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<b>Document title</b>	Renewal of HELCOM Meeting Portal
<b>Code</b>	7-2
<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	7 - HELCOM institutional and organisational matters
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## Background

The HELCOM Meeting Portal was taken into use in 2014 and is technically close to the end of its lifespan. The current platform is hosted by the HELCOM Secretariat at the HELCOM premises and is running out of both support and compatibility with other tools in use. The Secretariat started a process on gathering requirements for a follow-up system together with an external IT advisory consultant following the HOD 60-2021 agreement on starting the process on the renewal of the HELCOM Meeting Portal.

This document presents outputs of the preparation process for required specifications, scoping of suitable software platforms and preliminary tendering with suitable vendors for the new Meeting Portal / Content Management Platform (CMP).

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the preliminary budget range and timetable information;
- agree that the Secretariat can proceed according to the proposed plan.

## Renewal of HELCOM Meeting Portal

### 1. HELCOM Meeting Portal renewal process

The Secretariat started a process on gathering requirements for a follow-up system to the current HELCOM Meeting Portal. A consultant was contracted during autumn 2021 to assist in preparing requirements and tendering and to provide an overview of the supply of possible software platforms that would fulfil the needs for the new Meeting Portal.

Table 1. Completed actions and proposed next steps in HELCOM Meeting Portal renewal process.

Time frame	Completed actions	Proposed next steps
<b>HOD 60-2021</b>	Agreement on planning renewal of the Meeting Portal	
<b>June 2021</b>	Call for tender for consultant to advise in requirement specification, suitable software platforms and gathering information from possible vendors	
<b>September 2021</b>	Consultant (Tahto Group) contracted	
<b>November 2021</b>	Advisory project completed	
<b>HOD 61-2021</b>		To consider the preliminary budget range and timetable on the renewal of the Meeting Portal /Content Management Platform (CMP) and decide as appropriate
<b>December 2021</b>		Call for tender for vendors (to 10 identified vendors)
<b>Q1 / 2022</b>		Contracting vendor and starting renewal project
<b>Q3 / 2022</b>		New CMP solution taken into use

### 2. HELCOM Meeting Portal renewal planning project during autumn 2021

Detailed requirements have been collected from the Secretariat staff during Q2/2021. This formed a basis for creating a call for tender for consultants to advise on requirement specifications, suitable software platforms and gathering information from possible vendors. The call for tender for consultants was published in June 2021 and the consultant Tahto Group was contracted for the advisory project. The project consisted of the following tasks:

1. Task 1. Mapping the current CMP solution (Meeting Portal) and the desired CMP solution (**Annex 1**)
2. Task 2. Creating requirements for the new CMP solution
3. Task 3. Conducting market research for potential products and vendors on the market
4. Task 4. Preliminary information about the products, budget and deployment time for budgeting

Tasks 1-2 were carried out based on material developed by the Secretariat and further refined based on interviews of key users of the planned CMP solution in the Secretariat. A set of specifications is outlined in full detail in **Annex 2**.

The following three key focus areas were identified for the new CMP solution:

1. Improved user management
2. Improved content/document management

### 3. Improved collaboration features

It should be noted that the decision by HOD 60-2021 (6.10) has been taken into account in the planning phase and in setting up requirement for the new CMP:

*“The Meeting further agreed to opening access rights to all meeting documents and meeting registrations to all HELCOM Meeting Portal user groups as part of the portal renewal. The Meeting noted that this change in procedure will be implemented as soon as possible. The Meeting further agreed to take into use a self-managed contact list of HELCOM groups and networks, and also agreed that HELCOM HODs will be responsible for the nominations to the main groups, and that the HODs of the main groups (Gear, Maritime, Pressure, Response, State and Conservation, Agri, Fish and HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG) will be HOD 60-2021, Outcome Page 12 of 42 responsible for nominations to sub-groups, expert working groups and networks under the respective main groups. The same procedure would also apply to HELCOM observers. This change in procedure will be used as soon as the new Meeting Portal is operational”.*

Under task 3-4, market research was done for tools / software platforms suitable for fulfilling the requirement specifications. Also, potential vendors were approached for preliminary budget estimates and deployment time for preparing resource estimates for budgeting and feasibility of the offered solutions. The budget range of preliminary information provided by vendors is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Preliminary budget range of offered solutions based on vendors interviewed under the advisory project.

