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<b>Document title</b>	Outcome of PRESSURE 13-2020
<b>Code</b>	6-29
<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	6 - Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups
<b>Submission date</b>	17.11.2020
<b>Submitted by</b>	Executive Secretary
<b>Reference</b>	

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## Background

The Thirteenth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 13-2020) was held online, on 13-16 October 2020. All Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention attended the Meeting. Observers from CCB, BFFE, FEAP, EurEau, OSPAR, Race for the Baltic, ICES, KIMO International and WWF as well as invited guest from Baltic Nest Institute (BNI) and the Data Consultants from EMEP MSC-W and EMEP MSC-E also attended the Meeting.

This document contains the Outcome of PRESSURE 13-2020. The complete Outcome including all Annexes can be found [here](#). Matters requiring specific action by HOD 59-2020 are outlined below.

Please note that the following issues will be considered in separate documents:

- 6-2 Draft update of HELCOM Recommendation 23/5;
- 6-3 Draft HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise;
- 6-7 Update of the HELCOM Guidelines for Management of Dredged Material at Sea;
- 6-8 New soundscape maps for the development of the continuous noise section in HOLAS III;
- 6-23 Progress in the development of the risk assessment framework for internal nutrient reserve management;
- 6-24 HELCOM core indicator on inputs of nutrients for period 1995-2018;
- 6-27 Proposal for deletion of JCP hot-spot No 42: Rīga WWTP;
- 6-28 Proposal for regional wide-scope screening of hazardous substances.

Please also note that all issues related to the updating of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) will be discussed under Agenda Item 5 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- Agree on the proposed workplan to revise the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML) (c.f. paragraph 4.7);
- Agree to start the work on the development of a new HELCOM Recommendation on EPS and XPS (c.f. paragraphs 4.11-4.13);
- Approve publication of the report of the ACTION project WP4.2 on sufficiency of the EU WFD targets for individual rivers basins to achieve the BSAP goals in the HELCOM BSAP (c.f. paragraphs 7.12-7.17, [document 7-2](#));

- Approve the Work Plan for the HELCOM Pressure Working Group for 2021-2022 as contained in Annex 3 of the Outcome (c.f. paragraph 12.2);
- Approve that PRESSURE 14-2021 will be held in the week 13 to 16 April 2021 and PRESSURE 15-2021 in the week 1 to 5 November 2021 (c.f. paragraphs 12.4-12.5).



## Outcome of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (HELCOM PRESSURE 13-2020)

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# Outcome of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (HELCOM PRESSURE 13-2020)

## Introduction

0.1 In accordance with the decisions by PRESSURE 12-2020 (Outcome, Paragraph 12.1) and HOD 57-2019 (Outcome, Paragraph 4.19), the Thirteenth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 13-2020) was held online, on 13-16 October 2020.

0.2 All Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention attended the Meeting. Observers from Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), Baltic Farmers' Forum on Environment (BFFE), the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP), European Federation of National Associations of Water and Wastewater Services (EurEau), OSPAR, Race for the Baltic, International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), KIMO International and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as well as invited guest from Baltic Nest Institute (BNI) and the Data Consultants from EMEP MSC-W and EMEP MSC-E also attended the Meeting. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Lars Sonesten, Chair of the Pressure Group. Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, assisted by Ms. Laura Kaikkonen, Ms. Marta Ruiz and Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, from the HELCOM Secretariat acted as secretary of the Meeting.

## Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

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

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

1.2 The Meeting took note that contracting parties had no time for proper national consultations on some decision documents, given the extremely large number of these documents and late submission of some of them. Thus, some routine documents will need extended deadlines in order to be considered. The deadlines for consideration of these documents will be agreed when they are considered in accordance with the agenda of the Meeting.

1.3 The Meeting took note that due to ongoing reorganization in the Government of Poland, the representatives of Poland in the working group temporarily do not have a mandate to decide on political issues.

## Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from other HELCOM work

Documents: 2-1

2.1 The Meeting took note of the extracts from the outcomes of meetings of relevance to the work of the Pressure Working Group (**document 2-1**).

## Agenda Item 3 Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

Documents: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-6, 3-7, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 3-11, 3-12, 3-13, 3-14

3.1 The Meeting took note of the updated Work Plan for the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (**document 3-1**).

3.2 The Meeting took note of the information that the Science Agenda report and its associated comprehensive inventory of HELCOM knowledge and research needs will be made available by 30 October 2020 (**document 3-13**).

3.3 The Meeting considered the preliminary results of the analysis of sufficiency of measures for topics of relevance to the Working Group, including hazardous substances, marine litter, eutrophication,

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underwater noise, and loss and disturbance to seabed (benthic habitats) as presented by the Secretariat (**document 3-4** and [presentation 1](#)).

3.4 The Meeting took note of the results of the validation of input data to the SOM analysis.

3.5 The Meeting took note that some Contracting Parties were unable to respond to the request for data validation due to the short time frame given (4 weeks). The Meeting took note that most comments were sent by individual experts.

3.6 The Meeting took note of the preliminary results of the analysis of sufficiency of measures as presented by the Secretariat (**document 3-4**).

3.7 The Meeting thanked the SOM team for the work done.

3.8 The Meeting took note that the presented SOM analysis results are preliminary and that the final results will be submitted to HOD 59-2020 in December 2020.

3.9 The Meeting took note of the suggestion by Denmark regarding the use of the SOM analysis in the BSAP update that uncertainty of the results of the SOM analysis should be reflected and that only results of significance should be further used.

3.10 The Meeting took note of the position of Germany that the results of the SOM analysis show altogether interesting and plausible results and they indicate, as expected, that the existing measures are not sufficient to achieve GES for the Baltic Sea. Beyond this, Germany sees little added value for the BSAP review process. It remains unclear how the different needs for additional measures in different areas/basins of the Baltic Sea could be used in the updated BSAP, since the actions specified there are not area specific.

3.11 The Meeting discussed alternative ways of visualizing the results and suggested exploring other ways of visualization. The Meeting further discussed including the number of experts who responded in the figures illustrating the required pressure reductions.

3.12 The Meeting proposed that the presentation of the results should reflect the amount and quality of the underlying data, and that qualitative and semi-quantitative presentation formats should also be considered.

3.13 The Meeting took note that information on the linkage between the input of nutrients and effects of eutrophication will be added to the final version of the topic report. The Meeting suggested to refer to the HELCOM TARGREV report.

3.14 The Meeting took note that the SOM analysis estimates the effects of existing measures to the pressures and states in 2016-2030/2035.

3.15 The Meeting took note that although an EU GES threshold for beach litter has been developed, it will not be possible to include it in the SOM analysis at this stage. It is proposed to include this in further analyses, if the application for EMFF financing is approved.

3.16 The Meeting agreed that additional comments on the preliminary results of the SOM analysis can be sent by 23 October to the Secretariat (heini.ahtiainen@helcom.fi, luke.dodd@helcom.fi). The Meeting also took note that the work on the SOM analysis has to be accomplished by the end of 2020 and although all comments from HELCOM groups will be considered and taken into account as much as possible, it might not be possible to fully address every comment received in the presentation of the results.

3.17 The Meeting took note of the methodology and progress of the cost-effectiveness analysis (**document 3-5**).

3.18 The Meeting took note of the clarification that cost estimates have been provided by Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden. Also, Poland and Denmark have planned to provide this information. Poland is currently compiling the data on cost estimates and will provide them by 23 October. Denmark informed that national cost estimates are not yet ready.

3.19 The Meeting took note of the opinion of the SOM team that cost estimates can be transferred across countries by making necessary adjustments, e.g. for exchange rates and income levels.

3.20 The Meeting took note that OSPAR HASEC is highly interested in the information on the results of the SOM and cost-effectiveness analysis and that this information could be presented to OSPAR HASEC in spring 2021.

