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<b>Document title</b>	Draft update of HELCOM monitoring programmes
<b>Code</b>	4-1
<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4– Update of HELCOM monitoring programmes
<b>Submission date</b>	15.5.2020
<b>Submitted by</b>	Secretariat

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## Background

STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 considered and agreed on the proposed procedure for reviewing and updating the HELCOM Monitoring Manual and the engagement of HELCOM expert groups, network and projects ([document 2MA-3](#), table 1 to that meeting), and agreed that exhaustive reviews and revisions of the Manual should be carried out every six years, next time being in 2019. Intermittent revisions to the manual can be proposed by, or requested from, expert bodies, as needed.

STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 agreed to start the review process of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual once the guidance on Article 11 reporting under the MSFD was available from the EU Commission. Once available the guidance (provide for reference in document 3MA-2 to this meeting) was sent out to State and Conservation, together with the HELCOM Monitoring Manual, for providing comments and input for how to plan the process to amend or revise the HELCOM Manual. State and Conservation invited the Secretariat to collate the received input and provide the information for lead country Estonia to use when preparing a draft update of the Monitoring manual to be presented for review prior to STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 ([Outcome of STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019](#), para. 3MA.16). A [workspace](#) was created for that purpose where the various monitoring sub-programmes were provided as individual documents open for commenting.

As agreed by HOD 56-2019, an intersessional online meeting of State and Conservation (STATE & CONSERVATION 11 MA-2019) was organized on the review and revision of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual on 27 November 2019. STATE & CONSERVATION 11MA-2019 discussed and agreed on the revision of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual, in particular that the revision will be conducted at a sub-programme level through a lead country approach. The meeting welcomed the offer by Lithuania to take the lead on the revision of the sub-programme on non-indigenous species, and the intention of Sweden to also take the lead on other sub-programmes ([Outcome of STATE & CONSERVATION 11MA-2019](#), para. 4.7 and 4.8). Subsequently Sweden informed that they will take the lead on the revision of the following sub-programmes: Coastal fish, Migratory fish, Fisheries bycatch, Contaminants in sediment, Contaminants in biota, Marine bird health, Imposex, Macrolitter characteristics and abundance/volume, Ambient noise and Registry of impulsive sounds. The remaining monitoring sub-programmes were revised by the Secretariat.

A template for the update of the monitoring sub-programmes, based on guidance from State and Conservation and, where deemed appropriate the MSFD Article 11 guidance, was prepared by the Secretariat. The template, together with a list of generally agreed updates to be implemented throughout the Monitoring Manual, was provided to facilitate the work of the lead countries.

A second intersessional online meeting to support the update of the HELCOM Monitoring manual (STATE & CONSERVATION Extra MA-2020) was held on 17 January 2020. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the status of implementation of regional coordination for each HELCOM monitoring sub-programme as part of the EU MSFD reporting (Art. 11) for those HELCOM countries being also EU member states.

The lead countries and the Secretariat revised the sub-programmes, taking into account the input provided by Denmark, Estonia and Sweden in the first stage of the review. The updated monitoring programmes were made available in the dedicated [workspace](#) for review by State& Conservation in late March. In parallel the revised sub-programmes were shared with HELCOM experts networks for contribution. Comments received so far have been included in the relevant programme.

State and Conservation 12-2020 considered the draft update of HELCOM monitoring programmes (documents 3MA-5, 3MA-5-Rev.1 to that meeting). The meeting took note of the comments by several Contracting Parties that they would need more time to comment on the draft monitoring programmes. The meeting agreed on the following:

- Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Secretariat ([marta.ruiz@helcom.fi](mailto:marta.ruiz@helcom.fi)) of their willingness to take lead on the revision of monitoring programmes by **8 June 2020**. The Meeting encouraged Contracting Parties to consider taking lead on four or more programmes/country, to ensure all programmes are covered and account for the ambitious deadlines required to ensure the updated monitoring programmes are available for national reporting purposes.
- Countries as well as expert groups are invited to provide comments to the monitoring programmes by **15 June 2020** in track changes directly in the documents available in the workspace. One consolidated national view is encouraged when providing input through State and Conservation, to ensure access to the files. For expert groups experts can respond individually as all expert group members have access to the workspace.
- There is a need to revise the template for the monitoring programme to be aligned with the final version of the Art. 11 EU MSFD reporting guidance. Such an update will be conducted to the improved versions of the monitoring programmes.
- The finalised revised monitoring programmes will be made available to Contracting Parties by 11 August 2020 at the latest for final approval by 1 September 2020, thus enabling those Contracting Parties that are also EU member states to utilize the information for national reporting purposes.

The list of revised and updated monitoring sub-programmes as contained in the dedicated workspace, together with details on the

- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme marine mammals health status](#);
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Beach litter](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Coastal fish](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Contaminants in biota PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Contaminants in sediment PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Contaminants in water PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Fisheries bycatch](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Imposex](#)
- [Revised Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Impulsive noise](#): input to the revised programme was provided by Poland. EN-Noise further contributed to the revised monitoring programme under the leadership of Denmark and Germany. Additional input was provided by Germany.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Marine Bird Health PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme - Migratory fish](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Acute pollution](#)

- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme commercial shellfish](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Contaminant inputs from atmosphere](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Contaminant inputs from landbased sources](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme continuous noise](#): EN-Noise further contributed to the revision process under the leadership of Sweden. Work is also on-going within the EN-Noise to update the HELCOM monitoring guidelines on continuous noise to be aligned with the latest developments of the HELCOM continuous noise database. It is foreseen that a draft update is submitted to the next State & Conservation meeting addressing monitoring and assessment issues.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme floating litter](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Ice](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme litter in biota](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme litter on the seafloor](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme microlitter PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Nutrient inputs from atmosphere](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Nutrient inputs from landbased sources](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme nutrients PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme pigments PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Water column chemical characteristics PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme water column hydrological characteristics](#)
- [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Water column physical characteristics](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Habitat-forming species and substrates](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Harbour porpoise abundance](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Hardbottom species](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Marine breeding birds abundance and distribution](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Marine wintering birds abundance and distribution](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Phytoplankton species composition, abundance and biomass](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Seabed habitat physical characteristics](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme seal abundance](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Softbottom fauna](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Softbottom flora](#)
- [Draft updated HELCOM monitoring programme Zooplankton species composition, abundance and biomass](#)

#### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- Take note that the expert groups are invited to provide comments to the monitoring programmes by **15 June 2020**. Experts can respond individually as all expert group members have access to the workspace. The monitoring programmes relevant for IN Eutrophication include:
  - [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme nutrients PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
  - [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme pigments PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
  - [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme Water column chemical characteristics PL](#): includes input provided by Poland.
  - [Draft update HELCOM monitoring programme water column hydrological characteristics](#)