



Outcome of the tenth Meeting of the Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation (STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019)

Introduction

0.1 In accordance with the decision by HOD 55-2019 (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) was convened on 6-10 May 2019 in Hamina, Finland, in the premises of Kumppanuustalo Hilma.

0.2 The Monitoring and assessment session was attended by delegations from all Contracting Parties except Russia and EU and observer from Nordic Hunters' Alliance. The Joint session was attended by delegations from all Contracting Parties except Russia and EU and observers from Coalition Clean Baltic, Nordic Hunters' Alliance and OCEANA. The Nature conservation session was attended by delegations from all Contracting Parties except Sweden, Russia and EU as well as observers from Coalition Clean Baltic, Nordic Hunters' Alliance and OCEANA. The List of Participants is contained as **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Meeting was chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group: Ms. Marie-Louise Krawack (Denmark), Chair of nature conservation issues and Mr. Norbert Häubner (Sweden), Chair of monitoring and assessment related topics. The Joint session was chaired jointly by the Co-Chairs. Ms. Jannica Haldin, HELCOM Professional Secretary and Ms. Laura Hoikkala, HELCOM Associate Professional Secretary acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

0.4 The Meeting was welcomed by Mr. Ari Laine of the Parks and Wildlife Finland.

Monitoring and assessment

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

1MA.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda items 1MA-6MA as contained in document 1-1.

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

2MA.1 The Meeting took note of the progress and results of the BONUS project FUMARI (Future Marine Assessment and Monitoring of the Baltic), as presented by Project Coordinator Kristian Meissner (**presentation 1**). The Meeting participants were encouraged to respond the survey prepared by FUMARI.

2MA.2 The Meeting noted the extended deadline (20 May 2019) of the project survey and the invitation to take part in the survey, which can be accessed under the following link: <https://www.netigate.se/ra/s.aspx?s=712230X173875137X81527>

2MA.3 The Meeting took note that the project will explore the possibility to provide results and information prior to the finalization of the project in March 2020 and that anyone interested in accessing the information at an earlier date can contact the project manager Kristian Meissner (Kristian.meissner@ymparisto.fi)

2MA.4 The Meeting took note of the information regarding the BONUS SEAM (Towards Streamlined Baltic Sea Environmental Assessment and Monitoring) project as presented by Henrik Nygård (**presentation 2**).

2MA.5 The Meeting took note of the information that a holistic synthesis of reviews and analysis of current Baltic Sea monitoring will soon be available from the SEAM project.

2MA.6 The Meeting considered the work of both these projects valuable for the work of State and Conservation.

2MA.7 The Meeting noted that both projects will work on analysing the cost-efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring, which is in line with the task outlined in the State and Conservation workplan.

2MA.8 The Meeting discussed that the Contracting Parties that are also EU members states would benefit from access to information and results of the projects prior to their respective end dates (March 2020/April 2020) to support the reporting on, and update of, the MSFD monitoring programmes.

2MA.9 The Meeting noted that FUMARI and SEAM are planning to organize a joint workshop, and the Meeting welcomed information that State and Conservation participants are invited to the Workshop.

2MA.10 The Meeting invited both projects to present their results at State and Conservation 12-2020, after both projects have finalized their work.

Agenda Item 3MA Development and implementation of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 10/1 ABNORMAL SITUATIONS IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

3MA.1 The Meeting recalled that the Recommendation is considered to be replaced.

3MA.2 The Meeting took note of information on a CMEMS (Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service) development application as presented by Urmas Lips, Lead Country Estonia (document 3MA-8).

3MA.3 The Meeting took note of information by Estonia on the progress on the project proposal submitted by a consortium of European research institutes and agencies led by GEOMAR (Germany) which was formed to respond to the latest Horizon 2020 call. The Danish Meteorological Institute and the Tallinn University of Technology have joined the H2020 project proposal and defined a task which includes a service

development to produce quarterly or monthly assessment reports on extreme marine events in the Baltic Sea.

3MA.4 The Meeting further noted that should the project get funded, the Contracting Parties will be asked opinions about the service and how to develop it and make it available.

3MA.5 The Meeting took note of the information that Estonia will keep State and Conservation WG informed on progress regarding the application.

RECOMMENDATION 10/2 ASSESSMENTS OF THE EFFECTS OF POLLUTION ON THE COASTAL AREAS OF THE BALTIC SEA

3MA.6 The Meeting took note that Finland has started pollution monitoring using caged blue mussels in harbours.

3MA.7 The Meeting discussed reporting of the Recommendation and noted that there is currently no Lead for it. The Meeting discussed the hosting of the recommendation and considered that the Recommendation as a whole is more related to topics under Pressure: The Meeting agreed that Pressure WG should be approached with the question if they would be willing to take over hosting the Recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 19/3 MANUAL FOR THE HELCOM JOINT COORDINATED MARINE MONITORING

3MA.8 The Meeting recalled decision of STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 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.

3MA.9 The Meeting took note of information from the Secretariat on the progress of the matter. The Meeting noted that the Secretariat is contacting different data repositories, and hope to have the overview in place by STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3MA.10 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 agreed that exhaustive reviews and revisions of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual should be carried out every six years, next time being in 2019. The Meeting took note that the manual and associated guidelines are living documents and can be gradually updated in S&C Meetings also between exhaustive revisions.

3MA.11 The Meeting concluded that it is important to have early information exchange with the EU, to ensure that the update is in line with the reporting requirements for reporting on Article 11 under the MSFD.

3MA.12 The Meeting took note of the information that the upcoming EU WG DIKE meeting will discuss guidelines for reporting under Article 11 in June 2019.

3MA.13 Meeting took note of the comment by Finland, that State and Conservation should not conduct a complete revision of the monitoring based solely on EU monitoring but ensure that the existing functional system is maintained.

3MA.14 The Meeting noted that the current revisions should be done concomitantly with the upcoming revision of the HELCOM website.

3MA.15 The Meeting agreed to amend the name of the Monitoring Manual to better reflect the content of the manual and avoid confusion with the HELCOM Monitoring Guidelines and the previous HELCOM Combine Manual.

3MA.16 The Meeting agreed to start the review process once the guidance is available from the EU Commission. It is to be sent out to State and Conservation, together with the HELCOM Monitoring Manual, with a deadline for providing comments and input for how to amend or revise the manual by end of 31 October 2019. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to collate the received input by 29 November 2019 and

provide the information for lead country Estonia to use when preparing a draft update of the Monitoring manual to be presented for review prior to STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

3MA.17 The Meeting took note that for some contracting parties the timeline for public consultation for Article 11 reporting precludes any updates of the HELCOM Monitoring Manual from being included in the work.

3MA.18 The Meeting acknowledged that the plan to update the manual every 6 years was intended to align the work with the reporting and updating of the monitoring programs under the MSFD, and agreed that the update frequency might need to be revised to better align with EU processes in the future.

Development of data arrangements for HELCOM monitoring data and assessment

3MA.19 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 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.

3MA.20 The Meeting took note of information from the Secretariat that the Chairs of the respective networks have been contacted and expressed interest in an online workshop focused on improving reporting and usability of data for the HELCOM COMBINE database. Based on communications with the Expert Groups the workshop is intended to take place in fall 2019.

3MA.21 The Meeting took note of the current status of data flows supporting HELCOM assessments, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3MA-7).

3MA.22 The Meeting took note of the information that it is possible to use HELCOM structures to report on EU commitments as long as the process has been agreed by all parties.

3MA.23 The Meeting agreed that the next step should be to prioritize the existing gaps and identify low hanging fruits, including for which strands the national dataflows are green/yellow but where this is not reflected in the table, in order to identify where the work could begin. The Meeting agreed that the Contracting Parties will review the table and provide information on if the status given for different dataflows reflect their national dataflows as well as provide a list of national prioritization based on the identified gaps to the Secretariat (joni.kaitaranta@helcom.fi) by September 13 2019. The Meeting took note of the comment by Finland on reporting on human activities data that the first step in the process to reporting data is to set up functioning dataflows nationally.

3MA.24 The Meeting invited EG MAMA to review the table and clarify the reporting structure regarding marine mammal data.

3MA.25 The Meeting considered the updated overview of deadlines for data reporting listed in HELCOM Monitoring Manual and guidelines (document 3MA-2, **presentation 3**). The Meeting agreed on general conceptual guidelines to consider when optimizing reporting and dataflows as contained in **Annex 2** to this outcome.

Generally reporting in autumn was preferred. The Meeting noted comments to the specific reporting deadlines as follows: Lithuania can provide commercial fish related data in May. The Meeting further noted that ICES processes the data on hazardous substances in November, and thus the deadline for hazardous substances data could be set to 31 October. The Meeting noted that streamlining the reporting deadlines with the ones of OSPAR would generally be beneficial.

3MA.26 The Meeting noted that the table in document 3MA-2 included in the Monitoring manual as part of the Monitoring Manual update process and will be provided for final approval by STATE & CONSERVATION 20-2020.

3MA.27 The Meeting took note of recent progress on the monitoring of underwater noise. The Meeting noted that enough resources have been gathered to establish the database at ICES.

3MA.28 The Meeting took note of the following national work in relation to underwater noise monitoring:

- Germany has ongoing national R&D Projects on the Evaluation of the Efficiency of Noise Mitigation Measures with respect to Impact on Marine Mammals: Comprehensive field study on the progress and efficacy of noise-mitigation measures, using pile-driving sound measurements from German offshore construction projects up to the end of 2018 (ERa). Germany will share the results within HELCOM once available. Germany also has R&D Projects concerning the effects of pile driving on harbor porpoises as well as the effects of deterrence devices are ongoing and project results are expected to be available in 2020 for submission to the HELCOM network.
- Finland: has continued monitoring to maintain the BIAS model in the open sea and monitoring in coastal areas has already begun with more areas planned to be included.
- Estonia has ongoing a monitoring project on underwater noise in coastal waters especially focusing on the effects of leisure boating and possible monitoring of seals by underwater noise detectors, which ends in July. Estonia can present results in the next Meeting.
- Poland: Monitoring underwater continuous noise, with 6 present HELCOM assessment areas under national monitoring program has commenced in November 2018.

3MA.29 The Meeting took note of draft HELCOM monitoring sub-programme on beach litter (document 3MA-4), elaborated using information as contained in the pre-core indicator report on beach litter, the beach litter monitoring guidelines, and the section on marine litter contained in the State of the Baltic Sea report. The Meeting further noted that Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden have provided input to the document prior to the Meeting.

3MA.30 The Meeting took note of comments from Germany and Denmark to the document and further revised the subprogram as contained in document 3MA-4 rev.1.

3MA.31 The Meeting agreed on the regional monitoring sub-program on beach litter and on the amendments of the Monitoring Manual accordingly, and agreed to send it to HOD-56 2019 for approval.

