislation, and act, if appropriate, to reduce the potential impact on the marine environment and to influence the legal framework. This must include the engagement with all appropriate sectors such as manufacturers and retailers. With regard to the use of primary microplastics in personal care products formulations the possible impact on the marine environment should be reduced by applying substitutes. For other areas of applications appropriate solutions need to be defined.
<b>Sewage related litter including sanitary waste</b>	
NL6	Clarify and, if needed, carry out research on the importance of sewage related waste in the upstream waste flows (i.e. sewage treatments applied, efficiency of the treatments, existence of untreated sewage, storm water influence, psychology behind people's behavior related to flushing the toilet, identification of missing elements).
<b>Plastic bags</b>	
NL7	Support local pilot projects phasing out, replacing, and reducing single-use plastic bags. Strive for voluntary agreements with retailers and supermarkets to set an objective of reduction of plastic bags consumption.
<b>Bottles and containers</b>	
NL8	Establish deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (glass, plastics and aluminum), including the establishment of such systems on passenger ships and related harbors. Encourage refill systems and recycling, e.g. bulk and refill/reusable container for dry food and cleaning products, when applicable.
<b>Cigarette butts</b>	
NL9	Establish ashtrays in public areas such as beaches and outside restaurants, bars, public buildings (inland and along the coasts, ferries).
<b>Remediation and removal measures</b>	
NL10	Map (and highlight) landfills or dumpsites, including including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment due to factors such as coastal erosion, vicinity to rivers, and take appropriate action.
NL11	Establish an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, including cleaning beaches actions by local communities, riverbanks, pelagic and surface sea areas, ports, marinas and inland waterways, in cooperation with relevant fora. Develop best practice on environmental friendly technologies and methods for cleaning.

### 3.2. Voluntary national actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
<b>General improved waste prevention and management</b>	
NS1	Ensure the full implementation of HELCOM Convention Article 8 (Annex IV), especially Regulation 6; in line with related international agreements such as MARPOL V and related EU legislation (59/2000/EG) with regard to discharge of wastes to port reception facilities, and Article 9 on adequate reception facilities for pleasure crafts.
<b>Actions addressing shipping related waste including waste delivery in ports/marinas</b>	
NS2	Improve and follow-up enforcement of MARPOL Annex V.
NS3	Ensure and gather information on the implementation in ports of HELCOM Recommendation 28E/10: Application of the no-special-fee system to ship-generated wastes and marine litter caught in fishing nets in the Baltic Sea area.
NS4	Promotion of garbage collection for pleasure crafts by marinas (i.a. Blue Flag Marinas requirements related to the availability of pump-out stations and sustainable waste management).
<b>Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture</b>	
NS5	Improve enforcement of EU Regulation 404/2011 on gear marking.
NS6	Improve enforcement of EU Regulation 1224/2009 on reporting lost gear.
NS7	Enhance resource efficiency by facilitating markets and applications for plastic waste from the fishing, aquaculture and shipping industry (e.g. by bringing together producers of waste and recycling companies) by looking at specific items and differences in materials, including giving value to waste streams by financial incentives.
<b>Remediation and removal actions</b>	
NS8	Based on the risk assessment and identification of accumulation areas initiate removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land.
NS9	Promote removal of lost fishing gear.
NS10	Encourage fishing vessels to be involved in passive Fishing for Litter schemes, where they are available.

### 3.3. Voluntary national actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
NE1	Promote and undertake education activities on marine litter in synergy with existing initiatives in the field of sustainable development and in partnership with civil society (including activities related to prevention and promotion of sustainable consumption and production).
NE2	Identify and promote curricula for marine related education, including both professional seafarers and the recreational sector (e.g. diving and sailing schools), which develop awareness, understanding, and respect for the marine environment and secure commitment to responsible behavior at personal, local, national and global level.
NE3	Encourage participation in International, EU and National Marine Litter Cleanup Campaigns.
NE4	Promote the "Adopt a beach" system.
NE5	Raising public awareness, including for children and youths and consumer campaigns, on the occurrence, and prevention of marine litter (e.g. to use ashtrays in public areas inland and along the coast), including micro particles, taking into account existing materials (e.g. Marlisco Project) and accompanied by image campaigns addressing threats/impact to marine life from various harmful litter items, such as cigarette filters.
NE6	Enhance cooperation and coordination with global marine initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The UNEP's Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA-Marine);</li> <li>– Regional Seas Action Plans;</li> <li>– The Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM); and</li> <li>– The Honolulu Commitment and the Honolulu Strategy on marine debris.</li> </ul>

## Appendix I – Reporting format on implementation of actions

<b>Country</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Contact person</b>	
<b>Affiliation</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Skype</b>	
<b>Type of action <sup>1</sup></b>	
<b>Code of action <sup>2</sup></b>	
<b>Action</b>	
<b>Implementation period</b>	From: To:
<b>Status</b>	
<b>Description of the action</b>	
<b>Responsible organization</b>	
<b>Other organizations involved</b>	
<b>Geographical area covered</b>	
<b>URL to the initiative</b>	
<b>Type of marine litter targeted<sup>3</sup></b>	
<b>Compartment targeted<sup>4</sup></b>	
<b>Source targeted<sup>5</sup></b>	

1 - Please select accordingly: L –actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter; S – actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter; E – actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter.

