



| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Document title | Proposal for a regional consultation on the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report |
| Code | 2-3 |
| Category | DEC |
| Agenda Item | 2 - Next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting |
| Submission date | 30.05.2017 |
| Submitted by | Executive Secretary |
| Reference | HOD 51-2016, paras 6.44.-6.45 |

Background

At HOD 51-2016 the Secretariat presented a proposal to carry out a regional consultation on the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report. The meeting supported the proposal and agreed that the GEAR Group will continue planning for a regional consultation.

Based on feed-back from GEAR 16-2017, this document contains a proposal for how such a consultation could be arranged and which international stakeholder organizations would be targeted in a regional consultation.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- consider and agree on arranging a regional consultation of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report as outlined in the document.

Regional consultation on the ‘State of the Baltic Sea report’

The main objective of the regional consultation is to encourage selected stakeholders, i.e. international and intergovernmental organizations, to give feedback on the ‘State of the Baltic Sea’ report through a dedicated and structured consultation activity.

A secondary objective is to use the opportunity to increase visibility of the results as well as to improve communication of HELCOM assessments.

Stakeholder invitation

Stakeholders to be invited to the consultation are proposed to be:

- HELCOM observers (Annex 1)
- Additional international organizations and stakeholders that address regional issues of relevance for the Baltic Sea environment and with which HELCOM cooperates (Annex 2).

These organizations are not foreseen to respond to national consultations on the ‘State of the Baltic Sea report’ and the regional consultation would thus capture an additional group of stakeholders with a focus on the regional perspective.

Practical arrangements

The invited stakeholders will be directed to the web-site for the ‘State of the Baltic Sea report’. A template for responses will be prepared by the Secretariat. Respondents will be able to give open comments to the different sub-chapters of the report and will also be invited to respond to specific questions. A sub-set of the questions will be developed to support improvement to the communication of results.

Examples of specific questions

- Questions on the assessment as a whole:
 - What are the strengths of the Second Holistic Assessment of the Baltic Sea?
 - What are its weaknesses?
 - If a new, Third Holistic Assessment were to be carried out in a few years, what should that assessment do differently?
- Questions related to results: To what extent do you agree with the following (1 Disagree entirely – 5 Agree entirely)?
 - The assessment results are useful for my work
 - The overall evaluation provide good directions for further action to protect the Baltic marine environment
 - Existing or emerging impacts on the marine environment and associated problems are sufficiently recognised in the report
 - The evidence in the “State of The Baltic Sea” and its underlying thematic assessments support the conclusions that have been drawn.
- Questions on communication: To what extent do you agree with the following (1 Disagree entirely – 5 Agree entirely)?
 - The State of the Baltic Sea website is a good addition/complement to the PDF/printed report
 - The language in the report is clear and comprehensible
 - It is easy to find relevant results in the pdf report
 - It is easy to find the relevant results on the website

Handling of responses

The Secretariat is proposed to carry out the initial sorting and summarizing of comments from the consultation and to prepare the following material:

- 1) a summary of concrete proposals on changes to the report for consideration by the HOLAS II core team and for decision by State and Conservation Working Group (technical proposal) and GEAR (policy related proposal) for tentative inclusion in the update of the report in 2018,
- 2) a summary of responses to be made publicly available on the HELCOM web-site,
- 3) a summary of comments related to communication to be considered when further developing the web-based and pdf version of the summary report for the 2018 update.

The handling of comments received through the regional consultation will be considered concomitant with comments received through the national consultation that will take place on the 'State of the Baltic Sea report' or material thereof. End date for submission of comments from the national consultation to HELCOM is 1 March 2018.

In handling the responses the following guidance, as agreed by GEAR 16-2017, will be considered:

- technical comments can in general be noted and taken forward in the next assessment,
- factual issues (e.g. editorial comments, numerical errors, unclarity in language) will be considered for a response (correction or note in the text), indicators,
- threshold values and assessment tools are based on developments over many years in HELCOM and have been agreed for use in HOLAS II by all Contracting Parties. Thus, comments to indicator and tool development would be noted by HELCOM but only considered for longer-term development.

Time-frame

It is proposed that the regional consultation takes place in October - December 2017. Tentatively a HELCOM stakeholder meeting could be arranged to present the report. The regional consultation will take place in English.

Annex 1. List of HELCOM observers

Governments and intergovernmental organizations

- Government of Belarus
- Government of Ukraine
- Intergovernmental Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Sea (ASCOBANS)
- Expert Group on Sustainable Development- Baltic 30 - CBSS
- Baltic Pilotage Authorities Commission (BPAC)
- Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)
- Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC)
- Black Sea Commission (BSC)
- Bonn Agreement
- The Great Lakes Commission
- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- Oslo and Paris Commissions (OSPAR)
- UNEP/AEWA
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE)
- World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe
- World Meteorological Organization

International non-governmental organizations

- Baltic Farmers' Forum on Environment (BFFE)
- Baltic Operational Oceanographic System - BOOS
- Baltic Ports Organisation (BPO)
- Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC)
- Baltic Sea Forum (BSF)
- BirdLife International
- BONUS Baltic Organizations' Network for Funding Science (BONUS EEIG)
- CEFIC
- Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)
- Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe - Baltic Sea Commission (CPMR)
- European Anglers Alliance (EAA)
- European Boating Association (EBA)
- European Chlor-Alkali Industry (EURO CHLOR)
- European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA)
- Cruise Lines International Association Europe (CLIA Europe, former European Cruise Council (ECC))
- European Dredging Association (EuDA)
- European Network of Freshwater Research Organizations (EurAqua)
- Fertilizers Europe
- European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO)
- The Coastal and Marine Union (EUCC)
- EUREAU (European Federation of National Associations of Water and Wastewater Services)
- Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)
- Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe

- Interferry
- INTERTANKO
- International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (OGP)
- International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)
- International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions (IDUM)
- John Nurminen Foundation (JNF)
- Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation(KIMO International)
- Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
- Nordic Hunters' Alliance (NHA)
- Oceana
- PlasticsEurope
- Sea Alarm Foundation
- Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Annex 2. Additional proposed stakeholders cooperating with HELCOM to be invited to a regional consultation

- Nordic Council of Ministers
- Arctic Council
- UN Environment –Mediterranean Action Plan (Barcelona Convention cooperation)
- European Environment Agency
- European Chemicals Agency
- EUSBSR policy areas and horizontal actions coordinators
- VASAB
- The Baltic Sea Fisheries Forum (BALTFISH)
- World Maritime University
- Interreg Secretariat
- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO)
- Nordic Investment Bank (NIB)