



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
10-2019

Hamina, Finland, 6-10 May 2019

Document title	Provisional Annotated Agenda
Code	1-2
Category	DEC
Agenda Item	1 – Adoption of the Agenda
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Background

In accordance with the decision by HOD 55-2018 (Outcome of the meeting, paragraph 4.2), the tenth Meeting of the Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation (STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019) will be convened on 6-10 May 2019 in Hamina, Finland, in the premises of Kumppanuustalo Hilma (Kadettikoulunkatu 3, 49400 Hamina).

The Meeting will start on **Monday 10 May 2019 at 10.00** and is expected to end on **Friday 6 May 2019 at 14.30**. Monday to Tuesday 10.30 is planned for issues related to monitoring and assessment (Agenda Items 1MA-6MA). Tuesday 11.00 to Thursday 12.00 will be dedicated to joint themes (Agenda Item 1J-11J), and Thursday 13.00 until the end of the meeting on Friday will be dedicated to biodiversity and nature conservation (Agenda Items 1N-6N).

Focal items of the meeting are to:

- **Monitoring and assessment session:** discuss ongoing work related to recommendations under the Working Group, updating of monitoring guidelines and monitoring manual, and data arrangements. Sharing of national information on activities relating to the updating of the monitoring programs under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- **Joint session:** update process of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, taking into account the measures and actions under the BSAP and relevant recommendations as well as international commitments. Implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.
- **Nature conservation session:** discuss ongoing work related to recommendations under the Working Group, discuss and plan future work related to marine protected areas, as well as follow-up on the progress of BaltiCheck project on updating and upgrading the HELCOM checklist.

Meeting documents will be submitted by the Secretariat to the [document library](#) of the [STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 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. Basic documents and documents requiring action or a decision to the Meeting should be submitted in electronic format to Professional Secretary, Jannica Haldin (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) by **10 April 2019**, at the latest. Documents containing comments to the basic documents as well as information documents should be provided to the Secretariat by **24 April 2019**.

Participants are kindly requested to register for the Meeting by answering the [Participation Survey](#) at their earliest convenience, and **not later than 26 April 2019**. Instructions for the use of the Meeting Portal are available on the [HELCOM Website](#).

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Monitoring and assessment

Agenda Item 1MA Adoption of the Agenda: Monitoring and assessment

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

Agenda Item 2MA Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat

The Meeting is invited to take note of any relevant information.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 took note of the information on the projects BONUS FUMARI (Future Marine Assessment and Monitoring of the Baltic) and BONUS SEAM (Towards Streamlined Baltic Sea Environmental Assessment and Monitoring). The meeting invited the Project Coordinators of the respective projects to come and present the work at State and Conservation 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress and results of the respective projects, and consider how State & Conservation could possibly make use of the projects.

Agenda Item 3MA Development and implementation of Recommendations

[RECOMMENDATION 10/1 ABNORMAL SITUATIONS IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Estonia.

Reporting frequency on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

Possible funding to develop a permanent service for reporting on abnormal situations

STATE&CONSERVATION 8-2018 invited lead country Estonia to further explore the possibility to apply for funding to develop a permanent CMEMS (Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service) service for reporting on abnormal situations in the Baltic Sea to HELCOM through upcoming calls under CMEMS. STATE&CONSERVATION 9-2018 supported that, should a CMEMS project call open, interest in joining a regional consortium should be canvassed within State and Conservation.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 supported that, should a CMEMS project call open, interest in joining a regional consortium should be canvassed within State and Conservation.

In January 2019 Estonia informed State and Conservation that the call for CMEMS user uptake was launched.

The call posed some challenges as the call text specifies the preferred topics and abnormal/extreme events did not fall within the listed themes, which significantly negatively impacted the possibility that the planned HELCOM proposal would be successful.

At the same time, the Danish Meteorological Institute and the Tallinn University of Technology joined an H2020 project proposal and defined a task which includes a service development to produce quarterly or monthly assessment reports on marine extreme events. Should the project be funded such service will be developed within three years, and it will be up and running at least four years after the project ends. The service will be based on Copernicus (CMEMS) products which are developed further by assimilating both BOOS (Baltic Operational Oceanographic Service) and HELCOM data into the operational and hindcast models.

Estonia as lead country invited State and Conservation WG to provide input to the suggestion that focus should be on the H2020 project application. All answers received by the deadline 23 January 2018 were in favour of focusing on the H2020 application.

Estonia is invited to present the H2020 application and progress in relation to the application process.

Data sharing through CMEMS

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 welcomed the information from Latvia that they will explore the possibility to share more data openly through the CMEMS service.

Latvia is invited to inform the meeting on potential progress regarding the possibility to share more data openly through the CMEMS service.

[RECOMMENDATION 10/2 ASSESSMENTS OF THE EFFECTS OF POLLUTION ON THE COASTAL AREAS OF THE BALTIC SEA](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

There is currently no Lead country for this Recommendation.

Contracting Parties are invited to consider taking a lead on the Recommendation.

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

The Meeting is invited to discuss the setting up a reporting scheme for the Recommendation.

- a) Follow up of action: compiled results of coastal monitoring should be reported in a generalized form every fifth year, in order to be available for the preparation of the periodic assessments of the state of the Baltic Sea (starting from 1993).
- c) Follow up of action: in order to facilitate the comparability of the reports their contents should preferably be arranged according to the proposal contained in the Annex to this Recommendation.

[RECOMMENDATION 19/3 MANUAL FOR THE HELCOM JOINT COORDINATED MARINE MONITORING](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Estonia.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2019 agreed that reporting on the Recommendation should take the form of an overview of reported data and gaps from the different data repositories, to be provided annually for the fall meeting of State and Conservation. The Meeting invited the respective data hosts to provide such a report in relation to Recommendation 19/3 annually.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress in setting up such reporting schemes.

- a) Follow-up of action “monitoring of the state of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea should be performed in accordance with the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy and the HELCOM Monitoring Manual”.

Update of HELCOM Monitoring Manual

STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 considered and agreed on the proposed procedure for reviewing and updating the HELCOM Monitoring Manual and the engagement of HELCOM expert groups, network and projects (document 2MA-3, table 1 to that meeting), and agreed that exhaustive reviews and revisions of the Manual should be carried out every six years, next time being in 2019. Intermittent revisions to the manual can be proposed by, or requested from, expert bodies, as needed.

The Meeting is invited to initiate the review process of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual.

- b) Follow-up of action “annual coordinated monitoring data, as committed by the Contracting Parties in the HELCOM Data and Information Strategy, should be reported or made available to the Commission on deadlines given in the HELCOM Monitoring Manual”.

Development of data arrangements for HELCOM monitoring data and assessments

COMBINE database usability and reporting

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the zoo- and phytoplankton and zoobenthos indicator experts to clarify what issues they came across regarding data usability from COMBINE during HOLAS II and to join a half day online workshop, together with the data host ICES and Secretariat. The meeting invited the indicator leads to present an overview of gaps in the data which need to be solved for enabling functional data flow arrangements for future assessments. The meeting further invited the zoo-, phytoplankton and zoobenthos groups to report data on an annual basis to COMBINE and clearly communicate the issues encountered in reporting to the Secretariat and the data host ICES.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress in arranging an online workshop regarding data usability and reporting for the HELCOM COMBINE database.