2 - If the action is listed in the Annex to the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, please provide its code. Otherwise, leave the space blank.

3 - Select from the following keywords, the best that adjust to the types of marine litter targeted by the action. If none is appropriate please indicate “other” and provide further details:

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>ALDFG</b>	Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear
<b>Food related waste</b>	Food and beverage related waste, i.a. plastic and glass bottles, “six-pack” rings, plastic caps/lids, disposable cutlery and cups, straws
<b>Plastic bags</b>	Single use plastic bags and shopping bags
<b>Plastic waste</b>	All type of plastic waste. Indicate as appropriate: macro-, meso- (5 mm and 2,5 cm in size), micro-plastics or plastic microbeads
<b>Sanitary waste</b>	Household sanitary waste, i.a. sanitary pads and/or tampons, diapers, razors, cotton bud sticks
<b>Smoking related waste</b>	Disposable lighters, cigar tips, cigarette butts

4 - Please select accordingly: beach, water column, water surface, sea bed, tidal flat, river bank, shipwreck, sediment, biota.

5 - Please indicate which land-based or sea-based source of marine litter is addressed by the action.

## Appendix II – Reporting format on the effectiveness of the implemented actions

<b>Country</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Contact person</b>	
<b>Affiliation</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Skype</b>	
<b>Type of action<sup>1</sup></b>	
<b>Code of action<sup>2</sup></b>	
<b>Action</b>	
<b>Implementation period</b>	From: To:
<b>Status</b>	
<b>Description of the action</b>	
<b>Responsible organization</b>	
<b>Other organizations involved</b>	
<b>Geographical area covered</b>	
<b>URL to the initiative</b>	
<b>Type of marine litter targeted<sup>3</sup></b>	
<b>Compartment targeted<sup>4</sup></b>	
<b>Source targeted<sup>5</sup></b>	
<b>Cost of the initiative</b>	
<b>Financing source</b>	
<b>Challenges<sup>6</sup></b>	
<b>Results achieved</b>	
<b>Results expected</b>	
<b>Negative impacts</b>	
<b>Next steps</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

1 - Please select accordingly: L – actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter; S – actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter; E – actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter.

2 - If the action is listed in the Recommendation, please provide its code. Otherwise, leave the space in blank.

3 - Select from the following keywords, the best that adjust to the types of marine litter targeted by the action. If none is appropriate please indicate "other" and provide further details:

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>ALDFG</b>	Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear
<b>Food related waste</b>	Food and beverage related waste, i.a. plastic and glass bottles, "six-pack" rings, plastic caps/lids, disposable cutlery and cups, straws
<b>Plastic bags</b>	Single use plastic bags and shopping bags
<b>Plastic waste</b>	All type of plastic waste. Indicate as appropriate: macro-, meso- (5 mm and 2,5 cm in size), micro-plastics or plastic microbeads
<b>Sanitary waste</b>	Household sanitary waste, i.a. sanitary pads and/or tampons, diapers, razors, cotton bud sticks
<b>Smoking related waste</b>	Disposable lighters, cigar tips, cigarette butts

4 - Please select accordingly: beach, water column, water surface, sea bed, tidal flat, river bank, shipwreck, sediment, biota. Please indicate whether it is a "protected area" or a "non-protected area".

5 - Please indicate which land-based or sea-based source of marine litter is addressed by the action.

6 - Please provide a brief description of the challenges encountered: technical, logistical, political, financial, institutional and cultural if appropriate.

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**Appendix III – Definition of terms for the purpose of this Recommendation**

- a) “Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear or parts thereof” (ALFDG) or “Derelict fishing gear” (DFG) are the collective terms for commercial and recreational fishing gear that has been abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded into the marine environment and causes negative biological impacts through, e.g. unintentional catches of fish (a process which is often referred to as “ghost fishing”), coverage of sensitive habitats and/or fragmentation into micro-particles that could enter the food chain;
- b) “Fishing for litter” means the collection of marine litter and its subsequent landing in ports and proper disposal by fishermen, whether “passive” (litter is collected during their regular fishing activities) or “active” (litter is collected by fishermen on duty for that specific purpose);
- c) “Fishing gear” includes all items/elements onboard fishing vessels that are used for fishing purposes, including fish aggregating devices (FADs);
- d) “IUU fishing gear” means any fishing gear, marked or not marked, used for the purpose of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- e) “Marine litter” means any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment. Marine litter consists of items that have been made or used by people and deliberately discarded or unintentionally lost into the sea and on beaches including such material transported into the marine environment from land by rivers, draining or sewage systems or winds. For example, marine litter consists of plastics, wood, metals, glass, rubber, clothing, paper, etc. This definition does not include semi-solid remains of, for example, mineral and vegetable oils, and chemicals that sometimes litter sea and shores;
- f) “Macro litter” means the fraction of marine litter of more than 2,5 cm in size;
- g) “Micro litter” means the fraction of marine litter of less than 5 mm in size with a further division into “Large Micro Particles” (1-5mm) and “Small Micro Particles” (<1mm);
- h) “Personal care product” means an article intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, or sprayed on, introduced to, or otherwise applied to, the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance and an article intended for use as a component of such an article;
- i) “Primary microplastics” means plastics produced in microscopic size either for the direct use in products (such as microbeads used, e.g. in cosmetic peeling products or for cleaning purposes of ship hulks) or indirect use (such as pre-productions pellets or nurdles);
- j) “Secondary microplastics” means the fraction of microplastics in the marine environment which results from the breakdown of larger items in numerous tiny fragments due to mechanical forces and/or photochemical processes, as well as from other degradation sources such as fibres in wastewater from washing clothes and particles of rubber lost from tyres due to normal wear.

