



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture)

CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018

Berlin, Germany, 7-8 November 2018

Document title	Extracts from recent HELCOM meeting outcomes of relevance for CG Aquaculture
Code	3-1
Category	INF
Agenda Item	3 – Matters arising from HELCOM work of relevance of the group
Submission date	16.10.2018
Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

The following HELCOM meetings that are relevant for the CG Aquaculture group have taken place during 2017-2018:

1. CG Aquaculture 1-2017, Helsinki, Finland, 26 September 2017
2. FISH 7-2017, Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-15 November 2017
3. HOD 53-2017, Helsinki, Finland, 12-13 December 2017
4. HELCOM 39-2018, Brussels, Belgium, 5 March 2018
5. HELCOM MINISTERIAL 2018, Brussels, Belgium, 6 March 2018
6. PRESSURE 8-2018, Berlin, Germany, 18-20 April 2018
7. HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 16-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 8-9 May 2018
8. FISH 8-2018, Warsaw, Poland, 23-24 May 2018
9. HOD 54-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 14 June 2018
10. PRESSURE 9-2018, Riga, Latvia, 10-12 October 2018

In addition, STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 will be held from 22 to 26 October 2018. Any outcome with relevance for CG Aquaculture will be reported separately to the Meeting.

Extracts of the most relevant outcomes are set out in the Annex to this document. More information related to the outcome of HOD 54-2018 with specific emphasis on the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is provided in document 3-2.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the attached extracts from the outcomes of relevant HELCOM meetings and make use of the information as appropriate.

Extracts from recent HELCOM meeting outcomes of relevance for CG Aquaculture

1. CG Aquaculture 1-2017, Helsinki, Finland, 26 September 2017

The First meeting of HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture 1-2017) was held on 26 September 2017 at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat in Helsinki, Finland.

The Meeting aimed at focusing on the availability of material on aquaculture BAT/BEP, concluding on CG leads, and assigning tasks for future work.

The Meeting

- regretted that it was not in a position to conclude on a lead for CG Aquaculture and requested HELCOM FISH 7-2017 as well as HELCOM HOD to provide guidance on the issue.
- took note of and agreed to make use of the Terms of Reference as the basis of CG Aquaculture work.
- agreed that it would be useful to follow the selected BONUS project and to invite the project to contribute to the work within the HELCOM CG Aquaculture
- agreed that it would be beneficial to collect available information or links on BAT and BEP for sustainable aquaculture in one single place and invited Contracting Parties to submit relevant material to the CG Aquaculture Workspace in the HELCOM Meeting Portal.
- was of the view that there is a need to ensure that the work carried out to provide the expected deliverables and outputs are reasonable in terms of the available resources in the Contracting Parties, Observers and Secretariat.
- agreed that the focus, to begin with, should be on developing BAT/BEP for:
 - fish aquaculture in the marine area of the Baltic Sea (open sea cages)
 - intensive inland aquaculture
- was of the opinion that as any developed BAT/BEP menu will quickly become outdated, there is a need for a process for following the latest developments in aquaculture techniques and practices.
- was not able to conclude on designation of leads for the correspondence group and requested HELCOM FISH 7-2017 or HOD 53-2017 to conclude on leads.
- was of the opinion that in general there is a need to ensure focused questionnaires that ensure questions that are feasible to respond to, and can provide replies that are comparable and relevant.
- agreed that as a first step leads should cooperate with the CG members when drafting questionnaires.
- agreed that the second meeting of CG Aquaculture should be organised in the form of a workshop where relevant ongoing regional projects working with the aquaculture theme in the Baltic Sea (BONUS, INTERREG or similar) should be invited in order to enable engagement of the best possible expertise.
- welcomed the offers of Finland (Åland) and Germany to consider their possibility to host the CG Aquaculture 2 meeting in June 2018.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

2. FISH 7-2017, Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-15 November 2017

The seventh Meeting of the HELCOM Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (FISH 7-2017) was held on 14-15 November 2017 at the premises of the Danish Agrifish Agency in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The Meeting:

