



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Helsinki Commission  
Helsinki, Finland, 28 February–1 March 2017

HELCOM 38-2017

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<b>Document title</b>	Outline for the high-level segment of HELCOM 38-2017
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<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 - High-level segment with a focus on ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals combined with regional issues important for the Baltic Sea area
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<b>Reference</b>	

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### Background

The attached outline was sent to the Contracting Parties and Observers on 19 December 2017 with the invitation to the high-level segment.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outline.

## HELCOM high-level segment on ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and regional issues important for the Baltic Sea

### 28 February 2017

High-level representatives of the Baltic Sea countries and EU will meet on 28 February 2017 on the occasion of the 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Helsinki Commission to discuss the regional aspects in achieving ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and targets in the Baltic Sea, as well as progress and challenges in addressing regional environmental challenges.

The session will debate about how the Sustainable Development Goals are considered regionally, and how the shared targets could be better achieved in the future.

#### Background for the high-level segment

HELCOM has for over forty years provided a platform for the governments of the Baltic Sea countries and EU to discuss and agree on measures to prevent and eliminate pollution from all sources in order to promote the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea Area and the preservation of its ecological balance, thus, achieving and maintaining a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea and ensuring the sustainable use of its natural resources.

While many of the measures are to be implemented nationally, it is the joint regional HELCOM cooperation based on the Convention and involving all Baltic Sea countries and a broad range of stakeholders, which is capable of providing the key to effectively implement and monitor the ecosystem approach and sustainable use of resources in the region. This is the benefit of regional approaches that ensure tackling the challenges we are facing. The Baltic Sea Action Plan, adopted in 2007, provides a concrete basis for HELCOM work to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021.

Current chairmanship in HELCOM is held by the European Union (July 2016-June 2018). [Priorities of the chairmanship](#) focus on further implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and the follow-up commitments.

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) adopted the declaration “Baltic 2030: Renewing the Commitment to Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region” in June 2016.

The second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) “invited Member States and regional seas conventions and action plans, in cooperation, as appropriate, with other regional organizations and fora, such as regional fisheries management organizations, to work towards the implementation of, and reporting on, the different ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets” (Resolution 2/10 (Oceans and Seas)).

HELCOM is one of 18 Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in the world working together under the umbrella of UNEP.

One of the Sustainable Development Goals is fully dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas – number 14. One Contracting Party of the Helsinki Convention, Sweden, together with Fiji, will co-chair and co-fund the United Nations Conference “Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”, 5-9 June 2017, New York. This conference is an opportunity for Contracting Parties to make a contribution and consider a joint follow-up.

## Aim of the high-level segment

The high-level representatives are invited to exchange their views on the following questions and formulate joint guidance on future work.

- How can the ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets be met in the Baltic Sea by 2030 particularly in relation to eutrophication, marine litter and climate change?
- How HELCOM should enhance cooperation to reach effective results and which partnerships should be strengthened?

## Provisional agenda of the high-level segment:

The high-level segment will be held on Tuesday, 28 February 2017, Helsinki, Finland, as part of the annual 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Helsinki Commission (28 February- 1 March 2017).

The venue is the Marina Congress Centre (Katajanokanlaituri 6, FI-00160 Helsinki).

The segment will start at 10:00 and close at 12:00.

The meeting will be chaired by Ms. Marianne Wenning, Chair of the Helsinki Commission.

The high-level segment is organized in the format of a debate. In addition to Contracting Parties also HELCOM Observers may take part in the discussion. Interested Observers are invited to contact HELCOM Secretariat and in case of high interest organize themselves into groups to present their views.

Background documents will be prepared for the meeting. The segment will be finalized with adoption of an outcome document.

09:15	Coffee is served
10:00 –10:10	Opening
10:10 – 12:00	Debate <i>Debate initiated by the Chair. A guest speaker presentation is to be made to inspire discussions.</i>
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch for all participants

## Registration for the meeting

The Meeting is open to the Contracting Parties of the Helsinki Convention and HELCOM Observers.

For registering to the meeting and accessing meeting documents, please refer to the information as provided in the HELCOM invitation letter.