



Document title	Draft regional survey to compile information on on-going national activities with regard to ALDFG
Code	7-1
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	7– Interactions between fisheries and marine ecosystems
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Submitted by	Secretariat
Reference	Outcome of PRESSURE 7-2017, paras 3.15-3.18; Outcome of FISH 7-2017, paras 7.1-7.3; Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018, para. 3.16

Background

PRESSURE 7-2017 considered the initial draft for a HELCOM Recommendation on abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) ([document 3-4](#)), noted that the Workshop on implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter supported the initiative to elaborate the Recommendation, pointing out that many aspects of the Recommendation are under the mandates of national fisheries and maritime authorities. Thus, the work will require national coordination with these authorities. It also requires coordination with HELCOM groups Fish, Maritime and State & Conservation. PRESSURE 7-2017 agreed that the Contracting Parties will organize national consultations and inform by 17 November 2017 on their coordination position regarding the initiative to elaborate such Recommendation ([Outcome of PRESSURE 7-2017](#), para. 3.15-3.18).

In view of this input, the initial draft was submitted to FISH 7-2017 for consideration ([document 7-1](#)), where Denmark and Finland indicated that they were not in favour of developing a Recommendation at this point, while Germany and Sweden did not yet have a clear position. The meeting took note of the comment by Poland that they can take a lead if there is general acceptance of the idea and that during the last meeting of Pressure group, the participants were informed that the MARELITT project is developing BATs and BEPs for the lost gear retrieval, and that also both MARELITT and WWF Poland are ready to contribute into the development of the Recommendation. The meeting took note of a comment by LIFE, supported by Denmark, that a possible way forward could be exchange of information between the Contracting Parties on this issue, since there are many activities at the national level ([Outcome of FISH 7-2017](#), para. 7.1-7.3). Subsequently to FISH meeting, both Germany and Sweden had clarified their position. Germany welcomed the initiative to elaborate a Recommendation on ALDFG. Sweden informed that they support the initiative in principle, and that there is a need to consider the added value of the Recommendation in relation to other ongoing developments on the topic of marine litter, taking into account the existing legal frameworks and with the involvement of HELCOM Pressure and HELCOM Fish groups.

Recently, as part of the Ministerial Declaration 2018, HELCOM countries re-committed to preventing and reducing marine litter from land and sea-based sources and to achieving a significant quantitative reduction by 2025. Moreover, all HELCOM countries' representatives present in the debate by Ministers and High-level Representatives of the Contracting Parties indicated, through the use of different wording, the relevance of continuing working on the reduction of marine litter in the Baltic Sea (Annex 3 and 4 of the [Minutes of the Ministerial Meeting of the Helsinki Commission 2018](#)).

In addition, for those HELCOM countries which are EU members it is worth mentioning that one of the future EU measures to implement the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy is the “development of

measures to reduce loss or abandonment at sea of fishing gear (e.g. including recycling targets, EPR schemes, recycling funds or deposit schemes)” by 2018 onwards ([Annex 1 of the Plastics Strategy](#)).

In view of the feedback received from PRESSURE 7-2017 and FISH 7-2017, as well as additional positions subsequently provided, PRESSURE 8-2018 considered suggestions on work forward on a regional approach to the problem of ALDFG ([document 3-3](#)), and took note of the following views:

- Denmark: the survey should be developed in close cooperation with the FISH group. There is a need for clarification on the figures of nets lost or abandoned in the Baltic Sea from WWF Poland in document 3-3. It may be relevant to consider in the survey the number of fishing gears that are recovered. In Denmark, there is information of 31 cases of lost fishing gear (2012- 2017) and eight of them have been retrieved;
- Estonia: suggested to arrange a joint work with OSPAR on derelict fishing gear;
- Finland: regional survey should analyse alternative ways to tackle the problem of the lost fishing gear than HELCOM recommendation and highlighted that HELCOM FISH group should be involved. Finland offered to deliver further editorial comments to the text of the proposal to the regional survey.
- Germany: welcomed the survey as a good way forward; pointed out that also international legal framework should be reflected in the final review; requested clarification of the methodology and time frame to calculate the amount of ALDFG in the Baltic Sea, based on the information provided in document 3-3, and suggested that it might be one of the aspects of the survey.

Thus, PRESSURE 8-2018 agreed to develop a regional survey taking into account the comments given by the meeting, and that the survey will be developed by the HELCOM EN-Marine Litter in cooperation with the FISH Group with the support of the Secretariat. The draft survey will be submitted for final commenting to FISH and Pressure Groups by 7 June 2018. The survey will be launched on 14 June 2018 with a request for responds by 7 September 2018 ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.13-3.16).

This document contains a draft regional survey to compile information on on-going national activities with regard to ALDFG and how they can be possibly developed to a regional approach.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the draft regional survey to compile information on on-going national activities with regard to ALDFG and provide comments to it as needed.

Draft regional survey to compile information on on-going national activities with regard to ALDFG

HELCOM has initiated this survey to collect information on on-going national activities with regard to abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) and how they can be possibly developed to a regional approach. The survey will also compile information on national views and commitments and if exist, legal frameworks.

Based on the reporting and resulting evaluations, the intention is to evaluate the pros and cons of a harmonized regional approach and alternative approaches to tackle the problem to fill in existing gaps identified.

Please respond to all questions from the national perspective and please also provide a web link or additional information to the comment field to support your answer. Linked material can be provided in national language. Countries are kindly invited to complete the survey by **7 September 2018**.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Marta Ruiz (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) at the HELCOM Secretariat.

1. HELCOM country

2. Contact person for national responses (name and organization) for possible follow-up questions

3. Has a national legal framework (national legal acts, guidelines other regulations and communications) for ALDFG management been established?

Yes

On-going

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided.

4. Is there data available on the amount of annually lost fishing gear?

Yes

Partly

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

5. Is there data available on the amount of annually recovered fishing gear?

Yes

Partly

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided, such as the methodology used for retrieval.

6. Is there information available on the adequacy of ports to receive, separately collect and sort the derelict fishing gear collected from the sea as well as end-of-life fishing gear?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided.

7. Is there information available on practices to utilise separately collected fishing gear including their recycling?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided such as contact person from recovery companies.

8. Has information been compiled and/or guidelines on best practices to reduce the amount of ALDFG from commercial and recreational fishing to the Baltic Sea been elaborated¹?

Yes

On-going

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

9. Have best practices on removal of ALDFG been promoted²?

Yes

On-going

No

¹ This question is linked to Actions RS7 in the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter ([HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#)).

² This question is linked to Actions RS6 in the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter ([HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#)).

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

10. Is there any extended producer responsibility scheme established for fishing gear in general? And for fishing gear containing plastic (including incentives mechanisms to deliver derelict fishing gear to port reception facilities?)

Yes

On-going

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

11. Have the sites of accumulation of ALDFG being identified and mapped?³

Yes

On-going

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

12. Have the reasons of accumulation of ALDFG in these sites (see question 11) being identified in order to undertake adequate measures to prevent their accumulation?

Yes

³ This question is linked to Actions RS10 in the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter ([HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#)).

Partly

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

13. Has the removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land being initiated in those locations where they have been identified as posing a threat to the environment?⁴

Yes

On-going

No

If yes, please provide web link / reference. Additional information can also be provided

⁴ This question is linked to Actions RS11 in the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter ([HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#)).