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This document has been revised to include the feedback provided by the Plenary.

Background

[HELCOM EN-Marine Litter Terms of Reference](#) (ToR) was agreed in 2015 for the period 2015-2018 ([Outcome of PRESSURE 3-2015](#), para 5.17 and [Outcome of STATE&CONSERVATION 3-2015](#), para 2J.2). PRESSURE will regularly revisit the progress of the work according to these ToR and will consider, together with STATE&CONSERVATION, arrangements for further work beyond 2018.

This document contains a proposal for update of the ToR for the period 2018-2021 based on the evaluation of implementation of the ToR by 2018 as contained in document 4-1, and in alignment to the [2018 Ministerial Declaration](#) commitments on marine litter and circular economy (para. 29-34).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the update of the ToR for HELCOM EN-Marine Litter for the period 2018-2021.

Proposal for updated Terms of Reference for HELCOM EN-Marine Litter

The call for establishing this network has been raised through the need to (i) facilitate the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and (ii) develop regional core indicators on marine litter.

The duties of the expert network are detailed in the following sections to be fulfilled in the period 2019-2021, in coherence with similar work undertaken by Contracting Parties in other relevant fora. PRESSURE will regularly revisit the progress of the work according to these ToR and will consider, together with STATE&CONSERVATION, arrangements for further work beyond 2021.

Facilitate the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter

As part of the work of the Pressure Working Group and in cooperation with Maritime Working Groups and other groups as appropriate, the HELCOM EN-Marine litter will:

- ~~Provide its expertise to organize and facilitate practical implementation of the regional actions in HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 and follow up. More specifically, the HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will support and cooperate with the Lead Parties for the implementation of individual regional actions and provide expertise to facilitate implementation of actions with no lead. en:~~
- ~~Seek synergies with other Regional Seas Conventions, namely OSPAR and Barcelona Convention, in implementation of actions of common interest.~~
- ~~Provide expert input, as may be requested by HELCOM working groups e.g. Maritime WG, on relevant measures to reduce the sources and impacts of marine litter in the HELCOM area.:~~
- ~~Provide expert input to the process of updating BSAP as needed.~~
- ~~Drafting HELCOM guidelines on marine litter references to be included in national and local waste prevention and waste management plans, i.a. an element highlighting the impacts of marine litter.~~
- ~~Drafting HELCOM guidelines on best practice routines with regard to cleaning and collection systems to prevent litter from land entering the aquatic environment.~~
- ~~Identifying best practice on waste management and options to address loopholes that makes waste turn into marine litter, including the issue of landfills, regulations and enforcement.~~
- ~~Establishing a dialogue on solutions with business and industry to (i) develop design improvements that reduce the negative impacts of products entering the marine environment, and (ii) reduce over-packaging and promote wise packaging.~~
- ~~Drafting an overview on what products and processes contribute to the input of micro-plastics to the Baltic Sea.~~
- ~~Compiling information on available techniques as well as research and develop additional techniques in waste water treatment plants to prevent micro-particles entering the marine environment.~~
- ~~Finalising the analysis of the degree of the marine environment pollution by wastes flowing down the rivers to the sea, including sanitary waste and, if needed, identify suitable actions for improvement.~~
- ~~Drafting an overview of the most significant sources of EPS ending up in the marine environment. Make recommendations to the Contracting Parties on voluntary agreements with the industry on changes in product design and applying best practices when handling EPS.~~
- ~~Proposing tools for regional coordination to reduce the use of plastic bags including regular national reporting as well as feasible reduction targets.~~
- ~~Investigating bilateral and multilateral solutions between countries for establishment of deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (e.g. glass, plastics and aluminum) in relation to passenger ships.~~
- ~~Identifying what certification schemes could be addressed for information and inclusion of the management and prevention of marine litter in their lists of criteria.~~

