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<b>Document Title</b>	Provisional Annotated Agenda
<b>Code</b>	1-2
<b>Category</b>	CMNT
<b>Agenda Item</b>	1 - Adoption of the Agenda
<b>Submission date</b>	31.08.2016
<b>Submitted by</b>	Secretariat
<b>Reference</b>	SEAL 9-2016 (Outcome, paragraph 10.8)

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### Background

The Tenth Meeting of the *ad hoc* HELCOM Seal Expert Group (HELCOM SEAL 10-2016) will be held in Hel, Poland, at the premises of Prof. Krzysztof Skóra Marine Station, University of Gdańsk (Address: Morska 2 Str., 84-150 Hel) on 5-7 October 2016. The Meeting will be chaired by Mr. Anders Galatius, Chair of the *ad hoc* Seal expert group.

The Meeting will start at **10.00 on 5 October 2016** and will finish by **14.00 on 7 October 2016**.

The focal items of the Meeting are to review the activities of the Contracting Parties related to implementation of HELCOM Recommendation 27/28: 'Conservation of seals in the Baltic Sea area and to finalize the HELCOM marine mammal core indicators and agree on the update of the indicators.

Meeting documents will be submitted by the Secretariat to the [document library](#) of the [SEAL 10-2015 meeting site](#) via the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#). The Secretariat has prepared [a document template](#) and recommends using the template when submitting documents to the Secretariat. The Secretariat kindly requests the Contracting Parties and Observers to observe the deadlines for submission of documents to a HELCOM meeting. The basic documents and documents requiring action or a decision to the Meeting should be submitted in electronic form to Assisting Professional Secretary Ms. Petra Kääriä ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) **by 13 September 2016**. Bulky documents should include abstracts embodying the essence of the proposals and action requested from the meeting. Documents containing comments to the basic documents as well as information documents should be provided to the Secretariat by **28 September 2016**.

Please register for the Meeting by answering the [Participation Survey](#) in the HELCOM Meeting Portal **by 28 September 2016 the latest**. Instructions for the use of the new Meeting Portal are available on the [HELCOM Website](#).

**Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda**

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, as contained in document 1-1.

**Agenda Item 2 Information by the Chair, Secretariat and Contracting Parties**

The Secretariat will inform the Meeting of the outcome of STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016, FISH 4-2016 and other relevant recent meeting outcomes (document 2-2).

The Chair and The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting of any relevant information.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the Terms of Reference for the Meeting, agreed by SEAL 9-2015 and endorsed by STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 (document 2-1).

**Agenda Item 3 Progress with national management plans**

SEAL 7-2013 started the work on harmonizing national management plans as required by the Recommendation 27-28/2 and 'Guidelines for seal management plans' were developed by SEAL 8-2014 (Annex 2 of the [Outcome](#)).

SEAL 9-2015 agreed to review new and revised national management plans to assess the use of the guidelines and for the Contracting Parties to inform the Secretariat when new plans are adopted and make them available in advance of the annual HELCOM Seal meetings.

SEAL 9-2015 encouraged the Contracting Parties to review current national management plans and their implementation in light of the Recommendation 27-28/2 as well as the management plan guidelines developed by SEAL 8-2014.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) on possible new adopted management plans as well as to update information on the current status of management plans for marine mammals (document 3-1) and to submit updates as well as information on the review of current national management plans, as suggested by SEAL 9-2015 by **13 September 2016** (Point 3 of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016, meeting document 2-1).

**Agenda Item 4 Limit reference level for harbour seals**

SEAL 8-2014 stated that the 10 000 limit reference level does not apply to harbour seals because of the more complicated population structure compared to other seal species as well as influx migration from other areas. The meeting agreed to start work to define a specific LRL for harbour seals as compared to the other Baltic seal species.

Sweden and Denmark are invited to report on the progress of defining of a new LRL for harbour seals to the Meeting (Point 3 of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016, meeting document 2-1).

The Meeting is invited to consider defining a new LRL for harbour seals.

**Agenda Item 5 Monitoring and data collection***Database for seals*

The HELCOM seal database has been further developed under the HELCOM coordinated EU co-financed project BalticBOOST. The Secretariat will present the database and plans for its finalization.

The Contracting Parties are invited to report 2015 data on seals via an excel template (document to be submitted at a later stage) to the Secretariat by **28 September 2016**.

*Distribution maps for marine mammals for HOLAS II*

The Meeting is invited to review the maps for marine mammals that have been developed under the HELCOM coordinated EU co-financed [TAPAS project](#) (document 5-1).

*Monitoring guidelines*

The Meeting is invited to take note of the transfer of monitoring guidelines for the abundance (document 5-2) and distribution (document 5-3) of seals to a new template format as well as of the guidelines for reproductive status (document 5-4) of marine mammals, as prepared according to point 6 of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016 (document 2-1).

Mr. Mart and Ivar Jussi are invited to submit the guidelines on offshore distribution and Sweden, supported by the health team, is invited to submit the guidelines on nutritional status of seals **by 13 September 2016** to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)), as agreed by SEAL 9-2015 (point 6 of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016).

