



Document title	Outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for the Agri group
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Agenda Item	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM work of relevance for the Group
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Background

This document contains extracts from the following HELCOM meetings of relevance for the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri group):

- 47th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HOD 47-2015), Helsinki, Finland, 9-10 December 2015,
- Ninth Meeting of the Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (GEAR 9-2015), Berlin, Germany, 4-5 February 2015
- 35th Meeting of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 36-2015), Helsinki, Finland, 3-4 March 2015,
- Tenth Meeting of the Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (GEAR 10-2015), online meeting 24 April 2015.

The complete outcomes can be found in the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#).

Information on the outcomes of PRESSURE 2-2015 and GEAR 11-2015, which will be held on 6-8 May 2015 and 19-20 May 2015, respectively, will be provided at a later stage.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information and make use of it as seen appropriate.

Outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for the Agri group

HOD 47-2015, Helsinki, Finland, 9-10 December 2015

Agenda Item 3 Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups

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Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri)

Documents: 3-14, 3-14-Add,1, 3-15, 3-24

3.38 The Meeting took note of the first Meeting of the Agri group (AGRI 1-2014, Copenhagen, Denmark, 20-21 November 2014) (doc. 3-14) and welcomed the willingness of Germany to lead the work on nutrient accounting and congratulated Mr. Dietrich Schulz, Germany, for the election as the Chair for the Group for 2014-2016.

3.39 The Meeting considered the project proposal to review and revise Part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention - AGRIREV (doc. 3-15) and was of the opinion that the review and revision process should be driven by the Contracting Parties, and therefore did not support the project proposal at this stage.

3.40 The Meeting took note of the proposal by Lithuania for the scope of the review of Part II of Annex III (doc. 3-24).

3.41 The Meeting requested the Agri group to develop a proposal for the review process of part II of Annex III for the consideration by the Heads of Delegation. Once the scope of the review has been decided on by HOD, the revision process could start. The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to consider co-/leading the review/revision work.

3.42 The Meeting decided to remove the reference to the AGRIREV project proposal (cf. 3.39) from the Work Plan for HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices 2014-2016, and with this change approved the Work Plan (Annex 5).

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

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-10, 3-5, 3-17, 3-26, 3-28

3.44 The Meeting took note of the invitation to, and the programme of, a seminar on sea-based methods to reduce consequences of eutrophication to be held on 12 February 2015 in Stockholm (doc. 3-28) and requested the Secretariat to disseminate the invitation to stakeholders.

3.45 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the first meeting of the Pressure Working Group presented by Mr. Lars Sonesten, Chair, and congratulated Mr. Sonersten for the election as the Chair of the WG for 2014-2016.

3.46 The Meeting considered the draft Work Plan for the Pressure group as contained in document 3-1, amended it according to comments by Finland and approved it as contained in Annex 6.

3.47 The Meeting supported the thematic focus of the Pressure meetings and endorsed organizing the second meeting of the WG, dealing mostly with nutrients, on 6-8 May 2015 in Estonia and the third meeting on hazardous substances on two days during the week of 5-9 October 2015.

3.48 The Meeting supported organizing a workshop devoted to the updating knowledge on retention coefficient and transboundary inputs and invited the Chair of Pressure and the Secretariat to confirm the proposed date and place, 5 May 2015 in Estonia, for the workshop, taking into account the possible participation of representatives of transboundary river basin commissions.

3.49 The Meeting supported organizing an expert workshop on further development of the draft HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable handling of sewage sludge in spring 2015 and invited the lead countries for the Recommendation, Germany and Sweden, to confirm whether they are ready to organize the workshop and inform the Secretariat accordingly by the end of 2014.

3.50 The Meeting supported arranging a workshop to further consider an initial list of possible actions to prevent pharmaceuticals reaching the Baltic Sea in spring 2015 and welcomed the offer by Germany to host the workshop and investigate possibilities to do it in cooperation with Sweden in their coordinating role for Priority Area Hazards of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

3.51 The Meeting requested the Pressure group to specify in which transboundary river basin commission(s) the cooperation should be established taking into account the specific need to involve countries upstream in the catchment area.