Overview of dataflows for HELCOM assessments

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the Secretariat to produce an overview of the data flows related to the BSPI/BSII for State and Conservation 10-2019. STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the Secretariat to include data flows and data needs for candidate indicators in the overview, to facilitate prioritizing further work on indicator development, and present this overview at State and Conservation 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information provided in the updated overview (document to be sent later).

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2019 invited all indicator leads and the Secretariat to present an overview of gaps in the data needed to make the indicators fully functional, to facilitate prioritization of the upcoming work (to largely be based on already existing information collected through the indicator review questionnaire) and invited the indicator manager to present the information at State and Conservation 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the provided information which will be used as a basis for prioritizing future indicator work in the upcoming 2019 HELCOM indicator workshop (document to be sent later).

The Contracting Parties are invited to present national information relating to the identified gaps (reasons, plans for filling the gaps etc.) in the document X-X.

The Meeting is invited to discuss how the gaps could be filled.

Revision of HELCOM monitoring data reporting deadlines

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2019 took note of the initial overview of deadlines for data reporting listed in HELCOM Monitoring Manual and guidelines and agreed that this topic will be further discussed in State and Conservation 10-2019 when the input on optimal reporting dates are available from the Expert Networks. STATE & CONSERVATION invited the Secretariat to prepare a revised version of the document, including the information from the Expert Networks and indicator leads, to be shared with State and Conservation contacts by 28 February. The Contracting Parties are then invited to provide input to the document by the 1 April 2019. After collating the comments, the revised document will be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the revised document (document to be submitted later).

Monitoring of underwater noise

The Meeting is invited to take note of recent progress on the issue of monitoring of underwater noise.

The Meeting is invited to share any information on national work in relation to underwater noise monitoring.

Monitoring of seabirds at sea

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the JWG BIRD experts to identify the best way to collate available data on birds at sea and invited the experts to identify and suggest on the optimal reporting frequency and timing for at sea monitoring data. The meeting further concluded that a structured process needs to be developed for bird indicators and Contracting Parties commitment needed to report the data.

The Meeting is invited to take note of information from the JWG BIRD Co-Chair on progress regarding at sea monitoring.

Review and update of HELCOM monitoring guidelines

The Meeting is invited to take note that the Guidelines for Monitoring Seal abundance and distribution in the HELCOM area, Determination of Perfluoroalkylated substances (PFAS) in seawater, Sampling and determination of dissolved oxygen in seawater and Determination of heavy metals in sediment, endorsed by STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018, have been published on the [HELCOM website](#).

The Lead Countries/ Expert Groups (document 3MA-1) responsible for the remaining monitoring guidelines are also invited to report on progress of the work to the Meeting:

Lead Country Sweden:

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 took note of the Guidelines for physical oceanography. The Meeting noted comments by Denmark and Poland that the document is rather general and could be more detailed and provided further guidance to lead country Sweden. Germany was also to provide comments to lead country Sweden by 8 November 2018.

Sweden is invited to present a new version of the document at the Meeting.

Lead Country Finland:

- chlorophyll a

Lead Country Germany:

- chlorinated biphenyls and organochlorine pesticides in biota, in cooperation with EN-HZ;
- biological material sampling and sample handling for the analysis of persistent organic pollutants (PAHs, PCBs and OCPs) and metallic trace elements, in cooperation with EN-HZ;
- determination of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in biota, in cooperation with EN-HZ

Expert network on hazardous substances (EN-HZ):

- PFOS in biota;
- HBCDD in biota and sediments;
- chlorinated biphenyls and organochlorine pesticides in biota, in cooperation with Germany;
- biological material sampling and sample handling for the analysis of persistent organic pollutants (PAHs, PCBs and OCPs) and metallic trace elements, in cooperation with Germany

[RECOMMENDATION 26-3 MONITORING OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

There is currently no Lead country for this Recommendation.

Contracting Parties are invited to consider taking a lead on the Recommendation.

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

The Meeting is invited to discuss the setting up a reporting scheme for the Recommendation.

- a) Follow up of action: each Baltic Sea State should have environmental stations on the sea or on the coast, and the Commission will be informed about the positions of the stations;
- b) Follow up of action: the list contained in the Guidelines for Monitoring of Radioactive Substances should be used as the basis for the environmental monitoring programme in all Baltic Sea States, bearing in mind that the list consists of minimum requirements, and that the voluntary measurements are also highly recommended as essential complementary information;
- c) Follow up of action: Guidelines for Monitoring of Radioactive Substances should be followed as detailed as possible including the guidelines for reporting of data;
- d) Follow up of action: the discharge data should be reported to the Commission according to the Guidelines;
- e) Follow up of action: the Guidelines to meet the topical requirements should be regularly evaluated and updated by experts,

RECOMMENDS ALSO that the Baltic Sea States would report their data to the Commission once every year by 1 September.

[RECOMMENDATION 29/2 MARINE LITTER WITHIN THE BALTIC SEA REGION](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

There is currently no Lead country for this Recommendation.

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

Monitoring of marine litter

HOD 55-2018 took note that STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 agreed to supersede the HELCOM Recommendation 29/2, which includes Guidelines on sampling and reporting of marine litter found on beaches, by Recommendation 36/1, once the HELCOM monitoring guidelines for marine litter on beaches have been developed and included in the HELCOM Monitoring Manual. The meeting agreed that HELCOM Recommendation 29/2 will be discussed in PRESSURE 10-2019 with the aim of superseding Recommendation 29/2 by Recommendation 36/1.

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 55-2018 meeting in principle agreed, that following the discussion in the Pressure Group, HELCOM Recommendation 29/2 on marine litter within the Baltic Sea Region can be considered superseded by Recommendation 36/1 on Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, which is to be proposed for a decision by HELCOM 41-2020.

The Meeting is invited to share any information on national work in relation to marine litter monitoring.

[RECOMMENDATION 37/1 CO-OPERATION AND COORDINATION OF RESEARCH VESSEL BASED MONITORING IN OFF-SHORE AREAS AND PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING PERMITS FOR MONITORING AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

There is currently no Lead country for this Recommendation.

Contracting Parties are invited to consider taking a lead on the Recommendation.

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

The Meeting is invited to discuss the setting up a reporting scheme for the Recommendation.

- a) follow up of action: support the joint use of existing research vessels for off-shore monitoring activities and cooperation in planning and construction of new regional research vessels for the Baltic Sea environmental monitoring and scientific research,
- b) follow up of action: use the HELCOM on-line platform to share information on planned and completed cruises, real time vessel positions (based on AIS) and technical details of research vessels used for environmental monitoring that could support timely granting of permits for monitoring and research activities,
- c) follow up of action: to grant one year permits for planned monitoring and research activities in the framework of the HELCOM coordinated monitoring programme in the exclusive economic zones, fishing zones, continental shelves or territorial waters, during which period the coastal state is only to be notified in advance for each individual cruise,
- d) follow up of action: to facilitate granting of permits, to carry out monitoring and research activities in the framework of the HELCOM coordinated monitoring programme in the exclusive economic zones, fishing zones, continental shelves or territorial waters, aiming at within six weeks from the time of the request.

