



Outcome of the Second Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 2-2015)

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2.6 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to propose indicators to measure progress in the implementation based on the comments by the Contracting Parties and to present a draft proposal to HOD 48-2015 (10-11 June 2015). The Contracting Parties will be requested to provide their feedback on the proposal at HOD 48-2015. Heads of Delegation are invited to decide on how to follow up the implementation of Part II of Annex III to the Helsinki Convention,

2.7 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for the Agri group (document 2-3).

2.8 The Meeting noted the request by HOD 47-2014 to consider a way forward regarding revision of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention and agreed that for the time being the priority will be given to the themes of nutrient recycling, bookkeeping and manure nutrient content and that the Group will come back to the issue of revising and updating part II of Annex III at a later stage.

2.9 The Meeting took note of the latest information on nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea based on main results of the HELCOM core indicator on progress towards fulfilling Maximum Allowable Inputs published on the [HELCOM web page](#) (**Presentation 1**, document 2-4) and noted the progress achieved in nutrient input reduction in the most of the sub-basins.

2.10 The Secretariat clarified that source apportionment and assessment of the effectiveness of measures will be carried out in the frame of the PLC-6 project by 2017.

2.11 The Meeting took note an outcome of the last meeting of PLC-6 8-2015 (20-21 May 2015) regarding the needs for background information required to finalize the project (document 2-7) and discussed the availability of georeferenced data related to agriculture. The Contracting Parties indicated that in the most countries the data on the livestock, land use and soil types are available. Only Denmark and Finland reported availability of some data on fertilizers application while these data are not available in the other countries. Germany and Russia, whose territories are only partly within the Baltic Sea catchment area, informed that data on livestock and land use in the catchment area can be obtained from the national data sources. Some data could also be acquired from Eurostat.

2.12 The Meeting took note the information from CCB that the [report](#) on industrial livestock farming in the Baltic Sea Region contains relevant maps on animal farms (2013) for Baltic Sea catchment area which are available in digital format. However information on cattle farms are missing as not included in the IED Directive.

2.13 The Meeting took note of the comment by WWF pointing out the importance to also include data on mineral fertilizers and nutrient balance.

2.14 The Meeting requested the Contracting Parties to send information on data availability to the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamnetsky@helcom.fi) and to national PLC contacts and encouraged the Contracting Parties to communicate more closely with their national PLC experts.

2.15 The Meeting welcomed the initiative to prepare a regional status report on pharmaceuticals in the Baltic Sea (**Presentation 2**, document 2-6) and considered the possible contribution of agriculture to contamination of the aquatic environment by pharmaceuticals.

2.16 The Meeting pointed out that pharmaceuticals are used both in veterinary medicine (animal production) and in human use and that animal production is a minor source of medical substances into the Baltic Sea compare to urban areas but nevertheless it should be taken into account in the regional assessment

2.17 The Meeting took note information by Germany on results of a national study, which revealed only a few cases of pharmaceutical presence in the groundwater which indicates that transportation of these compounds to surface water by surface runoff is the major pathway.

2.18 The Meeting took note that an information on the use of pharmaceuticals in veterinary medicine is available in the most countries and that Finland have just launched a study aimed at identification of pharmaceuticals in manure.

2.19 CCB pointed out that there are good examples in the Baltic Sea on farmers who have reduced the use of antibiotics for veterinary purpose and that it would be interesting to collect experiences from such farms.

2.20 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties and Observers to provide information on the availability of the data on pharmaceuticals consumption in veterinary medicine and also about the national projects aimed at studies of possible releases of these substances into the environment to the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) by 30 June 2015.