## Annex 3

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### **1. Title of Project**

Proposal for agri-environmental function in the HELCOM Secretariat

#### **2. Project Manager (s)**

Agri-environment advisor to be employed

#### **3. Proposing Party**

Executive Secretary and HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri Group)

#### **4. The body supervising the Project**

HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri Group)

#### **5. Background, target and activities**

##### **Background**

Eutrophication has been a major environmental problem in the Baltic Sea for decades, and much of the HELCOM work – both on regional level and in the Contracting Parties, has been invested to estimating inputs of nutrients and quantifying their sources in the sea and the catchment area.

This knowledge is used to seek effective and cost-efficient measures to reduce the inputs of nitrogen and phosphorus. Within the framework of HELCOM and since 1980s, the Contracting Parties have agreed to implement various measures to fight eutrophication in urban wastewater treatment sector, land transport, industries on land, agriculture, shipping, ports, aquaculture. Sources outside HELCOM area are also recognized and efforts are being undertaken to address them. Measures agreed and taken within other regulatory and policy frameworks make a crucial contribution to these efforts.

Substantial progress has been achieved already, as in general, inputs of nitrogen and phosphorus to the sea have been decreasing, leading to the first signs of improvement in the marine environment. Nevertheless, further reduction of nutrient inputs is needed to achieve a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea with regard to eutrophication.

Implementation of measures varies among the Contracting Parties and there are also differences between the countries in terms of reduction potential. The HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme provides a common framework where the countries are free to choose the most cost-effective measures to bring down the inputs to the maximum allowable level representing a healthy marine environment.

Losses of nutrients from agriculture represent a substantial share of overall inputs to the sea. The 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting acknowledged that sustainability of agricultural production is a key to the success of reaching input reductions for Good Environmental Status.

Further, the Contracting Parties agreed (in the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration) to strive for the development and application of sustainable agricultural practices with the least environmental impacts on the Baltic Sea, underpinned by technical, economic and regulatory measures.

The common aim is to develop resource efficient, sustainable agricultural production systems. Nutrient recycling is an essential element of this.

To reach the nutrient circulation goals, introduction of nutrient accounting on farm level is an essential tool. This leads to an increased awareness of the value of nutrients and their efficient use, improved farm nutrient management and a better targeted manure nutrient recycling. To recycle nutrients in an agronomically efficient manner, information on the nutrient content of manure is essential.

To speed up the contribution of the agricultural sector in joint considerations for improvement of the marine environment, the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri Group) as part of the HELCOM working structure was established.

The Group has been tasked to look into nutrient recycling as an overall theme, and nutrient accounting on farm level and standards for nutrient content in manure as two specific topics. Lead countries: Germany and Denmark, and Finland have been identified for the two topics.

### **Target**

To support the work of the HELCOM Group of Sustainable Agricultural Practices in implementing its work programme and the work of the lead countries in their specific topics as well as to contribute to the overall theme of nutrient recycling, establishment of the agri-environment advisor function in the HELCOM Secretariat is proposed.

The advisor will help in substantial preparations for the meetings and workshops of the Agri Group, including of the necessary documentation. The person will support the work of the Contractive Parties by analyzing and synthesizing material and information on existing practices and ongoing activities and preparing comparisons and options for consideration. The existing information will be used as far as possible.

### **Activities and timetable**

The advisor will, as an overall goal, help to establish links between developing production systems to save resources and the benefits this brings to the marine environment, in the context of nutrient recycling. This will start from collecting the information on latest developments regarding nutrient recycling and presenting a concise report in the next Agri group meeting.

The advisor will be employed for September 2015 – December 2016.

More specific tasks:

The advisor will support Finland as lead party for the topic of nutrient content in manure, including:

1. Facilitate establishing a network of national experts within the Baltic Sea region dealing with standards for nutrients content in manure,
2. Complement the Baltic Sea overview of the systems for manure standards, e.g. based on the information collected within the Finnish project,
3. Discuss with national experts possible scenarios (pre-requisites, obstacles, enabling factors) for establishing national upgraded guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure,
4. Prepare a workshop to discuss in detail the challenges and possible solutions to establishment of more advanced normative manure systems in the countries,
5. Propose next steps to facilitate national work,
6. Prepare an initial outline for guidelines/recommendation on the use of standards.

Initial timetable:

Tasks 1 and 2: September - October 2015

Task 3: during 2015

Task 4: November 2015

Tasks 5: spring 2016

Task 6: October 2016

The advisor will support Germany and Denmark as lead parties for the topic of nutrient accounting on farm level, including:

1. Analyse material from the HELCOM workshop on nutrient book-keeping containing country specific information on nutrient accounting,
2. Prepare material demonstrating benefits of nutrient accounting on farm level (both economic and environmental),
3. Review available information on methodologies for calculating nutrient balances and prepare a reference list,
4. Develop a proposal for how to arrive at national roadmaps for promoting and advancing towards applying by 2018 annual accounting at farm level and prepare for follow up activities.

