



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	Extracts of outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for State and Conservation
Code	2J-1
Category	INF
Agenda Item	2J – Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat
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Background

The following HELCOM meetings that are relevant for the State and Conservation Group have taken place since the eighth meeting of the Group (STATE&CONSERVATION 9-2018), which was held on 22-26 October 2018:

- [HOD 55-2018](#), Helsinki, Finland, 4-5 December
- [HELCOM 40-2019](#), Helsinki, Finland, 6-7 March

Working Groups

- [GEAR 19-2018](#), Copenhagen, Denmark, 7-8 November
- [FISH 9-2019](#), Tallinn, Estonia, 30-31 January
- [AGRI 7-2019](#), St. Petersburg, Russia, 19-20 March
- [PRESSURE 10-2019](#), Tallinn, Estonia, 9-12 April

Expert Groups and networks

- [CG FISH DATA 3-2018](#), Copenhagen, Denmark, 21 November
- [IN EUTROPHICATION 11E-2018](#), Online, 27 November
- [IN EUTROPHICATION 12-2019](#), Online, 1 April
- [PLC 7 IG5-2018](#), Helsinki, Finland, 17-19 December
- [PLC 7 IG6-2019](#), Uppsala, Sweden, on 18-19 February
- MPA TG8-2019, Online, 21 January, Outcome is provided in [document 3N-5](#)
- MPA TG 9-2019, Online, 7 March, Outcome is provided in [document 3N-5](#)
- MPA TG 10-2019, Online, 12 March, Outcome is provided in [document 3N-5](#)
- MPA TG 11-2019, Online, 5 April, Outcome is provided in [document 3N-5](#)
- [EN CLIME 1-2019](#), Online, 29 January
- [EN CLIME 2-2019](#), Online, 15 February
- [SOM Platform 1-2019](#), Helsinki, Finland, 28 February- 1 March, [Notes](#) available in the Meeting Site
- [EN HZ 10-2019](#), Copenhagen, Denmark, 4-5 April, Outcome will be available via the [Meeting Site](#)

Projects

- [FISH PRO III 1-2019](#), Helsinki, Finland, 12-14 February
- ACTION 1-2019, Helsinki, Finland, 25-27 February, [Inception report](#) is available on [project web page](#)

Workshops

- [HELCOM workshop on migratory waterbirds](#), Helsinki, Finland, 20-22 November 2018, outcome is provided in [document 3N-1](#).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the attached extracts of outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for State and Conservation.

Extracts of outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings of relevance for State and Conservation

HOD 55-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 4-5 December

Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting

- took note of the updated information on implementation of national HELCOM actions provided via Working Groups and agreed to endorse the updates by informing the Secretariat by 31 January 2019.
- agreed that the cases of “open ended” national actions in the BSAP are to be considered in the review of the existing BSAP actions, which will continue at the next meetings of the Working Groups.
- requested that future Working Group meetings will provide a separate report or annex to summarize discussions and activities related to the update of the BSAP.
- agreed on the list of HELCOM Recommendations to be reported to support the BSAP update as contained in Annex 2 and further agreed that the Secretariat will propose which Recommendations under the Response Group should be reported early next year to support the analysis of sufficiency of measures in the BSAP update. The Meeting took note that Denmark will submit a proposal to the Secretariat on the reporting of Recommendations under the Response Group in the beginning of February 2019. The Meeting noted further that Denmark will clarify their national position related to the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG by 18 December 2018.
- mandated the Secretariat to arrange for the reporting and noted that it will be initiated in January-February 2019 and that the reporting period will be six weeks to cater for discussion of the results by the Working Group meetings in spring 2019. The Meeting welcomed that several Working Groups have initiated a review of HELCOM Recommendations and noted that this review can take place beyond the timetable of the BSAP update.
- agreed that the reporting of Recommendations will take place via submission of reporting forms by the Secretariat to Working Group representatives, keeping HOD informed. In the case that several national representatives are nominated to the Working Groups the Secretariat will consult HOD in advance to agree which person to engage in the work.
- discussed the possibility to refer to, e.g. implementation of EU legislation when reporting on accomplishment of Recommendations and concluded that the reporting should primarily refer to the implementation through national legislation while supporting information can be provided in the reporting forms to indicate how other legislation partly or entirely fulfils the HELCOM Recommendations.
- considered the proposal on how to link the BSAP to other policies (Presentation 1, document 3-3). The Meeting agreed to include overarching principles and higher level aims from the Helsinki Convention, UN SDGs and other relevant policies in the pre-amble of the updated BSAP document and also to maintain the ‘Vision’ of the current BSAP. The Meeting supported that climate change will be a key component of the pre-amble.
- agreed to include reference to sustainable development targets in the narrative of the updated BSAP document, for example by clarifying which HELCOM actions will contribute to the implementation of specific SDG targets.
- welcomed the proposal by Finland for an alternative structure for further work on the BSAP updating (document 3-9), which is based on mapping, through core indicators, the HELCOM objectives for biodiversity, non-indigenous species, water quality, contamination, marine litter and noise against clusters of manageable human activities with the titles ‘Land-based sources’, ‘Maritime sources’ and

'Preservation activities' and to use the result to support the selection of new HELCOM actions. Mapping of pressures would also be added to the matrix.

- discussed the pros and cons of the two structures and was of the view that the Finnish proposal provides a good tool for further elaborating the links between activities, pressures and status while there are important merits of close links to the structure of the current plan which is well known and which will provide consistency between the existing and updated BSAP.
- took note of the comments by the Contracting Parties to document 3-3 and agreed provisionally to maintain the original segments for the updated BSAP with the following preliminary adjustments, noting that the detailed content to be covered by the segments is still to be further defined and that the agreement on the BSAP structure is aimed for at HOD in December 2019:
 - to address marine litter under the segment on Hazardous substances and to consider changing the name to 'Hazardous substances and marine litter';
 - to include under the Maritime segment a broader set of sea-based activities, e.g. construction work, dredging, extraction of mineral resources, fishing, and consider changing the name of the segment to 'Sea-based activities'. The topics underwater noise and loss and disturbance of the seabed are tentatively assigned to this segment;
 - to use the approach presented by Finland (document 3-9) as a tool to further clarify how activities and pressures are linked to the different segments;
 - to request Working Groups to initiate the development of ecological or management objectives for the topics marine litter, underwater noise, and loss and disturbance of the seabed.
- endorsed the guidance to the Working Groups for the review of the existing and proposing new ecological and management objectives as presented in document 3-3.
- noted the proposal by GEAR 19-2018 to change the term "ecological objectives" to "environmental objectives", and the proposal by Finland to change the term to "ecosystem health objective" and agreed to come back to the issue at a later stage.
- recalled that HOD have been requested to consider a proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc Expert Group on analyses of sufficiency of measures to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update (c.f. document 3-1, activity 2.5). The Meeting considered a proposal for how to carry out the analyses of sufficiency of measures as contained in document 3-6. The Meeting agreed that the work will be carried out via an interdisciplinary platform for the implementation of the analyses (SOM Platform) (Annex 3), which is to engage the existing HELCOM ESA (social and economic analysis) network, national technical experts on the topics to be addressed by the group, and the Chairs of HELCOM Working Groups.
- approved the organization of a kick-off meeting for analysis of sufficiency of measures in February 2019.
- requested that the roles of the ESA network in the BSAP update and the Platform SOM should be clarified by amending the ToR for the ESA network.
- agreed that hazardous substances, non-indigenous species, marine litter, underwater noise, and elements of biodiversity not covered by the HELCOM ACTION project are possible additional topics for analyses of sufficiency of measures, to be carried out by the SOM Platform.
- supported the use of a Lead Country approach to carry out analyses of sufficiency of measures for topics complementary to the HELCOM ACTION project and to develop syntheses to support the BSAP update.
- considered the work plan for the BSAP update as contained in document 3-2 and approved it (Annex 4), noting that it will be updated by the Secretariat when additional agreements regarding the BSAP update are made.

