



Document title	Preparations for HELCOM Marine Litter Stakeholder Conference 9.3.2016
Code	2-1
Category	DEC
Agenda Item	2 - Preparations for HELCOM 37-2016
Submission date	12.11.2015
Submitted by	Executive Secretary
Reference	Outcome of HOD 48-2015, par. 6.2

Background

HOD 48-2015 (Outcome of HOD 48-2015, par. 6.2) took note of the suggestion by the Executive Secretary to focus a possible Stakeholder Conference in March next year on marine litter and invited the Heads of Delegation to consider the proposal. It has since been agreed to organize HELCOM Stakeholder Conference on marine litter, to be held on 9 March 2016 back-to-back with HELCOM 37-2016.

It remains vital to maintain attention on the severity of the issue of marine litter but foremost to build ownership for implementation of the recently adopted HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (Recommendation 36/1). Pushing into action the 30 agreed concrete regional tasks will require contributions from not just the coastal governments but several sectors.

A wide array of stakeholders can be invited to announce - or reiterate - their commitment for combating marine litter in the Baltic Sea in the Stakeholder Conference.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to provide feedback and endorse in principle the draft provisional programme for the HELCOM Stakeholder Conference on marine litter.

Preparations for HELCOM Marine Litter Stakeholder Conference 9.3.2016

Background

HELCOM will invite a wide array of stakeholders to announce - or reiterate - their commitment for combating marine litter in the Baltic Sea in a Stakeholder Conference, to be held on 9 March 2016 back-to-back with HELCOM 37-2016. It remains vital to maintain attention on the severity of the issue but also to build ownership for implementation of the recently adopted HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (Rec. 36/1). Pushing into action the 30 agreed concrete regional tasks will require contributions from not just the coastal governments but several sectors.

Since the intense drafting of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML) successfully concluded with its adoption, the work has continued through HELCOM Pressure Group and its expert network on marine litter.

Some HELCOM member states have already offered their leadership to conduct the selected actions of the Action Plan. However, as litter is notably a consumer generated problem, the administrations cannot do it alone but need cooperation from society at large. HELCOM Stakeholder Conference hopes to remind of this and involve other organizations so they table the implementation of the RAP ML on their agendas; citizens' personal involvement through changes on their daily habits; the NGOs with their public mobilization capacity and dedicated commitment; as well as the industry with their professional perspective and responsible attitude.

General notes

Audience interest and participation in the Conference and the issue of tackling marine litter could be effectively promoted in advance. A simple way is to offer the wider stakeholder audience an opportunity, by a short questionnaire, to express their views on the topics listed in the Marine Litter Action Plan:

- General improved waste prevention and management on land
- Micro particles
- Sewage related litter including sanitary waste
- Expanded polystyrene
- Plastic bags
- Bottles and containers
- Third parties
- Remediation and removal on land
- General improved waste prevention and management at sea
- Waste delivery in ports and marinas
- Waste related to fishing and aquaculture
- Remediation and removal at sea
- Education and outreach

This proactive engagement and pre-questionnaire would prolong the exposure to the issue itself and also, potentially, pave way for more commitments. In addition, the results of a simple questionnaire might be used as guidance in the fine-tuning of the contents of the Conference itself - according to "popular demand" or in other ways. It is initially foreseen that the following issues will be pointed out:

- General improved waste and sewage prevention and management on land
- Waste delivery in ports and marinas
- Waste related to fishing and aquaculture
- Remediation and removal at sea

In order to make the best out of the Conference those topics that already have an ownership and are well covered in the region and elsewhere would likely not be addressed specifically, such as the issue of micro particles, however, conference could be used to share material on those topics as well if so wished.

Provisional programme

08.30 - 09.30	Registration and coffee (breakfast served)
09.30 - 09.40	Welcome – Chair of HELCOM (tbc)
09.40 – 11.00	Mobile exploration to the marine litter issue in the Baltic Sea – experts explaining selected thematic areas (3–4, <i>potentially chosen based on the questionnaire results</i>)
11.00 – 11.10	Presenting the results of the questionnaire (<i>if felt necessary. This could also be combined with the Welcoming words</i>)
11.10 – 12.30	Joint discussion/panel on the thematic areas of the morning (<i>Facilitator(s) to stimulate a dialogue approach</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Panelists including litter experts & representatives of governance as well as the private sector
12.30 – 13.30 LUNCH	
13.30 – 15.00	Building high-level commitment to tackle litter in the Baltic I - Short statements/speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants could be representing major governmental, political and scientific organizations and initiatives in the region dealing with Baltic Sea issues to anchor marine litter issues in regional agendas.
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 17.00	Building commitment for practical implementation to tackle litter in the Baltic II – Short statements/speeches <p>Participants could be representing e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector (ports, industries, retailer chains) - Municipalities (e.g. City Councils, WWWTs) - Non-governmental organizations - Private citizens