Agenda Item 4MA Plans for implementation of the work plan and emerging issues

Analyse cost-efficiency of joint monitoring.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 discussed the implementation of not yet accomplished HELCOM actions under the State and Conservation Group. In relation to the action regarding revision of the HELCOM monitoring programmes and that it results in cost-effective joint monitoring (MD 2010) the meeting concluded that cost-efficiency of the programmes has not yet been considered. The meeting agreed to add this to the workplan of State and Conservation WG, to start in spring 2019.

The Meeting is invited to discuss how to analyse the cost-efficiency of joint monitoring and agree on how to initiate the work.

The Meeting is invited to discuss any further plans relating to implementing the work plan and/or identifying emerging issues.

Agenda Item 5MA Any other business

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the monitoring and assessment theme.

Contracting Parties are invited to provide national information on the ongoing update of the monitoring programs under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), e.g. if contracting parties are using HELCOM monitoring programs to support MSFD reporting.

Agenda Item 6MA Outcome of the Monitoring and assessment session

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by attendants of the monitoring and assessment theme.

Joint session

Agenda Item 1J Adoption of the Agenda: Joint themes

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

Agenda Item 2J Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat HELCOM

The Secretariat will inform the Meeting of the outcomes of relevant recent HELCOM meetings (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the workspace set up for State & Conservation Working Group.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited CG FISHDATA to consider incorporating a timeline and with associated task deadlines into the Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in order to assess incidental by-catches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea.

Poland is invited to present progress regarding the work at the Meeting.

Agenda Item 3J HELCOM indicators and assessments

Indicators

HELCOM core indicator reports

The Meeting is invited to take note of the publication of the updated indicator report on 'Inputs of nutrients to the subbasins' on the [HELCOM website](#).

Continued development of HELCOM core indicators

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated information on indicator lead and co-lead countries, the nominated experts appointed for their development and the development status of the indicators (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to take note that the Operational Marine Acidification Indicator (OMAI) project, aiming to produce an operational marine acidification indicator, had its kick off meeting 10 January at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat in Helsinki, Finland.

STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 reviewed the proposed acidification indicators for the Baltic Sea (document 3J-5, **Presentation 9** to that meeting), as submitted by Sweden and presented by Germany. The meeting welcomed the information that Sweden and Germany offer to co-lead the work on the indicator. Sweden and Estonia expressed their view that this works directly links to the work of MSFD Annex III Table 1.

IN EUTRO acknowledges the links of the proposed indicator to eutrophication but noted that the full set of causative factors and pressures are yet to be specified.

STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 in principle endorsed the further development of the indicator, with the aim of including it in the list of HELCOM candidate indicators, and agreed in principle that the work would be further developed within the eutrophication expert network, taking note of the Danish study reservation on the matter and that the housing of the indicator still remains an open issue.

The OMAI project wishes to continue the cooperation with IN EUTRO, in that the network could provide input to and review the work of the project as needed.

The Meeting is invited to support the cooperation between HELCOM IN EUTRO and the OMAI project.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 took note of the information by Sweden that they are nationally addressing the housing of the white tailed sea eagle productivity indicator, and will inform State and Conservation of any progress in the matter as soon as it is available.

Sweden is invited to inform the Meeting on the progress of the issue.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information that the German lead for the phytoplankton indicator Diatom/Dinoflagellate index is planning to retire next year and the question of succession is currently open. The Contracting Parties are invited to consider nominating a new lead for the indicator.

[HELCOM indicator review process](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note and discuss the progress under the indicator review work and review the background material prepared for the HELCOM workshops for indicators that takes place in May 2019 and fall 2019 (documents to be submitted later), with the intention of providing any remaining comments to the workshop.

[OSPAR-HELCOM Workshop on bycatch indicators](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note that a joint OSPAR-HELCOM workshop to examine possibilities for developing indicators for incidental by-catch of birds and marine mammals will take place on the 3-5 September in Denmark (dates to be decided).

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats to communicate with the ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS by-catch working group regarding the workshop to benefit from the work done under ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the planned co-operation with ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS.

[Assessments](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note that the [third thematic assessment on coastal fish](#) was published under the Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings in November.

[Agenda Item 4J](#) [Monitoring guidelines for biota](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note of and, if needed, update the information on lead and co-lead countries for HELCOM Monitoring Program topics (**document 3MA-1 X**).

STATE & CONSERVATION 9- 2018 invited Sweden to present further proceedings with 'monitoring guidelines on marine bird health' at State and Conservation 10-2019.

1st Meeting of the continuation of the project for Baltic-wide assessment of coastal fish communities in support of an ecosystem-based management (FISH-PRO III) agreed that Sweden will finalize the updated coastal fish monitoring guideline and send it for approval to STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019.

[Agenda Item 5J](#) [Development and implementation of Recommendations](#)

[RECOMMENDATION 21/3 SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TOURISM IN THE COASTAL ZONES OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

HOD 55-2018 meeting took note of the proposal of STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 that HELCOM Recommendation 21/3 on sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism in the coastal zones of the Baltic Sea area will be deleted and the efforts will be focused on reviewing and updating the guidelines on sustainable tourism. HOD 55-2018 noted the study reservation by Poland on the deletion of the recommendation prior to the finalization of the guidelines and agreed to come back to the consideration regarding the deletion of the recommendation once the guidelines on sustainable tourism have been developed.

The Contracting Parties were invited to provide proposals on what should be included into the guidelines to Latvia by 28 February.

Latvia is invited to report on the responses and to present a proposed plan for the task at the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to agree on the next steps in the development on guidelines.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Latvia.

Reporting format exists (List of 7 questions) for this Recommendation but reporting interval on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified. There has been no reporting on the implementation of this Recommendation since its adoption in 2000.

- a) Follow-up of action “to base their tourism development policy and plans for new tourist projects, and in particular their financial incentives, on the "GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA", as contained in the Attachment to this Recommendation”
- b) Follow-up of action “that all development, marketing and management of tourism should be based on the criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically sound in the long term, economically viable, as well as ethically and socially equitable for the local communities and also be oriented on the objectives, principles and obligations of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992);
- c) Follow-up of action “that for the development of large scaled tourist projects that need new specific infrastructure be preceded by a spatial planning process on national or regional level and be incorporated into, e.g. integrated coastal zone management plans;”
- d) Follow-up of action “that Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or similar procedures according to each Contracting Party's national law be carried out, before realizing tourism infrastructure and tourism operations, because they have significant negative impacts on biological and landscape diversity”
- e) Follow-up of action “all Contracting Parties work together and design bi - or multilateral transboundary strategies for environmentally friendly tourism development in order to harmonise activities aiming at sustainable use and the preservation of the natural beauty and biodiversity of the coastal area of the Baltic Sea”

RECOMMENDATION 24/10 IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED MARINE AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN ACTIVITIES IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

Following revision in the 17th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group the revised Recommendation was sent out for comment on 20 November 2018 to the State and Conservation WG. Comments were received from Denmark and Sweden.