3MA.32 The Meeting took note of the information on progress regarding monitoring of waterbirds at sea, as presented by Germany on behalf of Co-Chair of JWG BIRD. The Meeting noted the following comments sent by the co-chair of JWG BIRD:

- Existing data should be collated from the ESAS database (European seabirds at Sea database, currently hosted by JNCC) and the similarly structured database that was elaborated during the HELCOM BALSAM project.
- It is ongoing that the ESAS data will be hosted by ICES and it is planned that the Baltic Sea data should be included in this database, so that data can be used for indicator development.
- The experts of the JWGBIRD recommend to conduct (1) synchronous full-scale surveys covering major parts of the HELCOM and OSPAR regions once per six year reporting cycle and (2) surveys covering a subset of relevant areas at higher frequency in the years in between. (see JWGBIRD report 2016, page 22)
- General comment: regular and automated input of data is absolutely necessary for the success of the database. This requires appropriate personnel capacities to be provided by the Contracting Parties, not only for monitoring but also for providing the data.

3MA.33 The Meeting invited Germany to ask the Co-Chair of JWG BIRD Volker Dierschke if there exists an overview of in which CPs seabirds at sea monitoring takes place, and return to the issue in STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020. The Meeting took note that the gap on monitoring of seabirds at sea still exists.

3MA.34 The Meeting took note of the information by Germany that regular seabirds at sea as well as shipbased monitoring is ongoing and that the information is stored in a national database and that data are illustrated in a web application (<https://geodienste.bfn.de/seevogelmonitoring?lang=en>). The Meeting welcomed the offer by Germany to present the national approach for monitoring seabirds at sea in STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020. The Meeting took note of information that Poland has had yearly monitoring from 2015 – 2019 and that guidance is available in Polish.

3MA.35 The Meeting agreed that HELCOM Guidelines for seabirds at sea monitoring should be developed, possibly using existing national guidelines from Germany and Poland as a basis, using a lead country approach and invited CPs to offer taking the lead by contacting the Secretariat (laura.hoikkala@helcom.fi) by 29 June 2019 at the latest.

3MA.36 The Meeting invited JWG BIRD to support the work of the lead country(ies) on a HELCOM Guideline for seabirds at sea monitoring.

Review and update of HELCOM Monitoring Guidelines

3MA.37 The Meeting took 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.

3MA.38 The Meeting took note of the draft monitoring guideline on biological material sampling and sample handling for the analysis of persistent organic pollutants (PAHs, PCBs and OCPs) and metallic trace elements, as presented by Lead Country Germany (document 3MA-6). The Meeting noted that the guideline is currently described in the COMBINE manual, and that the revised guideline includes updates on procedure and expanded QA/QC section. The Meeting further noted that the guidelines were also revised by HELCOM EN-HZ and comments received from this working group are included in the new guidelines.

3MA.39 The Meeting took note of further comments by Denmark, Germany and Estonia to the draft guidelines, revised the guidelines, endorsed them and agreed on the publication of the revised guidelines on the HELCOM website as contained in document 3MA-6 rev.1.

3MA.40 The Meeting took note of draft guidelines for chlorophyll a, including two separate guidelines; one for station and ferrybox sampling and other for Earth Observation (EO) methods, as presented by Finland (document 3MA-5). The Meeting recalled that in STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 the Contracting Parties accepted the document, but expressed their interest to give further comments after meeting. The Meeting noted that the received comments have been taken into account in the present document.

3MA.41 The Meeting took note of comments by Denmark, Germany, Latvia and Poland to the draft guidelines, and revised the draft guidelines for monitoring of chlorophyll a as presented in 3MA-5 rev.1.

3MA.42 The Meeting took note of the information that there are remaining open question and agreed that additional information from Germany and Poland will be sent to the lead by **4 June 2019** and that there is a need to cross reference some of the information contained in the document with the previous guidance in the COMBINE manual.

3MA.43 The Meeting requested that the IN EUTRO group ensure that future updates of the HELCOM indicator for Chlorophyll-a clearly define the methodologies applied within each assessment unit evaluated. Since the guideline captures a number of different approaches that are considered as suitable for monitoring

(e.g. depth integrated or single depth sampling) then it must be clearly defined to ensure the assessment is fully transparent.

3MA.44 The Meeting in principle endorsed the revised guideline for monitoring of chlorophyll a and agreed on their publication on the HELCOM website.

3MA.45 The Meeting in principle endorsed the revised guideline for monitoring of chlorophyll a via EO and agreed on their publication on the HELCOM website.

3MA.46 The Meeting took note that Germany has a study reservation on the revised guidelines for monitoring chlorophyll a via EO and agreed that Germany will send any remaining comments to lead country Finland by 3 June 2019.

3MA.47 The Meeting took note of the ongoing work on draft guidelines for monitoring of physical oceanography, as presented by Sweden (document 3MA-3). The Meeting noted that comments from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany and Poland have been included into the guidelines. The Meeting noted the comment from Sweden that the material incomplete and noted that further input is needed. The Meeting noted comments and small addition to the guidelines from Germany.

3MA.48 The Meeting agreed that further comments can be provide to Sweden (johan.hakanson@smhi.se) by 31 October 2019 and invited Sweden to present updated guidelines at State and Conservation 12-2020

3MA.49 The Meeting took note of the invitation by Sweden for Contracting Parties to consider taking on the lead or co-lead for the guidelines.

3MA.50 The Meeting noted that Germany will consult with the national experts and respond by STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3MA.51 The Meeting took note of the information on progress on the remaining monitoring guidelines, as presented in document 3MA-1. The Meeting welcomed the information that guidelines on chlorinated biphenyls and organochlorine pesticides in biota, as well as guidelines of determination of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in biota will be presented at State and Conservation 12-2020. The Meeting further welcomed the information that Estonia, through EN HAZ, have agreed to produce guidelines for PFOS in biota and that EN HAZ will work to modify existing OSPAR guidelines for HBCDD in biota and sediments for HELCOM use, both to be presented at State and Conservation 12-2020.

RECOMMENDATION 26/3 MONITORING OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

3MA.52 The Meeting recalled that there is currently no Lead country for this recommendation and that the reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified.

3MA.53 The Meeting discussed setting up a reporting scheme for the recommendation and invited MORS EG to make a proposal for a reporting scheme to report on the implementation of the Recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 29/2 MARINE LITTER WITHIN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

3MA.54 The Meeting took 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 noted that Pressure 10-2019 agreed with S&C recommendation that can be superseded.

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

3MA.55 The Meeting recalled that there is currently no Lead country for this recommendation and that the reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified. The Meeting discussed setting up a reporting scheme for the recommendation and invited the Contracting Parties to consider taking a lead on the Recommendation. The Meeting agreed to return to the issue in STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

3MA.56 The Meeting noted that Sweden will have a new research vessel, Svea, launched this year. The Meeting further noted that the ship is currently being tested and will be operational in October – November, and that more information on the ship is available via [this link](#).

3MA.57 The Meeting welcomed the information on the beneficial cooperation regarding use of monitoring vessels and distribution of monitoring areas between Finland and Sweden.

3MA.58 The Meeting took note of the information by Estonia that research permits for Estonian waters will in the future (1 October 2019) be handled by the Estonian Ministry for the Environment (previously handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The Meeting took note of the clarification that there are still two separate permits needed for Estonian waters (ship permit and research permit).

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

4MA.1 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 discussed the implementation of not yet accomplished HELCOM actions under State and conservation group and in relation to the action regarding revision of the HELCOM monitoring programmes in a way that results in cost-effective joint monitoring (MD 2010) the meeting concluded that cost-efficiency of the programmes has not yet been considered. The Meeting further recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 agreed to add this to the workplan of State and Conservation WG, to start in spring 2019.

4MA.2 The Meeting discussed the possibility to use the analysis on cost-effectiveness of monitoring currently being done under the FUMARI and SEAM project and agreed to initiate the work by inviting FUMARI and SEAM to inform STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 on their results, and to use the information to continue the discussion in STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

Agenda Item 5MA Any other business

5MA.1 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to provide national information on the ongoing update of the monitoring programs under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), and took note of the following:

- Denmark: has received no information.
- Estonia: public tender out now, the initial draft is intended to be ready in January 2020 with a final draft ready in May 2020. The work will take into account the remakes received from the EU Commission on need to increase focus on targets and pressures as opposed to state monitoring. Estonia intends to use HELCOM monitoring for their national reporting.
- Finland: has started update of the monitoring programs with the first step being a gap analysis comparing the current monitoring against the requirements of the directive, secondly comparing against the national state of the environment report and thirdly through a survey among experts on any changes that should be reflected in the monitoring program. Proposal will be ready by the summer and discussed in the autumn, and final draft will be ready in November and transformed into a document. National consultation will take place in winter 2020.
- Germany: has consulted with experts and is currently getting feedback. First drafts from experts will be available in May, public consultation will start in the middle of October. Germany is also making a gap analysis of the assessment.

- Latvia: Hasn't started anything yet. Intends to use HELCOM monitoring programs.
- Lithuania: monitoring plans to be revised in 2020-2021 and new data would be added in line with the MSFD in particular bird by-catch, underwater noise and litter.
- Poland: intends for the first draft to be available at the beginning of 2020 with public consultation in first quarter of 2020 and reporting by October.
- Sweden: Looking at the pelagic monitoring program program, has collected material from experts in Sweden, reviewing regional programs and using fact sheets which will be published in Swedish

5MA.2 The Meeting considered an alternative setup for STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019, where the meeting would focus on a joint and nature conservation session, while STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 would focus on joint and monitoring and assessment session.

5MA.3 The Meeting discussed the possibility to hold a one-day extra session of State and Conservation Monitoring focussing on the reporting on and updated of the monitoring programmes under the MSFD in early fall, possibly back to back with the joint FUMARI-SEAM workshop. The Meeting agreed to forward this request to HOD 56-2019 for approval.

Agenda Item 6MA Outcome of the Monitoring and assessment session

6MA.1 The Meeting adopted the outcome of the monitoring and assessment theme and noted that the outcome will be available (together with the outcomes of the nature conservation and joint themes) at the [STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 Meeting Site](#) together with the documents and presentations considered by the Meeting.

Joint session

Agenda Item 1J Adoption of the Agenda: Joint themes

1J.1 The Meeting adopted items 1J-11J in the Agenda as contained in document 1-2.

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

2J.1 The Meeting took note of the extracts from outcomes of relevant HELCOM meetings for State and Conservation (document 2J-1), as presented by the Secretariat.

2J.2 The Meeting took note of a workspace set up for intersessional work of State and Conservation group.

2J.3 The Meeting took note that HELCOM now publishes a monthly HELCOM Newsletter. The Meeting noted that those that are interested can sign up to receive the newsletter.

2J.4 The Meeting took note of proceedings on the draft Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in order to assess incidental by-catches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting took note of progress of the work on the Draft Roadmap, as presented by Katarzyna Kaminska, Poland.