	Vendor 1		Vendor 2	
	Min (€)	Max (€)	Min (€)	Max (€)
Planning and building phase, including testing and training	46 000	54 000	210 000	300 000
Annual maintenance cost (support + licenses)	33 000	38 000	36 000	47 000
<b>Total deployment cost</b>	<b>79 000</b>	<b>92 000</b>	<b>246 000</b>	<b>347 000</b>

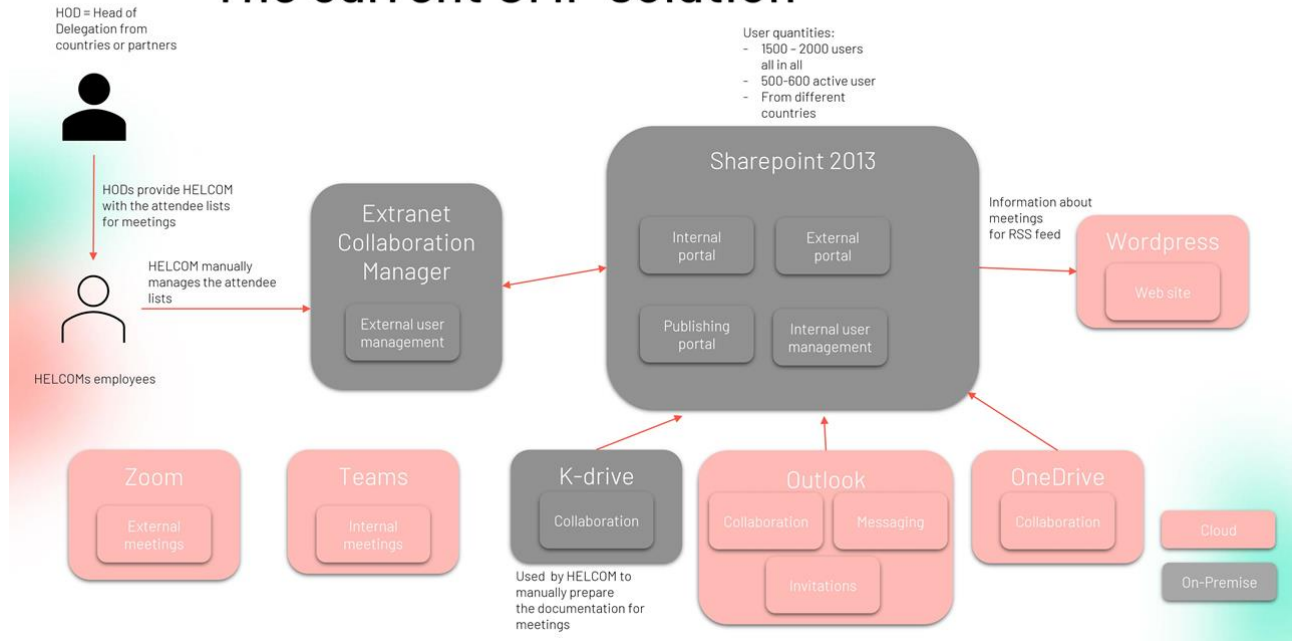
The minimum and maximum deployment and maintenance costs have been derived from the information gathered from potential vendors. Exact cost estimate will be based on responses to the actual call for tender during early 2022 and the selected vendor, the selected software platform and required customizations / extensions. The cost range between the vendors is wide and the price of the new CMP will be one of the most important factors when selecting the vendor and the new solution in the call for tender.

The need to soon update the current Meeting Portal has been acknowledged by the Secretariat for some years. Thus, because a larger-scale IT project such as this is difficult to execute within the budget of just one HELCOM financial year, it has been taken into account in the HELCOM budgets already for the last two financial periods. Therefore, the CMP update process can be finalized within the transitory budget from the last two financial years and the relevant budget category from the current financial year.