Matters arising from the HELCOM groups

The Meeting

- approved the arranging of State and Conservation 10-2019 on 6-10 May 2019 in Finland (c.f. document 4-9);
- 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 (c.f. document 4-9)
- considered and approved the Work Plan for the State and Conservation Working Group 2019-2020
- took note of the proposal to delete HELCOM Recommendation 21/3 on sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism in the coastal zone of the Baltic Sea (c.f. document 4-9).
- took note of the study reservation by Poland on the deletion of Recommendation 21/3 prior to the finalization of the guidelines. The Meeting agreed to come back to the consideration regarding the deletion of Recommendation 21/3 once the guidelines on sustainable tourism have been developed.
- 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.
- 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 (c.f. document 4-9)
- approved a delineated, fit for purpose, data call focused on filling identified gaps in the biodiversity data available at HELCOM to populate the biodiversity database (c.f. document 4-9).
- supported in principle the establishment of a regional MPA management network under the auspice of HELCOM, for which draft Terms of Reference will be developed for consideration by the State and Conservation 10-2019 and HOD 56-2019 as a next step (c.f. document 4-9).
- considered 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' (document 4-20).
- took note of the comments by Denmark that after a detailed analysis and a consultation process Denmark can now lift their reservation to the Recommendation, and propose sending it to HELCOM for adoption. The Recommendation contains an exemption for projects of significant public interest, which are not prohibited despite possible effects to HELCOM red listed habitats. This exemption is important to Denmark, as they find that the protection of red listed habitats cannot take precedence over activities of significant public interest including certain activities by the Danish Defense or construction of significant projects such as certain bridges and tunnels.
- welcomed the progress on the approval process of the draft Recommendation.
- took note of the comments to the document by the EU and Russia, and invited the Secretariat to prepare a revised document taking the comments into account.
- considered and 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' (document 4-20-Rev.1) to supersede HELCOM Recommendation 21/4, and agreed to forward it for adoption by HELCOM 40-2019.
- took note of the technical amendments to HELCOM Recommendation 17/2 on protection of harbor porpoise (document 4-23). The Meeting took note of the clarification that Sweden can lift their study reservation on the proposal, and that, while Germany cannot lift their study reservation, they are open to a revision of the Recommendation.
- 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.
- considered and approved the HELCOM Action Plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon (document 4-11) and agreed to submit it to HELCOM 40-2019 for adoption.

- agreed that the term of validity of the work plan should be 2019-2021, to be reviewed and revised by the network and approved by State and Conservation WG in 2021, and clarified that the ToRs should be reviewed and revised as needed, presented for endorsement at the working group level and approval by Heads of Delegation. A revised version of the document was prepared, taking the comments into account (document 4-12-Rev.1).
- considered and approved the draft updated Terms of Reference for HELCOM EN BENTHIC as contained in document 4-12-Rev.1 (Annex 7)
- took note of the project proposal for Quality assurance of phytoplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM PEG QA) 2020-2022 (document 4-13).
- highlighted the value of the work performed by the Phytoplankton Expert Group, however, noted that there are evolving needs and emerging issues and topics under HELCOM, e.g. in relation to indicators and assessments which need to be taken on board in the group's work.
- took note of the proposal by the Co-Chairs of State and Conservation that one of the Co-Chairs takes part in the upcoming PEG meeting to further clarify and discuss how these issues might be handled by the group.
- considered and approved the continuation of the work, taking into account the pending clarification on suitable working arrangements with regard to relevant indicators and assessments and agreed to come back to the project proposal in 2019.
- considered and reviewed and further developed the draft structure and process of HELCOM climate change work and the draft Terms of Reference for EN CLIME and the proposed work plan (documents 4-24, 4-24.Rev.1).
- approved the proposed work process, the establishment of the Expert Network on Climate Change and its ToRs (as presented in document 4-24-Rev.2 and contained in Annex 8), with the aim of starting nomination process and holding the first online meeting in early 2019.

Next Meetings

- The Meeting decided that the next meeting (HOD 56-2019) will be held on 18-19 June 2019 in Helsinki. The Meeting decided that HOD 57-2019 will be held tentatively on 10-11 December 2019.

HELCOM 40-2019, Helsinki, Finland, 6-7 March

Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting

- encouraged the Contracting Parties to make offers to lead the work on specific topics **by 27 March 2019** (susanna.kaasinen@helcom.fi). Questions related to the role of lead countries and the possibility to take on the lead on a more limited scope, as mentioned in document 2-7, can be directed to the Secretariat (ullali.zweifel@helcom.fi).
- considered the draft progress reports on HELCOM voluntary commitments to the UN Ocean Conference 2017 (document 2-3) as well as comments submitted by Denmark (document 2-8) and agreed that they are submitted to UN via a dedicated website taking into account the comments by Denmark (document 2-8).
- discussed possible HELCOM voluntary commitments to the next UN Ocean Conference in 2020 and agreed that the update of the BSAP will be a HELCOM commitment to support implementation of SDGs. The Meeting suggested that another HELCOM commitment could include cooperation and sharing experiences in carrying out holistic assessments and implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan including the analysis of sufficiency of measures with other Regional Seas Conventions. The Meeting also pointed out that HELCOM could make a commitment on contributing to the UNESCO Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2020-2030.
- reiterated the importance of regional science cooperation and emphasized the need to fill currently identified gaps concerning the link between management, human activities and the environment, and highlighted the relevance and value of the close cooperation between HELCOM and BONUS.
- approved the proposal to develop a HELCOM science agenda, concomitantly with the update of the BSAP. The agenda is to outline existing and foreseen HELCOM regional science needs. The development of the agenda will be the opportunity to provide regional input to the BANOS CSA process. The Meeting further agreed that the science agenda will function as a good contribution to support processes under the UNESCO Decade of Ocean Science.

Matters arising from the subsidiary bodies

The Meeting

- considered and adopted 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 (document 3-3-Rev.1) as HELCOM Recommendation 40/1, superseding the current HELCOM Recommendation 21/4, as contained in **Annex 4** to the Outcome. On that occasion the Chair thanked the lead country Germany, Co-Chairs and Vice-Co-Chairs of the State and Conservation Working Group as well as the Contracting Parties for their persistent work and continued commitment and congratulated them on taking an important step towards safeguarding the Baltic Sea environment (**Annex 5**).
- considered the revised version of HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 on Implementation of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea area (document 3-14) as well as comments submitted by the EU (document 3-20) and Estonia (document 3-21).
- took note of the EU statement that the influence of river inputs from all watersheds draining into the Baltic Sea is of utmost importance for the environmental status of the basin. The processes of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning should facilitate the engagement and coordination of all actors involved in order to prevent conflicts and negative impacts on the coastal and marine environment.

