



Document title	Provisional Annotated Agenda
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Category	DEC
Agenda Item	1 – Adoption of the Agenda
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Reference	

Background

With reference to the outcome of GEAR 20-2019 (Paragraph 7.7) I have the pleasure to invite you to the 21st Meeting of the Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (GEAR 21-2019), which will be held on 6-8 November 2019 in Helsinki, Finland, at the premises of the Ministry of Interior Affairs (Kirkkokatu 12, 00170 Helsinki) in the meeting room “Alexanteri” (2nd floor).

The Meeting will **start on Wednesday, 6 November at 13:00** and is expected to **terminate on Friday 8 November 2019 by 15:00**. As part of the first half day of the meeting (6 November) an informal session is planned, dedicated to the informal exchange of Contracting Parties’ national experiences in MSFD implementation. Input for discussions for the informal sessions and under agenda item 3 has been prepared by DG MSFD.

The Meeting will be Chaired by Ms. Andrea Weiss. The Meeting will consider:

- regional coordination in relation to MSFD, specifically to the update of MSFD PoMs in line with what was agreed on in the general work plan elaborated in GEAR 20-2019,
- progress on the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, including SOM-Platform work,
- scoping and planning for HOLAS III, including indicator work.

Documents for consideration of the Meeting, with a clear indication of actions proposed by the Contracting Parties, should be sent in electronic form via e-mail to Professional Secretary, Ms. Jannica Haldin (Jannica.Haldin@helcom.fi) **by 16 October 2019**. Documents containing comments to the basic documents shall be received by the Secretariat not later than seven days before the opening of the Meeting, i.e. **30 October 2019**. The Secretariat has prepared the attached document template (also available in the Meeting Portal) and would like to encourage the Contracting Parties to use the template when submitting documents to the Secretariat.

Participants of the Meeting are requested to register to the Meeting by answering the [Meeting Participation Survey](#) by **30 October 2019**. Please indicate whether you are planning to attend the meeting physically or online.

Documents for the Meeting, which are restricted until the end of the Meeting, will be made available via the HELCOM Meeting Portal on the GEAR 21-2019 Meeting Site’s [Document folder](#). Instructions for the use of the Meeting Portal are available on the [HELCOM Website](#).

Provisional Annotated Agenda

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

The Meeting is invited to adopt the agenda of the meeting (documents 1-1 and 1-2).

Agenda item 2 Matters arising from other meetings of relevance to GEAR

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcomes from meetings of relevance for the Gear Group.

Agenda Item 3 Regionally coordinated implementation of MSFD

GEAR 20-2019 agreed to dedicate one half meeting day at GEAR 21-2019 for regional MSFD coordination for those Contracting Parties who are also EU Member States, including an informal evening session for information exchange.

GEAR 20-2019 agreed on a general work plan on MSFD coordination for GEAR 21-2019 and GEAR 22-2020 ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 3.27-3.30). GEAR 20-2019 agreed to establish a drafting group (DG MSFD) to prepare documentation and discussion points for the GEAR meetings ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 3.31). Input for discussions under this agenda item has been prepared by DG MSFD.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the work conducted by the DG MSFD since GEAR 20-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note that the ACTION project has been informed about the usefulness of their outputs in relation to GEAR work and its strategic planning for MSFD purposes.

The Meeting is invited to take note that the information has been shared with the SOM platform to ensure that they are aware of the relevance of their work to improve synergies with national PoMs work.

National timetables

GEAR 20-2019 took note of the overview of national timetables for MSFD implementation as contained in [document 3-1 Rev. 2](#) and agreed that the document is regularly updated with national information prior to GEAR meetings ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para.3.1-3.5).

Countries are invited to provide updated information to the Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) by **26 October**.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information as presented by the Contracting Parties also being EU Member States, at the Meeting and discuss the provided information.

INSPIRE

GEAR 20-2019 discussed possibilities in providing coordinated HELCOM input to INSPIRE data model process based on the two options presented by EU TG DATA and agreed that more consideration by TG DATA is needed to identify the correct approach for how to involve the RSCs, as well as the legal implications of delegating the services, including regarding data ownership, obligations, and accountability and invited the EU to bring the concerns of the CPs for consideration at TG DATA ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 3.6-3.8).

The EU is invited to provide information and guidance to HELCOM Contracting Parties which are also members of the EU on the implications of making the datasets used for the MSFD assessments available, and in compliance with the INSPIRE Directive Implementing Rules, through RSC ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 3.9).

Revised Commission Decision

GEAR 20-2019 commented the strategic follow-up to Commission Decision 2017/848/EU and agreed to come back to the questions raised to the next GEAR meeting ([document 3-4](#) and [Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 3.19-3.22).

