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<b>Document title</b>	Outcome of CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018
<b>Code</b>	4-17
<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4 – Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups
<b>Submission date</b>	12.11.2018
<b>Submitted by</b>	Executive Secretary
<b>Reference</b>	

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## Background

Following the guidance of HOD 54-2018, the Second Meeting of the HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture) was held Berlin, Germany, at the premises of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, on 7-8 November 2018.

With regard to the development of BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture, HOD 54-2018 agreed that, despite progress being slow, the matter is important, in particular in view of HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region, and requested the Contracting Parties to contribute to the work and agreed that organizing a meeting of the CG Aquaculture would be a good way forward, and further agreed that based on the outcome of CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018, HOD 55-2018 could make a final decision on the continuation of the work.

This document contains the Outcome of the Second Meeting of CG Aquaculture. The Meeting discussed the progress so far and the needs and plans for future work.

Germany offered to co-lead the overall work of the Correspondence Group. Finland considered co-leading the work and agreed to confirm this by HOD 55-2018 in December 2018.

Estonia offered to take the thematic lead on matters related to monitoring of impacts from aquaculture operations, and Germany offered to take the thematic lead on matters related to nutrient input from aquaculture, subject to the possibility of appointing an expert consultant. Germany agreed to confirm this by February 2019. Remaining Contracting Parties were encouraged to consider taking the thematic lead for other elements of the BAT/BEP work, and inform HOD 55-2018 on the matter as appropriate.

The Meeting agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 to adopt the Terms of Reference and to approve the draft revised Work Plan, in order to renew the mandate of the Correspondence Group to continue the work on BAT/BEP beyond 2018.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to

- adopt the Terms of Reference and approve the draft revised Work Plan, as set out in Annexes 2 and 3 of the Outcome of CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018; and
- encourage all Contracting Parties to nominate experts to participate in the work of CG Aquaculture.



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

HELCOM Fish Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture)

CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018

Berlin, Germany, 7-8 November 2018

# Outcome of the second Meeting of HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018)

## Introduction

0.1 HELCOM HOD 54-2018 (Outcome § 4.57) requested the Contracting Parties to contribute to the work on BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture and agreed that organizing a meeting of the CG Aquaculture would be a good way for experts to come together to exchange views and share information regarding what is considered BAT/BEP in the different Contracting Parties. Following the guidance of HOD 54-2018, the Second Meeting of the HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture) was held Berlin, Germany, at the premises of the Federal Ministry for the Environment (Krausenstraße 17–18, 10117 Berlin), on 7-8 November 2018.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by delegations from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden, as well as observers from CCB and FEAP. Consent for publication of the list of participants and the information contained therein (**Annex 1**) was received by all participants.

0.3 The Meeting was moderated by Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Secretariat.

0.4 Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary and Mr. Henri Jokinen, HELCOM Project manager, acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

0.5 Dr. Axel Borchmann from the Federal Ministry for the Environment (upcoming German Head of Delegation for HELCOM), welcomed the participants to the Meeting and to Berlin.

0.6 Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary, welcomed the Meeting on behalf of the HELCOM Secretariat.

## Agenda item 1 Election of Chair

1.1 No candidates for Chair of the Meeting were proposed by the Participants. Consequently, the Meeting agreed that Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary, would moderate the meeting due to lack of a lead for the Correspondence Group.

## Agenda item 2 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 2-1, 2-2

2.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda of the Meeting as contained in document 2-1.

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### Agenda item 3                      Matters arising from HELCOM work of relevance of the group

Documents: 3-1, 3-2

3.1            The Meeting took note of the attached extracts from the outcomes of relevant HELCOM meetings (document 3-1), as presented by the Secretariat, and agreed to use the information as appropriate. The Meeting specifically took note of the Outcome of HOD 54-2018 and its relevance to CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018 in relation the objective of this meeting.

3.2            The Meeting took note of the strategic plan for the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan approved by HOD 54-2018, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3-2). The Meeting further noted the discussion at HOD 54-2018 concerning the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan being a priority for the HELCOM working groups, and noted that the updated BSAP should include actions necessary to achieve the HELCOM strategic goal of “Maritime activities carried out in an environmentally friendly way”.