2J.5 The meeting noted that as of yet no milestones have been achieved, however EG FISHDATA is working intensely to finalize the roadmap. The Meeting noted that since STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018, the Roadmap has been discussed in the meetings of CG FISH DATA 3-2018, FISH 9-2019 and at an informal CG FISHDATA meeting back to back meeting with BALTFISH seal symposium on seal-fish-fisheries interactions in March. The Meeting further noted that the sub-tasks were divided on 1 April in an online meeting, and there is an upcoming online meeting on the 15 May to finalize the Roadmap in order to send it to FISH 10-2019 in June. The Meeting further noted that the intention is to provide the finalized Roadmap for STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

2J.6 The Meeting highlighted the importance of the work and expressed the urgency of the having the information available for HELCOMs wider work to assess incidental bycatches and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes. The Meeting recalled that HELCOM 40-2019 requested that the Roadmap on collection of fisheries data in the Baltic Sea be finalized by FISH 10-2019.

Agenda Item 3J HELCOM indicators and assessments

HELCOM Core Indicator reports

3J.1 The Meeting took note of the publication of the updated indicator report on 'Inputs of nutrients to the sub-basins' on the HELCOM website.

Continued development of HELCOM core indicators

3J.2 The Meeting took note of the information on indicator leads, co-leads and expert networks (document 3J-3). The Meeting took note of comments from Contracting Parties to the information in the document and agreed that the Contracting Parties will send the corrections to the Secretariat (owen.rowe@helcom.fi) for updating the document.

3J.3 The Meeting took note of information from Sweden that they are willing to co-lead the work on the development of the Harbour Porpoise indicator (Julia Carlström), that Sweden can confirmed a new lead for the seal health indicators (Sara Persson), and the confirmation that Sweden will no longer be able to lead the work on the oxygen debt indicator. The Meeting invited Contracting Parties to consider taking over the lead for the indicator.

- 3J.4 The Meeting took note that Germany have a new nominated lead for the Harbour Porpoise indicator (Anita Gilles) and a new nominated contact for Fish Pro III (Claudia Starke).
- 3J.5 The Meeting took note 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 Meeting noted that Germany will return to the issue in STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.
- 3J.6 The Meeting took note that the Operational Marine Acidification Indicator (OMAI) project, aiming to produce an operational marine acidification indicator, had its kick off meeting 10 January. The Meeting noted that the project is ongoing and working closely with BONUS projects related to acidification. The Meeting noted that OMAI project wishes to have the indicator linked to HELCOM expert work. The Meeting considered and supported the cooperation between HELCOM IN EUTROPHICATION and the OMAI project.
- 3J.7 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 (Outcome paragraph 3J-33 and 34) in principle endorsed the further development of the indicator, with the aim of including it in the list of HELCOM candidate indicators.
- 3J.8 The Meeting recalled that Denmark has had study reservation on housing the acidification indicator under IN EUTROPHICATION, acknowledging that the indicator has strong links both to work of IN EUTROPHICATION and EN CLIME. The Meeting welcomed that Denmark can now lift the study reservation regarding the housing of a future indicator on acidification under IN EUTRO.
- 3J.9 The Meeting considered resourcing of eutrophication test assessment development, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3J-1). The Meeting noted that HELCOM IN EUTROPHICATION has been working on developing eutrophication assessment methodology to apply indicator scaling. The Meeting further noted that currently HELCOM eutrophication assessment is carried out using an online accessible dataview, provided by the database host ICES, but without indicator scaling.
- 3J.10 The Meeting took note that ICES is willing to continue the work but the current contract between ICES and HELCOM is limited to data management and does not include development work.
- 3J.11 The Meeting noted that IN EUTROPHICATION 12-2019 considered that possible solution would be petitioning for national funding for a small project or for adding development work to the contract between HELCOM and ICES, and that proceeding with a project proposal would have to be discussed at State and Conservation. The Meeting took note of the information by ICES that, due to resource constraints, the ICES Data Center can commit a maximum of 130 work hour/year on the subject, with an hour cost of 65 euros, resulting in estimated costs of 8190 € for one years work.
- 3J.12 The Meeting considered possibilities to provide national resources for the work. The Meeting noted that there is no reservation for this work in the HELCOM budget for 2019-2020.
- 3J.13 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Sweden to provide national co-financing for the proposed work and the offer by Germany to explore the possibility to provide co-financing.
- 3J.14 The Meeting invited IN EUTRO, together with relevant ICES representatives, to develop a project proposal which, should national funding to cover the project costs be secured, is to be presented to HELCOM Heads of Delegation for final approval. The Meeting suggested that the project proposal should be further elaborated in the IN EUROPHICATION 13-2019 Meeting, which takes place 29 May.
- 3J.15 The Meeting took note of the update on mammal health team plans, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3J-2).
- 3J.16 The Meeting welcomed progress made on finding a common way forward by lead countries within the EG MAMA health team and the leads on existing HELCOM seal indicators that address health-related components. The Meeting also took note that the health team will hold a physical meeting for the

whole Health Team on the 14th to 15th of August 2019 in Büsum, Germany, and supported the proposed work to develop assessments and harmonize monitoring and methods. A save the date for the workshop will be sent out by Germany shortly.

3J.17 The Meeting took note of the following comments from Sweden on the work of mammal health indicators:

- Sweden generally supports that the MAMA health team continues working on developing assessment approaches regarding the health of marine mammals. The outcome of the work should also provide a better understanding of effects from various pressures. This may include the outlined target organ approach but also other parameters should be considered. Several indicators should not be developed but rather using several parameters in one indicator or assessment approach.
- The team should consider and provide a proposal for what can be delivered in the short term for use in HOLAS III regarding an assessment of marine mammal health, including addressing if and how current indicators (blubber thickness and pregnancy rate) should be considered in the assessment. The team should also consider and provide a proposal for medium- long term work on possibilities for developing quantitative methods and thresholds for assessing marine mammal health, including resource and research needs. We encourage additional countries to contribute to the work and participate in the Health Team.
- Sweden is considering providing expert support to the work, including providing retrospective analyses on responses in seal health parameters coupled to population level impacts, exposure to environmental contaminants, and other pressures.
- Sweden strongly supports the outlined aims of the work of the group, to facilitate harmonisation in monitoring and methods.

3J.18 The Meeting took note that first HELCOM indicator workshop (HELCOM Indicator WS 1-2019 on 14-15 May 2019 in Berlin) takes place to initiate the future work on HELCOM indicators, and the provisional plans for a second workshop (autumn 2019), which will finalize the planning for the HELCOM indicator development.

3J.19 The Meeting noted that all Meeting participants and State and Conservation contacts have access to the [meeting site of the HELCOM indicator workshop](#), where a number of summary documents for major topic areas are available.

3J.20 The Meeting took note of the comments by Germany to the material provided for the workshop: that discussion related to aspects such as the linkages between pressure and state and between different indicator themes (e.g. biodiversity and eutrophication) would be relevant topics for further discussion at the workshop.

3J.21 The Meeting noted the clarification by Germany that no revisions to the submitted documents are needed as long as the topics are raised in the discussions at the workshop.

3J.22 The Meeting took 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](#)

4J.1 The Meeting took note of the information on lead and co-lead countries for specific HELCOM Monitoring guidelines (document 3MA-1) and invited the Contracting Parties to send possible revisions to the document to the Secretariat (laura.hoikkala@helcom.fi).

- 4J.2 The Meeting took note of the update on progress with the development of 'monitoring guidelines on marine bird health', as presented by Sweden. The Meeting took note that, due to current lack of personnel resources, Sweden invites other Contracting Parties to co-lead the work on the guideline.
- 4J.3 The Meeting considered the updated guideline for coastal fish monitoring (document 4J-1), and the minor technical edits to the guidelines from Denmark (document 4J-1 add.1). The Meeting further edited the guidelines as contained in document 4J-1 rev. 1, and agreed that all information pertaining to current national monitoring is to be moved into an annex to the guidelines, while the guidelines themselves should focus on presenting best practices guidelines for monitoring. The Meeting in principle endorsed the guidelines, including the requested amendment, and their publication on the HELCOM webpages.
- 4J.4 The Meeting took note of the study reservation on the guideline for coastal fish monitoring by Estonia and Sweden and invited Estonia and Sweden to clarify their position within 4 weeks of partaking of the updated guideline.
- 4J.5 The Meeting took note of the information by Germany that, due to resource limitations, Germany invites other Contracting Parties to consider offering co-lead, assistance or take over the lead for some of the 17 Guidelines currently led by Germany. The Meeting agreed to include the list of these guidelines as annex (**Annex 2**) of the Outcome and invited the Contracting Parties to consider by STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 if they have capacity to take some of the guidelines.

Agenda Item 5J Development and implementation of Recommendations

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

- 5J.1 The Meeting took note of the information on potential analytical framework for implementation of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP, focusing on connections between ecological and socio-economic systems, as presented by Jan Schmidtbauer-Crona, Sweden (document 5J-3). The Meeting expressed their appreciation for the work and considered it to be useful for HELCOMs work.
- 5J.2 The Meeting agreed that comments to the document can be sent to Jan Schmidtbauer-Crona (jan.schmidtbauer-crona@havochvatten.se) by **4 June 2019**
- 5J.3 The Meeting took note of the outline of Green infrastructure concept for MSP and its application within Pan Baltic Scope project as presented by Anda Ruskule, Latvia (document 5J-2, **presentation 4**).
- 5J.4 The Meeting took note of the question by Ida Carlen, CCB, on why data for harbor porpoise was not used for the work. The Meeting noted that Harbour porpoise data should be also available. The Meeting noted comment from Ruskule that if data on harbour porpoise is available, it can easily be included.
- 5J.5 The Meeting took note that the project works on ecological aspects and aims will produce aggregated spatial information for use in planning but also includes one task to specifically define how the results can be used in MSP.
- 5J.6 The Meeting noted comments from Germany on the importance to include references and reflection of the CBD EBSA project in the work.
- 5J.7 The Meeting agreed that comments to the document can be sent by **4 June 2019** to Anda Ruskule (anda.ruskule@bef.lv) and to the Secretariat (laura.hoikkala@helcom.fi) to be distributed within to State and conservation.
- 5J.8 The Meeting noted that Finland has an ongoing EMFF funded project defining key habitats and their ecosystem services, which will have results at the end of 2020.
- 5J.9 The Meeting took note that following revision in the 17th Meeting of the joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group, the revised Recommendation 24/10 was sent out for comment on

20 November 2018 to the State and Conservation WG. The Meeting noted that 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.

5J.10 The Meeting took note of the comment by Germany that the change in timeline for the approval process of the Recommendation, as opposed to the timeline agreed in State and Conservation 9-2018, was not considered beneficial for the overall development process and that as a result some ecosystem aspects did not have time to be properly included,

5J.11 The Meeting considered how, and which group(s), should report on the Recommendation in the future, taking into consideration that several actions listed in the Recommendation are directly related to MSP. The Meeting acknowledged that there are a number of Recommendations which contain actions relevant for more than one WG. The Meeting took note of the information that the Recommendation is still hosted by the State and Conservation WG and agreed to come back to the question on reporting, and possible division of actions, at a later stage.

