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<b>Document title</b>	Matters arising from other HELCOM groups and VASAB work
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<b>Agenda Item</b>	2 - Matters arising from other HELCOM and VASAB work
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<b>Reference</b>	

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### Background

The document contains extracts from relevant HELCOM meetings held since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 21-2021:

- [Outcome](#) of the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Heads of Delegation (HOD 59-2020), online, 7-8 December 2020;
- [Outcome](#) of the 42<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 42-2021), online, 7-18 March 2021.

The documents from these meetings are publicly available on the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#).

This document also contains information on matters arising from VASAB work.

### Action requested

The meeting is invited to take note of the information on the matters arising from other HELCOM Groups (extracts from recent Outcomes of the HELCOM events relevant to the Working Group) and VASAB work since HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 21-2021.

## Matters arising from other HELCOM groups and VASAB work

### Outcomes of the HELCOM events relevant to the work of the Working Group

HOD 59-2020

#### **Agenda Item 1      Work Plan of the German Chairmanship of HELCOM**

1.1            The Meeting took note of the initiatives taken since July 2020 or planned by Germany as a guidance for future HELCOM activities under the German chairmanship of HELCOM (document 2-1). Germany explained that while this document presented a brief overview, details of how Germany planned to progress the various issues would be explained in the respective HELCOM working groups. First issues have already been presented to the working groups in autumn this year.

1.2            With regard to document 2-2 on strengthening Global Ocean Governance under the German chairmanship, Germany stated that HELCOM was a symbol of successful cooperation for the marine environment and that continued and enhanced cooperation with other regional actors and with neighbouring Regional Sea Conventions would benefit from ocean governance in and beyond the region. The Meeting noted the planned initiatives by Germany.

1.3            The Meeting in principle supported the idea of strengthening cooperation between HELCOM and other regional actors. It also noted, however, that cooperation already existed, especially with OSPAR, and that, not least in light of resource constraints, increasing cooperation should deliver strategic added value and benefit HELCOM's core work.

1.4            The Meeting welcomed and accepted the offer by Germany to take the lead with the aim of proactively initiating exchange, i.a. with respective acting presidencies of other actors in the Baltic Sea Region with the aim of strengthening the cooperation.

1.5            The Meeting in principle supported addressing the OSPAR Commission with regard to strengthening and extending the existing co-operation between HELCOM and OSPAR.

#### **Agenda Item 5      Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan**

##### *HELCOM Science Agenda*

5.67           The Meeting took note of the comments received for the final draft of the HELCOM Science Agenda (document 5.2) and the clarifications provided by the Secretariat, and recalled the timeline and plan for the work as agreed at the start of the process (HOD 56-2019 outcome para.2.32, timetable outlined in doc 2-6).

5.68           The Meeting provisionally approved the final draft of the HELCOM Science Agenda, noting that amendments to selected topics may take place in spring 2021 based on ongoing HELCOM processes.

#### **Agenda Item 8      Any other business**

8.7            The Meeting took note of and thanked the representatives of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina for the interesting presentation on underwater heritage and archaeology (**Presentation 5**). The Meeting further noted the mutual benefits of protecting both the marine environment and underwater heritage and the option to include underwater archaeology into MSP processes. The Meeting especially noted, the common pressures on underwater heritage arising from ammunitions, ghost nets and eutrophication. The Meeting further encouraged to remain in contact with Leopoldina on this matter.

#### **Agenda Item 9      Next meeting(s)**

9.1 The Meeting decided that the next meeting of Heads of Delegation (HOD 60-2021) will be held on 3-4 June 2021 in Germany, if the COVID-19 situation allows. The Meeting decided that HOD 61-2021 will be held tentatively on 8-9 December 2021.

9.2 On behalf of the Contracting Parties the Chair thanked two staff members of HELCOM who will be leaving the Secretariat at the end of 2020, Ms. Heini Ahtiainen and Mr. Riku Varjopuro, for their dedicated and excellent services to the organization.

## HELCOM 42-2021

### **Agenda Item 2 Outcome of the HELCOM Stakeholder Conference 2021**

2.1 The Meeting took note of the presentation on the outcome of the HELCOM Stakeholder Conference 2021 ([HSC2021](#)) - “Practically Implementing Ecosystem-Based Management”, which was held on 11 March 2021 as an online workshop, in collaboration with Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) (document 2-1, **Presentation 1**).

2.2 In addition to being one of the HELCOM Voluntary Commitments to the UN Ocean Conference 2021 – approved by HELCOM 41- 2020 – the workshop also offered the possibility to gather considerations on Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) from stakeholders for possible input for the BSAP update process, the HELCOM Science Agenda and HELCOM’s future work on implementation of the ecosystem approach, including the update of the Roadmap on HELCOM activities on the ecosystem approach.

### **Agenda Item 3 2021 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting**

3.1 The Meeting took note of the logistical information for the next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, which will take place on 20 October 2021 hosted by Germany (document 3-2). The Ministerial Meeting will take place in Lübeck, Germany, if the COVID-19 situation allows.