#### *Drafting of the updated BSAP*

3.21 The Meeting took note of the detailed plan for drafting of the updated BSAP and the preliminary timetable ([presentation 2](#), [document 3-2](#)).

3.22 The Meeting took note that, according to the current BSAP update timetable, autumn meetings are the only opportunities for HELCOM WGs to consider the preambles and that further work will be continued by the DG BSAP and its expert drafting teams DG BSAP-BIO, -EUTRO and -HZ.

3.23 The Meeting took note of the first draft of introduction to the eutrophication segment of the updated BSAP ([document 3-3](#)), as presented by the Secretariat.

3.24 The Meeting took note of the following comments on the eutrophication preamble:

- the draft contains many repetitions, text should be more concise and consolidated;
- references to some policies are missing e.g. MSFD, convention of the Gothenburg protocol (UNECE CLRTAP);
- the role of scrubbers and NECA is to be clarified as application of scrubbers mainly concerns sulphur emissions reductions;
- clauses containing key messages (e.g. on non-deterioration) are to be moved from annex to the main part of the preamble;
- emphasis is to be on achieving national input ceilings but not on the MAI, the input ceilings are to be included in the main part of the preamble;
- the originally agreed target year 2021 for achieving GES in terms of input of nutrients is to be mentioned;
- shares of inputs from different sources are to be reflected;
- too much attention is paid to internal nutrient load while the section related to the impact of climate change should be expanded;
- the paragraph on the time lag is to be further elaborated using the outcome of the ACTION project;
- propose including a short paragraph noting what HELCOM has achieved and what it proposes to do

3.25 The Meeting took note of the position of Germany that a lot of effort has been put into developing the text for the HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme and that it would be preferable to include it in the main text and not as an annex. The Meeting also took note that agreeing on an ambitious nutrient reduction scheme without any footnote solutions is one of the priorities of the German Chairmanship of HELCOM 2020-2022 and therefore Germany requested to be notified of any scientific or political reservations Contracting Parties might have relating in particular to the acceptance of the NICs. .

3.26 The Meeting took note of the general reservation by Denmark on the text of the eutrophication segment.

3.27 The Meeting took note of the general study reservation by Estonia on the proposed nutrient input reduction scheme and particularly on the reference to the polluter pays principle since the proportional reduction approach if the shares between the natural background and anthropogenic inputs are not considered does not follow this principle.

- 3.28 The Meeting was of the view that the current structure of the preambles makes integration of the nutrient input reduction scheme challenging.
- 3.29 The Meeting noted that the key for the success of the new BSAP is agreement on the environmental and management targets.
- 3.30 The Meeting took note that Russia requested to integrate a paragraph in the Nutrient Input Reduction Scheme indicating that the countries are striving to achieve the integrated nutrient input ceilings and free to select where measures are to be applied. The exact wording was agreed on at HOD 58-2020.
- 3.31 The Meeting took note of the first draft of introduction to the hazardous substances & marine litter segment of the updated BSAP (document 3-3), as presented by the Secretariat.
- 3.32 The Meeting took note of the following comments:
- combining hazardous substances and marine litter in one section makes the text difficult to read, thus some additional structuring (e.g. sub-headings) should be integrated. More specific aspects of HELCOM work are to be reflected in the part dedicated to hazardous substances but not only pharmaceuticals (e.g. screening campaign);
  - submerged munitions and dangerous wrecks should be also mentioned in the preamble;
  - the sentence on page 11 ("Among land-based sources, household-related waste, including sanitary waste, are major sources of marine litter as well as micro litter including microplastics.") contains a statement related to the sources of marine litter which should be revised in terms of the role of the household waste.
- 3.33 The Meeting noted that further work to draft the preambles will be carried out in the BSAP UP DG and that the PRESSURE comments will be considered. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to inform participants of the representatives of the segment teams of the BSAP DG.
- 3.34 The Meeting agreed that considering the multiple substantial comments, PRESSURE group was not in the position to endorse the document emphasising that the document requires further drafting.
- 3.35 The Meeting was of the opinion that the results of drafting of the BSAP would benefit from being reviewed by the Working Group.

#### *Actions for the updated BSAP*

- 3.36 The Meeting took note of the existing actions that have been in principle agreed by HOD 58-2020 to be transferred to the updated BSAP (**document 3-7**).
- 3.37 The Meeting was of the opinion that some further drafting related to these existing actions is needed, in particular there are still duplications with new actions as contained in the synopses. The Meeting took note that this drafting will be done in spring by the BSAP DG.
- 3.38 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of the BSAP UP workshops (**document 3-9**).
- 3.39 The Meeting took note of the information set out in the document 3-9 Add.1 on the proposed new actions and existing actions for the updated BSAP of relevance for the Pressure WG.
- 3.40 The Meeting agreed that the agriculture related measures will be considered by AGRI requesting the AGRI group representatives to consult with national PRESSURE group contacts, especially, regarding measures which are not supported for inclusion in the updated BSAP.
- 3.41 The Meeting took note that Sweden proposed also to prioritize the actions and elaborate them to their final formulation before submission to HODs. The Meeting also took note that Sweden places a general reservation on all measures until thorough legal and economic analysis is done but can contribute to the drafting at a technical level.
- 3.42 The Meeting took note that Denmark places a general reservation on all measures until national consultations are accomplished.

- 3.43 The Meeting noted that Germany will contribute to the discussion on a technical level but has no political mandate yet concerning the synopses. Germany also suggested that the workshop results are to be fully utilized in the consideration.
- 3.44 The Meeting took note that Finland is in the process of national consultations, thus places general reservation on all proposed measures.
- 3.45 The Meeting agreed that strategic decisions on marine litter should be included in the updated BSAP while more specific technical measures better fit to the Regional Action Plan on Marine litter. With this in mind, the Meeting noted that some of the proposed new actions for the updated BSAP would be more suitable for the RAP ML.
- 3.46 The Meeting noted several synopses related to dredging/depositing operations at sea and was of the view that EN DREDS should be engaged in the consideration of the actions and provide advice on their inclusion in the updated BSAP. The Meeting also took note of the position that the existing HELCOM Recommendation on the extraction of mineral resources from the sea floor likely requires substantial revision.
- 3.47 The Meeting endorsed the proposed new actions for submission to HOD 59-2020, based on the outcomes of the BSAP workshops as given in the Attachment 1.

#### *New synopses*

- 3.48 The Meeting considered the new actions proposed via synopses submitted after the BSAP UP workshops.
- 3.49 The Meeting considered the proposals by Sweden on the 6 actions on hazardous substances to be included in the updated BSAP (**document 3-10**) and endorsed them as given in the Attachment 2.
- 3.50 The Meeting considered the proposal by Sweden on the Ban on giving away inflated balloons free of charge to be included in the updated BSAP (**document 3-11**) and endorsed the action as given in the Attachment 2.
- 3.51 The Meeting also took note that Denmark welcomed the proposal from Sweden but also found that it was not currently sufficiently substantiated to warrant a full ban.
- 3.52 The Meeting considered a proposed new measure for strengthening collection of obsolete pharmaceuticals from the public in the BSR within the scope of the BSAP update (**document 3-14**) and endorsed it providing comments as given in the Attachment 2.
- 3.53 The Meeting took note of the synopsis on underwater noise from commercial shipping and leisure boating (**document 3-12**) considering the document 3-9.
- 3.54 The Meeting took note that the proposed actions related to nutrient recycling have not been properly considered by countries due to late submission and agreed that written comments will be supplied by Pressure group members to the Secretariat (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi.) by 26 October 2020. The Meeting also encouraged participants to communicate their views with national representatives in the Agri group.
- 3.55 The Meeting also took note that Germany proposed to amend priority measure 5 in the list of actions related to nutrient recycling, mentioning there the need for an appropriate regulatory framework.
- 3.56 The Meeting discussed gaps in the set of actions for the updated BSAP.
- 3.57 The Meeting took note of the proposal to include in the action “Develop a Roadmap for enforcement of the Baltic Sea NOx Emission Control area by [2023]” the goal of NOx reductions by incentives for existing ships, since the NECA regulations only apply to new ships build from 2021 onwards. Application of technologies to clean exhaust gases (SCRs) as well as the use of cleaner fuels can contribute to the reduction of NOx emissions from shipping. A similar proposal was made by Maritime. Germany is prepared, if necessary, to provide the proposal in the format of synopsis.