Initial timetable:

Task 1: in 2015 (as soon as proceedings of the HELCOM workshop on book-keeping are available)

Task 2: January - May 2016

Task 3: June - September 2016

Task 4: October - December 2016

The timetable for activities may be adjusted as work progresses and according to the planning by the Agri Group.

**6. Expected results**

Concrete progress in implementation of the 2013 Ministerial commitments on nutrient recycling, book-keeping and content in manure.

Establishing regular exchange and communication between research projects and experts in the countries to enhance understanding of best practices and available solutions.

Making the results of the expert exchange and conclusions available for national considerations and development on national systems and strategies.

**7. Consistency with HELCOM priorities**  yes  no

**8. Budget****8.1 Total costs**

64,000 EUR + travels costs for agri-environmental advisor

**8.2 Costs divided per financial year**

Budget year	Staff cost	Travel cost
2015/2016	40,000 EUR	3 travels
2016/2017	24,000 EUR	2 travels

**8.3 Sources of financing divided per financial year**

2015/2016 – HELCOM budget

2016/2017 – HELCOM budget

**10. Additional requests**

All Contracting Parties are invited to actively engage in the work of the Ari Group.

The Contracting Parties have been requested by AGRI 2-2015 to nominate experts for the issue of nutrient content in manure. Experts will be requested to share available information for comparing the national systems and will be invited to participate in the workshop.

**11. Organization of the Project / Procedure of nomination of the Project team members**

The agri-environmental advisor will be employed to the Secretariat. The professional expectations for the advisor:

The agri-environmental advisor should have a university degree in an appropriate field of study (e.g. agricultural science, environmental engineering, environmental management, agroecology), some years of proven working experience in fields relevant to the tasks, and knowledge of agriculture and environmental policies. Excellent communication skills in English, both written and spoken, and high social competence are essential.

**12. Signature of the Project Manager****13. Opinion of the Chair of the relevant body**

The Chair supports the establishment of the project.

**14. Opinion of the Executive Secretary**

The Executive Secretary supports the establishment of the project.

**15. Decision of the Heads of Delegation**

\_\_\_ to establish \_\_\_ not to establish

## Annex 4

## Agreement on GES boundaries for core indicators and further development of indicators

Indicator name [[link to report on the HELCOM Meeting Portal]]	GES-boundary or Environmental Target		Based on HOD 48-2015
<b>Core indicators</b>			
Abundance of coastal fish key functional groups	Location specific. Modern baseline or trend depending on the length of the data series.		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish DE: study reservation on GES
Abundance of key coastal fish species	Location specific. Modern baseline or trend depending on the length of the data series.		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish DE: study reservation on GES
Abundance of salmon spawners and smolt	75% potential smolt production capacity		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish
Abundance of sea trout spawners and parr	>50% site specific reference potential		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish
Abundance of waterbirds in the breeding season	75% of considered species not more than 30% below baseline (20% for species laying only one egg per year)		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish
Abundance of waterbirds in the wintering season	75% of considered species not more than 30% below baseline (20% for species laying only one egg per year)		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish
Distribution of Baltic seals	All historically identified and available haul-out sites used and no migration barriers		Agreed on GES Agreed to publish DE: study reservation on GES
Population trends and abundance of seals	Populations at TRL	No decline in population size or pup production exceeding 10% occurred over a period up to 10 years	
	Populations below TRL	3% below the maximum rate of increase, i.e. annual rate of increase; 7% for grey seals and ringed seals, 9% for harbour seals.	
	For GES to be achieved the population size of each management unit must in addition be >10,000 individuals.		
Nutritional status of marine mammals	Samples from	Populations at exponential growth carrying capacity	
	Hunted seals	40 mm blubber	25 mm blubber
	By-caught seals	35 mm blubber	25 mm blubber
Reproductive status of marine mammals	Species	age class [year]	pregnancy rate
	Grey seal	6	90%
	Ringed seal (tentative)	6	90%
	Harbour seal	5	90%
	Harbour porpoise	?	?
Number of drowned mammals and waterbirds in fishing gear	General environmental target concept agreed, no specific boundaries are yet proposed.		Agreed to publish

