



Document title	Data call for seal abundance and distribution indicators
Code	4-1
Category	INF
Agenda Item	4 – Monitoring and data collection
Submission date	13.9.2017
Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

The data request for data until 2015 was submitted in 29 November 2016 and data resulting from the data request was stored to the HELCOM seal database. The Secretariat will present the current status of the database (document to be submitted later).

On 4 September 2017, a data call was sent out the SEAL EG contacts, inviting Contracting Parties to report 2016 data on seals by **4 October 2017**.

The attached documents contains a copy of the data call and the [Excel data reporting template](#) is available as an attachment to this document via the [Meeting Document Library](#).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the data call and Contracting Parties are invited to inform on the status of their data reporting.



4 September 2017

Data call – Seal abundance and distribution core indicators

HELCOM requests the Contracting Parties to HELCOM to report abundance and distribution data on seals, to be submitted by **4 October 2017** to the HELCOM Secretariat. Data are to be submitted to HELCOM Secretariat Data coordinator Joni Kaitaranta (joni.kaitaranta@helcom.fi, +358 46 850 9206) who is also to be approached regarding any questions on the data call.

**NB: Data submission template provided as separate attachment file
“HELCOM_SEAL_AbundanceDistribution_template.xlsx”**

RATIONALE FOR DATA REQUEST

Contracting Parties are requested to submit data on seal monitoring with the aim of updating the evaluation for the HELCOM core indicators on seals;

- Distribution of Baltic seals, and
- Population trends and abundance of seals,

as input to the 2018 update of HOLAS II and to support other HELCOM activities for policy purposes.

The data requested to be submitted to HELCOM by the Contracting Parties will be used to calculate the status of the two seal core indicators. The indicator evaluations will be delivered 1 December 2017 as input to the HELCOM 2018 update of the State of the Baltic Sea including data for 2016.

The seal indicators should be calculated based on all the coordinated Baltic-wide surveys and all available data.

If historical data has been provided to the HELCOM core indicator calculation in the previous update cycle, only update of latest years not included in the previous indicator assessment is requested.

DATA USE POLICY

The requested data will be compiled to a Baltic wide HELCOM dataset.

According to [HELCOM data and information strategy](#), all data collected for HELCOM assessment purposes should be openly accessible. For transparency and replicability of the assessment, the underlying data should be openly available on a relevant level of aggregation and documented with proper metadata on lineage and sources.

The data submitted by national data providers will be made publicly available as a HELCOM dataset using HELCOM seal database (see further details below) and [HELCOM Map and Data service](#) as relevant. All count observations contain mandatory text field “Source” containing reference to the national data provider.



DATA REPORTING			
<p>Data should be reported using the provided excel template for the selected species. Guidance on reporting has been developed by experts working on the core indicators and developing the HELCOM Seal database.</p>			
HELCOM SEAL DATABASE			
<p>Data reported by the Contracting Parties through this data call will be included to the HELCOM seal database hosted at the HELCOM Secretariat, to cater for seal distribution and abundance data based on the format developed with the seal experts and taking into account synergies with equivalent OSPAR format.</p>			
REQUESTED DATASET: SCOPE AND SPECIFICATIONS			
<p>The temporal coverage of the activity should last from beginning of surveys until 31.12.2016. If historical data has been provided to the HELCOM core indicator calculation in the previous update cycle during 2016, only update of latest years not included in the previous indicator assessment is requested.</p> <p>The dataset should contain the following information (attributes):</p>			
Dataset	Attribute	Data type (description)	Mandatory/optional field
Abundance and distribution	Species	Text (Codelist: Species as abbreviation: GS=Grey seal, HS=Harbour seal, RS=Ringed seal)	Mandatory
	Country	Text (Codelist: Country as in European union two character country designation)	Mandatory
	Site	Free Text (Name of count site)	Mandatory
	Latitude	Number (Latitude coordinate of count site OR center point of area/grid in WGS84 decimal degrees, 6 decimals)	Mandatory
	Longitude	Number (Latitude coordinate of count site OR center point of area/grid in WGS84 decimal degrees, 6 decimals)	Mandatory
	Natura2000ID	Text (If the count site is inside Natura2000 area, specify the Natura2000 code, e.g. "DK00EY133")	Optional
	Year	Number (Year as in YYYY)	Mandatory
	Month	Number (Month in MM)	Mandatory
	Day	Number (Day as in DD)	Mandatory
	Count	Number (Count of individuals as integer)	Mandatory
	Count_type	Text (Codelist: Site, Transect observation, Aggregated site)	Mandatory
	Estimate_type	Text (Codelist: Minimum, maximum, modelled)	Mandatory
CV_Estimate	Number (In case of repeated count, please provide any available estimates)	Optional	



		of the variability in repeated counts in the form of the coefficient of variation (standard deviation / mean) of replicate counts)	
	Number_surveys	Number (Number of surveys as integer)	Mandatory
	Method	Free text (Survey method text description)	Mandatory
	Source	Free text (Data provider organization)	Mandatory