



Outcome of the Fourth Meeting of the Expert Coordination Network on Response on the Shore (SHORE Network 4-2020)

Introduction

0.1 The Third Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Coordination Network on Response on the Shore (SHORE Network 4-2020) was held on 25 February 2020 in Vejle, Denmark.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by representatives of Estonia, EU, Latvia, Poland and Sweden as well as UNEP, WWF and Sea Alarm as observers. The list of participants is set out in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was welcomed and chaired by Ms. Marit Mätik, Chair of SHORE Network. Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary acted as secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1, 1-2

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

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from other HELCOM activities

Documents: 2-1

2.1 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the 26th Meeting of the HELCOM Response Working Group (RESPONSE 26-2019) held on 3-5 June 2019 in Warsaw, Poland (document 2-1), particularly of the matters of specific interest to the SHORE Network.

Agenda Item 3 Recent developments regarding on-shore response

Documents: 3-1

3.1 The Meeting recalled that Contracting Parties had been invited to provide information on recent national and regional developments of relevance for SHORE Network, national response capabilities as well as national exercises that are being organized in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting noted that Sweden had submitted such information in document 3-1.

3.2 The Meeting took note of the following additional information on recent national and regional developments of relevance for SHORE Network as provided by:

Estonia: A national contingency plan for large search and rescue and oil spill response (including shore response) accidents is being developed. No large oil spills have been detected on the Estonian coastline since the last meeting. No changes in the response equipment have taken place. The annual Clean Sea Exercise is not being conducted in 2020 as Estonia is hosting BALEX DELTA 2020;

Latvia: A national civil protection plan is being developed. The work started in 2019 and the plan is scheduled for adoption in 2020. The plan will include responsibilities for on shore response. Municipal civil protection plans should be issued based on this national plan;

Poland: The on shore response is included in the regional crises management response plans. A large scale shoreline exercise was conducted on the Polish west coast in 2019. There is an ongoing reorganization of the maritime authorities, but this will not significantly affect shore response. In 2015 the Polish firefighters created a document on event scenarios, analysis of law etc. In accordance with the document, more equipment is needed to implement the action. More shore response equipment is acquired annually, and this will continue. The State fire service is the main responsible authority for shore response (limits the contamination from chemical hazards on shore) in Poland; and

Sweden: c.f. document 3-1.

3.3 The Meeting noted the lack of information from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania and Russia, and encouraged all Contracting Parties to attend future meetings of the SHORE Network. The Meeting further encouraged all Contracting Parties to make use of the agreed template and submit information as meeting documents even for Contracting Parties do not attend the meetings. The Meeting further recognized that this sharing of information is one of the main tasks of the SHORE Network, as per its work plan and terms of reference.

3.4 The Meeting noted information provided by the WWF with regard to the OIL SPILL Project coordinated by University of Turku, aiming to strengthen shore response in southwest Finland, involving also a number of voluntary organizations. An exercise (Vellamo) is being planned as part of this project on 2-6 June 2020.

Agenda Item 4 Exercises

Documents:

4.1 The Meeting took note of the results of the BALEX DELTA 2019 exercise conducted around and on the island of Bornholm, Denmark, on 27-29 August 2019. The Meeting noted that participants had been asked in advance about their preferred training requirements. Contracting Parties were also invited to participate in the planning of the exercise, in order to ensure that it meets the needs of the participants. The Meeting noted that the exercise evaluation was led by Sweden and has been reported to RESPONSE 27-2020.

4.2 The Meeting noted the information on BALEX DELTA 2020 exercise to take place on 25-27 August 2020 near Tallinn, Estonia (**Presentation 1**). The event will include an oil spill response exercise as well as a BALEX BRAVO alarm exercise. A main planning conference was organized in Tallinn 28-29 January 2020, attended by 7 Contracting Parties and EMSA.

4.3 The Meeting discussed exercises in general, including national sensitivity mapping and challenges with regard to communication between the on shore and sea response parts of exercises.

4.4 The Meeting took note of the project led by Sweden on developing the HELCOM Response Exercise Plan (**Presentation 2**), which will be considered in more detail by RESPONSE 27-2020.

Agenda Item 5 HELCOM Response Manual and Recommendations

Documents: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4

HELCOM Response Manual

5.1 The Meeting considered the draft revised HELCOM Response Manual (document 5-3) and in particular the elements related to on shore and oiled wildlife response.

5.2 The Meeting took note of the comments by Sweden on the draft revised Response Manual (document 5-3). The Meeting discussed the proposal to revise Chapter 8 (Exercises) of the draft revised Manual to outline the general direction and “framework” rather than the specifics it presently contains. Most of the current text could be lifted out of the Manual and included as working material for the proposed task to develop the HELCOM Response Exercise Plan (HREP).

5.3 The Meeting noted that this proposal would constitute major changes to Chapter 8 of the Manual. The Meeting discussed the implications this would have for those exercises being planned in the near future, such as BALEX DELTA 2021 in Finland. The Meeting noted that revision of Chapter 8 could be undertaken using the proposal from Sweden for RESPONSE 27-2020 (document 12-2) on developing the HREP by e.g. establishing a new group or tasking the Exercise Evaluation Team (EET) to do so.

5.4 In considering the other action points of document 5-3, the Meeting agreed that the revised Manual should:

- as far as possible avoid differentiating between sea and shore in the Manual and to have the ambition to create general processes that facilitate cooperation between the sea and shore preparedness and response;
- avoid duplication. If the proposed new chapter is included about EU Host Nation Support (HNS) there is a need to review Chapter 4 (Administrative and organisational support of the requesting party);
- not mention details again in Chapter 4.3 that have already been included in Chapter 4.1. Chapter 4.1 already covers both sea and shore;
- the introduction of the Manual should be numbered, renamed and included in the Table of Contents. Consideration should also be given to lifting the subtitles into the Table of Contents; and
- if Chapter 8 is revised as proposed above, the following text in the Description of the Contents should be redrafted: “The different types of response exercises and exercise planning, evaluation and reporting are explained in Chapter 8.”

5.5 The Meeting noted that health and safety standards are currently not mentioned in the draft Revised Manual, which would be important in particular when it comes to on shore and oiled wildlife response.

5.6 The Meeting noted a proposal to include shore response and oiled wildlife response into the command structures described in Chapter 2 (Guidelines for Operational Co-operation) and throughout the Manual as it was considered not to be sufficiently addressed. The Meeting noted that the matter is complex and no conclusion was reached on what amendments should be done. The Meeting nevertheless agreed that interested parties should liaise with Hugo Nijkamp (nijkamp@sea-alarm.org) in order to revise the text to holistically integrate shore and wildlife response in the revised Manual. The Meeting invited RESPONSE 27-2020 to consider the matter further.

5.7 The Meeting noted that RESPONSE 27-2020 will consider the draft revised Response Manual in detail, with a view to its completion for agreement by RESPONSE 28-2020, approval by HOD 59-2020 and adoption by HELCOM 42-2021. The Meeting further noted that RESPONSE 27-2020 is expected to agree on a process for finalizing the work, including deadlines for submitting further comments.

HELCOM Recommendations

5.8 The Meeting considered the proposals for revision of HELCOM Recommendation 33/2 (document 5-2). Following discussion, the Meeting agreed that although many of the provisions of the Recommendation have been accomplished, revising it may not be useful as the remaining parts of the Recommendation would not bring much added value as a stand-alone HELCOM Recommendation. The Meeting instead agreed that there may be a need to develop a completely new recommendation or other kind of commitment, including also a strategic vision for dealing with all aspects of an oil spill (at sea, on

Annex 1. List of participants

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