



Outcome of the Tenth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 10-2018)

Introduction

0.1 The Tenth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 10-2018) was held as an online meeting on 8 February 2018.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by representatives of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia and Poland as well as Sea Alarm. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Hugo Nijkamp, Sea Alarm and Chair of EWG OWR. Ms. Laura Meski, Assisting Professional Secretary, acted as Secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

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

Agenda Item 2 Update on planning/preparedness in Contracting Parties

2.1 The Meeting recalled that according to the [Terms of Reference](#) for EWG OWR, the group has been tasked to produce, in 2016, and in 2017, a report on the finalized and developing integrated oiled wildlife response plans.

2.2 The Meeting took note of the reports on OWR activities in 2017 submitted by Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia and Poland, to be included in the EWG OWR report 2017 (document 3-2 and document 3-2-Add1), as well as the following updates since the last EWG OWR meeting:

- Denmark: Work on revising the contingency plan is still ongoing. The Danish Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for setting up the plan and objectives and the Danish Nature Agency is to carry out the plan/action.
- Estonia: The response plan is still in need of updating. No OWR trainings were organized in 2017. No changes in equipment and facilities (for around 100 birds). The Estonian Fund for Nature still part of OWR and other NGO's have also expressed interest to be involved. No incidents occurred in 2017.
- Finland: Due to organizational changes in the oil response administration (responsibility likely to change from the Finnish Environment Institute (Syke) to the Ministry of Interior later in 2018) the national OWR plan has not progressed. WWF trained volunteers and veterinarians in 2017. The Finnish OWR group had a meeting in December 2017.
- Germany: Trainings and courses are being organized for all involved. First level response getting more concrete. Table top exercises have been exercised. A larger training event was held in November 2017 with involvement of Sea Alarm, Pro Bird and ITOPF. Germany is working on the overall plan for Germany to know which agencies and organisations are involved and to identify their tasks. Counties are getting more and more involved.
- Latvia: Funding was not granted for developing the OWR plan in 2017. A decision on funding in 2018 is expected in March.
- Poland: The national OWR group will have a meeting in March 2018 to discuss primarily the implementation of the national OWR plan but also e.g. trainings in 2018. Cooperation with LOTOS

Petrobaltic S.A. has been established for setting up a fund, similar to the Finnish national oil pollution compensation fund, to cover smaller scale accidents.

2.3 The Meeting invited Estonia, Lithuania, Russia and Sweden to submit the reports on OWR activities in 2017 as soon as possible and at the latest **by 2 March 2018** to the Chair (nijkamp@sea-alarm.org) and the Secretariat (laura.meski@helcom.fi) to be able to submit a draft report to RESPONSE 24-2018 (10-12 April 2018) for consideration and endorsement and requested the Secretariat to send a reminder.

2.4 The Meeting welcomed the offer by the Chair to make a first draft of the EWG OWR report 2017. The draft report will be circulated to EWG OWR contacts at the latest on **9 March 2018** for comments **by 16 March 2018** before submitting it to RESPONSE 24-2018 (document submission deadline 20 March 2018).

2.5 Denmark will look into the possibility to make a short summary in English on the incident in February 2017 where a freighter ran aground in the Great Strait and 200 birds had to be euthanized due to an oil spill.

2.6 The Meeting invited Poland to provide links to the manual Oiled Wildlife Response Protocols in the Central Baltic Sea ([English](#), [Polish](#)), which has been translated to Polish by WWF Poland.

Agenda Item 3 EWG OWR activities

Agenda Item 4 Training and information activities to support work of EWG OWR

(Agenda Items 3 and 4 were discussed as one)

4.1 The Meeting considered and welcomed the revised oiled wildlife preparedness self-assessment tool (SAT) developed by Sea Alarm, which now better incorporates euthanasia (document 3-1).

4.2 The Meeting took note of the suggestion by Germany to change the word “contract” in the third column (strong basis) in the euthanasia trail.

