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Background

Following the Terms of Reference (ToR) adopted by the 46th Meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HOD 46-2014) and taking into account the commitments of the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration and the outcome of the 6th Meeting of the HELCOM Baltic Agriculture and Environment Forum (AGRI/ENV 6-2014) (successor of the Agri Group, the Secretariat has outlined a Work Plan for the Agri Group for two years, 2015-2016, as contained in this document.

The Action column includes concrete activities which could be identified and stemming from the ToR. Interlinked activities column refers to activities both within HELCOM and external processes.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to consider the outline and develop the Work Plan further, including to

- prioritize tasks time-wise and focus on concrete deliverables within upcoming two years;
- identify Interlinked activities,
- identify lead countries and timetables where these are missing.

The aim is to have the Work Plan presented to HOD 47-2014 for endorsement.

Draft Work Plan for HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri Group) 2015-2016

N	ACTION	LEAD/ RESPONSIBLE	INTERLINKED ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME
Action 1 Revision and update of part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention and implementation of the provision* ¹				
1	Review and update part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention being focused on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feeding practices • manure spreading technology • co-operation between crop and animal producers • other organic fertilizers <i>[to fill in according to the foreseen activities]</i>	[a project proposal] Drafting Group [Lead country(ies)]	To use the input from activities No. 2 and 3	by 2016 <i>[to further detail according to the foreseen timetable]</i>
2	Identify areas critical to N and P losses to enable cost-effective measures ²	[project proposal, lead partner to be identified]		[starting 2015?]
3	Annual accounting at farm level ³ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Stocktaking of the ongoing activities related to the theme - Outlining country-wise steps and requirements - National roadmaps] 	Germany to lead		by 2018 <i>[to detail based on the foreseen timetable]</i>

¹ By 2016 review and an update part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention, in order to better serve the purposes of reaching Good Environmental Status, and implementation and enforcement of the provisions, in particular taking into account the following commitments of the Contracting Parties of the Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting

² To initiate activity to identify/verify areas critical to N and P losses, utilizing the available data and as a starting point, to enable directing targeted and cost-effective measures where they can bring the greatest environmental effect, e.g. compulsory measures on manure handling (storage and application) for installations of intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs

³ To promote and advance towards applying by 2018 at the latest annual nutrient accounting at farm level taking into account soil and climate conditions giving the possibility to reach nutrient balanced fertilization and reduce nutrient losses at regional level in the countries, noting the positive examples of mandatory requirements on nutrient bookkeeping in some HELCOM countries and with an aim to apply it region-wide, as a first step, in areas critical to nutrient losses

Action 2 Guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure ⁴				
4	Development of national standards for nutrient content in manure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [collect national experiences and discuss methodologies with a view to find commonalities; • test methodologies across the region; • etc.] 	Finland, [Russia] leading		by 2016
5	Development of guidelines/recommendation on the use of national standards for nutrient content in manure – start planning			in 2016
Action 3. Promote development of appropriate methodology for phosphorus recycling				
6	[to identify steps/activities]	[identify]	Cooperation with PA NUTRI of the EU Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region Projects PROMISE, Baltic Phoenix	[to be identified]
Action 4. Enhance transfer of knowledge and technology and exchange of good examples				
7	Application of innovative water management measures, to ensure that upgrading and renovation of the agricultural drainage systems aim at reducing nutrient concentrations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective purification of runoff waters; • Ditch filters and dams; • Establishment of wetlands. 	[Lead country to be identified]	project Baltic Compact Cooperation with PA AGRI of the EUSBSR	[2016]
8	Application of BAT for intensive rearing of poultry and pigs at least equally ambitious EU's BREF document and conclusions throughout the region, especially within areas critical to nutrient losses	Contracting Parties		continuous

⁴ Support development by 2016 of national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure, and develop by 2018 guidelines/recommendation on the use of such standards

Action 5. Exchange experiences and ideas for potential development of policy instruments, both voluntary and mandatory, as well as measures for improved farm nutrient management				
12	<p>[Development proposals for establishing agri-environment investment facility and enhancing monitoring capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of national and international financial tools for supporting implementation legal environmental requirements in animal farming (or agriculture); • Engineering of grant and loan mechanisms and establishing criteria and capacity for project evaluation; • Developing proposals for establishing an agri-investment facility providing comprehensive services on integration of cost-efficient environmental practises.] 	Project	cooperation with PA NUTRI	project proposal 2015
13	[Enhancing nutrient load monitoring capacity and developing a system to follow up measures implemented in the NVAs (NVZ)].	Contracting parties, Project	Nitrate directive requirements Pollution load compilation GEAR Programmes of measures	