



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise

Gothenburg, Sweden, 5 October 2017

# Outcome of the Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise, Gothenburg, Sweden, 5 October 2017

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## Outcome of the Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise, Gothenburg, Sweden, 5 October 2017

### Introduction

0.1 A Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise was held on 5 October 2017 in Gothenburg, Sweden, at the premises of the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management.

0.2 The Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise was attended by delegations from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom as well as Observers from ICES. The List of HELCOM Participants is attached as **Annex 3**.

0.3 The Joint Session of OSPAR ICG-Noise and HELCOM EN-Noise was co-chaired by Mr. Peter Sigray, Sweden, Chair of the EN-Noise and Mr. Nathan Merchant, United Kingdom, Co-Chair of the OSPAR ICG-Noise. Mr. John Mouat, OSPAR Deputy Secretary and Ms. Marta Ruiz, HELCOM Associate Professional Secretary acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

0.4 The Meeting was welcomed by Ms. Anna Jöborn, Head of Science Affairs Department, on behalf on SwAM. The relevance of shared HELCOM OSPAR approach to carry more weight at EU level was emphasized (**Presentation 1**).

### Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda of the Meeting as contained in document 1-1.

### Agenda Item 2 Update on HELCOM Activities

2.1 The Meeting noted the information on the updates on HELCOM activities with a focus on the recently released 'State of the Baltic Sea Report' and the HELCOM approach on the issue of underwater noise as presented by HELCOM Secretariat (**Presentation 2**). HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2013 commitments related to underwater noise were emphasised as well as the Roadmap on Underwater Noise to achieve these commitments.

2.2 The Meeting noted the information on the HELCOM on-going work on underwater noise as introduced by the Chair of the HELCOM EN-Noise (**Presentation 3**).

### Agenda Item 3 Update on OSPAR Activities

3.1 The Meeting noted the information on the structure of OSPAR as well as the North East Atlantic Environment Strategy, which establishes main strategic direction for work on underwater noise, as well as timelines and implementation, as presented by the OSPAR Secretariat (**Presentation 4**). OSPAR had also agreed an Ambient Noise Monitoring Strategy in 2015. Regarding impulsive noise there was on-going work on improving the noise registry by addressing those areas and sources where data are not available. The impulsive noise pressure indicator was a common indicator in OSPAR, which was included as part of the Intermediate Assessment conducted by OSPAR in 2017. Work was currently starting on the development of an impulsive noise impact indicator. Regarding potential mitigation measures OSPAR had developed an Inventory of Noise Mitigation Techniques where further work was envisaged on chapters explosions and shipping. OSPAR Species and Habitats Recommendations also contain some species-specific mitigation actions and these will be implemented as part of Roadmap for threatened and/or declining species and habitats.

### Agenda Item 4 Update on EU Technical Group on Underwater Noise

4.1 The Meeting noted the update on the work programme (2016-2019) of EU TG Noise as presented by René Dekeling (The Netherlands), Co-Chair of the EU TG-Noise together with Mark Task (UK) (**Presentation 5**). Information was also provided on the background of the TG Noise work emerging from the Commission Decision in 2010. TG Noise had provided a range of advice, including initial guidance on monitoring of underwater noise in 2013. There is a lack of knowledge on impact of impulsive noise at a population level; therefore it is not envisaged to have a long term assessment in this MSFD cycle. Regarding continuous noise, fewer advances had been achieved. The work conducted by the TG Noise during 2016-2017 was summarised. During 2016 there was a workshop in Hamburg on impact indicators for which outcome is available. The Working Programme for the TG Noise for the period 2016-2019

has been agreed and the next meeting of the TG Noise will be held in November in Madrid (Spain), together with a workshop. The TG Noise role could be interpreted as a platform to serve for EU wide cooperation.

#### **Agenda Item 5 Discussion on topics of joint interest**

5.1 The Meeting took note of the information on the Swedish proposal on a monitoring programme of continuous noise (**Presentation 6**). The Swedish proposal is to be submitted to the upcoming HELCOM meeting of STATE & CONSERVATION to be held in 23-27 October 2017. Currently, the cost of the system is covered by Sweden, but there is a need for an agreement on a long term solution. The proposal contemplates a minor monitoring on some prioritized locations conducted yearly at 63, 125 and 2000 Hz, together with a major monitoring with several years interval.