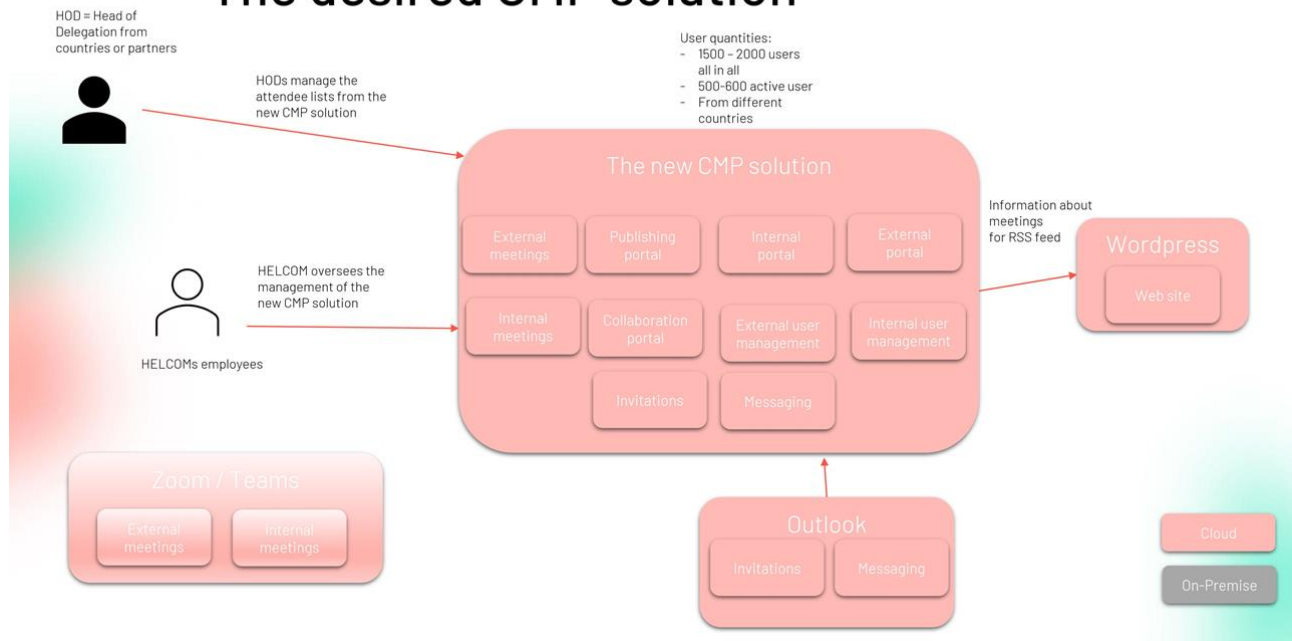
The expected deployment time according to vendors interviewed is 4 – 6 months. Therefore, if a vendor is contracted in early 2022, it should be expected that the new CMP platform is in use after 6 months, approximately during Q3/2022. Parallel use of the new CMP platform and current HELCOM Meeting Portal might be required during the transition period from the old to new platform.

# Annex 1. Current and desired state of the HELCOM Content Management Platform (CMP)

## The current CMP solution



## The desired CMP solution



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## Annex 2. Detailed specification for the desired Content Management Platform (CMP) solution

### 1. Meeting sites

#### a) Meeting site creation

The solution should have an easy and intuitive way for the meeting organizer to create a new collaboration workspace (meeting site). The meeting site should support storing, editing, and co-authoring meeting documents using Microsoft Office tools and common Microsoft Office file formats and PDFs.

The solution should gather meeting metadata when a new meeting collaboration workspace is created. Meeting metadata should be visible on the meeting workspace and metadata should be added to each meeting document. It should be possible to edit the meeting and document metadata separately after meeting creation. Currently, identified meeting metadata are:

- Meeting title, text
- Working group (predefined values)
- Meeting code, text
- Meeting location and date (not mandatory during creation)
- Selection tool for relevant contact groups to assign permissions and to send notifications

Editing document metadata should be easy, and it would be good to have a possibility to edit the document metadata for several documents at the same time.

The solution should support access to meeting documents for signed-in external users. It should be possible to assign external users contribution rights to draft versions of meeting documents. Meeting organizer should have a simple way to enable access to non-public documents for external users by applying user group levels permissions.

The solution should include a mechanism for publishing approved meeting documents in PDF format after the meeting for anonymous users. Documents should remain in the meeting context and the solution should support easy downloading of single meeting documents and all meeting documents for anonymous users.

#### b) Meeting agenda planning and automated document creation

The solution should have a tool for creating the meeting agenda. The meeting agenda consists of several agenda items, which can contain textual content and document references to the agenda item. The solution should support publishing the agenda in PDF format using HELCOM's predefined document template.

The solution should have a way to create documents for agenda items automatically. Created documents should be in Microsoft Office document format using HELCOM's document templates, and documents should include meeting metadata and document specific metadata, like reference to the agenda item, document code and version, document category and who have submitted the document. Document metadata should be visible in the cover page of each document.

The solution should offer a way to update the meeting agenda, adding new agenda items and creating new meeting documents using HELCOM's document templates. It should be possible to re-publish the meeting agenda to PDF.

#### c) Participation Survey

The solution should include a way to create meeting participation surveys (registration to events) for relevant user groups. The participation survey should be available for both signed in users. The participation survey

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should follow the meeting workspace permissions. There should be also possibility to use anonymous form / survey for registration to open events.

The solution should have an easy way to export participation survey results, for example to an Excel table.

