



Outcome of the Thirteenth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 13-2019)

Introduction

0.1 The Thirteenth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG OWR 13-2019) was held as an online meeting on 14 March 2019.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by representatives of Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Sweden as well as Sea Alarm and WWF. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex 1**. Consent for publication of the list of participants, and the information contained therein, was received by all participants.

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

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Document: 1-1

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

Agenda Item 2 Update on planning/preparedness in Contracting Parties

Document: 2-1

2.1 The Meeting took note of the following national OWR planning and preparedness activities which have taken place since the last meeting:

- Estonia:

Estonian responders from Estonian Fund for Nature (ELF) took part in the response operation in the Port of Rotterdam in 2018. Two and half year INTERREG project "OIL SPILL" lead by the Ministry of Environment of Estonia is at the starting point. NGO-Government cooperation platform was launched, and several seminars were organized. Estonian Fund for Nature (ELF) initiated work with volunteers.

- Germany:

Regional Oiled Wildlife Response Plans are existing and are being updated. Biennial meetings of responsible authorities from the five coastal states of Germany are regularly taken place to inform and harmonize response plans. Recently also table top exercises on OWR are included in these meetings. For this a scenario is given first. Responsible authorities are asked to report their role, the intended activities and leading structures. Role and capacities of non-governmental organizations are being informed. Potential integration of NGO's for contingency planning and during incidents is reviewed. For the German coastal state Schleswig-Holstein the integration of the Animal Welfare Fund Germany (Deutscher Tierschutzbund) for OWR contingency planning and response is formally agreed (limited capacities for rehabilitation in Germany). German NGO's that were organised and trained via the EUROWA project also took part in the response operation in the Netherlands in 2018 (see report of Sea Alarm below).

- Latvia:

Draft National Oiled Wildlife Response Plan is prepared. Plan is not legally binding as Strategic environmental impact assessment and estimation of the cost of implementing of the plan should be done before it is submitted for adoption. It is planned that necessary assessments will be completed until the end of 2019/ beginning 2020. Draft Plan will be used in oiled wildlife table top exercises as a part of National Oil Response Exercises planned in 2019.

- Poland

Recently, in March, the third meeting of national OWR working group was held (which consists of the relevant Ministries, other authorities responsible in case of oil spillage, like Fire Service, Veterinary Service, rehabilitation centre, NGO - WWF). During the meeting, among other, the issue of this year, long planned (and included in National plan of OWR), training was discussed. The meeting is supposed to be organized in cooperation with West Pomeranian Voivodship, which will be in charge of the response action in case of oil spill in West Pomerania area. There will be probably two parts of the meeting - one more for responsible authorities and services, in order to discuss/train procedures, and the second one for volunteers, veterinarians, ornithologists to train directly how to help oiled birds (catching and washing birds, and so on). We are still waiting for more details from East Pomeraniam Voivodship, but probably the training will take place in the autumn. It would be useful and valuable to include EUROWA procedures into the training, we will be in contact with Sea Alarm in this regard.

It turned out the National OWR Plan was included to the emergency response plan only in one (out of two NEEDE) Voivodhip - Pomeranian. There are some technical problems in West Pomeranian Voivodhip, however the Ministry of the Internal Affair and Administration offered support in this matter.

Fire Service informed and declared that in case of rescue operation, they can create/provide a logistic base for the participants of the operation (tents, electricity, water, transport of collected pollutants) and perhaps also for the time of rehabilitation (if the Voivode gives his consent).

WWF in cooperation with Ostoja Rehabilitation Centre provide hands-on trainings on dealing with injured and oiled birds for WWF Blue Patrol volunteers (one has taken place last weekend).

- Sweden:

No specific exercises have been conducted since Balex Delta 2018. Division of responsibilities regarding OWR remains a big question, and roles of different agencies and municipalities still need to be clarified. National tabletop exercise was organized.

- Sea Alarm:

Sea Alarm provided a detailed presentation of the oil spill rescue campaign "Bow Jubail wildlife Response" with EUROWA experts mobilised which took place in Derde-Petropleum port in Rotterdam (the Netherlands) in June 2018 (document 2-1).

- WWF Finland:

Two annual OWR trainings organised by WWF Finlnad, attendance to the national OWR expert board meetings, a member in ÖSRA government, attendance to national and Baltic Sea regional training events.