In order to discuss and clarify some of the received comments, as well as find agreement on proposed amendment prior to submission to HELCOM 40-2019, an online meeting for representatives of those countries who provided comments (SE and DK), lead country for the revision (PL) and lead country for the recommendation (EE) as well as Co- Chairs for the two relevant Working Groups, HELCOM-VASAB MSP and State and Conservation, was arranged. The comments, which to large extent were of editorial character, were integrated into the text

The recommendation was subsequently submitted to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the of the adoption process at HELCOM 40-2019 and the revised Recommendation (document will be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to discuss further cooperation with HELCOM-VASAB WG and between planners and ecosystem experts and managers (documents to be submitted later).

Agenda Item 6J Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 agreed on actions on integrating BSEFS into relevant indicator reports with priority to keep the indicator reports up to date, and further agreed that the relevant leads (as identified in the document 6J-2), will commence with implementing the actions.

The relevant leads are invited to report the Meeting on progress on the matter.

The Contracting Parties are invited to provide information on any changes or updates to the Fact Sheets to the Secretariat (laura.hoikkala@helcom.fi) by **8 April 2019**.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updates to the existing HELCOM Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets since STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 meeting (document 6J-1). The Meeting is also invited to consider and approve the publication of possible new fact sheets.

Agenda Item 7J Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overview of the work of the Expert Groups, Intersessional Networks and projects associated with the group (document 7J-2). STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 agreed that the overview document will be regularly considered in the Working Group meetings.

Expert Network on Hazardous Substances (EN HAZ)

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 considered options for hosting a physical meeting of the EN-HZ group and agreed that a physical meeting where the work plan could be further elaborated would be beneficial.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the proceedings on the matter.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 took note of the information by Sweden that the current co-Chair of EN HAZ will no longer be in a position to continue as she is changing positions.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the latest developments regarding the Chairing of EN HAZ.

The Meeting is invited to take note that the EN HAZ has expressed a need for further expertise on hazardous substances in sediments and consider the possibility to nominate additional experts for the network to cover the identified gap in expertise.

Phytoplankton Expert Group (PEG)

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 considered how to find a suitable working arrangement to support Phytoplankton Expert Group (PEG) in the evolving needs and emerging issues and topics under HELCOM, e.g. in relation to indicators and assessments. The meeting discussed the need and capacity of the PEG group to take on the work on identifying and developing indicators, as well as conducting assessment, to support HELCOM work and agreed to come back to this at State and Conservation 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information by the State and Conservation WG Co-Chair regarding his discussions with the EG and discuss possible ways forward.

HELCOM- Baltic Earth Expert Network on Climate Change (EN CLIME)

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD-55 and Baltic Earth Science Steering Group approved the proposed work process, the establishment of the Expert Network on Climate Change and its ToRs (document 7J-1), and that the work towards Climate Change Fact Sheet has commenced (documents 7J-3 and 7J-4).

Expert Network on Benthic Habitats

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 welcomed the information that lead country Finland will arrange a workshop on habitat and biotope mapping, mapping methods, habitat and species modelling and production of relevant maps (**presentation 21** to that meeting). The Meeting highlighted the importance and usefulness of such a workshop. The meeting agreed that the first workshop should be a two to three-day workshop, preliminarily

to be held in fall 2019, aimed at those experts performing mapping and working on producing the end products used in conservation and MSP. It should serve as a scoping exercise, identify the gaps and needs in knowledge and present successful mapping practices which will then be used to inform further work. The Meeting agreed that the work should be conducted in close cooperation with EN BENTHIC.

HOD 55-2018 approved the arranging of a workshop on habitat mapping and modelling to support the implementation of actions under Recommendation 35/1 on System of coastal and marine Baltic Sea protected areas (HELCOM MPAs), by the lead country Finland.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the workshop on Benthic Mapping which will take place 12-13 November 2018, in Helsinki, Finland and to nominate experts to take part in the event.

[Baltic Sea MPA Managers Network](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 55-2018 in principle supported the establishment of a regional MPA management network under the auspice of HELCOM.

The Meeting is invited to consider and approve the draft Terms of Reference for a regional MPA management network under the auspice of HELCOM (document to be sent later).

[BaltiCheck project](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress and deliverables of the BaltiCheck project, as presented by Jana Wolf, the Project Coordinator.

[Agenda Item 8J](#) [Baltic Sea Action Plan \(BSAP\)](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD-55 approved the workplan for the BSAP update (document to be sent later).

[Implementation of the current BSAP](#)

The session will be aimed to evaluate implementation of HELCOM agreements and progress which potentially can be achieved by 2021 and to follow-up on the reporting on the HELCOM Recommendations;

[Implementation of existing agreements](#)

The Meeting is invited to consider the progress achieved in the implementation of existing joint actions since the previous Meeting, and make further plans as needed to facilitate their implementation by 2021.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9- 2018 decided to come back to the discussion on reasons for not achieving BSAP commitments at STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019.

[Reporting on HELCOM Recommendations](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note of and, if needed, provide clarifications and updates on the technical and procedural aspects of the reporting as well as take note of preliminary analyses of the implementation (document to be submitted later)

[Update of BSAP](#)

The session will be aimed to consider elements for uptake in the updated BSAP.

Review of existing HELCOM actions

The implementation of existing HELCOM actions, including from the current BSAP and Ministerial Declarations in 2010 and 2013, have been followed-up through a coherent scheme since 2016. Some actions were however evaluated as formulated too general to be followed-up, e.g. those lacking concrete aims and target years and those that were formulated as aspirations rather than concrete actions. These actions will be reviewed, and in case found relevant to consider their uptake in the updated BSAP (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on existing HELCOM actions to be considered for further development and uptake in the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan, and make initial proposals for how to concretize the actions. In the case that the task is not completed, the Meeting is invited to consider and agree on how to arrange further work, e.g. by Contracting Parties taking the lead to develop the actions further, or by convening online meetings to finalize the task by next meeting of the Working Group.

Ministerial Declaration 2018 agreements

The Meeting is invited to provide concretisation of State and Conservation-related commitments from MD 2018, e.g. to specify measurable aims and target years (document to be submitted later).

Review and develop of new HELCOM ecological objectives

HOD 55-2018 agreed that HELCOM Working Groups will review existing HELCOM ecological objectives and management objectives as well as develop new objectives for marine litter, underwater noise, and loss and disturbance to the seabed to support the BSAP update. State and Conservation Working Group is invited to review the existing ecological objectives for eutrophication, hazardous substances, and biodiversity. A guidance document will be submitted at a later stage as well as the outcome of discussions on the review of HELCOM objectives at the Pressure X-2019.

Progress on analyzing sufficiency of measures

The Meeting is invited to take note that the HELCOM ACTION project, co-funded by the EU, will run in 2019-2020, aiming to carry out analyses on sufficiency of measures to reach HELCOM goals and objectives, in order to support the selection of new and strengthened HELCOM actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP).

The Meeting is invited to take note that the kick-off meeting of ACTION project took place 25 – 27 February 2019 at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki (document to be provided later).

The Meeting is invited to take note that the kick-off meeting of the ad hoc HELCOM Platform on sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform 1-2019) took place 28 February – 1 March at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki (document to be provided later).