Agenda Item 3

Farm nutrient management and balanced fertilization

3.1

Session on development of national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure

Documents: 3.1-1, 3.1-2

3.1 The Meeting took note of the introduction to the session made by Ms. Marja-Liisa Tapio-Biström, from lead country Finland, highlighting the overall goal to use resources more efficiently and apply nutrients where they are needed.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Ms. Sari Luostarinen, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), and Mr Juha Grönroos, Finnish Environment Institute (Syke) on the ongoing activities in Finland on developing a system for national standards for nutrient content in manure within the project on normative manure lead by Luke and Syke. The project is funded by Ministry of Environment and has a steering committee with representatives of both Ministry of Environment and Agriculture. Final results of the project are expected in spring 2016. (**Presentation 3**, document 3.1-1).

3.3 The Meeting took note of the Danish normative manure system, which has already been in use for 20 years. Calculations are made for standards N, P and K content in manure and of. The standard values are used for fertilization planning and control by the Danish farmers and authorities. The standard values are annually revised based on mandatory analysis of the nutrients content in manure by farmers and statistical database.

3.4 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Mr. Jacek Walczak, from the national research institute of animal production and expert of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development, Poland, (**Presentation 4**) (document 3.1-2). Poland will validate the previously created normative manure standards in a project (2015-2017) aiming at manure composition verification.

3.5 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Mr. Enn Liive, Ministry of the Environment Estonia (**Presentation 5**). Estonia has had regulation in place since 2014 on manure standards based on scientific research. The thematic web page providing background information on national standard values. Therefore, the data presented at the web page is not legally binding.

3.6 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Ms. Natalia Kozlova, Institute for Engineering and Environmental Problems in Agricultural Production (IEEP) (**Presentation 6**) regarding the existing nutrient content standards in Russia and the legal base regulating their application. National standards in Russia were developed 20-30 years ago and revision is in progress.

3.7 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Mr. Maximilian Hofmeier, Julius Kühn-Institute, Germany (**Presentation 7**). The general methodology is a mass balance approach with some preconditions and assumptions needed.

3.8 The Meeting appreciated the presented information on national systems of nutrient standards in manure and was of the opinion that all the countries around the Baltic Sea region are developing in the similar direction which creates a good possibility for regional cooperation.

3.9 The Meeting agreed that the aim of cooperation in the Agri group should be to identify, or jointly develop methodologies that could be recommended for use in the Baltic Sea region when establishing standards for nutrients content in manure nationally. In this respect, the Meeting agreed to start with comparing existing standards in the countries and analysing the similarities and differences in the

methodologies used, and that this work should be carried out on an expert level. The Meeting appreciated the renewed offer by Finland to lead this work.

3.10 The Meeting requested the Contracting Parties to nominate experts with knowledge of national systems of standards for nutrients content in manure and inform the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) accordingly as soon as possible but not later than **by 30 August 2015**. The experts are expected to provide information on the national standards of nutrient content in manure and methodologies used to the lead country Finland.

3.11 The Meeting further agreed that an expert workshop will be held in autumn 2015 to consider the issue in more detail and propose how common methodologies could be derived or developed. The aim is to start up a project with clear goals, look into existing methodologies and common interpretation.

3.12 The Meeting acknowledged the importance of stakeholder involvement in development of a normative manure system.

3.13 The Meeting agreed that the issues of promoting the use of manure as fertilizer among farmers and excess of manure from high density farms are relevant in the overall consideration how to promote nutrients recycling.

3.14 The Meeting took note of the call by WWF for actions by the Contracting Parties as complete scientific knowledge will not be achieved and CCB underlined the importance to stick to the timetable agreed on by the 2013 Ministerial Declaration.

3.2 Session on promotion of nutrient accounting at farm level

Documents: 3.2-1

3.15 The Meeting took note of the introductory presentation by Mr. Gunnar Norén, Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) highlighting the need for promotion of nutrients recycling in the region in particular in agricultural sector to reduce nutrient input to the environment as well as financial losses of farmers (**Presentation 8**).