5J.12 The Meeting took note of initial proposals for closer cooperation with HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG (**presentation 5**), including suggestion to organize a scoping workshop, as presented by the Secretariat. The Meeting welcomed the initiative for closer cooperation with HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and supported the idea of organizing a scoping workshop. The Meeting took note of comment by Latvia that in addition to Pan Baltic Scope, also other relevant projects (e.g. BONUS BASMATI) could be approached to take part in the workshop. The Meeting further took note of the suggestion by Germany that some form of synthesized background information based on existing material should be provided for the workshop.

5J.13 The Meeting took note that Finland has recently arranged a similar workshop providing a platform for closer cooperation with planners nationally and invited Finland to present the results of the work when it becomes available.

5J.14 The Meeting noted that as a next step, the Secretariat will approach the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG with the proposal for a joint scoping workshop and invited the Secretariat to keep the State and Conservation WG informed on progress.

5J.15 The Meeting took note of the information on the NABU 3D underwater tool.

RECOMMENDATION 21/3 SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TOURISM IN THE COASTAL ZONES OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA

5J.16 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 proposed 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. The Meeting noted that HOD 55-2018 meeting took note of the proposal and 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.

5J.17 The Meeting recalled that the Contracting Parties were invited to provide proposals on what should be included into the guidelines to Latvia by 28 February.

5J.18 The Meeting took note of the information that the relevant Latvian representative was not available to present the progress and agreed to come back to the issue at State and Conservation 11-2019.

Agenda Item 6J

Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets

6J.1 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 reviewed the status of the BSEFS and agreed on action for each sheet, including integrating Baltic Sea environment fact sheets (BSEFS) into

relevant indicator reports with priority to keep the indicator reports up to date. STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 further agreed that the relevant leads will commence with implementing the actions. The Meeting took note of the actions agreed in STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 (document 6J-1), and the comments from Germany, IN EUTROPHICATION and EN-HZ regarding the actions relevant for the CP/ group (document 6J.1 Add.1), as presented by the Secretariat (**presentation 6**).

6J.2 The Meeting took note that Germany has no data to contribute to the fact sheet "Bacterioplankton growth" and does not intend to develop an equivalent indicator. The Meeting noted that not many Contracting Parties are monitoring bacterial plankton growth and hence developing an indicator is not currently feasible. The Meeting agreed to contact the experts responsible for the BSEFS on whether the fact sheet can continue to be updated. The Meeting noted that the BSEFS should be kept and updated if possible as supporting information.

6J.3 The Meeting took note of comments from IN EUTROPHICATION and EN-HAZ on the actions agreed in STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 on the BSEFS relevant to these expert groups and agreed that their suggestions should be followed. The Meeting agreed that PEG group will be contacted regarding the BSEFS that were identified to be related to expertise of the group, with the intention to get the groups input on how to take the work forward.

6J.4 The Meeting took note of comment from Sweden regarding BSEFS on runoff to the Baltic Sea that Red Core team should be asked if they can develop an indicator based on PLC data, and comment from Denmark that indicators on nutrient inputs already exist.

6J.5 The Meeting took note of information from Latvia and Poland that it is not clear to PEG group why BSEFS on cyanobacterial biomass 1990-2016, is suggested to no longer be maintained. The Meeting further noted comment from PEG that data gathering has been voluntary and PEG wants to keep updating the BSEFS and to develop it further. The Meeting agreed to amend the suggested action by State and Conservation accordingly and contact the PEG group for concrete suggestions to include in the action section.

6J.6 The Meeting took note of comment from Germany that BSEFS on Water Exchange between the Baltic Sea and the North Sea will soon be updated with 2018 data and should be developed into an indicator. The Meeting further noted that if the indicator will be developed, Germany wishes to be part of any future indicator work. Current lead for the sheet is Sweden and they will check with their national expert and get back to Germany with further information.

6J.7 The Meeting discussed on how to proceed with implementing the rest of the agreed actions. The Meeting invited the Leads of the remaining BSEFS with agreed actions to update STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 on their progress.

6J.8 The Meeting took note that the following BSEFS have been updated since STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018:

- Nitrogen emissions to the air in the Baltic Sea area
- Atmospheric emissions of heavy metals in the Baltic Sea region
- Atmospheric emissions of PCB-153 in the Baltic Sea region
- Atmospheric emissions of benzo(a)pyrene in the Baltic Sea region
- Atmospheric nitrogen deposition to the Baltic Sea
- Atmospheric deposition of heavy metals on the Baltic Sea
- Atmospheric deposition of benzo(a)pyrene on the Baltic Sea
- Atmospheric deposition of PCB-153 on the Baltic Sea
- Bacterioplankton growth
- Population Development of Baltic Bird Species: Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*)

6J.9 The Meeting took note of the updated BSEFS 'Population Development of the Great Cormorant' which was compiled by Germany. The Meeting noted that no comments to the updated BSEFS were received by given deadline.

6J.10 The Meeting recalled that the fact sheets are living documents and that direct approval by State and Conservation is only required for new, not previously published fact sheets.

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

7J.1 The Meeting took note of the overview document on the work of the Expert Groups, Intersessional Networks and projects associated with the group (document 7J-2).

7J.2 The Meeting took note of the information from the Secretariat that there has been communication with the Chair of the Zooplankton Expert Network on the possibility to develop a new zooplankton project related to indicators. The Meeting took note of the information that there are initial plans to develop such a project proposal and agreed to return to this at State and Conservation 11-2019.

Expert network on Hazardous substances

7J.3 The Meeting took note that a physical meeting of EN-HZ had taken place and congratulated Berit Brockmeyer, Germany, and Jaakko Mannio, Finland, on their election as new co-Chairs of EN-HZ.

7J.4 The Meeting considered the proposal by EN-HZ to develop a BSEP on sediment analyses of hazardous substances and supported the proposal (document 7J-8).

7J.5 The Meeting endorsed the further development of a candidate indicator to address copper (**document 7J-8**).

7J.6 The Meeting considered the need for work related to munition and litter related releases of hazardous substances and the role of EN-HZ in that work (document 7J-8). The Meeting agree that cooperation between EN HZ, EN LITTER and SUBMERGED, as well as any relevant projects, to explore these issues would be valuable, that any double work should be avoided, and invited EN-HZ to explore what data is available and propose a valid way forward to address the issue.

7J.7 The Meeting took note of a position from Poland that there is no knowledge on the state indicator on munition and possible releasing of substances. The Meeting further noted a comment from Poland that this issue is subject to inventory and should belong to the pressures indicators instead of state indicators and therefore should be addressed by the PRESSURE group.

7J.8 The Meeting discussed the white-tailed sea eagle indicator and took note that Sweden is no longer able to act as sole lead country for the indicator. The Meeting welcomed the information from Finland that they will explore the possibility to provide a co-lead role and will confirm this State and Conservation 11-2019.

7J.9 The Meeting discussed the classification of the white-tailed sea eagle indicator and took note that the parameters monitored and assessed in the indicator are considered strongly related to biodiversity (e.g. productivity), whereas parameters such as egg shell thickness were more directly related to hazardous substances. The Meeting also took note of concerns relating to feeding areas, which in addition to coastal waters also including inland lakes and agreed that this might warrant providing clear justification (e.g. with supporting data where possible) for why white-tailed sea eagle can be considered an appropriate indicator for the marine environment in future versions of the indicator report.

7J.10 The Meeting considered proposals to further develop aspects related to biological effects of hazardous substances (documents 7J-9 and 7J-9 add.1).

7J.11 The Meeting took note of the comments to the request by Germany and Poland. The Meeting concluded that gaining a greater understanding of existing monitoring, available data, and national

developments related to the topic would be a most appropriate as an initial step. The Meeting agreed that a questionnaire covering relevant issues should be developed and provided to State and Conservation WG for them to distribute to the relevant national experts. The resulting information would then be used to help prioritize the current candidate indicators. The Meeting took note of the proposal that after a prioritization exercise a future workshop on the prioritized topics could be arranged.

7J.12 The Meeting took note of the offer by Germany and Sweden to prepare a questionnaire which will be distributed to State and Conservation contacts through the Secretariat.

7J.13 The Meeting noted the additional comment by Germany that focusing on a small set of well accepted indicators might be the best way forward and that mandatory inclusion of further bioeffects monitoring in COMBINE might be a problem for Germany.

7J.14 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 in principle endorsed the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the EN-HZ and noted that once a draft work plan is available it will be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 for approval. The Meeting noted that HOD 55-2018 took note that the ToRs for the EN-HZ have been updated (document 7J-5). The Meeting further noted that the ToRs have now been completed to include a work plan and timeline for 2018-2021. The Meeting endorsed the workplan for EN-HZ.

Phytoplankton Expert Group (PEG)

7J.15 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 considered and in principle endorsed the project proposal for Quality assurance of phytoplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea, taking into account the need to identify suitable working arrangements with regards to indicators and assessment. The Meeting noted that HOD 55-2018 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.

7J.16 The Meeting took note that the State and Conservation WG Co-Chair took part in the latest meeting of PEG to facilitate the process of including indicators in the groups work and assist in developing a revised project proposal (document 7J-11).

7J.17 The Meeting endorsed the project proposal for PEG QA 2020-2022, and agreed to forward it to HOD 56-2019 for approval (document 7J-11).

7J.18 The Meeting took note of information from Latvia on the ICES WG IAB meeting, and that the group is intending to test HELCOM indicators.

HELCOM- Baltic Earth Expert Network on Climate Change

7J.19 The Meeting took note that the Baltic Earth Science Steering Group and HOD 55-2018 approved the proposed work process for Expert Network on Climate Change (EN CLIME), the establishment of the EN CLIME and its ToRs, with the aim of starting nomination process and holding the first online meeting in early 2019. The Meeting noted the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for EN CLIME (document 7J-1).

7J.20 The Meeting took note of the draft structure of Climate Change fact sheet, agreed by EN CLIME 2-2019 (document 7J-3). The Meeting noted that EN CLIME has four subgroups, which have begun compiling key messages for the primary parameters.

7J.21 The Meeting took note of overview of parameters for Climate Change Fact Sheet as agreed in EN CLIME 2-2019 and expertise in EN CLIME as of March 2019 (document 7J-4).

7J.22 The Meeting took note that a worked example of key messages filled into the fact sheet will be available by the end of May and can be shared with the State and Conservation WG. The Meeting

further noted that similar fact sheets containing some of the same parameters as listed by HELCOM are available from MCCIP.