The Meeting is invited to provide feed-back to the plans for State and Conservation relevant activities of the ACTION project and the SOM Platform.

Agenda Item 9J Future work

Work plan

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD-55 approved the Work Plan for State and Conservation Working Group for years 2019-2020.

Agenda Item 10J Any other business

EU

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the Secretariat to explore the possibility of an EU Commission representative to present ongoing work at the EU level on marine litter, noise and seafloor integrity at State and Conservation 10-2019 with the aim of harmonizing approaches and avoiding double work.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the proceedings on this matter.

BONUS

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of BONUS-HELCOM 8th stakeholder conference 'Research and Innovation for Sustainability' (document 10J-1).

Baltic Earth

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 requested that the outcome of the Multiple Drivers workshop that took place 26-27 November 2018 in Tallinn, Estonia, will be presented to the State and Conservation 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the extracts of the outcome (document to be submitted later).

ICES

The Meeting is invited to take note of the newly published Baltic Sea Ecosystem overview produced by ICES, including the associated interactive webpage.

CBD

The Meeting is invited to take note of the following document coming out of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14), held on 17-29 November in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt:

Voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation (document to be sent later)

State and Conservation

The Meeting is invited to consider and update the list of contacts and observers of the Working Group.

The Meeting is invited to consider and update the list of contacts and observers, as well as Head of Delegation for the Working Group (document 10J-2).

The Contracting Parties are invited to consider their possibility to host future meetings of the Working Group.

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the mandate of the Working Group.

Agenda Item 11J Outcome of the Joint themes

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by attendants of the joint themes.

Nature conservation

Agenda Item 1N Adoption of the Agenda: Nature conservation

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

Agenda Item 2N Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat
HELCOM

The Meeting is invited to take note of progress on the Recommendations under the mandate of HELCOM FISH WG ([19/2 Protection and improvement of the wild salmon \(*Salmo salar* L.\) populations in the Baltic Sea area](#) and [32-33-1 Conservation of Baltic Salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) and Sea Trout \(*Salmo trutta*\) populations by the restoration of their rivers habitats and management of river fisheries](#)) but which are to be considered also by State & Conservation WG.

UNCLOS

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress of the work on new instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

OSPAR

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the Secretariat to report back to State and Conservation on the response and outcome of the OSPAR ICG MPA meeting regarding topics identified for possible cooperation under recommendations 35/1 and 37/2.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the relevant extracts of the outcome of the OSPAR ICG meeting.

EU

The Meeting is invited to take note of the use of the output of the HELCOM MPA Management Workshop in September 2018 in the EU Biogeographical Seminar in Mallorca in October 2018.

CBD

The Meeting is invited to take note of the Protected Planet report on progress towards reaching the Aichi targets (document to be sent later) and discuss the possibility of joint regional reporting on Aichi Target 11.

The Meeting is invited to take note of information on the process to develop the post 2020 global biodiversity framework under the CBD (document 2N-2).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the following document coming out of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14), held on 17-29 November in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt:

Voluntary guidance on the integration of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures into wider land- and seascapes, voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity, and scientific and technical advice on other effective area-based conservation measures (document 2N-1).

Agenda Item 3N Development and implementation of Recommendations

[RECOMMENDATION 15/1 PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL STRIP](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this recommendation is Finland.

The recommendation states that implementation should be reported to the Commission every 6 years and that the HELCOM working group in charge stays in contact with the Contracting Parties for information and cooperation in this matter. The latest reporting on the recommendation took place in 2014.

- a. Follow-up of action 'take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection of biodiversity and nature (biology and geology) as well as recreational values of the coastal strip'
- b. Follow-up of action 'that a generally protected coastal strip therefore be established outside urban areas and existing settlements'
- c. Follow-up of action 'that in this protected coastal strip activities which would permanently change the nature and landscape not be allowed except when proved to be in overwhelming public interest and that intensive forestry and intensive farming including drainage be restricted'
- e. Follow-up of action 'a zone of at least 3 kilometers landwards from the mean water line should be established as a coastal planning zone'

RECOMMENDATION 16/3 PRESERVATION OF NATURAL COASTAL DYNAMICS

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Denmark.

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 agreed to set up an intersessional review process on the recommendation, with further input to be provided to Denmark by 22 November 2018. Denmark presented the finalized version to State and Conservation for intersessional approval, and the reporting on the recommendation was initiated by sending the finalized questionnaire to national State and Conservation representatives. Responses are to be made available to lead country Denmark (makra@mfvm.dk) by 1 April 2019, after which the results will be compiled and presented to State and Conservation 10-2019.

Denmark is invited to present the results of the reporting for the Recommendation.

- a. Follow-up of action ‘the dynamic character and permanent change of the coast should be recognized and accepted as a natural process and that new coastal defense measures outside settlements normally not be executed except when integrated coastal zone management plans provide otherwise’
- b. Follow-up of action ‘that active cliffs as sediment supplier and natural coastal flood areas as potential nutrient traps should not be subject to any new coastal defense measures except when integrated coastal zone management plans provide otherwise’
- c. Follow-up of action ‘coastal areas outside settlements that have been subject to episodic flooding before they were dyked for land use purposes only, should be restored as coastal wetlands through removal or relocation of dykes further inland, wherever possible’
- d. Follow-up of action ‘if coastal defense measures are necessary, natural materials such as stones, sand, soil or wood shall be preferred to artificial materials (concrete, asphalt or plastic)’
- e. Follow-up of action ‘coastal defense measures be nationally or regionally incorporated into integrated coastal zone management plans’
- f. Follow-up of action ‘inform HELCOM about new projects and master plans for coastal defence measures’

RECOMMENDATION 17/2 PROTECTION OF HARBOUR PORPOISE IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

The Meeting is invited to take note on the following:

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 considered that, as new knowledge on the existence of two sub-populations of the harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea and work on the new indicators concerning Baltic harbour porpoise, a revision of the Recommendation 17/2 is needed, and invited HOD 55-2018 to consider initiating a process to revise the Recommendation. HOD 55 agreed to initiate a process to revise the Recommendation whereby State and Conservation 10-2019 will provide initial revisions to the document, to be submitted to EG MAMA 13-2019 meeting for further revision and to State and Conservation 11-2019 for endorsement and submission to HOD 57-2019 for approval, aiming at adoption by HELCOM 41-2020.

HOD 55-2018 noted the technical amendments to HELCOM Recommendation 17/2 on protection of harbor porpoise, and that Sweden can lift their study reservation on the proposal, and while Germany cannot lift their study reservation, they are open to a revision of the Recommendation.

Following the agreement of HOD 55, the Meeting is invited to draft revisions to the Recommendation.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Poland.

The current Recommendation states that a report on the implementation of this recommendation should be made available to the Commission every three years. The latest reporting took place in 2015, by those countries who are also parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS).

- a. Follow-up of action ‘avoiding by-catches of harbour porpoises, particularly following the recommendations of ASCOBANS and the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Plan’

The Meeting is invited to take note of work related to this action currently ongoing under the ACTION project.

