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Background

The 25th Meeting of the HELCOM Response Working Group ([RESPONSE 25-2018](#)) was held on 14-16 November 2018 in Rostock Warnemünde, Germany.

The full Outcome of the Meeting is set out in the attachment to this document. Of particular relevance to EWG OWR are the following paragraphs:

8.5. The Meeting took note of the Outcomes of the meetings of the Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 11-2018) held on 1 June 2018 and EWG OWR 12-2018, held on 18 October 2018, both as online meetings (document 8-2).

8.6. The Meeting welcomed the Self Assessment Tool (SAT 2.0) for Wildlife Response Preparedness which was developed by Sea Alarm as an instrument for countries to identify what their current state of preparedness is with regard to the potential to respond to oiled wildlife emergencies and supported using the SAT 2.0 for oiled and wildlife response reporting by EWG OWR.

8.7. The Meeting encouraged all Contracting Parties to take part in the meetings of the EWG OWR, noting that several Contracting Parties have not yet done so.

RESPONSE 26-2019 will be held in Warsaw from 11 to 13 June 2019.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.



Outcome of the 25th Meeting of the Response Working Group (RESPONSE 25-2018)

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Agenda Item 1	Adoption of the Agenda	2
Agenda Item 2	Matters arising from HELCOM meetings.....	2
Agenda Item 3	Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.....	3
Agenda Item 4	Risk assessments, OPENRISK and Safety of Navigation.....	4
Agenda Item 5	Matters related to recent response operations.....	5
Agenda Item 6	National preparedness at sea and on shore.....	5
Agenda Item 7	Sub-regional co-operation.....	7
Agenda Item 8	Response on the shore and wildlife response.....	8
Agenda Item 9	Wrecks and other submerged hazardous objects.....	8
Agenda Item 10	Remote Sensing.....	9
Agenda Item 11	Other developments in response strategies and equipment.....	10
Agenda Item 12	Exercises	12
Agenda Item 13	HELCOM Recommendations and Response Manual.....	13
Agenda Item 14	Activities within other organizations and initiatives	15
Agenda Item 15	Any other business	16
Agenda Item 16	Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs.....	16
Agenda Item 17	Future work and meetings	16
Agenda Item 18	Outcome of the Meeting.....	16
Annex 1	List of participants	17
Annex 2	Draft Terms of Reference for the Correspondence Group on revising the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2 (HELCOM CG HNS MANUAL) within the West MOPoCo project.....	19
Annex 3	Proposal for developing the HELCOM Response Manual	21
Annex 4	Draft Work Plan for HELCOM Response Working Group 2019-2020.....	23

Outcome of the 25th Meeting of the Response Working Group (RESPONSE 25-2018)

Introduction

- 0.1. The 25th Meeting of the HELCOM Response Working Group (RESPONSE 25-2018) was held on 14-16 November 2018 in Rostock Warnemünde, Germany, upon invitation by the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies of Germany.
- 0.2. The Meeting was attended by all HELCOM Contracting Parties. Consent for publication of the list of participants and the information contained therein (**Annex 1**) was received by all participants.
- 0.3. The Meeting was welcomed by Mr. Frank Deutscher, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Germany.
- 0.4. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Heli Haapasaari, Chair of the Response Working Group and Vice-Chairs Mr. Alexander von Buxhoeveden, Swedish Coast Guard and Mr. Ojars Gerke, Latvian Coast Guard Service.
- 0.5. Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary, and Mr. Alexey Bakhtov, HELCOM Assisting Professional Secretary, acted as Secretaries of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1

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

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from HELCOM meetings

Document: 2-1, 2-2

- 2.1. The Meeting took note of the Outcome of HELCOM MARITIME 18-2018 which was held on 25-27 September 2018 in Hamburg, Germany (document 2-1).
- 2.2. The Meeting took note of the Outcome of HOD 54-2018 and the following response-related decisions (document 2-2):
- HOD 54-2018 approved, following the outcome of RESPONSE 24-2018, the Work Plan 2018-2019 for the SHORE Network (Annex 3 of the Outcome);
 - HOD 54-2018 approved the revision of paragraph 7.5.3 of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 Chapter 7 as proposed by the Informal Working Group on Aerial Surveillance (IWGAS 2018) (document 4-3) and agreed to forward the amendment to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption. Further, HOD 54-2018 took note of the updates to the contact lists of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 and ongoing work related to coastal state response resources in the CECIS MP;
 - HOD 54-2018 endorsed the proposed amendment of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 Chapter 7 regarding the frequency of Coordinated Extended Pollution Control Operations (CEPCOs) organized in the Baltic Sea and North Sea (document 4-25); and
 - HOD 54-2018 instructed the Secretariat to present the amendment following the final agreement by BONN 2018 (25-27 September 2018) to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.
- 2.3. The Meeting took note of renewed Roadmap of HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach, which is set out in Attachment 2 of HOD 54-2018 document [3-5-Rev.1](#).

Agenda Item 3 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

Documents: 3-1, 3-2

- 3.1. The Meeting took note of the process regarding the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and the way forward as presented by the Secretariat (document 3-1).
- 3.2. The Meeting took note of the strategic plan for the update of the BSAP as set out in Annex 1 of document 3-1 and approved by HOD 54-2018.
- 3.3. The Meeting noted that the updated BSAP should include actions necessary to achieve the HELCOM strategic goal of “Maritime activities carried out in an environmentally friendly way”, which includes the objective of “Efficient emergency and response capabilities”.
- 3.4. The Meeting took note of the discussion at HOD 54-2018 concerning the update of the BSAP being a priority for the HELCOM working groups, and that the update will be based on the existing expertise in the HELCOM working structure according to the mandates of the working groups and will be overseen by the Heads of Delegation.
- 3.5. The Meeting considered the request by HOD 54-2018 to the HELCOM groups to plan their work accordingly, including the putting in place of additional arrangements as may be necessary, e.g. correspondence work and possible additional workshops (c.f. Outcome of HOD 54-2018, paragraphs 3.9-3.12). The Meeting noted that depending on the outcome of HOD 55-2018, it may be necessary for the Response Working Group to organize, e.g. intersessional workshops to be able to accommodate the timetable set out in the work plan for the update of the BSAP. The Meeting further invited the Secretariat to circulate an extract of the relevant outcome of HOD 55-2018 to the contacts and observers of the Response Working Group.
- 3.6. The Meeting took note of information by Denmark that 2021 will be a very busy year with the 50th anniversary of the Copenhagen Agreement as well as the anniversary of the Nordic Council of Ministers, and agreed that preparations for the finalization of the BSAP update should take this into consideration. In this regard, the Meeting took note of information provided by the Secretariat that the Ministerial Meeting is scheduled for autumn 2021 and that efforts will be made to avoid overlap with other events. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to keep HELCOM Response updated on the plans for the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2021, with special attention to avoiding conflicting meeting dates.
- 3.7. The Meeting considered the draft work plan for the update of the BSAP set out in Annex 2 of document 3-1 but did not see the need to propose any changes for consideration by HOD 55-2018.
- 3.8. The Meeting discussed the three not yet implemented joint actions detailed in the Attachment to document 3-1, and agreed that while progress has been made with each of them, they are still to be considered not implemented.
- 3.9. The Meeting discussed the joint action on further developing regional preparedness and response related services including HELCOM SeaTrackWeb, AIS, POLREP, GIS and links to relevant EU systems towards a second generation of HELCOM oil response information system covering the whole Baltic Sea on an equal basis. Following the expression of interest from Russia to use CECIS MP, made through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism portal in spring 2018, the Meeting invited Russia to confirm their intention to use the system for HELCOM POLREP purposes.
- 3.10. In discussing how valid joint actions that are not yet accomplished can be fulfilled, the Meeting noted that many of the actions contain several individual measures, making it less likely to achieve the entirety of such actions in the BSAP. The Meeting agreed that attention should be paid to avoiding such situations in the updated BSAP.
- 3.11. The Meeting discussed the progress on national actions that have not yet been implemented by all Contracting Parties and noted information provided by Latvia that a national Oiled Wildlife Response Plan is under development and that there is a scheme for cooperation and a list of the main responsible authorities in case oiled wildlife response is to be included within the National Contingency Plan. In addition,

national authorities and relevant NGOs have jointly prepared Guidelines for Oiled Wildlife Care at Marine and Inland Water Oil Spills. No further progress on national HELCOM actions was brought to the attention of the Meeting.

