



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area

PRESSURE 10a-2019

Online, 21 May 2019

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<b>Document title</b>	Concretization of HELCOM commitments from Ministerial Declaration 2018 to follow-up implementation
<b>Code</b>	2-3
<b>Category</b>	CMNT
<b>Agenda Item</b>	2-Follow-up of HELCOM actions
<b>Submission date</b>	14.5.2019
<b>Submitted by</b>	Secretariat
<b>Reference</b>	

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### Background

The 2018 HELCOM Ministerial Declaration includes a number of paragraphs related to activities under the mandate of the Pressure Working Group. While these paragraphs give the direction for HELCOM work in the upcoming years, some might be further specified in order to be turned into concrete tasks so that the progress can be achieved and measured. The initial aim of concretizing the actions is that the group can start working on the commitments made in Ministerial Meeting 2018. The second aim is that the concretized actions that are not carried out by end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP to be adopted in 2021. PRESSURE 10-2019 discussed the concretization of actions from Ministerial Meeting 2018 and agreed on a written procedure to provide comments for the initial proposal ([document DS-10](#) of PRESSURE 10-2019).

The attached document includes comments by Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the comments provided;
- discuss and agree on the proposal for concretization of commitments from Ministerial Meeting 2018 to follow up the implementation by 2020.

Paragraphs from MD 2018 related to Pressure **WG**

Theme: Eutrophication

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
21. <b>WE RECALL</b> the Country-Allocated Reduction Targets for nutrients, which will lower nutrient inputs as specified by the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, including through implementation of measures taken under relevant EU legislation for Contracting Parties being EU Member States and under relevant national legislation in the Russian Federation;	General
22. <b>WE ACKNOWLEDGE</b> that due to improved data on nutrient inputs in the reference period <sup>1</sup> , the Country-Allocated Reduction Targets 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 and that this should be taken into consideration when updating the BSAP;	Proposal for concrete action: to utilize national input ceilings to assess progress and to discuss the possibilities of incorporating nutrient input ceilings in the BSAP update (see suggestion in the <a href="#">document 6-1</a> , item 2.2).
23. <b>WE DECIDE</b> ....., as well as to engage with the relevant river basin authorities to better align national and international nutrient reduction requirements of the BSAP with those of coastal waters, whilst seeking synergies between relevant regimes	Proposal for concrete action: to organize a workshop with river basin management authorities; to make a trail calculation of the input ceilings for individual river basins and discuss at the Workshop with river basin management authorities (see suggestion in the <a href="#">document 6-1</a> , item 3.2).
24. <b>RECOGNIZING</b> with concern that large amounts of nutrients have accumulated in the Baltic Sea during the past decades due to anthropogenic activities, resulting in an enhanced internal flux of nutrients between sediments and sea water thereby exacerbating eutrophication	General
25. <b>WE ENCOURAGE</b> , as a first step, further improving the knowledge base regarding the nature and dynamics of internal nutrient reserves.	General
26. <b>WE ENCOURAGE</b> , as a second step, undertaking research on the potential of measures to manage internal nutrient reserves that have accumulated in the sediments due to anthropogenic activities in the last decades; <b>WE EMPHASIZE</b> that the risks to ecosystem and human health stemming from measures to manage internal nutrient reserves, as well as the long-term sustainability of their effects, need to be considered and thoroughly evaluated; <b>WE ALSO ENCOURAGE</b> in parallel developing and applying a risk assessment framework in HELCOM to meet the necessary environmental requirements for measures planned for the open sea and any other measures having potentially significant transboundary effects; <b>WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE</b> the need to elaborate in line with the Helsinki Convention commonly agreed regional principles as guidance for internal nutrient reserves management.	Proposal for concrete action: to elaborate the regional principles and the risk assessment framework to manage internal nutrient reserves and incorporated into the HELCOM acquis

**Commented [A1]:** FI: The answers represent Finland's initial view and they are to be used only for screening purposes. Finland reserves the right to further comment the summary/future versions made by the Secretariat.

**Commented [A2]:** FI: Ok

**Commented [A3]:** FI: Ok

**Commented [A4]:** SE: Isn't this ongoing already. Suggest that the outcome of the workshop as relevant is brought into BSAP.

**Commented [A5]:** FI: Ok

**Commented [A6]:** FI: Ok

**Commented [A7]:** FI: Could be concretised by encouraging countries to promote research in the topic and share information on planned and ongoing activities

**Commented [A8]:** FI: Ok

**Commented [A9]:** SE: §26 lacks a deliverable for the evaluation of ecosystem/human health risks and also a product around the sustainability of effects. The work should be carried forward. There could be scope for these questions to be managed in a BSEP, based primarily on the work ongoing in FI & SE, with the process managed by IN-MINUTS.

<sup>1</sup> Pre-BSAP period (1997-2003).

27. <b>WE COMMIT</b> to elaborating by 2020 a Baltic Sea Regional Nutrient Recycling Strategy that aims for reduced nutrient inputs to and eutrophication of the Baltic Sea	The work on the strategy is ongoing jointly with AGRI group.
28. <b>WE DECIDE</b> to also develop, as a follow-up to the Strategy, possible nutrient recycling measures to be included in the updated BSAP	PRESSURE contributes to the work with regard to nutrient recycling in waste water sector.

Commented [A10]: FI: Ok

Commented [A11]: FI: Ok

Theme: Marine Litter

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
29. <b>BEING CONCERNED</b> that marine litter, and in particular plastic waste, continues to be a problem in the Baltic Sea, <b>WE STRESS</b> the importance of eliminating discharges of litter from land and sea-based sources to the Baltic Sea;	General
30. <b>WE ARE DETERMINED</b> to combat marine litter through coordinated implementation of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan;	Aspiration to implement RAP ML
31. <b>WE RE-COMMIT</b> to preventing and reducing marine litter from land and sea-based sources and to achieving a significant quantitative reduction by 2025. To that end <b>WE COMMIT</b> to regional work on developing baselines and threshold values for maximum levels of marine litter in the Baltic Sea, in close coordination with work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora. <b>If additional efforts are needed to achieve those levels, WE COMMIT to developing ambitious, regionally coordinated, quantitative targets to reduce input of litter;</b>	<p>“developing baselines and threshold values for maximum levels” is to be considered by State and Conservation.</p> <p>A concrete action could be formulated as it is stated in the Recommendation 36/1: The Contracting Parties review and, if necessary, update this Recommendation and its action plan in 2021.</p> <p>The results of SOM could be utilized for quantification of potential reduction by 2025.</p>
32. <b>WE ALSO COMMIT</b> to strengthening regional research and developing harmonised monitoring methods on the sources, distribution, amounts and impacts of marine litter including micro-plastics, in coherence with similar work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora, and to <b>improving assessment of the effectiveness of measures;</b>	<p>“developing harmonised monitoring methods” is to be considered by State and Conservation.</p> <p>Proposal on concrete action: a method to quantify effectiveness of measures to prevent littering of the marine environment will be developed by SOM platform.</p>
33. <b>WE SUPPORT</b> measures aimed at preventing plastics, including micro-plastics, from contaminating the marine and coastal environment, at addressing the entire lifecycle of products, and at examining efficient and cost-effective options to reduce plastic and micro-plastic releases from products and processes into the environment;	aspiration to implement HELCOM RAP ML

Commented [A12]: DK: We agree.

Commented [A13]: FI: Ok

Commented [A14]: DK: We agree.

Commented [A15]: FI: Ok

Commented [A17]: FI: Proposal on concrete action: methods to quantify reductions and threshold values for maximum levels.

Commented [A16]: SE: Important to align with EU processes.

Commented [A18]: FI: Ok

Commented [A19]: DK: The text in the ministerial declaration does in my opinion not refer to an update of the RAP ML (but we agree that this is stated in rec 36/1). Likewise the text state that reduction targets should be developed if needed in order to achieve GES. Thus, we have committed to develop reduction targets AFTER threshold values have been established (at EU-level). But we agree that if threshold values have been established by 2020 it would be relevant to discuss the use of results of SOM for quantification of potential reduction by 2025. And if threshold values have not been established we could consider it anyway, but as a potential new commitment in the updated BSAP.

Commented [A20]: FI: Ok

Commented [A21]: DK: We agree.

Commented [A22]: FI: Ok

Commented [A23]: DK: We agree.

Commented [A24]: FI: Ok

Commented [A26]: SE: The revision appears to be restricted to commitments from the Ministerial Declaration 2018. Earlier commitments from 2007 onwards need to be collated into a proper HazSubs strategy. §35 should be developed into a commitment to develop load targets for Haz which can feed into emissions/discharges/losses targets for CPs.

There is a proposal from SwaM and SEPA to include a modernized strategy for Haz subst in BSAP, outlining priority areas of action  
This could be a basis for SE offering to lead this work, however, the ministry/HoD has not yet made a firm decision

Theme: Hazardous substances

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
35. <b>WE AGREE</b> to re-examine the effectiveness of measures and recommendations for legacy pollutants and to identify the scale of problems of contaminants of emerging concern, including micro-pollutants in coastal and marine waters and, based on this knowledge, to consider possible cost-effective mitigation	Proposed concrete action: to revise the regional priority pollutants; to advance the HELCOM indicators including information on sources and

measures. <b>WE WELCOME</b> the joint HELCOM-UNESCO-EUSBSR status report on pharmaceuticals in the aquatic environment in the Baltic Sea Region as the information basis for developing measures, as appropriate, to prevent pharmaceuticals from reaching the Baltic Sea, and also <b>WELCOME</b> the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) regional cooperation platform to reduce pharmaceuticals in the Baltic Sea;	pathways of pollutants to identify emerging pollutants; to develop measures to prevent pharmaceuticals from reaching marine environment; to develop a framework for responding to the emergent/alarming pollutants.
36. <b>WE ALSO AGREE</b> to identify and assess further hazardous substances and contaminants from offshore sources, which may give rise to pollution effects, and develop appropriate mitigation measures.	Proposed concrete action: regional inventory of offshore sources and identification of priority contaminants from offshore sources.

- Commented [A25]:** SE: This will partly/probably be done in SOM?
- Commented [A27]:** FI: "to develop source control measures"
- Commented [A28]:** DK: Why is this action only mentioned for pharmaceuticals. We would suggest that measures are considered more generally for contaminants as is stated in the ministerial declaration 35. In relation to pharmaceuticals it is important to also consider the Commission strategic approach for pharmaceuticals.
- Commented [A29]:** DK: What is meant with a framework? In the ministerial declaration it is stated that cost-effective mitigation measures should be considered.
- Commented [A30]:** FI: OK. Availability of data ?

Theme: Underwater noise

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
39. <b>WE AGREE</b> to develop an action plan, preferably by 2021, and regionally coordinated actions on underwater noise, aiming, in the long-term, at addressing adverse effects of underwater noise on marine species identified as sensitive to noise, whilst safeguarding the potential of the Baltic Sea for sustainable human activities;	Ongoing and anticipated to be adopted before or as part of the updated BSAP.

- Commented [A31]:** DK
- Commented [A32]:** DK: The measures in the noise action plan should be aligned with the work done in the BSAP. The SOM platform is currently in progress assessing the sufficiency of measures for under underwater noise to be used to identify the needed measures for the BSAP. Setting on a set of measures in an action plan before this SOM assessment is completed seems premature.

Theme: Loss and disturbance to the seabed

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
41. <b>WE AGREE</b> to do regional work on developing threshold values for the adverse effects of anthropogenic physical disturbance and, based on the best available scientific information in close coordination with other relevant fora, if needed to achieve GES, to develop the necessary regionally coordinated quantitative targets for the reduction of physical disturbance caused by human activities and habitat loss;	"developing threshold values for the adverse effects" is to be considered by State and Conservation Proposal on concrete action: to develop a method to evaluate losses and disturbance caused by handling dredged material at sea and thus, contribute to regional quantitative targets. to develop the targets a contribution of HELCOM FISH group is vital.
42. <b>WE AGREE</b> , based on best available scientific advice, to work together to elaborate regional and national actions aiming at delivering the necessary reductions in adverse effects of physical disturbance caused by human activities.	Proposal on concrete action: to propose actions to reduce adverse effect of handling dredged material at sea.

- Commented [A33]:** FI: Ok
- Commented [A34]:** DK: One could focus on thresholds for adverse effects on physical disturbance, not limited to any one activity. Similarly as separate (management objective) on setting targets across activities causing adverse physical disturbance.

Theme: Ocean Governance

Paragraph from Ministerial Declaration	Initial evaluation
54. <b>WE DECIDE</b> to continue the concrete cooperation on HELCOM Hotspots with the aim to eliminate the remaining hotspots <b>WE WELCOME</b> recent efforts made so far in addressing those hotspots via multi-stakeholder cooperation, such as for the Krasnyi Bor landfill involving NEFCO;	This is an inspirational paragraph. Concrete actions are in the HELCOM hot spot list.
56. <b>WE STRIVE</b> for joint approaches and synergies among HELCOM and relevant multilateral environmental agreements including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species and the Agreement on the	The first part "WE STRIVE.." of the paragraph is mainly for S&C to consider.

- Commented [A35]:** FI: ok
- Commented [A36]:** DK: This is not the same as is in 42 where focus is not solely on dredging. Perhaps it could be to make an inventory of existing actions, and propose and test new actions which reduce the adverse effects of pressures causing physical disturbance.
- Commented [A37]:** FI: Proposal on concrete action: to propose actions to avoid and reduce adverse effect of dredging and handling dredged material at sea.
- Commented [A38]:** SE: SE has not yet decided position regarding timeline or level of ambition as regards targets.
- Commented [A39]:** FI: ok

<p>Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas. <b>WE STRESS the importance of transboundary cooperation, transparency, and information-sharing among Contracting Parties in order to assess, prevent, mitigate, and compensate the impacts arising from human activities such as nuclear energy projects, offshore projects of oil drilling and construction of gas pipelines, in line with international legislation;</b></p>	<p>The “<b>WE STRESS...</b>” is of inspirational character as the relevant regulations are in the Article 7 of the Helsinki Convention or Espoo Convention etc.</p>
<p>59. <b>WE AGREE</b> to strengthen the fruitful cooperation with OSPAR on transboundary issues and common challenges to gain efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of SDGs such as ballast water management and introduction of invasive alien species, <b>the issue of underwater noise, micro-plastic, migratory birds, MPA network and management, and threatened and endangered species;</b></p>	<p>Proposal on concrete action:                  To organise a workshop with OSPAR on the development of a microliter indicator on sediments in coordination with EU TG Litter. (It is now a candidate indicator in OSPAR, and the HELCOM network indicated that it would be good to cooperate with then on this, and maybe not to advance on microlitter in the water column).                  To organise a follow up meeting (following the one organised in 2017) with the OSPAR ICG Noise and in coordination with EU TG Noise to advance on the assessment of underwater noise <b>indicators.</b></p>

**Commented [A40]:** SE: §56 contains a good structuring sentence (“WE STRESS...”) that could come higher in the document as it concerns overarching aims that should be implemented by the various themes.

**Commented [A41]:** FI: ok

**Commented [A42]:** FI: ok

**Commented [A43]:** SE: §59 lacks an ambition to work with AMAP/AC, despite overlapping areas in the catchment. Note that the work with OSPAR has already led to significant advances e.g. joint Haz assessment tool based on the OSPAR CEMP tool (also used by AMAP); similar EUT assessment tool. Seek further areas of cooperation e.g. joint EMEP products; common RID/PLC standards/guidelines.