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<b>Document title</b>	Notes from the BSAP UP Workshop on maritime activities, including underwater noise, non-indigenous species and response actions (BSAP UP WS-SEA)
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<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 – Matters arising from other HELCOM activities
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## Background

To support the selection of new measures and actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan, an invitation to submit synopses on potential new HELCOM actions was put forward in spring 2019 to the Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects and HELCOM Observers. As a first step, the HELCOM Working Groups conducted a technical review on the proposals for new actions, and as a second step, they were evaluated in the HELCOM BSAP UP workshops.

The HELCOM BSAP UP Workshop on maritime activities, including underwater noise, non-indigenous species and response actions (BSAP UP WS-SEA) held online on 2-4 September 2020 evaluated the synopses relevant for the Maritime and Response Working Groups. The Workshop included five breakout sessions: discharges, emissions and PRF; response issues; seabed disturbance and hydrography; non-indigenous species; underwater noise. The evaluation of the proposed actions in the workshop took place in the breakout sessions and focused on the effectiveness of the measures and whether or not the actions are supported for the updated BSAP. A summary of the general discussion in the workshop can be found in the workshop Notes and the evaluation of the synopses in the breakout groups is included in the Annexes to the Notes (see link to the workshop site [here](#)). The synopses that were evaluated are available in the dedicated [workspace](#) where they can be sorted according to the workshop and breakout session.

The synopsis on a framework for holistic/integrated management of marine pollution incidents, which could be of interest to EWG OWR, was prioritized and supported by the workshop and is found attached to this document.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the outcome of the BSAP UP WS-SEA;
- identify possible gaps in the set of measures for the updated BSAP and inform the Response Working Group accordingly.

**Title:** Framework for holistic/integrated management of marine pollution incidents

**Submitted by:** Response Working Group

**Description of measure**

Developing a framework for holistic/integrated management of marine pollution incidents that enable a coordinated response operation at sea and on shore. The holistic approach should permeate the oil spill preparedness and response both on national level and in the region-wide cooperation.

**Activity:**

Programme (5-10 years) of projects and actions to develop guidelines, training and exercises for CPs on the establishment of integrated management for marine pollution Incidents.

**Pressure:**

In case of a large oil spill with potential to reach the shore, multiple land based responders and organisations need to come together and swiftly be linked to the response operation at sea. This integrated management is able to oversee and coordinate the response in relation to the unfolding scenario. The sea and shore operations depend on each other to protect environmentally sensitive shorelines. While the shore response depends on situational awareness from the sea response, the sea response depends on intelligence from sensitivity maps and consultancy from local environmental experts as a basis for the overall objectives and tactics. In case of large oil spills, the overall objectives for the response should be set in dialogue between the sea and shore actors. Information exchange for strategic and tactical planning is key in proactive measures to prevent unnecessary damage, impacts and costs. Complex scenarios and large-scale incidents may challenge national experience, capacity and capability and there should be swift procedures that can mobilise complementary expert assistance and/or strike teams from abroad. Integrating those resources effectively in an ongoing national response requires well defined, pre-spill established arrangements and procedures and infrastructure between collaborating countries. This generic set-up, supported by EU infrastructure and facilities needs to be trained and exercised, which includes the description of expert functions, strike teams, the mobilisation procedures, logistic requirements and agreements for financial compensation.

**State:**

The national emergency plans of CP are different but all have a distinction between the management of at sea response and onshore/wildlife response. The organisation of mutual assistance between CPs for the at sea response is traditionally well defined and exercised by HELCOM RESPONSE. The various aspects of integrated onshore response, including wildlife response need to be defined, described and agreed between CPs, and generic structures need to be agreed between CPs and integrated into national plans, exercises as well as in the HELCOM manual and exercises.

#### Extent of impact:

In many CPs the responsibilities for at sea and onshore response are divided. For onshore response the responsibilities have often been further decentralised, which means that there are multiple authorities that should make a contribution to the overall response, but will have variability amongst them in the way they are prepared, the approaches they may want to take, and the culture that has been developed. This variability has a high potential for overall inefficiency, gaps appearing, communication problems, and a resulting increase of socio-economic and environmental impacts of the pollution event, costs, and political commotion. The envisaged programme needs to develop procedures, training and exercises, that allow authorities to maintain their autonomy, but they learn to develop routines that allow systems to blend together when needed, under a centralised command. Over time, the programme should develop a new generation of response personnel that can collaborate effectively at their own national level but also in neighbouring states, as principles, roles, training and exercises have developed out of a shared international vision and strategic lead.

#### Effectiveness of measure

The envisaged programme is to be developed in close consultation of all participating states to develop a common rationale, respecting existing systems and with activities such as attractive exercises that inspire change and convergence towards something that is nationally and internationally meaningful. While the nature of marine pollution incidents is the same to all coastal states, states have a lot to offer to each other, which should not be restricted to at sea response alone. The programme continues on the basis of existing HELCOM RESPONSE activities, but is adding a new flavour, a new rationale and purpose, that allow CPs to develop an extended cooperation in the fields of onshore response and preparedness, including wildlife response and preparedness. The programme ensures continuation of development within each of the three disciplines, but aims at ensuring the interdisciplinary exchange and coherence via dedicated strategic activities directed towards strengthening the integrated character and sense of interdependence between the disciplines.

#### Cost, cost-effectiveness of measure:

Mutual assistance between countries is overall cost saving per definition. Developing preparedness is costly, but if these costs are well directed towards an investment into three disciplines, a huge spin-off can be expected when professionals who are working together within the disciplines can effectively work together both nationally and internationally. Internationally a very versatile system will emerge where resources can be moved across borders, strengthening a response while being fit for purpose, and therefore cost saving and impact reducing in a tailored way.

#### Feasibility:

Guidelines of good practice are internationally available, including training and exercise programmes. Train the trainer approaches and modern e-learning techniques should be

applied. The programme will need a continuous stream of financial support e.g. from EU funding programmes. A good coordination is needed to maximise the use of such funds. Translation of materials will be needed to ensure that language barriers are overcome.

HELCOM RESPONSE can drive and coordinate the programme. It may have to create three streams for the exchange of technical information between CPs focussing at the three disciplines: at sea, onshore, wildlife. Each of these streams should coordinate programmes and activities at national and international levels, and monitor trends. A fourth stream should be looking at strategic integration of the disciplines, and ensure that integrated manuals are up to date and are continuously exercised.

#### Follow-up of measure:

The programme aims at inducing a change of thinking about incident scenarios, preparedness and response. The new thinking can be expected to provide different insights in the way that CPs can better work together, organise their meetings differently, make them inspiring and creative, and therefore better attended. The change of thinking may lead to a more dynamic way of international cooperation.

#### Background material:

## References