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Agenda Item	5 - Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups
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Background

The Ninth Meeting of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9-2020) was held online on 30-31 March 2020.

The Meeting was attended by all HELCOM Contracting Parties except for the European Union and Russia, as well as by Observers from the Baltic Farmers' Forum for Environment (BFFE), Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG), Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP), Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Sari Luostarinen, Chair of HELCOM Agri group.

This document contains the Outcome of AGRI 9-2020. The whole Outcome including all Annexes can also be found [here](#). Matters requiring specific action by HOD 58-2020 are outlined below.

To complete the rephrasing of HELCOM actions, a Dedicated Meeting of the Agri group was held online on 14 May 2020. The Outcome of the Dedicated Meeting is attached and the whole Outcome including all Annexes can be found [here](#).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcomes of AGRI 9-2020 and AGRI 9a-2020 in general and consider them as appropriate. Specifically, the Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the work on rephrasing of existing BSAP actions (Outcome of AGRI 9-2020: paras 3.7-3.12, Annex 2; Outcome of AGRI 9a-2020 and Annex 2);
- take note of the ongoing technical review of synopses and that an intersessional online meeting dedicated to the review of synopses (AGRI 9b-2020) will take place on 12 June 2020 (Outcome of AGRI 9-2020: paras 3.13-3.21; Outcome of AGRI 9a-2020: para 4.1);
- take note of the prioritization by experts of the possible nutrient recycling measures to be included in the Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy and updated BSAP based on the proposals from the HELCOM Workshop on nutrient recycling measures held on 5-6 February in Helsinki (Outcome of AGRI 9-2020: paras 6.1-6.10);
- approve that AGRI 10-2020 will be organized on 4-5 November 2020 in Uppsala, Sweden.



Outcome of the Ninth Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9-2020)

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Outcome of the Ninth Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9-2020)

Introduction

0.1 The Ninth Meeting of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9-2020) was held online on 30-31 March 2020.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by all HELCOM Contracting Parties except for the European Union and Russia, as well as by Observers from the Baltic Farmers' Forum for Environment (BFFE), Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG), Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP), Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (**Annex 1**).

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Sari Luostarinen, Chair of HELCOM Agri group.

0.4 Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Professional Secretary and Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, Associate Professional Secretary at the HELCOM Secretariat, acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1-Rev.1, 1-2

1.1 The Meeting adopted the agenda as contained in document 1-1-Rev.1.

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from other HELCOM work of relevance for the Group

Documents: 2-1

2.1 The Meeting took note of the information on the outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for the Agri group (document 2-1).

2.2 The Meeting clarified the link between the update of HELCOM Recommendation 24/3 on measures aimed at the reduction of emissions and discharges from agriculture and the revision of the Annex III part of the Helsinki Convention. The Meeting found that the update of the Recommendation can be difficult to connect with the revision of Annex III due to the difference in timeframes for these work strands. The Meeting further clarified that the provisions of the updated part 2 of Annex III are to be taken into account in the update of the Recommendation. The work on the Recommendation 24/3 will be continued after the revision of the Annex III has been accomplished in the end of 2020.

2.3 The Meeting took note that HELCOM 41-2020 adopted the draft Recommendation on the use of national manure standards in principle pending study reservation by Estonia as Germany has recently lifted their study reservation.

Agenda Item 3 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5

3.1 The Meeting took note of an overview of already implemented activities and the timing of upcoming activities and decisions in 2020 for the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (document 3-1). The Meeting took note that BSAP UP workshops on new measures have been postponed to autumn 2020 and that the new dates for the eutrophication workshop are 26-27 August 2020.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the provisional agreement on the structure and objectives for the updated BSAP and guidance from HOD 57-2019 that updated BSAP should be a relatively short document written in a straightforward way but should at the same time provide sufficient supporting information to facilitate future follow-up of implementation (document 3-2).