3.3            In this context the Meeting also noted that HOD 55-2018 (4-5 December 2018) is expected to agree on a Work Plan for the BSAP update. To support the BSAP update an interdisciplinary platform with representatives of the Contracting Parties will be established in autumn 2018, with Terms of Reference still to be agreed upon by HOD. In addition to all HELCOM working groups, it is also expected that many of the expert groups will be requested to contribute to the work as appropriate.

### Agenda item 4                      Aquaculture BAT/BEP definitions

Documents: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4

4.1            The Meeting recalled the BAT and BEP definitions in Annex II of the 1992 Helsinki Convention (document 4-1), noted the legal nature of the Convention, and acknowledged that these definitions form the basis for developing BAT and BEP for aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region.

4.2            The Meeting recalled that CG AQUACULTURE 1-2017 had agreed that a compilations of BAT/BEP definitions and related concepts should be produced and that Sweden was tasked to lead the work. Sweden subsequently circulated a questionnaire on national BAT/BEP definitions to be filled in by Contracting Parties.

4.3            The Meeting took note of the received contributions from Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Sweden to the questionnaire regarding the definitions of BAT/BEP sent out to all Contracting Parties (documents 4-3 and 4-4), as presented by Sweden. The Meeting thanked Sweden for the work done, and emphasized that it is very useful to have information on the situation in various countries.

4.4            The Meeting also took note of the BAT/BEP definition analysis about national and international legislation concerning BAT/BEP (document 4-2) developed by a consultant, as presented by Sweden, and considered it relevant as background to matters of aquaculture BAT/BEP implementation.

4.5            The Meeting further considered document 4-2 Add.1, which contained national BAT/BEP definitions for a number of countries compiled by a consultant.

4.6            Meeting agreed that all countries would check the information in documents 4-2 Add.1 and 4-3, combine them as appropriate, complete missing information (especially for countries that had not yet responded to the questionnaire sent out by Sweden) and make any necessary corrections. The Meeting agreed that Contracting Parties would send the completed information to the Secretariat ([henri.jokinen@helcom.fi](mailto:henri.jokinen@helcom.fi)) by 23 November 2018.

4.7            The Meeting requested the Secretariat to contact the HELCOM Heads of Delegation of those Contracting Parties that were not present at the meeting, in order to invite also them to provide information on national definitions of BAT/BEP to achieve a comprehensive compilation of definitions, which was seen by the Meeting as a useful source of information in the further implementation of Recommendation 37/3 on Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region and the Terms of Reference of CG Aquaculture.

4.8            The Meeting agreed that the compilation of national BAT/BEP definitions clearly indicates commonalities between Contracting Parties, especially with regard to how BAT/BEP is implemented in

national legislation. The Meeting agreed to take this into account and use the compilation in the future work on BAT/BEP.

4.9 The meeting noted that some Contracting Parties have not nominated experts to the contact list of CG Aquaculture and have never attended the CG Aquaculture meetings. The Meeting therefore invited HOD 55-2018 to encourage all Contracting Parties to nominate experts to participate in the work.

4.10 The Meeting also discussed the need to gather data on the aquaculture operations currently present in the Baltic Sea area. Comments were made that such info should be relatively readily available through various sources.

4.11 In this context the Meeting noted that such information should also be available through the reporting provisions of Recommendation 25/4 on Measures aimed at the reduction of discharges from fresh water and marine fish farming. The Meeting further noted that Recommendation 37/3 makes reference to Recommendation 25/4 *“as far as it is not overridden by HELCOM Ministerial Declarations and Recommendations or other legal requirements”*. Recommendation 37/3 also recognizes the need to maintain Recommendation 25/4 until adoption of BAT and BEP based measures for application in marine and fresh water fish farming. The Meeting therefore concluded that it is not clear to what extent Recommendation 25/4 is still valid or to what extent the reporting requirements still apply, and consequently requested the Secretariat to analyze the current status and inform FISH 9-2019 as appropriate.

