



## OUTCOME OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON SAFETY OF NAVIGATION (SAFE NAV 12-2021)

### Introduction

0.1 The Twelfth Meeting of the HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation (SAFE NAV 12-2021) was held online on 9 June 2021, in accordance with the decisions of SAFE NAV 11-2020 (Outcome of SAFE NAV 11-2020, Paragraph 8.2).

0.2 The Meeting was attended by Delegations from all Contracting Parties except the European Union, as well as an observer from Race For The Baltic. The list of participants is contained **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Ronny Hansen, Danish Maritime Authority. Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary and Ms. Marta Ruiz, Associate Professional Secretary, acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

### Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

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

### Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from HELCOM meetings

2.1 The Meeting took note of the outcome of HELCOM SAFE NAV 11-2020 (**document 2-1**) and agreed to make use of the information as appropriate.

2.2 The Meeting took note of the information on the outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for the Group (**document 2-2**) and agreed to discuss issues of relevance to HELCOM SAFE NAV under relevant Agenda Items. In particular, the Meeting took note of the process of updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and proposals for actions related to safety of navigation in the Baltic Sea.

### Agenda Item 3 Accidents and ship traffic in the Baltic Sea

3.1 No documents were submitted under this Agenda Item.

3.2 The Meeting noted that the [HELCOM report on shipping accidents during 2018](#) in the Baltic Sea region has been published in the HELCOM website.

3.3 The Meeting recalled that MARITIME 19-2019 had noted the discussion by SAFE NAV 10-2019 regarding the lack of reporting of drug or alcohol abuse as the cause of accidents. The meeting had noted that due to the recent decision to use EMCIP data, starting with accidents that occurred in 2019, HELCOM is not in a position to mandate the reporting of drug or alcohol abuse as the cause of accidents. The meeting had further noted that changes to the EMCIP dataset would have to be considered by EMSA and its Permanent Cooperation Framework (PCF) for the Investigation of Accidents in the Maritime Transport Sector. SAFE NAV 11-2020 discussed the matter and encouraged Contracting Parties that attend the PCF to raise the matter there, as appropriate ([Outcome of SAFE NAV 11-2020](#), para.3.4-3.5).

3.4 In this context, the Meeting noted that an action has been proposed for inclusion in the updated BSAP on close technical cooperation with the EMSA in collection of data relevant for the development of

safer shipping in the Baltic Sea and explore possibilities for future cooperation on the provision of data to EMSA, including on drug/alcohol abuse as a cause of accidents as well as data on linked spills and cargo losses to the environment.

3.5 The Meeting noted that, as requested by MARITIME 18-2020, the Secretariat has been in contact with EMSA to get the shipping accidents data for 2019 through the EMCIP Database (for EU Member States). A MoU has been signed between EMSA and HELCOM for this purpose, but due to the related administrative tasks and COVID-19, it had not been possible for the Secretariat to finalize the draft accidents report for approval by MARITIME 20-2020.

3.6 The Meeting noted that MARITIME 20-2020 invited the Secretariat to, once available, circulate the draft report on shipping accidents during 2019 in the Baltic Sea region to Contracting Parties for approval by correspondence, noting that due to resource constraints at the Secretariat, it was not possible to indicate exactly when the draft report could be circulated for approval. The Meeting took note that the draft report is close to completion, but unfortunately not ready for consideration by this Meeting.

3.7 The Meeting noted that the Secretariat is currently liaising with EMSA regarding access to the 2020 accidents data for inclusion in the next annual report.

#### **Agenda Item 4                      Sea Traffic Management**

4.1 No documents were submitted under this Agenda Item.

4.2 The Meeting recalled that SAFE NAV 11-2020 had agreed in general with a proposal by Sweden for an action in the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) to recommend sharing of voyage plans on a voluntary basis in the Baltic Sea region in order to increase maritime safety. The Meeting invited Sweden to prepare a synopsis on the matter at their earliest convenience, and the Secretariat to forward it for consideration to the relevant HELCOM groups and meetings ([Outcome of SAFE NAV 11-2020](#), para.4.4).