7J.23 The Meeting took note that the terms primary and secondary parameters are used as way of separating the parameters and structuring the work process, but it is not the intention to use the terms in the final Fact Sheet, e.g. to avoid confusion with the MSFD connotation of the terms

New Expert Group proposals

7J.24 The Meeting took note of the draft ToRs for HELCOM Network for Marine Protected Area Management (EN MPA MANET) (document 7J-7) and noted that Contracting Parties were invited to provide input to the draft ToRs in writing, preferably by 2 May 2019 to the Secretariat. The Meeting took note and considered the comments to the document provided by Denmark (document 7J-7 add.1).

7J.25 The Meeting welcomed the draft ToRs and expressed their support for the initiative.

7J.26 The Meeting took note of the information by Germany that the German participation in the network is not possible at present, due to resource constraints.

7J.27 The Meeting discussed the nature of the proposed network and their work. The Meeting noted that the network will differ from traditional HELCOM expert networks and will be strongly driven by the needs of the managers identified within the network itself.

7J.28 The Meeting considered the need for the network to have a set work plan and a Chair. The Meeting agreed that in light of the foreseen working mode of the network a workplan would not be constructive. The Meeting supported that the network will have a dedicated Chair, at least initially.

7J.29 The Meeting agreed to include the changes suggested by Denmark (document 7J-7 rev.1), in principle endorsed the draft Terms of Reference for EN MPA MANET, taking note of a study reservation by Estonia, and agreed to send it to HOD 56-2019 for approval.

7J.30 The Meeting invited Estonia to clarify their position at the HOD 56-2019 at the latest.

7J.31 Meeting took note that HELCOM 40-2019 adopted the Baltic Sea Sturgeon Action Plan (BSSAP) developed by the HELCOM Sturgeon Remediation project.

7J.32 The Meeting took note that Contracting Parties were invited to provide comments to the draft ToRs for a HELCOM Expert Group of Sturgeon Experts (EG STUR) under HELCOM State and Conservation WG preferably by 2 May, no comments have been received (document 7J-6). The Meeting endorsed the establishment of a HELCOM sturgeon EG and agreed to forward it to HOD 56 – 2019 for approval.

7J.33 The Meeting took note of the wish by Sweden that a broader and more strategic discussion on how to plan setting up expert networks for biodiversity under State and Conservation WG be held at STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

Projects

7J.34 The Meeting took note of the progress and deliverables of the BaltiCheck project, as presented by Jana Wolf, the Project Coordinator (**presentation 7**).

7J.35 The Meeting took note that BaltiCheck project asked State and Conservation to nominate experts for the workshop that takes place **27-28 May 2019**. The Meeting noted that experts are needed for five species groups: mammals, birds, fishes, macrophytes and invertebrates.

7J.36 The Meeting agreed that the output of the workshop will be sent to State and Conservation for review at the latest by **4 June 2019** after which the WG will have one week to review the output,

providing any comments or input by the **11 June 2019**. The Meeting took note that the short deadline is to ensure that any amendments are incorporated within the project period.

7J.37 The Meeting took note that the data stemming from the previous Red List project cannot be published without permission given by the Contracting Parties and encouraged Contracting Parties to review the data and communicate the response to the Secretariat by **28 May 2019**.

Workshops

7J.38 The Meeting recalled that 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. The Meeting took note that HOD 55-2018 approved arranging of the workshop 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 took note that the workshop on Benthic Mapping which will take place 12-13 November 2019, in Helsinki, Finland, hosted by the Ministry of the Environment at the premises of Ministry of Transport and Communication.

7J.39 The Meeting took 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.

7J.40 The Meeting took note that following the request from STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 the Secretariat has been in contact with ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS to enquire regarding possible cooperation and received positive replies. The Meeting took note of the progress regarding the planning of the workshop and the ToRs of the workshop (document 7J-10). The Meeting noted that the Marine mammal session in the workshop will possibly be led by ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS.

7J.41 The Meeting further noted that the workshop does not yet have chairs. The Meeting invited CPs to consider taking the lead and to inform the Secretariat in the coming weeks.

Agenda Item 8J Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP)

8J.1 The Meeting took note of the Work Plan for BSAP Update for State and Conservation Working Group, approved by HOD 55-2018, as presented by the Secretariat (document 8J-5, **presentation 8**).

Progress on analyzing sufficiency of measures

8J.2 The Meeting took note of the organization of work for analysing Sufficiency of Measures (SOM) to support the BSAP update as presented by the Secretariat (document 8J-9, **presentation 9**). The Meeting noted that the HELCOM platform on Sufficiency of measures (SOM platform), established by HOD 55-2018, and the HELCOM ACTION project will contribute to the SOM analyses through a common methodological framework, and that the results of the analyses will indicate whether existing measures and actions are sufficient to achieve good environmental status (GES) in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting further noted that HELCOM Working Groups will guide the work, contribute to validation of input data to the analyses, and participate in expert-based evaluations.

8J.3 The Meeting took note of the presentation of the approach for the SOM analyses as presented by SYKE, Finland (document 8J-9, **presentation 10**). The Meeting noted that the approach will be considered for endorsement by GEAR 20-2019 and presented for approval by HOD 56-2019.

8J.4 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the measures to be included in the analyses will consist of HELCOM actions and Recommendations, measures from the programmes of measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Water Framework Directive, and measures from relevant global agreements e.g. the Ballast Water Management Convention.

8J.5 The Meeting acknowledged that the SOM analyses will provide a structured approach for identifying gaps in current measures and contribute to the collation of information on the impacts of activities and pressures on the Baltic Sea environment and the effect of measures to improve the status while also identifying gaps and uncertainties in current knowledge.

8J.6 The Meeting noted that the pressure-state response included in the SOM approach is new and partially relies on expert judgement. The Meeting looks forward to seeing the outcome of the analysis but also acknowledges that this is a new method and will contain some uncertainties.

8J.7 The Meeting took note that the expert-based evaluations that will be carried out to support the SOM analyses will draw expertise from HELCOM networks and expert groups, Working Groups, partners of the ACTION project, other projects where HELCOM is a partner (e.g. COMPLETE project related to non-indigenous species), and HELCOM workshops arranged under the ACTION project or arranged specifically to support the BSAP update. The outcome of expert-based evaluations and other data and information sources used in the SOM analyses will be presented for validation by HELCOM Working Groups, aiming at taking place at autumn meetings in 2019.

8J.8 The Meeting took note of the agreement to develop synopses on potential new HELCOM actions for the updated BSAP and that such proposal can be submitted by Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects and observers by end 2019 according to a format that will be distributed to HELCOM subsidiary bodies shortly. The Meeting noted that the synopses are to be brief, 1-2 pages, and that they are intended to create a collection of tentative new actions. The Meeting furthermore noted that the analyses of sufficiency of measures will provide information on which activities that are contributing most to specific pressures which can provide guidance to the selection of new actions which is planned for in spring 2020 according to the Work plan for the BSAP update.

8J.9 The Meeting took note that with regard to the HELCOM ACTION project all work packages will be presented for review and discussion at Working Group meetings during the course of the project and for some work packages HELCOM workshops will be held (WP2, WP3 and WP4). Contracting Parties which are interested in more close interaction with ACTION project can contact the Secretariat for establishing contact with partners of the ACTION project.

8J.10 The Meeting took note of the proposal on geographic scale of SOM analysis for biodiversity state variables (document 8J-10, **presentation 11**). The Meeting noted that the proposal follows the recommendations of [SOM Platform 1-2019](#) and HELCOM core indicators whenever feasible, and has been circulated to the SOM platform for comments.

8J.11 The Meeting recalled that the implementation of the topics under the SOM platform relies on a lead country approach and the formation of topic teams. The Meeting further noted that for biodiversity, a lead is only offered for fish (Sweden). The Meeting took note of the proposal by the Secretariat to arrange a HELCOM workshop to collate the required information for the SOM analyses on pressure-state response and for evaluating effect of measures that impact directly on the state variables. The Meeting noted that the Contracting Parties are still encouraged to take the lead on all or part of biodiversity topics as outlined in document 8J-10.

8J.12 The Meeting supported the proposal to convene an expert workshop to meet the needs of the SOM analyses on biodiversity, either as one dedicated workshop in late autumn 2019, or alternatively to set up workshops in connection to upcoming meetings in autumn 2019 of HELCOM expert groups on e.g. mammals, birds, benthic habitats. The Secretariat will explore the two possibilities further and inform the State and Conservation Working Group on the outcome.

8J.13 The Meeting took note of the proposal to make use of the HELCOM red list assessments as an information source on pressures to threatened species and biotopes. The Meeting also noted that red listed

species and benthic habitats can partly be considered through the planned analyses on these topics but that a more elaborate assessment will require contribution from Lead Countries and national experts.

8J.14 The Meeting took note of the information on work package 3 of the HELCOM ACTION which will focus on developing a method to assess effectiveness of marine protected areas and tested in the Baltic Sea as presented by the Secretariat (**Presentation 12**).

8J.15 The Meeting took note of the information from Germany on the Workshop on effective MPA management, organized by German federal agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN) at the Isle of Vilm, Germany, in the week starting with the 18 November 2019. The Meeting further noted that the workshop is targeted to international experts and has overall objective to develop guidelines for and exchange experiences in the assessment of management effectiveness in MPAs. The Meeting invited partners of work package 3 of the ACTION project to participate in the workshop and also members of the proposed future HELCOM Expert Network on MPA management, via the Secretariat.

8J.16 The Meeting took note of information from Germany that Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (COP) decided on the protected areas, taking into account management effectiveness (decision 10/31, Section 3).

8J.17 The Meeting took note of the review and revision of HELCOM existing ecological objectives, as presented by the Secretariat (document 8J-6, **presentation 13**). The Meeting further noted that HOD 55-2018 agreed that HELCOM Working Groups will also develop new objectives for marine litter, underwater noise and loss and disturbance to the seabed. The Meeting took note that Pressure 10-2019 initiated the review of existing and development of new objectives on topics under the mandate of the Group. The Meeting was divided to two groups to discuss:

- Ecological objectives and management objectives for biodiversity and loss and disturbance to the seabed
- Further elaborate on the proposals from Pressure 10-201e in terms of Ecological objectives and management objectives for eutrophication, hazardous substances, marine litter, underwater noise.

8J.18 The outcome of group discussions is included in Working Paper 1 to the Meeting (8J-WP1).

8J.19 The Meeting noted that not all topics considered as important for development of management objectives for biodiversity was possible to address at the Meeting and that the Working Paper should be seen as a starting point for further discussion. The Meeting further noted that due to time constraints the Biodiversity group did not have the opportunity to discuss the objectives for loss and disturbance to the seabed. The Meeting agreed that Contracting Parties can submit further elaborations or new proposals on ecological and management objectives for biodiversity and for loss and disturbance to the seabed to the Secretariat (Jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) by **23 August 2019** and that the proposed objectives will be further elaboration on at the next meeting of State and Conservation.