3.12. The Meeting discussed the reasons for not achieving national actions and noted that in some cases national actions will always be ongoing, for instance when it comes to integrating shoreline response into national contingency plans and conducting trainings and organizing exchange programmes. The Meeting agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 to provide instructions on how such actions should be reported.

3.13. The Meeting considered which of the Recommendations related to the Response Working Group detailed in document 3-2 are relevant for a more thorough assessment of implementation, and agreed to inform HOD 55-2018 that all Recommendations that are not already followed up through specific actions in the current BSAP, are relevant for a more thorough assessment of implementation.

3.14. The Meeting further agreed that Recommendation 31E/6 on Places of refuge needs to be considered also by the Maritime Working Group.

3.15. The Meeting had a general discussion on how the implementation of HELCOM Recommendations is followed up on a national level in the Contracting Parties. The Meeting concluded that there is significant variability, even within individual countries, ranging from implementation as part of national legislation to more *ad hoc* follow up.

3.16. The Meeting recognized that if the HELCOM Response Manual is revised in the future, several Recommendations will need to be updated due to references to specific parts of the Manual.

3.17. The Meeting discussed whether Directive 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on safety of offshore oil and gas operations can be considered to cover Recommendation 18/2 on Offshore Activities. In addition, the Meeting considered that Recommendation 12/9 was considered to be also covered by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

3.18. The Meeting agreed that there is a need to review which HELCOM Recommendations related to the Response Working Group are outdated or in need of revision, e.g. due to the implementation of EU Directives that regulate the same issue, noting at the same time that it is important to consider the fact that Russia is not bound by such instruments.

Agenda Item 4 Risk assessments, OPENRISK and Safety of Navigation

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

4.1. The Meeting took note of the Outcome the 29th Meeting of the Expert Working Group for Mutual Exchange and Deliveries of AIS & Data (AIS EWG 29-2018) which was held on 12-13 June 2018 in Tallinn, Estonia (document 4-1).

4.2. The Meeting took note of the Outcome of the Ninth Meeting of the HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation (SAFE NAV 9-2018) which was held on 7 September 2018 in Copenhagen, Denmark (document 4-2).

4.3. The Meeting took note of the updates of the OpenRisk project and its main outcomes (document 4-3 and **Presentation 1**). In this context the Meeting took note of the OpenRisk Guideline for Regional Risk Management to Improve European Pollution Preparedness and Response, and of the Baltic Sea Case Study, which has been published on the [HELCOM website](#).

4.4. The Meeting took note of the offer made by the Norwegian Coastal Administration to make the AISyRISK risk assessment tool available to the HELCOM Response authorities. The Meeting discussed that this tool can be applied also in the Baltic Sea, as long as AIS data and other Baltic Sea parameters (e.g. bathymetry) are fed into the system. The Meeting agreed that the tool would be useful also for the HELCOM Contracting Parties and agreed to invite the Secretariat to request access to the tool from the Norwegian Coastal Administration at this stage. In addition, the Meeting invited the Secretariat to clarify with the Norwegian Coastal Administration the conditions and technical requirements for using the tool.

4.5. The Meeting noted that there are resource constraints in most Contracting Parties and that in order to use AISyRISK significant preparatory work may be necessary on a national level. The Meeting agreed that any future projects on risk assessment/management could build on AISyRISK or other existing tools, rather than starting from zero. The Meeting also agreed that the level of ambition for any new project should be carefully detailed in the planning stages.

4.6. A demonstration of the AISyRISK tool was provided by the OpenRisk Project Manager to interested participants during a break.

4.7. The Meeting recalled paragraph 3.15 of the Outcome of RESPONSE 24-2018 about Lithuania having sent out a questionnaire on bunkering activities and received answers from most countries. RESPONSE 24-2018 had welcomed the intention to submit the results to the Secretariat to be shared with the HELCOM Green Team as well as with the Response Working Group. Lithuania informed the Meeting that the results will be submitted to the Secretariat for circulation before the end of November 2018.

Agenda Item 5 Matters related to recent response operations

Documents: 5-1, 5-2

5.1. The Meeting took note of the HELCOM report on the accidents and pollution response operations prepared jointly with the Maritime Working Group and approved by MARITIME 18-2018 and the related outcome of MARITIME 18-2018 regarding EMCIP (document 5-1).

5.2. The Meeting agreed that in the future it continues to be important for the Response Working Group to get access to the accident reports despite the decision to use EMCIP data, in order to be able to continue providing annual reports on response operations related to shipping accidents.

5.3. The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to report recent (2017-2018) significant response operations at sea and on the shore using the reporting template agreed by RESPONSE 21-2016, and to report lessons learnt from response operations. Information should be submitted to the Secretariat (markus.helavuori@helcom.fi) by **21 December 2018**.

5.4. The Meeting noted the information presented by Sweden on the response operation related to the grounding of Makassar Highway in July 2018 (**Presentation 2**). The Meeting noted that the leaked oil was hybrid oil, but the Swedish Coast Guard experienced some difficulties operating skimmers to recover this oil using shallow water recovery vessel. The oil did not flow to the skimmer.

Agenda Item 6 National preparedness at sea and on shore

Documents: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3

6.1 The Meeting took note of the information on use of the template for compiling information on national developments regarding response at sea, on shore and for oiled wildlife response (document 6-1). Only one such a report was submitted by the deadline of 7 November 2018.

6.2 The Meeting noted that According to the template the national developments should be reported on the following topics as applicable:

Legislation

The Contracting Parties are invited to report on changes in the legislation or contingency plans.

At sea response

The Contracting Parties are invited to report on enhancements of national preparedness in dealing with response to pollution at sea including new vessels, equipment and projects.

On shore response

The Contracting Parties are invited to report on enhancements of national preparedness on shore, including oiled wildlife response, covering new equipment and development projects of national interest.

6.3 The Meeting discussed further use of the template and agreed that using it is a very good way of sharing information instead of providing oral information during meetings of the Response Working Group. The Meeting consequently encouraged the Contracting Parties to make use of the template from now on, when reporting on enhancements of national preparedness on shore, including oiled wildlife response, covering new equipment and development projects of national interest.