- 3.3 The Meeting took note of the progress in the sufficiency of measures (SOM) analysis (document 3-3) and that the data validation by the Agri Group that will likely take place in April-May 2020.
- 3.4 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the literature review is currently being prepared by SYKE, Finland, but slightly delayed. The review will be prepared in a numeric format utilizing most probably MS Excel spreadsheet. The Agri group will be invited to review the data intersessionally via correspondence. The literature review will also contain data obtained outside the region.
- 3.5 The Meeting took note that intersessional consultations are foreseen with a minimum of 3-week time and might be performed combining correspondence and online meeting. The timeframe for this work will be specified later.
- 3.6 The Meeting took note of the concern by Germany that the answers to survey on sufficiency of measures might not be fully objective representing the view of individuals and should be supplemented by the literature review.
- 3.7 The Meeting recalled that to support to the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), HELCOM Working Groups were invited to consider how the actions agreed in the BSAP and the subsequent Ministerial Meetings of 2010 and 2013 have been implemented. The Meeting also recalled that AGRI 7-2019 and AGRI 8-2019 Meetings considered the HELCOM actions from BSAP and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013 related to the Agri group and their implementation status and that AGRI 8-2019 agreed on lead countries for rephrasing of actions that are not likely implemented by 2021 or were previously deemed too general for follow-up.
- 3.8 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to submit an information document on the procedure to eliminate HELCOM hot spots to the next meeting of the group.
- 3.9 The Meeting invited Denmark, Poland and Sweden to send proposals for rephrasing the action “Make use of appropriate policy and economic instruments as well as economic levies and incentives, in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs” to lead country Germany (katrin.kuka@julius-kuehn.de; Kai.Schlegelmilch@bmu.bund.de) **by 10 April 2020**. The Meeting invited Germany to send the updated proposal to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) **by 29 April 2020**.
- 3.10 The Meeting invited Finland and BSAG to contact WATERDRIVE project for checking the update for the action “Apply innovative water management measures, in particular under difficult soil conditions, to ensure that upgrading and renovation of the agricultural drainage systems aim at reducing nutrient concentrations in the outlets of the adjacent catchment”, proposed by the Meeting (**Annex 2**).
- 3.11 The Meeting took note that Pressure group suggested that the action “Address the need for additional measures within transportation, combustion and agriculture (as the three major sources of atmospheric emissions of nitrogen these sectors) with the aim to ensure a Baltic-wide application of uniform standards” could be rephrased by the Agri group considering the ongoing discussion on mitigating ammonia emissions from agriculture and the revision of Recommendation 24-3. The Meeting invited Germany and Sweden to elaborate the formulation for an action to mitigate ammonia emissions from agriculture in coordination with national Pressure group representatives and provide it to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) **by end of April 2020**.
- 3.12 The Meeting agreed on the tentative rephrasing of the actions for the updated BSAP as included in **Annex 2**.
- 3.13 The Meeting recalled that to support the selection of new measures and actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan, an invitation to submit synopses on potential new HELCOM actions was put forward to the Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects and HELCOM Observers.
- 3.14 The Meeting took note of the synopses related to agriculture and the guidance for making a technical review of the synopses (document 3-5).
- 3.15 The Meeting took note that Sweden will submit additional synopses **by 3 April 2020** to the Secretariat.

- 3.16 The Meeting agreed to use the proposed MS Excel spreadsheet as a template to provide input to the review of the measures. The Meeting recommended to elaborate the Excel table further integrating drop down menus in the fields where it's applicable. The Meeting proposed also coding actions to use for further considerations.
- 3.17 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate the template integrating latest suggestions by Sweden and proposed technical modification of the Excel template **by 9 April 2020**.
- 3.18 The Meeting encouraged to involve national experts in the technical review of the proposed measures to assure best expertise is available for their consideration.
- 3.19 The Meeting took note that the replies should be nationally coordinated and only one filled in template per country provided.
- 3.20 The Meeting agreed to supply replies utilizing the agreed template to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) **by 28 May 2020**.
- 3.21 The Meeting further requested the Secretariat to make a compilation of the replies and discuss them in an online meeting in June 2020.
- 3.22 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the HELCOM Stakeholder Conference and considered the actions of relevance to Agri group proposed at the Conference.
- 3.23 The Meeting took note of the concern that the proposals of the Stakeholder Conference might be set aside from consideration as those proposals do not provide more information than just titles, which is not enough for technical reviewing. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to encourage stakeholders that proposed the measure that scored the highest rank in the prioritization in the conference to submit a full synopsis.

Agenda Item 4 Revision of part 2 of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention

Documents: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5

- 4.1 The Meeting recalled that the following parts have been agreed by the Agri Group (document 4-1):
- Draft Regulation 2 item 3 (agreed in AGRI 7a-2019)
 - Draft Regulation 2 item 6 (agreed in AGRI 7-2019)
 - New paragraph on nutrient recycling (agreed in general in AGRI 7a-2019, pending study reservation by Poland on bullet points 4 and 5).
- 4.2 The Meeting also recalled that according to the timeframe agreed by HOD 54-2018, the revision is to be accomplished by the end of 2020.
- 4.3 The Meeting took note of the Polish comments on the revision of Annex III part 2 (document 4-2).
- 4.4 The Meeting took note of the comments by European Commission (document 4-4).
- 4.5 The Meeting pointed out that scientific justification of the deviation from the regulation, proposed by the EU, requires clarification as the procedure for such justification is not set.
- 4.6 The Meeting also discussed the practical application of climate conditions to regulate P rate proposed by the EU for the regulation 2 item 7, noting an example how to account this factor based on e.g. amount of grass harvest per year and consequently uptake of nutrients by plants.
- 4.7 The Meeting took note of the position of CCB that any deviations/derogations in regulation 2 item 7 are considered as weakening of the current regulation.
- 4.8 The Meeting took note that from the Danish point of view there is no need for multi-year calculation of P application rate in the Annex to the Convention but instead countries can develop national regulatory systems, which would justify the phosphorus application rate in accordance with the provisions of the last paragraph of the proposed draft regulation 2 item 7.

- 4.9 The Meeting took note of the information by CCB regarding [the scientific research article](#) on P content in soils in the Baltic Sea region countries, including Poland, that does not support the argument that Polish soils are P deficient.
- 4.10 The Meeting also took note that Poland possesses scientific expertise on phosphorus and organic matter content in soils justifying Polish position regarding the P application rate calculation on the basis of multi-year-period. Poland argued that although not all soils in Poland are P deficient, a significant part of agricultural land in this country is characterised by soil with low content of P and organic matter (as stated in document 4-2), and they should be taken into account.
- 4.11 The Meeting pointed out that the Annex to the Helsinki Convention is not a communication tool for framers but general regulation for the Governments of Contracting Parties to the Convention to develop national legal requirements.
- 4.12 The Meeting took note that Latvia supports the 5-year average for P applications since Latvia has P deficit soils and stricter limitations to P applied from manure could stimulate the use of mineral fertilizers.
- 4.13 The Meeting took note of the position of Estonia that the 5-year average of P regulation has been already applied in the country.
- 4.14 The Meeting recalled that the Helsinki Convention has the full right to develop its own regulations that are different to EU regulations and that the EU is one of the equal Contracting Parties to the Convention.
- 4.15 The Meeting also recalled that the Baltic Sea is still heavily affected by eutrophication, that P losses to the Baltic Sea are still exceeding the limits and that agriculture is the major contributor to the phosphorus load to the sea. It clearly justifies the need of strong phosphorus regulation for all Contracting Parties.
- 4.16 The Meeting also acknowledged that all countries have soils with high and poor content of phosphorus and several countries see that the proposed regulation 2 item 7 gives enough flexibility to countries to develop national regulatory system justifying the required application rate taking into account specific local conditions.
- 4.17 The Meeting encouraged Contracting Parties to discuss nationally any suggestions to find compromise on the regulation 2 item 7 and discuss them at the next meeting of the Annex drafting group. The Chair reminded the parties of the agreed timetable for the revision and urged them to seek compromise for the revision of Regulation 2 Item 7 noting that since the current positions by CPs are so far apart, it is likely that the Regulation 2 Item 7 will remain unchanged.
- 4.18 The Meeting took note of the suggestion for revised text for the new paragraph on nutrient recycling by Finland (document 4-5).
- 4.19 The Meeting took note that Poland supports the new proposal and suggests deleting bullet point 5, which is already covered by bullet point 3.
- 4.20 The Meeting took note that Denmark questions the relevance of the term “organic fertilizer product” that could be replaced with “recycled organic fertilizer” and has the view that the proposal “to development of national plan to implement nutrient recycling strategy” might be considered as an additional administrative burden when the main goals should be implementing the strategy and not only planning for it.
- 4.21 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the term “organic fertilizer product” is used to support creating the market for organic fertilizers and to facilitate recycling of nutrients.
- 4.22 The Meeting pointed out that the bullet point on creating a national plan for the implementation of the strategy could be more preferably placed as an action for the updated BSAP.

4.23 The Meeting invited Finland to look into replacing the term “nutrient rich biomasses” with the term “organic residual material” that is already used in the Annex and for which an explanation can be found in the draft glossary.

4.24 The Meeting invited Contracting Parties to provide written comments on the new version of the paragraph on nutrient recycling **by 30 April 2020** to lead country Finland (marja-liisa.tapio-bistrom@mmm.fi and sonja.pyykkonen@ym.fi) with a copy to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi). The Meeting invited Finland to compile the proposals and submit an updated version of the paragraph on nutrient recycling to the drafting group on the Annex revision.