4.3 The Meeting noted that while such a synopsis was not provided, there are other proposed actions related to maritime safety currently being considered for inclusion in the updated BSAP. In this context, the Meeting also noted that sharing of voyage plans on a voluntary basis is already ongoing, taking also into consideration HELCOM Recommendation 34E/2 *on Further testing and development of the concept of exchange of voyage plans as well as other e-navigation solutions to enhance safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea region*. The Meeting encouraged all Contracting Parties to implement Recommendation 34E/2 and share voyage plans with each other.

4.4 The Meeting did not discuss any further matters related to Sea Traffic Management.

#### **Agenda Item 5                      New and existing routeing measures in the Baltic Sea**

5.1 No documents were submitted under this Agenda Item.

5.2 The Meeting recalled that SAFE NAV 10-2019 took note of the information by Germany on Routeing in southwest of the Baltic Sea - Update 2019 to HELCOM Maritime/SAFE NAV ([document 5-1, Presentation 1](#)) as well as comments by Poland ([Presentation 2](#)), expressing concern with regard to the proposed routeing measures as they would have an impact on some of the established and commonly used routes to Polish ports. The meeting had noted that no decisions were to be made at that stage, but had agreed that further discussion and consideration of the proposals in document 5-1 is needed, and that the overall objective is to improve safety of navigation in the concerned area. The meeting invited Germany, Poland, Sweden and Denmark to discuss intersessionally, and agreed to revisit the matter at SAFE NAV 11-2020 ([Outcome of SAFE NAV 10-2019](#), para. 5.1-5.2).

5.3 The Meeting recalled further that SAFE NAV 11-2020 took note that intersessional discussions with Denmark, Germany and Poland have taken place ([Outcome of SAFE NAV 11-2020](#), para. 5.3).

5.4 The Meeting took note of the information by Germany that the proposal for routeing in the southwest Baltic Sea is being revised, but the revised proposal has not been completed yet. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Denmark to cooperate with Germany in revising the proposal. The Meeting invited Germany to submit the revised proposal to SAFE NAV 13-2022.

5.5 The Meeting discussed existing and planned routeing measures in the Baltic Sea and noted information provided by Sweden that new routes and traffic separation schemes, approved by IMO, entered into force in Skagerrak and Kattegat during summer 2020. The Meeting noted the view of Sweden and Denmark that these new measures have been proven to be very successful. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Denmark to share analysis of these measures with the SAFE NAV 13-2022.

5.6 The Meeting took note of information by Poland on the new Traffic Separation Scheme “Slupska Bank”, which has been approved by IMO and entered into force on 1 June 2021.

5.7 The Meeting took note of information provided by Denmark on a new temporary non mandatory Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) in the Fehmarn Belt being applied from 1 July 2021 due to the construction of the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link tunnel.

## **Agenda Item 6                      Charts and bathymetry**

6.1 The Meeting recalled that SAFE NAV 10-2019 had taken note of the information on defining and updating HELCOM CAT. I & II shipping routes in the Baltic Sea submitted by Sweden ([document 6-1](#) and [Presentation 4](#)), noting also that the matter will be raised at MARITIME 19-2019 (documents [10-3](#) and [10-4](#)), including a proposal to updating the Re-survey Scheme to include also Category III areas, with a view for approval at MARITIME 20-2020 ([Outcome of SAFE NAV 10-2019](#), para. 6.1).

6.2 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 20-2020 took note of the HELCOM-BSHC Harmonized Re-survey Scheme update and assessment report ([document 9-1](#), Presentation 6), and approved the updated HELCOM Harmonized Re-Survey Scheme, as set out in Annex 1 of document 9-1 ([Outcome of MARITIME 20-2020](#), para. 9.5-9.6).

6.3 The Meeting took note that that MARITIME 20-2020 endorsed the updated Re-Survey Scheme for inclusion into the updated BSAP ([Outcome of MARITIME 20-2020](#), para. 3.19 and [Excel attachment](#) to the Outcome).