- took note of the outcome of the CG Aquaculture 1-2017 and agreed on the updated Work plan¹
- took note of the request to update the contacts and observers of CG Aquaculture to the HELCOM Secretariat.
- welcomed that Sweden can lead task 1A (*Compilation of national Aquaculture BAT/BEP definitions*).
- took note that Germany unfortunately has currently no capacity to lead task 1B.2
- took note the comment by FEAP that the HELCOM Convention definition on BAT is very broad and further input based on other BAT/BEP definitions would be needed.
- took note of the comment from Germany that the inclusion of extractive aquaculture of mussels and algae in the work of CG is urgently needed to develop BAT/BEP for this form of aquaculture.
- welcomed the information that Åland islands would be available to host the next meeting of CG Aquaculture in May-June 2018.
- took note of the project Baltic Blue Growth and the invitation that HELCOM should be an observer in the project and took note that the project will end by 2019.
- took note that FEAP invited the Fish group to be more engaged in mussel farming for nutrient removal, would appreciate exchange of views on this topic within the Fish or Pressure groups in accordance with the decision at HELCOM HOD.
- took note that in Denmark the Government is very much in favour of using mussel farming as a compensatory instrument and this idea is included in the current Danish legislation.
- took note of the comment from Germany that there is a difference between small scale (local) and large scale effects of mussel farming.
- took note of the comment from Sweden that the environmental impacts of mussel farming should be studied further.
- took note of the suggestion by Denmark regarding an exchange of experience on mussel farming and the filtration capacity of mussels.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

3. HOD 53-2017, Helsinki, Finland, 12-13 December 2017

The 53th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HOD 53-2018) was held in Helsinki, Finland, on 12-13 December 2017.

The Meeting approved the updated Work plan² of CG Aquaculture 2017-2019.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

4. HELCOM 39-2018, Brussels, Belgium, 5 March 2018

The 39th Meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission - Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 39-2018) was held on 5 March 2018 in Brussels, Belgium, hosted by the European Union, at the premises of Palais d'Egmont.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

¹ Paragraph 4.1 of the outcome of FISH 7-2017 erroneously referred to the agreeing of ToRs, while it in fact should have referred to the draft work plan of CG Aquaculture for 2017-2019 (Annex 2 of the outcome).

² Paragraph 3.8 of the outcome of HOD 53-2017 erroneously referred to the approval of ToRs, while it in fact should have referred to the work plan of CG Aquaculture for 2017-2019 (Annex 3 of the outcome).

5. HELCOM MINISTERIAL 2018, Brussels, Belgium, 6 March 2018

The 2018 Ministerial Meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission - Helsinki Commission (HELCOM MINISTERIAL 2018) was held on 6 March 2018 in Brussels, Belgium, hosted by the European Union, at the premises of Palais d'Egmont.

The Meeting:

- took note of the input by the Minister for Environment and Food, Denmark, Mr. Esben Lunde Larsen, who informed that Denmark plans to use the extra nutrient reductions to the Kattegat to expand the aquaculture sector.
- took note of the input by the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Siim Kiisler, who highlighted the need to further reduce the environmental impact from agriculture, industries, and aquaculture.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

6. PRESSURE 8-2018, Berlin, Germany, 18-20 April 2018

The Eighth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 8-2017) was held by invitation from Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety of Germany in Berlin on 18-20 April 2018.

The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to investigate available national information on pollutants from offshore sources (e.g. shipping, off shore windmills, aquaculture, oil industry) of hazardous substances and to discuss the matter at the PRESSURE 9-2018 meeting.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

7. HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 16-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 8-9 May 2018

The 16th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 16-2018) was held on 8-9 May 2018 in Helsinki, Finland upon invitation by the Ministry of the Environment.