Indicator name [link to report on the HELCOM Meeting Portal]	GES-boundary or Environmental Target	Based on HOD 48-2015						
Zooplankton mean size and total stock	Lower bound of the 95%-CI for the respective mean values during the reference time period	Agreed on GES, noting that regional boundary values need to be calculated Agreed to publish						
Trends in arrival of new non-indigenous species	Long-term; no new introductions of NIS per assessment unit through human activities during a six year assessment period Additional mid-term goal; a decrease in the rate of new introductions	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish						
Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD)	EQS <i>biota human health</i> 167 µg/kg ww secondary: sediment	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish						
Metals	Cd: EQS <sub>water</sub> (AA) 0.2 µg/l secondary: QS <sub>sediment</sub> 2.3 mg/kg dw or biota BAC blue mussel 960 µg/kg dw Hg: EQS <sub>biota secondary poisoning</sub> 20 µg/kg ww Pb: EQS <sub>water</sub> (AA) 1.3 µg/l secondary: QS <sub>sediment</sub> 120 mg/kg dw or biota BAC mussel 1300 µg/kg dw, BAC fish 26 µg/kg	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish						
Polybrominated biphenyl ethers (PBDE)	EQS <i>biota human health</i> 0.0085 µg/kg ww secondary: sediment	Agreed on GES						
Perfluorooctane sulphonate (PFOS)	EQS <i>biota human health</i> 9.1 µg/kg ww secondary: EQS <sub>water</sub>	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish						
Radioactive substances: Cesium-137 in fish and surface waters	Pre-chernobyl level <table border="1" data-bbox="499 1048 879 1162"> <tr> <td data-bbox="499 1048 746 1081">herring</td> <td data-bbox="746 1048 879 1081">2.5 Bq kg<sup>-1</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="499 1081 746 1115">flounder and plaice</td> <td data-bbox="746 1081 879 1115">2.9 Bq kg<sup>-1</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="499 1115 746 1162">seawater</td> <td data-bbox="746 1115 879 1162">15 Bq m<sup>-3</sup></td> </tr> </table>	herring	2.5 Bq kg <sup>-1</sup>	flounder and plaice	2.9 Bq kg <sup>-1</sup>	seawater	15 Bq m <sup>-3</sup>	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish DE: to clarify position on GES
herring	2.5 Bq kg <sup>-1</sup>							
flounder and plaice	2.9 Bq kg <sup>-1</sup>							
seawater	15 Bq m <sup>-3</sup>							
White-tailed eagle productivity	Productivity: 0.97 nestlings. Brood size: 1.71 nestlings. Breeding success: 0.59 (59%)	Agreed on GES Agreed to publish						
Population structure of long-lived macrozoobenthic species		GES-boundary not yet proposed No agreement to publish until offshore GES concept is adequately described						
Proportion of large fish in the community		GES-boundary not yet proposed No agreement to publish						
State of the soft-bottom macrofauna community		GES-boundary for the offshore areas not yet proposed, agreed to use nationally developed indexes and intercalibration in coastal areas. Development of high priority.						
Polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and their metabolites		No agreement on GES, noted that EQS should be used where available and the need to assess other substances still to be considered and tentatively as supporting parameters. No agreement to publish until sufficient editorial work to clarify the concept is made						

Indicator name [link to report on the HELCOM Meeting Portal]	GES-boundary or Environmental Target	Based on HOD 48-2015
Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) and dioxins and furans		Agreed on GES No agreement to publish until sufficient editorial work to clarify the concept is made
TBT and imposex		GES-boundary not yet proposed, noted that derivation of sediment boundary and secondary biota boundaries need to be further elaborated No agreement to publish until GES concept and assessment protocol is adequately described
Inputs of nitrogen and phosphorous to the basins	MAI	(already adopted)
<b>Pre-core indicators</b>		
Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes		Keep as pre-core Future work of high importance
Distribution, pattern and extent of benthic biotopes		Keep as pre-core Future work of high importance
Lower depth limit distribution of the macrophyte community		Keep as pre-core Assessments in HOLAS II using national indexes as operationalization will take time
Acetylcholinesterase inhibition		Keep as pre-core DE: proposed as supplementary indicator
Diclofenac concentration		Keep as pre-core Further development to be agreed on after data compilation for the pharmaceutical assessment is completed
Estrogenic-like chemicals and effects		Keep as pre-core Further development to be agreed on after data compilation for the pharmaceutical assessment is completed
Lysosomal membrane stability (LMS)		Keep as pre-core DE: proposed as supplementary indicator
Reproductive disorders: Malformed eelpout and amphipod embryos		No agreement on GES-boundaries yet, additional clarification on amphipod boundary derivation needed as well as editorial work DE: proposed as supplementary indicator
Fish disease index (no progress in CORESET II)		
Micronucleus test (no progress in CORESET II)		

Indicator name [link to report on the HELCOM Meeting Portal]	GES-boundary or Environmental Target	Based on HOD 48-2015
Oil-spills affecting the marine environment		Technical review by Response 20-2015, environmental target proposed
Diatoms/dinoflagellates index		Agreed on shift to pre-core
Seasonal succession of functional phytoplankton groups		Agreed on shift to pre-core
Maximum length fish in the pelagic community		Agreed on shift to pre-core DE: support the indicator but study reservation on shift
Beach litter		Agreed on shift to pre-core
Continuous low frequency anthropogenic sound		Agreed on shift to pre-core
Total nitrogen concentration		Agreed on shift to pre-core and proposed to be considered for shift to core when GES-boundaries are presented
Total phosphorous concentration		Agreed on shift to pre-core and proposed to be considered for shift to core when GES-boundaries are presented
Cyanobacterial surface accumulations		Agreed on shift to pre-core
Phytoplankton spring bloom intensity based on chl-a		Agreed on shift to pre-core
<b>Candidate core indicators</b>		
Harbour porpoise distribution and abundance		Keep as candidate
Biomass ratio of opportunistic and perennial macroalgae		Keep as candidate
Phytoplankton species assemblage clusters based on environmental factors		Keep as candidate
EROD activity		Keep as candidate DE: proposed as supplementary indicator
Litter on the seafloor		Keep as candidate
Microlitter in the watercolumn		Keep as candidate
Distribution in time and space of loud low- and mid-frequency impulsive sounds		Keep as candidate Future work to be closely linked to development of a regional Registry