6.4 The Meeting took note of the HELCOM Re-Survey Scheme update report as contained in **document 6-1** and **Presentation 1**).

6.5 The Meeting supported the MARITIME 19A-2020 and MARITIME 20-2020 proposal to include the Updated HELCOM Re-Survey Scheme CAT III areas into the new BSAP (2021).

6.6 The Meeting encouraged all Contracting Parties to continue hydrographic surveys in their waters.

6.7 The Meeting further encouraged all Contracting Parties to monitor the shipping in order to revise the CAT I & II routes and further define uniform routes at border crossings bilaterally with their neighbours.

## **Agenda Item 7                      Any other business**

7.1 The Meeting took note of information provided by Germany regarding the publication of the second draft of the [Maritime Spatial Plan](#) for the German Exclusive Economic Zone in the North Sea and in the Baltic Sea.

7.2 The Meeting took note of the working version of the [Estonian Maritime Spatial Plan](#).

7.3 The Meeting did not discuss any other issues.

**Agenda Item 8**                      **Next meetings and contacts**

8.1            The Meeting checked and updated the list of contact addresses and observers of HELCOM SAFE NAV (**document 8-1**) and agreed to include it as **Annex 2** of the Outcome. The Meeting encouraged Contracting Parties and observers to ensure that the information is correct and inform the Secretariat of any changes.

8.2            The Meeting considered the draft revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for SAVE NAV, as set out in **document 8-2** and recalled the discussion at SAFE NAV 11-2020 regarding the need to update the ToR especially with respect to having alphabetically changing host countries for the group rather than only Denmark and Sweden hosting the meetings in turn.

8.3            The Meeting discussed the draft revised ToR, made a number of revisions and agreed on the draft ToR as contained in **Annex 3** of the Outcome for approval by the Maritime Working Group.

8.4            The Meeting agreed that the next meeting of SAFE NAV tentatively be held on 1 June 2022, with the exact dates to be decided by the Secretariat, the next host country Finland and the Chair when more information is available on the HELCOM and IMO meeting schedules. The Meeting agreed that the format (online or physical) should also be decided at that stage.

**Agenda Item 9**                      **Outcome of the Meeting**

9.1            The Meeting adopted the Outcome of the Meeting. The Outcome of the Meeting, together with the documents and presentations considered by the Meeting are available on the [SAFE NAV 12-2021 meeting site](#).

## Annex 1 List of participants

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## Annex 2 List of Contacts and Observers of HELCOM SAFE NAV

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## Annex 3 Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Group of Experts on Safety of Navigation

### 1. Rationale

The Baltic Sea is an area of heavy maritime traffic which is predicted to grow also in the future. Increasing traffic also increases the risk of major pollution accidents, which could have devastating impacts on the marine environment.

Numerous measures to improve maritime safety have been implemented in different parts of the Baltic Sea, including routing measures and new ship reporting systems as agreed e.g. in the 2001 HELCOM Copenhagen Declaration. However, the increasing maritime traffic and the associated risks call for further, improved and tailor-made safety and environmental risk reduction procedures.

It is recognized that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is the body regulating navigational safety. It has further been recognized that close and enhanced cooperation and especially exchange of technical expertise on navigational safety is needed in the Baltic Sea.

The HELCOM 2010 Ministerial Meeting in Moscow agreed to identify the possible areas for strengthening regional cooperation in maritime safety in the framework of the HELCOM Maritime Group and consider the appropriate forms for this cooperation, while recognizing the need for the exchange of technical expertise in the field of maritime safety, especially in risk assessment to avoid shipping accidents in the Baltic Sea, and taking into account the work of the IMO.

The HELCOM 2013 Ministerial Meeting in Copenhagen recalled the HELCOM Copenhagen 2001, Krakow 2007 and Moscow 2010 commitments to increase safety of navigation in the Baltic Sea and agreed to further strengthen co-operation with IMO in the field of safety of navigation and to further develop technical cooperation between the European Maritime Safety Agency and HELCOM, including to ease collection and analysis of maritime data relevant for the Baltic Sea.

This is in line with one of the objectives of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to ensure safe maritime traffic without accidental pollution.