Agenda Item 3 EWG OWR activities

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

- 3.1. The Meeting took note of the EWG-OWR related sections in the [Outcome](#) of 25th Meeting of the Response Working Group (RESPONSE 25-2018) which took place on 14-16 November 2018 in Rostock-Warnemünde, Germany.
- 3.2. The Meeting took note of EWG-OWR related sections in the [Outcome](#) of the 55th Meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HELCOM HOD 55-2018) which took place on 4-5 December 2018 in Helsinki, Finland. Particularly, *The Meeting considered the amendments to the HELCOM Response Manual Volume 1 (in Chapters 10.5 and 11)* (para 4.78 of the Outcome).
- 3.3. The Meeting discussed the lists of available equipment stockpiles.
- Sea Alarm* informed about the list of content of the EUROWA stockpile of equipment that is maintained by the EUROWA members for use in European oiled wildlife incidents (document 3-5).
- WWF Finland* provided the Bird cleaning unit (three marine containers) equipment list (**Annex 3**).
- Germany* informed there is a container trailer for the first response, but technical details can not be provided unless there is a special request to the responsibly federal authority.
- Estonia* has dedicated equipment for birds, but it is not ready for use at the international level.
- Poland* informed that basic first response equipment exists and can be mobilized in case of an oil spill. It is stored in one of the rehabilitation centres.
- 3.4. Secretariat and Sea Alarm will draft the table for available equipment stockpiles and circulate to the Contracting Parties. The Contracting Parties are invited to fill in the table and forward it to the Secretariat before the next meeting.
- 3.5. The Meeting discussed the involvement of NGOs in national and international emergency cooperation. The format table was forwarded by the Secretariat to Contracting Parties. No responses have been received by the Secretariat to date. Therefore, the Meeting agreed to revisit this issue and Contracting Parties are invited to submit information to the Secretariat in advance of the next meeting.
- 3.6. The Meeting discussed the use of Self-Assessment tool (SAT) developed by Sea Alarm and approved by Response 25-2018 as a reporting tool for OWR. The Contracting Parties are invited to fill in the SAT by the end of 2019 and submit to the Secretariat. The first draft should be discussed at the next meeting. Therefore, earlier submissions are encouraged.
- 3.7. The Meeting agreed to inform Response 26-2019 on the intention to use the SAT, and final report on the OWR activities should be submitted to the first meeting of HELCOM Response Working group in 2020 (Response 27-2020).
- 3.8. The Meeting discussed the issue of mass euthanasia, in consideration of existing and new practices of protocols of mass euthanasia in the Baltic countries. The Meeting is invited to read the guidelines of good practice: [Key principles for the care of oiled wildlife](#) and [Good Practice Guide for Oiled Wildlife Response Preparedness](#) and revisit this issue on the next meeting. Germany will provide a proposal on how to proceed with the issue.
- 3.9. Germany and Sea Alarm will further explore possibility of inviting Ms. Nele Markones to give presentation on monitoring of seabird distributions in the Baltic at the next meeting.
- 3.10. The Meeting discussed OWR [exercise terminology](#). The Contracting Parties are invited to review the terminology and use it in the national OWR reporting.
- 3.11. The Meeting discussed the group's Terms of Reference and Work Plan. As the Work Plan has not been updated since 2018 it is necessary to review and report on the updated version to Response 26-2019. The Contracting Parties are invited to critically reflect on the group's added value and purpose. In case

that the group's objectives and performance are not sufficient enough, this should be identified. The Secretariat will develop a questionnaire and forward to the Contracting parties with the request to fill in and submit to the Secretariat in three weeks. Based on the responses the Work plan will be amended and circulated to the group contacts for the approval. Consequently, the approved Work plan for 2019-2020 will be presented to Response 26-2019. Additionally, Response 26-2019 will be invited to consider prolongation of the group mandate for additional two years period.

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

4.1 The Meeting discussed the possibility of organizing a one-day online seminar with lectures on euthanasia, and/or early incident response. Germany and Sea Alarm will further elaborate the scenario and suggest three countries which will be involved in presenting at the seminar. This will be reported to Response 26-2019.

Agenda Item 5 Any other business

Document: 5-1

5.1 The Contracting Parties checked and updated the list of contacts for EWG OWR (document 5-1) as contained in **Annex 2**, to be published on the HELCOM Meeting Portal when consent from all contacts has been received for its publication.