- agreed that exact dates and deadlines should be an essential part of the practical work to plan integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning and are to be considered in the work of relevant HELCOM working groups.
- considered the revised document circulated to the Meeting containing amendments to the draft Recommendation 24/10 based on the comments provided by the EU and Estonia prior to the Meeting, editorial amendments provided by Russia in the Meeting, as well as amendments as agreed in plenary (document 3-14-Rev.2).
- adopted the revised HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 as contained in **Annex 6** to the Outcome.
- considered the draft HELCOM Action Plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon (document 3-4) and the comments by the EU (document 3-20-Rev.1).
- took note of the document circulated to the Meeting containing responses and proposed amendments provided by the Project Expert Group to document 3-4 in regard to the questions and suggested changes provided by the EU in document 3-20 (document 3-20-Add.1).
- agreed to incorporate the suggested changes (document 3-4-Rev.1) and adopted the revised HELCOM Action Plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon as contained in **Annex 7** to the Outcome.
- considered the outcome of FISH 9-2019 (document 3-10) and endorsed the Terms of Reference of the Expert Group on fisheries data for operationalizing indicators used for the purposes of assessment of the marine environment (EG Fishdata).
- In this context requested that the Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in order to assess incidental bycatches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea be finalized by FISH 10-2019.
- considered and adopted the updated HELCOM Data and Information Strategy, to replace the current HELCOM Data and Information Strategy (document 3-8) as contained in **Annex 9** to the Outcome.
- The Meeting took note and considered the information on coordinated reporting and hosting of HELCOM continuous noise monitoring data (document 3-9) and decided on the proposed hosting solution (in ICES) for a HELCOM database on continuous underwater sound.
- The Meeting took note of the position of Russia that the use of the data from the noise database in HELCOM work is to be clarified and that still for today there is no comprehensive scientific research in liaison to the direct influence of underwater noise on marine species.
- The Meeting requested the Secretariat to regularly keep the HODs informed of the progress in reporting of the underwater noise database on their monitoring and how the data are analyzed for use in HELCOM.
- The Meeting welcomed the information by Sweden that their offer to contribute to the funding of the database is still valid and the information by Denmark that they are investigating the possibility to make a financial contribution as well.
- The Meeting agreed on the annual allocation from the HELCOM budget for the database maintenance as indicated in document 3-9 as well as authorized the use of the HELCOM budget to bridge any remaining gap for funding of the database establishment.
- The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to co-fund the establishment of the soundscape planning tool as indicated in document 3-9.
- The Meeting took note of the comment by Denmark that it would be appreciated if, in the future when monitoring of underwater noise is established in both HELCOM and OSPAR, the data on underwater noise from the respective RSC's would be collated and maintained jointly or in a comparative manner.
- considered and endorsed the updated Roadmap on HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach (document 3-15).

- took note of the comment by Germany that, in general and for those Contracting Parties who are also EU Member States, regional cooperation on the implementation of the ecosystem approach should extend to also include work related to the Programs of Measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- took note of editorial comments to the document from Denmark, agreed to include the comments and endorsed the revised updated Roadmap on HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach (document 3-15-Rev.1).

Accounts 2017–2018, budget 2019–2020 and other institutional and organisational matters of the Commission

The Meeting

- Following an open and competitive recruitment process, agreed on the recommendation of the Recruitment Panel for the post of HELCOM Executive Secretary and decided to appoint Mr. Rüdiger Stempel as the next HELCOM Executive Secretary. The appointment is for an initial period of three years starting from 1 August 2019, with a possibility of a prolongation.
- considered and adopted the draft budget for the financial period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 as contained in **Annex 13** to that meeting.

Any other business

The Meeting

- considered the “HELCOM Green workplace guidelines” (documents 6-1 and 6-1-Corr.1) and adopted them as contained in **Annex 14**.
- decided to give the guidelines the status of an official HELCOM document, to be published in HELCOM website.

Next meetings of the Commission

The Meeting

- decided to arrange the next meeting of the Commission on 4-5 March 2020 at the Marina Congress Centre in Helsinki, and HELCOM Stakeholder Conference prior to HELCOM 41-2020 on 3 March.
- agreed to discuss the topic of the HELCOM stakeholder conference and the high-level segment of HELCOM 41-2020 in HOD 56-2019.

Working groups

GEAR 19-2018, Copenhagen, Denmark, 7-8 November

Implementation and update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting

- noted that the Strategic plan indicates GEAR for proposing adjustments to the BSAP structure from a policy perspective (activity 2.2) and GEAR as responsible for planning the analysis of sufficiency of measures to be carried out as part of the BSAP update (activity 2.5).
- considered **document 3.2** and **Presentation 3** on the adjustment of the BSAP structure. The Meeting supported the proposal to reflect Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets in the narrative of the updated BSAP, under the respective segment as relevant. The Meeting furthermore supported that overarching principles from the Helsinki Convention and other relevant policies will be reflected in the pre-amble text of the updated BSAP. The Meeting proposed changes and additional topics to be addressed in the development of the pre-amble of the updated BSAP. The Meeting was of the view that the pre-amble should be written as a light and inspirational text.
- discussed a number of possible adjustments to BSAP structure and agreed to propose to HOD 55-2018 a structure as contained in **Annex 2**. The proposed structure maintains in principle the four existing BSAP segments and goals but expands on the topics covered by the segments. One proposed substantial change is to combine marine litter and underwater noise and hazardous substances under a new segment with the tentative new name of "Pollution". A second proposed substantial change is to broaden the segment on maritime activities to also address fishing, aquaculture, and other activities having an impact on the seafloor, some of which are included in other segments of the current BSAP. The name of the segment may need adjustment to reflect the broader set of pressures from maritime activities. Ecological objectives should be developed by the Working Groups for the new topics covered by the structure.
- noted that the list of activities and pressures to be addressed under the tentative new segment on Maritime activities appears more extensive than for other segments since activities linked to impacts on the seabed have been more comprehensively listed. The Meeting proposed to further develop the list of activities and pressures also under other segments to get a more complete overview. The Meeting furthermore recalled that the BSAP structure is not directly linked to the HELCOM Working Groups structure and that various groups may be involved in implementing the segments.
- proposed to consider the following in the further elaboration of the BSAP structure:
 - when referring to activities use the terminology of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to facilitate the understanding of links between policies,
 - use sub-titles for different topics covered under each segment in the updated BSAP.
 - The Meeting proposed that the ecological objectives should closely follow the approach of the current BSAP and provided the following guidance for the review of ecological objectives:
 - maintain the formulation of ecological objectives to reflect the desired state,
 - maintain the aim that the objectives should be easy to communicate,
 - the objectives should not be too many, but maximum numbers cannot be given at this time,