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3.53 The Meeting decided to establish the Reduction Scheme Core Drafting Group (RedCore DG) (doc. 3-2) and agreed on its Terms of Reference as contained in Annex 7. The Meeting requested the RedCore DG to prepare a list of concrete deliverables of the drafting group, giving priority to CART follow-up, in order to consider providing financial support for some of the tasks.

3.54 The Meeting took note that Germany is ready to contribute to the work of the RedCore DG.

3.55 The Meeting considered the draft core pressure indicator on nutrient inputs (doc. 3-10), noting that it will be updated with data for 2011-2012 during the beginning of 2015 and adopted it in general as part of the nutrient reduction scheme follow-up system.

3.56 The Meeting exchanged views on the best ways to present the main outcomes of the indicator for further consideration and suggested the following:

- to improve the visual representation in general, including by linking it to other related indicators,
- to reconsider the use of maps for presenting the outcome of pressure indicators,
- stick, for the time being, to the original seven sub-basins for which MAI has been established.

3.57 The Meeting highlighted the need to work out the inter-linkage between the assessment methods for the coastal areas and the open sea.

3.58 The meeting took note of the presentation of the draft follow-up assessment on progress towards the country-wise allocation of nutrient reduction targets (CART) (doc. 3-26).

3.59 The Meeting clarified that the CARTs as stated in the 2013 HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration are the ones to be followed within the assessment and took note that Germany regrets that HELCOM does not yet have a CART follow-up system in place one year after adoption of the targets.

3.60 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to provide feedback to the draft CART follow-up assessment from the point of view of presentation of results and policy needs, especially on the key message, by 30 of January 2015 (to the Secretariat minna.pyhala@helcom.fi).

3.61 The Meeting appreciated the ambitious task of developing the CART follow-up assessment and noted that further work is needed, but that some elements of the assessment could be ready by HELCOM 36-2015.

3.62 The Meeting thanked the Chair of RedCore DG, BNI Sweden and the Secretariat for the valuable work done in developing MAI indicator and CART follow up assessment.

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Group on the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (Gear)

Documents: 3-4, 3-16, 3-18, 3-19

5.6 The Meeting concluded that it is important to develop a proposal to institutionalize the cooperation between HELCOM and EUSBSR, and to define the specific tasks of the Working Groups, Chairs, the HELCOM Secretariat and the EUSBSR Coordinators and Steering Committees.

5.7 The Meeting recognized the financial opportunities of EUSBSR for implementing HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and other HELCOM requirements. In addition, it was noted that EUSBSR can provide potential hands-on help to support the HELCOM countries in identifying and using funds including the use of private investments.

5.8 The Meeting was of the opinion that HELCOM Heads of Delegation as well as Working Groups are in the position and should provide expertise and policy directions to point to the implementation needs which can be met with and supported by EU projects.

5.9 The Meeting acknowledged the importance of bringing any policy-relevant outcomes of the EUSBSR projects to the attention of relevant HELCOM Working Groups.

5.10 The Meeting agreed on the following concrete ideas on how the cooperation between HELCOM and EUSBSR could be enhanced and formalized:

- Co-chairing of the PAs and HAs, as has been successfully done in e.g. PA Bio and HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group, to genuinely have all the relevant activities and plans “under one roof”
- Using the existing forums of a given area or topic, let them grow, and not to unnecessarily create new ones
- Giving HELCOM – working groups, their chairs as well as the Secretariat – the possibility to participate in the consideration of flagship projects, as appropriate
- Frequent exchange between HELCOM and EUSBSR through back-to back or joint meetings
- Regular meetings between HELCOM Heads of Delegations and representatives working with EUSBSR.

5.11 The Meeting agreed to bring up the HELCOM and EUSBSR cooperation again in HELCOM 36-2015 and requested the Secretariat to initiate the preparation of the consolidated input by HELCOM to the revision process of the EUSBSR utilizing the expertise of the working groups.

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GEAR 9-2015, Berlin, Germany, 4-5 February 2015

Agenda Item 3 Coordination and information related to the implementation of the ecosystem approach and related policies

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-2-Rev.1, 3-2-Rev.1-Add.1, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5

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Programmes of Measures

3.3 The Meeting took note of the information on the proposal for a Finnish MSFD Programme of Measures as contained in document 3-5. The plan is currently in public consultation together with the WFD river basin management plans, RBMPs. The focus has been on analyzing existing measures and identifying whether they should be strengthened or complemented by additional new measures and eventually 35 new measures were proposed.