- 3.58 The Meeting took note that the set of measures related to underwater noise in the updated BSAP is currently missing an action committing to an implementation of mitigation measures in an appropriate place and time to achieve good environmental status.
- 3.59 The Meeting took note that the measures regarding emission sources of hazardous substances are not proposed following a systematic approach. In this respect, the proposal to develop an action plan on hazardous substances can be a solution.
- 3.60 The Meeting took note of the opinion of Sweden that measures addressing internal load should be considered in the updated BSAP. Sweden proposed that IN MINUTS could address the issue.
- 3.61 The Meeting took note that neither Germany nor CCB support having neither technical nor biomanipulative sea-based measures to counteract internal nutrient load in the updated BSAP.
- 3.62 The Meeting also emphasised that the gaps in the proposed measures will be better visible when the whole list of measures proposed for inclusion in the updated BSAP is compiled. Thus, the Group was not in the position to conclude on the sufficiency of the proposed measures to achieve the agreed BSAP goals.
- 3.63 The Meeting invited the Pressure group members to communicate with national Agri group contacts regarding the consideration of the agriculture related synopses when needed.
- 3.64 The Meeting took note that proposals that were not endorsed by any of the HELCOM WGs will be compiled in a list and presented to HOD 59-2020 for information.
- 3.65 The Meeting encouraged group members to provide proposals addressing identified gaps in the format of synopsis.
- 3.66 The Meeting took note that further work on the proposed new actions will take place in DG BSAP and HOD meetings, in line with the BSAP updated workplan.
- 3.67 The Meeting considered the proposal on content and structure of the Annexes for the eutrophication and hazardous substances and litter segments of the updated BSAP (**document 3-6**).
- 3.68 The Meeting took note of the views that the proposed Annexes are too detailed for the updated BSAP and more suitable for the implementation plan. Also proposed inclusion of the rationale and potential effect might inspire an extensive discussion. Thus, the table should contain a minimum of the most relevant information.
- 3.69 The Meeting proposed that the relevant expert groups should be added to the annexes since they will substantially contribute to the work that needs to be undertaken considering the individual actions.
- 3.70 The Meeting took note that CCB fully supports producing an annex to the updated BSAP in the proposed format.
- 3.71 The Meeting also expressed the view that indicators of achievement could be included in the proposed annex only when the actions constituting the updated BSAP are agreed and their implementation is clarified.
- 3.72 The Meeting pointed out that producing the proposed annexes constitutes a substantial workload. Therefore, the Meeting proposed that no work on the annexes would start before HOD 59 agreed on a first list of measures to be included in the updated BSAP. The Meeting also requested the Secretariat to fill the annexes in utilizing information from the synopses.
- 3.73 The Meeting pointed out that the suggested annexes are useful when including the new actions to the HELCOM Explorer web tool to follow up the implementation of the updated BSAP.
- 3.74 The Meeting agreed to return to consideration of the content of the draft annexes after they have been prefilled at PRESSURE 14-2020.
- 3.75 The Meeting took note of the information on the updated version of the HELCOM Explorer as a tool to follow up implementation of HELCOM agreements.
- 3.76 The Meeting considered the accomplishment and status of the joint actions of relevance for Pressure Working Group (**document 3-8**).

3.77 The Meeting took note that some Contracting Parties have already considered the implementation of the actions and agreed that the review of the joint actions will be performed via correspondence inviting contracting parties to provide comments on the implementation status and endorse its evaluation by 6 November 2020 to the Secretariat ([susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi](mailto:susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi)).

3.78 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate the draft evaluation of the implementation status to the Pressure group members right after the Meeting has been closed.

#### **Agenda Item 4 Hazardous substances and marine litter**

Documents: 4-1, 4-2, 4-2 Rev. 1, 4-3, 4-3 Rev.1, 4-4, 4-5, 4-6, 4-7, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-13, 4-14, 4-15, 4-16

##### **Marine litter**

4.1 The Meeting took note of the information on the follow-up of EU and global processes related to marine litter (**document 4-15**).

4.2 The Meeting took note of the key issues of the German Chairmanship related to marine litter (**document 4-13**).

4.3 The Meeting welcomed German Chairmanship priorities regarding marine litter and expressed readiness to work further together towards declared goals.

4.4 The Meeting took note of a presentation on the outcomes of the 5th Workshop on implementation of the HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter held on 12 October 2020. ([presentation 3](#)).

4.5 The Meeting agreed to publish the best practice guide to reduce inputs of cuttings of nets and cord to the marine environment (RS5) on the HELCOM website as suggested by the WS RAP ML 5-2020. The Meeting agreed that with the publication of the guide, the action RS5 in relation to cutting nets will be considered accomplished.

4.6 The Meeting also supported utilizing the outcome of the WS RAP ML 5-2020 for the revision of the RAP ML.

4.7 The Meeting considered document 4-10 and agreed on the proposal by the WS RAP ML 5-2020 on the plan for the RAP ML revision as follows:

- Further work on those regional actions where relative progress has been achieved based on the Annex 3 to the Outcome of WS RAP ML 5-2020;
- Finalize the reporting on the implementation of national actions: countries are to fill in missing information ([document 4-4 Rev. 1](#) to the WS RAP ML 5-2020) on voluntary national actions together with proposals on how to further proceed with these actions in the revision process by **7 December 2020** and provide it to the Secretariat ([marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi));
- Finalize the update of the implementation of regional actions: the follow up table is to be utilised, including proposals for revision (shall actions be included and whether reformulation is needed) to be provided by countries by 7 December 2020 to the Secretariat ([marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi));
- Set up a drafting group for the revision of the Action Plan and invite countries to nominate representatives to such a group by **7 December 2020**;
- The Secretariat is invited to compile available information by **18 December 2020** and circulate it to the drafting group;
- The drafting group meets online in **January 2021** (two days meeting in the week of 18-24 January 2021, exact dates tbc);
- Further drafting continues via correspondence, being the first draft presented to PRESSURE 14-2021.
- Endorsement of the draft revised Action Plan by HOD 60-2021.

- Adoption of the revised Action Plan in October 2021.

4.8 The Meeting considered the update of the HELCOM Recommendation on storm water management (Rec.23-5) (**document 4-2**) together with the minor revisions proposed by WS RAP ML 5-2020 and agreed on submission of the draft Recommendation to HOD 59-2020 for endorsement as contained in **document 4-2 Rev. 1**.

4.9 The Meeting discussed the updated draft policy brief on disposal of End of Life Boats (ELB) (**document 4-7**) and comments by Denmark (**document 4-16**).

4.10 The Meeting agreed on a version of the document to be recommended to HOD 59-2020 for approval as HELCOM policy message on End of Life Boats (ELB) as given in **document 4-7 Rev1**.

4.11 The Meeting discussed further steps on prioritized actions addressing expanded and extruded polystyrene (EPS and XPS) (**document 4-6**).

4.12 The Meeting agreed that the first three actions are suitable for a HELCOM recommendation and that the last one (on floats for flag buoys) is more appropriate to be incorporated into the revised RAP ML.

