



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach  
Gothenburg, Sweden, 10-11 May 2016

GEAR 14-2016

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<b>Document title</b>	Consultation on output of the HOLAS II project
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<b>Category</b>	CMNT
<b>Agenda Item</b>	Coordination and information related to the implementation of the ecosystem approach and related policies
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<b>Reference</b>	Outcome of HELCOM 35-2014, para 4.27; Outcome of GEAR 13-2016, paras 4.9-4.17

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### Background

The second HELCOM holistic assessment is developed so that it can be used for regional “roof report” by Contracting Parties also being EU Member States in the 2018 MSFD reporting ([Outcome of HELCOM 35-2014](#), para 4.27).

Following discussions initiated at GEAR 12-2015, GEAR 13-2016 considered the results of the questionnaire regarding a national consultation processes that was circulated by the Secretariat prior to the meeting with the view to discuss the timing, content and organization of consultations related to the 2nd holistic assessment (GEAR 13-2016, doc. 4-1). Based on the discussions GEAR 13-2016 agreed to develop a common understanding in this regard ([Outcome of GEAR 13-2016](#), paras 4.9-4.17).

This document contains an extract of the outcome from GEAR 13-2016 on the discussion on public consultation regarding HOLAS II to serve as basis for further discussions at GEAR 14-2016.

### Action required

The Meeting is invited to develop common information on the aims for the consultations and discuss how to manage the national consultation processes and the results in finalizing HOLAS II.

Contracting Parties that have not yet done so are invited to inform on the timing and organization of national consultations in this regard.

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## Summary of previous discussion on consultation on HOLAS II report

To support the intended EU reporting purposes the HOLAS II project has been planned to deliver a first version of the HOLAS II results by mid-2017, which can be included as a component in national public consultations. The first results are to be updated and adopted by mid-2018. For comments provided through the consultation process to be fed into the HOLAS II updating, they should be delivered by the end of February 2018 at the latest.

Prior to GEAR 13-2016 the Secretariat circulated a questionnaire (21.12.2015) to Contracting Parties to clarify e.g. the intended use of the output of the HOLAS II project, and national requirements and timing on the consultation of the report. Information was provided by Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden and is included in full in [document 4-1](#) of GEAR 13-2016.

Regarding length and timing for national consultations on MSFD reporting the following information was received:

- Denmark: 12 weeks. Additional time for consultation of the final assessment if changed significantly.
- Germany: 6 months, starting October 2017
- Finland: length and timing not specified.
- Lithuania 3 months
- Poland: 3 weeks
- Sweden: length and timing not specified

### **Extract from outcome of GEAR 13-2016 as regards consultations on HOLAS II:**

4.9 The Meeting took note of the results of the questionnaire regarding national consultation processes that was circulated by the Secretariat prior to the meeting with the view to discuss the timing, content and organization of consultations related to the 2nd holistic assessment (document 4-1, Presentation 2).

4.10 The Meeting noted that all HELCOM countries responding to the questionnaire or represented at the meeting intend to make use of HOLAS II results as the basis for the 2018 MSFD reporting of Article 8. Several countries expressed the view that what is presented for public consultation should be nationally oriented, e.g. focus on status in national waters. The Meeting recognized the importance to continue discussion on the use of HOLAS II nationally including the details of the outcome consultation process. The Meeting also invited Russia to contribute with their considerations on how they intend to use HOLAS II results.

4.11 The Meeting recalled that the issue of using national indicators as supplementary indicators in HOLAS II has been addressed by the HOLAS II core team and that principles for their use have been proposed and will be further discussed by the project in the view of availability of HELCOM core indicators for HOLAS II vs the reporting requirements under MSFD Article 8.

4.12 The Meeting also raised a number of issues concerning the use of regional 'roof' assessments in relation to the EU Member States reports due in 2018. These included the issue of scale of assessment and its relationship to management issues (e.g. if a regional assessment showed poor status would the 'problem areas' be identified to indicate which country should take action via Article 10 targets and Article 13 measures) and the links to public consultation processes (e.g. needs of Member States to extract national level information from a regional report and present it in the national language). As these issues are of a generic nature, the Meeting considered they should be raised in the MSFD CIS and clarity be sought as soon as possible to inform work under HOLAS II and at national level.

4.13 The Meeting stressed the need for further information on the requirements for reporting in 2018 and invited the European Commission to provide guidance on whether the reporting is to focus on the regional or national scale perspective or how the two perspectives should be balanced.

4.14 The Meeting noted that the HOLAS II first results will be available by mid-2017, allowing countries to use and translate the material and carry out national consultations. For comments provided through the consultation process to be fed into the HOLAS II updating, they should be delivered by the end of February 2018 further noting that the German consultation period is 6 months by law, and that Germany can provide input to the HOLAS II project by May 2018 at the earliest.

4.15 The Meeting agreed that the feed-back from national consultation of relevance for the HOLAS II should be channelled to the HOLAS II project through national authorities responsible for the consultations.

4.16 The Meeting discussed the option to have a regional consultation on the HOLAS II report that could be oriented in particular towards an international audience in the Baltic Sea region possibly using the HELCOM web-site as a consultation platform. The Meeting felt that the possibility of regional consultation on HOLAS II could be further explored, recognized that a public event could also draw attention to the work of HELCOM.

4.17 The Meeting discussed the need to develop a common understanding and provide the Contracting Parties with common information on the aims for the consultations and how to manage national consultation processes and their results in finalizing HOLAS II and agreed that this issue should be on the agenda of GEAR 14-2016.