## Agenda item 5 First ideas on BAT/BEP concept by Contracting Parties

Documents: 5-1, 5-2

5.1 The Meeting took note of ideas for development of BAT and BEP, as presented by Estonia (document 5-1), as an input for the thematic discussions.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the ideas on BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea as presented in document 5-2 submitted by Germany. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the excellent starting point for discussions provided by Germany and Estonia and agreed to use it in the further discussions on BAT/BEP and also for planning the future work. The Meeting agreed that the work should cover the following three processes, as suggested by Germany:

- BAT/BEP for the establishment of aquaculture operations (site selection, permitting regulations, MPAs etc.);
- BAT/BEP for aquaculture operation considering for example the following issues: hazardous substances, eutrophication, biodiversity impacts, marine litter and sustainable feeds; and
- BAT/BEP for the monitoring of impacts from aquaculture operations.

5.3 In introducing document 5-2, Germany also pointed out that there are a number of overarching issues regarding the scope of the BAT/BEP discussion, that still need further consideration, such as the issue of land-based aquaculture and the issue of existing or new aquaculture facilities. Furthermore Germany highlighted the importance of reporting in accordance with Recommendation 37/3, which the Meeting agreed is one of the key matters that will need to be addressed in more detail at a later stage once more clarity has been reached regarding BAT/BEP descriptions in general.

5.4 Regarding the scope, the Meeting agreed that both land- and sea-based aquaculture should be covered, as had already been agreed by AQUACULTURE 1-2017. Furthermore, the Meeting agreed that both new and existing aquaculture facilities should be covered, similarly to the original Recommendation 25/4, taking into account that existing aquaculture operations may need time to implement any new requirements.

5.5 The Meeting agreed that the elements contained in document 5-2 by Germany would form the basis for future work on BAT/BEP descriptions in the Baltic Sea area. The Meeting discussed the need to identify which elements of the BAT/BEP descriptions should be discussed as priority matters, but recognized that it may be premature to do so at this stage.

5.6 Recognizing that aquaculture is an important vector for the introduction of non-indigenous species, Poland was of the view that this issue should not be prioritized in the work on BAT/BEP descriptions as it is already well regulated by the EU.

5.7 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Estonia to take the thematic lead on matters related to monitoring of impacts from aquaculture operations. The Meeting also welcomed the offer by Germany to take the thematic lead on matters related to nutrient input from aquaculture, subject to the possibility of appointing an expert consultant. Germany agreed to confirm this by February 2019.

5.8 The Meeting recognized that input of hazardous substances from aquaculture is another important issue that needs to be considered in the work on BAT/BEP. The Meeting noted that this thematic element could be linked to the HELCOM Pressure Group and the Correspondence Group on Pharmaceuticals (CG Pharma), which also discusses medicine inputs in to the Baltic Sea. The Meeting agreed to seek advice from Pressure and CG Pharma on this issue as part of the future work, if deemed appropriate.

5.9 The Meeting recognized the possible need to keep the two concepts of BAT and BEP separate in the future discussions, as the measures to achieve the two are different, and as BEP in some cases can be achieved by applying BAT.

5.10 Furthermore, the Meeting noted that some of the BAT/BEP aspects under discussion are already regulated to some extent by national, EU or international regulations. The Meeting also noted that work regarding sustainable aquaculture is going on also in ICES. The Meeting agreed that information on such regulations and work in other organizations should be taken into consideration throughout the work.

#### *Additional information*

5.11 The Meeting took note of additional information by Germany regarding the siting of aquaculture operations taking into account nutrient input (**Presentation 1**) and discussed inter alia the Maximum Allowable Inputs for nitrogen and phosphorous. In this context, the Meeting recalled that one of the principles outlined in Recommendation 37/3 is to take full account of nutrient discharges and losses from marine aquaculture in an overall endeavour by the Contracting Parties to keep inputs within Maximum Allowable Inputs for nitrogen and phosphorus for the Baltic Sea basins, as agreed at the 2013 HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting and in its possible future updates.

