



11 September 2019

To: HELCOM Heads of Delegation
HELCOM Observers
HELCOM GEAR Contacts and Observers
Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the HELCOM Groups
BSAP-UP Contacts
HELCOM Expert Network on Economic and Social Analyses

Cc: HELCOM Pressure Contacts and Observers
HELCOM State and Conservation Contacts and Observers

**Re. 21st Meeting of the HELCOM Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach,
(GEAR 21-2019), Helsinki, Finland, 6-8 November 2019**

Dear Madam/Sir,

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](#).

Yours sincerely,

Rüdiger Stempel
Executive Secretary