6.4 The Meeting took note of information on national developments regarding response at sea, on shore and for oiled wildlife response as follows:

- Denmark: Information on recent organizational developments will be circulated to all contacts of the Response Group via the Secretariat within a few weeks. Denmark also informed the Meeting that two new shallow water response vessels are soon to be delivered, with more information to be provided later.
- Estonia: Information was provided regarding a new aircraft, which the Estonian Border Guard recently has received. Estonia also provided information regarding a new response vessel. Both the aircraft and the vessel were co-funded by the EU. Estonia further informed that the date for the Puhas Meri exercise has been set for 21-22 May 2019, and proposed that SHORE NETWORK 3-2019 could be organized back-to-back with this exercise.
- Finland: The Meeting took note of the Information from Finland on national developments regarding response at sea, on shore and for oiled wildlife response submitted using the template and presented in document 6-2.
- Germany: Information was provided that Germany is still waiting for new multipurpose vessels to increase the response and emergency towing capacity significantly. Building of the new vessels, which will be run by LNG, is expected to begin in winter 2019.
- Latvia: Changes are expected to national legislation and organization. The SafeSeaNet responsibility is expected to be transferred to Latvian Maritime Administration. Latvia further informed that a National Oiled Wildlife Response Plan is under development. Developments have also taken place with regard to shoreline response equipment through the EU funded Safe Sea project, which has also organized response exercises involving also Estonia.
- Lithuania: Information was provided regarding the ongoing project on acquiring new multipurpose vessel, with a tender expected to start in 2019.
- Poland: No major new developments since RESPONSE 24-2018 were reported, but the building of a new multipurpose vessel is under way, co-financed by the EU and with delivery expected in 2022. Implementation of the Offshore Safety Directive (2013/30/EU) requires the offshore operator to update their internal contingency plans and in addition the National Contingency Plan requires minor updates to fulfil the needs of the Directive. Poland also informed about new acquisitions of response equipment. Finally, Poland informed that they took part in the bilateral POLGER 2018 exercise with Germany in September 2018.
- Russia: Information was provided about recent organizational changes at the FSBI “Marine Rescue Service”, including the change of the legal status and the name of the institution. Russia also informed the Meeting of response operations in 2017, lessons learned and developments with regard to response ships and equipment, including various remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROV) (**Presentation 3**).
- Sweden: Both the Swedish Coast Guard and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) have received new general directors in 2018. Recent organizational changes in the Coast Guard are still being phased in. A new law regarding the mandate of the Coast Guard regarding police matters is

expected to be approved in the beginning of 2019. Information was also provided on sensitivity mapping, including a new national layer. Sweden also informed about a conference organized by the National coordination group for oil spill preparedness and response (Nationell konferens för oljeskadeskydd 2018) that will take place the week after RESPONSE 25-2018.

- European Union: A presentation was provided on the latest developments with regard to EMSA's response vessel network and related recent developments related to, *inter alia*, response vessels, the use of dispersants and the new Equipment Assistance Service (EAS) for the Baltic Sea, which is expected to become operational in the beginning of 2019 (**Presentation 4**). Information was also provided on difficulties in finding suitable vessels to be contracted by EMSA and placed in the Baltic Sea. EU also agreed to provide information about upcoming EAS-trainings in 2019.

6.5 Finland expressed concern with regard to the lack of response capacity provided by EMSA in the northern parts of the Baltic Sea and enquired what the HELCOM countries could do to improve the situation. The Meeting noted that the EAS is aimed to address this issue.

6.6 The Meeting took note of the information provided by Finland on oil in ice recovery brush equipment for TURVA and new floating type caissons (document 6-3).

6.7 The Meeting took note of the importance for the EU countries of completing relevant information in CESIS MP.

Agenda Item 7 Sub-regional co-operation

Documents: 7-1

7.1. The Meeting took note of the update provided by Denmark, as the Lead Country of the intersessional Correspondence Group on revision of [HELCOM Recommendation 28E/12](#), on the results of the request to the Contracting Parties for information regarding a definition of target spill and other progress in revision the Recommendation.

7.2. In this context, the Meeting noted that no progress has been made since the previous Response meeting on the revision of Recommendation 28E/12. The Meeting agreed to discontinue the work of the intersessional Correspondence Group. The Meeting, nevertheless, agreed that cooperation among the Contracting Parties should be improved. Furthermore, the Meeting noted that information sharing, and preferably coordination of vessel overhauls, should be improved between the Contracting Parties in order to avoid situations of lacking response capacity on the sub-regional level.

7.3. The Meeting noted that the Contracting Parties have been requested to provide updates on bi- and multilateral agreements on joint response operations and response plans in response regions in the Baltic Sea preferably prior the meeting as information documents, but no such updates have been received to date (document 7-1).

7.4. Denmark informed the Meeting of an editorial correction in Chapter 2 of the HELCOM Response Manual – Volume 1, that the "*Trilateral area (SWE-DE-GE) south from Sweden and west from Denmark*" in fact should read "*Trilateral area (SWE-DE-GE) south from Sweden and west from Bornholm.*"

7.5. The Meeting agreed with a proposal by Finland that the Response Manual should clearly state that HELCOM is the only regional agreement covering also response cooperation on shore.

7.6. The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to provide possible updates to the Secretariat (markus.helavuori@helcom.fi) at their earliest convenience.

7.7. The Meeting noted information provided by Estonia regarding possible future changes to the search and rescue agreement and the oil spill response agreement between Estonia and Finland, and that a meeting had been held on 6 November 2018 in Tallinn between the Estonian and the Finnish Ministry of the Interior and representatives of the Border Guards of the two countries. The oil spill response agreement between Estonia and Finland was signed 25 years ago in 1993 and needs consideration as well as references to the HELCOM Response Manuals and other instruments signed and ratified in the past 25 years.

7.8. The Meeting further noted that if the response responsibilities in Finland are to be transferred from SYKE to the Finnish Border Guard, there may be a need for an oil spill response protocol between the Finnish Border Guard and the Estonian Police and Border Guard in addition to a Governmental agreement.

Agenda Item 8 Response on the shore and wildlife response

Documents: 8-1, 8-2, 8-3

8.1. The Meeting took note of the Outcome of the Second Meeting of the HELCOM SHORE Network (SHORE NETWORK 2-2018) which was held on 30 August 2018 (document 8-1).

8.2. The Meeting considered the proposed amendments to the Response Manual agreed by SHORE Network 2-2018 and agreed that these proposals should be further discussed under Agenda Item 13.

8.3. The Meeting noted that not all Contracting Parties have been attending the meetings of the SHORE Network, and encouraged all Contracting Parties to do so.

8.4. The Meeting discussed the timing of the next meeting of the SHORE Network, and agreed that it could be organized back to back with the Puhas Meri exercise which is to be held 21-22 May 2019 in Tallinn, Estonia.

8.5. The Meeting took note of the Outcomes of the meetings of the Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 11-2018) held on 1 June 2018 and EWG OWR 12-2018, held on 18 October 2018, both as online meetings (document 8-2).

8.6. The Meeting welcomed the Self Assessment Tool (SAT 2.0) for Wildlife Response Preparedness which was developed by Sea Alarm as an instrument for countries to identify what their current state of preparedness is with regard to the potential to respond to oiled wildlife emergencies and supported using the SAT 2.0 for oiled and wildlife response reporting by EWG OWR.

8.7. The Meeting encouraged all Contracting Parties to take part in the meetings of the EWG OWR, noting that several Contracting Parties have not yet done so.

Agenda Item 9 Wrecks and other submerged hazardous objects

Documents: 9-1

9.1. The Meeting took note of the Outcome of the Sixth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Hazardous Submerged Objects (HELCOM SUBMERGED 6-2018) which was held on 4 May 2018 in Berlin, Germany (document 9-1) and of the Seventh Meeting (HELCOM SUBMERGED 7-2018) which was held in Rostock Warnemünde on 12 November 2018, prior to HELCOM RESPONSE 25-2018.

9.2. The Meeting noted that SUBMERGED 7-2018 had not been able to finalize the work with the Interim Submerged Assessment, which originally had been planned for submission to RESPONSE 25-2018 and HOD 55-2018 with a view to publication.

9.3. The Meeting considered and agreed with the request of SUBMERGED 7-2018 to recommend to HOD 55-2018 that the mandate of the Submerged Expert Group should be prolonged until the end of 2020, with a view to finalizing the HELCOM Thematic Assessment on Hazardous Submerged Objects in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting agreed that the work should predominantly be undertaken by correspondence in two drafting groups (one on warfare materials and one on wrecks), but that meetings of the Submerged Expert Group could be considered once per year, as appropriate.

9.4. The Meeting encouraged those Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, to participate in the work of SUBMERGED and to contribute to the development of the Submerged Assessment. The Meeting agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 also to encourage participation by all Contracting Parties and to nominate national contact points to the Expert Group.