#### d) Notifications and reminders

The solution should have a mechanism for sending reminders and notifications to the meeting attendees about document changes and added documents. Gathering changes to the notification should be an automated process.

An ideal solution would be that users can pick the notification method by themselves, for example weekly digest or notification about all document changes.

#### e) Meeting portal

The solution should include a public portal for anonymous users for finding past meeting documents and to see upcoming meetings. Upcoming meetings should be represented in a calendar type of layout. All meetings should appear automatically to the meeting portal based on meeting metadata. The meeting portal should support publishing announcements. The meeting portal should include search capabilities for anonymous users.

The Meeting Portal for registered and authenticated (signed in) users should show upcoming meetings to a user based on his/her membership on meeting workspaces.

#### f) Meeting tools

The solutions should offer a group chat feature for meeting organizers during the meeting. It should be also possible to track meeting attendance and organize voting.

## 2. User and group management

The solution should have user permission management based on user roles and group memberships.

#### a) Self-service sign-up and profile management

The solution should support a self-service sign-up for the external meeting attendees.

An external user should be able to update their profile information, including name, job title, organization and contact details.

#### b) User and group management by external users

The solution should support management of external users by nominated external HELCOM Heads of Delegations or Heads of Delegations of HELCOM main groups of a specific country. A nominated person manages national group memberships and contact lists under his/her responsibility.

When a new external user signs up to a certain working group, the nominated person should get a notification about the new user. It should be easy to approve the new user and assign him/her to correct working groups. It should also be possible to invite user to sign up for a working group.

The solution should include an overview for groups and contact list for an organization.

The solution should include an approval process for approving users to working group meetings. Approval should be possible by external HELCOM Heads of Delegation and Heads of Delegation of HELCOM main groups.

HELCOM Secretariat personnel should be able to manage users, groups and contact lists for each country, working group and partner organization as well.

### c) Contact lists

The solution should include automatically generated contact lists based on country, different working groups and working group meetings. Contact lists should be updated near real-time, when changes for group memberships or meeting attendee approvals are made.

It should be possible to use contact lists for meeting invitations and reminders and managing meeting workspace permissions with contact lists.

The solution should support exporting a meeting contact list to Excel format, including person's name, job title, organization and contact details.

## 3. Internal communications and collaboration (HELCOM Secretariat staff)

### a) Internal communications

The solution should include a platform for sharing the HELCOM Secretariat's internal guidance and documentation for personnel. Content is currently mostly folder structures and documents. It is needed to be able to divide the content in separate containers / sections like finance or HR with different access rights. It should be easy to separate draft version and final version. The solution should have a possibility to create internal surveys and polls.

### b) Collaboration

The solution should include a platform for internal collaboration and co-authoring for the HELCOM Secretariat's personnel. It should be possible to create workspaces for teams, projects and different internal functions. The solution should offer a chat and/or a discussion group features for internal discussions.

The solutions should support collaboration with external partners, and all collaboration feature should be available for external user as well.

## 4. Document Management

The solutions should support basic document management needs like co-authoring, document types and metadata, document templates, and support for document lifecycle.

### a) Document co-authoring and version history

The solution should support document co-authoring and include a version history for each saved version. It should be also possible to use Microsoft Office's track changes feature for tracking document changes. The solution should support common Microsoft Office document formats and usage of Microsoft Office applications. External users should have a possibility to co-author documents using Office applications or using browser editing tools.

### b) Document templates

The solution should have a way for managing and publishing document templates in Microsoft Office supported formats. Document templates should be available in all workspaces.

### c) Approval workflows

The solution should support approval workflows for document approval.

### d) Document citation

The solution should have a public permanent links for published meeting documents. The link should be auto-generated.

#### e) Document lifecycle

The solution should have support archiving and retaining documents permanently.

The solution should include a repository for meeting workspaces and meeting documents in the current system.

### 5. Search

The solution should include a search functionality. The search should include results from all of the content where users have at least read access. Search should include basic filtering functionalities based on document and meeting metadata. Search should at least return results from document title, document and meeting metadata, and document contents.

### 6. Migration of current meeting documents

The solution should have a public repository for meeting documents stored in the current meeting platform. Current meeting documents should be discoverable via search, categorized according to metadata and available for view and download on the meeting portal. The context of the meeting should be retained for the current documents. Migration of current meeting documents should be included in the deployment project.

### 7. Storage of information

The internal communication and collaboration materials and data contains special categories of personal data that is restricted to be processed by only certain HELCOM Secretariat staff members. The storage of this information in the new CMP solution must be within EU region.