Contracting Parties are invited to provide comments to [document 3-4](#) to Sweden (Linda Rydell, linda.rydell@havochvatten.se) by **14 October 2019** to be used as basis for discussion in GEAR 21-2019.

Update of monitoring programmes

The Contracting Parties who are also EU Member States are invited to share information regarding their national approaches for updating monitoring programmes at the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information and use it when discussing approaches and any regional aspects.

Programmes of measures

GEAR 20-2019 agreed that in, or prior to, GEAR 21-2019 the DG MSFD will:

- compile ideas from Member States on how to consider Art. 14 MSFD;
- consider the draft EU MSFD CIS reporting guidance on PoMs;
- discuss potential use of Art. 15 MSFD;
- discuss preparation for joint documentation in support of Contracting Parties MSFD Art. 13 reporting on PoMs.

The Meeting will be invited to consider the documentation prepared and discussion points suggested by the drafting group, to initiate work on identified topics and agree on the next steps.

GEAR 20-2019 further agreed that in, or prior to, GEAR 22-2020, the Working Group GEAR will:

- exchange initial ideas for measures;
- discuss possible transboundary impacts on other countries waters in the context of SEA;
- start identifying possibilities for joint measures, which can possibly feed into the BSAP update;
- start preparing a HELCOM joint documentation in support of Contracting Parties MSFD Art. 13 reporting on PoMs.

The Meeting will be invited to review and confirm the tasks for GEAR 22-2020 and to plan regional MSFD coordination work for GEAR 23-2020.

Agenda Item 4 Implementation and update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 56-2019 endorsed the revised work plan for the BSAP update (Annex 2 of the [Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#) and para. 2.1).

The Meeting will be informed of the outcome of the Second Meeting of the ad hoc HELCOM Platform on sufficiency of measures ([SOM Platform 2-2019](#)) which will take place on 16-17 September 2019 at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki (document to be submitted).

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 56-2019 endorsed the approach for analyzing sufficiency of measures and its use to support the BSAP update ([document 2-3](#) and [Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#), para. 2.16). The Meeting will be informed on the further methodological developments of the approach (document to be submitted) and is invited to provide any further guidance to the process.

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 56-2019 agreed to use a provisional 'BSAP structure' as a basis for ongoing work of HELCOM Working Groups on the BSAP update and supported the proposed outline of a BSAP segment and the use of ecological objectives, management objectives and action areas to structure the segments ([document 2-4](#) to HOD 56-2019).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the provisional 'BSAP structure' and consider and discuss the ecological and management objectives as proposed by Working Groups in their autumn meetings and provide recommendations, as needed, for consideration by HOD 57-2019.

The Meeting will be informed on the ongoing work to update the HELCOM Explorer, i.e. a web-based tool that provides information on HELCOM agreements and their level of implementation. The Meeting is invited to discuss and guide the further development of the HELCOM Explorer.

The Meeting is invited to take note that the template for synopses on potential new HELCOM actions has been submitted to HELCOM subsidiary bodies including Observers to the Groups, as agreed by HELCOM 40-2019, and also distributed to BONUS projects. As outlined in the work plan, the synopses are to be submitted to the Secretariat by the end of 2019 and will be reviewed by HELCOM Working Group meetings in spring 2020 ([Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#), para. 2.5).

The Meeting will be invited to take note of information on the status of work of the ACTION project (document to be submitted).

Ministerial Declaration 2018 agreements

GEAR 20-2019 recalled that the 2018 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration includes a number of paragraphs related to activities under the mandate of the GEAR Group (Annex 1 to [document 5-2](#)). These paragraphs give the direction for HELCOM work in the upcoming years, but some need further specification in order to be turned into concrete tasks for the Group or associated networks. The aim is that the concretized actions that are not carried out by the end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP to be agreed in 2021.

The meeting agreed to postpone the discussion on the initial proposals for concretized actions based on the 2018 Ministerial Declaration to the next GEAR meeting, and invited countries to provide comments to the proposals contained in document 5-2 to the Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) prior to the meeting. Countries are invited to provide their input by **16 October**, so that a discussion document on the topic can be provided to the Meeting for consideration.

HELCOM Science Agenda

HELCOM 40-2019 agreed to develop a HELCOM science agenda, concomitantly with the update of the BSAP. The agenda is to outline existing and foreseen HELCOM regional science needs. It will serve the development of activities in HELCOM as well as to inform external funding mechanisms on the research needs of HELCOM. The development of the agenda will also be an opportunity to provide regional input to the BANOS CSA process and can also contribute to support processes under the UNESCO Decade of Ocean Science. HOD 56-2019 took note of the proposed plan for developing the Science Agenda, agreed on the draft time-table for work proposed as well as on the establishment of a Task Group to prepare it ([document 2-6](#) and [Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#), para. 2.32).