3.4 The Meeting also took note of the following information on existing and planned national measures to implement the ecosystem approach, especially related to Programmes of Measures (PoMs):

- Denmark informed that they have sent out a first part of the PoMs to public consultation (12 weeks) which includes a proposal to designate six new MPAs in Kattegat with restrictions on activities such

as fishing with bottom towed gear, dredging and sediment extraction. Denmark has notified Norway, Sweden and Germany according to the Espoo Convention.

- Estonia informed that the first draft of new measures was available since the end of January. They are currently organizing stakeholder meetings before the official public hearing. They are preparing the public procurement for SEA. And a six month public consultation is expected to start in May 2015 together with the WFD RBMPs and floods directive processes.
- Germany informed that they are still working towards the mile stones of their time plan for the POMs despite delays and hope to start public consultation on 1 April 2015.
- Lithuania are planning to develop a first draft of PoMs by March and public consultation is planned from April to June.
- Poland is currently compiling information on existing measures. A project will be set up to propose new measures and the public consultation will be 3 weeks and finalized by the end of 2015
- Finland informed that they used the CART of Finland as an important basis for considering the needs for nutrient load reduction measures in national PoM and that Finland proposes seven new measures to reduce nutrients in the marine PoM and part of the WFD measures will be applied as MSFD measures as well.

3.5 The Meeting took note of the draft document on work in progress on regional coordination of PoMs as contained in document 3-2-Rev.1-Att.1, as well as the early analysis of available information on new national measures as presented in Annex 1 of document 3-2-Rev.1 and 3-2-Rev.1-Add.1 with a link to the Finnish national consultation.

3.6 The Meeting appreciated the efforts of the Intersessional Group on Programmes of Measures (IG PoM) to further elaborate the document, and thanked especially the chair, Ms. Andrea Weiss, Germany.

3.7 The Meeting acknowledged that the document is a work in progress that provides a preliminary snapshot of current status of regional coordination efforts, and that gaps in the document related to coordination of regional measures will be further developed in the finalization of the document by the end of 2015.

3.8 The Meeting noted that Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland can support the use of the document in their public consultation.

3.9 The Meeting took note of the information that Germany was not able to support document 3-2-Rev.1-Att.1 as the German Länder were not in a position to approve the document at this stage or give a vote whether or not the document could be used for national public consultation processes for MSFD PoMs.

3.10 The Meeting recognized that the document allows Contracting Parties, if they so wish, to use it in their national PoM consultation processes and proposed the addition to the end of the caveat note on the cover of document 3-2-Rev.1-Att.1, the following two sentences: “The contents of this document is subject to national internal and public consultation processes and is expected undergo further changes. It is up to the Contracting Parties if they wish to use the document in their national processes.”

3.11 The Meeting invited Contracting Parties, who have not yet done so, to provide input to Annex 1 to document 3-2 Rev.1-Att.1 on possible measures under consideration in HELCOM Contracting Parties by 19 February 2015 or to use a standard formulation on later input. Contracting Parties who wish to adjust their information in Annex 1 to the latest state of affairs are invited to do so also by 19 February 2015.

3.12 The Meeting agreed that the updated document should be made available for use by Contracting Parties by 20 February 2015.

3.13 The Meeting invited those Contracting States not present at the meeting to clarify by 12 February 2015 their position on the document as a basis for further work.

3.14 The Meeting also invited Germany and any other country which may not be in a position to support the document to specify in detail their hesitation.

3.15 The Meeting discussed the next steps for further elaboration of the draft document on regional coordination of POMs and agreed that IG PoM should continue its work. The Meeting was of the view that as a priority, IG PoM should focus on the coordination of national programmes of measures with a view to completing the Joint Document for approval by HOD in December 2015.