8J.20 The Meeting noted that the overarching structure of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, including the segments and goals, are also undergoing a review and that HOD 55-2018 tentatively agreed to consider sea-based activities separately from other segments. The Meeting noted that this implies that impacts from fisheries will tentatively addressed under a segment on sea-based activities and not under the segment on biodiversity which is the case in the current BSAP. The Meeting proposed that by-catch from fisheries should still be considered under the segment on biodiversity since it has a direct effect on the state of species and that this would also comply with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive where by-catch is considered as a criterion under Descriptor 1 on biodiversity. A proposed Management Objective on bycatch is presented under the Biodiversity section of 8J-WP1.

Implementation of the current BSAP

8J.21 The Meeting took note of the follow-up of existing HELCOM actions as presented by the Secretariat (document 8J-4). The Meeting updated the document as contained in document 8J-4 rev.1.

8J.22 The Meeting took note that there is a discrepancy regarding the action 'at least 10% of the marine area in all sub-basins of the Baltic Sea including the EEZ areas beyond territorial waters is covered by MPAs', as the 2010 Ministerial Declaration concerns only HELCOM MPAs whereas the Recommendation refers to MPAs in general. The Recommendation refers in paragraph a to MPAs in general. As the Recommendation as such refers to HELCOM MPAs and to the 2010 Ministerial Declaration as well the Meeting discussed that the MPAs mentioned in the Recommendation should also be interpreted as referring to HELCOM MPAs.

8J.23 The Meeting noted the comment from Finland that it is nationally challenging to have all MPAs/Natura2000 sites as HELCOM MPAs as the nomination process is time consuming. The Meeting took note of the comment by Finland and Denmark that all relevant MPAs (HELCOM/N2000/national protected areas) should be taken into account when reporting the coverage as they serve the same purpose.,

8J.24 The Meeting agreed that the status of action on marine litter should be partly accomplished instead of not accomplished, as there is an EU report on the topic published in 2016.

8J.25 The Meeting noted the progress on joint actions and agreed on further plans for their implementation.

8J.26 The Meeting considered the proposed categorization of actions regarding needs for rephrasing in case of transfer to the updated BSAP.

Update of BSAP

8J.27 The Meeting took note of the follow up of existing actions and the preliminary categorization of the actions likely to remain in the updated BSAP (document 8J-4). The Meeting discussed on further development of the existing HELCOM actions and the categorizations and agreed on the changes to the provided information as contained in document 8J-4 rev.1.

8J.28 The Meeting took note of the initial evaluation of the paragraphs from the Ministerial Declaration 2018 relevant for the WG which might warrant more concrete formulation and targets for implementation, as well as the list of general actions that have been evaluated as formulated too general to be followed-up (document 8J-3).

8J.29 The Meeting agreed to finalize the task followingly: The Contracting Parties will send concrete proposals to the actions contained in document 8J-3 to the Secretariat by **31 May**, the Secretariat will collate the comments and make a preliminary sorting of the proposals after which they will send them to State and Conservation by **14 June**. Depending on the proposals received an online Meeting can be organized to agree on the further development of the actions in late **August 2019**. The proposals will be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 for approval.

8J.30 The Meeting took note of the reporting on HELCOM recommendations under State and Conservation Working Group as presented by the Secretariat (document 8J-7, document 8J-7 rev.1)).

8J.31 The Meeting took note of the state of the reporting and received information on implementation. The Meeting took note that reporting is still missing from three Contracting Parties, and that for some Contracting Parties the reporting is incomplete. The Meeting took note that any remaining reporting needs to be submitted to the Secretariat as soon as possible, as the results are to be presented at HOD 56-2019, as well as forming important input to the sufficiency of measures analysis.

8J.32 The Meeting noted the following feedback on the reporting exercises: the possibility to choose the option 'Partially implemented' would be beneficial, as well as allowing for reporting on individual species groups under the recommendations related to red listing.

Agenda Item 9J

Future work

9J.1. The Meeting took note that HOD 55-2018 approved the Work Plan for State and Conservation Working Group for years 2019-2020.

9J.2. The Meeting considered the proposal of an alternative setup for STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019, where the meeting would focus on a Joint and Nature conservation Sessions, while STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 would focus on a Joint and Monitoring and Assessment Sessions. The Meeting supported the suggestion.

9J.3. The Meeting took note that HELCOM 40-2019 agreed to develop a science agenda to outline existing and foreseen HELCOM regional science needs, concomitantly with the update of the BSAP. The Meeting took note of survey on HELCOM knowledge and research needs as presented by the Secretariat (document 9J-1). The Meeting further noted that the Contracting Parties are invited to submit proposals by end of June 2019 (ullali.zweifel@helcom.fi), and that the proposals will be discussed at STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019. The Meeting took note that the information will be shared with the BANOS project.

Agenda Item 10J

Any other business

10J.1 The Meeting recalled that 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.

10J.2 The Meeting took note of the information on the EU Commission work in TG Marine Litter by Mr. Michail Papadoyannakis. The Meeting took note of the following tasks and proceedings:

- in the last EU WG GES meeting, the TG ML was asked to come back with a proposal of thresholds for beach litter.
- the evaluation of the waste water treatment directive has started and the report, which will touch upon microplastics will be out later this year. The Meeting further noted that the TG welcomes the work of HELCOM on waste water treatment.
- the revised waste framework regulation and the Plastic Strategy aims at improving of monitoring in inland waters and to establish a link between waste management. The Meeting noted that the TG considers HELCOM to be advanced on this issue and hopes for further support from HELCOM.
- the following directives relevant for sea-based litter have been adopted and will soon be published in the EU website: SUP Directive and revised PRF Directive.
- that advances have been done also on microplastics, dealing with the possible restrictions on microplastics, and that work on pollution with pellet losses is also ongoing.
- EU participated the G7 Workshop on Marine Litter in synergy with the Regional Seas Conventions.

10J.3 The Meeting took note of the information on the EU Commission work in TG noise by Ms. Anna Cheilari. The Meeting took note of the following tasks and proceedings:

- the 10th meeting of the TG Noise took place in April, followed by a thematic WS, with aim to make progress on the advice of developing thresholds on underwater noise.
- one of the tasks of the TG Noise is to update the monitoring guidelines, and the plan is to have a draft update by July to be subsequently submitted to the WG GES meeting in September.
- Communication paper is to be finalised by the next TG Noise meeting (to be held 15-16 October in Brussels).

- following points in the next TG Noise meeting: monitoring guidelines, communication paper, advisory document on threshold values and future work plan of the TG Noise.

10J.4 The Meeting took note of the presentation on the EU Commission work in TG Seabed by Mr. David Connor (**presentation 14**).

10J.5 The Meeting took note of the outcome of BONUS-HELCOM 8th stakeholder conference 'Research and Innovation for Sustainability' that took place on 6 November 2018 in Copenhagen, Denmark, as presented by the secretariat (document 10J-1).

10J.6 The Meeting took note of the Outcome of Baltic Earth Workshop on Multiple drivers for Earth system changes in the Baltic Sea region, that took place 26-27 November 2018 in Tallinn, Estonia (document 10J-4), as presented by the Secretariat. The Meeting noted that HELCOM co-organized the workshop.

10J.7 The Meeting took note of the newly published [Baltic Sea Ecosystem overview](#) produced by ICES, including the associated interactive webpage. The Meeting noted that HELCOM has been asked to give input to the process, especially for the planning for the next iteration.

10J.8 The Meeting took note of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14), document on voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation (document 10J-3).

10J.9 The Meeting took note of the list of contacts and observers of the Working Group (document 10J-2).

10J.10 The Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to consider their possibility to host future meetings of the Working Group.

10J.11 The Meeting confirmed that the next Meeting of the Working Group (STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019) will be organized in **21-25 October** in Latvia.

10J.12 The Meeting agreed that STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 will take place **11-15 May 2020**.

10J.13 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Estonia to explore hosting STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

Nature conservation

Agenda Item 1N Adoption of the Agenda: Nature conservation

1N.1 The Meeting adopted Agenda items 1N-7N as contained in document 1-2.

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

2N.1 The Meeting took note of the of progress on the Recommendations under the mandate of HELCOM FISH WG, which are to be considered also by State & Conservation 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 (document 2N-6).

2N.2 The Meeting took note of the responses to reporting templates for the FISH related Recommendations (document 2N-6, attachment 1). The Meeting took note of the comment by Poland to the attachment, that there should be an option to choose 'partially implemented' as a response option.

2N.3 The Meeting took note of the 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. The Meeting took note that HELCOM took part in the BBNJ Meeting that took place 25 March – 5 April in New York. The Meeting noted that UNEP encouraged HELCOM to prepare a short case study on HELCOM MPA work to be distributed to the participants for reference. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to share the prepared case study document with the State and Conservation intersessionally.

2N.4 The Meeting took note of the information on UN Decade on Ecosystem restoration (2021-2030), which was declared on 1 March (document 2N-4).

2N.5 The Meeting took note of the information on UN Environment report on enabling Effective and Equitable Marine Protected Areas - Guidance on combining governance approaches, supported by a case study compendium (document 2N-5). The Meeting took note that the report is available on the United Nations Environment Programme [website](#).

2N.6 The Meeting took note of information on the OSPAR ICG meeting. The Meeting noted that, in line with the wishes of State and Conservation WG, the HELCOM Secretariat and the State and Conservation WG Co-Chair took part to the meeting. The Meeting took note that HELCOM held two presentations at the meeting: an overview of HELCOM work related to MPAs and a number of suggested topics for possible cooperation between the RSC's related to MPA work.

2N.7 The Meeting took note that the next Meeting of OSPAR ICG will take place on the island of Vilm, Germany

2N.8 The Meeting took 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.

2N.9 The Meeting took note of the CBD COP 14 decision 14/8 on protected areas and other effective area -based conservation measures (document 2N-1). The Meeting noted that CBD COP 14 welcomed the voluntary guidance on integration of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures into the wider land- and seascapes, and on mainstreaming these into sectors, as well as the voluntary guidance on governance and equity, contained in annexes I and II, respectively, to the decision.

2N.10 The Meeting took note of the comprehensive and participatory process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (document 2N-2 att. 1), as well as the background discussion paper (att.2) and the Scenarios for the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (att. 3), as prepared by the CBD. The Meeting

took note of the information by BSAP UP Project Manager Ulla Li Zweifel on the workshop for the post-2020 framework of the CBD strategic biodiversity plan held in March 2019.

2N.11 The Meeting took note of the Protected Planet report 2018 on progress towards reaching the Aichi targets (**document 2N-3**).

Agenda Item 3N Development and implementation of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 15/1 PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL STRIP

3N.1 The Meeting took note that the Recommendation 15/1 states that implementation should be reported to the Commission every 6 years. The Meeting further noted that the latest reporting has just been undertaken as part of the BSAP update process. As such the Meeting agreed that the next scheduled reporting will take place in 2025.

RECOMMENDATION 16/3 PRESERVATION OF NATURAL COASTAL DYNAMICS

3N.2 The Meeting recalled that STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 agreed to set up an intersessional review process on the recommendation and that further input to the questionnaire was to be provided to Denmark. The Meeting noted that 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. The Meeting further noted that responses were to be made available to lead country Denmark by 1 April 2019.