4.25 The Meeting agreed that the new paragraph will be further discussed at the drafting group for the Annex revision.

4.26 The Meeting took note of the preliminary working draft of the glossary of terms (document 4-3).

4.27 The Meeting recalled that the glossary only contains terms that have been used in the Annex. If a term should be changed, it should be changed in the Annex text.

4.28 The Meeting discussed the draft glossary taking note

- that the explanation of inorganic fertilizer in the draft glossary should not exclude it being of organic origin
- of the proposal to use more round (e.g. DM-limits of 10% or 15%) values and to order terms by themes and not in alphabetical order.

4.29 The Meeting took note that Germany volunteered to send a suggestion on how to order terms by themes to the lead country Denmark (wibch@mfvm.dk) **by 15 April 2020**.

4.30 The Meeting invited also all other Contracting Parties to provide written comments to the lead country Denmark (wibch@mfvm.dk) **by 15 April 2020** and invited Denmark to update the glossary and submit it to the next meeting of the drafting group.

4.31 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of the drafting group on the Annex revision will be held online on 13 May 2020, 10.00 EET.

Agenda Item 5 Development of national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure

Documents: None

5.1 The Meeting took note of the status of the draft Recommendation on the use of national manure standards under Agenda Item 2.

Agenda Item 6 Nutrient recycling

Documents: 6-1

6.1 The Meeting took note of the Notes from the HELCOM workshop on nutrient recycling measures held on 5-6 February 2020 in Helsinki, Finland and of the list of measures that was the result of the workshop (document 6-1).

6.2 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to make a proposal of the measures that would be most suitable for HELCOM.

6.3 The Meeting agreed that the aim is to find under each objective of the strategy a measure that could be included in the updated BSAP.

6.4 The Meeting pointed out that some measures might be already implemented in some countries, which might influence the prioritization of measures by experts from these countries.

6.5 The Meeting agreed that a general guidance for prioritization of measures is to be given.

6.6 The Meeting discussed criteria for prioritization of measures. As general guidance, the Meeting suggested that the measures should be considered from the point of view of relevance to achieve objectives, but the approach is to be pragmatic. It is difficult to expect proper analysis of cost-efficiency of measures, but economic and technical feasibility is to be taken into account. Nominated experts should be in the position to consider measures from the point of view of agriculture as the major consumer of recycled nutrients. The experts in wastewater management sector are also to be involved.

6.7 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to nominate one expert on agriculture and one expert on wastewater management and coordinate the nomination nationally with the Agri and Pressure group representatives.

6.8 The Meeting agreed on the following timetable

- Proposal of the measures most suitable for HELCOM by the Secretariat **by 30 April 2020**
- Nomination of national experts to Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) **by 30 April 2020**
- Prioritization of measures by experts by **29 May 2020**
- Drafting group meeting to discuss and agree on the prioritized measures in June 2020

6.9 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to launch a doodle poll to identify the date for the drafting group meeting.

6.10 The Meeting took note of the first draft of the contents of the strategy.

Agenda Item 7 Transfer of knowledge and technology and exchange of good examples

7.1 Innovative water management

Documents: none

7.1 The Meeting agreed to postpone the discussion under Agenda Item 7.1 to the next meeting of the group.

7.2 Best available technology in animal farming

Documents: none

7.2 The Meeting agreed to postpone the discussion under Agenda Item 7.2 to the next meeting of the group.

7.3 National measures to mitigate atmospheric emissions from agriculture

Documents: none

7.3 The Meeting agreed to postpone the discussion under Agenda Item 7.3 to the next meeting of the group.

7.4 Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures

Documents: none

7.4 The Meeting agreed to postpone the discussion under Agenda Item 7.4 to the next meeting of the group.

Agenda Item 8 Future work

Documents: none

8.1 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of the group will be organized on 4-5 November 2020 and welcomed the offer by Sweden to accommodate the meeting in Uppsala.

8.2 The Meeting also welcomed the offer by Denmark to host the Agri group meeting in Copenhagen in 2021 or later, depending on the exact timing.

8.3 The Meeting invited Estonia to provide information on provisional time to lift their study reservation on the draft Recommendation on the use of nutrient standards.

Agenda Item 9 Any other business

Documents: 9-1, 9-2

9.1 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties and Observers to check the list of contact of the Agri group (document 9-1) and inform the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) of possible changes.

9.2 The Meeting took note of the "[The Baltic Shadow Plan: For the future of the Baltic Sea. NGO's key asks for the revised BSAP](#)" jointly prepared by WWF and CCB. The Meeting took note of the invitation by CCB to acquaint with the document and that HELCOM 41-2020 agreed that the document should be put forward to the HELCOM Working Groups for further consideration in the light of the BSAP update.

