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<b>Document title</b>	Annotations to the Provisional Agenda
<b>Code</b>	1-2
<b>Category</b>	CMNT
<b>Agenda Item</b>	1 – Adoption of the Agenda
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<b>Submitted by</b>	Executive Secretary
<b>Reference</b>	Outcomes of HOD 51-2016 and HELCOM 38-2017

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The 52nd Meeting of the Heads of Delegation will be held 2017 in Brussels, Belgium, hosted by the European Union, at the premises of Palais d'Egmont, Arenberg room (Place du Petit Sablon, 8, 1000 Brussels, <http://www.ccegmt.be/en>).

The Meeting will start on **Tuesday, 20 June at 09.00** o'clock and will terminate on **Wednesday, 21 June by 16.00** o'clock.

The Meeting will focus on the preparation of the next Ministerial Meeting.

The Meeting will be opened by the Chair of the Helsinki Commission.

## Item 1 [Adoption of the Agenda](#)

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda as contained in document 1-1.

## Item 2 [Next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting](#)

HELCOM 38-2017 took note of the information by the European Union on possible dates for the next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2018 and supported that the meeting would be organized on 6 March 2018 back-to-back with the EU Environment Council in Brussels. The Meeting invited EU to confirm the possibility to organize the Ministerial Meeting on this concrete date. The Meeting decided to organize a regular HELCOM meeting in 2018 back-to-back to the Ministerial Meeting. The EU is invited to confirm the date for the Ministerial Meeting.

HELCOM 38-2017 exchanged views on the Ministerial Meeting and took note that the Secretariat will circulate a working document on the issues raised in the discussion to the Heads of Delegation. A draft working document on the Ministerial Meeting to recall the discussion is included in document 2-1. The document also contains the relevant extracts from the high-level segment and the last year's meetings.

The Chairmanship and the Secretariat will initiate an intersessional activity to continue planning concrete topics and possible outcomes of the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting with a view to formulating a proposal for this Meeting.

### ***Implementing SDGs and regional ocean governance***

Sweden is invited to report on the outcome of the UN Conference "Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14", 5-9 June 2017, New York.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform on their side-events and commitments announced during the Conference.

The high-level segment of HELCOM 38-2017 agreed that HELCOM will contribute with voluntary commitments on SDG 14 to be registered for the Conference. The Meeting is invited to take note of the information on commitments.

The Meeting is invited to reflect on the outcome of the Conference and its foreseen follow-up, in particular taking the Ministerial Meeting into account.

HOD 51-2016 supported the idea of inviting representatives of the OSPAR Commission to the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting. Further, the high-level segment referred to the upcoming HELCOM Ministerial Meeting and stressed the importance of taking concrete steps, e.g. to identify how to enhance cooperation with regional organisations also outside the Baltic Sea region, especially OSPAR and other regional seas organisations and the Arctic Council.

The Meeting is invited to discuss how to take this issue further in preparation for the Ministerial Meeting.

Russia is invited to report on the outcome of the XVIII International Environmental Forum “Baltic Sea Day” held on 22-23 of March 2017 in St. Petersburg. The Forum theme was “Cooperation and connectivity in the Baltic Sea region - the way towards UN Sustainable Development Goal”.

The high-level segment highlighted that the Contracting Parties and HELCOM may consider presenting joint commitments at Our Ocean Conference on 5-6 October 2017 in Malta.

The Meeting is invited to consider possible HELCOM commitments for the Malta Conference.

#### ***Current state, pressures and impacts on the Baltic Sea***

In previous meetings, the Contracting Parties considered results from the HOLAS II project as one of the most important issues suitable for ministerial attention, providing valuable points for discussion and possibilities to take stock of HELCOM achievements in improving the status of the marine environment and to consider strategic directions for further HELCOM work.

The Meeting will be invited to approve a draft summary report “State of the Baltic Sea – Second HELCOM holistic assessment of the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea” and agree to publish it on the HELCOM website (document to be submitted later).

HOD 51-2016 supported a proposal by the Secretariat to carry out a regional consultation on the ‘State of the Baltic Sea’ report and agreed that the GEAR Group will continue planning intersessionally for a regional consultation.

