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Outcome of the fifth meeting of the project making the HELCOM eutrophication assessment operational (HELCOM EUTRO-OPER)

Introduction

0.1 In accordance with the minutes of the eighth meeting of workshop on development of core eutrophication indicators (HELCOM CORE EUTRO 8/2013, paragraph 5.4) and the 42nd meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HELCOM HOD 42/2013, paragraph 3.6 - 3.7) and the fifth meeting of the project making the HELCOM eutrophication assessment operational (HELCOM EUTRO-OPER 5-2015), the sixth meeting of the project on Making the HELCOM eutrophication assessment operational (HELCOM EUTRO-OPER 6-2015) was held on 8 August 2015, as a video conference.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by participants from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland, Sweden, ICES and SYKE. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Hermanni Kaartokallio, Chair of the meetings of the EUTRO-OPER project. Ms. Vivi Fleming-Lehtinen, Project Manager of EUTRO-OPER, acted as secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1, 1-2

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

Agenda Item 2 Information by the Secretariat, Project Manager and Contracting Parties

Documents: None

2.1 The Meeting took note of the on-going processes relevant to EUTRO-OPER regarding indicator development and the HOLAS II –project, as informed by the Secretariat.

2.2 The Meeting took note of information by the Contracting parties about relevant activities supporting the further development and updating of the HELCOM eutrophication indicators and assessment of eutrophication of the Baltic Sea and participation in the on-going work on revising the EU Commission Decision on criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status under Descriptor 5:

- Estonia informed on their participation in the EU-project Checkpoint, including responsibilities on producing an overall eutrophication assessment (HEAT 3.0) utilizing all openly available data.
- Germany informed on the recent work on setting boundaries for bottom oxygen concentration in the national coastal waters including the 12 nm-zone, at 4 µg l⁻¹ in areas with seasonal vertical stratification and 6 µg l⁻¹ at unstratified areas. Germany will take part in the coming Commission Decision workshop for D5.
- Finland informed on their participation in the coming Commission Decision workshop for D5.
- Poland informed on their participation in the coming Commission Decision workshop for D5.
- Sweden informed the meeting that they are revising their programmes of measures after the public consultation. Work for the OSPAR Common Procedure (eutrophication assessment) is starting now. This will be the basis of our Kattegat and Sound eutrophication assessments in the initial assessment 2018. We will be having a bilateral meeting with Denmark tomorrow (9th September) to discuss further details of this. Sweden will take part in the coming Commission Decision workshop for D5 at the end of the month. SE is also active in the Ecostat process.

Agenda Item 3 Progress of EUTRO-OPER during work phase 4

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4.

- 3.1 ICES presented the latest progress in implementing the eutrophication data- and work flow. The Meeting showed appreciation for the progress and guided the work forward in the following details:
- a wish to filter observations according to national / HELCOM monitoring station, for review purposes
 - pop-up information on table headers, for those who are not familiar with the HEAT terminology
 - pop-up information on the indicators actually included in the individual assessment results shown in the table below the assessment map (see <http://ocean.ices.dk/eutro-oper/> for test assessment results for the open sea).
- 3.2 The review and check of the information in the test assessment will follow the procedure of information flow implemented by EUTRO-OPER. Participants will receive a task alert from the EUTRO-OPER data reporting work shape to check the test assessment results for the relevant parameters and assessment units, according to roles and responsibilities agreed during EUTRO-OPER 3-2014 (doc.- 3-2). This will simultaneously be a test for the developed information flow.
- 3.3 The Meeting took note of the information on indicator grouping for coastal indicators, as presented in Document 3-4.
- 3.4 The Meeting discussed the proposal for aggregation of coastal indicators for HEAT 3.0 purposes, as presented in Document 3-4, and agreed to use it for the EUTRO-OPER test assessment. The Meeting however acknowledged the on-going process on revision of Commission Decision on criteria and methodological standards, and accepted the possibility of adjusting the list at EUTRO-OPER 7-2015 if needed.
- 3.5 The Meeting welcomed the draft QA/QC guidance for EO data (Document 3-1), as presented by JRC, Finland, ICES and the Secretariat, and Ferrybox data (Document 3-1), as presented by Estonia, Finland, ICES and the Secretariat. The Meeting agreed to circulate the documents among national experts. Comments on the drafts shall be sent to the Project Manager (vivi.fleming-lehtinen@helcom.fi) **by 22 September 2015**.
- 3.6 The Meeting welcomed the results on testing alternatives for visualization of eutrophication status presented by the Secretariat (Document 3-3), and agreed to pursue the approach using MSFD classification into GES / SubGES, divided further into 5 eutrophication levels set at even intervals. ICES pointed out that it would be possible to add a finer resolution of assessment levels (e.g. 10 as in Doc. 3-3) as drop-down menu which could be used for internal purposes.
- 3.7 The meeting pointed out that for coastal assessments there is no indication on the level of confidence yet. It was suggested to use the confidence information reported for WFD purposes.

Agenda Item 4

The final deliverables of EUTRO-OPER

(Documents 4-1, 4-2)

- 4.1 The Meeting welcomed the first draft of the EUTRO-OPER manual (Document 4-1), as presented by the Secretariat. The Meeting agreed that the outcome should be a living document with the dual purpose of being a description of the eutrophication assessment and methodology as well as a manual for conducting the assessment and that the manual should be easy to extract from the wider report. The Meeting provided additional time for the participants to comment and modify the draft, with comments to be sent to the Project Manager (vivi.fleming-lehtinen@helcom.fi) **by 6 October 2015**.
- 4.2 The Meeting commented on the proposal presented by the Secretariat for establishing an expert network for continuation of eutrophication work after the end of EUTRO-OPER (Document 4-2), proposing to add the following duties under the period 2016-2018:
- Finalize the eutrophication pre-core indicators developed under EUTRO-OPER: total nitrogen, total phosphorus, spring bloom chlorophyll-*a* and cyanobacterial bloom indicators
 - Continue the integration of coastal and open-sea assessments including oxygen

Agenda Item 5

Future work

Documents: 6-1

5.1 The Meeting welcomed and accepted the invitation of Sweden to host EUTRO-OPER 7-2015 in Gothenburg on 24-25 November.

5.2 The Meeting modified the list of project participants (Document 6-1) by removing Ms. Sieglinde Weigelt-Krenz, as requested by Germany.

Agenda Item 6

Any other business

Documents: None

6.1 No other business was expressed.

Agenda Item 7

Closing of the Meeting

Documents: 7-1

7.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting. The final Outcome of the Meeting will be made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal, together with the documents and presentations considered by the Meeting.

Annex 1 List of Participants

CHAIR, FINLAND		
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