3N.3 The Meeting took note that due to delayed reporting by a number of Contracting Parties Denmark was not able to compile the information in time for this Meeting. The Meeting took note that Denmark has now received the responses from most countries and will provide the information to be included in the overall reporting on the implementation of recommendations for HOD 56-2019 and will present the results at STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

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

3N.4 The Meeting took note of the following national work relevant for the Recommendation:

- Denmark: experts have compiled information about the abundance and distribution of harbour porpoise in Danish water. Based on this report Denmark plans to include harbour porpoise as a reason for designation in a number of existing MPA's.
- Finland has acoustic survey of harbor porpoises with C-pods with some positive results. In 2018, Finland had one observation of bycaught harbor porpoise, which was released alive. There are acoustic observations in open sea areas every year and also opportunistic sightings have been received almost every year.
- Germany: fishery is not regulated in most protected areas, and monitoring of bycatch does not exist. Distribution and abundance of harbor porpoises are monitored with acoustic devices, C-pods, and through aerial surveys. Strandings are also monitored, with some necropsies performed to identify cause of death. Around 200 strandings were observed last year. There are Natura 2000 areas explicitly conserving harbor porpoises, but there are no fisheries measures in place, but under preparation. Bycatch is still the highest danger for harbor porpoises also in the western population.
- Poland: There was a three-year project with pilot monitoring using C-pods lasting from 2015-2018. Poland is also monitoring strandings, with 14 stranded individuals in 2018. There was also one reported instance of bycatch in 2018. In 2018, 300 pingers were distributed to fishermen. Poland with Contracting Parties in HELCOM FISH Working Group has produced a questionnaire on tests of alternative fishing gears and fishing techniques, which contains information on trials of harbour porpoise safe fishing gears. Link to the questionnaire is

available in the [Meeting documents](#) of FISH 9-2019 (document 4-1 attachment to that meeting). The questionnaire is intended e.g. to provide information for fishermen and administration on fishing gear that could be used to decrease bycatch.

3N.5 The Meeting took note of the concerns by CCB as follows:

- on possible windpark being explored within the Natura 2000 area designated for harbour porpoises and three species of seabirds by the Danish windfarm company Ørsted. The company has submitted applications for permits to conduct surveys in preparation for construction of a large windfarm within the Swedish EEZ, west of the Northern Midsea bank. The Meeting took note that to the knowledge of CCB, no decisions have yet been made by Sweden but concern was expressed that a windfarm in this area would have severe detrimental effects on the critically endangered Baltic Proper harbour porpoise population.
- in relation to the German report on lack of fisheries measures in Baltic Sea MPAs, CCB expressed serious concern about the CFP article 11 process to negotiate joint recommendations on fisheries regulations in marine protected areas, which is regularly taking a lot longer than it should, and commonly includes conservation initiatives from Member States for Natura 2000 areas in their national waters being blocked by other Member States.
- in relation to the Finnish report that there are regular acoustic detections of porpoises in Finnish waters during the winter months, and visual observations every year, CCB expressed disappointment at the recently concluded Finnish redlist process where the harbour porpoise classification was changed from “regionally extinct” to “not assessed”. The Meeting further noted that the opinion of CCB is that there is sufficient data to assess the status of the harbour porpoise in Finnish waters, and that the population should be listed as “critically endangered” in Finland.

3N.6 The Meeting took note that Sweden has Red-list reporting this year and will report the two Baltic Sea harbor porpoise populations separately.

3N.7 The Meeting took note of information by CCB about an ongoing project where so called seal-safe pingers, which emit sound presumably above the seal hearing frequency, from two manufacturers will be tested in active gillnet fisheries in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting noted that the aim of the project is to determine if the rate of seal-damage to catch is increased or not when using these pingers, and if the results may increase the willingness of fishermen in the Baltic Sea region to use pingers.

3N.8 The Meeting took note that Denmark has results on seal/pinger interactions, which might be relevant for the CCB – WWF Sweden project. The Meeting further noted that these topics are also of considered under the bycatch work in ACTION project.

3N.9 The Meeting took note that the HELCOM Secretariat was approached by a project consortium planning to submit an application under the current LIFE call for a SAMBAH II. The project consortium approached HELCOM to take the role of coordinator in the project. The Meeting took note that HOD have mandated HELCOM to function as coordinator for the the project, should the project get funded. The Meeting noted that if the project will actualize with HELCOM coordination, a project coordinator will be hired for the task.

3N.10 The Meeting took note of information from Contracting Parties Denmark and Finland that they have not confirmed funding for the project, but both Contracting Parties are in favor of the project and checking the possibility to contribute with national funding for the project.

3N.11 The Meeting took note that following the agreement HOD 55, the Meeting is invited to draft revisions to the Recommendation (document 3N-16).

3N.12 The Meeting took note of the comment by Lead country Poland, that as a start two paragraphs need further work. The Meeting took note that the two populations should be separately taken into account in the revised recommendation. To forward the work, the Meeting formed a drafting group to further consider the revision to forward the process.

3N.13 The Meeting took note of the edits proposed by the drafting group to the revision of the Recommendation and further edited the draft as contained in document 3N-16 rev.1.

3N.14 The Meeting took note of the comment by Denmark that due to the upcoming elections a disclaimer regarding the Danish mandate needs to be added to the document.

3N.15 The Meeting agreed that the draft revised recommendation will be submitted to EG MAMA 13-2019 for review and further input, before being reviewed by STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 with the intention of submitting the revised recommendation for approval by HOD 57-2019 and adoption by HELCOM 41-2020.

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

3N.16 The Meeting took note of work under the ACTION project related to the follow up of action ‘avoiding by-catches of harbour porpoises, particularly following the recommendations of ASCOBANS and the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Plan’.

3N.17 The Meeting took 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’

3N.18 The Meeting took note of the Action points from the 15th meeting of the Jastarnia Group which took place 18-20 March in Turku, Finland (document 3N-14, **presentation 15**), as presented by Ida Carlen, Chair of the Jastarnia Group.

3N.19 The Meeting took 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)

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

3N.20 The Meeting noted with appreciation that HELCOM 40-2019 considered and adopted the draft Recommendation on ‘Conservation and Protection of Marine and Coastal Biotopes, Habitats and Biotope Complexes Categorized as Threatened According to the HELCOM Red Lists’ (document 3N-4) as HELCOM Recommendation 40/1, superseding the current HELCOM Recommendation 21/4.

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

3N.21 The Meeting took note of the HELCOM workshop on Migratory waterbirds which took place 20-22 November 2018 at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat (documents 3N-1, 3N-15). The Meeting found the workshop very useful and thanked the workshop participants for their work and taking the important initial steps in the process to map migration.

3N.22 The Meeting took note of comments presented by Germany on behalf of Volker Dierschke, co-chair of JWG BIRD, that the current members of JWG BIRD are not experts on bird migration and as such a different forum would need to be created to take the work forward, e.g. experts on bird migration or e.g. satellite tracking experts nominated by Contracting Parties should be provided compensations to continue with the task.

3N.23 The Meeting took note that the maps produced by the workshop are not specific enough to be used for planning purposes, however that the ultimate goal is to produce detailed maps which also representing the sensitivity of a given area to e.g. wind power construction and that these maps should be regularly updated.

3N.24 The Meeting took note that according to the experts, with more resources more detailed maps could be produced and considered whether the resolution of the maps should be increased and more details added before publishing.

3N.25 The Meeting agreed to consider the next steps regarding the maps and the work on bird migration in an intersessional online meeting dedicated to identifying a proposal to be considered by STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019. The intention is for Lead countries Germany and Sweden, as well as Denmark and the Secretariat to take part in the meeting.

3N.26 The Meeting considered that one way forward is to suggest JWG BIRD to propose to its Contracting Parties to nominate migration and satellite tracking experts into a subgroup to fill the gap in expertise. The Meeting further noted that as the next Meeting of JWG BIRD will take place after the next STATE & CONSERVATION meeting, the process will take time.

3N.27 The Meeting took note of information by Finland on a scientific paper published in 2018 on habitat use of white-tailed eagles and implications for land use and wind power plant planning, using satellite tracking ([Tikkanen et al. 2018](#)).

3N.28 The Meeting considered that the Recommendation contains two distinct types of actions, pertaining to either ecology or planning and approval processes (**presentation 16**).

3N.29 The Meeting proposed that the actions highlighted in purple in presentation 16 should be considered by national competent authorities working with permissions for energy construction, whereas the Meeting considered that the actions highlighted in green are more relevant for planners and MSP processes (in the form of the end products), as well as for the work of State and Conservation.

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

3N.30 The Meeting took note of the BALTFISH symposium on seal – fish/fisheries interaction in the Baltic Sea, as presented by the Secretariat (**presentation 17**). The Meeting took note that, at the invitation of BALTFISH; HELCOM presented Recommendation 27-28/2 in the symposium.

3N.31 The Meeting took note of HELCOM workshop on seal – fisheries interactions, taking place 27 June, back to back with HELCOM FISH 10-2019 meeting. The Meeting invited the planning group to involve EG MAMA in both the planning of the workshop and in the event itself.

3N.32 The Meeting expressed support for the proposal that BALTFISH be invited to give a more comprehensive presentation at the HELCOM Fisheries-Seal workshop regarding the outcome and conclusions from the BALTFISH symposium.

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

3N.33 The Meeting discussed the possibility to produce a MPA related project proposal for LIFE 2020 call.

3N.34 The Meeting supported the idea and agreed that initial scoping for such a proposal should begin as early as possible, building on already existing or identified gaps in MPA work in the region.

3N.35 The Meeting took note of the following information on national work relevant to actions of Recommendation 35/1:

- Germany: the process to implement fisheries measures in German Baltic Sea MPAs has commenced. The Meeting invited Germany to present progress on the issue at STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019.
- Poland: preparing management plan for marine N2000 site Slupsk Bank has just started. The Meeting invited Poland to present progress on the issue and also other management plans at STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3N.36 The Meeting took note that reporting frequency on the implementation on this Recommendation as a whole has not been specified. The Meeting noted that the national actions under the Recommendation are part of the Recommendation reporting process under the Baltic Sea Action Plan update.

3N.37 The Meeting agreed come back to the question on reporting frequency at STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3N.38 The Meeting took note that the possibility to hold a second MPA management workshop in autumn 2019 has been explored (document 3N-9). The Meeting noted that based on the input of the managers it is suggested that such a workshop would focus on stakeholder involvement, looking at main challenges and how they have been solved, benefits of stakeholder involvement and important considerations to take into account when deciding on the level of involvement to aim for in a given MPA.

3N.39 The Meeting welcomed the information that Finland has offered to host the workshop, which is suggested to take place 9-12 September 2019, in Vaasa, Finland. The Meeting noted that, should the workshop be approved, invitation to the workshop will be sent very soon after HOD 56-2019.

