



Document title	Ongoing work within HELCOM on indicators
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Background

There is ongoing work within HELCOM to review the catalogue of HELCOM indicators, particularly those used in the 2018 State of the Baltic Sea report or those pressures and gaps identified within the report – including matching of the existing indicators to policy requirements (e.g. the Baltic Sea Action Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive). The current work is the first step of a five-step process that was approved at HELCOM HOD 54-2018 (Outcomes paragraph 4.25 and document 4-5), with further details defined at HELCOM GEAR 19-2018 (Outcomes paragraphs 4.1 – 4.16).

The current major focus of this process is to define where existing indicators may need to be adjusted and where clear gaps are identified that require indicator development. The process will culminate in a workshop, tentatively planned for 13-15 May 2019, that will combine both technical and policy experts required for discussion on the identified priority issues – the outcome of which will be a document submitted to the following HELCOM HOD meeting (June 2019) that will detail the planned work on indicators and the relevant milestones. This will then initiate the technical development phase of the work.

The overall purpose of the ‘future work on HELCOM indicators’ is to further develop a suitable set of indicators that are operational and functional in time for the Baltic Sea Action Plan update (2021) and the third holistic assessment (2023). Development work will thus be completed in advance of these events to allow sufficient time for the indicators to be run or updated, i.e. by autumn 2020 and autumn 2021, respectively. The overall process considers a wide range of priority setting criteria and other issues such as cooperative work between relevant organizations, as described within the background documents, and aims to keep all relevant HELCOM expert groups and working groups informed.

Of specific relevance to the HELCOM Fish Group, particularly with relevance to the ongoing process on HELCOM indicators, may be indicators such as by-catch (though this is being developed through a somewhat separate process jointly with OSPAR), the coastal fish indicators (these are operational and were updated in 2018), the migratory fish indicators (salmon and sea trout - these are operational and were updated in 2018), and indicators that currently not operational but may be considered as important knowledge gaps, such as: Proportion of large fish in the community or Maximum length fish in the pelagic community.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information contained in this document.