3.16 The Meeting agreed on the following procedure:

- to invite Contracting Parties to endeavor to send their information on proposed new national measures by 31 March 2015.
- that, by 16 April 2015 IG POM should undertake an analysis of the new national measures and prepare a proposal for
 - o specific topics in need of further regional coordination
 - o any technical input required from Working Groups for developing the proposal further
- that GEAR, on 21 April 2015, through an online meeting, 9-13 CET, should review the proposals and give guidance to IG POM and to the Working Groups for the input required taking into consideration the upcoming meetings of Pressure (6-8 May 2015) and State & Conservation (11-15 May 2015). Chairs of relevant Working Groups will be invited to the Gear meeting.
- that a GEAR workshop (participation to be decided) be held in September / October 2015 (possibly back-to-back with a GEAR meeting) to develop a plan on practical steps for the coordination of national measures and the development of regional measures and joint actions. The aim is to facilitate the regionally coordinated implementation of programmes of measures as of 2016. The workshop builds on the proposals from IG PoM, the input from WGs and presentation by each Contracting Party of their PoMs/new measures and priorities for regional coordination/joint action.
- GEAR 11-2015 reviews the results of the workshop with a view to recommending them to HOD for endorsement in December 2015. The conclusions of HOD on further coordination and regional measures/actions will be included in the completed Joint Document.

3.17 The Meeting considered and discussed arrangements for consultations on transboundary impacts of PoMs.

3.18 The Meeting took note of the information on the analysis of transboundary impacts of the Finnish PoM proposal included in document 3-5 and that Finland has notified Sweden and Estonia, who they share sub-basins with, on the impacts of Finnish PoMs according to the Espoo Convention. All other HELCOM countries that are EU member states have also been informed.

3.19 The Meeting noted that Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania and Poland are still considering how to carry out the consultations on transboundary impacts but may use a similar approach as Finland. The Meeting was of the view that it might be helpful to define a common approach on the consultation on transboundary impacts. The Meeting welcomed the offer of Germany to take the lead in to propose a common approach (via correspondence).

3.20 The Meeting considered the proposal by GEAR 8-2014 to arrange a joint workshop, e.g. in mid-2015, for HELCOM Contracting Parties to discuss the transboundary impacts jointly and agreed that such a workshop would not have added value at this stage.

Environmental targets

3.21 The Meeting recalled that in the implementation of MSFD Article 10, national environmental targets to achieve good environmental status of marine waters have been defined by Contracting Parties being EU Member States and that these form the basis for development of PoMs.

3.22 The Meeting acknowledged that at a regional level, environmental targets for reducing pressures in the Baltic Sea have been agreed e.g. through the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme (MAI/CART), but a need to develop environmental targets for also other parameters, e.g. hazardous substances, non-indigenous species and seabed disturbance has been previously indicated e.g. in the Roadmap for HELCOM activities.

3.23 The Meeting felt that in order to start up work on improving regional coherence in environmental target setting for 2018, an analysis of coherence of national environmental targets could be a starting point..

3.24 The Meeting agreed that the Secretariat will use the existing compilation of national targets provided by the European Commission and identify those reported environmental targets that are related to reduction of pressures, and make an analysis of coherence of existing targets and to present the results and the next meeting of Gear.

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Agenda Item 4 Activities of relevant HELCOM projects and processes

Documents: 4-1, 4-1-Rev.1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4

A second holistic assessment of the Baltic Sea (HOLAS II)

4.1 The Meeting took note of the Outcome of the first meeting of the HELCOM HOLAS II project (document 4-1), including the preliminary draft outline of second holistic assessment of the Baltic Sea ecosystem elaborated by the meeting as contained in Annex 2 of the Outcome of the meeting.

4.2 The Meeting emphasized the importance of the project and acknowledged that the work of HOLAS II is very dependent on many other projects and policy developments, e.g. CORESET II, BOOST application, input from Contracting Parties, ongoing review of the EC GES decision, etc.

4.3 The Meeting was of the opinion that the holistic assessment should focus on assessment of the status of the Baltic Sea marine environment and whether GES has been achieved and that less focus should be placed on the social and economic aspects and measures components.

4.4 The Meeting welcomed the offer of Finland to take the lead in the socio-economic evaluation to be included in the assessment.

4.5 The Meeting stressed the importance of knowing the MSFD reporting requirements in 2018, as soon as possible, in order to ensure that the HOLAS II assessment will provide Contracting Parties that are EU members with the necessary information.

4.6 The Meeting took note that the HOLAS II core team proposed to address environmental targets in the holistic report, and that the GEAR group was asked to give advice on how to address environmental targets for pressures in the holistic report and that this is in line with the activity initiated under Agenda item 3, Environmental targets.