4.13 The Meeting agreed to submit to HOD 59-2020 a proposal to embark the work on the development of a new HELCOM Recommendation on EPS and XPS and welcomed the offer by Denmark to provide the first draft to PRESSURE 14-2020, if the development of the recommendation is approved by HOD 59-2020.

4.14 The Meeting took note of the updated RAP ML follow-up table (**document 4-1**), which will be used as background information to evaluate the implementation of the RAP ML.

4.15 The Meeting discussed the next update of the current RAP ML follow-up table and agreed to update it via correspondence after PRESSURE 13-2020. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to update the table with the input from this Meeting and invited countries to provide input on their latest activities by **7 December 2020** to the Secretariat ([marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi)), when the table will be made available on the HELCOM website and shared with the drafting group for the revision of the RAP ML.

#### **Hazardous substances**

4.16 The Meeting took note of the results of Germany's Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) research project "Environmental Protection in Maritime Traffic – Scrubber Wash Water Survey" (**document 4-12**).

4.17 The Meeting welcomed the results of the study and thanked Germany for the work done and sharing the information.

4.18 The Meeting took note that Sweden also carried out lots of activities related to ship scrubbers and that a report is available in the PRESSURE 13-2020 website ([link](#)). The Meeting also noted the ICES report on the matter ([link](#)).

4.19 The Meeting took note of information about the planned screening project on hazardous substances in marine mammals by Germany (**document 4-11**) and welcomed the proposal by Germany.

4.20 The Meeting considered the draft overview of the HELCOM framework for hazardous substances (**document 4-5**). The Meeting welcomed the work done and progress achieved in preparation of the regional policy document on hazardous substances.

4.21 The Meeting emphasized that the HELCOM framework for hazardous substances contains many opportunities which are not always fully utilized and consists of various parts which not always well fit together.

4.22 The Meeting also pointed out that the document is intended to describe the future HELCOM work on hazardous substances, highlighting its importance for Baltic Sea countries. The Meeting further requested the Secretariat to arrange an online meeting of the national contact persons nominated for the consideration of the document not later than 15 November 2020.

- 4.23 The Meeting encouraged the contracting parties that have not yet nominated national contact persons for further work on the regional policy document on hazardous substances to do that as soon as possible to enable their participation in the online meeting.
- 4.24 The Meeting took note of the EMEP report on deposition of HS on the Baltic Sea (**document 4-4, [presentation 4](#)**).
- 4.25 The Meeting noted significant changes in the estimated reductions of HS's deposition reported by EMEP in different years. The main reason for the interannual variation is regular revision of the whole emission time series. The assessment results further depend on the model parameterization and resolution. Uncertainties in emission estimates reported by countries are given in fact sheets but not all countries reported the uncertainty. Uncertainty of the modelling has been estimated as being about 30%.
- 4.26 The Meeting requested EMEP to include a description of the reasons for these variations in the main contract report in a way that revisions of emission time series are reflected in the chapters on each individual substance and changes of model or other general parameters are described only once in the report.
- 4.27 The Meeting requested EMEP to include references to the respective chapters of the main contract report in the factsheets describing the reasons of changes in the assessment results.
- 4.28 The Meeting requested that estimation of statistical significance of emission and deposition trends will be included in the assessments produced within the course of the new contract.
- 4.29 The Meeting endorsed in general the publication of the fact sheets on the EMEP and HELCOM websites after the requested updates have been made and pending comments by Germany which will be sent to EMEP (alexey.gusev@msceast.org) by 2 November 2020. The Meeting agreed that in case significant changes of the factsheets will be required after commenting by Germany, the factsheets will be accepted for publication by RedCore DG.
- 4.30 The Meeting agreed on the list of substances for assessment in 2021 as given in the Annex to the document 4-4.
- 4.31 The Meeting agreed that for the newly assessed substances the factsheets can deviate from the agreed format, but they are to be well structures for efficient evaluation of the assessment results.
- 4.32 The Meeting considered the draft assessment of input of selected hazardous substances into the Baltic Sea by the PLC-7 project (**document 4-14**).
- 4.33 The Meeting noted that Lithuanian data on HMs are missing in the draft although monitoring of these substances is being regularly carried out and requested to check the data availability in the PLC water database.
- 4.34 The Meeting took note that input of HM from Denmark will not be included in the assessment due to the data scarcity.
- 4.35 The Meeting noted that Denmark is working on expanding the monitoring network in rivers for HM and expect to receive more comprehensive information in the future.
- 4.36 The Meeting requested to include a brief policy messages in this PLC-7 thematic report.
- 4.37 The Meeting also agreed that written comments will be provided to PLC-7 project implementation group (lms@dce.au.dk) by 30 October 2020. The Meeting also supported the proposal and the final draft of the thematic report will be considered at the PLC-8 project meeting in December 2020 (PLC-8 2-2020) and further endorsed by PRESSURE via correspondence for submission to HELCOM 21-2021.
- 4.38 The Meeting took note of a proposal for wide-scope screening of hazardous substances (**document 4-3, 4-3 Rev. 1**)

- 4.39 The Meeting was of the opinion that at the current stage of the first trial, the screening should focus only on marine biota.
- 4.40 The Meeting also took note that the discussion on the species which the campaign will target should be further continued in order to obtain comparable results. Particularly, perch, eelpout, and bream are monitored by Germany in coastal waters. Germany was of the view that fish species of a high trophic level should be investigated as well as mussels (blue and zebra mussels).
- 4.41 The Meeting also raised the issue of choosing a laboratory for the screening campaign noting that some CPs will have to use a competitive tender procedure.
- 4.42 The Meeting noted that in order to make the results of the screening compatible with OSPAR projects, blue mussels are to be selected as primary species in the biota matrix but a maximum of two further species can be considered.
- 4.43 The Meeting also noted that the project planned by Germany - the screening hazardous substances in marine mammals - will be a one-off project to initiated respective discussion.
- 4.44 The Meeting took note that the purpose of screening is to be clearly identified before identification of sampling matrices/species selection and launching the campaign, as the selection of the sampling matrix/species significantly influences final results.
- 4.45 The Meeting also took note that Denmark prefers the Athens laboratory as this is where the OSPAR samples are also sent and because NORMAN has an EU wide database for all results. Furthermore, Denmark has already decided on a number of marine biota samples to be sent, as finances are available Samples from WWTP effluents are also available to be included in this work.
- 4.46 The Meeting noted that this campaign is only the first trial to arrange wide-scope screening of HS and that the aim is to receive comparable results across the region and with those from OSPAR.
- 4.47 The Meeting endorsed the submission of the document to HOD 59-2020 for consideration and approval
- 4.48 The Meeting took note of the information on the progress on the draft report on micropollutants in WWTP effluents as presented by the Secretariat and agreed that the revised version will be circulated to the group for intersessional consideration with the aim to consider its endorsement at PRESSURE 14-2021.
- 4.49 The Meeting further took note of a proposal to include some results on micropollutants in rivers in the assessment of selected hazardous substance report.
- 4.50 The Meeting took note of the information on practices to handle unused medicine in the Baltic Sea region and the recommendation on the improved waste management of unused medicines (**document 4-8**).
- 4.51 The Meeting thanked CWPharma for the recommendations, noting that they are to be further considered in relation to prioritized pharmaceutical substances. The Meeting also recalled that the action regarding improvement of take back systems for unused pharmaceuticals has been already recommended for inclusion to the updated BSAP. In this context the recommendation is a valuable contribution to the future regional work.
- 4.52 The Meeting took note of information on active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) exceeding the predicted no-effect concentration (PNEC) in the CWPharma's case studies (**document 4-9**).
- 4.53 The Meeting welcomed the project results, thanking CWPharma for sharing this information and requested information on the source of the PNECs for the analysed substances.