- the maritime segment can maintain focus on management objectives but it is anticipated that the segment will also include ecological objectives and/or cross-references to the relevant ecological objectives in other segments.
- In view of the focus of ecological objectives on desired state of the environment, identified State and Conservation as the primary Working Group to review the ecological objectives on eutrophication, pollution and biodiversity, and other relevant Working Groups to contribute. Maritime, Fish and Pressure Working Group should be considered for the review of ecological objectives for the tentatively revised segment on maritime activities. Relevant HELCOM expert groups, such as EN-Marine Litter and EN-Noise, are expected to be involved upon request by the Working Groups.
- discussed the placement of climate change in the updated BSAP and stressed that climate change should be highlighted in the BSAP, including as key component of the pre-ambule text of the BSAP document as well as a cross-cutting issue to be addressed under each segment. The Meeting was of the view that climate change is not a directly relevant topic for the ecological objectives.
- discussed a possible change of name from 'ecological objectives' to 'environmental objectives' in order to broaden the policy linkages and proposed to HOD 55-2018 to consider this possibility in the further development of the updated BSAP.
- agreed to submit the draft guidelines for the review of ecological objectives to HOD 55-2018.
- took note of the proposed framework to support the update of the BSAP, based on identification of action areas, management objectives and ecological objectives and supported its further development.
- agreed that it will have to be decided at a later stage how good status should be defined for new core indicators and indicators under development.
- proposed to further clarify the approach for the BAU scenarios and noted that this can take place at the upcoming workshop of the HELCOM ESA network on 14 December 2018.
- took note of the proposal to prepare syntheses to support the BSAP update, e.g. to synthesize information on the effectiveness of potential new actions, or existing projections on development of human activities as an input to the BAU analyses. The syntheses would be purpose-made for the BSAP update with the aim of being easily to communicate within the HELCOM working structure and to prepare information in a format that could be used as an input to the analyses of sufficiency of measures.
- supported in general the use of a country lead approach for the development of such syntheses. The Meeting agreed that the Secretariat will submit an initial list with proposal for syntheses to GEAR by mid-December 2018 to be complemented with proposal from GEAR by **end of January 2019**.

Future work on HELCOM indicators

The Meeting

- discussed the upcoming indicator workshop and agreed that it will be organised as a joint GEAR and State and Conservation (policy and technical) event, with the inclusion of indicator leads and relevant technical experts.
- agreed that the indicator workshop invitation will be extended to other relevant HELCOM Working Groups and expert groups identified as necessary (e.g. HELCOM PRESSURE, FISH or ESA) and to any institutions identified for cooperative work (e.g. OSPAR or JRC).
- highlighted the importance of clearly defining the aim of the workshop and agreed that the outcome consists of a work plan to be submitted to HOD-56 in June 2019 (as outlined in the 'Future work on HELCOM indicators' process approved by HOD-54) forming the basis of actual development or adjustment work on indicators.
- agreed that preparations for the workshop will be supported by a 'core group' of nominated HELCOM Working Groups' members (e.g. from GEAR) and the Secretariat. This group will assist in practical organisation and preparation of supporting documents, e.g. merging the information on priorities listed in document 5-4 and the information on indicators in document 4-2, and coordinate with Chairs of the relevant HELCOM Working Groups. Nominations for the 'core group' have been received from Estonia

(Urmas Lips) and Sweden (Linda Rydell), and other countries are invited to provide further nominations **by 25 January 2019**. Preparatory work will be initiated in February 2019.

- agreed that the indicator workshop could be divided into thematic sections (hazardous substances, litter and noise, biodiversity and eutrophication) and is anticipated to last 2.5 days. The workshop is proposed to be held back-to-back with GEAR in the week of 13-17 May 2019.
- agreed to revisit at the workshop how to provide policy guidance and support to the Secretariat and indicator leads in further work on the HELCOM indicators.
- agreed that autumn 2021 should be the target date for final approval of new threshold values and finalizing the development of indicators for step 5 of the future work on HELCOM indicators (as set out and approved in document 4-5 to HOD 54-2018).

Future work and any other business

The Meeting

- took note that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 highlighted that there is a need for more concrete planning for HELCOM work on threshold values for underwater noise, in line with the decision of the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2018, which is currently lacking in the proposed ToR for EN-Noise for 2018-2021. The meeting suggested to GEAR to discuss the issue with the aim of establishing a shared understanding and guidance on how this Ministerial task related to thresholds should be executed in collaborative manner with the work of TG Noise.

tentatively agreed to convene the next physical meeting of WG GEAR on the week **13-17 May 2019**, back to back with the indicator workshop 2019 and welcomed Germany's offer to host the meeting.

FISH 9-2018, Tallinn, Estonia, 30-31 January

Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting

- discussed the not yet implemented joint HELCOM actions linked to the Fish Group (Attachment 1 to document 3-1, Tab 'Joint actions') and agreed on a process for their implementation and proposals for HOD to consider as further detailed in **Annex 2**.
- agreed to report on recommendations 19/2, 32-33/1, 37/3 and 25/4, as further specified in **Annex 2**.

Matters arising from HELCOM work of relevance of the group

- The Meeting noted information provided by the Secretariat, that maps on essential fish habitats are being developed and will be sent to the State and Conservation Working Group for consideration. The Meeting also noted that the work on this matter will continue, acknowledging the importance of such spatial data for many HELCOM processes.

Work on indicator development

The Meeting

- recalled that FISH 8-2018 noted information on the ongoing process under OSPAR Meeting of the Biodiversity Committee (BDC), which in February 2018 had agreed that proposals should be developed for a workshop to examine needs and possibilities for developing indicators for incidental by-catch of birds, seals, cetaceans, turtles and non-commercial fish, linked to related work by HELCOM and ICES as relevant. HOD 54-2018 noted the initiative for a possible joint HELCOM/OSPAR workshop on by-catch indicators.
- As requested by FISH 8-2018 the Secretariat informed the Meeting on the initiative with the aim of having Fish and State and Conservation Groups contributing to the process.
- took note of the draft Terms of Reference for a joint OSPAR-HELCOM workshop for indicators for incidental bycatch (document 9-1), as introduced by the Secretariat.
- noted that the draft ToRs for the workshop have been drafted by the Secretariats of OSPAR and HELCOM, and have been submitted also to CG FISHDATA 3-2018, STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 and GEAR 192018, as well as OSPAR ICG-COBAM for comments, and are also to be considered by OSPAR BDC 2019 on 25-29 March 2019 before finalization by the HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats based on the comments received from all relevant meetings.
- further noted that after submission of document 9-1, the HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats have made further progress on the matter, including setting tentative dates for the workshop (9-11 September in Denmark)
- noted that a small group of interested countries have held online meetings with the HELCOM and OSPAR secretariats, in order to make progress on the preparations.
- did not provide any further comments to the draft ToR, but noted with appreciation that experts from ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and ICES working groups have already been contacted to ensure their valuable expertise is included already in the early preparation of this Workshop.

BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture

The Meeting

- was informed by the Secretariat that while Recommendation 37/3 on *Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea region* was developed to substitute Recommendation 25/4, it also recognizes the need to maintain Recommendation 25/4 until sufficient progress on BAT and BEP has been made. Work on this matter is still ongoing in CG Aquaculture.

- Following the provided clarification on the matter, agreed that Recommendation 25/4, as well as its reporting requirements, are still valid and applicable and encouraged Contracting Parties to provide reports in accordance with Recommendation 25/4.
- agreed that, in addition to the themes presented at CG AQUACULTURE 2-2018, parasites and pathogens could be a useful additional theme to be considered in the future work on BAT/BEP for sustainable aquaculture.