Development of a core set of HELCOM indicators (CORESET II)

4.7 The Meeting took note of the progress and remaining time-table for the CORESET II project (document 4-2). The Meeting noted that a sub-set of the core indicators will be made available for review by Contracting Parties as soon as possible, starting in March 2015.

4.8 The Meeting emphasized that the development of indicators is fundamental to the preparation of the holistic assessment and recognized that adequate resources for experts are needed to secure their finalization.

4.9 The Meeting discussed the planned endorsement process of indicators and raised concern that time-table was very tight considering the need for an adequate national consultation process, in particular on GES-boundaries, to facilitate the review process at Pressure 2-2015, State & Conservation 2-2015 and decision at HOD 47-2015.

4.10 The Meeting stressed that to facilitate the review process an extract of information from the core indicator reports should be provided as soon as possible by the CORESET II project, including a summary of the indicator and its concept, GES-boundary, and a brief explanation of how the GES boundaries have been derived.

4.11 The Meeting furthermore requested the State & Conservation group, at their next meeting, to also discuss the compatibility between GES boundaries across relevant core indicators and report if any issues of concern are identified.

4.12 The Meeting furthermore noted that the core indicators are in different stages of development and that continued work to finalize indicators for use in the holistic assessment will be needed after June 2015.

4.13 The Meeting agreed to consider the outcomes of the Working Group meetings that will review the core indicators from a technical aspect and formulate a recommendation for HOD 48-2015.

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Making HELCOM eutrophication assessments operational (EUTRO-OPER)

4.15 The Meeting took note of the progress of the HELCOM EUTRO-OPER project (document 4-3). The Meeting noted that the project will carry out an updated eutrophication assessment and cater for an improved data flow and assessment protocol for future assessments but that the timing of the project (continuing until end of 2015) does not allow for an input of relevant data to the holistic assessment.

Agenda Item 5 Follow-up of the HELCOM streamlining and Roadmap for HELCOM activities

Documents: 5-1

5.1 The Meeting took note that the Roadmap for HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach will be presented to HELCOM 36-2015 and that the Secretariat is preparing on an overview on how the Working groups are to contribute to the Roadmap deliverables.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the joint session on cooperation between HELCOM and EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) held as part of the Heads of Delegation meeting in December 2014 (cf. document 2-1) and of the information that the EU Commission has issued a discussion paper for the revision of the Action Plan of the EUSBSR proposing an adjusted structure of the Action Plan and prioritization of the cooperation areas.

5.3 The Meeting considered the draft input by HELCOM for increasing synergies with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) as presented in document 5-1 and noted comments by Finland to the draft input.

5.4 Noting the study reservation by Denmark and Finland, the Meeting invited Contracting Parties to consult the draft HELCOM input as amended during the meeting and contained in document 5-1-Rev.1 with national heads of delegation in order to have a HELCOM agreement on the document and to provide possible comments to the Executive Secretary **latest on 12 February 2015**.

5.5 The Meeting noted that the consultation of the proposed revision by the Commission with the countries is planned to be closed in February. Therefore, the Meeting recommended sending the HELCOM input on operationalization of the cooperation between HELCOM and the EUSBSR in time for feeding it into the revision process.

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HELCOM 36-2015, Helsinki, Finland, 3-4 March 2015

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies

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Gear

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2.25 The Meeting considered and adopted the HELCOM work plan to improve regional coherence in moving towards Good Environmental Status (document 2-9) pending the clarification of the study reservation by Germany by **13 March 2015**.

2.26 The Meeting further noted that Denmark lifted their study reservation on section 5.1 of the work plan, BSAP follow-up system, with an understanding that the development of indicators should not be an indirect strengthening of existing agreements and the presentation of results has to be carefully considered.

2.27 The Meeting considered the updated Roadmap on HELCOM activities (document 2-16), supported the integration of the activities of the HELCOM Work Plan (document 2-9) with the HELCOM Roadmap of HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach, and decided to use it for planning of HELCOM actions and milestones.

2.28 The Meeting appreciated the document and its usefulness for planning HELCOM work including providing background for planning the milestones by 2021.

Agenda Item 3 Cooperation with other Regional Seas Conventions and organizations

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-2-Rev.1

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3.3 The Meeting took note of document 3-2 on increasing synergies in activities of the Contracting Parties in implementing HELCOM requirements and EUSBSR as appropriate.