9.5. The Meeting took note of information by Latvia that no national responsible authority on submerged objects in their country has been nominated. Latvia also has no funding for such work and there

are no identified potentially polluting wrecks in Latvian waters. The Meeting also noted information by Lithuania, that they will inform the Secretariat of their national authority which has been designated as responsible for submerged objects.

9.6. The Meeting agreed that the national Heads of Delegation for the Response Group should be the contact points for the Submerged Expert Group, for those Contracting Parties that have not nominated official contact points for the Submerged Expert Group.

Agenda Item 10 Remote Sensing

Documents: 10-1, 10-2, 10-3, 10-4

10.1 Aerial surveillance

10.1. The Meeting took note of the HELCOM Annual report on discharges observed during aerial surveillance in the Baltic Sea 2017 which has been published on the HELCOM website (document 10-1).

10.2. The Meeting recalled that HOD 54-2018 endorsed the proposed amendment of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 Chapter 7 regarding the frequency of Coordinated Extended Pollution Control Operations (CEPCOs) organized in the Baltic Sea and North Sea (HOD 54-2018, document 4-25). The Meeting instructed the Secretariat to present the amendment following the final agreement by the *Meeting of the Bonn Agreement 2018* (25-27 September 2018), to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.

10.3. The Meeting took note of the Summary Record of the Meeting of the Bonn Agreement 2018 (document 10-3), and that BONN 2018 had agreed with the proposed change regarding the frequency of CEPCOs.

10.4. The Meeting took note of the Report on Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems RPAS submitted by Finland (document 10-4).

10.5. The Meeting took note of the information from the Contracting Parties on plans for CEPCO flights in the Baltic Sea. Sweden informed the Meeting of a Super CEPCO being planned for the next year, a CEPCO in early May 2019 between Sweden, Finland and Estonia, as well as a small CEPCO during week 51 in 2018 involving Sweden, Finland and Estonia.

10.2 Use of satellites for detecting illegal discharges

10.6. The Meeting took note of the information provided by EMSA on 2018 CleanSeaNet Statistics within the HELCOM region covering the period January to September 2018 (document 10-2 and **Presentation 5**). The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to ensure sufficient verification preparedness in order to achieve a higher rate of checking of potential spills detected by CleaSeaNet.

10.3 STW/AIS/SAT model

10.7. The Meeting took note of information provided by Sweden on the status of financing the SeaTrack Web (STW) including statistics on contracts with organisations of HELCOM members.

10.4 Investigation and prosecution of offenders of anti-pollution regulations

10.8. The Meeting discussed other issues of relevance to this Agenda Item and noted information regarding a workshop organized by the European Commission on ship-source pollution on 13 November 2018 in Lisbon, Portugal. In addition, the Meeting noted that IMO has commenced work on revising the reporting format for MARPOL violations.

10.9. The Meeting also noted that, e.g. in Finland, investigations regarding offences involving new types of oil (non-mineral) are problematic as discharges cannot be categorised as violations under MARPOL Annex I or II without detailed knowledge of the substance, which may require laboratory analysis.

Agenda Item 11 Other developments in response strategies and equipment

Documents 11-1, 11-2

11.1 HNS Response

- 11.1. The Meeting took note of the information provided by Finland on the EKOMON Project that prepared an action plan on the monitoring of ecological impacts of accidental chemical spills, as presented in document 11-1.
- 11.2. The Meeting took note of the information provided by Finland on progress within the ChemSAR project (**Presentation 6**). The final seminar of the project will be held on 6 February 2019 in Helsinki, Finland.
- 11.3. The EU pointed out that links should be made between the ChemSAR project and the West MOPoCo project (Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil and HNS Pollution Cooperation) which is expected to kick off in January 2019. Finland confirmed that they will invite West MOPoCo partners as well as contacts of the Response Working Group to the final seminar of ChemSAR.
- 11.4. The Meeting noted the information provided by Estonia regarding the three exercises which were organized as part of the ChemSAR project. The final exercise, which included a live incident and full scale shore support, was held on 13 September 2018 together with Estonia, Finland and Sweden. The evaluation report of the exercise will be finalized in November 2018.
- 11.5. The Meeting took note of the information provided by Sweden on a project on raising competence of response vessels in chemical response operations, which this year has a specific focus on radiation.
- 11.6. The Meeting took note of the information provided by EMSA on progress within the Maritime Chemical Information Sheet (MAR-CIS), the Marine Intervention in Chemical Emergencies (MAR-ICE) service and HNS working groups. The MAR-ICE service, which is operational 24/7 based on a co-operation agreement between EMSA, CEFIC and CEDRE, is currently being extended in order to offer a “level 2” service. This service will consist of an expert from the chemical industry being present upon request at the command centre in case of an incident involving chemicals to provide advice to the authorities. This service is based on a voluntary initiative by the concerned manufacturer. Regarding the MAR-CIS database, EMSA informed that a new phase of the project will consist of extracting from the already extensive compiled information gathered, information relevant for emergency situations based on several scenarios (chemical leak on the deck, chemical incident within an enclosed space etc.).
- 11.7. The Meeting noted that there are numerous projects of various kinds and that the awareness of previous or ongoing projects is often not on a sufficient level for those preparing new project applications. The Meeting agreed that priorities of new projects should be shared between countries and relevant stakeholders. The Meeting also noted that the work plan of the Response Working Group can be used as a tool for being aware of the current priorities.
- 11.8. The Meeting took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on a joint project application to DG ECHO on updating regional response manuals on chemical spills. The project, to which HELCOM is a Project Partner is entitled Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil and HNS Pollution Cooperation (WestMOPoCo) and is presented in more detail in document 13-3. Of key interest for HELCOM is the development of a joint inter-regional HNS response manual, which is envisaged to replace the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2.
- 11.9. The Meeting agreed that in order for the Response Working Group to get involved and provide input to West MOPoCo, the TG HNS MANUAL group should be re-established, but this time as a correspondence group. It was noted that it is important to ensure that the special conditions of the Baltic Sea are taken into consideration. A drafting group was established in order to develop Terms of Reference for the Correspondence Group.

11.10. The Meeting agreed that nominations to the Group should be provided to the Secretariat (markus.helavuori@helcom.fi) by **21 December 2018**. The Meeting consequently agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 to approve the establishment of the HNS MANUAL CG with the Terms of Reference set out in **Annex 2**.

11.11. The Meeting noted the information from the EU that EMSA also has an HNS Correspondence Group which may also seek to contribute to the work of West MOPoCo.

11.2 Response to oil in ice

11.12. The Meeting took note of the information provided by Finland on a research programme focused on the efficiency of the mechanical oil brushes in cold conditions (document 11-2). The Meeting thanked Finland for sharing this important information.

11.3 Places of Refuge

11.13. The Meeting took note of the information provided by Sweden on work regarding places of refuge. In this regard, Finland asked Sweden to invite also them to any Swedish meetings regarding places of refuge on the Swedish North-East coast.

11.14. The Meeting noted that from 2019, the responsibility in Finland regarding places of refuge will be with the Border Guard.

11.4 Response at night/in bad visibility

11.15. The Meeting noted the information provided by the EU regarding an EMSA report on "Benchmarking of on-board oil slick detection systems".

11.5 Emergency towing

11.16. The Contracting Parties and Observers were invited to discuss relevant information related to emergency towing. In this context, the Meeting noted the information provided by Germany regarding three emergency towing exercises that took place in 2018 as follows:

- an exercise in June 2018 with a CCME chartered heavy lift vessel as casualty. A boarding team was sent on board of the "casualty" by helicopter in order to establish towing connections. Towing operations were carried out by governmental owned multipurpose vessels as well as by chartered emergency towing vessels;
- under the SweDenGer exercise an emergency towing exercise was carried out in August 2018. The casualty was represented by a German pollution fighting tanker. The task was to prevent the tanker from drifting into a windfarm; and
- also in August 2018 an exercise took place with a CCME chartered passenger ferry acting as casualty. A boarding team was sent on board by helicopter in order to establish towing connections. Towing operations were carried out by governmental owned multipurpose vessels as well as by chartered emergency towing vessels.