## Agenda Item 5 Underwater noise

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

- 5.1 The Meeting considered the draft HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise (**document 5-1**).
- 5.2 The Meeting took note of the comments to the draft RAP provided by MARITIME 20-2020 and contained in document 3-15.
- 5.3 The Meeting took note that most of the comments were clarified already in the Maritime meeting, except for the need to make an appropriate reference to SOLAS in relation to voluntary action nr 7 in section 3.2 of the draft RAP; the consistent use of the term “underwater noise” instead of “underwater sound” and the Danish concerns in relation to voluntary action nr 16 in part 3.3.
- 5.4 The Meeting discussed and agreed on the rewording proposal by Denmark to the voluntary action nr 16 in section 3.3 to read as follows: “Discussion [with the relevant authorities] on how the use of military sonars during testing, training and exercises can be adapted to reduce the potential negative effects on noise sensitive species”.
- 5.5 The Meeting invited the EN-Noise to finalise the draft RAP on Underwater Noise based on the input by the Meeting and the remaining issues to be addressed from MARITIME 20-2020 (c.f. paragraph 5.3 above) and endorsed it for submission to HOD 59-2020 for adoption.
- 5.6 The Meeting took note of the update on the process of setting up the HELCOM continuous noise database and soundscape planning tool hosted at ICES (**document 5-2**).
- 5.7 The Meeting agreed that the annual submission of continuous underwater noise monitoring data occurs by the 1st October of each year.
- 5.8 The Meeting took note of the information by Poland that due to internal procedures, the reporting of national continuous underwater noise monitoring data is to be conducted through national State & Conservation contacts.
- 5.9 The Meeting took note of the clarification that following HELCOM policy, data in the database will be publicly available.
- 5.10 The Meeting discussed the need for new soundscape maps for HOLAS III including its financial implications, noting that the production of these maps was included as part of the HELCOM Blues project application recently submitted to an EU MSFD call. The Meeting further noted that decisions on applications to this call are expected in November 2020.
- 5.11 The Meeting took note that the database has been developed to ensure compatibility with current work on the topic in OSPAR in the frame of the JOMOPANS project.
- 5.12 The Meeting took note that there is no expertise within ICES nor HELCOM EN-Noise to produce the above-mentioned new soundscape maps, and thus the services of a private company would need to be used for that purpose. In this regard, a preliminary estimation of cost can be extracted from the HELCOM Blues project application.
- 5.13 The Meeting supported the need of new soundscape maps for HOLAS III and invited the EN-Noise to provide a cost-effective solution that meets OSPAR and HELCOM needs for the upcoming Quality Status Report 2023 and HOLAS III to HOD 59-2020 for consideration in case the HELCOM Blues project application is not granted.
- 5.14 The Meeting took note of an update of the data reporting to the impulsive noise registry in the region (**document 5-3**).
- 5.15 The Meeting noted the opinion of Sweden supported by CCB that the updated BSAP should include Concrete proposals for measures reducing underwater noise / moving towards GES even Before all preliminary analyses of sensitivity of species are complete. (after para 5.5).

## **Agenda Item 6 Physical damage to the seafloor**

Documents: 6-1, 6-2

- 6.1 The Meeting considered the proposed changes to the Guideline for Management of Dredged Material at Sea (**document 6-1**).
- 6.2 The Meeting endorsed the changes to the Guideline (Annex 2) for submission to HOD 59-2020 for final approval.
- 6.3 The Meeting noted the proposal by CCB that in the light of the discussion on the need of guidance for regulation of small-scale dredging the Guideline might be further revised addressing the matter.
- 6.4 The Meeting took note of the status of 2019 data reporting under HELCOM Recommendation 36/2 (**document 6-2**).
- 6.5 The Meeting took note that Russia will report data by 15 November.
- 6.6 The Meeting took note of information on the outcomes of HELCOM Action project WP2 on impact on the sea floor as presented by the Secretariat and agreed to consider the report via correspondence. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate the report to PRESSURE contacts no later than 19 October and agreed to provide comments on the report by 13 November 2020 to the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi).

### **Agenda Item 7 Eutrophication**

Documents: 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6

- 7.1 The Meeting took note of the priorities of the German HELCOM Chairmanship related to eutrophication (document 7-4) and welcomed the priorities emphasizing that they are well developed and provide for continuity and succession in the HELCOM work. The Meeting also took note that there is still an ongoing discussion in Germany whether and how diffuse sources (in particular agriculture) should be taken into account when elaborating a methodology for the designation of nutrient hotspots.
- 7.2 The Meeting took note of the invitation by Germany to reflect on the priorities providing further input to Germany (wera.leujak@uba.de).
- 7.3 The Meeting considered the PLC-7 progress report (**document 7-5**).
- 7.4 The Meeting welcomed the report on the project implementation and thanked the implementation team for their accomplishments.
- 7.5 The Meeting took note that Germany requested to arrange submission of documents related to the major project products at least a week before project meetings to allow for a discussion among national experts.
- 7.6 The Meeting considered a draft update of the MAI indicator (**document 7-6**).
- 7.7 The Meeting thanked the PLC project implementation team for the update of the indicator report, and its improved quality, emphasizing the direction in fulfilling the MAI in the sub-basins. The Meeting recommended to include a time-series of MAI achievement for each basin in the report, to show the progress achieved. The Meeting also briefly exchanged views on potential consequences of climate change for achieving nutrient input targets and took note of diverging views of Contracting Parties on this topic.
- 7.8 The Meeting endorsed in general the indicator report for submission to HOD 59-2020 for final approval but requested additional time until 30 October 2020 to provide written comments on the report to the PLC Project Manager (lms@dce.au.dk) and the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi).
- 7.9 The Meeting considered the draft thematic report on nutrient input by big rivers (document 7-7, [presentation 5](#)) and welcomed the presented information, emphasizing that the report has been nicely developed since the first PLC-6 report on big rivers was published.

7.10 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the gap between the sum of input by different sources from the source apportionment and actual monitored input by rivers was in some cases allocated as unknown source. The Meeting took note of a comment by Germany that for the river Odra the problem is already under discussion between the German and Polish PLC representatives, and that it can hopefully be solved. The Meeting agreed that source apportionment data should be corrected before publication of the report.

7.11 The Meeting discussed national data used in the report and agreed to provide written comments on the thematic report to the PLC-7 implementation team (antti.raike@ymparisto.fi; dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) by 30 October 2020. The Meeting agreed that the updated draft thematic report will be considered by the PLC-8 meeting in December 2020 with the intention that the PRESSURE group will endorse the thematic report for submission to HELCOM 42-2021 via correspondence.

7.12 The Meeting considered the updated draft of the report of the ACTION project WP4.2 on sufficiency of the EU WFD targets for individual rivers basins to achieve the BSAP goals (**document 7-2, presentation 6**).

7.13 The Meeting expressed gratitude to the authors of the report and to the ACTION project emphasizing its high value for regional policy making. The Meeting emphasised that one of the major shortcomings of the report is the use of WFD good/moderate boundaries for the nutrient concentrations in rivers that were not developed for the purpose of achieving good status in coastal water bodies and that it would be preferable to use management targets that have been set specifically for this purpose.

7.14 The Meeting took note that Germany is planning to derive a management value for TP as one of the measures under the MSFD and plans to use the report as a starting point. Furthermore, Germany will also use the report to evaluate obstacles for achieving the BSAP targets, which is one of the priority topics under the German chairmanship of HELCOM.

7.15 The Meeting took note that Germany requests the authors to include in the report an annex describing data used for calculations as well as examples of these calculations and also reflect how nutrient run off from unmonitored areas was considered and which data on N deposition was utilized. The Meeting also recommended to include a text box with key definitions in the report.

