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<b>Document title</b>	Outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings and information on upcoming HELCOM meetings
<b>Code</b>	2-1
<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM and VASAB work
<b>Submission date</b>	3.10.2016
<b>Submitted by</b>	HELCOM Secretariat

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### Background

The attached document (attachment 1) contains extracts from outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings, which are relevant for HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

A list of upcoming meetings within HELCOM as well as other relevant/major meetings in 2016-2017 can be found in attachment 2 to facilitate scheduling of activities of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG. Additional information on past and upcoming HELCOM meetings can be found in the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#). Documents and presentations of past meetings are publicly available.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

**Attachment 1**

## Outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings and information on upcoming HELCOM meetings

### Past meetings

HELCOM 37-2016, Helsinki, Finland, 10-11 March 2016

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#### **HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG**

4.17 The Meeting took note of the information on the current mandate and achievements of the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (document 4-16).

4.18 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the VASAB Workshop on MSP held on 24 February 2016 in Gdansk, Poland, as presented by the Chair of VASAB Mr Jacek Zaucha (**Presentation 1**).

4.19 The Meeting thanked the VASAB Chair for the introduction and VASAB for their initiative to organize the workshop. The Meeting welcomed the invitation by the VASAB Chair to the Contracting Parties to attend the MSP Forum on 23-24 November 2016 in Riga, Latvia.

4.20 The Meeting took note of the introduction on the added value of the co-operation within the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG by the Co-Chair of the group Ms Anita Mäkinen and thanked for her contribution.

4.21 The Meeting expressed willingness from the HELCOM side to continue the good co-operation with VASAB and recognized the unique set-up of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG as well as its added value in facilitating coherent elaboration and implementation of maritime spatial plans across the borders in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting emphasized the tangible results achieved by the group, including incorporating an ecosystem approach into MSP.

4.22 The Meeting took note of the view by EU that the WG is a good example of sea-basin cooperation on MSP that can also facilitate the work of the Contracting Parties being EU countries to implement the MSP Directive.

4.23 The Meeting supported the prolongation of the work of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

4.24 The Meeting took note of the proposal by Estonia that the WG should also deal with Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

4.25 The Meeting considered and supported the proposal for coordination between HELCOM and VASAB in preparing the future MSP tasks (document 4-6).

4.26 The Meeting agreed that a document on future MSP work, including a first draft list of MSP pan-Baltic topics will be prepared based on the exchange at this Meeting and taking into account the suggestions by the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG, for consideration by 72nd Meeting of the VASAB CSPD/BSR, 8 June, Warsaw, Poland and by HOD 50-2016 in June, Estonia. The Meeting noted that feedback is also being arranged within VASAB and the document will be prepared jointly by the HELCOM and VASAB Secretariats.

4.27 The Meeting welcomed the participation of the VASAB Chair in HELCOM meetings to pursue closer cooperation.

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8.1 The Meeting decided to arrange the next meeting of the Commission on 28 February - 1 March 2017 in Helsinki. A preliminary reservation for HELCOM 39-2018 has been made for week 10 in March 2018.

## STATE &amp; CONSERVATION 4-2016, Schwerin, Germany, 11-15 April 2016

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**Follow-up of agreed HELCOM actions for further consideration related to marine protected areas**

2N.16 The Meeting considered the second action related to marine protected areas 'How to consider MPAs in Maritime Spatial Planning and vice versa' of document 2N-2, 4N-3, 4MA-1-Rev.1 and noted that the issue was discussed at the last meeting of HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (MSP WG) that was positive towards the action as a joint activity between the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and State and Conservation and that it was agreed, as a first step, to request the Contracting Parties/Member States to inform how MPAs are taken into account in the MSP, which could be used to amend information in the country fiches. This information is anticipated to be available by the next meeting of HELCOM-VASAB MSP.

2N.17 The Meeting recalled that management of MPA lies in the competence of nature conservation authorities and that MSP shall consider respective spatial protection needs.

2N.18 The Meeting noted that the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group will convene a workshop on the ecosystem approach in maritime spatial planning in November 2016 (week 47) and proposed that MSP/MPAs could be addressed as a topic in the workshop. The Meeting encouraged the Co-Chairs of State and Conservation and the HELCOM VASAB MSP Working Group to initiate communication on further cooperation between the groups on this topic.

2N.19 The Meeting furthermore agreed to initiate the action by inviting the Contracting Parties to provide ideas and comments on their views on how to proceed with the action 'How to consider MPAs in Maritime Spatial Planning and vice versa' to the Secretariat ([petra.kaarja@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaarja@helcom.fi)) by **31 May 2016**.

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## FISH 4-2016, Gothenburg, Sweden, 11-12 May 2016

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**Testing alternative fishing gears/fishing techniques**

4.11 The Meeting further took note of a questionnaire on alternative fishing gears or fishing techniques (document 4-2), as an initial follow up activity to the action 'Testing alternative fishing gears/fishing techniques to minimize incidental catch through joint project/projects' presented by Poland and noted the suggestion by Sweden on a proposal to include reference to further context of the questionnaire as well as added benefits of the CFP landing obligation towards bycatch estimation.