11.6 Use of dispersants

11.17. The Meeting noted the information provided by the EU regarding EMSA increasing their dispersant availability, most recently in the Black Sea. The Meeting also noted the information provided by Denmark regarding a study which concludes that using dispersants on heavy fuel oils in cold water leads to detrimental environmental consequences.

11.7 Non-traditional fuel types

11.18. The Contracting Parties and Observers were invited to discuss relevant information related to non-traditional fuel types. The Meeting noted the information provided by Denmark regarding a new project proposal on hybrid oils coordinated by Norway, to which other countries would also be welcome to participate. Sweden expressed their intention to participate in this project.

11.19. The Meeting recalled the information provided by Finland on the project on testing of non-traditional oil types in laboratory conditions (document 11-2) and agreed that it would be useful for the above mentioned project to make use of the results of the studies undertaken by Finland.

11.20. The Meeting agreed that researching the behaviour of and developing response techniques for these non-traditional fuel types are important with regard to future success of response operations involving such fuels, since traditional response techniques may not be efficient.

Agenda Item 12 Exercises

Documents: 12-1

12.1 BALEX DELTA 2018

12.1. The Meeting recalled and agreed to use in forward planning the current schedule of HELCOM BALEX DELTA exercises up to 2026, as agreed by RESPONSE 15-2012, 17-2013 and 23-2017 (2019 Denmark, 2020 Estonia, 2021 Finland, 2022 Germany, 2023 Latvia, 2024 Lithuania, 2025 Poland and 2026 Russia) and further recalled the decision by RESPONSE 20-2015 that starting from BALEX DELTA 2017 the exercises will be held in August each year (c.f. paragraph 11.3 of the Outcome of the Meeting).

12.2. Sweden presented information regarding the BALEX DELTA 2018 exercise that took place on 27-30 August 2018 in Karlskrona, Sweden, and that included an alarm exercise, at sea exercise (both oil and HNS) and on shore exercise (**Presentation 7**). The exercise project was co-financed by DG-ECHO and there is an ongoing evaluation in the project. A final conference for lessons identified will be organised in Helsinki on 9-10 April 2019 and it is open to all interested. This year's exercise included:

- an alarm exercise;
- a field exercise at sea (both oil and HNS);
- a table top exercise on shore;
- a demonstration programme for response equipment; and
- observers and VIP programmes.

12.3. The Meeting took note of the BALEX DELTA Exercise Evaluation Team (EET) report presented by the Lead of the EET (document 12-1 and **Presentation 8**). The Meeting considered the recommendations by the EET and noted, inter alia, the following main findings:

- clearer objectives for exercises are needed;
- close relation between exercise type, planning and controlling;
- more commonality in approach to exercises;
- instructions for exercise evaluation are both in the Response Manual Volume 1 and Volume 3 but the instructions differ somewhat. These should be combined;
- the EET should be involved already in the early preparatory work for exercises;
- official communication should be done in English;
- SafeSeaNet and CECIS MP should be used in operational mode;
- improvements in engagement within Contracting Parties needed;
- engagement by the EUCPT was excellent; and
- the HELCOM Grid was not used.

12.4. Sweden thanked the EET for good cooperation and informed the Meeting that the BALEX DELTA 2018 Project is also being evaluated by the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI).

12.5. The EU asked whether it would be possible to place more emphasis in informing about the key findings of the evaluation on, e.g. the European or regional level, as well as the suggested steps in order to

make use of the lessons identified. The EU also informed that e-learning tools for SafeSeaNet and CECIS are under development.

12.6. In this context, the Meeting noted that based on the project evaluation report by FOI, the findings will be developed into concrete proposals to the Response Working Group and to DG ECHO on procedures regarding exercises and operational cooperation. Consideration could also be given to whether the Tec MI course could also contribute to defining the role of EU CPT in marine pollution incidents and exercises.

12.7. Sweden informed about the BALEX DELTA 2018 final conference which will take place from 9 to 10 April 2019 in Helsinki, Finland.

12.8. The Meeting recalled that RESPONSE 23-2017 had agreed that the EET should focus on the sea-based exercise and that the HELCOM SHORE Network should have responsibility to help the EET in evaluating any on shore exercises held in conjunction with the BALEX DELTA. The Meeting also recalled that RESPONSE 23-2017 had agreed on the Terms of Reference for the EET to be tested in BALEX DELTA 2018.

12.9. Denmark informed the Meeting about the preparations for HELCOM BALEX DELTA 2019, which will take place during the last week of August in the Bornholm area. The plan is to have both a sea exercise, as well as possibly an on shore response exercise. A decision has not yet been made whether an alarm exercise will be conducted as this depends on the possibilities to use SafeSeaNet and CECIS MP in operational mode for that purpose. Denmark also informed that consideration is already being given to possibly having an evaluation workshop back-to-back with a meeting of the Response Working Group in spring 2020.

12.10. The Meeting noted in general that BALEX DELTA exercises do not always have to be done on a very large scale with elaborate planning conferences and sea/shore/alarm elements.

12.11. Estonia informed the Meeting that details with regard to BALEX DELTA 2020 will be given at RESPONSE 26-2019.

12.2 National exercises

12.12. The Contracting Parties or Observers were invited to provide information regarding other national and international exercises held during the inter-sessional period or plans for future exercises. The Meeting noted the information provided by Denmark that the exercise evaluation considerations developed under the Copenhagen Agreement are currently on hold and awaiting how similar work initiated by EMSA will progress.

12.3 HELCOM Response Exercise Plan (HREP)

12.13. The Meeting noted that document 12-2 on exercise planning and evaluation had been submitted after the established deadline, but the matter was seen as important and the Meeting agreed to consider the document.

12.14. The Meeting discussed if and how it should proceed with the development of a draft HELCOM Response Exercise Plan (HREP). The Meeting agreed that HREPs would be an important tool for improving the planning and execution of exercises. The Meeting agreed that the HREP should not be part of the HELCOM Response Manual, but a separate document.

12.15. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Sweden to lead the development of a draft HREP for consideration by RESPONSE 26-2019. Interested Contracting Parties and Observers were invited to liaise directly with Sweden (Alexander.Von.Buxhoeveden@kustbevakningen.se). The Meeting further agreed that elements of the Response Manual may be moved to the HREP.

Agenda Item 13 HELCOM Recommendations and Response Manual

Documents: 13-1, 13-2, 13-3, 13-4, 13-5

13.1. The Meeting reviewed national contact information and web links included in Chapter 1 of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 (at sea, on shore and oiled wildlife) (document 13-1) and invited all

Contracting Parties to update the information and also send a message to the HELCOM Secretariat (alexey.bakhtov@helcom.fi) ensuring that the information has been checked and is up-to-date.

13.2. The Meeting noted that updated information had been provided by the EU (document 13-5) and a number of Contracting Parties also provided information to the Secretariat during the Meeting, to be included in the next update of Chapter 1.

13.3. The Meeting took note of a request by the EU for the Member States to keep also the contact details in CECIS MP up to date.

13.4. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to regularly check if web-links included in the Response Manual are up to date, and to contact the relevant authorities if irregularities are discovered.

13.5. The Meeting agreed that EMSA should at the beginning of every year extract information on response equipment from CECIS MP, to be forwarded to the Secretariat for inclusion in the Response Manual Volume 1.

13.6. The Meeting had a general discussion on CECIS MP and SafeSeaNet and agreed that any technical difficulties with these systems should be reported by the Contracting Parties to DG ECHO and EMSA as appropriate.