3.2 The Meeting took note that drafting of the programme for the Ministerial Meeting has started and more concrete planning will continue after HELCOM 42-2021.

### **Agenda Item 4 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan**

4.1 The Meeting took note of the second draft of the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) (document 4-3, Excel attachment 4-3 Att.1 and **Presentation 2**) noting that the drafting will continue in the Ad-hoc Drafting Group for the Updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (DG BSAP) and DG BSAP Segment Teams based on the guidance by HELCOM 42-2021. The Meeting also noted the comments to the draft BSAP by Finland (document 4-5).

4.2 The Meeting noted that national consultation is ongoing in several Contracting Parties and that as a consequence the content remains under a general study reservation by Denmark, Estonia and Latvia.

*Segment introductions: horizontal actions*

*MSP*

4.24 The Meeting took note that Russia is planning to submit a proposal for wording to the MSP section to DG BSAP 6-2021.

### **Agenda Item 5 Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies**

*HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group*

5.11 The Meeting considered the draft Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Roadmap 2021-2030 (document 5-10) and expressed general support to the current draft of the document.

5.12 The Meeting requested the HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group to finalize the document for endorsement at HOD 60-2021 and subsequent adoption at the 2021 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting.

5.13 The Meeting took note of the remark by WWF pointing out the importance of considering climate aspects in maritime spatial planning (MSP) and inviting countries to explore how national MSP processes can contribute to not negatively impact countries nationally determined contributions and used as a tool to mitigate climate change of the Baltic Sea region.

5.14 The Meeting also took note that Denmark requested to clarify availability of and need for financial support of joint MSP related activities at HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 22-2021 in April.

#### *Gear Group*

5.15 The Meeting considered the proposed setup of the HOLAS III assessment working structure of HOLAS III assessment phase 2.0, including a proposal as to which HELCOM meetings would be invited to endorse and approve the various deliverables (document 5-4).

5.16 The Meeting agreed on the establishment of a correspondence group consisting of national focal points for the HOLAS III assessment, as outlined in the document.

#### *Pressure Working Group*

5.34 The Meeting took note of the draft HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise (Annex 1 of document 5-9) and the comments provided by Sweden (document 5-19). The Meeting further took note of the late comments on document 5-9 provided by Denmark via correspondence. The Meeting considered the revised draft HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise (Annex 1 of document 5-9 Rev. 1) addressing all comments provided.

5.35 The Meeting in general approved the Action Plan as contained in **Annex 3** to the Outcome and invited all Contracting Parties to confirm their approval to the Secretariat ([dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi](mailto:dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) and [marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi)) **by 26 March 2021**.

5.36 The Meeting considered a draft HELCOM Recommendation on the Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise (Annex 2 of document 5-9).

5.37 The Meeting agreed to provide written comments on the draft Recommendation to the Secretariat ([dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi](mailto:dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) and [marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi)) **by 1 April 2021** Secretariat and requested PRESSURE 14-2021 to elaborate the Recommendation for submission to HOD 60-2021.

5.38 The Meeting agreed to mandate HOD 60-2021 to adopt the Recommendation on Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise.

#### *State and Conservation Working Group*

5.54 The Meeting agreed that a regional HELCOM workshop on “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs), supported by FAO/WCPA, can be arranged in early 2022 (document 5-5). The Meeting took note of the comment by Denmark that the purpose should be to see and exemplify how OECMs fit into the Baltic context, but that definitions of OECMs should be those made by CBD and IUCN.

5.55 The Meeting welcomed the draft HELCOM Climate Change Fact Sheet (document 5-3-Rev.1) and congratulated the Expert Network on Climate Change (EN CLIME) on the ambitious and well executed work.

5.56 The Meeting provisionally approved the publication of the Climate Change Fact Sheet under the Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings, noting that, based on input by Germany and Russia, further work will be done on the key messages for the following parameters: offshore wind farms, fisheries, shipping, coastal and migratory fish and pelagic and demersal fish. The Meeting agreed that changes to these key messages will be shared with HODs for separate approval, prior to or at HOD 60-2021, after which the document will be considered approved and can be published.

**Agenda Item 6      Accounts 2019–2020, budget 2021–2022 and other institutional and organisational matters of the Commission**

6.4            The Meeting took note of the information provided by the Executive Secretary that following an open and competitive recruitment procedure and the approval by the Heads of Delegation, Ms. Lotta Ruokanen, Finland, has been appointed to the post of HELCOM Professional Secretary for Pressure and Agri Groups and the Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group initially for three years as from 1 July 2021.

