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Background

The attached document contains the summary of the Sixth Baltic Sea Pollution Load Compilation (PLC-6) project.

The PLC-6 project aims at delivering a detailed assessment of the inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances, based on the data for 1994-2014, but focusing on source apportionment (e.g. agriculture, urban WWTP) and evaluation of effectiveness of measures for the individual year.

The PLC-6 assessment covers 2012 (Poland and Germany) and 2014 (the remaining Contracting Parties). The data are to be reported to a new PLC database, which is under development. The new database will open up access to the data and ease up reporting by the Contracting Parties as well as future preparation of the future assessments. The PLC-6 assessment will be finalized in 2017, however, some essential data are to be made available by the end of 2016 in order to provide input to the second HELCOM holistic assessment of the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea.

The PLC-6 project covers also activities to improve the quality of PLC data and reporting, including updating of the PLC guidelines and reporting templates as well as developing statistical aspects for assessment purposes.

The PLC-6 assessment is planned to be implemented using a new, more user-friendly format (e.g. e-book).

The full project description can be accessed via the [PLC-6 project webpage](#) and documents related to project meetings can be found in the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#).

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

Summary of the Sixth Baltic Sea Pollution Load Compilation (PLC-6) project (2013-2017)

The PLC-6 project is an implementation of [HELCOM Recommendation 26/2](#) to every sixth year carry out a pollution load assessment (PLC) including a quantification of waterborne point, diffuse and natural sources. The PLC-6 project aims to deliver the essential information by the end of 2016 to allow for making use of the data for HELCOM thematic and holistic assessments as well as the second round of initial assessments under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) in 2018 for the Contracting Parties being EU member states. The availability of the initial results, however, is pending the timely implementation of the [HELCOM PLUS project](#) on modernization of the PLC water database, timely delivery of quality assured waterborne data by the Contracting Parties and timely delivery of atmospheric deposition data by EMEP.

Furthermore, the results of the PLC-6 project will overall evaluate effectiveness of nutrient reduction measures taken within the Baltic Sea catchment area.

The overall objective of the project is to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the water- and airborne inputs of nutrients and some hazardous substances to the Baltic Sea and prioritize their sources. The main tasks to achieve the overall objective are:

- compilation of information on the waterborne and airborne input of nitrogen, phosphorus and selected hazardous substances to the Baltic Sea sub-basins from different countries and sources in 1994-2014, with a more detailed analysis (source apportionment) for 2012/2014;
- assessment of long-term changes in the pollution load to the Baltic Sea and prioritisation of different sources of pollutants;
- overall assessment of the effect of measures taken to reduce the pollution load in the Baltic Sea catchment area.

The standardized methodology of data compilation and evaluation, including evaluation of countries' progress in fulfilling BSAP nutrient reduction targets and on fulfilling maximum allowable inputs has been developed. The methods have been documented in a published [report](#). Also laboratory intercalibration/intercomparison activity with the participation of all nine HELCOM countries and published the results in a [report](#) has been carried out.

At the moment, the project is working on annexes to the updated and extended PLC-water guidelines, which have been endorsed in principle by HELCOM HOD 46-2014, and to contain the revised periodical reporting templates developed by HELCOM PLUS project.

Reporting of the data on nutrients input in 2014 (except Poland and one federal state in Germany have carried out periodic monitoring in 2012) will take place in the end of 2015 using the web user interface of the new modernized PLC-Water database (HELCOM PLUS project).

Data assessment, data products as well as preparation and publication of the PLC-6 assessment report will take place in 2016-2017.