HELCOM DATA interests

The Meeting

- Having made some editorial changes to the draft Terms of Reference, approved the draft Terms of Reference and new status of the CG FISHDATA group as “Expert Group on fisheries data for operationalizing indicators used for the purposes of assessment of the marine environment” (EG Fishdata) as set out in **Annex 3**, subject to endorsement by HELCOM 40-2019. In this context, the Meeting agreed that the priority and purpose of EG Fishdata is to operationalize the indicators, but that once this task is complete proposals may be made to Fish and HOD for amending the Terms of Reference and extending the mandate of the Group.

Future work

- The Meeting welcomed the offer by Denmark to host the next HELCOM Fish Group meeting (FISH 10-2019), and agreed tentatively that it will be held in Copenhagen in 25-26 June 2019, back-to-back with the seal-fisheries workshop scheduled for 27 June 2019.

AGRI 7-2019, St. Petersburg, Russia, 19-20 March

Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

The Meeting

- considered the actions that were previously deemed too general for follow-up (document 4-1-att1) and suggested on their follow-up as included in Annex 2.
- took note of the questionnaire on effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient inputs that is being jointly drafted by PLC-7 project and HELCOM ACTION project (document 4-4).
- discussed the questionnaire and pointed out that some countries operate by concentrations to evaluate effect of measures on diffuse sources but not loads.
- suggested to include three columns in the questionnaire: measures taken, measures to have their effect in the future and measures to be taken in the future.
- clarified that measures that have been politically agreed for the future years can be reported for measures to be taken in the future.

Nutrient recycling

The Meeting

- recalled that the HELCOM Workshop on regional nutrient recycling strategy was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland and HELCOM in cooperation with the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Nutri on 7 November 2018 in Warsaw, Poland. The workshop participants discussed a draft vision for the Baltic Sea regional nutrient recycling strategy and suggested possible objectives for the strategy.
- took note of the draft vision and list of draft objectives and sub-objectives that was compiled by lead country Finland and the Secretariat based on the suggestions in the workshop and was discussed in a drafting group meeting on 29 January 2019 (document 7-1).
- discussed the draft objectives and agreed on them as in document 7-1-Rev.1.
- agreed to submit the draft vision and objectives to HOD 56-2019 after commenting by Pressure Working Group.
- agreed to organize a workshop on nutrient recycling measures, preferably in January 2020 in Helsinki. The Meeting took note that project platforms SuMaNu and BSRWater are invited to contribute to the workshop.
- agreed that the data on mapping nutrients flows should be used as a background for the nutrient recycling strategy and planning measures. The Meeting also agreed that a disclaimer need to be added for the countries that only have a part of their area in the Baltic Sea catchment area.
- The Meeting recalled that Heads of Delegation (HOD 54-2018) decided to prolong the mandate of the Agri group until 2022, to cover the period of updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan and approved the group's Work Plan for the period 2018-2019 (document 9-1).
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Future work

The Meeting

- recalled that Heads of Delegation (HOD 54-2018) decided to prolong the mandate of the Agri group until 2022, to cover the period of updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan and approved the group's Work Plan for the period 2018-2019 (document 9-1).
- agreed that the next meeting of the group will be organized in the week 4-8 November 2019. The Contracting Parties are invited to consider hosting AGRI 8-2019 and inform the Secretariat by the planned dedicated online meeting.

PRESSURE 10-2019, Tallinn, Estonia, 9-12 April

Marine Litter

The Meeting

- considered and agreed that HELCOM Recommendation 29/2 can be superseded by HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 (document 3-1) and suggested HELCOM 41-2020 to decide to supersede HELCOM Recommendation 29/2.
- agreed in general to initiate the revision of HELCOM Recommendation 23/5, pending the study reservations by Denmark and Germany to be clarified by 10 May 2019 and informing the Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi). The Meeting pointed out that the revision should be more thorough than proposed by CCB including also update of the policy relevance and considering also other aspects of storm-water management than micro litter. The Meeting agreed to include this topic in the agenda of the next Workshop on the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.
- agreed to organize the 4th Workshop on implementation of RAP ML back-to-back with PRESSURE 11-2019 and invited the Contracting Parties to propose additional themes to those included in paragraph 3.10 for its agenda **by 6 September 2019**.

Physical damage to sea floor

The Meeting

- took note of the results of reporting of 2017 data under HELCOM Recommendation 36/2.
- considered and approved the consolidated report for submission to the LC/LP after this final verification.
- discussed the final draft analysis data on handling of dredged material at sea in 2016 and in general endorsed its publication as Baltic Sea Environmental Fact Sheet (BSEFS) after editorial revision of the text.

Dedicated session on implementation of HELCOM agreements

The Meeting

- took note of the task for the Pressure Working Group to review and revise existing HELCOM ecological objectives for eutrophication and hazardous substances, to propose new ecological objectives for marine litter, underwater noise and loss and disturbance to the seabed, and to propose management objectives for all these topics (Document DS-2, Presentation DS_5).
- noted this is an iterative task and that the outcome of the discussion on HELCOM objectives will be used as basis for continued elaboration by State and Conservation (ecological objectives) and Fish Group (ecological and management objectives for loss and disturbance of the seabed), and that the task also be further discussed at the next meeting of the Pressure Group with the aim of coming to an agreement at HOD in December 2019.
- agreed to split into four groups to discuss the review and development of HELCOM objectives during the meeting. The resulting outcome of the group discussions is included in Working Paper DS-WP.1.
- briefly reflected on the outcome of group discussion in plenum and noted the following:
 - Ecological objectives for eutrophication and hazardous are proposed to remain as they are, possibly with minor modifications, with the reasoning that they are still relevant and in several cases not achieved yet, and that there is an important value to stay close to the current objectives since they are commonly recognized.
 - One view was that hazardous substances segment in the updated BSAP should not be combined with marine litter.
 - Several groups proposed that management objectives could be linked to sources/sector rather than pressures. This approach can potentially result in long lists of management objectives but could be

further explored, e.g. to have one overarching management objective and a list of more detailed associated objectives than can support the follow-up of HELCOM objectives and development of actions.

- Loss and disturbance to the seabed was recognized as closely linked to ecological objectives on biodiversity and that further consideration is needed to differentiate between an ecological objective for “loss and disturbance” and status of benthic habitats in general. It was proposed that the State and Conservation Working Group discuss this matter further.
- It was noted that in some cases the management objectives drafted in the groups are formulated as actions rather than objectives and that there is a need to differentiate between these two subjects.
- For underwater noise some differing views were expressed. Since noise will always exist in the environment one view was that such objectives could focus on designating places with no noise. The use of the word “quiet/quieter” was also supported since it speaks to the wider community.
- When the discussion on objectives advances it was found important to harmonize the objectives between topics, i.e. so that managements objectives are formulated in a similar way for segments of the BSAP.

Future work and meetings

The Meeting

- recalled the offer of the EU to host the Eleventh Meeting of the Group (PRESSURE 11-2019), tentatively during week 21-25 October 2019 and agreed that the PRESSURE 11-2019 will be held on 23-25 October 2019.
- agreed that the 4th RAP ML Workshop will be held on 22 October 2019 preceding PRESSURE 11-2019.
- requested the Secretariat to adjust the agenda of the Group’s meeting in such way to optimize the attendance of various experts and also to avoid overlapping with meetings of other HELCOM Working Groups, especially the State & Conservation
- agreed tentatively that PRESSURE 12-2020 will be held during the week 20-25 April 2020 and welcomed the offer by Finland to host the meeting.