4.12 The Meeting invited Denmark to present information on an initiative to protect the harbour porpoise in Danish waters from fisheries in FISH 5-2016 and noted that in Sweden similar work is ongoing (designating protected areas for porpoises) and could possibly also be presented at FISH 5-2016.

4.13 The Meeting noted the need for Fish to also communicate with the HELCOM VASAB MSP Working Group and HOLAS II project to identify possible spatial data sources to underpin the hot spot analyses.

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**Fisheries and MSP**

4.22 The Meeting took note of the information on including fish and fisheries to maritime spatial planning (MSP), including recent projects such as BALTIC SCOPE (Presentation 3) presented by Mr. Terje Selnes, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SWAM), and SYMPHONY (Presentation 4), presented by Mr. Linus Hammar, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SWAM).

4.23 The Meeting noted that the work carried out under SYMPHONY is based on the indexes developed under HOLAS I with a dynamic approach and that Baltic SCOPE (represented by all CPs except Finland and Lithuania) is starting the discussion on how common fishing interests can be represented. The Meeting noted that once published in autumn 2016, the topic paper by Baltic SCOPE could be presented to Fish. The Meeting further noted the connection between these projects and the pressure and impacts indexes of HOLAS II as well as their relevance to MSP and that regional discussion on fisheries and MSP need to be organized involving the HELCOM VASAB MSP Working Group.

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[HOD 50-2016, Laulasmaa, Estonia, 15-16 June 2016](#)

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### ***New HELCOM Chair***

2.2 The Meeting took note of and welcomed the priorities of the EU Chairmanship of HELCOM starting 1 July 2016 (document 2-1) and took note of the nomination of Ms. Marianne Wenning, Director of ENV C Quality of Life, Water and Air, and Mr. Matjaž Malgaj, Head of Unit ENV C.2 Marine Environment and Water Industry as Chair and Vice-Chair of HELCOM for the period of 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2018.

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### ***Next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting***

3.1 The Meeting took note of the summary of the HELCOM Ministerial Session held on 18 May 2016 in Turku, Finland (document 3-1, also available under this [link](#)) and congratulated Finland for calling up a successful event addressing relevant topics, acknowledging the potential of such sessions to increase the visibility of HELCOM also in the future and that it might be useful to have more frequent high-level sessions around specific matters.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the readiness indicated by Sweden to send an invitation to gather high-level attendance at the EUSBSR Strategic Forum on 8-9 November 2016 in Stockholm, Sweden, including to possible HELCOM high-level workshop.

3.3 The Meeting considered potential topics for the next Ministerial Meeting and was of the opinion that the results of HOLAS II will be a major outcome of HELCOM and should provide valuable discussion points for the Ministers, including evaluating the efficiency of measures.

3.4 The Meeting concluded that the year 2018 for the next Ministerial Meeting should be the latest timing and took note that some Contracting Parties would prefer the second half of 2018 due to some other commitments and as updated HOLAS II would be then ready. The Meeting decided to continue the discussion at HOD 51-2016 on the exact timing and to further elaborate on what could be possible concrete outcomes of the Ministerial Meeting.

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### ***Maritime Spatial Planning***

4.3 The Meeting considered the draft list of MSP pan-Baltic topics as contained in Annex 2 and proposed additional tasks as contained in Annex 3 of document 4-13 and took note of the proposed additions by Germany to Annex 2 as reflected in document 4-13-Rev.2.

4.4 The Meeting took note of a study reservation by Russia on the tasks in Annex 2.

4.5 The Meeting noted that at this stage not all Contracting Parties can support the additional tasks as in Annex 3 and that it should be considered in the MSP Working Group first.

4.6 The Meeting mandated the MSP Working Group, at its 13th meeting on 24-25 November 2016 (Riga, Latvia), to develop a draft work plan for the future work, utilizing the identified MSP topics (document 4-13-Rev.2), as well as to consider and make proposals on any other related matters as needed, for consideration and approval by HOD 51-2016. The Meeting requested that also the ToR of the group is updated.

4.7 The Meeting considered a suitable period for the extended mandate of the HELCOMVASAB MSP WG, taking into account the timeframe for implementation of the Regional MSP Roadmap (2013-2020) as well as other requirements the countries need to follow. The Meeting supported the prolongation of the mandate of the MSP WG up to 2021, to be followed by evaluation of the results and decision on further work. The Meeting noted the decision by VASAB to prolong the mandate of the HELCOM-VASAB MSP group by three years and agreed to have the mandate prolonged until 2021 as the first priority.

4.8 The Meeting considered the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area (document 4-1) and comments submitted by Denmark (document 4-27).

4.9 The Meeting could not support incorporating the Danish proposals to the guideline as the remaining Contracting Parties were of the opinion that sustainable growth is already covered by the guideline and had no mandate for this meeting to re-open the text of the guideline. Further, the Outcome of HOD 50-2016 Page 4 of 57 Meeting found it important to stick to the existing concepts adopted in HELCOM and within global conventions.

4.10 The Meeting noted the information by Ms. Katarzyna Krzywda representing VASAB on the adoption of both this guideline and the Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation by VASAB CSPD.

