



Document title	HELCOM data needs to assess incidental by-catches, fisheries impact on benthic biotopes, non-commercially exploited and protected fish species in the Baltic Sea – compilation of comments
Code	6-3
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	6 – Human induced pressures and management of marine mammals
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Submitted by	Poland
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Background

The European Commission adopted a new Data Collection Multiannual Plan DC-MAP for years 2017-2019 dated 12 July 2016 (recast Data Collection Framework). As a new approach, it also requires the collection of data to assess the impact of Union fisheries on marine ecosystems in Union waters and outside Union waters.

Taking into account the EC delegated act on DC-MAP, HELCOM FISH 5-2016 decided to prepare a detailed HELCOM document defining HELCOM data needs to assess incidental by-catches of mammals and waterbirds, fisheries impact on benthic biotopes and non-commercially exploited and protected fish species in the Baltic Sea in order to further operationalise HELCOM CORE Indicators which are not operable at this stage.

Further, the proposal has been discussed during the HELCOM FISH 6/2017 meeting and countries were requested to provide their comments to the proposal (par. 6.24 of the outcome of the HELCOM FISH 6/2017). The attached proposal contains a compilation of obtained comments and some text edits.

The proposal for HELCOM data needs, has also been discussed during the (HELCOM FISH and HELCOM STATE&CONSERVATION) online meeting on 29 of September 2017 (Fish data interests 1/2017).

It should be underlined, that HELCOM proposal is in line with the EFARO¹ initiative to seek greater synergies between the data collection processes under CFP (Data Collection Framework) and the MSFD, particularly in view of the potential benefits to both policies in collecting coordinated data for ecosystem-based management, and for the potential resource efficiencies.

The EFARO proposal has been supported by the European Marine Directors during the meeting, which took place on 15-16 of June 2017 in Malta. They also acknowledged that the recast Data Collection Framework provided an opportunity to strengthen the collection of data on the environmental effects of fisheries (particularly regarding incidental by-catch and adverse effects to the seafloor), and encouraged Member States to actively engage with the Data Collection Framework Regional Coordination Groups to help define these data needs, prioritizing efforts based on risk and use of the most effective and efficient methods. Further, they requested the Commission services to support Member States to engage in the Regional Coordination Groups processes.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to comment the document and suggest how to proceed further.

¹ EFARO - The European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Organization