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The Ninth Meeting of the PLC-7 Project Implementation Group (PLC-7 IG 9-2019) will be held at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat (Katajanokanlaituri 6 B) in Helsinki, Finland on 16-18 December 2019. The Meeting will start at 10.00 on Monday, 16 December and terminate not later than 16:00 on Wednesday, 18 December 2019.

Documents for the Meeting, which are restricted until after the Meeting has ended, will be made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal, on the restricted PLC-7 IG 9-2019 Meeting Site.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda.

2. Matters arising from other HELCOM work

The Meeting will be informed on the recent HELCOM activities related to the Group's work, including outcome HOD 57-2019. The Project team will also be informed on the progress achieved by SOM Platform, ACTION project, HELCOM Indicator WS 2-2019 and other HELCOM activities.

3. Data reporting and processing

Status of the periodic data 2017 reporting will be presented by the PLC Data Manager. The state of the periodic reporting was discussed at PLC-7 8-2019.

The Meeting will be invited to discuss the state of the periodic dataset (document to be submitted by the PLC Data Manager) including approval of periodic data 2017. Participants will be invited to discuss whether the assessment of the data can be started and further efforts needed to deliver this project product in time.

CCB informed on PRESSURE 11 about new aquaculture farms establish in the Baltic Sea region not reported to PLC. The PLC Implementation Group members are invited to inform about fish farms which are not yet reported but to be included in upcoming PLC reporting.

Status of the annual 2018 PLC data reporting

A new annual data reporting cycle started in September 2019, and prefilled annual reporting templates were made available at the end of August. The deadline for verification of reporting templates and spatial data was 10 October and actual data reporting 31 October 2019. The status of reporting will be presented by the Secretariat.

The Meeting will be invited to discuss the status of data reporting, missing data, and any remaining difficulties in reporting.

PLC-7 IG 7-2019 agreed that spatial data is to be verified simultaneously to annual PLC-data reporting procedure, starting from verification of background information in the reporting templates and indicating which sub-catchment areas are to be updated in the PLC database and which sub-catchments are to be redrawn in the spatial database. Secretariat will inform on the state of spatial data verification.

The Meeting will be invited to discuss the verification of spatial data and inform on any difficulties to update and verify the spatial data.

4. Current activities of the PLC-7 project and coordination with other HELCOM activities including ACTION project

HELCOM Core Indicator for Inputs of nutrients 1995-2017

HELCOM Core indicator for Inputs of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) to the sub-basins (2017) was presented at PRESSURE 11-2019, and the Meeting welcomed the updated indicator and pointed out a great progress achieved since reference period in reduction of nutrient inputs. The Meeting proposed some corrections and decided on additional time for editorial remarks of the text.

The Meeting will be informed on the decision of HOD 57-2019 regarding publication of the HELCOM Core Indicator for input of nutrients and be invited to act in accordance with the decision.

Assessment of the progress towards implementation of national nutrient input ceilings

Assessment of national implementation of existing HELCOM agreements to achieve national input reduction targets expressed as net nutrient input ceilings (NIC) is one of the project's key tasks. The assessment is to cover period from 1995 to 2017. Preliminary assessment results will be presented by the Project Manager. The Meeting will be invited to consider the quality of input data for the assessment, especially the data on transboundary loads, and agree on the next steps and deadlines to deliver the assessment products. Further, the Meeting will be invited to discuss how to present NIC assessment results, taking into account the first NIC assessment products (document to be submitted by the Project Manager).

Updating background information

PLC-7 IG 5-2018 agreed in general on sections of the background report which are to be updated for PLC-7. PLC-7 IG 8-2019 discussed the preparation and status of the PLC-7 background information report and invited PLC-7 Project Implementation Group members to present a first draft of questionnaires in October, with a deadline for filling in the questionnaires by 1 December 2019, in order to make a draft compilation of the reported information. The information will be presented at the Meeting.

The Meeting will be invited to discuss the implementation of the task and agree on the next steps to progress with the update of the background information (information by PLC-7 Project IG members).

Natural background losses

Identification of the natural background for nutrient inputs is a part of discussion on the need for regional harmonization of methods to identify diffuse load. PLC-7 IG 7-2019 considered a draft overview of the methodologies used in the HELCOM countries to identify background losses of nutrients, presented by Germany, and invited national experts to verify reported information where it is needed.

PLC-7 IG 8-2019 took note of the proposal by Germany to consider the recommendations to update PLC-Water Guidelines, based on the overview of methodologies and data used by HELCOM countries (presented at PLC7 IG 7-2019) at the next PLC-7 IG 9-2019 meeting.

The Meeting welcomed the proposal by Germany pointing out that, although the recommendations can be implemented only for PLC-8, the compilation of data on natural background losses of nutrients could be utilized to verify the results of current assessment products.

The Meeting will be invited to consider the recommendation to update HELCOM PLC-Water Guidelines and agree on the way to take them into account when the revision of the Guidelines will be launched (document will be submitted by Germany).

ENIRED report (EMEP)

RedCore DG agreed that ENIRED II project implementation and the project results will be discussed at PLC-7 IG 9-2019 in December 2019. Draft report on the ENIRED II project implementation will be presented to the meeting by EMEP.

The Meeting is invited to consider the draft project report and discuss the suitability of the project results to the evaluation of the effectiveness and sufficiency of measure to reduce input of nitrogen to the Baltic Sea. The Meeting will also be invited to discuss how the results can be used in the upcoming updated of BSAP nutrient reduction scheme.

Implementation of the task on evaluation of effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient loads

PLC-7 IG 8-2019 discussed the status of the PLC-7 task to evaluate effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient loads and recalled that PLC-7 IG 7-2019 had agreed to focus the evaluation on effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient loads from point sources and scattered dwellings.

PLC-7 IG 8-2019 outlined the targeted questionnaire to compile additional information for the task implementation, which will include request for information on: number of scattered dwellings and individual houses, national requirements for wastewater treatment and evaluation of potential to reduce nutrient input in this sector under national policies; data on reduction achieved by improving WWTP and sewerage systems to increase connectivity, etc.

Updated information on the progress in the assessment of effectiveness of measure to reduce nutrient input from point sources was presented at RedCore DG 28-2019. The meeting welcomed the progress in evaluation of potential reduction in wastewater management sector and encouraged the countries, which planned to supply data on the capacity of waste water treatment plants reported to PLC database, to provide the required information.

The RedCore meeting agreed that potential reduction of input from scattered dwellings should be further investigated and thoroughly discussed at PLC-7 IG 9-2019. The meeting encouraged Finland, with the assistance of the PLC Project Manager, to prepare a background information document on the matter for PLC-7 IG 9-2019.

This task is tightly linked with implementation of ACTION Project WP 4.1 Following up existing measures. A Report describing the variation in efficiency of nutrient treatment from point source is to be prepared by SYKE utilizing data from PLC Water database.

The Meeting is invited to consider the results of the study (document will be submitted by SYKE, Finland), reflect on its completeness and suitability of the approach for accomplishing the related task of the PLC-7 Project. Conclusions might also be used for preparation of the project proposal for PLC-8.

ACTION: River catchment analysis (SYKE)

PLC-7 IG 8-2019 considered the information on the progress in implementation of the ACTION project task to identify examples of individual rivers where measures to reduce nutrient input had been implemented, presented by Finland. The meeting invited the countries, which have not yet provided background information on the selected study cases, to supply this information to Finland by 15 October 2019.

The Meeting will be invited to consider test cases selected to evaluate effects of measures to reduce nutrient loads from individual river basins and provide feedback on the implementation of this task from of ACTION Project.

Assessment of inputs of selected hazardous substances

The Meeting will be invited to consider progress in the work strand to evaluate inputs of selected hazardous substances to the Baltic Sea (initial information will be presented by SLU, Sweden).

5. *BSAP nutrient reduction scheme*

PLC-7 IG 8-2019 took note of the proposal by BNI on the adjustment of national nutrient input ceilings based on the most recent scientific data on nutrient inputs, including transboundary loads. The meeting supported the proposed approach to deduct input by transboundary rivers from the national input ceilings and to consider national input ceilings for the major transboundary river basins separately. The meeting agreed to submit the proposal to PRESSURE 11, including the magnitude of changes of values of nutrient input ceiling, since they were computed for MD2013.

PRESSURE 11-2019 agreed in general on the proposed approach to update the values for input ceilings. The Meeting requested to continue the discussion on calculations with national experts in the PLC Project Implementation Group and proposed to communicate the proposal for the updated nutrient reduction scheme with Heads of Delegation, integrating the nutrient ceiling values with the textual part of the revised scheme and submitting the integrated proposal for commenting to HOD 57-2019 meeting.

The Meeting will be invited to consider the draft update of the HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme and recommendation by HOD 57-2019 regarding its further development (document will be submitted by the Secretariat).

The Meeting will be also invited to discuss the provisional agenda of the workshop on the update of the national input ceilings which is proposed to be convened back-to-back with PRESSURE 12-2020.

Follow-up workshop with River basin management authorities

HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 committed to engage with the relevant river basin authorities to better align national and international nutrient reduction requirements of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP). The Workshop with river basin management authorities (RBMA WS 1-2019) took place in Riga, Latvia, on 18-20 September 2019, co-organized by HELCOM and ACTION Project.

PRESSURE 11-2019 took note of the Outcome of the HELCOM Workshop with River Basin Management Authorities and considered the proposals of the Workshop on practical measures to engage with the relevant river basin authorities to enhance implementation of the BSAP. The meeting took note that the participants of the Workshop had proposed regular organization of similar workshops to maintain dialog with the river basin management authorities.

The Meeting will be informed on the HOD 57-2019 conclusions regarding implementation of the Workshop's proposals and is invited to discuss how the PLC Project Implementation Group can contribute and support the work.

Rephrasing of actions for the BSAP update

The work on the BSAP update implies rephrasing of actions which will likely not be implemented by 2021 and their inclusion to the updated BSAP. List of actions to be rephrased was agreed by PRESSURE 11-2019 and the PLC-7 IG together with RedCore DG were requested to propose wording for a number of actions.

The Meeting will be invited to elaborate new wording for the actions which PLC IG and RedCore DG were requested to rephrase (document will be provided by the Secretariat).

6. Any other business

Annual BSEF's on airborne emissions and depositions (EMEP) and assessing min. reasons for the changes in nitrogen deposition during the reference period (1997-2003)

PRESSURE 11-2019 supported the proposals by RedCore DG to improve BSEP on atmospheric emissions and deposition, e.g. by implementing trend analysis, testing for breakpoints, and inducing statistical uncertainty on changes in emissions/deposition.

The Meeting will be invited to discuss the application in the EMEP product of the statistical methodology similar to the one used for the assessment of waterborne nutrient inputs.

The Meeting will be also invited to discuss and give advice on the assessment of the main reasons for the changes in atmospheric deposition (about 30% in average) in the reference period evaluated in 2012 (for the MD2013) and in 2019 (EMEP is invited to present a document).

PLC-8 timeframe

The Meeting will be informed on the decision of HOD 57-2019 regarding the timeframe and deliverables for PLC-8 Project as well as on changing the periodic reporting deadline and related deadlines and is invited to discuss next steps in accordance with the decision.

Development of a structure for the web page for nutrient input reduction scheme for the new HELCOM website.

PLC-7 Project IG and RedCore DG meetings several times raised an issue of availability and transparency of the PLC assessment data and methodological documents used to produce various PLC assessment products. HELCOM has recently launched a new website which gives a perfect opportunity for the update on existing information resources related to HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme follow-up.

The Meeting will be invited to propose the structure of the web pages dedicated to HELCOM nutrient input reduction scheme and agree on their content (initial document will be submitted by the Secretariat).

Development of the PLC-Water database

BNI is invited to inform the Meeting of any developments of the user tool of the of the PLC-Water database.

7. *Future work and meetings*

The Meeting is invited to review the list of project contacts (document to be submitted) and update it as necessary.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated PLC-7 timetable (will be updated during the Meeting).

The Meeting is invited to discuss the main agenda themes for the next PLC-7 Project IG meeting, decide on meeting dates, and consider hosting the meeting.

8. *Closing of the Meeting*

The Meeting will be invited to comment on the draft Outcome and approve it via correspondence.