5.2 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.

5.3 The Meeting discussed the exercise that will be arranged in 2019 by SHELL in Denmark in cooperation with Denmark NAVY, part of the exercise containing OWR elements. Sea Alarm will participate in the exercise and inform the group on the details at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 6 Next Meeting

6.1 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of the Group, EWG OWR 14-2019, will be held tentatively in September 2019, and EWG OWR 15-2015, upon necessity, in November 2019, and requested the Secretariat to set up a Doodle poll for deciding on the dates.

Agenda Item 7 Outcome of the Meeting

Document: 7-1

7.1 The Outcome of the Meeting has been finalized by the Secretariat and made available on the HELCOM Meeting Portal together with the meeting documents.

Annex 1. List of participants

Representing	Name	Organization	Email
Chair	Hugo Nijkamp	Sea Alarm	nijkamp@sea-alarm.org
Estonia	Agni Kaldma	Ministry of Environment	agni.kaldma@envir.ee
Estonia	Teet Koitjärv	Environmental Board	teet.koitjarv@keskkonnaamet.ee
Germany	Uda Tuente	Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME)	utuent@havariekommando.de
Germany	Tobias Zisenis	Schleswig-Holstein's governmental Agency for Coastal Defense, National Park and Marine Conservation, Department for Hazard Control and Harbour Office	Tobias.Zisenis@lkn.landsh.de
Latvia	Laura Mazmaca	State Environmental Service	laura.mazmaca@vvd.gov.lv
Poland	Malgorzata Korczak	General Directorate for Environmental Protection	malgorzata.korczak@gdos.gov.pl
Sweden	Nils Mårtenson	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Nils.Martenson@Naturvardsverket.se
WWF	Anna Soirinsuo	WWF Finland	anna.soirinsuo@wwf.fi
WWF	Maria Jujka-Radziewicz	WWF Poland	mradziewicz@wwf.pl
HELCOM Secretariat	Alexey Bakhtov	HELCOM Secretariat	alexey.bakhtov@helcom.fi

Annex 2. 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			
Estonia	Agni Kaldma	Ministry of the Environment	agni.kaldma@envir.ee
Estonia	Teet Koitj�rvi	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 Tuentel	Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME)	UTuentel@havariekommando.de
Latvia	Laura Mazma�a	State Environmental Service	laura.mazmaca@vvd.gov.lv
Lithuania	Ignas Kazlauskas	Lithuania sea museum	i.kazlauskas@muziejus.lt
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
Russia	Natalia Kutaeva	FBI "Marine Rescue Service of Rosmorrechflot"	kutaevang@morspas.com
Sweden	Nils M�rtenson	Swedish Environment Protection Agency	nils.martenson@naturvardsverket.se
Observer	Janica Borg	WWF Finland	janica.borg@wwf.fi
Observer	Maria Jujka-Radziejewicz	WWF Poland	mradziejewicz@wwf.pl
Observer	Rafał Jankowski	WWF Poland	rjankowski@wwf.pl

Annex 3. WWF Finland's Bird cleaning unit (three marine containers) equipment list

1. Washing container:

Air dryer
Bathroom fan
Cabinets for supplies
Earth conductor X 2
Sewage pipe
Sinks and tables for washing X 3
Warm water accumulator
Overalls X 400
Goggles X 50
Gloves X 50
Rubber boots X 50

2. Drying container:

Air dryer
Bathroom fan
Cabinets for supplies
Cages for birds X 27
Earth conductor X 2
Sewage pipe
Sink and working surface
Tent (4 x 8 meters) and pool for after care

3. Triage and veterinary container:

Air dryer
Hematocrit centrifuge X 1
Hypodermic needles
Syringes
Nitrile gloves
Bathroom fan
Cabinets for supplies
Earth conductor X 2
Sewage pipe
Sink and working surface
Tent (4 x 8 meters) and pool for after care

Other equipment

Adapter X 1
Cable for earth conductor (8 meter) X 6
Electric air heater 3000W X 3
Floodlight 250W X 4
Heat lamp 250W X 2
Oil water separation tank X 3
Power supply cable X 3
Sewage pipe X 3
Sprayer (5 l) X 10