The Meeting is invited to take note that a joint OSPAR-HELCOM workshop on indicators for incidental bycatch will be held in September 2019.

b. Follow-up of action 'take action in close co-operation with ASCOBANS and ICES'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the action points from the 15th meeting of the Jastarnia Group (document to be sent later).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the increased cooperation between HELCOM, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and ICES in relation to work on the bycatch indicator.

c. Follow-up of action 'establishment of marine protected areas for harbour porpoises within the framework of the Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPAs)

[HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 40/1 CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF MARINE AND COASTAL BIOTOPES, HABITATS AND BIOTOPE COMPLEXES CATEGORIZED AS THREATENED ACCORDING TO THE HELCOM RED LISTS](#)

Draft Recommendation on biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 55-2018 approved the draft HELCOM Recommendation on 'Conservation and Protection of Marine and Coastal Biotopes, Habitats and Biotope Complexes Categorized as Threatened According to the HELCOM Red Lists' to supersede HELCOM Recommendation 21/4, and agreed to forward it for adoption by HELCOM 40-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the of the adoption process at HELCOM 40-2019 and the revised Recommendation (document will be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to discuss how to begin implementing the Recommendation.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Germany.

The Recommendation states that Contracting Parties will report on their first activities taken to implement this Recommendation in 2019, and thereafter according to the schedule to be agreed by the State and Conservation Working Group with the aim to harmonize reporting intervals and content with EU and other reporting obligations supported by this Recommendation, using an appropriate template to be developed.

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on how to initiate reporting on the Recommendation, as well as discuss an appropriate future reporting schedule.

- 1) to protect and conserve threatened biotopes, habitats and biotopes complexes which are relevant to their waters.
- 2) to include in or update national legislation with provisions that provide protection for specific threatened biotopes, habitats or biotope complexes¹ or choose different kinds of existing legal and other instruments to provide similar protection such as incentives, administrative actions or negotiated agreements.
- 3) that those activities that may significantly affect, destroy or damage threatened biotopes, habitats or biotope complexes should be prohibited or limited. Therefore, new plans and projects should be evaluated in an EIA or similar procedure, in accordance with national legislation, and the area be mapped by the applicant if such maps do not already exist for the planning area,
- 4) that derogations from such prohibitions shall only be granted for activities of significant public interest or when the negative impacts can be remedied by appropriate mitigation or compensation measures for the benefit of nature conservation,

¹ biotope complexes of the HELCOM Red List are similar to the Annex 1 natural habitat types of the Habitats Directive [NB that this footnote is part of the Recommendation]

- 5) that threatened biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes be identified and mapped preferably by using the HELCOM HUB classification system and appropriate classification systems for coastal biotopes in order to support general management of human activities and maritime spatial planning based on the ecosystem approach,
- 6) to make an inventory of existing and planned national and regional conservation-, recovery- and/or action plans as well as other relevant programmes and measures for the protection of threatened underwater biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes,
- 7) to review the effectiveness of conservation-, recovery- or action plans or related activities with main focus on the cause of changes and the effect of activities, and based on these:
 - 7.1. determine what additional activities are needed to mitigate the identified pressures and/or impacts and develop or amend conservation-, recovery- and/or action plans. Where appropriate, the development could be carried out in cooperation with neighboring countries and/or relevant organizations,
 - 7.2. aim to implement such plans or activities as soon as possible, and by 2021 at the latest,
- 8) to consider whether any sites justify selection as new or expanded MPAs for the conservation of HELCOM threatened marine biotopes, habitats or biotope complexes,
- 9) to encourage other international organizations or bodies to promote and strive for taking all appropriate measures in areas of their specific competence, such as in fisheries management or shipping, in order to reduce pressures and impacts on HELCOM threatened marine biotopes, habitats or biotope complexes,
- 10) to monitor the range, spatial coverage as well as structure and function of HELCOM threatened marine biotopes, habitats or biotope complexes and the pressures and/or impacts that cause threats to them, and to improve the exchange of respective data with HELCOM and other international and national bodies in order to create synergies,
- 11) to raise awareness about the HELCOM Red list of threatened marine biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes amongst stakeholders and the general public, and consider to establish a permanent dialogue and exchange of knowledge between HELCOM and relevant stakeholders, such as recreational and commercial fishermen.
- 12) for those Contracting Parties being also EU Member States, to ensure that the implementation of this Recommendation is consistent with the implementation of relevant EU regulations, in particular Habitats Directive (HD, 92/43/EEC), Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC), Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC), EU Directive establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (2014/89/EU) and the Common Fisheries Policy.

RECOMMENDATION 34E/1 SAFEGUARDING IMPORTANT BIRD HABITATS AND MIGRATION ROUTES IN THE BALTIC SEA FROM NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WIND AND WAVE ENERGY PRODUCTION AT SEA

The Contracting Parties are invited to **inform** the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

The Meeting is invited to **consider** and **agree** on whether the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG could be invited to jointly work on implementing and reporting on actions c)-h) of the Recommendation.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Co-lead countries for this recommendation are Sweden and Germany.

The Recommendation states that action taken by the Contracting Parties in accordance with this Recommendation should be reported to the Commission on request.

- a) Follow-up on action 'Compile and exchange information on existing, on-going as well as planned developments for wind energy facilities and wave energy installations well as on migration routes and staging areas of birds'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome and recommendations of the Workshop on Seabird migratory routes took place 20-22 November 2018, at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat (document 3N-1), and to take note of the initial maps and supplementing information on the migration routes produced by the Workshop and endorse their publication in the HELCOM Map and Data Services. (document to be submitted later). The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree how to take the work further.

- b) Follow-up on action 'Assess cumulative impacts of wind energy facilities and wave energy installations in the Baltic Sea Area on birds'
- c) Follow-up on action 'Enable appropriate planning of the use of marine space that incorporates conservation need of seabirds'
- d) Follow-up on action 'support development and use of nature friendly wind energy technology'
- e) Follow-up on action 'avoid that wind energy facilities and wave energy installations are sited in areas important for birds, and that the loss of off-shore staging habitats will be halted'
- f) Follow-up on action 'avoid that wind energy facilities are situated within major migrating routes of birds'
- g) Follow-up on action 'establishment of installations only following strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment'
- h) Follow-up on action 'including obligation for the operator to carry out adequate monitoring of impacts on birds during the operation phase'

RECOMMENDATION 27-28/2 CONSERVATION OF SEALS IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Sweden

The Recommendation states that the effectiveness of the Recommendation is to be assessed in 5 years time with regard to the conservation of seals in the Baltic Sea Area, and whether amendments are necessary.

1. Follow up of action: to apply the General Management Principles and Management Units and in conformity with these principles develop and implement National Management Plans

2. Follow up of action: to take effective measures for all populations in order to prevent illegal killing, and to reduce incidental bycatches to a minimum level and if possible to a level close to zero;
3. Follow up of action: task under HELCOM seal expert group, including develop under co-ordinated under the Marine Mammal Expert Group and assess the population structure, size and growth, reproduction and breeding distribution, contaminant burden and health status, fisheries interactions and bycatches, and evaluate their results;
4. Follow up of action: to carry out respective monitoring programmes.
5. Follow up of action: to collaborate within the HELCOM Marine Mammal Expert Group to identify and establish a network of protected areas for important actual and potential seal habitats across the Baltic Sea area (re. the EU Habitat Directive, Annex II), and attempt to harmonize the regulations and monitoring of these conservation areas
6. Follow up of action: to develop and to apply where possible non-lethal mitigation measures for seals to reduce bycatch and damage to fishing gear, as well as to support and coordinate the development of efficient mitigation measures;

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the BALTFISH symposium on seal – fish/fisheries interaction in the Baltic Sea.