4.11 The Meeting approved the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in MSP in the Baltic Sea area as contained in document 4-1 (Annex 2). The Meeting took note of the request by Denmark that the issues related to sustainable growth are taken into account when implementing and reviewing the guideline.

4.12 The Meeting considered the Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation (document 4-2) and a proposal by Sweden to clarify the scope of the guidelines.

4.13 The Meeting approved the Guidelines on transboundary consultations, public participation and co-operation (document 4-2, Annex 3) with the clarification that the Guidelines:

- apply without prejudice to obligations emerging from national and international legislation and do not substitute the obligations and existing standard practice of parties to the Espoo Convention and its SEA protocol;
- will be reviewed and amended, if needed, based on the experience gathered;
- refer to the national MSP contact points for the purpose of transboundary consultation and joint planning, as designated by the Baltic Sea countries and listed.

4.14 Further, the Meeting agreed that this approval decision by HOD 50-2016 is to be reflected as a cover note to accompany the guidelines and requested the Secretariat to approach VASAB if they wish the adoption decision by VASAB CSPD to be included in the note as well.

4.15 The Meeting requested the Contracting Parties to check and, if needed, update the MSP WG list of the national MSP contact points for the purpose of transboundary consultation and joint planning.

4.16 The Meeting invited the MSP WG to investigate a possibility to co-operate with the Baltic group under the Espoo Convention.

### **Shipping**

4.17 The Meeting approved the final Baltic Sea NOx Emission Control Area application and the related INF. document on NOx reducing technology (documents 4-12-Rev.1 and 4-12-Rev.2) and decided that they will be submitted to the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (IMO MEPC 70) for consideration.

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7.1 The Meeting agreed that HOD 51-2016 will be held 14-15 December 2016 and HOD 52- 2017 tentatively 20-21 June 2017.

[MARITIME 16-2016, Tallinn, Estonia, 6-8 September 2016](#)

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***Safety of navigation and related matters***

9.11 The Meeting took note of the termination of the agreement between the Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) and HELCOM on the HELCOM AIS Information Centre, as of 1 January 2017, regarding handling of AIS data from the Baltic Sea countries and Norway and of the decision by HOD 50-2016 to move the HELCOM AIS services from Denmark (DMA) to Norway (Kystverket) before the end of 2016 (document 9-1).

9.12 The Meeting took note of the information by the Secretariat on the general progress in AIS data handling capacity including the recent work on shipping density maps and a web tool for browsing and comparing such maps.

**Attachment 2**

List of upcoming meetings in the framework of HELCOM as well as other meetings in 2016-2017

Date and place	Name of Meeting
29 September 2016 Copenhagen, Denmark	Seventh Meeting of the HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation (SAFE NAV 7-2016)
26 - 29 September 2016 Seoul, Republic of Korea	the CBD SOI meeting " <i>The Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organisations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets</i> "
30 September - 1 October 2016 Seoul, Korea	18th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans
4-5 October 2016 Helsinki Finland	Fifth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Hazardous Submerged Objects (SUBMERGED 5-2016)
4-5 October 2016 Brussels, Belgium	EU MSFD WG Economic and Social Analysis (ESA)
4-6 October 2016, Helsinki (Secretariat), Finland	HOLAS II 6-2016
[24-28 October 2016] London, U.K.	70 <sup>th</sup> Session of IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)
25-27 October 2016 Warsaw, Poland	Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 5-2016)
7-11 November 2016 Tallinn, Estonia	Fifth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation (STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016)
8-9 November 2016 Stockholm, Sweden	Annual EUSBRS Stakeholder Forum
8-10 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	22 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM Response Working Group (RESPONSE 22-2016)
14-17 November 2016 Denmark	Fifth Meeting of the Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable fisheries (FISH 5-2016) and Third Meeting of the Task Force on Migratory fish species (FISH-M 3-2016) back-to-back
17-18 November 2016 [online?]	15th Meeting of the Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (GEAR 15-2016)
21-22 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	Baltic LINes project partner meeting
22 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	The 10 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the Member States Expert Group on Maritime Spatial Planning
23-24 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	2 <sup>nd</sup> Baltic MSP Forum and Final Baltic SCOPE conference HELCOM-VASAB MSP and ecosystem approach workshop

24 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	Baltic Scope project partner meeting
24-25 November 2016 Riga, Latvia	13 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group (HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 13-2016)
28-29 November 2016 Bratislava, Slovakia	EU Water, Marine and Nature Directors' meeting
14-15 December 2016 tbd	51 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HOD 51-2016)
28 February-2 March 2017 Helsinki, Finland	38 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 38-2017)
March 2017 St. Petersburg, Russia	XVIII International Environmental Forum "Baltic Sea Day"
During week 24-28 April 2017 [ tbd ]	Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 6-2017)
5-9 June 2017	Conference on Sustainable Development Goal 14 on oceans
20-21 June 2017	52 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HOD 52-2017)
3 - 5 September 2017 Hamburg, Germany	26 <sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
5-6 October 2017 Malta	Our Ocean Conference
during week 9-13 October 2017 [Russia]	17 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Maritime Working Group (MARITIME 17-2017)