5.2 The Meeting noted a number of areas, such as, data provision (AIS, WMS and sediment), GIS (soundscape) tools and data storage, which OSPAR could learn from the experience in HELCOM. One of the other lessons learned was how to move from a monitoring project to a regional seas monitoring programme to ensure a smooth transfer process.

5.3 The Meeting also took note that draft monitoring guidelines on continuous noise have been submitted to HELCOM STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 for consideration.

5.4 The Meeting noted the information on the JOMOPANS project - Joint Monitoring Programme for Ambient Noise North Seas presented by Niels Kinneging (NL) (**Presentation 7**). The project is to start in 2018 and will continue for three years. The kick-off meeting will be held on 9-10 January 2018 in The Netherlands. There are six work packages: project management (led by RWS); communication and harmonisation (led by FOI); standardisation (led by NPL); modelling (led by TNO); measurements and data management (led by BSH); combination of measurements and modelling (led by CEFAS) and GES management tools (lead by Aarhus University). Draft measurement locations have been identified. One of the locations is based in Northern Norway and aims to represent a quiet location. In the Baltic Sea, there is no quiet location identified as such. Further information on the project is available through the dedicated [website](#). There will be close cooperation of the project with OSPAR through the ICG Noise.

5.5 The Meeting noted the information on the impulsive noise indicator as provided by Nathan Merchant (UK) (**Presentation 8**). On the basis of the Impulsive Noise Registry, hosted by ICES, OSPAR had adopted a common indicator on pressure from impulsive noise. The first OSPAR assessment of anthropogenic pressure from impulsive noise was presented as part of the IA 2017. Data, although partial (not from all type of sources), were provided Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and UK.

5.6 The Meeting noted that OSPAR had also started working on the development of an impact indicator for impulsive noise. Steps on further work to be developed were agreed on the ICG Noise meeting held 3-4 October 2017. The aim is to propose a candidate impact indicator to EIHA 2018, that it is adopted as a common indicator by EIHA 2019.

5.7 The Meeting discussed any other issues with reporting data to the Impulsive Noise Registry and several points were raised, including: what was minimum level for including pile driving in the registry, how to highlight in the portal maps where a country has submitted data, even if this just confirming that there are no impulsive noise sources, and whether data from previous years should be submitted.

5.8 The Meeting noted that OSPAR is drafting a document to provide guidance on reporting data to the registry based on UK experience and agreed to share the guidance document with the HELCOM EN-Noise for commenting.

5.9 The Meeting noted that ICES will update the registry to indicate which countries had submitted data.

5.10 The Meeting encouraged countries to submit data from previous years if available.

5.11 The Meeting noted that Contracting Parties are to indicate when they are reporting no impulsive noise occurrences so that it can be differentiated from those occasions when countries have not reported data.

5.12 The Meeting noted the HELCOM input to the process of establishing environmental targets for underwater noise as presented by the Chair of the HELCOM EN-Noise (**Presentation 9**). The pillar of this input is two decision support trees, one for impulsive and one for continuous noise, which aim at identifying the need of establishing environmental targets for underwater noise using a risk-based approach. Such risk-based approach considers the effect of noise on the conservation status of noise-sensitive species. In this respect, whether guidance levels are exceeded during relevant biological time periods is considered. Further work is needed on the definition of these guidance levels, which

are to be developed based on the knowledge available. This knowledge is gathered on the species-specific principles proposed both for continuous and impulsive noise.

5.13 The Meeting noted the information by the Co-chair of the TG Noise that the role of TG Noise was to provide technical advice on methodological issues and the establishment of thresholds, as indicated in the CIS WP 2016-2019. The Meeting discussed the flow of information between the Regional Sea Conventions and TG-Noise and agreed that both HELCOM and OSPAR should feed relevant information on their current developments into the TG-Noise process.

5.14 The Meeting agreed on sharing information on the on-going work of OSPAR and HELCOM on underwater noise between the expert groups and establishing dedicated feedback items on their respective agendas. The Meeting also agreed on the benefits of joint meetings to avoid duplication and share lessons learned and that they should be held again in the future at an appropriate time.

5.15 The Co-Chairs thanked Sweden for hosting the Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 6 Report of the Meeting and follow-up**

6.1 The final outcome of the Meeting, together with documents and presentations considered by the Meeting will be made available on the OSPAR and HELCOM meeting sites.

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