7.16 The Meeting emphasised that the findings of the report are to be used to improve the HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme in the future. The Meeting acknowledged that use of different methodology and uncertainty in estimation of natural background losses and estimation of anthropogenic load is one of the key tasks to be resolved.

7.17 The Meeting endorsed the draft report for publication in the HELCOM BSEP pending final clarification by Sweden by 23 October 2020 and requested the Secretariat to submit the report to HOD 59-2020 for final approval after all recommended improvements have been made.

7.18 The Meeting took note of the estimation of natural time-lags that influence the achievement of GES for eutrophication as illustrated by the results of ACTION project WP5 (**document 7-3**). The Meeting thanked the ACTION project for the report indicating that the results could be useful for underpinning arguments for exemptions under the MSFD for not achieving good status for descriptor 5 in 2020 and supports the results of BNI's BALTSEM modelling presented at the 2013 Ministerial meeting, that is the basis for the BSAP nutrient reduction scheme. The Meeting reflected on the report pointing out that the approach used is rather simplified and requested clarification of the statement regarding required N reduction of one third of nitrogen input explaining what baseline is used for this estimation. Furthermore, the Meeting questioned why only nitrogen and not phosphorus was considered in the report, given that phosphorus plays an important role in controlling the eutrophication processes in the Baltic Sea.

7.19 The Meeting considered the EMEP report on nitrogen emissions and deposition (**document 7-1, presentation 7**).



7.20 The Meeting took note of the comments and recommendations by RedCore DG chair on document 7-1 (**document 7-8**) and supported them. The Meeting particularly supported a proposition to include timeseries analyses on nitrogen to test for significant changes, trends, and break points in the next EMEP contract.

7.21 The Meeting welcomed the report, thanked EMEP for the work done and highlighted that receiving such data from countries individually would be extremely challenging. The Meeting also draw attention to the fact that in some countries no reduction of ammonia emissions has occurred in recent years, also noting that the emission data might be underestimated. The Meeting also took note that national data on emissions in some countries differs from the values given in the EMEP report.

7.22 The Meeting also suggested in the future to include in the report a calculation of the portion of national emissions depositing on the Baltic sea in a table format.

7.23 The Meeting agreed that the contract tasks were fully implemented.

7.24 The Meeting agreed to provide written comments on the factsheets and the major contract report by 2 November 2020 to EMEP (michael.gauss@met.no; dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi). The Meeting requested EMEP to update the BSEFS and major project report in line with comments and provide the final version to the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) for publication before HOD 59-2020.

7.25 The Meeting endorsed in general the publication of BSEFSs on nitrogen emission and deposition and the main project report, pending that no comments requiring significant changes will be received.

#### **Agenda Item 8 Nutrient recycling strategy – measures to improve recycling of nutrient – finalizing drafting the Strategy**

Documents: 8-1, 8-2, 8-2 Add.1

8.1 The Meeting took note of the current state of the nutrient recycling strategy (**document 8-1**).

8.2 The Meeting took note of the general comment that some contracting parties had no time to coordinate national positions on the strategy due to late submission and that national positions will be presented to AGRI.

8.3 The Meeting noted that in general, Germany would be in favour of making the actions proposed for the BSAP update more concrete.

8.4 The Meeting also welcomed the idea to produce a long list of national measures for voluntary implementation to facilitate the nutrient recycling strategy and allocate them to the strategy's objectives and sub-objectives.

8.5 The Meeting also took note that there are some measures in the list which are still unclear and should be further clarified, while avoiding duplication with measures proposed via synopsis for the updated BSAP. The Meeting encouraged PRESSURE contacts to contribute to further development of the strategy by nominating representatives to the drafting group for the Strategy and providing recommendations for further consideration at AGRI group meeting through national representatives in AGRI group.

8.6 The Meeting considered the report on the Palette of solutions for nutrient recycling in wastewater sector (**document 8-2**).

8.7 The Meeting discussed the draft policy messages on solutions for nutrient recycling in wastewater sector (**document 8-2 Add. 1**)

8.8 The Meeting welcomed the report highlighting its high regional value but pointed out that the report still contains some imprecisions and points which require clarification. The Meeting took note that Germany does not agree with all recommendation given in the report thus recommends keeping it as a project report but not publish it as BSEP.

8.9 The Meeting agreed to provide written comments on the report and policy messages by 2 November 2020 to the Secretariat (dmitry.frank-kamenetsky@helcom.fi) and to inform on the view regarding publication of the report and policy messages.

## **Agenda Item 9 Development of the HELCOM framework on internal nutrient load management**

Documents: 9-1, 9-2

9.1 The Meeting considered the draft of the Recommendation on the application of sea-based measures to manage internal nutrient reserves (**document 9-1, attachment 1**).

9.2 The Meeting took note of Finland's comments on the draft recommendation (**document 9-2**) and the additional comment that mentions linked to the national permitting procedures would need to be revised throughout the recommendation.

9.3 The Meeting considered the draft guideline for Sea-Based Measures to Manage Internal Nutrient Reserves in the Baltic Sea Region (**document 9-1, attachment 2**).

9.4 The Meeting took note that Sweden, Denmark and Poland in general support the position of Finland expressed in document 9-2. Sweden indicated also the role of Espoo convention in the consideration of measures with potential transboundary effect, though not all contracting parties have ratified the Espoo Convention and they must be kept informed on these measures. Sweden also pointed out that the limits for small-scale measures proposed in the draft is not appropriate even for the measures implemented in national coastal waters and should be reconsidered. Finally, the Meeting took note that Sweden places general reservation on all documents constituting the risk assessment framework.

9.5 The Meeting took note that Germany does not support the comments by Finland expressed in document 9-2, recalling especially the discussion at HOD 58-2020 and written comments submitted by Germany after the HOD meeting regarding the role of HELCOM in the consideration of the planned measures to manage internal nutrient reserves in the sea.

9.6 The Meeting agreed that the MINUTS group achieved significant progress in the implementation of the group's task and is close to deliver the products. The Meeting also agreed, however, that further work to finalize the deliverables is still needed and supported the modification of the group's mandate as proposed in document 9-1, recommending that HoD extend the Terms of Reference to allow MINUTS to provide the draft recommendation and guidance to Pressure 14-2021.

9.7 The Meeting requested MINUTS expert group to prepare a document for the HOD 59-2020 seeking clear guidance based on coordinated national positions regarding remaining key open issues in the draft risk assessment framework for management of internal nutrient reserves.

## **Agenda Item 10 Remaining HELCOM hot spots and follow-up of their deletion**

Documents: 10-1

10.1 The Meeting considered the information on the compliance of Rīga wastewater treatment plant with the existing environmental requirements (**document 10-1, presentation 8**).

10.2 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the efficiency of the WWTP was estimated without accounting for nutrient losses in case of overflow of the combined sewerage and thus, the information of the efficiency of the complete sewage system has not yet been provided.

10.3 The Meeting thanked Latvia for the great work done to reduce nutrient input into the Gulf of Riga and invited Latvia to provide quantified information on the efficiency of the sewage system proving compliance with HELCOM Recommendations before the HOD 59-2020. The Meeting in general agreed that

the hot spot can be deleted and recommended HOD 59-2020 to delete hot spot No. 42 Rīga WWTP from the HELCOM list, pending of the submission of the requested information on the sewage system efficiency.

#### **Agenda Item 11      Any other business**

Documents: 11-1

11.1            The Meeting took note of information on a project on identification of pressures in water regions and river basin districts presented by Poland (**document 11-1**).

11.2            The Meeting thanked Poland for the work done, emphasizing that this is a valuable contribution to the improvement of HELCOM PLC data. The Meeting invited Poland to provide this information to the PLC implementation team.