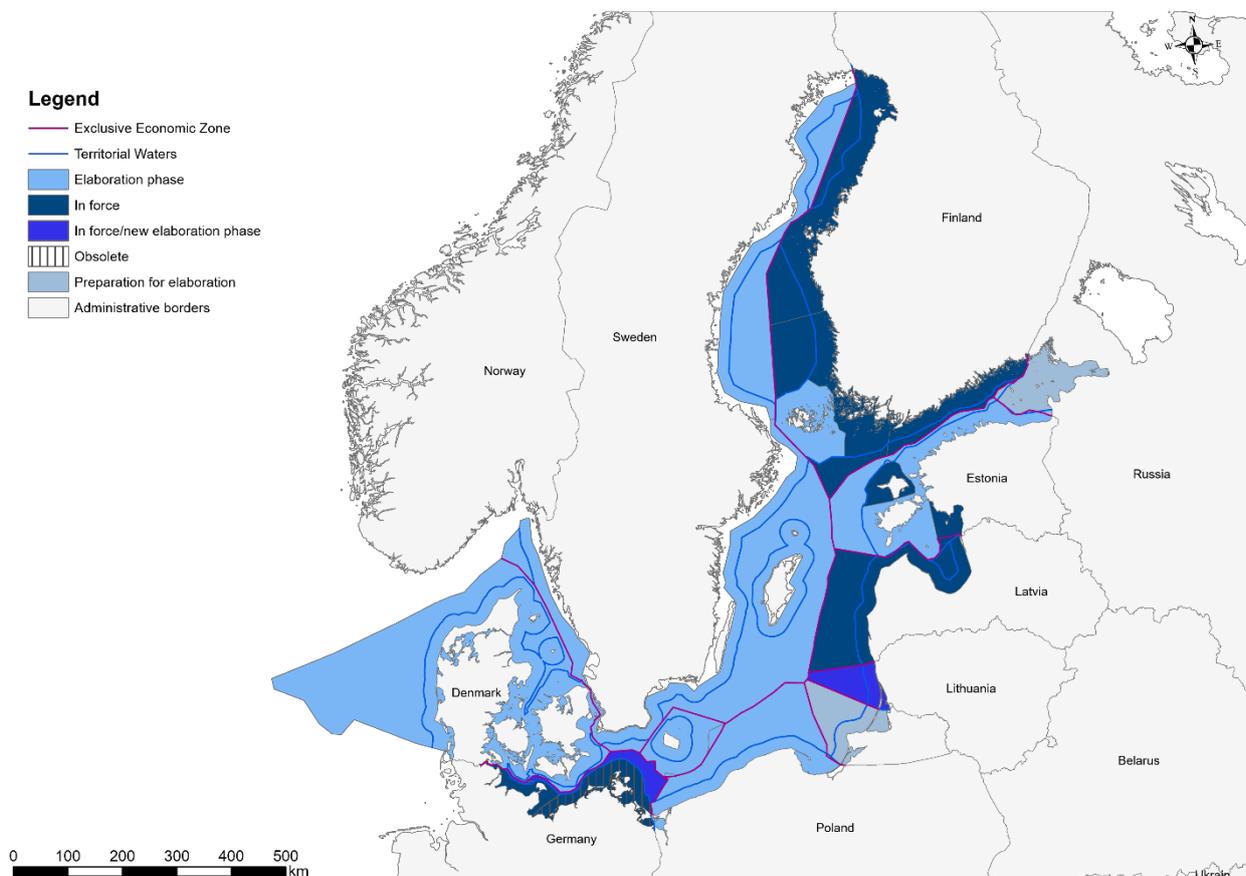
### Matters arising from VASAB work:

VASAB Committee for Spatial Planning and Development in the Baltic Sea Region (CSPD/BSR) has launched the update of its **Long-Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region** in February 2021. In this regard the first VASAB LTP update -meeting was held on 19 March 2021 when the Methodology and overall update process was discussed. The update (to be led by **Spatial Foresight GmbH** together with **Nordregio**) will take place till the end of 2022 and is intended to be participatory and co-creative process with various workshops, where stakeholders jointly with VASAB CSPD/BSR will define the perspective for the coherent territorial development of the Baltic Sea region in 2040. Invited guests from Spatial Foresight GmbH will introduce more about the update process during the Meeting.

VASAB Secretariat as lead partner of Capacity4MSP project platform together with Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development as lead partner of Land-Sea-Act project is jointly organizing **the Baltic 4th MSP Forum** which will take place on 1-2 June online. Registration to the Forum will be open till 25 May 2021 here: [www.balticmspforum.eu](http://www.balticmspforum.eu). The Agenda available here: <https://vasab.org/4th-baltic-msp-forum/agenda/>.

The next VASAB CSPD/BSR meeting is scheduled on 6th May. Among other issues the outcomes of recent HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group meeting, including the draft Regional Baltic MSP Roadmap 2021-2030 will be discussed.

The information about the MSP developments in the BSR countries is being regularly updated in VASAB webpage: <https://vasab.org/theme-posts/maritimespatial-planning/msp-country-fiches/>. With relevance to the provisions of the EU MSP Directive, out of 8 EU member countries around the Baltic Sea 4 countries (namely – Finland, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania) have adopted maritime spatial plans, while other countries are at various stages of elaboration phase.



**Status of the MSP process in the Baltic Sea** © Pan Baltic Scope report 'Assessment of the application of Baltic Sea Common Regional Maritime Spatial Planning Framework', March 2021.