Proposed changes to the HELCOM Response Manual

13.7. The Meeting agreed with the proposals for amendments of Chapter 11 of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 as provided by EWG OWR (document 13-2) and agreed to forward them to HOD 55-2018 for approval and HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.

13.8. The Meeting agreed with the proposals for amendments to the Response Manual Volume 1, as proposed by the SHORE Network (document 8-1, Outcome of SHORE NETWORK 2-2018) and agreed to take them into account in the upcoming revision of the Response Manual.

13.9. The Meeting also agreed that the Terms of Reference for the EET, which had been agreed by RESPONSE 23-2017, should be included in Chapter 10.5 of the Responses Manual Volume 1 and that these amendments should be included in the next revision of the Manual to be forwarded to HOD 55-2018 for approval and HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.

13.10. The Meeting considered document 13-4 on revision of Chapter 1 of Volume 1 of the Response Manual in order to make the Manual more user friendly, possibly also by combining duplicate elements of Volume 3 with Volume 1. The Meeting agreed on the allocation of tasks and chapter leads as described in document 13-4.

13.11. In this context, the Meeting noted the significant amount of work these proposed revisions would entail, as well as the challenges related to having a number of people drafting text for the various chapters. The Meeting, therefore, invited the Contracting Parties to consider providing financial support in order for the Secretariat to be able to appoint project staff to work together with the chapter leads and compile the draft revised Manual.

13.12. The Meeting invited participants to liaise with their Heads of Delegation in order for each Contracting Party to announce at HOD 55-2018 how much, if any, financial support they could commit to providing.

13.13. The text to be used by the Secretariat in developing a project proposal for the revision of the HELCOM Response Manual was agreed by the Meeting, as set out in **Annex 3**.

Reviewing valid HELCOM Recommendations related to the Response Working Group

13.14. The Meeting recalled the discussion under Agenda Item 3, as well as paragraph 12.6 of the Outcome of RESPONSE 24-2018, regarding the relevance and validity of HELCOM Recommendations related to the Response Working Group. The Meeting reviewed a list of all valid Recommendations and agreed to:

- invite IWGAS to consider whether Recommendation 34E/4 is up to date;
- intersessionally consider whether to update of Recommendation 33/3
- invite the SHORE Network to consider whether Recommendations 33/2 and 31E/6 are up to date;
- invite the Maritime Working Group to review Recommendation 31E/5;
- invite Finland to review and propose updates to Recommendation 12/9, as appropriate;
- intersessionally review recommendation 25/5 and to also invite the Maritime Working Group to review this recommendation; and
- invite the Contracting Parties and Observers to intersessionally consider the need to revise or revoke Recommendations 33/3, 24/9, 24/7, 23/2, 22/2, 20/5, 19/17 and 17/2.

13.15. In addition, the Meeting agreed that all Contracting Parties should carefully study all valid Recommendations in order to be better prepared at the next meeting and also in the upcoming work on updating the BSAP.

Agenda Item 14 Activities within other organizations and initiatives

Documents: 14-1, 14-2

14.1. The Meeting discussed the proposed project on implementing the recommendation of EMSA's Administrative Board including regional table-top exercises ("stress tests") (document 14-1 and **Presentation 9**). A number of questions and comments were posed, and answers provided by the EMSA representative of the EU, *inter alia*, as follows:

- what are the possibilities of EMSA to assist in raising the response capacities of Member States, based on identified challenges and bottlenecks through the stress test. The answer may vary depending on the bottleneck identified and they may not all be in EMSA's remit;
- the planned scenario involves a spill of 50.000 tonnes of oil, but is that a realistic scenario? Views were expressed that it may be better to work with three different size scenarios. According to EMSA this was given much consideration during the planning, but it had been agreed that a very serious scenario should be tested;
- comparability of results on a European scale was questioned (as an example, response in ice condition differs from north to south - will icy conditions be taken into consideration also in the table-top exercise?), but EMSA informed that this may not be possible due to limitations in the tool;
- it was confirmed that the software to be developed as part of the project will be made available to Member States after the exercise;
- to volunteer as the coordinating country in the Baltic Sea would pose a significant challenge, but at the same time it is seen as a valuable opportunity to learn; and
- in this context, the Meeting also noted that the OpenRisk Project (discussed further under Agenda Item 4 above) conducted a similar table-top exercise (the Baltic Sea Case Study).

14.2. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Sweden to volunteer to act as the authority coordinating the response for the Baltic Sea during the stress test. The Meeting also welcomed the offer by Lithuania to assist and provide information for the exercise.

14.3. The Meeting took note of a new EU Interreg funded project entitled Oil Spill, presented by Finland (document 14-2 and **Presentation 10**). The Meeting invited Finland to liaise with the project team regarding the possibility of inviting a representative of the SHORE Network to the project steering committee. The Meeting also noted that this project had been noted also by EWG OWR 12-2018.

14.4. In this context, the Meeting noted that most participants had not heard of the Oil Spill Project beforehand and discussed in general the challenges with ensuring sufficient awareness of and input to project proposals during the early planning phases. The Meeting agreed that the competent authorities in the Contracting Parties should be informed early regarding relevant project proposals and that such information also could be distributed to the national contact points of the relevant HELCOM groups via the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 15 Any other business

Documents: 15-1

15.1 The Meeting reviewed and updated the list of contact addresses and Observers of the Response Working Group. Taking into account the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, (EU) 2016/679), the Meeting agreed that the contact address list will be made available on the HELCOM Meeting Portal upon receipt of consent for publication by all contact persons.

15.2 The Meeting noted that the participants have not always been fully prepared for the meetings of the Response Working Group, leading to lack of discussions and progress. The Meeting consequently agreed that telephone conferences between the Response Heads of Delegation before each meeting of the Response Working Group would be useful, in order to discuss the upcoming agenda and be better prepared for the meetings themselves. Sweden agreed to make arrangements for such a teleconference a few weeks before RESPONSE 26-2019.

Agenda Item 16 Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs

16.1 The Meeting unanimously re-elected the Chair and Vice-Chairs of HELCOM RESPONSE for the next two-year period (2019-2020).

Agenda Item 17 Future work and meetings

Documents: 17-1, 17-2

17.1 The Meeting updated the Work Plan of the Response Working Group 2019-2020 contained in **Annex 4**, taking into account also the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, and agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 to approve it.

17.2 The Meeting took note and considered the preliminary list of upcoming HELCOM and other meetings (document 17-2).

17.3 The meeting welcomed the offer by Poland to host the next meeting in Warsaw from 11 to 13 June 2019. The Meeting also welcomed the offer by Denmark to host RESPONSE 27-2020 in spring 2020, with further details on time and place to be provided at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 18 Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 18-1

18.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting as contained in document 18-1.

18.2 The final Outcome of the Meeting has been finalized by the Secretariat and made available on the HELCOM Meeting Portal together with the documents and presentations given during the Meeting.

Annex 1. List of participants

Name	Representing	Organisation	Email address
Heli Haapasaari	Chair	Finnish Environment Institute	heli.haapasaari@ymparisto.fi
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Kaspar Anderson	Estonia	Ministry of the Environment	kaspar.anderson@envir.ee
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Annex 2. Draft Terms of Reference for the Correspondence Group on revising the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2 (HELCOM CG HNS MANUAL) within the West MOPoCo project

1. Background

In the Helsinki Convention Annex VII Regulation 11 (on the HELCOM Combatting Manual) the Contracting Parties agree to apply, as far as practicable, the principles and rules included in the Manual on Co-operation in Combatting Marine Pollution, detailing the regulations in the Annex, adopted by the Commission or by the Committee designated by the Commission for this purpose.

Volume 2 of the Manual on Co-operation in Combatting Marine Pollution, focusing on response to accidents at sea involving spills of hazardous substances and loss of packaged dangerous goods, was adopted on 1 December 2001. This document has not been revised since its adoption.