11.3            The Meeting took note of the clarification by Poland that the whole Odra catchment area is not included in the modelling process at the moment, but it could be done in future.

11.4            The Meeting took note that the Contracting Parties and Observers are invited to check and update the information of the Contacts of the Pressure Group and to inform the Secretariat (laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi) of any changes.

#### **Agenda Item 12      Future work and meetings**

Documents: 12-1

12.1            The Meeting thanked Lars Sonesten for the work done as the Chair of PRESSURE group and elected Lars Sonesten as the Chair of the group for the next two-year term.

12.2            The Meeting considered the PRESSURE working plan for 2021-22 and endorsed it in general as given in the annex 3, pending clarification of the reservation by Finland on the document 12-1 and by Germany on their Chairmanship priorities.

12.3            The Meeting agreed that the main issues to be dealt with in the next meeting of the Group (PRESSURE 14-2021) will be the BSAP update, revision of the RAP ML, finalizing the joint action on micropollutants, regional policy document for hazardous substances, nutrient recycling strategy, risk assessment framework for nutrient reserves and other topics.

12.4            The Meeting confirmed that PRESSURE 14-2021 will take place in the week from 13 to 16 April 2021 in Sweden if travel restrictions are lifted, otherwise the meeting will be held online.

12.5            The Meeting also agreed that PRESSURE 15-2021 will tentatively take place in the week from 1-5 November 2021. The Meeting invited contracting parties to consider hosting the meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 13      Outcome of the Meeting**

Documents: 13-1

13.1            The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting

13.2            The Outcome of the Meeting was finalized by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Chair and made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal together with all documents and presentations given during the Meeting.

Annex 3. Draft Work Plan of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (Pressure) 2021-2022

No.	ACTION	LEAD/RESPONSIBLE IN HELCOM	INTERLINKED ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME
<b>Action 1 Guide Pollution Load Compilations (PLCs) and prepare related reports meeting policy needs, including core indicators<sup>1</sup></b>				
1.1	Annual compilation of air- and waterborne inputs of nitrogen, phosphorus and hazardous substances to the Baltic Sea: - Produce annual report and BSEFS <sup>2</sup> - Consider inclusion of new and/or rotation of already covered substances in accordance with the HELCOM priorities and data availability	Data reporting by CPs PLC-Air Centre EMEP RedCore DG and EMEP		- Annually - Continuously
1.2	Compilation of PLC 8 data reporting. Producing assessment reports: - Update of the PLC-water Guidelines and statistic report. Finalizing remaining PLC-7 products: - sources and pathways of nutrient inputs; - nutrient input by major rivers; - evaluation of effectiveness of measures; - thematic report on hazardous substances.	PLC-8 project RedCore DG		In accordance with PLC-8 project work plan.
1.3	Regular update of the HELCOM information resources to collect, store and provide access to the data on input of nutrients and selected hazardous substances into the Baltic Sea including reporting web applications and relevant HELCOM GIS map services.	BNI (Database Host) PLC Data Manager Secretariat RedCore DG		Continuous
1.4	Improve PLC data on background losses of nutrients based on the most recent scientific knowledge.	PLC-8 project RedCore DG	Regional and bilateral projects	2022

<sup>1</sup> Coordinate and organize the monitoring and assessment activities of HELCOM related to waterborne and airborne discharges, emissions and inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances: Guide Pollution Load Compilations (PLCs) (Water, and Air in cooperation with EMEP) and continuous work on improving data reporting and quality, as well as prepare assessment reports meeting policy needs, and in relation to PLC be responsible for that:

- HELCOM core indicators for pressures on marine environment are developed and operationalized (in cooperation with EMEP) to serve e.g. holistic assessments according to the goals and objectives of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, HELCOM Ministerial Declarations, and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive for those Contracting Parties also being EU Member States;
- PLC-associated technical guidelines for quality assurance are developed and updated to ensure confident monitoring and assessment results for inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances, taking into account the existing international guidance documents;
- PLC database is developed and maintained;

Further develop and maintain additional pressure indicators, e.g. concerning inputs to the marine environment of noise, litter and hazardous substances and other emerging issues

<sup>2</sup> Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheet

1.5	Elaboration of guidance to improve national data on effectiveness of measures and consequent HELCOM reporting based on the outcomes of PLC-7 project.	PLC-8 project RedCore DG		2022
<b>Action 2 Follow-up of HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme<sup>3</sup></b>				
2.1	Update the core pressure indicator on nutrient inputs for assessing progress towards the maximum allowable inputs (MAI)	PLC-8 RedCore DG, BNI and DCE		Annually
2.2	Assess progress towards nutrient input ceilings, both scientific assessment and policy document.	BNI Sweden DCE Denmark RedCore DG PLC-8		2022
2.3	Organize cooperation with RBMA to follow up implementation of the nutrient input ceilings for transboundary river basins and their integration in the river basin management plans. Involvement of the representatives of non-HELCOM countries in the work of PLC-8 project.	RedCore DG PLC-8 BNI Sweden	[PA Nutri]	PLC-8 project meetings according to project implementation plan. Workshop 2022
2.4	Follow up further improving of the knowledge base regarding the nature and dynamics of internal nutrient reserve and potential of measures to manage internal nutrient reserves.	IN MINUTS	[PA Nutri]	Continuous Workshop 2021
2.5	Elaborate regional principles and risk assessment framework for management of internal nutrient reserves.	IN MINUTS		2021
2.6	Update of the HELCOM Nutrient Reduction Scheme as a part of the work on BSAP update.	PLC-8 RedCore DG		2021

<sup>3</sup> Monitor and assess the implementation of the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme, as well as support the review of the scheme based on the best available scientific knowledge in cooperation with other relevant subsidiary bodies and institutes and modelling centres, as may be necessary: Develop and maintain a system to evaluate progress by the HELCOM countries in meeting their country-allocated nutrient reduction targets of the HELCOM nutrient reductions scheme, follow-up on the progress and prepare reports and recommendations for improved implementation; Cooperate to address nutrient emissions and inputs from non-Contracting Parties to meet the expected reductions according to the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme, e.g. in relation to the Gothenburg Protocol under the UN ECE CLRTAP as well as EU NECD, the work of river basin management commissions/bodies; Identify and prioritize needs for further reduction of nutrients, with the aim to bridge the gap in translating the nutrient reduction scheme into area or site-specific implementation, with a view to, among others, pointing to investment needs.

Action 3 Pollution prevention from wastewater treatment, including sustainable handling of sewage sludge <sup>4</sup>				
3.1	Follow-up implementation and update, if needed, of HELCOM Recommendations related to waste water management	CPs reporting		Continuous
3.2	Launching of the regional dialog on set regional limit values for hazardous substances in sewage sludge and related products utilizing the HELCOM Recommendation on sustainable handling of sewage sludge as a starting point.	[Lead countries]		2022
3.3	Promotion policy recommendations on the best available solution to utilize nutrients and other valuable properties of sewage sludge minimising a potential adverse environmental effect. Contribution to the regional Nutrient recycling strategy	Cooperation with HELCOM Agri Ggroup in the work on the Nutrient recycling strategy	PA Nutri BSR-WATER project platform	Workshops and other events 2020-2021
3.4	Finalizing the new HELCOM action on Micropollutants in effluents from wastewater treatment plants.		BSR-WATER project platform CW PHARMA Contribution by Baltic Eye through project PA Hazards	2021
3.5	Consider policy relevant proposals raised by PA Nutri of EUSBSR	Finland and Poland are leading		Continuous
3.6	Contribute to the update of the BSAP.			In line with the BSAP update process

<sup>4</sup> Cooperate on pollution prevention from waste water treatment, including sustainable handling of sewage sludge