5.12 The Meeting took note of additional information by an expert invited by Germany (Dr. Boris Kolar) on risk assessments related to input of hazardous substances such as veterinary medicines from aquaculture operations (**Presentation 2**) and recognized that there are gaps in assessment of substances used in aquaculture. The Meeting also noted that a proportion of antibiotics and medicines used in aquaculture end up in the surrounding environment. The Meeting also noted that in many Contracting Parties aquaculture operations do not have reporting requirements of used antibiotics and medicines, and that the HELCOM Pressure Group monitoring of veterinary medicines in the Baltic Sea cannot distinguish between substances stemming from aquaculture and other animal production.

#### Agenda item 6 Future work and assigning leads

Documents: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3

6.1 The Meeting recalled that the Correspondence Group was established in order to implement the Work Plan of the HELCOM Fish Group and as a follow up of the HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable aquaculture (Rec. 37/3), and that the work of the Correspondence Group is based on the Terms of Reference adopted by HELCOM 37-2016 and the Work Plan of agreed by HELCOM FISH 7-2017 and approved by HOD 53-2018.

#### *Assigning leads*

6.2 The Meeting recalled that the Correspondence Group currently lacks a lead country and commitment from several Contracting Parties.

6.3 The Meeting noted that FISH 8-2018 invited Contracting Parties to consider taking the lead of the Correspondence Group and to recommit to completing the work on BAT/BEP definitions, techniques and practices applicable in the Baltic Sea region, originally envisaged to be completed in summer 2018.

6.4 The Meeting further took note that HOD 54-2018 noted the lack of progress and lead country with regard to the development of BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture, but agreed that, despite progress being slow, the matter is important, in particular in view of HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region and requested the Contracting Parties to contribute to the work. HOD 54-2018 furthermore agreed that, based on the Outcome of CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018, HOD 55-2018 in December 2018 could make a final decision on the continuation of the work of CG Aquaculture.

6.5 Contracting Parties were encouraged and invited to consider taking a leading role in the development of BAT/BEP and to inform the Meeting on their possibilities in this matter.

6.6 The Meeting welcomed with appreciation the offer by Germany to co-lead the overall work of the Correspondence Group, and the offer by Finland to also consider co-leading the work. Finland agreed to confirm whether they are in a position to co-lead the work by HOD 55-2018 in December 2018.

6.7 As discussed under Agenda Item 4 above, the Meeting welcomed the offer by Estonia to take the thematic lead on matters related to monitoring of impacts from aquaculture operations. The Meeting also welcomed the offer by Germany to take the thematic lead on matters related to nutrient input from aquaculture, subject to the possibility of appointing an expert consultant. Germany agreed to confirm this by February 2019.

6.8 The Meeting encouraged remaining Contracting Parties to consider taking the thematic lead for other elements of the BAT/BEP work, and inform HOD 55-2018 on the matter as appropriate.

#### *Future work*

6.9 The Meeting was invited to plan for the continuation of the work beyond 2018, based on the current Work Plan, with a view to completing the work on BAT/BEP definitions, techniques and practices applicable in the Baltic Sea region.

6.10 The Meeting recalled the HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on sustainable aquaculture (document 6-1) as background for discussions on future work.

6.11 The Meeting reconfirmed that the elements and processes contained in document 5-2 by Germany would constitute the basis for the future work on BAT/BEP descriptions.

6.12 With regard to the HELCOM Recommendation 37/3, the Meeting noted that actions taken by the Contracting Parties to implement the HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region should be reported for the first time in 2018, and considered this to be relevant and linked to the work of the Correspondence Group. The Meeting consequently agreed that an appropriate reporting format for demonstrating compliance with Recommendation 37/3 should be developed as part of the future work.

#### *Terms of Reference and Work Plan*

6.13 The Meeting recalled the Terms of Reference and the Work Plan of CG Aquaculture (documents 6-2 and 6-3), as background for discussions on future work of the Correspondence Group, presented by the Secretariat.

6.14 Based on the background material presented, the Meeting discussed and updated the Terms of Reference and Work Plan of CG Aquaculture for 2019-2020.