RECOMMENDATION 35/1 SYSTEM OF COASTAL AND MARINE BALTIC SEA PROTECTED AREAS (HELCOM MPAs)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Finland.

Reporting frequency on the implementation on this Recommendation as a whole has not been specified. No reporting on the implementation of the Recommendation has yet taken place.

- a) Follow-up of action 'reach goal of 10% of the marine area in all sub-basins of the Baltic Sea including the EEZ areas beyond territorial waters is covered by MPAs where scientifically justified'

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 noted that part of the sub-basins still have MPA coverage below 10%. The meeting invited the Secretariat to intersessionally provide calculations for the total area of HELCOM MPA's and Natura 2000 areas coverage by sub-basin and based on these calculations compile a list of those sub-basins with a total coverage of less than 10%, as well as identify the countries bordering the respective sub-basins. The Meeting agreed that the relevant Contracting Parties will collate any additional information regarding spatial protection in the respective areas and present this at State and Conservation 10-2019 for further discussion.

The Meeting is invited to consider the information on the coverage of MPAs and Natura 2000s in the subbasins (document to be sent later).

The bordering Contracting Parties Estonia, Finland and Sweden are hence invited to present to the Meeting any additional information regarding spatial protection in the respective areas and provide information on spatial coverage/shape files to complement the information from the HELCOM MPAs and Natura 2000 sites.

Contracting Parties are invited to highlight and report any missing information and to inform the Meeting on any new or planned MPAs in territorial waters or EEZ areas beyond said waters.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the MPA TG 9-2019 online meeting.

- b) Follow-up of action 'review whether new coastal and marine areas justify being selected as HELCOM MPAs, and to designate new sites as HELCOM MPAs where ecologically meaningful, especially in offshore area beyond territorial waters'

Finland is invited to present progress on the ongoing designation of new protected areas in the Gulf of Finland.

Denmark is invited to present to the Meeting further information on the designation of existing protected areas (MSFD MPAs) to the HELCOM MPA network.

Estonia is invited to present to the Meeting further information on designation of new protected areas in Estonian EEZ of the Baltic Proper.

The Contracting Parties are invited to share information on any newly designated national MPAs which could be included in the HELCOM MPA network with the Meeting.

- c) Follow-up of action 'ensure that HELCOM MPAs inter alia provide specific protection to those species, habitats, biotopes and biotope complexes included in the HELCOM Red Lists'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the work being done under TG MPA regarding linking habitats to red listed species and consider how to take the work forward, including the need to validate and make the information available.

- d) Follow-up of action 'ensure, when selecting new areas, that the network of HELCOM MPAs is ecologically coherent and takes into account connectivity between sites'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the link with the upcoming workshop on habitat mapping and modelling to support the implementation of actions under Recommendation 35/1.

- e) Follow-up of action 'make use of computer-based site selection tools'
- f) Follow-up of action 'designate when feasible all appropriate Natura 2000 sites as HELCOM MPAs, and to consider all Natura 2000 sites as well as other marine protected areas when evaluating the network of marine protected areas'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the work being done under the ACTION project.

- g) Follow-up of action 'to designate, when appropriate, OSPAR MPAs as HELCOM MPAs'
- h) Follow-up of action 'develop and apply by 2015 management plans or measures for all existing HELCOM MPAs, and to establish management plan or measures for every new MPA within five years after its designation'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the work being done to map measures, pressures and habitat features in MPAs under the ACTION project and the questionnaire to be send out to fill the matrix.

The Meeting is invited to review the questionnaire and support the projects efforts to collaborate with national experts and MPA managers to procure the needed information.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the meeting of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) Working Group on ecosystem-based management work on producing an overview of fisheries management measures in Natura 2000 areas in the Baltic.

- i) Follow-up of action 'update the management plans when necessary and in accordance with other legal requirements with a maximum of 12 years intervals'

The Meeting is invited to consider the information on national frequency of review and/or update of MPA management plans based on the answers to the questionnaire collated by the Secretariat (document to be sent later).

- j) Follow-up of action 'harmonize the designation of neighboring HELCOM MPAs in transboundary marine areas'
- k) Follow-up of action 'assess the effectiveness of the management plans or measures of HELCOM MPAs by conducting monitoring, and where feasible scientific research programmes, which are directly connected to the conservation interests of HELCOM MPAs'

STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 invited Germany to keep the Working Group updated on the progress regarding activities on assessing management effectiveness of the OSPAR MPA Network. Germany informed STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 of presenting information on the progress on these activities at State and Conservation 10-2019.

Germany is invited to report on the progress of the matter.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the plans and progress on analyzing sufficiency of MPAs as a measure under the ACTION project.

- l) Follow-up of action 'include HELCOM MPAs as areas of particular ecological significance in coastal and maritime spatial planning processes and incorporate their management provisions'

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on how natural values and nature conservation interests have been taken into account in their national maritime spatial plans. This was suggested by STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 to be a continuous task for the future working group meetings.

The Meeting is invited to take note of information on the proceeding of the Pan Baltic Scope project and review the map layers produced in the Pan Baltic Scope workshop on Essential Fish Habitats (document to be submitted later) and endorse their publication in the HELCOM Map and Data Services.

- m) Follow-up of action 'update, when necessary, HELCOM MPA related guidelines and guiding documents in order to keep them in line with new knowledge and compatible with other international criteria'

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 discussed the draft update of Guidelines for MPA pressure evaluation, as presented by Finland (document 3N-4, presentation 7 to that meeting). The Meeting noted a need for further discussion on the matter and agreed that the Contracting Parties can provide comments to Finland (lasse.kurvinen@metsa.fi) by the 26 November 2018, after which an intersessional online meeting will be arranged in the beginning of 2019.

A meeting of TG MPA was arranged to further discuss the received comments and revised guidelines in preparation for STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of information by Finland on the progress on the draft update of Guidelines for MPA pressure evaluation and agree on their publication.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 discussed the state of and need for updating the HELCOM MPA management and designation guidelines in order to keep them in line with new knowledge and recent best practices. The meeting agreed on a process for reviewing the guidelines to get an overview of the magnitude the update required, including a reconsideration of the existing size limit of the HELCOM MPA's, as follows: Contracting Parties could provide comments to the document to the Secretariat or their national TG MPA representative by 30 January 2019. Concomitantly the members of TG MPA individually reviewed the guidelines and share the results by 30 January. Finland, as lead country for the Recommendation, will collate the information and present it at a TG MPA meeting in early March where the group will elaborate a way forward. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to collate relevant information to support the work from the outcome of the MPA Managers workshop.

The Meeting is invited to take note of and consider the proposal by TG MPA, as well as the relevant recommendations and input from the MPA Managers workshop in September 2018, (document to be submitted

later) on how to take the work forward. The Meeting is invited to agree on the process for updating of the guidelines in order to keep them in line with new knowledge and recent best practices.

