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<b>Document title</b>	Outcomes of recent HELCOM events of relevance to the Agri Group's Work
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<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM work
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## Background

This document presents information on the outcomes of the HELCOM events relevant to the work of the Group and not reflected in other documents submitted to the Meeting. The document includes information on key decisions of [HOD 59-2021](#), [HELCOM 42-2021](#) and [PRESSURE 14-2021](#) Regarding the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, the segment team meetings for drafting the segment on eutrophication (DG BSAP EUTRO 4-2021) was held on 7 April 2021 and DG BSAP 6-2021 on 22 April 2021. The latest update on the progress of these segment teams will be provided orally.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcomes of the HELCOM events relevant to the work of the Group which are not reflected in the other documents submitted to the Meeting.



- The Secretariat is to implement editorial changes and harmonize content across segments, based on this guidance from HOD 59-2020, prior to submission of the introductions to respective Segment Team meetings in early 2021.
- The introductions will be further considered and developed in the respective Segment Teams in spring 2021, based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received in the review processes in 2020. Special focus in the Segment Teams should be on identifying strategic decisions.
- Further developed drafts will be presented for review by DG BSAP and guidance by HELCOM 42-2021.
- The segment introductions will be drafted further by DG BSAP Segment Teams and DG BSAP based on guidance by HELCOM 42-2021.,
- Final approval of the introductions will take place at HOD 60-2021.

#### *Operative section*

5.50 The Meeting agreed that the work on actions for inclusion in the updated BSAP should now continue at the strategic/managerial level, under the umbrella of DG BSAP, the respective Segment Teams and the HELCOM 42-2020 and possible intersessional HOD meetings planned for spring 2021, supported by the Secretariat. In exceptional cases where deemed necessary DG BSAP can involve topical experts from outside of the DG or the Segment teams where specific expert advice is required, and DG BSAP team participants should consider involving national experts to support the respective national considerations. The Meeting agreed that in spring 2021 the main focus of the work of DG BSAP and the Segment Teams should be the further development of the actions.

5.58 The Meeting agreed on the following process for further work:

- Comments to the new actions can be submitted to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) using the template provided in document 5-8-Att.1. Comments provided by 10 December 2020 will, to the extent possible, be considered when re-formulating actions prior to the Segment Team meetings in early 2021. Comments submitted after 10 December 2020 will be shared directly with the respective meeting.
- The Secretariat will, to the extent possible, redraft proposed actions based on the comments received from Contracting Parties and through the review process in 2020, prior to the Segment Team meetings in early 2021.
- All actions will then be further considered and developed in the respective Segment Teams in spring 2021, based on the guidance from HOD 59-2020 and comments received in the review processes in 2020.
- Further developed actions will be presented for review at DG BSAP and for provisional agreement at HELCOM 42-2021 (and possible subsequent intersessional HOD meeting), as they become available.
- The actions will be drafted further by DG BSAP Segment Teams and DG BSAP based on guidance by HELCOM 42-2020.,
- Final approval will take place at HOD 60-2021.

#### *Supporting documents*

5.63 The Meeting took note of the list of supporting documents that are expected to be adopted alongside the BSAP as well as information on the possible other background documents (document 5-6) and recalled the agreement that additional documents which are adopted alongside the updated BSAP will remain as separate documents and will not be merged with the main BSAP document.

5.64 The Meeting supported that documents submitted together with the updated BSAP will be divided into three specific categories depending on their nature, as follows:

- **Background documents:** material providing background information for the BSAP and the update process e.g. implementation report of the BSAP 2007-2021, rationale and process of the BSAP update etc.
- **Supporting documents:** documents which function as support for implementing and achieving the overall visions and objectives of the updated BSAP, but which do not require specific and concrete actions, e.g. the Climate Change Fact Sheet and the HELCOM Science Agenda.
- **Associated action documents:** documents which directly relate to implementing actions and measures for achieving the overall visions and objectives of the updated BSAP e.g. roadmaps, topic specific action plans, strategies, Recommendations etc.

#### *HELCOM Science Agenda*

5.68 The Meeting provisionally approved the final draft of the HELCOM Science Agenda, noting that amendments to selected topics may take place in spring 2021 based on ongoing HELCOM processes.