9.3 The Meeting took note of the changes in the contact lists of Denmark and Poland.

Agenda Item 10 Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 10-1

10.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of AGRI 9-2020 as contained in document 10-1.

10.2 The Outcome of the Meeting was finalized by the Secretariat and made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal.

Annex 2. Rephrasing of HELCOM actions

Joint actions

Partly accomplished joint actions

Action	Comments from AGRI 7-2019	Categorization/Need for rephrasing
<p>Review and update part II of Annex III of the Helsinki Convention, in order to better serve the purposes of reaching good environmental status (GES)</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: Joint Status: Partly accomplished</p>	<p>The revision is ongoing and thus this action is still partly accomplished</p>	<p>1</p> <p>If the action will not be implemented by 2021 it will be transferred to the updated BSAP as it is.</p>
<p>Develop guidelines/recommendation on the use of standards for nutrient content in manure</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: Joint Status: Partly accomplished</p>	<p>The development of the recommendation is ongoing and thus this action is still partly accomplished</p>	<p>1</p> <p>If the action will not be implemented by 2021 it will be transferred to the updated BSAP as it is.</p>

National actions

Partly accomplished national actions

Action	Comments from AGRI 7-2019	Categorization/Need for rephrasing
<p>Apply as a minimum the updated EU's BREF document and Conclusions on BAT for intensive rearing of poultry and pigs, especially for the facilities located within areas critical to nutrient losses</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (7/9 countries)</p>	<p>EU BREF has been released and Russia has introduced legislation on BAT. In the reporting, it should be taken into account that the action does not refer only to areas critical to nitrogen losses but also phosphorus.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>If the action will not be implemented by 2021 it will be transferred to the updated BSAP as it is.</p>
<p>Revised palette of measures for reducing phosphorus and nitrogen losses from agriculture. Optional agro-environmental measures to be implemented through corresponding international and national instruments</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (3/9 countries)</p>	<p>The group has made a compilation of the implementation of palette of measures and discussed it in AGRI 5-2017 and AGRI 6-2018. The compilation can be used for reporting. The revision of the palette of measures could be considered as an action to the updated BSAP.</p>	<p>2-3</p> <p>Lead country: Denmark</p> <p>Suggestion for rephrasing: <i>Review national regulation and voluntary measures and – if relevant – implement further or revised measures, as compiled in the revised palette of measures for reducing phosphorus and nitrogen losses from agriculture. [Optional agro-</i></p>

Action	Comments from AGRI 7-2019	Categorization/Need for rephrasing
		<i>environmental measures to be implemented through corresponding international and national instruments]</i>
<p>Establish national guidelines or standards for nutrient content in manure with the view to fully utilize nutrient content of manure in fertilization practices and to avoid overfertilization</p> <p>Origin: BSAP, MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (5/9 countries)</p>	<p>The group suggested that the Manure Standards project will make an overview on the implementation of this action for consideration by AGRI 8-2019. The group acknowledged that it is even more important to implement the standards than to establish them and suggested that implementing the standards could be an action to updated BSAP.</p>	<p>2-3 Lead: Manure Standards project to rephrase taking into account the draft Recommendation</p> <p>The draft Recommendation recommends to establish and update national standards and advices how they should be implemented. The action is proposed to be set aside when the Recommendation is adopted.</p>
<p>Aim for elimination of remaining [agriculture] Hot Spots under the HELCOM JCP</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished</p>	<p>There is an established procedure in place to report on this action to Pressure WG. Agri group could provide support in evaluating suggestions to remove agricultural hot spots.</p>	<p>2 Lead: Secretariat The discussion goes on in PRESSURE on the future of the action in general.</p>
<p>Implement and enforce the provisions of part 2 of Annex III "Prevention of pollution from agriculture" of the 1992 Helsinki Convention</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (4/9 countries)</p>	<p>The Meeting suggested to clarify that all the regulations and items in the Annex need to be implemented and should be reflected individually in the reporting in 2020. The Meeting clarified also that the reporting is likely to be done on the current annex since the revision is still ongoing.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Enhance the recycling of phosphorus (especially in agriculture and wastewater treatment) and to promote development of appropriate methodology</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (3/9 countries)</p>	<p>The following criterion for accomplishment of this action was suggested: existing national strategy or other national policy setting a target for P recycling and a target year to achieve it. Targets could include substitution of mineral fertilizers or use of P from waste water sector etc.</p>	<p>3 the action will likely be rephrased as part of the work on the Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy</p>
<p>Agreement on national level on measures to reduce nutrient surplus in fertilization practices to reach nutrient balanced fertilization</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (5/9 countries)</p>	<p>The following criterion for accomplishment of this action was suggested: existing national policies setting targets to reduce nutrient surpluses and/or nutrient losses, possibly with link to water quality. The Meeting suggested to reformulate the action to the updated BSAP to focus on reducing nutrient losses.</p>	<p>3 Lead: Secretariat Suggestion for rephrasing: <i>Agreement on national level by 2023 on measures to reduce nutrient surplus in fertilization practices to reduce nutrient losses</i></p>