## Annex 5

## Project Description HELCOM ZEN ZIIM

1. **Title of the project:** Zooplankton Indicator Integration to Monitoring in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM ZEN ZIIM)
2. **Project Manager(s):** Elena Gorokhova (Sweden)
3. **Proposing party:** Contracting parties: Sweden
4. **The body supervising the project:** HELCOM State and Conservation
5. **Targets and activities**

5.1. **Aim**

This project is a logical continuation of ZEN QAI (2011-2014) with an overarching aim to promote zooplankton-based indicators to follow-up the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and to support the international Baltic regional zooplankton monitoring. The project results can also be of use for the Contracting Parties that are also EU member states for their implementation of MSFD. The aim of the project will be achieved by:

- Organizing training courses/workshops;
- Test the applicability of zooplankton-based indicators in the Baltic Sea, with particular focus on regional assessment;
- Harmonization zooplankton indicator with other food web indicators within the descriptor (D4) and establishing a dialogue with other groups involved in indicator work;
- Revising recommendations for zooplankton biomass assessment, which is a pre-requisite for harmonizing indicator applicability Baltic-wise.

5.2. **Importance of zooplankton assessment**

Zooplankton are a major link in aquatic ecosystems and integral to food web dynamics, ecosystem productivity, nutrient and carbon cycling. With the position that zooplankton has in the food web – sandwiched between phytoplankton and fish (between eutrophication and overfishing) – data and understanding of zooplankton are a prerequisite for an ecosystem approach to management. This approach is a cornerstone to HELCOM, Baltic Sea Action Plan, as well as other policies, namely Marine Strategy Framework Directive and EU Common Fisheries Policy. In particular, zooplankton are indicated as biological features to be considered under the MSFD (Annex III), and the Commission decision on GES (2010/477/EC) propose that zooplankton are addressed under descriptor Food Webs. In this context, development of ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ indicator metrics at the regional level is needed to provide a solid assessment of trophic conditions in marine ecosystems.

5.3. **Current activities and needs for development**

Preceding project, ZEN QAI, provided funding for network activities, such as training workshops, intercalibration exercises (Ring tests) and seminars. These activities facilitated quality assurance assessment, both within each participating laboratory and between laboratories involved in HELCOM coordinated monitoring.

**Previous results in the field of Indicator development.** As a part of ZEN QAI, zooplankton metrics were evaluated to revise existing data for responsiveness of zooplankton indicators to relevant pressures in order to develop food web indicators (Descriptor 4). By testing indicators reflecting various characteristics of zooplankton assemblages and relevant approaches for establishing Good Environmental Status (GES) values,

the project explored the possibility of using zooplankton-based metrics as indicators for fish feeding conditions and eutrophication-driven food web changes. This work resulted in the development of a conceptually new indicator MSTS based on two metrics: zooplankton mean size and zooplankton stock estimated as either abundance or biomass. The indicator was presented to CORESET I project and adopted as a HELCOM core indicator (HOD 41-2013). See HELCOM (2012) Development of a set of core indicators: Interim report of the HELCOM CORESET project. PART B: Descriptions of the indicators. Balt. Sea Environ. Proc. 129B: 1-222.

**Harmonization of indicators within Descriptor 4.** The necessity of conceptual integration of all indicators considered for D4, has been stressed in many discussions within ZEN as well as other groups and projects involved in this work. In particular, establishing GES boundaries should be harmonized within the descriptor. This would require a dialogue with other groups involved in indicator work (HELCOM PEG, OSPAR COBAM, ICES WGZE, ICES WKGMSFD, etc.) and responsible authorities. Moreover, focus on production-based indicators for lower food webs is recommended by ICES workshops addressing D4 indicators (ICES WKGMSFD; ICES WKFooWI).

**Ring Test 2012.** Within ZEN QAI, 20 participants from 14 testing laboratories/institutes of the Baltic Sea area in 9 HELCOM Member States participated in the Ring Test (RT) on species identification, counting and biomass determination of Baltic Sea zooplankton. The Ring Test 2012 was organized by ZEN in collaboration with the German company *Arivis*, the University of Rostock and the Leibniz Institute of Baltic Sea Research.

The overarching recommendation of the Ring Test is that a regular scheme of ring tests and continuous training workshops should be established and financed to maintain and improve the quality of zooplankton monitoring data to fulfill the demands of the regional and European policies. The target group for this training is zooplankton experts at national laboratories. The Ring Test report indicates a clear need for unification of taxonomic lists and biomass assessment in zooplankton monitoring and analysis in the Baltic Sea. This is particularly important for validation and implementation of zooplankton indicators and setting regional GES boundaries. This work has been started by revision of taxonomic lists, but there still remain a need in harmonizing biomass factors.

Based on the results of the indicator development, ring tests and ZEN discussions as well as participation in various meetings, **the need for systematic and region-specific validation of the MSTS indicator and unified methodology for biomass assessment in the Baltic Sea was acknowledged** as well as the need for development supporting area-specific indicators that would facilitate interpretation of MSTS.