- ~~— Exchanging information on the implementation of measures addressing the reduction of littering in river basins.~~
- ~~— Setting up an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in the different marine compartments and rivers.~~
- ~~— Drafting best practice on the disposal of old pleasure boats.~~
- ~~— Drafting best practice in relation to inspections for MARPOL Annex V, including harmonized management of data.~~
- ~~— Evaluating the implementation of HELCOM Recommendation 28E-10 on the application of the no-special fee system to ship-generated wastes and marine litter caught in fishing nets in the Baltic Sea area.~~
- ~~— Assessing the amount of ports operating according to ISO standard (ISO 21070:2013) in relation to port reception facilities and proposing action as appropriate.~~
- ~~— Drafting best practice in relation to all relevant aspects of waste management within the fishing sector (including e.g. waste management on board, waste management at harbors and operational losses/net cuttings).~~
- ~~— Drafting and promoting best practice in relation to ALDFG and derelict fishing gear and their removal.~~
- ~~— Compiling information and elaborating guidelines on best practices to reduce the input of ALDFG from commercial and recreational fishing to the Baltic Sea taking into account geographical particularities.~~
- ~~— Proposing options to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industry, which could contribute to marine litter, including deposit schemes and extended producer responsibility.~~
- ~~— Investigating the use and prevalence of dolly ropes (bunches of polyethylene threads used to protect the cod end of demersal trawl nets from abrasions; synthetic fibre) in the areas of the Baltic Sea where they are used and consider the need to act.~~
- ~~— Mapping of snagging sites or historic dumping grounds and a risk assessment for identifying where accumulation of ghost nets pose a threat to the environment and should be removed.~~
- ~~— Promoting the implementation of passive Fishing for Litter schemes.~~
- ~~— Drafting information sheets to assist Contracting Parties in developing material for education programs, especially for professional seafarers including fishermen, highlighting the marine litter problem and including codes of practice.~~
- Contributing to the revision of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter to be held in 2021.
- Provide expert input to the process of updating the BSAP as needed.

Monitoring and assessment

The HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will act as the platform for discussion and review of HELCOM indicators on marine litter being developed by Lead Countries and appointed experts as part of the work by State and Conservation Working Group. More specifically, the HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will support Lead Countries in the further development of HELCOM indicators on marine litter, namely:

- Further develop the HELCOM pre-core indicator on beach litter aiming at shifting it to core indicator.
- Further develop the HELCOM pre-core indicator on litter on the seafloor aiming at shifting it to core indicator.
- Assay the adequacy of the existing HELCOM candidate indicator on microlitter in the water column as a microlitter indicator. Based on the results of the assay further work on the development of a regional microlitter indicator.
- Building reliable knowledge base on monitoring of microlitter in storm water.
- Develop a regionally coordinated monitoring sub-programme on macrolitter characteristics and abundance/volume.

- Develop a proposal of a regionally coordinated monitoring sub-programme on microlitter particle abundance and characteristics.
- Work on developing baselines and threshold values for maximum levels of marine litter in the Baltic Sea.
- Update the indicator reports at regular intervals as decided in HELCOM.
- Ensure timely and quality assured delivery of indicator based assessments of marine litter.
- Provide suggestions for regional action on monitoring of litter, including micro-plastics, in rivers.

Working procedures

The network consists of experts nominated by Contracting Parties and will be open to Observers according to HELCOM procedures. Additional experts and representatives of organizations can be invited to the meetings. The expert network will function as a joint network of Pressure WG and State and Conservation WG receiving guidance from both HELCOM working groups according to their mandates (Pressure WG overall coordination of the RAP ML; State and Conservation indicators, monitoring and assessment) and providing support to other groups, in particular Maritime WG, as may be requested.

The mode of work for the expert network will be mainly via correspondence and tele-meetings, with at least one physical meetings ~~being~~ organized ~~annually as needed~~. A Chair for the network will be elected. The products will be handled at HELCOM Meeting Portal workspace dedicated to this use. The HELCOM Secretariat will provide administrative support to the network.