#### **Agenda Item 6 Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups**

6.87 The Meeting took note of the current status of the revision of Part 2 of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention (document 6-6) and considered the comments and proposals by CCB as contained in document 6-33.

6.88 The Meeting welcomed the progress achieved by the Agri Group in revising Part 2 of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention and thanked the group for the work done.

6.89 The Meeting approved the revised Regulation 2 Item 3, the revised Regulation 2 Item 6 and the glossary of terms.

6.90 The Meeting took note that the EU would like to provide minor written comments on the regulations under revision to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi and dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi ) for consideration by AGRI 11-2021.

6.91 The Meeting in general supported the new paragraph on nutrient recycling, taking note of a study reservation by Denmark on the first two bullet points of the new paragraph on nutrient recycling and that Germany finds that it would be desirable for the paragraph to be formulated with the same ambition as the Nutrient Recycling Strategy and the currently proposed texts for the BSAP. The Meeting took note that Denmark proposed a discussion in the Agri Group regarding the placement of the text.

6.92 The Meeting invited Denmark to lift the reservation by AGRI 11-2021 as well as provide concrete written proposals to update the paragraph to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi and dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi), if this will be needed.

6.93 The Meeting requested the Agri group to consider written proposals by the EU and Denmark and use them in accordance with the decisions of this Meeting.

6.94 The Meeting considered the proposed alternatives for revising Regulation 2 item 7 and did not come to an agreement on selection one of them.

6.96 The Meeting recognized that since consensus on the revision of Regulation 2 Item 7 has not been achieved the current version of the regulation remains valid, noting that Denmark, Latvia and Sweden would prefer either of the proposed new alternatives to the original text.

6.97 The Meeting agreed that the glossary of terms is to be an integral part of Annex 2, being applicable only to Annex 2.

The Meeting considered the first draft of the Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy (document 6-26).

6.100 The Meeting supported the draft Strategy, pointing out that the document provides a comprehensive vision of nutrient recycling in line with the commitments given by HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2018.

6.101 The Meeting took note that measures listed in the draft Strategy are of a voluntary nature and can be utilized as a pick-up list for national implementation. The Meeting also took note that six key strategic actions corresponding to each objective of the nutrient recycling strategy were proposed for inclusion in the updated BSAP (Annex 2 to document 6-26). These actions will be utilized to follow-up the Strategy implementation.

## HELCOM 42-2021

### Agenda Item 3 2021 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting

3.1 The Meeting took note of the logistical information for the next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, which will take place on 20 October 2021 hosted by Germany (document 3-2). The Ministerial Meeting will take place in Lübeck, Germany, if the COVID-19 situation allows.

### Agenda Item 4 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

4.1 The Meeting took note of the second draft of the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) (document 4-3, Excel attachment 4-3 Att.1 and Presentation 2) noting that the drafting will continue in the Ad-hoc Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP) and DG BSAP Segment Teams based on the guidance by HELCOM 42-2021. The Meeting also noted the comments to the draft BSAP by Finland (document 4-5).

4.2 The Meeting noted that national consultation is ongoing in several Contracting Parties and that as a consequence the content remains under a general study reservation by Denmark, Estonia and Latvia.

#### *Overarching preamble and introduction*

4.3 The Meeting took note of preliminary comments on the proposals for amendments to the preamble presented by Finland, as contained in document 4-5, and agreed to come back to these proposals in more detail at DG BSAP 6-2021.

4.4 The Meeting took note of comments provided by the Contracting Parties on the paragraphs of the preamble presented in document 4-3 which have bearing on the future work of DG BSAP and provided guidance to DG BSAP for further drafting (see the Outcome).

4.6 The Meeting invited Contracting Parties to submit comments and concrete input to the preamble by **15 April 2021** at the latest, to be further discussed and amended at DG BSAP 6-2021.

#### *Segment introductions: biodiversity, eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter, sea-based activities*

4.7 The Meeting considered the segment introductions and the proposals by Russia and Germany to change the objectives under the sea-based segment as presented in document 4-3.

4.8 The Meeting took note that several Contracting Parties as well as CCB are not in favour of changing the objectives but prefer the original formulations.

4.9 The Meeting took note of the clarification by Germany that the aim of their proposal on changing the management objective regarding eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter is intended as an editorial change to clarify the objective.