3.16 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Mr. Weert Sweers, Chamber of Agriculture Lower Saxony, Germany, on the conclusions from the HELCOM Workshop on status of nutrient bookkeeping in the Baltic Sea countries, which was held on 28-29 April 2015 in Oldenburg, Germany. The workshop was organized by the Chamber of Agriculture Lower Saxony and the Federal Environment Agency in Germany. The workshop identified the status of the nutrient bookkeeping in the region, revealed the main obstacles in integration of this tool into the routines agricultural practice and outlined the for regional cooperation in promoting and advancing nutrient bookkeeping in the Baltic Sea countries. The conclusions and presentations from the workshop have been made available on the [HELCOM web page](#) and workshop proceedings, as a collection of national reports on nutrient bookkeeping, will be published in autumn 2015. (**Presentation 9**, document 3.2-1).

3.17 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to provide additional information, if considered necessary, on the status of nutrient bookkeeping in their respective country to the organizers of the workshop (Amelie Bauer, amelie.bauer@lwk-niedersachsen.de).

3.18 The Meeting thanked Germany and in particular the Chamber of Agriculture Lower Saxony and the Federal Environment Agency for organizing the workshop.

Agenda Item 4 Future work

Documents: 2-8, 4-1, 4-2

4.1 The Meeting considered the proposal for having an agri-environmental advisor at the Secretariat to support the work of the Agri Group as well as of the lead countries Finland, and Germany and Denmark regarding the specific topics they are leading (document 4-2).

4.2 The Meeting supported the proposal in principle with the idea that the advisor will bring technical expertise to take issues forward and develop substantial proposals for consideration by the Group.

The Secretariat will develop professional requirements for the position and inform the contracting parties accordingly.

4.3 The Meeting recalled that the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting agreed to aim at improved farm nutrient management, especially manure nutrient recycling, including calculation of nutrient surplus in fertilization practices, and nutrient accounting at the farm level.

4.4 The Meeting took note of the introduction by Ms. Tarja Haaranen, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), to nutrient recycling and specifically to the ongoing two year project “Nutrient recycling in agriculture” funded by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture (**Presentation 10**). As consumption is increasing and there are less resources, circular economy is needed and waste needs to be made into a resource. Also food production needs to be secured to ensure safe food of high quality. The aim of the project is to secure that the nutrients in manure and other organic matter are in effective use by 2020.

4.5 The Meeting noted the importance of the issue as nutrient recycling is a key issue also for the health of the Baltic Sea and noted that a lot of knowledge is already available and related studies have been made.

4.6 The Meeting requested Finland to keep the Group updated on the project, decided to focus on this issue in more detail at the next meeting of the Group and welcomed all Contracting Parties to consider presenting aims and policies in nutrient recycling.

4.7 The Meeting took note of activities within the HELCOM Gear group on stock tacking and analysis of new national programs of measures being proposed to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status in the Baltic Sea (under Marine Strategy Framework Directive for EU Member States and under relevant legislation for the Russian Federation) and the initial list of specific topics in need of further regional coordination (document 2-8). The aim of the activity is to identify opportunities for regional coherence of national measures and for additional joint regional actions. The Meeting agreed that nutrient recycling can be proposed as a potential issue for regional cooperation.

4.8 The Meeting took note of the Work Plan for the Agri group 2014-2016 as approved by HOD 47-2014 (9-10 December 2014) and requested the Secretariat to update the Work Plan based on the outcome of the meeting and to circulate it to the contacts of the Agri group for checking.

4.9 The Meeting decided that the next meeting of the group (AGRI 3-2015) will be held after the planned HELCOM workshop on nutrient content in order to progress with the work and have results for consideration by the Contracting Parties.

4.10 The Meeting decided to hold the workshop on nutrient standards in November 2015 taking into account that the Conference Greener Agriculture for a Bluer Baltic Sea will be held on 5-6 November 2015 in Stralsund, Germany, and welcomed the offer by Finland to host the workshop.

4.11 The Meeting agreed to hold AGRI 3-2016 in early April and welcomed the preliminary offer by Estonia to host the meeting to be confirmed at a later stage.