Action	Comments from AGRI 7-2019	Categorization/Need for rephrasing
<p>Promote and advance towards applying annual nutrient accounting at farm level, taking into account soil and climate conditions, in areas critical to nutrient losses as a first step and with an aim to apply it region-wise</p> <p>Origin: MD2013 Implementation: National Status: Partly accomplished (4/9 countries)</p>	<p>The following criteria for accomplishment of this action were suggested: existing national guidelines on nutrient accounting (fertilization planning and/or nutrient balances) of both nitrogen and phosphorus as a minimum (as more advanced systems might be also established)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>The action could be included as part of the Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy but make it stronger and add "implement".</p>

Rephrasing of actions previously considered too general for follow-up

Action	Comments by AGRI 7-2019	Transfer to updated BSAP (yes/no) and need for rephrasing
<p>Make use of appropriate policy and economic instruments as well as economic levies and incentives, in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs</p> <p>Origin: MD 2013</p>	<p>This is an important tool to advance the implementation of agri-environmental measures. The action should be made more precise and could be considered in the updated BSAP if it would be reformulated.</p>	<p>Yes, 3</p> <p>Lead country: Germany</p> <p>Suggestion for rephrasing: <i>[Implementation of mineral fertiliser taxes/charges and/or nitrogen surplus taxes/charges building on the experiences available in various countries, in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs]</i> <i><u>DK, PL and SE to send proposals for rephrasing to lead country DE. DE to make a new proposal based on input from DK, PL and SE.</u></i></p>
<p>Apply innovative water management measures, in particular under difficult soil conditions, to ensure that upgrading and renovation of the agricultural drainage systems aim at reducing nutrient concentrations in the outlets of the adjacent catchment</p> <p>Origin: MD 2013</p>	<p>The action could be considered to include in the updated BSAP and taking into account the results of the WATERDRIVE project.</p>	<p>Yes, 2</p> <p>Drainage issue is important and climate change makes the situation more demanding. In the rephrasing at least the reference to "difficult soil conditions" could be removed.</p> <p>Lead: WATERDRIVE project</p> <p>Suggestion for rephrasing: <i>Apply innovative water management measures, <u>for example, lime filter ditches, sediment traps and controlled drainage, and nature-based solutions, such as two-level ditches</u></i></p>

Action	Comments by AGRI 7-2019	Transfer to updated BSAP (yes/no) and need for rephrasing
		<p><i><u>and constructed wetlands</u>, to ensure that upgrading and renovation of the agricultural drainage systems aim at reducing nutrient <u>loss concentrations from in the outlets of the adjacent catchment</u></i></p> <p><i><u>FI and BSAG to contact WATERDRIVE project</u></i></p>
<p>Address the need for additional measures within transportation, combustion and agriculture (as the three major sources of atmospheric emissions of nitrogen these sectors) with the aim to ensure a Baltic-wide application of uniform standards</p> <p>Origin: MD 2010</p>	<p><i>The action has not previously been considered by the Agri group. Pressure group suggested that the action could be rephrased by the Agri group considering the ongoing discussion on mitigating ammonia emissions from agriculture and the revision of Recommendation 24-3.</i></p>	<p>Yes, 3</p> <p>Lead countries: Sweden and Germany (in Pressure group)</p> <p>Pressure group was of the opinion that emissions from agriculture should be addressed separately and invited Agri group to propose action as the HELCOM body with the best expertise on the matter.</p> <p><i><u>SE and DE to make a proposal and coordinate with national Pressure group representatives</u></i></p>



Outcome of the Dedicated Meeting of the Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9a-2020)

Introduction

0.1 The Dedicated Meeting of the HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (AGRI 9a-2020) was held online on 14 May 2020.