**Agenda Item 6 Work on Baltic Sea harbour porpoise**

The Meeting is invited to review the status of the [HELCOM-ASCOBANS harbour porpoise database](#) (as agreed by SEAL 4-2010). The Contracting Parties are invited to report updates to the database by filling in the [reporting form](#) and sending it to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)).

SEAL 9-2015 agreed that each Contracting Party will designate a contact person for updating data to the database. The Contracting Parties are invited to provide information on national contacts for updating the database to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) by **13 September 2016**.

SEAL 9-2015 welcomed that Germany will prepare a suggestion on an east-west border for the high and low density areas of harbour porpoises. Germany is invited to present the proposal to the Meeting.

SEAL 9-2015 proposed to establish a HELCOM meta-database on acoustic monitoring and welcomed that Germany will prepare a meta-data format for the database in advance of SEAL 10-2016. Germany is invited to prepare the meta-data format and submit it to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) **by 13 September 2016**.

Ms. Penina Blankett, Finland, is invited to report on activities related to Baltic Sea harbour porpoises under ASCOBANS and the Jastarnia Plan.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform of any relevant national activities concerning harbour porpoise.

**Agenda Item 7 Human induced pressures and management of marine mammals**

The Seal expert group has agreed to annually update information on registered seal mortality. The Contracting Parties are invited to update the information in document 7-1 and send it to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) **by 13 September 2016**.

The Meeting is invited to review the existing information and provide updates, especially for year 2015.

Mr. Finn Larsen, Denmark, representative of the incidental catch subgroup for marine mammals is invited to present a review of studies on seal-safe fishing gears to the Meeting (Point 7 of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016, meeting document 2-1).

**Agenda Item 8 Core indicators and other activities under the Seal Expert Group teams***Marine mammal core indicators*

Co-Lead Countries Sweden and Denmark are invited to report on the work undertaken on resolving the still open issues regarding the indicator '**Distribution of Baltic seals**'.

Lead Country Sweden is invited to report on the work undertaken on resolving the still open issues regarding the indicator '**Population trends and abundance of seals**'.

The Meeting is invited to update the core indicator evaluations with 2015 data for the indicators 'Population trends and abundance of seals' and 'Distribution of Baltic seals' (Point 2b of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016, meeting document 2-1).

The Lead Country representatives and the health team are invited to report to the meeting on the conclusions of discussions on the indicators '**Nutritional status of marine mammals**' and '**Reproductive status of marine mammals**' (Outcome of SEAL 10-2016 para 6.18, point 2c of the Terms of Reference of SEAL 10-2016, meeting document 2-1).

The co-Lead Country representatives are invited to present work undertaken on the candidate indicator '**Harbour porpoise distribution and abundance**' and Germany is invited to inform the Meeting on the possibility to take lead for the indicator.

#### *Other work under the intersessional teams*

The leaders of intersessional teams Mr. Ivar Jussi for seal populations, Mr. Olle Karlsson for seal distribution and Ms. Ursula Siebert for seal health, are invited to present information on the recent activities of the teams.

#### **Agenda Item 9 Evaluation of Recommendation 27-28/2**

The evaluation of effectiveness of the HELCOM Recommendation 27-28/2 'Conservation of seals in the Baltic Sea Area' is due in 2016.

Sweden, as a Lead Country for the Recommendation and the review (SEAL 9-2015, paragraph 9.2 in the outcome), is invited to provide a draft document of the evaluation of the effectiveness to the Secretariat ([petra.kaaria@helcom.fi](mailto:petra.kaaria@helcom.fi)) **by 5 September 2016** to be circulated to the group contacts for comments, as agreed at SEAL 9-2015.

The Meeting is invited to consider the review, complement it and agree to submit the evaluation to STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016.

#### **Agenda Item 10 Session on the BalticBOOST comparative pilot study on the use MSFD and HD criteria for assessing the status of seals**

Under the work package 2.1 of the EU cofinanced BalticBOOST project a pilot study comparing the assessment of the status of seal populations based on criteria of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) or the Habitat Directive (HD), has been carried out. The aim of the study is to recommend how to harmonize the assessment of seal population status under the two directives. A comparison on the assessment criteria and geographic scale of the two directives as well as case studies on HD assessments based on Danish and Swedish data compared with HELCOM regional assessments of the status of seals will be presented in a background report (document to be submitted at a later stage).

The Meeting is invited to review the report and provide further guidance towards the finalization of the BalticBOOST pilot-study.

The Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States are invited to report on the approaches used and assessment results reported in the MSFD 2012 reporting to the Secretariat ([ullali.zweifel@helcom.fi](mailto:ullali.zweifel@helcom.fi)) **by 8 September 2016**.

#### **Agenda Item 11 Any other business**

The Meeting is invited to consider any other business of relevance for the group.

The Meeting is invited to agree on the Terms of Reference of the next meeting including main tasks and objectives as well as the arrangements of intersessional activities, to be submitted for endorsement by STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016.

The Meeting is invited to decide on the time and place of the next meeting of the group.

**Agenda Item 12 Outcome of the Meeting**

A draft outcome of the Meeting will be presented by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by the Meeting participants. The final outcome, documents provided as well as presentations given at the Meeting will be made available on the [SEAL 10-2016 Meeting site](#) under [Meeting Documents](#) on the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#).