Agenda Item 5

Any other business

Documents: 5-1, 5-2

5.1 The Meeting checked and updated the list of contact addresses and observers of the Agri group (document 5-1) as contained in **Annex 3**.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the proposals by CCB for amendments to part II of Annex III (document 5-2).

5.3 The Meeting thanked Mr. Norén for his valuable work for the Baltic Sea marine environment as the CCB Executive Secretary for many years and wished him all the best for his retirement days.

5.4 The Meeting thanked the host for excellent meeting arrangements.

Agenda Item 6

Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 6-1

6.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of AGRI 2-2015 as contained in document 6-1.

6.2 The Outcome of the Meeting was finalized by the Secretariat and made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal together with the documents and presentation given during the Meeting.

Annex 1 List of Participants

Representing	Name	Organization	Email address
Chair	Dietrich Schulz	Federal Environment Agency	dietrich.schulz@uba.dex
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Annex 2 BSAP follow-up

Actions related to reduction of negative environmental impact of agriculture on the Baltic Sea **proposed to be followed-up in terms of level of accomplishment.**

Action (nr from 2013 follow-up)	Origin/Deadline	Level	Indicator for national reporting	Indicator for aggregation at regional level	Accomplished (Regional)	Partly accomplished (Regional)	Not accomplished (Regional)
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 environment effect, e.g. compulsory measures on manure handling (storage and application) for installations of intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs	MD 2010 MD 2013						
Measures to bring all installations for the intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs as well as other agricultural activities in compliance with part 2, Annex III of the Helsinki Convention (and thus remove all agricultural hot spots from JCP list)	MD2010 MD 2103						
Apply as a minimum the updated EU's BREF document and Conclusions on BAT for intensive rearing of poultry and pigs, especially for the facilities located within areas critical to nutrient losses	MD 2013						
Establishment of a list of hot spots concerning animal farms for intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs not in compliance with	BSAP MD 2010						

part 2, Annex III of the Helsinki Convention							
Review and update part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention, in order to better serve the purposes of reaching GES	MD 2013						
Aim for elimination of remaining agricultural Hot Spots under the HELCOM JCP	MD 2013						
HELCOM Palette of optional agro-environmental measures to be implemented through corresponding international and national instruments	MD 2013						
Agreement on national level on measures to reduce nutrient surplus in fertilization practices to reach nutrient balanced fertilization	MD 2013						
Promote and advance annual nutrient accounting at farm level, in areas critical to nutrient losses as a first step	MD 2013 2018						
Establish national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure and guidelines/recommendation on the use of such standards	MD 2013 2016/ 2018						
Enhance the recycling of phosphorus (especially in agriculture and waste water treatment) and to promote development of appropriate methodology	MD 2013						

Make use of appropriate policy and economic instruments as well as economic levies and incentives, in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture	MD 2013						
Apply innovative water management measures, in particular under difficult soil conditions, to ensure that upgrading and renovation of the agricultural drainage systems aim at reducing nutrient concentrations in the outlets of the adjacent catchment	MD 2013						

Actions identified as having General objectives or overlapping with the commitments of the other HELCOM agreements; proposed **not to be follow-up in terms of level of accomplishment**. Progress is proposed to be followed up over time by HELCOM Working Groups (or a more precise target needs to be expressed).

Action	Origin	Comment
Follow-up and exchange experiences and ideas for potential development of policy instruments and measures for improved farm nutrient management	MD 2013	The action could not be followed due to unmeasurable target
Facilitate enhanced transfer of knowledge and technology and exchange of good examples as well as development of co-operation projects to reduce agricultural impact on the Baltic Sea;	MD 2010 MD 2013	The action could not be followed due to unmeasurable target
Designation of relevant parts of agricultural land as zones vulnerable to nitrogen	BSAP	The action overlaps with "Initiate activity to identify/verify areas critical to N and P losses, utilizing the available data..."

Annex 3 List of contact addresses of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri group)

Contact addresses of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri group) in the Contracting Parties

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Contact addresses of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri group) in the Observer organizations

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