0.2 All the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention, except for European Union and Lithuania, attended the Meeting, as well as Observers from Baltic Sea Action Group, BFFE and CCB. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was moderated by the Secretariat. Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky and Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, from the HELCOM Secretariat acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1

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

Agenda Item 2 Rephrasing of HELCOM actions

Documents: 2-1, 2-1-Rev.1, 2-2

2.1 The Meeting recalled that The HELCOM Working Groups were tasked to consider tentative needs for rephrasing of existing HELCOM actions from the Baltic Sea Action Plan and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013 that are not likely implemented by 2021 and that these actions will be transferred to the updated BSAP as they are, or they will be rephrased as found needed by the Working Groups. The Meeting further recalled that AGRI 9-2020 agreed on the tentative formulations for some of the actions to be included in the updated BSAP and invited the lead countries to submit new proposals for the rephrasing of the actions that had not yet been agreed on.

2.2 The Meeting considered the suggestions for rephrasing of actions (document 2-1-Rev.1).

2.3 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Denmark and Germany to share with the group studies and experiences on economic incentives to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture.

2.4 The Meeting took note of the comments by CCB on rephrasing of action as presented in document 2-2. The Meeting welcomed the proposals and invited CCB to submit ideas for new actions for the updated BSAP in the form of synopses to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi) as soon as possible to make them available for discussion on new actions in the BSAP UP workshops.

2.5 The Meeting took note of the comments made by PRESSURE 12a-2020 on the action "Address the need for additional measures within transportation, combustion and agriculture (as the three major sources of atmospheric emissions of nitrogen these sectors) with the aim to ensure a Baltic wide application of uniform standards".

2.6 The Meeting agreed on the tentative formulations for actions to be included in the updated BSAP (**Annex 2**).

Agenda Item 3 Any other business

Agenda Item 4 Documents: None

4.1 The Meeting agreed that the Meeting of the Agri group dedicated to the technical review of synopses (AGRI 9b-2020) will be organized on 12 June 2020 at 9 CEST/10 EEST – 12 CEST/13 EEST.

Agenda Item 5 Outcome of the Meeting

5.1 A draft outcome was prepared by the Secretariat and adopted via correspondence.

Annex 2. Rephrasing of actions

Original action	Proposal for rephrased action agreed by AGRI 9a-2020	Comments received prior to AGRI 9a-2020
<p>Make use of appropriate policy and economic instruments as well as economic levies and incentives, in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs</p> <p>Origin: MD 2013</p>	<p>Lead country: Germany <u>Investigate opportunities for implement taxation of</u> mineral fertiliser taxes/charges and/or <u>taxation of</u> nitrogen surplus taxes/charges and/or payments for agri-environment measures <u>[by 2024], and implement them</u> building on the experiences available in various countries, when revising policy and economic instruments in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs.</p>	<p>EE: Implement Study* mineral fertiliser taxes/charges and/or nitrogen surplus taxes/charges and/or payments for agri-environment measures, and building on the experiences available in various countries, when revising policy and economic instruments in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs.</p> <p>*„study“ could be as well „make an inventory of“. It would mean that we study which tax-related techniques exist in the Baltic Sea countries or wherever they exist, make a proper inventory and publish it.</p> <p>Explanations: At present, the implementation of the tax at national level is very unlikely and there is no overview of other practices on which this approach could be built at all. First we need to do background work and then we can talk about the next possible steps.</p> <p>BFFE: When it comes to the first action we would like to make a rephrasing proposal to use word “Study” instead of “Implement”. And regarding taxes/charges of mineral fertilizers and/or nitrogen surplus we see the need for an overview of the best practices of other countries. In the BSR experiences of fertilizer tax only exists in Sweden who used from 1983 until 2010 and then removed it, because lack of efficiency for the Baltic Sea and for causing damage to farmers competitiveness. So it is unclear on who else experience this approach should be built on. Also implementation of mineral fertilizer tax or nitrogen surplus tax <i>at national level</i> is rather unlikely. Therefore we feel that before talking about implementation the preliminary work should be done, i.e. gather knowledge on existing practices and thorough impact assessment of implementation of the taxes/charges (incl socio-economic assessment).</p> <p><u>So the proposal would read:</u> “Implement Study mineral fertiliser taxes/charges and/or nitrogen surplus taxes/charges and/or payments for agri-environment measures, and building on the experiences available in various countries, when revising policy and economic instruments in order to minimize nutrient losses in agriculture and thus contribute to keeping the nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea below the Maximum Allowable Inputs.”</p>

