



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Information event for HELCOM indicator leads

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Background

This document provides a brief overview and links to a series of important documents that need to be considered under for indicator development/adjustment work. These address issues that are key to the indicator development and application, and have direct relevance to the Baltic Sea region through HELCOM agreements and/or agreements under the EU that are directly relevant to HELCOM Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States. These documents are provided to support the 'policy steer' for indicator development, to ensure all work carried out is policy relevant and also to highlight the need for the indicator template section on 'policy relevance' to be fully updated by HOLAS III.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information provided and use it to support ongoing work on HELCOM indicators.

Policy relevance

The following documentation is relevant to HELCOM indicator adjustment/development work. The list is not exhaustive but simply provides some key areas where policy input has been provided or where harmonisation with HELCOM indicators is critical.

The Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

The [HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan](#) is available online and provides broad regionally agreed aims and objectives. In addition the subsequent [Ministerial Declarations](#) also provide additional motivations or specificities that are considered as additional to the existing Baltic Sea Action Plan approved in 2007.

It is good to note that the Baltic Sea Action Plan is currently undergoing revision and should be finalized by the end of 2021. The latest versions of aims and objectives are available through the recent meeting of the Drafting Group for the BSAP (see [DG BSAP meetings](#)). While the final aims, objectives and actions that will represent the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan have not yet been finalized these may also influence the future work on HELCOM indicators.

The EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive is a major policy initiative or relevance to those HELCOM Contracting parties that are also EU Member States. The [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/848](#) in particular lays out the specific details of required indicator development. In addition to a general overview of the assessment of marine environments required this document also provides significant specification on the requirements underlying assessments undertaken.

Future work on HELCOM indicators

The [Future work on HELCOM indicators](#) process was initiated after HOLAS II to evaluate the status of indicator development and the compatibility to policy and ecological requirements. The review process was also utilized to identify key priority areas where indicator adjustment/development was required by HOLAS III. The process considered both ecological and policy requirements and established the work on indicators required by HOLAS III (and in cases beyond). In addition, key policy relevant priority factors were also identified, with the final approved focus and work towards HOLAS III being approved at HOD 57-2019 (see [document 4-20](#), [Outcomes paragraph 4.46-48](#)).

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG)

The [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), particularly SDG 14 'Life below water', have relevant links to HELCOM indicator development.