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<b>Document title</b>	Proposal to shift the date of HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation meetings
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<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	7 - Any other business
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<b>Submitted by</b>	Poland
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## Background

The Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization, at its 101<sup>st</sup> session, approved, with immediate effect, changes to the procedure for submission of documents containing proposals regarding ships' routing and ship reporting systems.

The aforementioned changes, notified by means of MSC.1/Circ.1608 circular, include, amongst other things, an obligation to submit draft documents regarding establishment of, or major amendments to, ships' routing systems or ship reporting systems, to the IMO Secretariat for initial review not later than six months before the opening of the relevant session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR).

Considering the current good practice of presenting draft ships' routing proposals during HELCOM SAFE NAV meetings before submitting them to the IMO, together with the current date of the NCSR Sub-Committee sessions (in January) and the date of HELCOM SAFE NAV meetings (in September), the changed IMO procedure described above increases the length of the submission process to 16 months.

The proposed shifting the date of HELCOM SAFE NAV meetings to the month of May would allow completion of the aforementioned process within 8 months.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider the proposal and decide as appropriate.

## Proposal to shift the date of HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation meetings

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), at its 101<sup>st</sup> session, approved changes to the procedure for submission of documents containing proposals regarding ships' routing and ship reporting systems (MSC.1/Circ.1608).

The aforementioned changes were developed during the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), which took place on 16 to 25 January 2019.

The new procedure, amongst other things, requires Member States to submit draft documents proposing the establishment of, or major amendments to, ships' routing systems or ship reporting systems to the NCSR Secretariat for initial review not later than six months before the opening of the relevant session of the NCSR Sub-Committee.

Considering the dates of the past two (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) sessions of the NCSR Sub-Committee, as well as the date of the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Sub-Committee, planned for the month of January, the deadline for submission of proposals concerning ships' routing and ship reporting systems, in accordance with the new procedure, falls on the month of July.

Considering also the good practice of consulting proposals regarding ships' routing systems and ship reporting systems within the Baltic Sea with the Baltic States during meetings of HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation (usually taking place in the month of September), in order to allow both the timely submission of the aforementioned proposals to the IMO and the preliminary consultation of such proposals with the Baltic States, it is recommended to shift the date of HELCOM SAFE NAV meetings and to organize them in the month of May.

This will create an opportunity to present the draft submission to the Baltic States at an early stage, collect experts' opinions, implement any suggested modifications and resolve potential doubts, before submitting the proposal to the IMO for consideration during the nearest session of the NCSR Sub-Committee.

The proposed shifting the date of HELCOM SAFE NAV meetings will allow completion of the aforementioned process within 8 months, while, if the current month of SAFE NAV meetings remains unchanged, the aforementioned procedure will last at least 16 months.