4.3 Sea Alarm invited the Contracting Parties to provide further comments on the SAT to the Chair (nijkamp@sea-alarm.org). A flow diagram and a suggestion of how it could be added to the tool will be circulated to the EWG OWR contacts. The Meeting decided to discuss further the draft revised SAT at the next meeting of EWG OWR.

4.4 The Meeting took note that the HELCOM BALEX DELTA 2018 oil and chemical spill recovery exercise will take place on 27-30 August 2018 in the Karlskrona area, Sweden, hosted by the Swedish Coast Guard. The exercise is organized with co-financing from the EU allowing for a border set up. The exercise will include an at sea exercise and a shore table top exercise as well as an EU observer program and a more extensive evaluation of the exercise. The Main Planning Conference was held on 23-24 January 2018 in Malmö and the Final Planning Conference will be held on 17-18 April 2018 in Karlskrona. The official web page can be found at <https://balexdelta2018.helcom.fi/>.

4.5 The Meeting further took note that the lead partner for the on shore table top is the Country Administrative Board of Skåne, led by Lars Persson (lars.persson@lansstyrelsen.se). It will be a national exercise and mainly run in Swedish. The time span for the exercise will be from real-time to days, weeks and years to simulate a real accident situation. It is still unclear how the OWR component will be included. The OWR rooftop organization in Sweden “Katasrofthjälp Fåglar och Vilt” has been invited but has not yet confirmed participation.

4.6 The Meeting was informed that the Chair has been in contact with the lead of the table top exercise and has offered to provide assistance for including OWR into the exercise. The document on training and exercise packages on OWR ([document 4-1](#) of EWG OWR 7-2017) has also been shared.

4.7 The Meeting expressed interest in providing input to planning of the table top exercise, expressed concern over the language barrier, as the table top will be in Swedish, and supported the idea of having briefings in English and the exercise broadcasted, if possible.

4.8 The Meeting supported continued correspondence between the lead of the table top exercise, the Chair and Secretariat.

4.9 The Meeting discussed the EWG OWR [Work Plan 2014-2018](#) and was of the opinion that most tasks are being well covered by e.g. regular exchange of information on OWR response planning and preparedness, regular meetings, preparing of the EWG OWR reports providing input on OWR to BALEX DELTA.

4.10 The Meeting took note of the interest by Germany to organize bilateral/trilateral meetings (online or in person) to intensify the information exchange on topics like alarm plans, involvement and tasks of different agencies, scenarios on crossborder cooperation etc. The Meeting welcomed the idea of organizing such meetings and invited the Contracting Parties to inform of them in advance in case of interest from others to participate and to report back to EWG OWR on lessons learned.

4.11 The Meeting welcomed the idea of organizing a one day online seminar, tentatively in November 2018, with lectures and discussion to dive deeper into a specific topic like euthanasia or early incident response, invited Contracting Parties to suggest additional topics and to inform on experiences that could be shared and decided to continue the discussion on organizing such a seminar at the next EWG OWR meeting.

4.12 The Meeting stressed the need for an easy to use platform for organizing online meetings and seminars and decided to look into different options at the next meeting of EWG OWR. Sea Alarm will look into the possibility of using zoom.us and Germany into the possibility of using the CCME conference system.

4.13 The Meeting discussed the organizing of a Baltic oiled wildlife responders network meeting in 2018, one possibility being to have it as part of the seminar in November 2018.

4.14 The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to inform in advance on upcoming national exercises involving OWR and the possibility for observers to participate as well as to report on lessons learned from the exercises.

Agenda Item 5 Any other business

5.1 The Contracting Parties checked and updated the list of contacts for EWG OWR (document 5-1) as contained in **Annex 2**.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the information by the Secretariat that Alexey Bakhtov (alexey.bakhtov@helcom.fi) will be the main Secretariat contact for EWG OWR starting from end of March 2018 and that Markus Helavuori (markus.helavuori@helcom.fi) will start on 1 March 2018 at the HELCOM Secretariat as the successor of Hermann Backer with the overall responsibility for issues related to oil and chemical spill response at sea and on the shore, maritime safety, clean shipping and fisheries related issues.