4.11 The Meeting made proposals for alternative wording for the objective related to eutrophication, hazardous substances and litter, which were noted by the Secretariat. The Meeting tasked DG BSAP SEA 3-2021 and DG BSAP 6-2021 to continue the discussion and to propose wording for the three objectives under the sea-based segment. The Meeting further invited Contracting Parties to send suggestions for the wordings to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) as soon as possible.

4.15 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to submit the guidance to the next segment team meetings and also submit revised versions of the introductions based on the guidance and comments from the segment teams to DG BSAP 6-2021. The Meeting noted that after the segment team meetings at the

end of March and in early April, the drafting of the segment introductions will continue only in DG BSAP to ensure coherence of the texts across segments.

4.16 The Meeting took note that Estonia is still not in a position to agree on the net nutrient input ceilings as they are given in the introductory text for the eutrophication segment and will provide a written proposal on a compromise solution to PRESSURE 14-2021. The Meeting took note that Estonia is not in favor of including an annex to the eutrophication segment but proposes moving the information it contains to another document.

4.17 The Meeting took note that Denmark does not expect to be able to support the statement - "...inputs of nitrogen or phosphorus to a basin should not increase until both MAI and [good status with respect to eutrophication] have been reached, even in basins where inputs are already below the input ceilings" - in the introduction to the eutrophication segment as it is perceived as a disproportional tightening of the nutrient reduction requirements. The Meeting also took note that Denmark will provide a written proposal on the rephrasing of this statement to DG BSAP EUTRO 4-2021.

#### *Segment introductions: horizontal actions*

##### *Hot spots, knowledge exchange and awareness raising*

4.19 The Meeting agreed to include hot spots as well as knowledge exchange and awareness raising as additional topics in the horizontal action segment as proposed in document 4-3.

4.21 The Meeting did not support the inclusion of sources of underwater noise sites in the hot spot list.

4.22 The Meeting took note that Finland prefers to focus the hot spot actions on reactivating the efforts to delete already identified hot spots emphasizing that criteria for their deletion should remain unchanged in order to not have a moving target (document 4-5). The Meeting took note of the strong call by Finland to Contracting Parties to reinforce their effort to remove current hot spots from the list.

#### *Annexes*

4.42 The Meeting discussed how to present the additional information on the actions originally intended to be annexed to the BSAP. The Meeting agreed that the information should be collected but not included as an annex to the BSAP. The Meeting agreed that, instead, the information should be presented as a supporting document for the Ministerial Meeting to provide context for and support the implementation and follow up of the actions.

4.43 The Meeting agreed that the supporting document will be submitted for review to HOD 60-2021 and approval to an intersessional HOD meeting in early September in 2021, invited the Secretariat to update the preliminary timetable for BSAP drafting accordingly as included in Annex 2.

#### *Analysis on sufficiency of measures*

4.49 The Meeting discussed the publication of the main report of the sufficiency of measures (SOM) analysis and agreed on its publication under the Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings (BSEP). The Meeting further agreed that, due to the technical nature of the content, the BSEP will not be included as a background document for Ministerial Meeting 2021. The Meeting also agreed that the report can be referenced as background information in other submissions for the MM 2021, and that the use of SOM in the BSAP update process should be included in the information on the BSAP update process to be prepared for the MM 2021.

### **Agenda Item 5                      Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies**

5.1 The Meeting took note that the positions of countries regarding regulation 2 item 7 of the revised part 2 of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention contained in document 5-11 remain unchanged and consensus on the proposal to revise the regulation could not be found and thus the current version remains valid.

5.2 The Meeting agreed with the procedure for adopting the revised Part 2 of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention as proposed in document 5-11.

5.3 The Meeting requested the Agri Group to draft the HELCOM Recommendation required for adopting the revised Part 2 of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention and to submit the draft Recommendation to HOD 60-2021 for endorsement with subsequent adoption at 2021 Ministerial Meeting together with the updated BSAP. The fact of adoption of the Recommendation can be reflected in the introductory part to the updated BSAP or in the eutrophication segment.

5.4 The Meeting acknowledged that the procedure to amend annexes to the Convention implies communication of these amendments by the Depositary Government to the Contracting Parties and that the accepted amendments enter into force about one year after the adoption of the HELCOM Recommendation. In this respect, the Meeting agreed that only the fact of adoption of the Recommendation can be reflected in the updated BSAP.

