

## Memo of RedCore DG 8-2015

**Tuesday-Wednesday, 1-2 September 2015 at HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki, Finland**

**Chair:** Lars M. Svendsen (DK).

**Participants:** : Dietmar Koch (DE), Lars Sonesten (SE), Antti Raike (FI), Seppo Knuutila (FI), Pekka Kotilainen (SYKE), Adriana Dembowska (National Water Management Authority, Poland), Karina Makarewicz (Ministry of Agriculture Poland), Tomasz Kowalkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland), Marianna Pastuszek (National Marine Fisheries State Research Institute, Poland), Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky (Secretariat), Sriram Sethuraman (Secretariat).

Bo Gustafsson (BNI) via Skype.

### **1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

### **2. Information from participants and from HELCOM Secretariat**

The issues of relevance for the group have been discussed. In particular, the group was informed about the HOLAS II project (agenda item 4), progress in preparation of the status report on pharmaceuticals and questionnaire on national methodologies of heavy metal monitoring (agenda item 5).

### **3. Preparation for the PRESSURE 3/2015 meeting**

*a. CART follow-up assessment – follow up on questions and comments from Contracting Parties and request from HOD48/2015. Further status on dataset. Remaining activities, timetable and responsibilities*

The document prepared by Lars M. Svendsen, Bo Gustafsson and the Secretariat was discussed. The document contains compilation of all the questions regarding the CART follow up assessment raised at the HOD 48-2015 and written comments received after HOD 48-2015. The meeting agreed about the answers given to the questions and also clarified the questions from Finland on some discrepancies in the Finnish data in the assessment compared with Finnish compilations, and on the methodology of taking extra reduction into account assessing the input to the other Baltic Sea sub-basins.

Lars M. Svendsen will by 4. September 2015 slightly update some paragraph on the used statistical methodology used in the assessment, and make the key message more clear for readers.

The meeting discussed excel tables prepared by Lars M. Svendsen with the most important data on nutrient inputs from the countries to the sub-basins which were used for the last CART assessment. The experts agreed that the tables can be published together with the CART follow up assessment being complemented with the reference input data for sub-basins. Lars M. Svendsen will elaborate the tables by 4. September. The Secretariat will then upload the revised CART follow-up assessment and the spreadsheet with assessment data.

*b. Future production of PLC assessment and frequency of these was discussed as well as the document for submission for PRESSURE3/2015.*

The meeting decided to update the PLC strategic document (doc 3-2 HOD 48-2015) by substantiation of the assessment periods. Pros and cons for the proposed assessment periods will be identified, as synergy with the other reporting periods e.g. MSFD and WFD in order to avoid double work. Lars Sonesten and Lars M. Svendsen will prepare the document for submission for Pressure 3-2015 in due time.

The meeting also welcomed suggestion of the BNI and DCE to perform a comparison of the results of 3 and 5 year assessment period when updating the MAI and CART follow-up assessment with 2013 and 2014 data.

*c. The meeting considered a proposal by the Chair for procedures for releasing the reported PLC water data and accepting the filled in and consolidated dataset as part of the steps to elaborate PLC products and in general agreed with the proposed procedures. The document was amended according to the suggestions of the participants which recommended to integrate the items describing circulation of the prefilled templates and informing Pressure group meetings. The meeting requested the Secretariat to develop the document further integrating a graphical presentation of the agreed procedures, and to circulate the document for a short commenting round in REDCORE DG before the document are submitted to PRESSURE 3 by 16<sup>th</sup> September.*

The meeting also noted that the protocol of correction and approving the data reported by the contracting parties and filling up data gaps should be developed.

*d. The project on operationalization project of the nutrient reductions scheme follow up as agreed by HOD48/2015 was discussed. The participants agreed that the full automation should be performed in 2 phases. The data processing procedures which are to be urgently automated should be included to the phase 1. The list of these procedures was provided to the HOD 48-2015 in the document 3.29. The meeting was of the opinion that not all the procedures can be automated. There are a number of procedures which required expert analysis and manual data handling. Nevertheless, the programme application/expert toolbox automatically performing the standard procedures of retrieving data from the PLC data base, statistical data processing, flow normalization and inputs calculation should be one of the deliverables of the first phase of the project.*

The meeting agreed with the proposal that the assessment data should be kept separately from the PLC database. The technical solution should be clarified whether the assessment data could be in separate tables in the PLC database or in another database.

The meeting agreed that the workshops focused on identification of the needs for data presentation, access to download of assessment data and public tools for PLC data handling as well as optimal technical solutions should be organized at the first phase of the project implementation. The phases 1 should also include proposal for contents of the second phase of the project and resources required for its implementation assessed.

The meeting requested BNI, DCE together with the Secretariat to elaborate particular technical aspects and working plan of the project implementation. The working plan is to be reported to the Pressure 3-2015.

*e. Updating of recommendations on airborne and waterborne inputs (HELCOM Recommendation 24/1 and 26/2). The meeting thoroughly considered the updated documents presented by the Lars M. Svendsen. The participants requested the Secretariat to update preambles of the recommendations with the references to recent legal acts and HELCOM commitments. Lars M. Svendsen will further elaborate substantial parts of the documents taking into account the comments by the RedCore 8-2015 and consultations with experts in air quality monitoring (e.g. Ms. Tuija Ruoho-Airola FMI). The document have to be submitted to the Pressure 3-2015 for endorsement in due time.*

#### *4. REDCORE DG/PLC6 contribution to HOLASII – brief information by HOLASII project manager.*

The meeting took note the information on implementation of the HOLAS II project. The meeting discussed how the data on nutrients input could be integrated into the pressure index calculation. Bo Gustafsson (BNI) will investigate available technical and methodological options to present spatial distributed nutrients input to the Baltic Sea with a resolution higher than the one quantified for the assessment of the nutrient reduction scheme implementation. The information on possible solutions will be provided for the HOLAS II workshop which will be held 13 November in Helsinki.