6.15 The Meeting agreed that the draft revised Work Plan should reflect the tasks listed in the draft revised Terms of Reference. Specifically the Meeting agreed inter alia that with regard to compiling latest information on various aquaculture techniques for different types of production, possibly contributing to the BAT/BEP descriptions, environmental and economic performance should be taken into account, and that the task could be undertaken in two stages by:

- in the first instance inviting Contracting Parties to provide relevant information, which could be taken into consideration also during the development of BAT/BEP descriptions; and
- in the longer term, by investigating opportunities for producing a more advanced compilation e.g. through collaborating with the Nordic Council of Ministers' BAT group, or by using EMFF funding from the Contracting Parties to conduct the work.

6.16 Following discussion, it was agreed that more emphasis should be placed on working by correspondence and that work on the BAT/BEP description should be initiated by the thematic leads (Germany for nutrient input, Estonia for monitoring of aquaculture operations, and other lead countries that may be identified later).

6.17 The Meeting recognized the importance of dedication and commitment from all Contracting Parties, in addition to the Lead Countries, in order to realistically be able to make progress on this extensive work. Therefore, the Meeting encouraged more Contracting Parties and Observers to consider taking leadership in some of the other themes identified in document 5-2 by Germany.

6.18 The Meeting agreed to invite HOD 55-2018 to adopt the Terms of Reference as set out in **Annex 2** and to approve the draft revised Work Plan as set out in **Annex 3**, in order to renew the mandate of the Correspondence Group to continue the work on BAT/BEP beyond 2018.

#### Agenda item 7 Any other business

7.1 The Meeting reviewed and updated the list of nominated contacts for the HELCOM CG Aquaculture (List of Contacts). Taking into account the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, (EU) 2016/679), the Meeting agreed that the contact address list will be made available on the HELCOM Meeting Portal upon receipt of consent for publication by all contact persons.

7.2 The Meeting invited Contracting Parties and Observer organizations to inform of any new, or changed, nominations to the Secretariat ([henri.jokinen@helcom.fi](mailto:henri.jokinen@helcom.fi)).

7.3 The Meeting agreed to organize the next meeting at the latest in May 2019 in Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland, with further details on timing to be decided at a later stage.

#### Agenda item 8 Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: draft Outcome

8.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting. The Outcome of the Meeting, together with the documents and presentations considered by the Meeting are available on the [CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018 meeting site](#).

## Annex 1. List of participants

	Name	Organization	E-mail
<b>Contracting Parties</b>			
Denmark	Alf Skovgaard	Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark	alsko@mfvm.dk
Estonia	Rene Reisner	Ministry of the Environment	rene.reisner@envir.ee
Estonia	Hendrik Põldja	Ministry of the Environment	hendrik.poldja@envir.ee
Estonia	Eduard Koitmaa	Ministry of Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia	eduard.koitmaa@agri.ee
Finland	Heikki Lehtinen	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	heikki.lehtinen@mmm.fi
Finland	Mikael Wennström	Provincial Government of Åland	mikael.wennstrom@regeringen.ax
Germany	Hans-Peter Damian	German Environment Agency	hans-peter.damian@uba.de
Germany	Ulfert Focken	Thünen-Institute of Fisheries Ecology on behalf of Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture	ulfert.focken@thuenen.de
Germany	Wera Leujak	German Environment Agency	wera.leujak@uba.de
Germany	Ulrike Pirntke	German Environment Agency	ulrike.pirntke@uba.de
Germany	Axel Borchmann	Federal Ministry for the Environment	axel.borchmann@bmu.bund.de
Poland	Katarzyna Kaminska	Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation	k.kaminska@mgm.gov.pl
Poland	Igor Wawrzyniak	Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation	igor.wawrzyniak@mgm.gov.pl
Sweden	Annika Johansson	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	annika.johansson@havochvatten.se
Sweden	Ulrika Gunnartz	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	ulrika.gunnartz@havochvatten.se
<b>Invited Guest</b>			
Guest	Boris Kolar	National Laboratory for Health, Environment and Food in Slovenia	boris.kolar@nlzoh.si
<b>Observer organizations</b>			
Observer	Nils Höglund	Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)	nils.hoglund@ccb.se
Observer	Henning Jørgensen	Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)	hmj@dn.dk
Observer	Lisbeth Jess Plesner	FEAP	lisbeth@danskakvakultur.dk
<b>HELCOM Secretariat</b>			
Secretariat	Markus Helavuori	Secretariat	markus.helavuori@helcom.fi
Secretariat	Henri Jokinen	Secretariat	henri.jokinen@helcom.fi