Action 4 Solutions for limiting emissions and losses of hazardous substances <sup>5</sup>				
4.1	Revision of the HELCOM framework based on the regional policy document on hazardous substances in cooperation with State&Conservation, MARITIME and PA Hazards.	[Lead countries] Projects CG PHARMA HAZBREF	PA Hazards	2020-2022
4.2	Cooperate with State&Conservation to further advance HELCOM indicators on hazardous substances integrating into them information on loads, pathways and sources of the pollutants. Contribute to the HOLAS III process in line with the implementation plan	[Lead country] Projects RedCore CG PHARMA EN-Hazards State & Conservation EMEP, PLC-7	PA Hazards	2020-2022 and further on
4.3	Identification of emerging pollutants, evaluation of the scale of problems and suggestion of mitigation measures. Consideration of the results of regional and national screening campaigns.	State & Conservation PA Hazards CW PHARMA HAZBREF BEST BSR-WATER project platform	Watch list of the WFD; National and international screening campaigns.	Continuous
4.4	Assessing the state of threat to the Baltic Sea marine environment posed by input of pharmaceuticals, filling in data and knowledge gaps, prioritization of measures with aim to elaborate regional policy in terms of pharmaceuticals in the region.	[HELCOM CG PHARMA] Sweden in the capacity as Coordinator for PA Hazards [Lead country(s)] Projects	Cooperation with the other RSCs.	Workshop(s) 2020 and further on
4.5	Identify and assess further hazardous substances and contaminants from offshore sources, which may give rise to pollution effects, and develop appropriate mitigation measures.	CPs to provide relevant information HELCOM Maritime group		2022

<sup>5</sup>Share best practices and solutions for limiting emissions and losses of hazardous substances from existing sources and exchange information of EU BAT, BEP, REACH and other legislation and of activities concerning new and emerging substances (e.g. pharmaceuticals)

4.6	Consider policy relevant proposals raised by PA Hazards of EUSBSR	Sweden leading in the capacity as Coordinator for PA Hazards		Continuous
4.7	Contribute to the BSAP update with regard to objectives for hazardous substances.			2021
<i>Action on assessing of sea-bed damage</i>				
4.8	Regularly compile data on dredging/depositing operations at sea reported in accordance with the Guidelines for Management of Dredged Material at Sea. Regular assess environmental pressure caused by dredging/depositing operations at sea. Further develop methodology to evaluate pressure caused by dredging/depositing operations at sea and, if possible, exploitation of mineral resources on the sea bed. Contribute to assessment of sea floor integrity and cumulative impact on ecosystem. Consider measures to mitigate this pressure where it's needed.	CPs to report Secretariat HELCOM Expert Network on dredging/ depositing operations at Sea EN DREDS) To seek cooperation with ongoing projects evaluating cumulative impact.	Coordination with OSPAR Cooperation with IMO	Continuous
4.9	Contribute to the HOLAS III process with regard to sea-floor integrity	HELCOM EN DREDS [Project]	In cooperation with OSPAR	2022
4.10	Contribute to the BSAP update with regard to measures to minimise pressure caused by dredging/depositing operations and exploitation of mineral resources on the sea floor.	HELCOM EN DREDS		2021
<b>Action 5 Coordinate implementation of Regional Marine Litter Action Plan <sup>6</sup></b>				
5.1	Contribute to the development of HELCOM core indicator(s) related to marine litter in the Baltic Sea environment in cooperation with State&Conservation.	Indicator leads: Poland-beach litter (DK and SE co-leads); Finland-microliter (DK and DE co-leads). Denmark a -lead litter on the seafloor HELCOM EN-Marine litter	STATE related to development of core indicators and joint monitoring In cooperation with OSPAR and EU TG Litter	2021 and 2022 depending on the indicator
5.2	Coordinate and follow up implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter to achieve a significant quantitative reduction by 2025. Develop ambitious, regionally coordinated, quantitative targets to reduce input of litter.	Leads countries, PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Marine Litter) in cooperation with	Exchange information with OSPAR and the other RSCs.	Continuous

<sup>6</sup> Lead regional implementation of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan and coordinate its implementation with relevant subsidiary bodies to enable their substantial contribution.



		State&Conservation, Maritime and Fish		
	Update of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in alignment with the BSAP update objectives on marine litter matter	PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Marine Litter)		2021
5.3	Consider potential amendments of relevant Recommendations as well as drafting new ones to address marine litter including microlitter	In cooperation with State&Conservation, Maritime and Fish		Continuous
5.4	Contribute to the update of the BSAP with regard to specific actions aimed at mitigation of input of plastics, including micro-plastics into the marine environment, addressing also micro-plastics in riverine inputs, urban wastewater effluents and storm water.	In cooperation with State&Conservation, Maritime and Fish Contribution by projects EN-Marine litter		2021
5.5	Contribute to the HOLAS III process in relation to marine litter	PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Marine Litter)		2022
<b>Action 6 Lead the work on underwater noise<sup>7</sup></b>				
6.1	Develop an action plan on underwater noise. Contribute to the update of the BSAP with regard to specific actions aimed at mitigation of input of energy and underwater, particularly, noise into the marine environment	PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Noise) in coordination with State&Conservation and Maritime	Contribute to MSFD for EU Member States, and relevant legislation of Russian Federation Cooperation with OSPAR Intersessional group on noise and EU TG Noise IMO work	2021
6.2	Contribute to development of core indicators on underwater noise	PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Noise) in coordination with State&Conservation Indicator Leads: Poland-continuous sound; Germany-impulsive sound.	In coordination with OSPAR to the extent it is appropriate. IMO work	2021

<sup>7</sup> Lead the work on underwater noise, including evaluating inputs of noise to the marine environment with the view to developing regional action on underwater noise as far as necessary, in coordination with relevant subsidiary bodies.

5.3	Contribute to the HOLAS III process in relation to underwater noise	PRESSURE (HELCOM EN-Noise)		2022
<b>Action 7 Assess individual or newly identified point sources of pollution<sup>8</sup></b>				
7.1	Consider, and where applicable agree on deletion of remaining hot spots from the JCP list in accordance with HELCOM procedures.	Contracting Parties		Continuous
7.2	Organize regional dialog on identification of new hot spots and update of the criteria for their identification and deletion from the hot spot list.	German lead in the frame of the Chairmanship In cooperation with all relevant HELCOM working groups		2022
7.3	Identify current and emerging issues related to point sources of land based and other pollution and assess the effectiveness of the measures being adopted and the need for any additional or different measures			On-going
<b>Action 8 Climate change</b>				
8.1	Contribute to scientific understanding of the impacts of climate change together with multiple other stressors on the Baltic Sea marine environment and environmental pressures in cooperation with State&Conservation	State&Conservation EN CLIME Projects	PA Nutri	2021
8.2	Develop suggestions, within the group's mandate, to increase HELCOM's preparedness to respond to climate change impacts by taking foreseen climate change impacts into account when updating the BSAP and by adaptation of relevant policies and recommendations.	State&Conservation EN CLIME		continues
<b>Action 9 Reporting on implementation of BSAP and HELCOM Recommendations in the remit of PRESSURE</b>				
9.1	Regular reviewing the state of implementation of the HELCOM agreements; follow up implementation of national actions; reviewing of the existing Recommendations Further contribute to the HELCOM Explorer (indicator-based follow up system for BSAP) as may be decided	CPs to report		Continuous
9.2	Revision of the other sections of BSAP by request of HOD and in cooperation with other HELCOM groups			2021
9.3	Revise current working plan in line with the decisions related to the BSAP update			2021

<sup>8</sup> Respond to the requests to assess individual or newly identified point sources of pollution as may be needed; Identify current and emerging issues related to point sources of land based pollution and assess the effectiveness of the measures being adopted and the need for any additional or different measures, including in relation to remaining hot spots from the list of the Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme