



Intersessional Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (HELCOM PRESSURE 12b-2020)

Introduction

0.1 The Intersessional Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 12b-2020) was held on 11 June 2020, online.

0.2 All the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention, except European Union, Latvia and Russia, attended the Meeting. Observers from CCB, BFFE, EurEau, KIMO International, Race for the Baltic and WWF, as well as representative of EUSBSR PA Nutri attended the Meeting. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Lars Sonesten, Chair of the Pressure Group. Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, assisted by Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, from the HELCOM Secretariat acted as secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda of the Meeting as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2 Technical review of synopses

Documents: 2-1, 2-1-Att.1, 2-1-Rev.1, 2-1-Att.1-Rev.1

2.1 The Meeting recalled that to support the selection of new measures and actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan, an invitation to submit synopses on potential new HELCOM actions was put forward in spring 2019 to the Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects and HELCOM Observers. The Meeting further recalled that PRESSURE 12-2020 took note of the synopses relevant for the Pressure group and the common guidance for making a technical review, invited the Contracting Parties to make the technical review and agreed to organize dedicated online meeting to finalize the task.

2.2 The Meeting recalled that the review at this stage is technical and based on expert opinion, not political views, and that no synopses will be omitted at this stage unless they are overlapping with existing measures. The Meeting took note that the BSAP UP workshops will further evaluate the proposed measures and the Working Group meetings in autumn will consider the outcomes of the workshops and endorse them for submission to HOD 59-2020.

2.3 The Meeting recalled that some proposals are reviewed by several HELCOM groups and agreed that the proposals related to agriculture (synopses 35-58 in document 2-1-Att.1.Rev.1) will in principle only be reviewed by the Agri group while Pressure group will be kept informed of the results of the review. However, if the Pressure group does have a different opinion on some of these synopses this needs to be resolved at the BSAP UP workshop.

2.4 The Meeting took note of the concern that the online format is not best suited for the BSAP UP workshops but acknowledged that due to the uncertainty related to travel restrictions it is not possible to have the workshops in person and keep the planned timetable for the BSAP update.

2.5 The Meeting took note that a BSAP drafting group chaired by Rüdiger Stempel, HELCOM Executive Secretary, has been established by the Heads of Delegation.

2.6 The Meeting took note that HOD 58-2020 approved the updated Work Plan for BSAP update which will be available on the [HOD 58-2020 Meeting site](#) annexed to the outcome.

2.7 The Meeting invited Sweden to share experiences on the topic of synopsis 1 “implementing restrictions on over-the-counter pharmaceuticals that are persistent and have an impact on the environment by making prescription by physicians compulsory” in the BSAP UP Workshop on hazardous substances and litter.

2.8 The Meeting suggested to merge proposals 29 and 63 related to munitions and invited SUBMEGED expert groups to work further with the proposal.

2.9 The Meeting agreed on the technical review of synopses as contained in **Annex 2** and further agreed to organize PRESSURE 12c-2020 Meeting to finalize the technical review online on 24 June 2020 at 14 CEST/15 EEST - 16 CEST/17 EEST.

2.10 The Meeting invited the Secretariat to contact the submitters of the synopses where gaps were identified in Annex 2 for gaining additional information prior to the BSAP UP workshops.

Agenda Item 3 Any other business

Documents: None

3.1 The Meeting took note of the information provided by Denmark on a planned, but now postponed, wastewater discharge to the Sound (**Annex 3**).

Agenda Item 4 Outcome of the Meeting

4.1 A draft outcome was prepared by the Secretariat and adopted via correspondence.

Annex 1. List of participants

Name	Representing	Organization	Email address
Lars Sonesten	Chair	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Lars.Sonesten@slu.se
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Cecilia Jörgensen	Sweden	EPA	cecilia.jorgensen@naturvardsverket.se
Philip Axe	Sweden	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	philip.axe@havochvatten.se
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Susanna Kaasinen	HELCOM Secretariat	HELCOM Secretariat	Susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi

Annex 3. Information by Denmark on the planned, but now postponed, sewage discharge to the Sound

- The local municipality of Copenhagen recently authorized a planned discharge of 290.000 kubicmeters of mechanically treated wastewater to the Sound. That is wastewater where only larger objects have been removed. The discharge would take place over a couple of days. The discharge was deemed necessary by the local authorities, since the planned construction of a new city district on top of the existing main sewage pipe required the pipe to be inspected. The decision rest entirely with the local authorities. Local or national politicians were not informed of the decision and had no say in the outcome.
- The discharge represents an estimated 2 tons of phosphorous and 12 tons of nitrogen and 120 tons of organic matter. In terms of nitrogen, this corresponds to less than one percent of the total Danish load to the Sound (12/1350 tons).
- The discharge has, however, been postponed until the autumn, due to recommendations from several sources, including the Danish minister of environment. In the meantime, local authorities have commissioned an external investigation to search for potential alternative solutions to the planned discharge. This investigation will be finished by the end of August.
- We can add that an average of 4 million kubicmeters of mechanically treated wastewater is discharged into the Sound annually, caused by heavy rainfalls leading to sewage overflow. That is more than ten times the planned discharge. On a national level, 96% of all Danish waste water undergoes treatment at waste water treatment plants. The remaining 4% are discharged as overflow. Approximately half of the total Danish nitrogen loads to the Sound stem from sewage treatment plants (700 ton year-1) and overflow events (160 ton year-1).
- Water overflow is of course included in the Danish data reported to HELCOM, and we do not expect the currently planned discharge to alter the Danish nutrient loads to the Baltic Sea significantly.