3.4 The Meeting took note that the Contracting Parties involved in the activities of the EUSBSR welcome the approach to synergies and new opportunities for directing financial support to projects and activities to implement the BSAP.

3.5 The Meeting took note of the position of the Russian Federation that the HELCOM input in document 3-2 requires revision in order to sufficiently reflect the role of HELCOM in the region and that Russia reserved its position on document 3-2.

3.6 The Meeting took note of the position of Sweden to give the cooperation between the EUSBSR and HELCOM the highest priority as it opens mutual benefits to advance the goals of protecting the Baltic Sea and implementing the BSAP.

3.7 The Meeting took note of the proposed revisions to the HELCOM input on synergies prepared by the Secretariat and as contained in document 3-2-Rev.1 and agreed to finalize and agree on the document via correspondence. The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Secretariat if they can agree on the document by **18 March 2015**.

3.8 The Meeting took note of the update on the revision of the EUSBSR as presented by Finland, informing that the structure of the new Action Plan of the EUSBSR has been agreed. The Meeting noted new initiatives on the revised Strategy such as a horizontal action on climate adaptation, while areas such as the PA Bio have also been taken out of the Strategy due to a considered overlap with the work of HELCOM.

3.9 The Meeting took note that Germany regretted the deletion of PA Bio given its efforts making HELCOM and EUSBSR being complementary bodies with HELCOM as political pace car for the protection of biodiversity in the Baltic Sea region and related practical PA Bio projects, e.g. by NGOs, in the margins of the EUSBSR. This delegation, furthermore, stressed that the deletion of biodiversity as priority area of the revised EUSBSR Action Plan neglected that conservation of marine biological diversity is one of the biggest challenges of the region that has to be mirrored as well in the EUSBSR Strategy in an integral coherent way, either via the principles of the Action Plan or any potential Work Plan.

3.10 The Meeting agreed that the Secretariat will prepare material on the current HELCOM priorities and implementation needs in consultation with working groups in order to inform actors involved in the EUSBSR for their consideration on how activities under the Strategy can further contribute to HELCOM activities. Such information material should clarify the difference between time-bound externally funded projects and open-ended HELCOM policy processes as requested by Denmark with regard to, e.g. projects under PA Ship.

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Agenda Item 4 Activities of the Commission during 2014 and contributions to the work of the Helsinki Commission

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4.7 The Meeting agreed to consider in more detail how the Contracting Parties are progressing in relation to fulfilling the nutrient reduction targets at HOD 48-2015 and welcomed the offer by Germany to prepare a discussion paper for the next meeting of the Pressure Group.

4.8 A presentation on the ongoing work to follow-up the nutrient reduction scheme (MAI/CART) was made by the Secretariat on the side of the plenary session (**Presentation 2**). The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to provide further feedback on the way of presenting the progress in CART.

4.9 The Meeting supported the systematic approach to communicating the results within nutrient reduction scheme introduced in the presentation.

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[GEAR 10-2015, online meeting, 24 April 2015](#)

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Item 2 Topics in need of further regional coordination and requested input from HELCOM Working Groups

Documents: 2-1, 2-2

2.1 The Meeting took note of the progress on regional coordination of Programmes of Measures (PoMs) as presented by the Chair of IG PoM, Andrea Weiss, and contained in document 2-1 and Attachment 1, and noted that the draft joint document on regional coordination of PoMs has been available since end of February 2015 for the possible use by those Contracting Parties of HELCOM who are EU member states in their public consultation on national PoMs developed under the MSFD Article 13.

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2.3 The Meeting noted that information on proposed new measures in national PoMs are still missing from four countries and was informed that Lithuania will be able to possibly forward information to the Secretariat by mid-May 2015 and that Poland will be able to provide information in September 2015.

2.4 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to contact Latvia and Russian Federation to ask by when they will provide information on their new measures.

2.5 The Meeting discussed the preliminary proposal for themes for regional coordination one by one and noted that some of Contracting Parties are still in the process of reviewing the document and are not in the position to present their feedback on all the themes. The Meeting agreed that possible new or complementary information to the list of new national measures (Attachment to document 2-1) should be provided to the Secretariat (UllaLi.Zweifel@helcom.fi) **by 29 April 2015**.