		<p><i>*Here the word “study” could also be replaced with “make an inventory of” (like inventory of best practices).</i></p>
<p>Address the need for additional measures within transportation, combustion and agriculture (as the three major sources of atmospheric emissions of nitrogen these sectors) with the aim to ensure a Baltic-wide application of uniform standards</p> <p>Origin: MD 2010</p>	<p>Lead countries: Germany and Sweden HELCOM Contracting Parties will <u>continue to</u> reduce the deposition of atmospheric nitrogen on the Baltic Sea through the implementation of the national nitrogen reduction commitments of the Gothenburg Protocol and the EU NEC-Directive 2016/2284 for those HELCOM CPs that are also EU Member States. In the implementation, HELCOM CPs will ensure that measures taken in transportation, combustion and agriculture are tailored <u>to contribute to to have the maximum effect concerning</u> the reduction of the nitrogen deposition on the Baltic Sea.</p> <p>The HELCOM Recommendation 24/3 on “Measures aimed at the reduction of emissions and discharges from agriculture” is currently undergoing revision to ensure that ammonia emissions from agriculture are reduced.</p>	<p><i>The action is also considered by PRESSURE 12a-2020 on 14 May.</i></p> <p>DK: <i>In the implementation, HELCOM CPs will ensure that measures taken in transportation, combustion and agriculture <u>are tailored to also contributing to have the maximum effect concerning</u> the reduction of the nitrogen deposition onto the Baltic Sea.</i> (or something similar)</p> <p>The reasoning behind the proposed change is that basically all “air pollution mitigation measures” first of all aim at mitigating harmful effects on human health, so that we cannot agree that all measures in “transportation, combustion and agriculture” are maximized with respect to reducing N deposition to the sea, disregarding the focus on human health benefits. We do believe however that is possible to tailor measures in a way, so that both beneficiary effects (on human health and for the Baltic Sea) are considered and can hence serve multiple purposes.</p> <p>EE: <i>HELCOM Contracting Parties will <u>continue to</u> reduce the deposition of atmospheric nitrogen onto the Baltic Sea <u>region</u> through the implementation of the national nitrogen reduction commitments of the Gothenburg Protocol and the EU NEC-Directive 2016/2284 for those HELCOM CPs that are also EU Member States. In the implementation, HELCOM CPs will ensure that measures taken in transportation, combustion and agriculture are tailored to have the maximum effect concerning the <u>for the</u> reduction of the nitrogen deposition onto the Baltic Sea <u>region</u>.</i></p> <p>Explanations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) “continue to ” means that we parties already have taken actions under Gothenburg Protocol and NEC Directive and are continuing with them 2) We would like to add that while referring to atmospheric precipitation then we talk about the whole region, not just the sea?! Nitrogen falls from the air to both the sea and the earth, so we would specify it with the word 'region'. 3) In addition, we would delete 'in the implementation' at the beginning of the second sentence because it is not clear what the implementation is referring to, apparently the NEC directive and protocol but it remains somewhat confusing. The sentence works without it. 4) In the second sentence we would delete 'to have the maximum effect', because no one knows or can actually define what this maximum effect is and whether it is also the best solution. The maximum effect on the reduction of precipitated nitrogen is that the amount of precipitated nitrogen is zero, ie that nothing precipitates. That's not what we mean. But since the idea remains the same without it, we don't think it's necessary. <p>BFFE: Regarding the second action. Farmers in all countries in the Baltic Sea region also have the National Air Pollution Control Programmes (under NEC directive), which covers the agricultural NH3</p>

		<p>emissions. But when we talk about deposition of atmospheric nitrogen then we refer to whole region not just precipitation to the sea (nitrogen is deposited to both land and sea), it should be taken into account. And in the second sentence there is wording “to have maximum effect concerning the” here we would propose to remove that, as the maximum effect can not be defined (maximum effect should mean that the effect of reduction measures lead to zero nitrogen precipitation), also it wouldn’t change the meaning of the sentence.</p> <p><u>Taken it into account, we propose following changes:</u> HELCOM Contracting Parties will <u>continue to</u> reduce the deposition of atmospheric nitrogen <u>on</u> the Baltic Sea <u>region</u> through the implementation of the national nitrogen reduction commitments of the Gothenburg Protocol and the EU NEC-Directive 2016/2284 for those HELCOM CPs that are also EU Member States. In the implementation, HELCOM CPs will ensure that measures taken in transportation, combustion and agriculture are tailored to have the maximum effect concerning the <u>for the</u> reduction of the nitrogen deposition onto the Baltic Sea <u>region</u>.</p> <p><i>*In the first sentence “continue to” could be added, which would indicate that parties already have taken and are taking actions under Gothenburg Protocol and NEC Directive.</i></p>
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