Expert groups and networks

CG FISH DATA 3-2018, Copenhagen, Denmark, 21 November

The Workshop

- recalled the Outcome of CG FISHDATA 2-2018 (22 May 2018). In this regard, the Workshop recalled that Denmark and Poland had offered to update the draft Roadmap based on the discussions at CG FISHDATA 2-2018, and that the revised draft Roadmap with the templates as annexes was then to be circulated by the Secretariat to the CG FISHDATA and Fish Group contacts, as agreed. CG FISHDATA 3-2018, Outcome Page 2 of 9 It was further recalled that after collecting comments, a revised draft of the Roadmap was to be circulated with a view for agreement by CG Fishdata followed by submission to STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 for comments that could be taken into account by CG FISHDATA 3-2018 before finalization and submission to the Fish Group for approval.
- further recalled that the last workshop agreed that changing the status of the Correspondence Group to an Expert Group would provide more clarity to the scope and methods of work of the group. It was noted that the aim of the third Workshop was to finalize the Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in order to assess incidental by-catches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea, and to discuss and plan the future work and format for continuation of the group.
- Recognizing that the aim was to finalize the Roadmap at this Workshop, it was noted that a significant amount of work still remains in order to finalize the Roadmap for approval by the Fish Group.
- further agreed that it may not be appropriate to try to finalize the Roadmap at this meeting, as Estonia, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania were not present.
- agreed that while the draft Roadmap set out in Document 5 contains much of the information needed, the current structure is not fit for purpose. The Workshop consequently developed a new structure for the Roadmap, as set out in Annex 2. The Workshop agreed that the Chair will develop a first draft Roadmap using the new structure, utilizing as much as possible text from the current draft, as well as the CG FISHDATA 3-2018, Outcome Page 4 of 9 outcome of this Workshop. The Workshop further invited interested parties to liaise directly with the Chair and to contribute to the development of the Roadmap.
- considered the comments from STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 set out in Document 6, as presented by the Secretariat. In this context the Workshop noted that Germany (in absence) supports the request from STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 to incorporate a timeline with associated task deadlines into the roadmap. The Workshop agreed that the possible inclusion of a timeline and task list should be further considered in the further development of the Roadmap.
- agreed that the Roadmap should reflect also the work of ICES.
- further agreed that the Roadmap should reflect that efforts for monitoring bycatches should be done taking into consideration effective use of resources. The Workshop further agreed that the Roadmap should address the lack of data for fishing vessels below 12 meters in length.

IN EUTROPHICATION 11E-2018, Online, 27 November

The Meeting

- took note of the test EQR results for open sea using fixed 50 % acceptable deviations ([Document 2-1](#)), as presented by Birgit Heyden, Germany. The document was based on document 4-1 of IN-EUTROPHICATION 11-2018 meeting, amended with further test calculations based on calculated best values from target values and fixed acceptable deviations and with test EQR results for coastal water results.
- agreed to proceed by making a test eutrophication assessment using current data with EQR values in the HELCOM Workspace. The Meeting noted that proceeding with test assessment does not mean accepting the EQR approach.
- agreed that the Secretariat will communicate with ICES for actualizing the test assessment, and that Germany will help in providing needed information to ICES.
- agreed to use acceptable deviation values from HEAT 2.0 to start the work ([HEAT2.0 Excel](#) included in Meeting document library contains acceptable deviations). The Meeting further agreed that in future work scientifically sound best values and acceptable deviation values need to be defined for each basin and each indicator separately.

IN EUTROPHICATION 12-2019, Online, 1 April

The Meeting

- considered the integration of eutrophication related Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets (BSEFS) to relevant indicator reports and agreed on the statements and actions provided in [document 6J-2 add.1](#).
- considered how to combine the different projects regarding oxygen indicator development and took note that also Denmark was willing to participate the work. As a first step, the Meeting agreed that the already existing document on [shallow water oxygen indicator](#) will be updated by those Contracting Parties who have ongoing activities on the subject, preferably by mid May. The Meeting agreed to make the document a living document.
- took note of the latest developments regarding Acidification indicator and agreed to initiate co-operation between acidification projects by circulating [acidification related document](#) from BONUS Integral project, presented at State & Conservation 8-2018 ([presentation 9.5](#)) and update it with information from projects in Estonia and Sweden and OMAI project by midsummer.
- discussed the assessment units in the following basins:
 - o Gulf of Finland (Lead Country for sub-basin division discussion is Finland): The sub-basin has a strong east – west gradient and also the trends in these parts may differ, which gives grounds to divide the sub-basin into two or even three areas. This would also facilitate observing the positive development in the eastern part of the gulf. Next step on the matter should be a clear proposal for dividing the sub-basin.
 - o Bornholm Basin (Lead Country for sub-basin division discussion is Germany): Results from Oder estuary strongly affect the overall status of the sub-basin. The issue will be looked into by Germany and Poland together. The task has not proceeded and there is no funding for the task at the moment.
 - o Kattegat (Lead Country for sub-basin division discussion is Sweden): No proceedings regarding the division. Kattegat is also a part of OSPAR area, and OSPAR proposal for new assessment units seems promising for Kattegat and could be looked into.
 - o Eastern Gotland Basin (Lead Country for sub-basin division discussion is Sweden): The basin is large and there has been problems in setting targets, but there are no clear gradients in nutrients, and no need for further work on the matter is needed at the moment.
- took note of the current information on eutrophication indicators from the indicator review questionnaire sent to the leads, co-leads and expert groups and agreed on edits and amendments to the document 4-2 to supplement the information delivered to the Indicator Workshop.

- took note of the current status of the Test Assessment using current data with Eutrophication Quality Ratios (EQRs), including the work done by ICES, and that the Best value, EQR value and scaled EQR value will be added to the indicator view and EQR and scaled EQR in the assessment view in the sharepoint.
- took note of the information from ICES, that the resources to continue the Test Assessment work at ICES are limited. The current contract between ICES and HELCOM is limited to data management and does not include development work. The Meeting noted that ICES is willing to continue the work, but to ensure the continuation of the development work at ICES, the procedure should be agreed on. The Meeting further noted that uninterrupted continuation of the work would be important, but developing the EQR based assessment and future work on Confidence assessment needs resources which are not currently available at HELCOM. The Meeting considered that possible solutions would be trying to get funding for a small project, for which ICES would make a work estimate, or for including a certain amount of development work into the current agreement between HELCOM and ICES. The Meeting noted that proceeding with a project proposal would have to be discussed in State and Conservation.
- discussed the state of the Indicator Scaling Table and noted that there are contradictions concerning the Best Values and Target values used in HOLAS II, which need to be checked. The Meeting agreed that Germany will check the Table and in case of any missing information from Contracting Parties try to solve those cases bilaterally.
- took note that the test on data-driven coastal indicator assessment for nutrients, chlorophyll and secchi depth has not been proceeded after the previous IN EUTROPHICATION meeting.
- noted the developing of the HEAT confidence assessment by Germany. The Meeting agreed that all Contracting Parties will provide comments on document 4-5 by **15 April** to Germany (heyden@aquaeology.de), for Germany to get a decision, if the work is going on the right direction before getting into the details which for part of the indicators require a large workload.

