



HELCOM Workshop on the update of the national nutrient input ceilings

20 April 2020, online

Background

HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 identified that, due to improved data on nutrient inputs in the reference period, the Country Allocated Reduction Targets (CART) for nutrients are no longer always sufficient to achieve GES of the Baltic Sea with regard to eutrophication and that, therefore, the follow-up of the nutrient reduction requirements of the BSAP should focus on national commitments based on Maximum Allowable Inputs (MAI) and that this should be taken into consideration when updating the BSAP.

Improvement of the data, especially, on airborne input of nitrogen and transboundary loads for both nutrients may also lead to a need to update national input ceilings to sub-basins, based on the Maximum Allowable Inputs agreed in the MD2013 which remain unchanged.

A proposal to update national nutrient input ceilings was presented at PRESSURE 11-2019. The proposal was based on the approach to address eutrophication-related reduction targets including nutrient loads through transboundary rivers, taking into account retention and reflecting input from upstream countries to the sea. The proposed update of the input ceilings was also discussed at the Workshop with river basin management authorities in September 2019, where participants welcomed the proposal pointing out its value for the management of river basins.

PRESSURE 11-2019 in general supported the proposed approach. Nevertheless, the participants pointed out that the presented values are of indicative character, and they will be further improved utilising the best available scientific knowledge, which requires continuation of the discussion on the details of calculations with national experts in the PLC-7 Project Implementation Group and also discussion on all methodological aspects of the calculation at a workshop to be held back-to-back with PRESSURE 12-2020.

In accordance with the working plan of the PLC-7 Project, assessment of the progress towards national nutrient input reduction targets (national input ceilings) 1995-2017 is to be accomplished in the second quarter of 2020. The assessment utilizes nutrient input ceilings agreed in 2013 and used for the previous assessment carried out in the frame of PLC-6 Project covering period 1995-2014. The first assessment results will be presented to the Workshop for thorough consideration.

Outcomes of the Workshop will be reported to PRESSURE 12-2020.

Goals of the Workshop are:

- to discuss and agree at expert level on the results of the assessment of progress towards currently valid national nutrient input ceilings in 1995-2017;
- to agree on a robust and scientifically sound nutrient reduction scheme, including updated nutrient input ceilings (NICs), for incorporation into the updated BSAP;
- to assure transparency of the data used for the update of the nutrient input ceilings and common understanding of the used methodology.

Provisional Programme

The workshop will be organized in online format utilizing ZOOM telecommunication software.

The provisional timeframe for the workshop is 10.00 – 14.00 EET with 20 minutes break.

Part 1. Assessment of progress towards national nutrient input reduction ceilings in 1995-2017

Presentation:

A draft assessment of the progress towards nutrient input ceilings (NICs) in the period 1995-2017 will be presented to workshop by the PLC Project Manager Lars M. Svendsen (Aarhus University, Denmark).

The assessment is based on the most recent data on input of nutrients compiled by PLC-7 project and analyzed in accordance with the updated PLC-Water Guidelines adopted by HELCOM 40-2020.

A brief description of data used in the analysis and changes since the previous assessment (1995-2014) will be given in the presentation.

Background document:

A document with values and plots illustrating progress towards nutrient input ceilings for all countries will be submitted prior to the Workshop.

Participants of the workshop are also invited to consider the document prepared by EMEP to describe the major reasons of differences of N atmospheric deposition in the reference period (1997-2003) calculated in 2012 and 2019.

Please note: The documents will not be presented at the workshop. All participants are invited to get acquainted with the documents prior to the Workshop. To facilitate the discussion at the workshop, participants are also invited to provide questions in advance to the Secretariat (Susanna.Kaasinen@helcom.fi).

Part 2. Update of the nutrient input ceilings (NICs)

Presentation:

Results of computation of updated nutrient input ceilings (NICs) will be presented to Workshop by Bo Gustafsson (BNI, Stockholm, University, Sweden).

The computation is based on the best available data on the input of nutrients in the period 1995-2017, including transboundary loads and atmospheric deposition. In addition to presentation of newly computed input ceilings the following aspects will be discussed in the presentation: description of principle to allocate nutrient inputs; method to compute nutrient input ceilings; difference between newly computed nutrient input ceilings and the ones identified in 2013; benefits of the new approach.

Background document:

Expected reductions of inputs from HELCOM countries, ship traffic and from non-Contracting Parties resulting from implementation of Gothenburg Protocol & NEC Directive will be presented in the EMEP's report on ENIREC II project.

Please note: The documents will not be presented at the workshop. All participants are invited to acquaint with the documents prior to the Workshop. To facilitate the discussion at the workshop,

participants are also invited to provide questions in advance to the Secretariat (Susanna.Kaasinen@helcom.fi).

Discussion and conclusions

The participants will be invited to clarify all technical aspects of computing updated nutrient input ceilings and assessing the progress towards existing ones. The main goal of the discussion is to express common position of the regional expert community regarding the achieved progress and proposed updated environmental targets. The position will be communicated with relevant HELCOM Working Groups.

Workshop's target group

The Workshop is tasked to convene open discussion on various methodological aspects of setting nutrient input targets as well as data and methods to follow up the progress. The Workshop is targeted to a broad audience of experts and policy makers involved in the national and regional work to achieve nutrient input reduction targets. In general, the target groups for the Workshop are scientific and research organizations; authorities responsible for the marine and river basin environmental management; agencies conducting water quality monitoring; intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; representatives of professional associations concerned about nutrient related environmental targets.