### 2. Overall aims and tasks of the Expert Group

The overall aim of the Expert Group is to create a forum on enhancing navigational safety through regional cooperation.

The Expert Group will function as information exchange forum and will also discuss and propose measures to improve safety of navigation, as well as provide feedback and expertise as need be.

The Expert Group will enable more regular discussions on the safety of navigation, including coordination and exchange of views before IMO meetings (MSC and NCSR) as well as in relation to other issues.

The basis for the work of the Expert Group is the list of identified areas in need of regional cooperation as found in Annex 1 of these Terms of Reference.

### 3. Membership

Participation is open to representatives of the HELCOM Contracting Parties. The members should be nominated by the Contracting Parties.

HELCOM observers can participate. Other guests, organisations and initiatives with a maritime safety interest can be invited to the meetings.

### 4. Organisation

The Expert Group will meet once per year either online or in person based on the IMO meeting calendar and well in advance of relevant IMO meetings (MSC, NCSR). The forum could also communicate via correspondence. If need arises, more meetings could be arranged.

The meetings are hosted by Contracting Parties taking turns in alphabetical order.

The Group will be chaired by the hosting country unless otherwise decided.

The Expert Group will document its meetings. A concise outcome will be adopted before the end of each meeting. The outcome is agreed by consensus.

HELCOM Meeting Portal will be used to distribute documents (in a restricted access mode) as well as publish the meeting documents, presentations and the outcome (public after the meeting). Access to some documents may be kept restricted.

The outcome of meetings will be reported to the HELCOM Maritime Working Group. The Chair should attend the meetings of the Maritime Working Group as far as possible.

#### **5. Agenda for the meetings**

The agenda for the meetings will be developed by the Secretariat in cooperation with the chair/hosting country.

**ANNEX 1****Areas of strengthening of regional expert cooperation in navigational safety**

Numerous measures to improve maritime safety have been implemented in different parts of the Baltic Sea, including routing measures and new ship reporting systems as agreed e.g. in the 2001 HELCOM Copenhagen Declaration.

The increasing maritime traffic in the Baltic Sea and the associated risks call for further, improved and tailor-made safety and environmental risk reduction procedures.

While it is recognized that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is the body regulating navigational safety, the following non-exclusive list of areas in need of strengthened regional cooperation have been identified:

- 1) Evaluate the current and foreseen risks related to shipping and other maritime activities in the Baltic Sea area.
- 2) Identify appropriate and pro-active risk control measures to address the risks to the Baltic Sea environment based on a comprehensive risk approach, and promote their implementation.
- 3) Develop common understanding of the causes of shipping accidents with the aim to suggest how these could be addressed.
- 4) Investigate the need for, and share and utilize the results of, research projects, risk assessment studies, “cost and benefit” analysis, and Formal Safety Assessment(s) (FSAs) in support of decision making when choosing the best mitigating measures and for use in IMO rule-making process.
- 5) Build regional knowledge, experience and excellence in FSAs and showcase the Baltic good standards and practices of both how FSAs can be carried out and documented.
- 6) Consider and consult the development of, and proposals for, amending the existing and introducing new traffic management measures, such as routing measures, with the aim to ensure that all systems and services assist safe navigation of ships in the Baltic Sea in an optimized and uniform manner.
- 7) Discuss and promote the harmonization of operation and procedures of ship reporting systems (SRSs), Vessel Traffic Services (VTS), and other related vessel traffic management measures.
- 8) Discuss measures to increase safety of winter navigation.
- 9) Cooperate with the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC) regarding prioritization of areas for hydrographic re-surveys taking into account the planned and upcoming routing measures.
- 10) Work out uniform interpretations of new regional and international regulations and standards for maritime safety, where needed.
- 11) In the long term, ensure utilization of expertise on maritime safety in the emerging regional processes aiming at testing and implementing Maritime Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea in a cross-border context.
- 12) Contribute to the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in relation to maritime safety.
- 13) Identify research and development needs in support of navigational safety with the aim to have the relevant research topics well represented in available national and international funding programmes.