The Meeting is invited to consider a further developed proposal for a regional consultation of the report taking into account the outcome of GEAR 16-2017 (document to be submitted later) and decide as appropriate.

#### ***Renewing the BSAP beyond 2021 and towards 2030***

The Meeting is invited to consider carrying out an activity to review the progress in the BSAP implementation ([HELCOM Explorer](#)) in the light of the HOLAS II results in order to specify areas for strengthened implementation.

HELCOM 38-2017 high-level segment highlighted that a renewal of the BSAP with a time perspective until 2030 is the next step to be jointly undertaken by the Contracting Parties, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Further, the meeting stressed the importance of taking concrete steps, e.g.:

- to plan for renewal of the BSAP in a both ambitious and realistic way with the view that the next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in 2018 would consider embarking on a renewal process,
- engage municipalities and other local actors more closely to implementing the BSAP commitments.

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on a process to develop a proposal for the BSAP renewal for the Ministerial Meeting.

**Promoting knowledge and innovation in the Baltic Sea**

As discussed in HOD 51-2016, the Secretariat approached BONUS to invite BONUS projects to follow up closer the HELCOM priorities and synthesize their expected policy input to HELCOM work and share it with the relevant HELCOM bodies.

An overview of the BONUS projects contributing into the current HELCOM agenda will be submitted to the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to consider a possible use of the projects' results, e.g. in the Ministerial preparation and follow-up.

**Item 3 Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups**

The following meetings will have been held since HELCOM 38-2017:

- 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices, Brussels, Belgium, 3-4 April 2017;
- 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area, St. Petersburg, Russia, 25-27 April 2017;
- 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group, Stockholm, Sweden, 10-11 May 2017;
- 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation, Uppsala, Sweden, 15-19 May 2017;
- 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, Helsinki, Finland, 23-24 May 2017;
- 6<sup>th</sup> Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries, Helsinki, Finland, 22-24 May 2017;
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of HELCOM Response Working Group, 14-16 June, Finland.

The Meeting is invited to consider essential issues stemming from these meetings.

HELCOM 38-2017 considered and commented the draft regional input for defining levels of underwater noise that are consistent with GES for noise-sensitive species as well as decision support trees for establishing environmental targets for ambient and impulsive noise. The Meeting agreed that the open issues addressed by the Contracting Parties should be considered by HELCOM Expert Network on underwater noise (EN Noise). Based on considerations by EN Noise, the draft document will be further developed by HOD 52-2017 (to be submitted at a later stage) with the view of reaching an agreement on the document and thereafter share the document with other Regional Seas Conventions and EU TG Noise.

**Item 4 HELCOM institutional and organisational matters**

The Meeting will be invited to approve the recommendation by the recruitment panel for the post of Administrative Officer.

As decided in HELCOM 38-2017, the Meeting will be invited to reconsider and decide on the pending application for observer status for Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE).

HOD 51-2016 underlined the importance of streamlining and priority setting and invited the Contracting Parties into the work and decided to discuss this issue at HOD 52-2017, based on intersessional exchange to be initiated after the annual Commission meeting. HELCOM 38-2017 agreed that the further work on streamlining of HELCOM processes assuring better involvement of national experts will be discussed at HOD 52-2017.

The Meeting is invited to consider the issue and decide as appropriate.

Item 5      Any other business

A list providing information on forthcoming meetings within HELCOM and other forums will be submitted to the Meeting.

An update on HELCOM communication activities will be presented to the Meeting, with the view of elaborating further any current issues as well as an outlook for the future with emphasis on the Ministerial Meeting.

The Contracting Parties and Observers might wish to discuss any other issues under this Agenda Item.

Item 6      Next meeting(s)

HOD 53-2017 has been tentatively scheduled for 13-14 December 2017.

The Meeting is invited to decide on the next HOD meeting taking into account preparations for the Ministerial Meeting.

Item 7      Outcome of the Meeting

With reference to Rule 11.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Helsinki Commission, the Outcome of the Meeting, reflecting decisions taken will be prepared at the end of the Meeting and presented for consideration and adoption.