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2.9 The Meeting considered the preliminary observations on the specific need for further regional coordination as contained in document 2-1 (page 2). The Meeting suggested that the headings of the themes should be kept in line with the headings used as in the Overview of possible measures (Attachment 1).

2.10 The Meeting clarified that the purpose of the coordination process was to focus on the “new” measures included in PoMs of Contracting Parties and to use the list of planned national measures in the attachment to document 2-1 and the listed potential coordination topics at page 2 to explore the scope for

regional coordination. The Meeting also noted that three different levels of coordination are proposed and that the appropriate level needs to be discussed for each tentative measure i.e. coordination of national measures, development of regional measures, or joint regional proposals for measures by the EU, international organisations or third parties.

2.11 The Meeting also recognized that coordination can be considered both a process and an end result of the process and that in the joint document on regional coordination of PoMs the focus of coordination should be on the new measures included in the national PoMs.

2.12 The Meeting supported in general the proposed topics for regional coordination as presented in document 2-1 (Annex 2 to the Outcome), with the understanding that Contracting Parties have not yet been able to discuss or agreed at the national level, and that it is a living list which will be shaped by additional national information, the input of the Working Groups and the discussions in coordination process in the coming months. The Meeting noted the following comments:

Input of nutrients and organic matter

2.13 The Meeting supported that the proposed measures related to input of nutrients in document 2-1 should be kept on the list while recognizing that that input of nutrients is a specific case in that it is already advanced in terms of coordination and that HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme provides the regional framework for measures and follow up on their implementation.

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Input of synthetic and non-synthetic contaminants

2.23 The Meeting took note of the information that identification of pharmaceuticals in the marine environment will be taken forward in cooperation with PA Hazards under the EUSBSR and HELCOM WGs State and Conservation and Pressure with the view of finalizing a report addressing the concentrations, impact and sources of pharmaceutical in the Baltic Sea environment by early 2016. A work plan for the production of the report will be discussed at the upcoming meetings of the relevant HELCOM WGs.

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Overall process

2.25 The Meeting recalled the previous conclusion by Gear that due to differing national timetables for programmes of measures it will not be possible, and has not been the intention, to coordinate the content of the national programmes of measures in this MSFD cycle. However, the Meeting agreed that there is a scope for coordination of and contributing to the implementation of national measures for the topics that might be selected. In addition, the Meeting recalled that it was the intention to propose regional measures at the end of 2015 for their development mainly after 2015 with a view to the operationalization of national programmes of measures by end of 2016.

2.26 The Meeting discussed how to formulate the request to the Working Groups for input in relation to the proposed topics for regional coordination.

2.27 The Meeting noted that on a number of issues initially proposed for coordination there are already activities ongoing or planned in HELCOM and agreed that it is to be decided later on to what extend this ongoing work in HELCOM is to be reflected in the joint documentation on programmes of measures to demonstrate coherent approaches among the countries. The Meeting agreed that the proposed coordination issues which are new to HELCOM will require more consideration by the Working Groups thus should be prioritized in preparing the input.

2.28 The Meeting requested the HELCOM Working Groups to scrutinize the list of the initial themes identified by GEAR for further regional coordination as presented on page 2 of document 2-1 and contained in Annex 2 to the Outcome and provide their input to the list according to the following points:

1. Indicate if the proposed topic for coordination is already well covered by the activities of the Working Group (to provide brief description, including reference to the existing ToR / Roadmaps / work plans / sub-groups) and briefly reflect on possible gaps or needs for further work and/or improved coordination,
2. For new issues, propose how they could be taken forward in a coordinated manner, including next steps, possible technical requirements and time-lines,
3. If still not identified, indicate the most appropriate and effective action level according to the three categories of measures (coordination of national measures, joint measures and actions, joint proposals and inputs to other competent organizations and institutions: EU, IMO, etc.).

2.29 The Meeting invited the Working Groups to provide their input by the end of September 2015. The Meeting asked the Secretariat to inform the Working Groups of this request by Gear either when preparing agendas for the meeting or through a separate letter.

2.30 The Meeting recognized that some of the groups have scheduled their next meetings only for late autumn and requested the Secretariat to consult with the chairs of the groups (e.g. Fish, Maritime) how the input of those groups could be organized i.a. via correspondence or online meetings.

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