HELCOM RESPONSE 16-2012 considered a proposal by Sweden for updating the HELCOM Response Manual, Volume 2 and agreed on Terms of Reference for a Task Group for this revision work that should have been completed by March 2013. This work did not succeed in producing a new proposal.

HELCOM RESPONSE 25-2018 agreed to continue the efforts to revise the Manual by liaising with the project “Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil and HNS Pollution Cooperation (West MOPoCo)”. Accordingly, these Terms of Reference were drafted during RESPONSE 25-2018 held on 13-15 November 2018 in Rostock Warnemünde, Germany.

These Terms of Reference were agreed by RESPONSE 25-2018 and approved by HELCOM HOD 55-2018 in December 2018.

2. Tasks

This Correspondence Group was established to prepare and support the interaction with, and possible participation of the HELCOM Response Working group in the West MOPoCo project. The work of the Correspondence Group will mainly take place as an intersessional activity between meetings of the HELCOM Response Working Group. The overall goal is to provide input during the development of a new inter-regional HNS manual planned to replace the existing Volume 2 of the HELCOM Response Manual.

A major revision or replacement of the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2 is anticipated during the course of the work of the Correspondence Group. This work will include updating and restructuring the existing material as well as compilation and creation of new content, as needed.

The Correspondence Group will report on its work to the meetings of the Response Working Group.

3. Participation

The Correspondence Group shall be open to the Contracting Parties and Observers of HELCOM.

The Correspondence Group Members from the HELCOM Contracting Parties will be nominated by HELCOM RESPONSE Heads of Delegation, via email to the HELCOM Secretariat. The Correspondence Group Members from HELCOM observer organizations will be nominated by the HELCOM contact points of the observer organizations, via email to the HELCOM Secretariat.

4. Working procedures

The Correspondence Group will, *mutatis mutandis*, follow the Rules of Procedure of the Helsinki Commission

The group will identify a Lead Country for the Correspondence Group after its establishment.

The Correspondence Group will decide internally on division of work.

The Correspondence Group will consider, as appropriate, input on Chemical Warfare Agents and other hazardous submerged objects emerging from the relevant groups and projects (i.e. HELCOM SUBMERGED expert group, the EU-funded CHEMSEA project, ChemSAR-project as well as recent EMSA tools including MAR-ICE and MAR-CIS.)

The HELCOM Secretariat will function as the Secretariat to the Correspondence Group.

The Correspondence Group will report the outcomes of its meetings to contact points and observers of the HELCOM Response Working Group.

The revised HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2 will be subject to endorsement by HELCOM RESPONSE and after this to adoption by the HELCOM Heads of Delegations.

5. Indicative Timeline and Meetings

The Correspondence Group will work mainly by correspondence and through back-to-back-meetings in connection to other relevant HELCOM meetings. The need for meetings and intensified correspondence within the group will be affected by the proceedings and progress of the West MOPoCo project.

If not otherwise decided by HELCOM HODs the Correspondence Group will cease to exist with the adoption of a revised HELCOM Response Manual Volume 2. The task of the Correspondence Group may be revised at the first meeting of the RESPONSE working group after the finalization of the West MOPoCo project, as appropriate.

Likely topics, challenges and hazards to be considered in a replacement of the HELCOM Response Manual Vol 2 by a new, joint manual intended for use in many other areas than the Baltic Sea:

- The special conditions and consequences of chemical spills and response operations in the Baltic Sea such as the low salinity, the shallowness and ice conditions of this sea area compared to other seas.
- Pre-defined scenarios (General description e.g. Bulk & packaged HNS different, Tankers with single substance but large quantities, containership with smaller quantities of more than one substance, ferries, RORO and ROPAX ships etc.)
- Spills and fire linked with HNS.
- Groundings, towing linked with HNS.
- Predicting drift and spread
- Monitoring and sampling
- Identifying threats (types of situations, properties of chemical)both for the environment and humans

Annex 3. Proposal for developing the HELCOM RESPONSE manual

Introduction

Annex VII of the Helsinki Convention states that *“The Contracting Parties agree to apply, as far as practicable, the principles and rules included in the HELCOM Manual on Co-operation in Response to Marine Pollution, detailing this Annex and adopted by the Commission or by the Group designated by the Commission for this purpose.”*

The HELCOM Manual on Co-operation in Response to Marine Pollution (in the following the Manual) is applied by the Baltic Sea States in operational co-operation, surveillance activities and combatting exercises since 1983. The present Manual consists of three volumes;

- Volume 1 dealing generally with co-operation in combatting marine pollution,
- Volume 2 dealing specifically with such co-operation in case of spillages of chemicals and
- Volume 3 dealing with response to pollution incidents on the shore.

The manual has been updated over the years several time and is today quite bulky - the three volumes have a total of 448 pages. Also the Contracting Parties have indicated that the manual should be more operational.

It is expected that Volume 2 will be renewed in a project West MoPoCo during 2019 and 2020 through the development of a joint inter-regional HNS response manual for the Baltic Sea, North Sea and Mediterranean Sea areas. Volume 3 is up to date as it was adopted in 2017. Volume 1 should be reviewed and rewritten, and if deemed appropriate, Volumes 1 and 3 could be combined either partly or fully in order to increase user friendliness and decrease redundancy.

Manual Volume 1

During the Balex Delta 2017 in Kaliningrad, Russia, the representatives of the Contracting Parties held an *ad hoc* meeting regarding the Manual. The Common opinion was, that Volume 1 should be revised to better meet the needs of the Contracting Parties. This proposal was presented to HELCOM RESPONSE 24-2018 (ref Outcome of the meeting, paragraph 12.9) and the Meeting requested the agreed chapter leaders to make proposals on updating the chapters by 1 August 2018.

Table of Contents

- Secretariat

Preface Updated

- Secretariat

Introduction Updated

- Secretariat

1. Information by the Contracting Parties

- each Contracting Party to check and send corrections to the Secretariat

2. Response Regions

- Response Working Group Chair

- This chapter is proposed to be renamed (e.g. bi- and tri-lateral cooperation) and to be moved as an annex

3. Reporting Procedures

- Sweden together with Latvia

4. Requesting and Providing Assistance

- Response Working Group Chair
- except 4.5 Requesting a place of refuge that should be sent to the Maritime Working Group

5. Operational Co-operation

- Finland together with Latvia

6. Guidelines for Oil Sampling

- OSINET to review?
- Should there be separate chapter for sampling in accidents and other for operational spills?

7. Co-operation on Aerial Surveillance over the Baltic Sea Area

- HELCOM IWGAS

8. Administrative and Organizational Aspects

- No working group or lead country agreed yet
- Need to review this together with EMSA claims manual

9. Exercises and Related Guidelines

- Balex Delta 2018 lessons learned. Sweden and Finland
- Take into account SHORE Network's proposals in HELCOM RESPONSE 24-2018
- Take into account Danish proposal in HELCOM RESPONSE 24-2018

10. Oiled Wildlife Response Original December 2009

- EWG OWR

11. The Helsinki Convention

- Secretariat

Proposal for continuation of the renewal work

The rewriting of the chapters is quite time consuming and it has been recognized that the experts of the Contracting Parties may have difficulties to allocate working time for this task.

One way to overcome this lack of time could be if the HELCOM Secretariat would recruit project staff to carry out the revision. The role of the agreed chapter leaders would be to make sure, that the content of the text in each chapter meets the operational and administrative needs of the Contracting Parties.

The benefit of this proposal is, that the renewal could be done relatively quickly and that the style of the Manual would be consistent throughout the document.

The Secretariat does not have finances to recruit a person to renew the manual, thus additional funding by the Contracting Parties would be needed. It is proposed, that the Contracting Parties would allocate finances to this task. The decision on how much money each Contracting party could allocate to this would be taken by HOD 55-2018 in December 2018.