Next meetings

- The Meeting agreed to have next meeting (IN-Eutrophication 13-2019) to be held as an online meeting at the end of May – beginning of June. The Meeting further agreed that the Secretariat will send a Doodle poll for finding the date.

PLC 7 IG5-2018, Helsinki, Finland, 17-19 December

Finalizing the PLC-6 project

The Meeting

- took note of the status of the draft report on evaluation of effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient loads ([Presentation 1](#)) and examples of source apportionment based on source-oriented approach.
- noted the idea that N and P input reduction could be also separately assessed for large urban areas as an additional PLC-7 product or chapter.
- welcomed the results of quantification of the effect of implemented measures to reduce nutrients and also of planned measures to achieve national reduction targets obtained from the compiled data.
- invited Finland to prepare a draft of the assessment by **21st January 2019** and provide to the Secretariat in order to circulate to national representatives in PLC-7 for commenting.
- agreed that the final overview of the methodologies, including some conclusions on the level of compatibility of the methods used in different countries, will be presented by the Project Managers at PLC-7 6-2019.
- agreed that there is an urgent need publish information substantiating the decisions made by HELCOM bodies with regard to the methods to evaluate progress towards national reduction targets. The Meeting invited the Project manager to prepare a document containing the main conclusions and recommendation with regard to the MAI and CART assessment methods by the next PLC-7 meeting which could be then published as a supplementary material for the PLC-6 products.

Current activities of the PLC-7 project

The Meeting

- considered an updated version of the draft report on statistical methods submitted by Denmark ([document 4-3-Att.](#)).
- took note of the clarification regarding possible effect of additional years, especially with atypical parameters, on already identified break points. The Meeting concluded that in some cases mathematically identified break points should be reconsidered in case of high probability that adding of the next year's values to the time series could result in significant changes of the break point.
- agreed that the statistical report can be published by DCE after some minor editorial corrections in January 2019.
- discussed background information to be updated in the PLC-7 project and agreed in general with suggestion to update data as suggested in [Presentation 3](#). Nonetheless, the Meeting suggested to include additional information to the PLC-7 background information report such as map of nutrient surplus, update maps of land use/cover and sources of hazardous substances.

Future work and meetings

- The meeting agreed to arrange PLC-7 IG 6-2018 on **18-20 February 2019** and invited Sweden to consider opportunity to arrange the Meeting in SLU premises in Uppsala, Sweden.
- The meeting also agreed to arrange PLC-7 7-2018 tentatively **14-15 May 2019 in Warsaw**, Poland.

PLC 7 IG6-2019, Uppsala, Sweden, on 18-19 February

Matters arising from other HELCOM work

The Meeting

- agreed that the results of the PLC-6 and PLC-7 work will be discussed at the ACTION project kick-off meeting with an intention to improve the questionnaire and, subsequently, submit it to PRESSURE 10-2019 to be endorsed and agreed on the reporting procedure.
- pointed out that the load data from the PLC assessment data set are to be used for the analysis of sufficiency of measures. The raw data reported to PLC water database could not be utilized for this purpose.
- discussed the workshop with river basin authorities, recently approved by Pressure group, pointing out that the workshop has strategical targets to align nutrient input reduction requirements under WFD and MSFD. The workshop foreseen in the HELCOM ACTION project has a more technical target aimed at assessment of reduction achieved through implementation of measures.
- suggested to split the workshop into two parts. The first part will be mainly devoted to strategic aspects of aligning nutrient reduction targets between WFD and BSAP. The HELCOM activity on evaluation of effectiveness of measures will be announced at the workshop to facilitate reporting on questionnaire on effectiveness of measures prepared jointly by PLC-7 and ACTION projects. The second part of the workshop will be arranged in late autumn 2019 being focused on more technical aspects resulted from the analysis of responds to the questionnaire.
- agreed that the Secretariat will provide technical support for both parts of the workshop, but as the first part of the workshop is focused on strategic issues the work is to be planned by the Pressure group and Heads of Delegation. The updated draft of the workshop's concept will be produced by this Meeting and the following RedCore DG 24-2019 meeting and further communicated with the ACTION project.

Finalizing the PLC-6 project

The Meeting

- took note of the status of the draft report on evaluation of effectiveness of measures to reduce nutrient loads ([Presentation 1](#)).
- discussed the presented material and in general agreed with the proposed approach. The Meeting suggested that the effect of measures to reduce waterborne input of nitrogen would be compared with the remaining reduction with subtraction of airborne input. Also, a chapter on scattered dwellings is to be added.
- agreed that the assessment will be prepared by the deadline for PRESSURE 10-2019 and circulated to the meeting. Simultaneously, the draft will be circulated to the PLC-7 Implementation Group.
- took note of the updated version of the document illustrating source-oriented approach to source apportionment ([document 3-1](#) and [3-1-Att](#)). The Meeting re-iterated the agreement that the assessment of sources will be finalized separately from the evaluation of effectiveness of measures and published as an independent supplementary paper illustrating a pilot case of the source-oriented approach, utilizing a limited number of examples provided by some of HELCOM countries.
- agreed that the document will be published after integration of some minor comments, which the participants have provided to the Project Manager. The Project Manager will supply the final version of the document to the Secretariat by 1 March 2019.
- agreed that the scientific report on assessment of progress towards national nutrient input reduction targets should be focused on the methods used for nutrient input assessment and that the report will be drafted by the PLC-7 IG meeting in May and further finalized during the summer.

- agreed that the Final draft of the Background information report will be updated by 9 March 2019 and submitted to PRESSURE 10-2019 to reflect on the document and provide guidance on compilation of the background report for PLC-7.

Current activities of the PLC-7 project

The Meeting

- agreed that the Project Manager will prepare an information document for PRESSURE 10-2019 illustrating the status of knowledge on airborne P-input, based on the compiled data and information which might be additionally provided by Sweden and Poland.
- discussed background information to be updated in the PLC-7 project and agreed in general with suggestion to update data as suggested in **Annex 3**. The Meeting in general agreed that the structure of the PLC-7 background report will remain almost the same as for PLC-6.

Data reporting

The Meeting

- urged national data reporters to approve data which require manual approval.
- agreed that the processing of annual data 2017 will be started after 1 March when the last open issues have been clarified, with intention to get the draft assessment results by the next PLC-7 IG meeting in May 2019.
- urged national data reporters to start data approval, as the most part of periodically reported data should be approved manually.
- agreed that the status of periodic data reporting will be reported to PRESSURE 10-2019 by the deadline for decision documents. Updates will be provided as a revised document before the meeting.

Future work and meetings

- The Meeting agreed to arrange PLC-7 IG 8-2019 on 14-16 May 2019 in Warsaw, Poland.
- The themes of the next meeting will be the first results of processing of annual data and reporting of periodic data, progress in preparation of the scientific report, latest updates of the programme of the workshop with river basin authorities, background information and further work on evaluation of effectiveness of measures, and further advancement of the follow up of the nutrient reduction scheme.