5.3 A general description of EWG OWR can be found on the [HELCOM web page](#). EWG OWR meetings and meeting documents are found in the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#) under [upcoming meetings](#) (documents have restricted access) and [past meetings](#) (documents are publicly available). A [workspace](#) is available for EWG OWR contacts ([sign in](#) required) for sharing documents.

5.4 The Meeting welcomed the offer by the Chair to prepare a questionnaire on the roles of the EWG OWR contacts in OWR.

5.5 Denmark will look into the possibility to also have a contact in EWG OWR from the Danish Nature Agency (currently a contact only from the Danish Environmental Protection Agency) as the planning and actions on OWR are shared between the agencies.

Agenda Item 6 Next Meeting

6.1 The Meeting decided that the next meeting of the Group (EWG OWR 11-2018) will be held in end of May/beginning on June 2018 and requested the Secretariat to set up a Doodle poll for deciding on the date.

Agenda Item 7 Outcome of the Meeting

7.1 The Meeting will be presented with a draft Outcome of the Meeting (document 7-1) and invited to adopt the draft outcome.

7.2 The Outcome of the Meeting will be finalized by the Secretariat and the Chair and made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal together with the documents and the presentation given during the Meeting.

Annex 1. List of participants

Representing	Name	Organization	Email
Chair	Hugo Nijkamp	Sea Alarm	nijkamp@sea-alarm.org
Denmark	Henrik Lykke Sørensen	Environmental Protection Agency	hls@mst.dk
Estonia	Agni Kaldma	Ministry of the Environment	agni.kaldma@envir.ee
Finland	Pekka Rusanen	Finnish Environment Institute	pekka.rusanen@ymparisto.fi
Germany	Uda Tuent	Central Command for Maritime Emergencies	utuente@havariekommando.de
Latvia	Laura Mazmaca	State Environmental Service	laura.mazmaca@vvd.gov.lv
Poland	Małgorzata Korczak	General Directorate for Environmental Protection	malgorzata.korczak@gdos.gov.pl
Poland	Dorota Łukasik	General Directorate for Environmental Protection	dorota.lukasik@gdos.gov.pl
HELCOM Secretariat	Laura Meski	HELCOM Secretariat	laura.meski@helcom.fi
HELCOM Secretariat	Alexey Bakhtov	HELCOM Secretariat	alexey.bakhtov@helcom.fi

* WWF Poland was not able to participate due to technical problems.

Annex 1. Contacts of HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR)

Representing	Name	Organization	E-mail address
Chair	Hugo Nijkamp	Sea Alarm	nijkamp@sea-alarm.org
Denmark	Henrik Lykke Sørensen	The Danish Environmental Protection Agency	hls@mst.dk
Estonia	Agni Kaldma	Ministry of the Environment	agni.kaldma@envir.ee
Estonia	Teet Koitjärv	Environmental Board	teet.koitjarv@keskkonnaamet.ee
Finland	Pekka Rusanen	Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	pekka.rusanen@ymparisto.fi
Germany	Tobias Zisenis	Schleswig-Holstein Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation	Tobias.Zisenis@lkn.landsh.de
Germany	Uda Tuente	Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME)	UTuente@havariekommando.de
Latvia	Laura Mazmača	State Environmental Service	laura.mazmaca@vvd.gov.lv
Lithuania	Ignas Kazlauskas	Lithuania see museum	i.kazlauskas@muziejus.lt
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Russia	Andrey Bryksin	FBI "Marine Rescue Service of Rosmorrechflot"	briksinay@morspas.com
Russia	Natalia Kutaeva	FBI "Marine Rescue Service of Rosmorrechflot"	kutaevang@morspas.com
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Observer	Janica Borg	WWF Finland	janica.borg@wwf.fi
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Observer	Rafał Jankowski	WWF Poland	rjankowski@wwf.pl