#### *5. Status on the PLC6 project.*

The meeting was informed about that the PLC-6 Guideline are ready and can be published shortly. The meeting was informed about data on national methodologies of monitoring of heavy metals in rivers and noted high compatibility of the methodologies used in the reported countries. The meeting invited Finland and Germany to provide required information as soon as possible, and the Secretariat will also remind Lithuania, Poland and Russia to submit the questionnaires within one week.

The meeting was informed about results of annual reporting of 2013 PLC data. The meeting took note the information by PLC data manager Pekka Kotilainen regarding the state of the reported data. All the countries reported some data on nutrient inputs in 2013, but so far data sets of 6 countries have been verified. Data verification includes skype session with national data coordinators. 5 interviews have carried out (DE, EE, LT, LV and RU). The data received from DK, SE and FI are being verified. Corrections to the primarily reported data and after the skype interview were obtained from DE, EE, LT, LV and RU, but the received amendments/corrections haven't been verified. No response have been received from Poland. The data manager informed the meeting that in some cases the third round of data correction and filling data gaps will be needed.

Taking into account that the data on annual and periodic reporting 2014 are of high importance for further implementation of the PLC-6 project in accordance with the deadlines, the Chair of the RedCore DG recommended to prioritize preparation of the prefilled templates for 2014 reporting period compare to the correction 2013 data. The final prefilled templates for annual and periodic reporting 2014 including information on inland (indirect) sources have to be released in November 2015 by the week 46. The meeting requested the data manager by the end of week 36 to make a timetable for submission of prefilled annual and prefilled periodical templates and specify the procedure on when Country Parties can report data and how they will be notified about the correct version of the templates for reporting 2014 data. A plan for reporting 2014 data including deadlines has to be developed. The Chairman stressed that the Contracting Parties cannot report data later than by the agreed deadlines as the PLC6 assessment and the update of MAI and CART assessments cannot be delayed.

The procedures of correction and filling gaps in the 2013 dataset should be finalized by mid-October 2015. Thus, the assessment procedures are to be launched by the end of October 2015 striving to finalize the Baltic Sea Environmental fact sheets on nutrient input fact sheets 2013 by the end of January 2016.

#### *6. Status on PLUS project.*

The meeting was informed about implementation of the QA/QC procedures. The meeting noted that the QA procedures of the level 1 – format check – have been implemented and verified. At the same time the meeting noted that the QA level 2 – automatic statistical checks – still requires verification. The QA procedures level 3 and 4 have not been yet implemented. The meeting emphasized that the thorough description of the QA/QC procedures is strongly required and level 2 procedures need to be ready in October 2015 before Contracting Parties start reporting 2014 data. The meeting also stressed that the lacking documentation for the different QA levels should be provided.

#### *7. Presentation of the recent studies by Poland – document have been submitted, and we will have an expert discussion around the scientific points they raise.*

The meeting took note of presentations by Tomasz Kowalkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland)[will be submitted later after internal validation] and Marianna Pastuszek (National Marine Fisheries State Research Institute, Poland)[Presentation 2] regarding the recent national studies on nutrient inputs by the rivers Vistula and Odra. The meeting highly appreciate the effort of Poland to obtain reliable data on nutrients input from the Polish territory to the Baltic Sea. The experts discussed some of the scientific aspects of the presented studies and especially noted the importance of a comprehensive holistic approach to the assessment of the state of the Baltic Sea presented by Marianna Pastuszek (this presentation is available at the HELCOM meeting portal). Polish experts expressed the opinion that there are many methodological inconsistencies during elaboration of the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme e.g. flow normalization and lack of the account of global processes e.g regime shift. The experts also pointed out that the year 2010 was characterised by extremely high precipitation and rivers run of and consequently nutrient discharges. Thus,

Polish experts were of the opinion that this single year can not be used for evaluation of Polish impact on the Baltic Sea environment. Further Polish experts expressed the view that the HELCOM reduction targets proposed for Poland are not feasible and fulfilling such CART requirements will have very negative impact on Polish economy and agricultural sector in particular.

The participants also discussed questions raised in relation to the reference period (1997-2003) in BSAP, how the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme was elaborated, methodology of the flow normalization and some of the statistical procedures. The meeting emphasized that the methodologies were also harmonized with the ones used in OSPAR area. Further it was clarified that a new dynamic model (BALTSEM) was used for the revised MAI and the new CART in the HELCOM 2013 Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration. The meeting also refer that a lot of reports and documentation are available on HELCOM website describing how the nutrient reduction scheme has been developed.

The participants highlighted that the pollution load compilation and consequent assessment are done based on data reported by the Contracting Parties (e.g. only annual data on flow and loads are reported). The participants urged that Polish experts provide the data they have used in their calculation to allow for comparison with data reported to the PLC database and also for comparing with some of the calculation made in the follow-up assessments of MAI and CART.

The REDCORE DG chair offered that some of the scientific issues raised by Poland could be further discussed within the PLC6 project (PLC 6 project meeting), on a workshop or at an extended REDCORE DG meeting.

*9. Planning: RedCore DG tentative working plan for the next half of the year by the PRESSURE 4-2016.*

The meeting conformed following meetings to be held at the HELCOM Secretariat:

REDCORE DG 9 –2015: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015

PLC6 9-2015: 27-28 October 2015

PLUS 9-2015: 29 October 2015

Further the Chair promised to make an updated working plan for the work of REDCORE DG during the next period by the end of week 36.