- n) Follow-up of action 'apply the newest IUCN categorization system when describing the HELCOM MPAs
- o) Follow-up of action 'perform identification, designation and legal protection of HELCOM MPAs according to HELCOMs criteria and guidelines and base all management plans or measures on relevant HELCOM publications'
- p) Follow-up of action 'modernize the HELCOM MPAs database'

The Meeting is invited to consider the possibility to include information (e.g. on measures) received through the ACTION project MPA questionnaire to the database when the data base is updated.

- q) Follow-up of action 'continuously report the most recent numerical and descriptive data on HELCOM MPAs to HELCOMs data systems (HELCOM MPA database, GIS based map and data service)'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the responses received under the national reporting on this action for the BSAP update and consider making this data reporting an annual occurrence with a given deadline.

- r) Follow-up of action 'regularly assess the status and development of HELCOMs MPAs according to the time tables set by HELCOM and to ensure that the assessments are applicable for corresponding EU and global reporting

RECOMMENDATION 37/2 CONSERVATION OF BALTIC SEA SPECIES CATEGORIZED AS THREATENED ACCORDING TO THE 2013 HELCOM RED LIST

The Meeting is invited to take note of information relating to the national species red listing processes in Estonia and Finland.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

The lead country for this Recommendation is Germany.

The Contracting Parties will report on their first activities taken to implement this Recommendation in 2018, and thereafter according to the schedule to be agreed by the State & Conservation Working Group with the aim to harmonize reporting intervals and content with EU and other reporting obligations supported by this Recommendation, using an appropriate template to be developed.

The Recommendation also states that based on the progress in implementing this Recommendation and following the next Red List assessment of the Baltic Sea species and habitats/biotopes in 2019, the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention utilize new knowledge on threatened species to maintain or further improve the status of HELCOM threatened species also beyond 2021.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 agreed to initiate reporting on the Recommendation and welcomed Germany's offer to draft a template for reporting on the level of implementation of the actions under the Recommendation, with assistance from the Secretariat, and present it to State and Conservation 10-2019. The Meeting agreed that it would be beneficial to report on the Recommendation both from the perspective of level of implementation and effectiveness of measures, taking note of the related OSPAR work.

Germany is invited to present to the Meeting the draft template for reporting on the level of implementation of the actions under the Recommendation.

Germany are invited to present the work on reporting done under the OSPAR Recommendation to the Meeting.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 took note of the information from Estonia that the national threat evaluation of mammals, fish and birds (including migratory birds) is finalized in spring 2019 and from Finland that their national red list of species is to be finalized in the beginning of 2019 and biotopes by 18 December 2018.

Estonia and Finland are invited to present the progress and results of these works at the Meeting.

- a) Follow-up of action 'Inventory of existing and planned national and regional conservation-, recovery- and/or action plans, and by 2018 review their effectiveness and, if necessary, define future protection needs'

STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 agreed to follow-up on the agreed action 'Activities to support conservation of Baltic Sea species and biotopes/habitats categorized as threatened according to the HELCOM Red List' by testing the categorization of conservation measures proposed by the Meeting (Outcome STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016, Annex 3), and by updating the inventory of national conservation plans for species and biotopes threatened according to the HELCOM Red Lists.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updates in information on national conservation plans for species and biotopes categorized as threatened according to HELCOM 2013 Red List, as presented by the Secretariat (document to be sent later). The Contracting Parties are invited to update the living document on the inventory of national conservation plans.

Contracting Parties are invited to report missing and additional information on national conservation plans to the Secretariat (laura.hoikkala@helcom.fi) as it becomes available (template available upon request).

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 endorsed the HELCOM Action Plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon, as presented by Germany, and agreed to submit the plan to HOD 55-2018 for approval, with the aim of submitting it to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption. HOD 55-2018 approved the HELCOM Action Plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon and agreed to submit it to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption

The Meeting is invited to take note of information regarding the progress of the approval process.

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 considered the possibility to link the ongoing cross-border work within a group of Baltic Sturgeon experts with that of HELCOM State and Conservation, probably through the establishment of a sturgeon expert network and agreed to come back to this issue in State and Conservation 10-2019 after the action plan has been adopted by HELCOM 40-2019.

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the establishment of a sturgeon expert network.

- b) Follow-up of action 'Introduce and/or update national legislation or, if more appropriate, choose different kinds of instruments (such as incentives, administrative actions or negotiated agreements), to provide for effective protection of relevant HELCOM threatened species'

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the JWG BIRD group to prioritize for which species HELCOM could bring the most value and suggest most effective measures. The meeting supported the proposal that the JWG BIRD group be approached with an invitation to hold their next meeting at the HELCOM Secretariat in Helsinki, Finland.

The Meeting is invited to take note on the proceedings on the matter.

- c) Follow-up of action 'Including HELCOM list of threatened species in EIA procedures in order to mitigate or limit pressures or impacts inflicted on threatened species'
- d) Follow-up of action 'Selection as new or expanded MPAs for the conservation of HELCOM threatened species with the aim to improve connectivity between populations and key areas along migration routes'
- e) Follow-up of action 'Identify and/or map areas of ecological significance for individual or groups of HELCOM threatened species, also in order to support maritime spatial planning based on the ecosystem approach'

At its 14th meeting last November, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity welcomed the scientific and technical information contained in the report of the regional EBSA workshop for the Baltic Sea, and requested the Executive Secretary to include the summary report in the EBSA repository

(www.cbd.int/ebsa), and to submit it to the United Nations General Assembly and its relevant processes, as well as to Parties, other Governments and relevant international organizations.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information on national processes to identify areas of ecological significance which has been initiated in Finland

- f) Follow-up of action 'Take measures to reduce transboundary pressures and/or impacts on HELCOM threatened migrating species'

The Contracting Parties are invited to share information with the Meeting on, or express their interest in, any transboundary efforts to reduce the pressures and/or impacts on threatened migrating species.

- g) Follow-up of action 'Encourage other international organizations or bodies to promote and strive for taking all appropriate measures in areas of their specific competence'
- h) Follow-up of action 'Improve the exchange of data on HELCOM threatened species between HELCOM and other international and national bodies that produce or use similar data in order to create synergies'

Agenda Item 4N Links to and Ongoing Work under the Habitats and Birds Directives

STATE & CONSERVATION 9 -2018 supported the proposal to have a regional discussion on the common understanding and future regional coordination of the assessment of relevant marine species and habitats under EU directives and agreed that this should be a reoccurring agenda point of State and Conservation meetings, especially in preparation for the next reporting on the directives.

The Contracting parties are invited to present progress, questions and challenges related to the ongoing national reporting for Article 17.

The Meeting is invited to take note and consider the information by Finland on the Marine Expert Working Group meeting.

Agenda Item 5N Plans for implementation of the work plan and emerging issues

The Meeting is invited to discuss any further plans relating to implementing the work plan and/or identifying emerging issues.

Agenda Item 6N Any other business

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the themes of nature conservation and biodiversity.

Agenda Item 7N Outcome of the Nature conservation session

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by the attendants of the nature conservation session of the Meeting.