It is estimated, that the needed finances would be approximately 30.000 to 35.000 euro, which would cover salary for the project staff, travel costs to attend e.g. meetings of the Response Working Group and Secretariat Administrative costs. If the Contracting Parties have the possibility to allocate the needed finances and the recruiting is successful the work could be finalised by the end of year 2019.

Annex 4. Draft Work Plan for HELCOM Response Working Group 2019-2020

ACTION	INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES/ RESPONSIBLE	RESULTS/ TIME FRAME
Maintain and further develop the standing operational network for trans-national response in case of incidents		
Keep HELCOM Response Manual up to date including current Volume 1 (oil) as well as the new Volume III (response on the shore)	Contracting Parties/Secretariat Intersessional work	Continuously Scrutiny at HELCOM RESPONSE
Improve the usability and ease of updating of HELCOM Response Manuals by exploring new electronic means of publishing including i.e. smartphone apps.	Secretariat	Continuously Scrutiny at HELCOM RESPONSE
Consider complete revision of the HELCOM Response Manual (all Volumes)	Contracting Parties, Expert working groups, Secretariat	Follow up at RESPONSE 26- 2019
Carry out a major revision of Volume 2 (chemicals) via a joint European project.	Secretariat, CG HNS MANUAL	Follow up at HELCOM RESPONSE 26-2019
Development of HELCOM Response Exercise Plan	Contracting Parties (Sweden as lead country) EET	BALEX DELTA 2019 Draft to be considered at RESPONSE 26-2019
Carry out operational and other kinds of exercises in order to train the topics included in the HELCOM Response Exercise Plan	Lead Countries/Contracting Parties BALEX DELTA 2019: Lead Country Denmark EETs to inform about the applicability of the evaluation framework developed for shore exercises Estonia to inform about BALEX DELTA 2020 Other HELCOM and sub-regional exercises On shore response exercises and OWR exercises, which can be combined with other exercises, as appropriate.	Annual activities EET of BALEX DELTA 2019 RESPONSE 26-2019
Build and follow up new knowledge on dispersants' use and applicability in the Baltic Sea	Contracting Parties	Continuously
Implement a three-tier approach to ensure adequate response to incidents in the Baltic Sea Area, with a special focus on the second tier (sub-regional level)		
Develop tools and methodology for regular regional assessments of maritime risks	Contracting Parties RESPONSE	Continuously

Utilize the results of the OpenRisk Project and possible use of AISyRISK tool.	MARITIME (SAFE NAV)	Further discussion at RESPONSE 262019
Conclude/implement sub-regional agreements	Contracting Parties	Continuously
Co-operate by conducting trainings and organizing exchange programmes to ensure swift and adequate response capacity to shoreline pollution and to develop best practices	Contracting Parties RESPONSE Intersessional work	Continuously
Implement and update if needed Response Manual Volume III (response on the shore) Ensure that response on the shore is integrated with overall contingency planning Make proposals on how to improve access to national and regional information on sensitive areas and sensitive coasts Provide annual cross-border or international exercises Follow up the outcome of relevant projects Ensure wide participation	Contracting Parties RESPONSE Intersessional work SHORE Network	Continuously Working program of SHORE Network
Carry out Baltic wide mapping of prioritised coastal areas (sensitivity mapping).	Contracting Parties SHORE network	Further discussion at SHORE NETWORK 3-2019 and RESPONSE 26-2019
Integrate oiled wildlife response (OWR) into existing contingency plans Exchange of information on development of national OWR plans, authority-NGO cooperation, national trainings and exercises Develop OWR protocols and facilities Develop OWR preparedness and response Ensure wide participation	Contracting Parties, Sea Alarm, WWF Finland and other stakeholders. Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR) 2013-2020	Baltic Oiled Wildlife network meeting 2019-2020 Reports to RESPONSE

Review the RESPONSE related HELCOM recommendations	Contracting Parties RESPONSE Response Sub-Groups In consultation with MARITIME Intersessional work	Intersessional discussion Further discussion at RESPONSE 26-2019
Plan activities related to the update of the BSAP	Contracting Parties	Further discussion at RESPONSE 26-2019
Enhance co-operation with regard to places of refuge according to HELCOM Recommendation 31E/5		
Make the Mutual Plan for Places of Refuge operational and implemented within/through sub-regional agreements	Contracting Parties	Continuously Reports to RESPONSE and MARITIME
Ratify the relevant compensation and liability conventions according to HELCOM Rec 31E/5	Contracting Parties Secretariat to provide update of the ratification status of relevant conventions at each RESPONSE meeting	Reports to RESPONSE and MARITIME
Detection, investigation and prosecution of anti-pollution regulations		
Co-ordinate aerial surveillance flights and harmonize aerial surveillance with satellite surveillance	IWGAS (Lead Country 2019-2020: Estonia) In co-operation with EMSA (CleanSeaNet)	Meetings of IWGAS and RESPONSE
Identify operational needs for satellite surveillance in each sub-region of the Baltic	IWGAS	Continuously
Carry out CEPCO and other flights:	Lead Countries/Contracting Parties	Annual activities
Harmonize aerial surveillance reporting systems with Bonn Agreement area	IWGAS	Continuously
Maintain Seatrack Web/AIS/SAT for improved identification of possible polluters	STW/AIS/SAT partnership	Continuously
Co-operate/assist and exchange experience in investigations	Contracting Parties	Continuously
Co-operate with the Network of the Prosecutors on Environmental Crime (ENPRO)	Contracting Parties/Secretariat	Continuously
Carry out information exchange about offshore activities to be able to respond to accidental spills from such installations		
Report on ongoing/planned offshore activities (exploration/exploitation)	Contracting Parties	When applicable
Collect information/exchange experience/promote development and use of new technology and best practices		
Collect and publish information on shipping accidents and response operations in the Baltic and their impact on marine environment	Secretariat/ Contracting Parties in cooperation with HELCOM MARITIME Data flows from EMSA's EMCIP to be established	Annual report on shipping accidents in the Baltic

Developing response related indicators and update the existing core indicator on spills	RESPONSE and IWGAS	Meetings of RESPONSE
Keep track of studies on effects of and response to oil spills on the sea-bed (sunken oil).	RESPONSE	Meetings of RESPONSE
National and sub-regional reports on response operations and lessons learned	Contracting Parties	Meetings of RESPONSE
Collect, compile and publish regional summaries of response operations and lessons learned using the format agreed at RESPONSE 21-2016	Secretariat/ Contracting Parties	Meetings of RESPONSE New chapter to be added to the Annual report on shipping accidents in the Baltic
Collect information on observed deliberate, illegal oil discharges, other substances and unknown substances and related statistics	Secretariat/ Contracting Parties	Annual report on discharges observed during aerial surveillance Indicator on oil spills
Update HELCOM map and data service with RESPONSE related information Further develop regional preparedness and response related services including HELCOM SeaTrackWeb, HELCOM AIS, HELCOM POLREP, HELCOM GIS towards a second generation HELCOM oil response information system	Secretariat/ Contracting Parties	Annually Meetings of RESPONSE
Update of national equipment list in CECIS MP database	Contracting Parties	Continuously
Exchange information with other regional agreements	Chair/Secretariat	Meetings between regional agreements, EMSA and DG ECHO
Enhance use and development of technology to respond to accidents at night, in bad visibility, in bad weather, oil on ice, accidents involving heavy oil, chemical incidents	Contracting Parties	Meetings of RESPONSE
Sharing information on common workspace regarding non-traditional oils	Contracting Parties	Continuously Meetings of RESPONSE
Participate in and share information of research on non-traditional fuel types	Contracting Parties	Continuously Meetings of RESPONSE
Collect and assess information on submerged hazardous objects including contaminated and potentially polluting wrecks and maintain work on dumped chemical munitions	HELCOM Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Hazardous Submerged Objects (HELCOM SUBMERGED)	Meetings of RESPONSE Thematic Assessment publication by 2020