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<b>Document title</b>	Extracts from recent HELCOM events
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<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	3 – Matters arising from other HELCOM and VASAB work
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### Background

The document contains extracts from relevant HELCOM meetings held since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 17-2018:

- The 55<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of Delegation ([HOD 55-2018](#)), Helsinki, Finland, 4-5 December 2018;
- The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries ([FISH 9-2019](#)), Tallinn, Estonia, 30-31 January 2019;
- The 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission ([HELCOM 40-2019](#)), Helsinki, Finland, 6-7 March 2019.

### Action requested

The meeting is invited to take note of the information.

## Extract from recent HELCOM events

### HOD 55-2018

3.14 The Meeting discussed the proposed adjustment of the main segments of the BSAP structure, noting that it builds on the four original segments of the current BSAP, while expanding on the topics covered by the segments (Presentation 1, document 3-3).

3.15 The Meeting welcomed the proposal by Finland for an alternative structure for further work on the BSAP updating (document 3-9).

3.19 The Meeting endorsed the guidance to the Working Groups for the review of the existing and proposing new ecological and management objectives as presented in document 3-3.

3.23 The Meeting recalled that HOD have been requested to consider a proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc Expert Group on analyses of sufficiency of measures to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update (c.f. document 3-1, activity 2.5). The Meeting considered a proposal for how to carry out the analyses of sufficiency of measures as contained in document 3-6. The Meeting agreed that the work will be carried out via an interdisciplinary platform for the implementation of the analyses (SOM Platform) (Annex 3), which is to engage the existing HELCOM ESA (social and economic analysis) network, national technical experts on the topics to be addressed by the group, and the Chairs of HELCOM Working Groups.

3.24 The Meeting approved the organization of a kick-off meeting for analysis of sufficiency of measures in February 2019 and requested the Contracting Parties to nominate representatives to participate in the Meeting.

3.26 The Meeting agreed that hazardous substances, non-indigenous species, marine litter, underwater noise, and elements of biodiversity not covered by the HELCOM ACTION project are possible additional topics for analyses of sufficiency of measures, to be carried out by the SOM Platform.

3.30 The Meeting considered the work plan for the BSAP update as contained in document 3-2 and approved it (Annex 4), noting that it will be updated by the Secretariat when additional agreements regarding the BSAP update are made.

4.72 The Meeting supported the involvement of HELCOM as a project partner in a new project platform proposal on MSP to be submitted under the Interreg call (c.f. document 4-29) pending clarification of the study reservation by Denmark until 18 December 2018.

### FISH 9-2019

2.6 A long discussion ensued on the importance of MSP in relation to essential fish habitats. Inter alia the following views were expressed:

- consideration may be given to include the maps on sprat and herring spawning areas into the HELCOM work on underwater noise;
- it is useful to consider the means of utilizing the data on essential fish habitats for other HELCOM processes; – referring to the Baltic flounder as a separate species from the European flounder may be problematic until EU legislation recognizes this species;
- it is important to know where the essential fish habitats are. Denmark is in the process of developing a Maritime Spatial Plan (MSP) including fisheries and have recognized that there are challenges in producing useful and accurate maps of the spatial demands of fisheries and fish habitats;
- discussion with other Contracting Parties would be beneficial; and

– it is important to have good quality data on fish habitats.

2.7 In addition, the Meeting noted the following information regarding ongoing MSP processes that also consider essential fish habitats: Outcome of FISH 9-2019 Page 3 of 21

– In Sweden a consultation on draft maritime spatial plans took place in 2018. A further review of the draft plans will take place in the spring of 2019, with a view to submission to the Government by the end of 2019;

– Finnish MSPs are also under development, including information on essential fish habitats and other biodiversity related information, and a national workshop on the topic took place on 28 January 2019. The aim is to develop a map of ecologically important marine areas, to be used for e.g. MSP purposes; and

– In Denmark, MSP planning has already mapped all the relevant activities. Evaluations of what activities can coexist in the same areas have been done, but a challenge is the legal aspects of which activities can overrule other activities and fisheries is an activity that can be moved elsewhere. This first MSP will simply describe the different activities, but it is clear that e.g. spawning grounds will be difficult to prioritize as there are more economically valuable activities.

2.8 The Meeting noted a comment by CCB that national MSP processes are problematic unless there is coherence between the approaches in the different countries.

2.9 Recognizing the importance of considering conservation targets in MSP, including for commercial fish species that may benefit from this, the Meeting noted Article 8 of the Basic Regulation of the Common Fisheries Policy in this respect. The Meeting also noted that moving fisheries under the way of other more impacting activities may have consequences for the biodiversity, which is a matter that should be considered by HELCOM.

2.11 The Meeting noted information provided by ICES, that work on essential fish habitats has also been undertaken within ICES WGVHES, which could be relevant for further work in HELCOM.

2.12 Finally, the Meeting noted that the Pan Baltic Scope project is holding a planning forum on 12 February 2019 in Hamburg, which includes a workshop on fisheries in MSP from a national and cross border perspective.

2.13 The Meeting took note of the Outcome of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 17-2018 (document 2-5). In particular, the Meeting considered the discussions on a BSAP action on developing common procedures to facilitate the sharing of aggregated data on fisheries activities in the Baltic Sea in an applicable format for the purpose of assessing pressures on marine and coastal ecosystems e.g. to be applied in MSP, and the view of HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 17-2018 that easy access to fisheries data remains a challenge.

#### [HELCOM 40-2019](#)

3.7 The Meeting considered the revised version of HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 on Implementation of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea area (document 3-14) as well as comments submitted by the EU (document 3-20) and Estonia (document 3-21).

3.8 The Meeting took note of the EU statement that the influence of river inputs from all watersheds draining into the Baltic Sea is of utmost importance for the environmental status of the basin. The processes of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning should facilitate the engagement and coordination of all actors involved in order to prevent conflicts and negative impacts on the coastal and marine environment.

- 3.9 The Meeting was of the opinion that the results of the EBSA process provides important information which can be used to establish maritime spatial plans.
- 3.10 The Meeting agreed that exact dates and deadlines should be an essential part of the practical work to plan integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning and are to be considered in the work of relevant HELCOM working groups.
- 3.11 The Meeting considered the revised document circulated to the Meeting containing amendments to the draft Recommendation 24/10 based on the comments provided by the EU and Estonia prior to the Meeting, editorial amendments provided by Russia in the Meeting, as well as amendments as agreed in plenary (document 3-14-Rev.2).
- 3.12 The Meeting adopted the revised HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 as contained in **Annex 6** to the Outcome.
- 3.34 The Meeting considered and adopted the HELCOM-VASAB Guidelines on transboundary MSP output data structure in the Baltic Sea (document 3-6) as contained in **Annex 10** to the Outcome.
- 3.35 The Meeting took note of the statement by Poland that the document is crucial for cooperation in the Baltic Sea region and implementation of the goal of the HELCOM MSP Roadmap to establish the spatial plans coherent across the borders.