Following the time-table agreed, HELCOM Expert Groups, network etc. will be given time until 20 September 2019 to provide proposals. The input received will be discussed at autumn meetings 2019 of the HELCOM Working Groups with the aim of agreeing on a joint input to the survey in the respective area of work. The Meeting will be informed on proposals of relevance for the mandate of the GEAR Group.

Agenda Item 5 Activities of relevant HELCOM projects or processes

Scoping for HOLAS III

GEAR 20-2019 agreed to further elaborate the initial proposal of the components of HOLAS III, and invited countries to provide comments and suggestions to these components to the Secretariat. No feedback has been provided ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 4.5).

GEAR 20-2019 considered a guidance paper for discussion and scoping for HOLAS III, including a preliminary overall timeline result of which the year 2016, which was already included in HOLAS II, would be included also in HOLAS III to ensure that the assessment covers a six year period ([document 4-1](#) and [Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 4.1-4.4).

GEAR 20-2019 in principle supported the suggestion that intersessional preparatory work for HOLAS III should take the form of three consecutive, interlinking work strands focusing on indicators, dataflows, and assessments and methodologies respectively. GEAR 20-2019 acknowledged that the work strand on indicators is already established and that work has commenced and invited the Secretariat to prepare a draft for a project proposal for the dataflow strand, to be presented to STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 and GEAR 21-2019 for review.

The Meeting is invited to consider a further developed proposed HOLAS III preparatory phase plan with the understanding that it has also been submitted to STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 for input.

The Meeting is invited to discuss the components, scope and process for HOLAS III, specifically the development needed to fill identified gaps as well as development needs for the various work strands not covered by the indicator work, as identified in the HOLAS II process or in subsequent work ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 4.5) (document to be submitted).

The Meeting is invited to review and endorse the project proposal, with the intention that both the concrete project proposal for the dataflow strand, as well as the overall plan for the HOLAS III preparatory phase, be submitted to HOD 57-2019 for approval.

The Meeting is invited to consider the question of including one year in the HOLAS III assessment which was already included in HOLAS II in order to cover a full six year assessment period and endorse the proposed timetable for HOLAS III.

HELCOM Expert Network on Social and Economic Analyses (EN ESA)

The Meeting is invited to consider the need to revise the Terms of Reference of the ESA network in view of the outcomes of the workshop in relation to the establishment of the plan for HOLAS III ([Outcome of GEAR 20-2019](#), para. 4.20).

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 56-2019 supported that HELCOM will co-host the joint workshop on marine ecosystem accounting to be held on 10 October 2019 in Helsinki, Finland ([Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#), para. 3.75). The Meeting will be informed of the outcome of the Workshop (document to be submitted).

Work on HELCOM indicators

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 56-2019 endorsed holding a Second HELCOM indicator Workshop, proposed to take place 16-18 October 2019, and its Terms of Reference ([Outcome of HOD 56-2019](#), para. 3.79). The Workshop is supported by the ongoing indicator review process and aims at an indicator work plan for the short (HOLAS III) and longer term.

Due to the limited time between meetings STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 will be informed of the workshop directly after it has taken place and any recommendation or input received in STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 will be incorporated in the consequent document to GEAR 21-2019. GEAR is kindly invited to take note that, in order to finalize the document post-STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019, it will be submitted to GEAR 21-2019 two weeks prior to GEAR 21-2019. If identified as needed at the STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 State and Conservation WG will be invited to provide further intersessional input to the indicator document through their national GEAR representative, to be discussed at GEAR 21-2019.

The Meeting will be informed of the outcome of the Workshop (document to be submitted) and any related discussions and recommendations of STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019.

The Meeting will be invited to endorse the proposed HELCOM indicator work plan and priorities for approval by HOD 57-2019.

Agenda Item 6 Future work and any other business

Next meeting of GEAR

The Meeting is invited to agree on the dates and place of the next two GEAR meetings, based on the Doodle submitted prior to the Meeting, and to propose focal items for the next meeting.

The Contracting Parties are invited to consider their possibilities to host future meetings of the Group.

Any other business

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the activities of the Group.

The Delegations and Observers are invited to check and update the List of Contact Addresses and Observers of HELCOM GEAR (document to be submitted).

Agenda Item 7 Outcome of the Meeting

The draft Outcome of the Meeting will be presented for adoption. The final Outcome, together with documents and presentations considered by the Meeting will be made available on the [Meeting Site](#).