The Meeting invited HELCOM FISH group to start regional dialogue on integration of information on fisheries activities and aquaculture in spatial planning, in cooperation with HELCOM-VASAB MSP group.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

8. FISH 8-2018, Warsaw, Poland, 23-24 May 2018

The eight Meeting of the HELCOM Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (FISH 7-2017) was held on 23-24 May 2018 at the premises of the Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation in Warsaw, Poland.

The Meeting

- took note of information on recent activities relevant to the development of sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea as well as the BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture, and noted that it has not been possible to organize a meeting of CG Aquaculture for June 2018, according to the original plan.
- recalled that the group currently lacks a lead country and commitment from several Contracting Parties, and invited Contracting Parties to consider taking the lead of the group and to recommit to completing the work on BAT/BEP definitions, techniques and practices applicable in the Baltic Sea region, originally envisaged to be completed in summer 2018.

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- noted a comment by FEAP, suggesting that the Nordic Council of Ministers report on aquaculture, Bat for fiskeopdræt i Norden, should be translated into English as discussed already at FISH 6-2016, but noted that the translation has not progressed due to lack of allocated funds in the Secretariat.
 - further noted information by Sweden, that the Swedish study on aquaculture techniques has been published in Swedish and is under translation into English.
 - noted with appreciation that Germany agreed to ask whether they are able to take a leading role in the development of BAT & BEP and invited Germany to inform HOD 54-2018 on the matter.
 - noted the comment by Finland regretting the lack of a lead country for the process and highlighting the need for a thorough discussion on the matter, noting also the reporting deadline for 2018 specified in Recommendation 37/3 on Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region. In this context, Finland expressed the possible need to develop a template for reporting in accordance with the Recommendation.
 - noted that Sweden, in accordance with the agreed work plan for CG aquaculture, sent out a questionnaire regarding the definition of BAT & BEP to be completed by Contracting Parties but had not received any response by the set deadline, and agreed that Sweden will resend the questionnaire to be fulfilled by the Contracting Parties by mid-September 2018 and, pending guidance from HODs, synthesize the results of the questionnaire.
 - noted that Denmark and Finland considered as one option the discontinuation of the BAT & BEP work if no progress can be foreseen.
 - requested HELCOM HOD 54-2018 to provide guidance on the way forward regarding the Aquaculture work on BAT & BEP and stressed that for the work on BAT & BEP to continue, Contracting Parties should fully commit to contribute to the work in order enable its finalization and efficient use of resources.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

9. HOD 54-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 14 June 2018

The 54th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HOD 54-2018) was held in Helsinki, Finland, on 14-15 June 2018.

The Meeting

- noted the lack of progress and lead country with regard to the development of BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture.
- agreed that, despite progress being slow, the matter is important, in particular in view of HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region.
- noted a comment by FEAP that a publication by the Nordic Council of Ministers may be useful in this regard, but that it has not been translated into English due to lack of funds.
- also noted a comment by CCB that the Helsinki Convention itself already contains a definition for BAT and BEP, and that HELCOM Recommendation 25/4 on Measures aimed at the reduction of discharges from water and marine fish farming is still valid, and welcomed the offer by CCB to contribute to the work regarding BAT/BEP.
- requested the Contracting Parties to contribute to the work and agreed that organizing a meeting of the CG Aquaculture would be a good way for experts to come together to exchange views and share information regarding what is considered BAT/BEP in the different Contracting Parties. Based on the outcome of this meeting, HOD 55-2018 in December 2018 could make a final decision on the continuation of the work.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).

10. PRESSURE 9-2018, Riga, Latvia, 10-12 October 2018

The Ninth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 9-2018) was held in Riga, Latvia on 10-12 October 2018 by invitation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia.

The Meeting:

- took note of the comment by FEAP pointing out that there are two different Recommendations on aquaculture.
- noted that OSPAR works on offshore sources of contaminants, particularly fish farms and wind mills.

The outcome of the Meeting, as well as all meeting documents, are available on the [HELCOM meeting portal](#).