### 5.3. Activities and objectives

Activities	Objectives
I. Training courses <i>September 2015</i>	a) To provide revised guidelines for zooplankton monitoring and required data collection for indicator assessment; b) To introduce methodology for the MSTS indicator calculations based on existing monitoring data; c) To introduce methodology for establishing GES boundaries for the MSTS indicator.
II. Revision and update of biomass factors <i>January 2016</i>	a) To further unify biomass assessment methods among the laboratories; b) To complement Baltic zooplankton list with species- and stage-specific biomass values; c) To document biomass calculation procedure for MSTS.

<p>III. Regional MSTs implementation and specification of GES</p> <p><i>September 2015 a-c</i></p> <p><i>September 2016 d</i></p> <p><i>February 2017 e</i></p>	<p>a) To promote operationalization of the MSTs indicator in all areas of the Baltic Sea, synthesize experience in MSTs application in different Baltic areas; including to propose GES-boundaries for the MSTs indicator for all relevant assessment units in the HELCOM area (provided that required data are available).</p> <p>b) To define data requirements for MSTs and an appropriate data reporting format to ensure that the COMBINE database hosted by ICES provides the data needs for the MSTs indicator.</p> <p>c) To critically examine challenges and possible inconsistencies in MSTs applicability</p> <p>d) To identify the need of region-specific supporting indicators to facilitate interpretation of MSTs;</p> <p>e) To provide the estimated GES values (see III-a) for use the HOLAS II project, to be considered by the State and Conservation Group and adopted by HELCOM HODs before used in the 2nd holistic assessment.</p>
<p>IV. Contribution to current HELCOM activities and dialogue with scientific community, stakeholders and data holders</p> <p><i>continuous</i></p>	<p>a) To exchange expertise in theory and practice of ecological indicators with various groups involved in WFD and MSFD;</p> <p>b) To update the core indicator report on MSTs as requested and downstream projects addressing MSFD implementation,</p> <p>c) To support agencies involved in pelagic monitoring and data management.</p>
<p>V. Final reporting</p> <p>2017</p>	<p>To inform State and Conservation of the results and recommendations for any improvements in the future.</p>

## 6. Expected results

- a) Annual reports to HELCOM;
- b) Revised monitoring guidelines for zooplankton, including biomass assessment guidelines and taxonomic lists of Baltic zooplankton species;
- c) Recommendations on data reporting formats for ICES database, with specified parameters needed to support the MSTs indicator;
- d) Contribution to the core indicator reports and data products regarding use of zooplankton in environmental status assessment, including to the HOLAS II project;
- e) Final report.

The Project Manager is to follow the [HELCOM risk assessment procedure](#).

## 7. Consistency with HELCOM priorities \_\_\_yes\_\_\_no

## 8. Timetable

The project period is three years, i.e., the project will be carried out in 2015-2017 as continuation to the ongoing ZEN networking. Elena Gorokhova (Sweden) will be the convener during the project period.

## 9. Budget

### 9.1. Total costs

The total costs for HELCOM from 2015 to 2017 are estimated to be 15 000 EUR.

## 9.2. Funds requested from HELCOM

Type of costs	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	Total, EUR
Project management and meeting facilitation	5 000	5 000	5 000	15 000

In addition the project is authorized to use any remaining balance from the previous project (ZEN QAI).

## 10. Additional requests

### 10.1. From the Contracting Parties

The Contracting Parties are in general expected to cover the travel expenses for the participation of the national experts in the workshops.

### 10.2. From the Secretariat

The Project shall be supported by the Secretariat.

## 11. Procedure of nomination of the Project team members

The present zooplankton expert group consists of the following experts representing all countries around the Baltic Sea:

Expert name	Country	Affiliation
Eva Friis Møller	Denmark	NERI, Aarhus University
Poul Seebach	Denmark	Zooplankton Id
Arno Põllumäe	Estonia	Estonian Marine Institute, University of Tartu
Maiju Lehtiniemi	Finland	SYKE
Siru Tasala	Finland	SYKE
Lutz Postel	Germany	Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research, IOW
Jörg Dutz	Germany	Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research, IOW
Matthias Paulsen	Germany	Geomar, Kiel
Anda Ikauniece	Latvia	Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology

Solvita Strake	Latvia	Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology
Gunta Rubene	Latvia	Latvian Fisheries Agency
Natalja Demereckiene	Lithuania	Environmental Protection Agency, Marine Research Department
Egle Supiniene	Lithuania	Environmental Protection Agency, Marine Research Department
Jurate Lesutiene	Lithuania	Klaipeda University
Evelina Griniene	Lithuania	Klaipeda University
Piotr Margonski	Poland	Sea Fisheries Institute
Bozenna Kaczmaruk	Poland	Department of Oceanography and Baltic Sea Monitoring
Irena Telesh	Russia	Zoological Institute, RAS
Elena Gorokhova	Sweden	Stockholm University
Lisa Mattsson	Sweden	Stockholm University
Johanna Crona	Sweden	Umeå University
Marie Johansson	Sweden	SMHI
Strömberg Patrik	Sweden	SMHI
Alexandra Teodósio	Portugal	Universidade do Algarve (OSPAR representative)

## 12. Signatures of the project manager

*Elena Gorokhova*

**Chair of HELCOM Zooplankton Expert Group**

## 13. Opinion of the chairman of the relevant body

## 14. Opinion of the Executive Secretary

The project is supported by the Executive Secretary

## 15. Decision of the Heads of Delegation

\_\_\_\_\_ to establish \_\_\_\_\_ not to establish

## Annex 6

### Statement by the European Commission regarding implementation of EU Legislation and Financing

The EU is an important financing body for potential projects being considered within the context of HELCOM. In order to avoid any interference with the independent decision-making procedures established under the various financing instruments, the EU does, as a matter of principle, not take any position as regards any project proposal intended for submission to EU financing bodies. This should not be interpreted in any way as prejudging the position of the EU when taking financing decision.