## Annex 2. Draft revised Terms of Reference for the HELCOM FISH Correspondence Group concerning a draft document on BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture)

Adopted by HELCOM HOD 55-2018

In order to implement the Work Plan and as a follow up on HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on sustainable aquaculture, the HELCOM Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (Fish Group) suggested to establish an intersessional Correspondence Group on Best Available Technology/Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP) for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region (CG Aquaculture) (c.f. outcome of HELCOM FISH 3-2015, §3.5-3.8). This suggestion was agreed HOD 49-2015 (c.f. outcome of HELCOM HOD 49-2015, paragraph 4.45).

Recalling HELCOM Recommendation 37/3, which:

- recalls the 2013 HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting agreement to develop a new HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable aquaculture by 2014 to substitute the existing HELCOM Recommendation 25/4;
- has regard to HELCOM Recommendation 25/4 on Measures aimed at the reduction of discharges from fresh water and marine fish farming, as far as it is not overridden by HELCOM Ministerial Declarations and Recommendations or other legal requirements;
- recognizes the need to maintain Recommendation 25/4 until adoption of BAT and BEP based measures for application in marine and fresh water fish farming;
- desires to limit the negative impacts on the environment from aquaculture facilities located in the catchment area of the Baltic Sea and in the Baltic Sea by applying Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP); and hence
- recommends to the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention to jointly develop by 2018 BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable and environmentally friendly aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region and apply them based on Annex II of the Helsinki Convention;

the purpose of CG Aquaculture is to work towards adoption of BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region.

The CG shall take account of the heterogeneous nature of aquaculture, variability in technology and geography with the need for a differentiated (if not locally- and/or sub-regionally concentrated) approach and aim at a developing comprehensive set of BAT/BEP descriptions on sustainable aquaculture for the benefit of the Baltic Sea region.

### Objective

The HELCOM Correspondence Group on sustainable aquaculture (hereinafter – CG Aquaculture):

- exchanges BAT/BEP information and experience gained on aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region; and
- develops BAT/BEP descriptions for sustainable aquaculture for the Baltic Sea region, by:
  - i. defining environmentally acceptable, economically viable and socially equitable standards;
  - ii. differentiating between land- and sea-based aquaculture, where appropriate
  - iii. promoting innovation; and
  - iv. not prescribing any specific technique to be applied by all Contracting Parties.

**Status and working procedures**

The CG Aquaculture is:

- an ad hoc sub-group to the Fish Group which it reports to;
- supported by the Secretariat;
- established for a period of 24 months (the work to be finalized by the end of 2020); with a possibility to extend the mandate by HELCOM HODs decision;
- working mainly by correspondence, face-to-face or virtual meetings, as needed; and
- co-led by Germany [and Finland].

**Membership**

Members of the CG Aquaculture are:

- nominated Contracting Party experts on aquaculture and other relevant matters;
- HELCOM Observers, as appropriate;
- additional experts may participate in meetings by invitation by the Chair of the CG Aquaculture (such as representatives of other organizations, technical experts, etc.); and
- the group should be led by a Chair appointed by the lead countries.

**In executing its duties, the group shall**

- base its work to the Helsinki Convention Articles 3 and 6 and Annex II;
- be guided by HELCOM Recommendation 37/3 on Sustainable Aquaculture and its Annex, and Recommendation 25/4 to the extent it is not overridden by HELCOM Ministerial Declarations and Recommendations or other legal requirements;
- be guided by matters related to nutrition impacts and thresholds of the Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration;
- promote innovation by considering the available new (open/closed) technologies/systems, such as IMTA or RAS;
- be guided e.g. by the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, HELCOM Ministerial Declarations, EU and national legislation, the report on existing BAT techniques applied in the Nordic countries (Nordic Council of Ministers report on aquaculture), national strategies and other relevant documents as deemed relevant; and
- recognize the commonalities between Contracting Parties, especially with regard to how BAT/BEP is expressed in national legislation.