EN CLIME 1-2019, Online, 29 January

The Meeting

- took note of the draft structure of the information fact sheet (document 3-2).
- noted that the intention is for EN CLIME to be a long term platform and that the group would support iterations of the fact sheet. The Meeting took note of the comment that as far as possible these could be aligned with work on BACC reports and reports and work under the IPCC. The Meeting further agreed to return to the question of the schedule for iterations at later stage of the process and that the interval should be based on what is scientifically and practically feasible.
- agreed that as a first step the parameters need to be in place, and only then should the exercise to map the expertise available in the group commence. The draft Expert overview (document 4-1), prepared by the Secretariat, will be circulated within the EN CLIME contacts for them to fill in their areas of expertise once the parameters are finalized.
- discussed on the content and scope of the fact sheet, mainly focusing on the identified parameters. The Meeting noted that at this stage, scientifically sound parameters should be selected, and that the parameters can at later stage of the process be combined under wider topics in order to make the fact sheet more usable for policy makers. It was further discussed that the fact sheet could be organized topically, but that this might complicate iterations as the important topics may change over time.
- edited the list of parameters as contained in document 4-1 rev. 2 and agreed that the revised document will be circulated among the contacts of EN CLIME for further comments and edits.
- discussed the mode of working and agreed that as a first step, parameters will be chosen and expertise mapped, after which thematic sub-groups could be formed. The Meeting agreed to come back to this issue once the parameters are in place.
- agreed that second meeting of EN CLIME (EN CLIME 2-2019) will be held online at the end of February in order to confirm the list of parameters to be included, to look into the division of available expertise and to identify gaps in expertise.

EN CLIME 2-2019, Online, 15 February

The Meeting

- agreed on the general structure of the fact sheet (as contained in [document 2-1 rev. 3](#)) and noted that the order of topics in the fact sheet can be reconsidered when content has been gathered to ensure that the information is as accessible as possible. The Meeting further noted that parameter 'Description' should be included to the fact sheet in a very concise manner, describing the underlying factors, and linkages to other parameters.
- considered, edited and amended the revised version of the excel file containing the list of proposed parameters (document 3-1 rev.2). The Meeting agreed on the content and scope of the fact sheet and noted that further division of secondary parameters e.g. by species groups is still possible during the latter phases of the process.
- agreed to form subgroups related to primary parameters
- agreed that a physical meeting is needed for going through the key messages for the primary parameters and suggested this be done at the proposed meeting in relation to the Baltic Sea Science Congress.
- discussed and supported organizing a physical meeting of EN CLIME in association with 12th Baltic Sea Science Congress in Stockholm 19-23 August, and welcomed the information that the Swedish EPA can offer facilities for the meeting.
- elected Clarisse Kehler Siebert, representing HELCOM, and Markus Meier, representing Baltic Earth, as co-chairs of EN CLIME.

Projects

FISH PRO III 1-2019, Helsinki, Finland, 12-14 February

The Meeting

- recalled that of specific relevance to the FISH-PRO III, are the coastal fish indicators (these are operational and were updated in 2018) and indicators that currently are not operational but may be considered as important knowledge gaps, such as '*Proportion of large fish in the community*'.
- took note that the planning for a joint OSPAR-HELCOM bycatch indicator workshop is progressing and noted that it will tentatively take place in 9-11 September 2019, hosted by Denmark.
- in this regard, further took note that the ACTION project shall contribute to the update of the BSAP and implementation of *Programs of Measures* for Contracting Parties being EU members, with a specific objective to analyze the effectiveness and sufficiency of existing measures with particular focus on bycatch, impacts on the seabed, marine protected areas, and eutrophication.
- took note of the Outcome of the regional expert workshop on essential fish habitats, organized by Pan Baltic Scope project and HELCOM (HELCOM Pan Baltic Scope EFH WS 2018), on 12-13 December 2019, in Riga, Latvia (document 2-4), as presented by the Secretariat. The Meeting noted that the purpose of the workshop was to consider existing knowledge on essential fish habitats at the Baltic Sea regional scale, needed inter alia for the work of Pan Baltic Scope project to develop a concept of green infrastructure for supporting maritime spatial planning in the HELCOM region, and that the workshop focused on a selection of key species for which Baltic-wide spawning/recruitment habitat maps have been developed within the Pan Baltic Scope project.
- took note of the revised descriptions and maps of the essential fish habitats considered by HELCOM Pan Baltic Scope EFH WS 2018 (document 2-5), as introduced by the Secretariat on behalf of Pan Baltic Scope Project Coordinator. The revised essential fish habitat document (2-5) was based on recommended changes as described in the workshop Outcome (document 2-4).
- was invited to review the draft guideline and agree on further tasks for the update work, with the view of sending the updated guidelines for approval to STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019, and with the goal to publish the guideline during spring 2019.
- noting that the final draft has already taken into account comments and amendments from reviews invited from all Contracting Parties, the Meeting considered and discussed the draft guideline.
- agreed that based on the final comments to be received, Sweden will finalize the updated guideline and send it for approval to STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 that will be held on 6-10 May 2019, in Finland.
- agreed that the coastal fish CORE indicator data should continue to be annually updated in the COOL database and that updating for 2018 will be done via an excel template to the Project Manager (jens.olsson@slu.se) by 30 June 2019.
- agreed that size-based indicators, especially L90, have large potential to provide valuable added knowledge on coastal fish, and that the matter should progress intersessionally by initial work on national data to be reported and further considered at next meeting 2020.
- concluded that the matter of recreational fishery is difficult to advance at this point with any common approach, and that the extent of the work would require a dedicated project for substantial progress to be realistic. The Meeting agreed to continue sharing information about national projects and advancements on the matter, and to consider updating document 6-1 in the future by adding an overview on existing data and expanding to address which potential impacts are known to exist. Such an update could additionally include a summary on existing literature on recreational fishing impacts.
- concluded that migratory species are not in the scope of FISH-PRO III as they are being sufficiently addressed already by other HELCOM and ICES bodies, that there is no purpose for duplication of such

work, and that the monitoring programmes that serves the basis for FISH PRO III commonly do not catch migratory fish species. The Meeting agreed to continue focusing on the current species and seasons but proceeding with national investigations on the possibilities and benefits of including additional species and/or seasons in the future work.

- based on the project proposal (document 7-1) and the current work plans of State and Conservation and Fish Groups (document 7-2), the Meeting discussed and planned the future work of FISH-PRO III, as supported by a presentation by the Project Manager.
- agreed that the work should focus on the following tasks:
 - Further development of Core indicators
 - Development of additional indicators (e.g. size-related indicators)
 - Contribution to HELCOM Thematic assessments and Red list of species
 - Providing recommendations for EBM for coastal fish
 - Producing fourth thematic assessment on coastal fish
 - Considering alternative data sources for status assessments and monitoring
 - Expanding spatial coverage of monitoring
 - Updating coastal fish monitoring manual when needed
 - Providing expert proposals and management measures for coastal fish
 - Supporting the development of relevant research (especially the effects of essential habitats and external pressures for coastal fish CORE indicator responses)
- approved and agreed to use the Work Plan of FISH-PRO III including the specified tasks, deliverables and a tentative schedule, as prepared and presented by the Project Manager.
- agreed to include the following topics to the Agenda of FISH-PRO III 2-2020:
 - Revision of work plan if needed
 - Continued work on size related indicators
 - Continued discussion/work on future habitat indicator
 - Discussion on alternative assessment methods besides the one currently applied
 - Data update COOL including 2019 data and potentially additional monitoring areas and data
 - Discussion on alternative data sources, additional monitoring areas and trends in commercial catches Intermediate status assessment, CORE indicators (data until 2019)
 - Presentation of national projects on recreational fisheries