The responsibility for implementing EU legislation is solely with the EU Member States. The role of the European Commission is, inter alia, to assess compliance with EU legislation once a Member State has submitted its report. Hence, any statement or position taken by the EU within the context of HELCOM should not be construed to give any assessment of whether the work done by HELCOM is compliant with EU legislation.

## List of Documents

<u>Name</u>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Submitted by</b>	<b>Date</b>
<a href="#">1-1 Provisional Agenda.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	30.4.2015
<a href="#">1-2 Annotations to the Provisional Agenda.pdf</a>	CMNT	Executive Secretary	30.4.2015
<a href="#">2-1 Updated Roadmap of HELCOM activities.pdf</a>	CMNT	Executive Secretary	8.6.2015
<a href="#">3-1 Proposal for the Annex with concrete measures as part of the HELCOM RAP ML.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-2 PLC strategy for future deliverables.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-3 Proposal for operationalization of MAI core indicator and CART assessment.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-4 Outcome of FISH 2-2015.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-5 Outcome of PRESSURE 2-2015.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-6 Proposal for a work plan on underwater noise.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-7 Draft HELCOM Recommendation Conservation of Baltic Sea species categorized as threatened.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	15.5.2015
<a href="#">3-8 Outcome of State and Conservation 2-2015.pdf</a>	INF	Executive Secretary	18.5.2015
<a href="#">3-9 Project proposal for ZEN ZIIM.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	18.5.2015
<a href="#">3-10 Internal load of plant nutrients in the Baltic Sea.pdf</a>	CMNT	Sweden	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-11 Management of grey seal in the Baltic Sea.pdf</a>	CMNT	Denmark	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-12 Planning for regional status report on pharmaceuticals.pdf</a>	CMNT	Executive Secretary	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-13 Proposal for continued development of HELCOM indicators.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-14 Outcome of GEAR 10-2015 and GEAR 11-2015.pdf</a>	CMNT	Executive Secretary	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-15 Progress towards Country-Allocated Reduction Targets of nutrients.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	21.5.2015
<a href="#">3-15-Add1 Draft Infographic on nutrient reduction.pdf</a>	INF	Executive Secretary	8.6.2015
<a href="#">3-16 Draft revision of HELCOM Recommendation 12-1.pdf</a>	DEC	Co-Chair of State and Conservation Group	22.5.2015
<a href="#">3-17 Core indicator GES-boundary adoption.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	22.5.2015
<a href="#">3-17-Corr1 Core indicator GES-boundary adoption.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	8.6.2015
<a href="#">3-18 Draft HELCOM Recommendation on aquaculture.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	22.5.2015
<a href="#">3-18-Add1 Draft HELCOM Recommendation on aquaculture.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	8.6.2015
<a href="#">3-18-Rev1 Draft HELCOM Recommendation on aquaculture.pdf</a>	DEC	Drafting Group	10.6.2015
<a href="#">3-19 HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	29.5.2015
<a href="#">3-20 Revised Target Species List for BWMC A-4 exemptions in the Baltic.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	29.5.2015

<a href="#">3-21 Supporting document for continued development of HELCOM indicators.pdf</a>	CMNT	Executive Secretary	29.5.2015
<a href="#">3-22 Outcome of AGRI 2-2015.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	29.5.2015
<a href="#">3-23 Proposal for agri-environment advisor.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	29.5.2015
<a href="#">3-24 Invitation to a technical meeting between Baltic Sea and North Sea countries.pdf</a>	INF	Denmark	2.6.2015
<a href="#">3-25 Proposals for scope of review of part II Annex III of Helsinki Convention.pdf</a>	CMNT	CCB	3.6.2015
<a href="#">3-26 Summary of GES-boundaries recommended for adoption.pdf</a>	INF	Executive Secretary	4.6.2015
<a href="#">3-27 Follow-up system for HELCOM agreements.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	4.6.2015
<a href="#">3-28 Outcome of RESPONSE 20-2015.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	4.6.2015
<a href="#">3-29 Project proposal for operationalization of MAI-CART follow-up system.pdf</a>	DEC	Executive Secretary	8.6.2015
<a href="#">3-30 Interim report from HELCOM CG on Ballast Water Management.pdf</a>	INF	Finland	9.6.2015
<a href="#">5-1 Forthcoming meetings within HELCOM and other forums in 2015-2016.pdf</a>	INF	Executive Secretary	4.6.2015
<a href="#">5-2 WWF Principles for a Sustainable Blue Economy.pdf</a>	INF	WWF	4.6.2015
<a href="#">5-3 Update on Communication activities.pdf</a>	INF	Information Secretary	8.6.2015