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### Background

This document selects certain outcome points from earlier HELCOM meetings that may have relevance to the current meeting (EN-HZ 7-2017). Please note that this document does not cover all aspects of the discussion at the three meetings presented and further details are available directly from the outcomes themselves, as given in links within the provisional annotated agenda (Document 1-1).

### Action required

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of this information and discuss any aspects of importance.



## Selected outcomes from other previous HELCOM meetings

### **HELCOM SPICE Workshop on Hazardous substances – 16 March 2017 - Outcomes**

Draft integrated contamination status assessment results

5. The workshop took note of the draft integrated contamination status results calculated based on the HELCOM core indicators for hazardous substances on HELCOM assessment unit scale 4 (Document 3) as well as on assessment unit scale 3 including the core indicator for radioactive substances (Document 5) and the 'initial status assessment', as presented by the Secretariat (Presentation 2).

6. The workshop noted that the aggregation of results from assessment unit scale 4 to scale 3 has been made by aggregating results calculated for scale 4 and not by recalculating results for stations and associating stations to the scale 3 unit, and noted that there are inconsistencies between the borders of some of the scale 4 and scale 3 units. The workshop further noted that it is possible to correct the situation for the update of the mid-2018 version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report by associating stations to scale 3 assessment units when carrying out the data extraction from the HELCOM COMBINE database.

Discussion

10. The workshop discussed the 'initial status assessment' and whether to include data from these stations in the integration, and noted the following:

- a. Some of the substances have only recently been included in the monitoring programme and therefore only 1-2 years of data are available. This problem may be solved in the future as the programmes continue, however several CPs expressed a wish to include the information to show the currently available knowledge.
- b. The monitoring programmes for some substances and matrices (especially sediment) is designed to only have sampling every third or sixth year, and thus there will not be 3 years of data in the assessment period, and data predating 2011 are not always available in COMBINE.
- c. Monitoring coverage of the substances has improved since the first holistic assessment made in 2010, however this will not be reflected in the integrated results if the 'initial status assessment' stations are excluded. Excluding the 'initial assessment status' stations would result in fewer stations being included in the mid-2017 assessment compared to the 2010 assessment.
- d. Generally the contamination ratio values (CR) for the 'initial status assessment' stations are of the same order of magnitude as the CR values for the stations that have gone through both the first and second step of the indicator script, and thus the overall result appear the same.
- e. For a status assessment purposes it is considered sufficient to only have few measurements indicate the status, especially if the measurement shows that the concentration is very far from the threshold value. For a trend analysis many measurements are needed from the same station.

Recommendations on how to carry out the integrated assessment of hazardous substances

20. The integrated results are to include both the 'full' data and the 'initial status assessment' data, but the use of these data should be transparent.
21. The integration should be updated as soon as possible by the SPICE project and updated results to be submitted to the HOLAS II 6-2017 meeting.
22. The 'initial status assessment' data should be assigned low confidence in the input data and the same confidence is assigned to the threshold value as for the full data as agreed at EN-HZ 6-2017.
23. The CHASE integration should be made on assessment unit scale 3, noting however that this is obtained by aggregating results from the scale 4 assessment unit results at this time.
24. The core indicator 'Radioactive substances: Cs-137 in fish and surface water' is to be included in the CHASE integration by assigning the value calculated for the scale 2 unit (sub-basin) to all the nested scale 3 units (coastal and open-sea units).

### **HOLAS II 7-2017 – 4-6 April - Outcomes**

5.8 The Meeting took note that based on the recommendation from the HELCOM SPICE hazardous substance workshop (HELCOM SPICE HZ WS 1-2017) the integrated assessment on contamination status has been recalculated to include data also from the so called 'initial status assessment'. The 'initial status assessment' data does not meet the criteria of the script used to calculate the core indicators, however, it does meet the specifications for the core indicators on which matrices should be sampled etc. As the 'initial status assessment' data does not meet the script-criteria the data are not included in the core indicator result displayed in the core indicator key message maps, however intended to be included in the more detailed results of the reports.

5.10 The Meeting supported to continue the development of the integrated hazardous substance assessment based on the inclusion of data from the 'initial status assessment', noting that Denmark was not in a position to give a final view on the approach.

5.11 The Meeting took note that the hazardous substance experts have proposed to show how many substances have contributed to the assessment by including pie charts in the maps displaying the integrated contamination status (Figure 1) and also to include a graph showing the range of contamination ratios and direction of trends of the core indicators per station (Figure 2a).

### **Annex 2. Editorial and visual recommendations**

Hazardous substances (document 5-6): - figure 1; o use the version that includes pie charts showing the proportion of the 12 substance included in the assessment unit, and adjust the legend, o consider to use different colour scheme, preferably the same color scheme as in other maps displaying integrated status, o use the same approach as for biodiversity assessments when displaying confidence, i.e. a separate small map inside the larger map - use figure 2a, but consider displaying trends as graphic element such as in figure 2b and provide information on time period for the trend analysis, - revise table 1 to clarify the difference between results included in the integrated CHASE assessment and the core indicators results, e.g. by using a symbol to indicate results based on 'initial status assessment', and explain the indicators where there are secondary substances and threshold values and how they have been included in the assessment, - move table 2 to the supplementary report, and only include in the text of the summary report the main message of the table i.e. that the poor status is most often driven by status in biota, in some cases in sediment and only in water when other measurements were not available.

### **State and Conservation 6-2017 - 15-19 May – Outcomes.**

4J.43 The Meeting endorsed the publication of the following updated hazardous substances core indicators with edits agreed at the meeting: ☐ 'Reproductive disorders- malformed embryos in amphipods and

eelpout' (document 4J-25) ☒ 'TBT and imposex' (document 4J-28) ☒ 'Metals' (document 4J-26) ☒ 'HBCDD' (document 4J-21) ☒ 'PBDE' (document 4J-22) ☒ 'PFOS' (document 4J-23) ☒ 'PAH and metabolites' (document 4J-38) ☒ 'Radioactive substances' (document 4J-24)

4J.46 The Meeting considered and endorsed the core indicator general assessment protocol for hazardous substances concentration core indicators (document 4J-30).