**Detailed tasks for the group are:**

- a) to complete a concise compilation of existing BAT and BEP definitions applied in the Contracting Parties or otherwise relevant for the Baltic Sea area/region;
- b) to compile latest information on aquaculture techniques for different types of production, possibly contributing to the BAT/BEP descriptions;
- c) to jointly develop BAT/BEP descriptions for the aquaculture operators, relevant for both existing and new, sea-based aquaculture and land-based<sup>1</sup> aquaculture with a potential impact on the Baltic Sea;

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<sup>1</sup>CG AQUACULTURE 1-2017 considered and discussed different types of aquaculture to be covered by distinct BAT/BEP agreed with regard to land-based aquaculture that the focus should be on intensive inland aquaculture (see Annex 2 of the outcome of CG AQUACULTURE 1-2017, intensive in accordance with FAO definitions)

- d) to develop an appropriate reporting format for demonstrating compliance with Recommendation 37/3;
- e) review and update Recommendation 37/3 as necessary; and
- f) to identify possible research and development needs and knowledge gaps, with a view to improving the BAT and BEP descriptions for the Baltic Sea region.

The results of CG work shall be subject to consideration by the Fish Group and high-level HELCOM bodies as deemed necessary.

## Annex 3. Draft revised work plan of CG Aquaculture 2019-2020

Tasks of the CG Aquaculture TORs	Responsible	Milestone	Output deadline
To complete a concise compilation of existing BAT and BEP definitions applied in the Contracting Parties or otherwise relevant for the Baltic Sea area/region	All participants	Report to meetings of HELCOM Fish	2019
<p>To compile latest information on environmental and economic performance of various aquaculture techniques for different types of production, possibly contributing to the BAT/BEP descriptions,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- by inviting CP's to provide information in the first instance.</li> <li>- in the long term, investigate opportunities for producing a more advanced compilation e.g. through collaborating with the Nordic Council of Ministers BAT Group, or by using EMFF funding from the CP's to conduct the work.</li> </ul>	<p>Secretariat to request All participants to contribute</p>	<p>Report to meetings of CG Aquaculture Report to meetings of HELCOM Fish</p>	Spring 2019 (2020 for more advanced compilation)
<p>To jointly develop BAT/BEP descriptions for the aquaculture operators, relevant for both existing and new, sea-based aquaculture and land-based aquaculture with a potential impact on the Baltic Sea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– BAT/BEP for the establishment of aquaculture operations (site selection, permitting regulations, MPAs etc.);</li> <li>– BAT/BEP for aquaculture operation considering for example the following issues: hazardous substances, eutrophication, biodiversity impacts, marine litter and sustainable feeds; and</li> </ul>	Overall coordination by Lead Countries supported by the Secretariat	Report to meetings of CG Aquaculture	By end of 2020

<p>– BAT/BEP for the monitoring of impacts from aquaculture operations.</p> <p>The work should be initiated by the thematic leads (Germany for nutrient input and Estonia for monitoring of aquaculture operation) in consultation with the Correspondence Group.</p>			
<p>Following completion of BAT/BEP descriptions, develop an appropriate reporting format for demonstrating compliance with Recommendation 37/3.</p>	<p>All participants to contribute</p>	<p>Report to meeting of CG Aquaculture 2020</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>Review and update Recommendation 37/3 as necessary.</p>	<p>All participants to contribute</p>	<p>Report to meeting of CG Aquaculture 2020</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>To identify possible research and development needs and knowledge gaps, with a view to improving the BAT and BEP descriptions for the Baltic region.</p>	<p>All participants</p>	<p>Report to meeting of CG Aquaculture 2020</p> <p>Report to meeting of HELCOM FISH in 2020</p>	<p>2020</p>