5.5 The Meeting took note that Denmark is not in the position to lift their study reservation on the nutrient recycling paragraph of the revised Part 2 Annex III and that Denmark will provide written proposal on the issue to AGRI 11-2021.

5.6 The Meeting took note of the draft Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy (document 5-8) and in general supported the proposed way to establish linkage between the updated BSAP and the Strategy as an associated action document and agreed on the suggested approach to following up on the implementation of the Strategy.

5.7 The Meeting requested the Agri Group and Pressure Working Group to finalize the document and submit it to HOD 60-2021 for endorsement with subsequent adoption at the 2021 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 7 Accounts 2019–2020, budget 2021–2022 and other institutional and organisational matters of the Commission**

7.4 The Meeting took note of the information provided by the Executive Secretary that following an open and competitive recruitment procedure and the approval by the Heads of Delegation, Ms. Lotta Ruokanen, Finland, has been appointed to the post of HELCOM Professional Secretary for Pressure and Agri Groups and the Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group initially for three years as from 1 July 2021.

#### **PRESSURE 14-2021**

9.5 The Meeting took note of the proposal to consider marine eutrophication in the review and possible revision of the Gothenburg Protocol (document 9-3).

9.6 The Meeting discussed the potential role of HELCOM in this process and took note of a coming meeting of CLRTAPs Working Group in September 2021 where the HELCOM's participation would be desirable.

9.7 The Meeting thanked Germany for this initiative to consider a joint effort of HELCOM countries to reduce input of nutrients to the Baltic Sea. The Meeting agreed to prioritize the task and recommended taking into consideration the following points:

- ☐ assessment and comparison of costs and benefits of measures addressing airborne reduction versus waterborne reduction;
- ☐ how the critical load analysis could consider nutrient limitations;
- ☐ BALTSEM model would be a helpful tool to compute various scenarios;
- ☐ raised importance of increasing ammonia emissions which is are not transported as far as NOX in the atmosphere.

9.8 The Meeting agreed to task RedCore DG and PLC IG to look into the issue at their earliest convenience, to establish communication with ad hoc group on marine protection (AMP) under the

working group on effects of CLRTAP (via: Gudrun.Schuetze@uba.de), and to report to PRESSURE 15-2021 on the progress.

9.9 The Meeting took note of the German draft concept for the analysis of implementation obstacles and propagation of best practice examples for eutrophication (document 9-4).

9.10 The Meeting discussed the concept and thanked Germany enthusiastically for this valuable initiative, expressing full support to the proposal.

9.11 The Meeting took note of the provisional timeline for the work involving consideration of the first results at PRESSURE 15-2021 and extended consideration of material at a workshop in spring or early summer 2022.

9.12 The Meeting took note of the willingness of experts from most of HELCOM countries to participate in the initiative and requested RedCore DG and PLC IG to be involved in this work, as these expert groups have valuable experience regarding compiling information on the effectiveness of measures as well as projecting future reductions.

9.13 The Meeting further took note that statistical analysis of projected reductions should be treated with care as they may produce unreliable results.

9.14 The Meeting took note that analysis of distance to targets is ongoing nationally in some CPs and this experience could be utilized in this work. The Meeting also emphasized the importance of the task to identify anthropogenic loads as well as the importance of involving the river basin management authorities in this work.

9.15 The Meeting took note that BNI is willing to cooperate providing data and scientific advice where needed.

9.16 The Meeting took note of the information on the best practice example "Model Region Schlei" given by Matthias Boeldt (document 9-6, presentation 7)

9.17 The Meeting welcomed the approach demonstrating how various tools available in the EU framework can be efficiently utilized to mitigate loads from multiple sources. The Meeting further noted that the Schlei fjord may experience internal nutrient loads similar to Mariager fjords in Denmark, resulting in continued nutrient loading when all land-based sources have been addressed.

9.18 The Meeting further suggested that this example and advisory systems like LEVA and Greppa Näringen (Grip the Nutrients) in Sweden could be utilized in the PLC-8 project on assessment of effectiveness of measures.

9.19 The Meeting noted that the presented information provides inspiration for further efforts to reduce input of nutrients, for example to delete the last remaining agricultural hot spot in Finland and encouraged exchanging experience with similar projects and initiatives around the Baltic Sea and seeking for opportunities for mutual support.