3N.40 The Meeting took note that Denmark looks forward to the workshop and has already nominated experts to join it. The Meeting further noted that while Germany also supports the workshop, it unfortunately cannot confirm the participation to the workshop.

3N.41 The Meeting endorsed the arranging of the second HELCOM MPA Management Workshop in September 2019 and invited the Contracting Parties to nominate managers to participate in the workshop.

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'](#)

3N.42 The Meeting took note of and considered the information on current coverage of HELCOM Marine Protected Areas and Natura 2000 areas in the Baltic Sea region as presented by the Secretariat (document 3N-3, **presentation 18**). Following discussion in the implementation of the Recommendation under the Joint Session the Meeting took note that the share of marine area covered by HELCOM MPAs only was below 10 % in the Bothnian Bay, Bothnian Sea, the Northern Baltic Proper, the Eastern and Western Gotland Basins and the Sound bordered by Denmark, Estonia, Finland Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden.

3N.43 The Meeting took note that the Moscow ministerial Declaration specifies that the 10% coverage of HELCOM MPAs refers to the marine area. The Meeting noted that for Eastern and Western Gotland Basin and Sound, nominating existing Natura 2000 areas as HELCOM MPAs would result in the sub basins reaching the 10% target.

3N.44 The Meeting took note that for Bothnian Bay, Bothnian Sea and the Northern Baltic Proper, nominating more Natura 2000 areas as HELCOM MPAs would not lift the coverage of HELCOM MPAs over 10 % as the total coverage of HELCOM MPAs and N2000 sites does not reach the 10% limit. The Meeting took note that Estonia is looking into the possibility to nominate further existing areas as HELCOM MPAs, but have been hesitant due to the national interpretation of the resulting management measures related obligations.

3N.45 The Meeting took note of the clarification that for N2000 sites no additional management obligation follow from nomination as HELCOM MPAs, and that Contracting Parties which are also EU member states are under no obligation to take any further actions beyond what is determined by the Habitats Directive.

3N.46 The Meeting noted that HELCOM MPAs require a management plan OR similar management measures.

3N.47 The Meeting noted that the HELCOM MPAs have a recommendation for minimum size, however the area does not have to be continuous but can be formed of several smaller Natura 2000 areas.

3N.48 The Meeting considered how to identify scientific justifications for HELCOM MPA coverage to be below 10%. The Meeting discussed that one way of identifying if coverage below 10% is sufficient could be to use the MPA coherence approach for the subbasins with < 10 % HELCOM MPA coverage, and if the conservation network is not coherent, more conservation areas should be designated.

3N.49 The Meeting took note of information by Finland, that the Zonation tool can be used to identify valuable areas in the sub-basin but that the requirement is to have good underlying data from the area.

3N.50 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of Task Group on HELCOM Marine Protected Areas (MPA TG 9- MPA TG 11) (document 3N-5).

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'

3N.51 The Meeting took note of the information from Finland on progress on the ongoing designation of new protected areas in the Gulf of Finland.

- Two existing Natura 2000 areas have been expanded. The areas were already HELCOM MPAs which have now also expanded.
- There is a national process to establish new protected areas in the Gulf of Finland. The plans have been in hearing.
- One of the existing N2000 sites has been expanded to have the same borders as the existing seal sanctuary and has been included as a new HELCOM MPA (Södra Sandbäck-Sandbäck).

3N.52 The Meeting took note of the information from Denmark on the designation of existing protected areas (MSFD MPAs) to the HELCOM MPA network.

- There are new MSFD MPAs in Kattegat, protecting HELCOM Red-listed species and habitats. The size of some areas is less than 3000 ha.
- The Danish part of the northern half of the Sound has been designated as MSFD MPA.
- Denmark is in the process of identifying possible new MPAs in the Danish waters around Bornholm and in the North Sea.

3N.53 The Meeting took note of the information from Estonia about the ongoing inventories in the Baltic Proper. After the project has ended (in 2020), new information can be presented.

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'

3N.54 The Meeting took note of the work being done under TG MPA regarding linking habitats to red-listed species and considered how to take the work forward, including the need to validate and make the

information available. The Meeting took note of an overview of available information and preliminary linking of HELCOM Redlisted species to habitats as presented by the Secretariat (document 3N-8).

3N.55 The Meeting welcomed the work and expressed that the overview is very useful.

3N.56 The Meeting took note that the excluded MSFD broad habitat types should be checked to ensure that they really do not occur in the Baltic Sea. The Meeting further noted that the identification of MSFD broad habitat types applicable in the Baltic Sea was done by the SPICE project. The Meeting took note that specific comments or corrections to the document can be sent to the Secretariat (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi).

3N.57 The Meeting agreed to come back to how to validate the linkages in STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

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'

3N.58 The Meeting took note of the upcoming workshop on habitat mapping and modelling to support the implementation of actions under Recommendation 35/1.

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'

3N.59 The Meeting noted 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. The Meeting took note that, at the invitation of BSAC, the HELCOM Secretariat presented the HELCOM MPA network in the workshop.

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'

3N.60 The Meeting took note of the responses to questionnaire on National frequency of review and update of HELCOM MPA management plans, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3N-6, **presentation 19**). The Meeting took note that the questionnaire was prepared by the Secretariat as agreed in STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 and presented to MPA TG 8-2019 for review and input. The final survey was sent out to State and Conservation on 1 January.

3N.61 The Meeting took note that Denmark will respond to the questionnaire. The Meeting further noted that the management plan review system in Denmark is similar to the one in Germany.

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'

3N.62 The Meeting took note of information from Germany that there was no progress of assessing management effectiveness of the OSPAR MPA network in 2018.

3N.63 The Meeting took note of work being done to map measures, pressures and habitat features in MPAs under the ACTION project and the questionnaire to be sent out to fill the matrix, as presented by Darius Daunys (**presentation 20**). The Meeting took note of the questionnaire and supported the projects efforts to collaborate with national experts and MPA managers to collate the needed information.

3N.64 The Meeting took note that in Finland, similar work is ongoing. The Meeting noted that Finland was interested to receive more information from the MPA work in ACTION project and further noted that ACTION project will send the information to Finland.

3N.65 The Meeting noted that ACTION project will distribute the draft questionnaire to interested parties for testing before publication. The Meeting took note that Germany is willing to contribute and participate and test the questionnaire.

3N.66 The Meeting commented that to the extent possible the N2000 areas chosen should also be HELCOM MPAs to enable the results of the analysis to be presented for HELCOM MPAs as well.

3N.67 The Meeting noted that the list of species could be cross-checked as for example ringed seal which is listed as vulnerable and also listed under habitats directive is missing from the list.

3N.68 The Meeting noted the proposal from Germany that purely marine MPAs should also be included in the analysis when listing the areas for sub-sampling, which was seen as meaningful by the Lead for the ACTION WP3.

3N.69 The Meeting urged the project to include those species for which a status assessment is available, e.g. those species for which HELCOM has existing indicators.

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'](#)

3N.70 The Meeting took note of the national work in the marine protection project TILA2 in Finland, as presented by Matti Sahla (**presentation 21**).

3N.71 The Meeting took note of the following comments from Germany: due to the federal system in Germany there are three different spatial plans in Germany, one for the EEZ and one for each of the states. The state plans include priority and reservation areas for nature values whereas in the federal plan nature values are described in an annex. The Meeting took note of information on proceeding of the Pan Baltic Scope project, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3N-13) and reviewed the map layers produced in the Pan Baltic Scope workshop on essential fish habitats in the Baltic Sea.

3N.72 The Meeting took note of comment by Germany that in the future more species could be included e.g. red listed species.

3N.73 The Meeting further noted that Denmark, Finland, Germany and Poland need more time to review the information, because initial reviews have illustrated that data might be missing and maps of spawning areas might need an update.

3N.74 The Meeting agreed that comments and missing data can be delivered to Pan Baltic Scope via the Secretariat (lena.bergstrom@helcom.fi) by **28 June 2019**.

3N.75 The Meeting took note of the information that the project would like to see the results of the work published as a project publication under HELCOM. The Meeting invited the project to, if possible, provide the draft report for review to STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

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'](#)

3N.76 The Meeting took note of Recommendations from the 2018 MPA managers Workshop that are relevant for continued work on HELCOM MPA guidelines (document 3N-17).

3N.77 The Meeting took note of the information on the progress of the update of Guidelines for MPA pressure evaluation, as presented by Lasse Kurvinen, Finland. The Meeting noted that the guidelines have been discussed in meetings of MPA TG.

3N.78 The Meeting took note of the information by Finland that based on comments from TG MPA the work on the Guidelines is ongoing and Finland hopes to be able to present a draft version to STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3N.79 The Meeting took note of the progress on update of MPA management guidelines as presented by Penina Blankett, Finland (document 3N-11). The Meeting noted that the guidelines would need a major update. The Meeting took note that at present only Finland and Germany had provided comments to the guidelines. The Meeting took note that based on the received comments, the update would take approximately 6 - 8 months of dedicated work.

3N.80 The Meeting took note of specific comments from Germany to the attachment 1 of document 3N-11 and that Germany will send the comments to Finland.

3N.81 The Meeting considered how to proceed with the update process. The Meeting considered that a shorter, more concise guideline which focuses directly on MPA management (not e.g. management effectiveness) might be more fit for purpose.

3N.82 The Meeting supported that in the upcoming MPA managers workshop the MPA managers will be asked on which specific topics they consider most relevant to include to ensure that the updated guidelines will be useful for the managers.

3N.83 The Meeting agreed that Finland will collate the information on identified topics from the Contracting Parties and the Workshop and present the compiled information to STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

3N.84 The Meeting welcomed the offer by Germany to support Finland in the work.

3N.85 The Meeting agreed that contracting parties will provide Finland with information and views on which sections of the guidelines should be included in a more focused, concise version of the document by **15 August 2019**.

3N.86 The Meeting took note of the draft updated MPA designation guidelines as presented by Penina Blankett, Finland (document 3N-12). The Meeting took note of the comments from Germany to the document. The Meeting agreed that review of the guidelines will be continued by an intersessional subgroup with participants from Denmark, Finland, Germany and the Secretariat.

p) [Follow-up of action 'modernize the HELCOM MPAs database'](#)

3N.87 The Meeting took note of the expected information on pressures/measures coming from ACTION project and the recommendation by the MPA management workshop in 2018 to explore if the MPA database can be used to store and share information from the management plans in a structures way which would significantly facilitate access to information and cooperation across borders. The Meeting supported the proposal to include information 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 \(HELCOM MPA database, GIS based map and data service\)'](#)

3N.88 The Meeting took note of the responses received under the national reporting on this action for the BSAP update (document 8J-7), and considered an annual reporting on if the information in the database has been reviewed by CPs.

3N.89 The Meeting took note of the following responses from Contracting Parties:

- Germany: has updated the database in 2018
- Denmark: doesn't have resources to report annually.
- Finland: could report annually if noting 'nothing new' is also an option
- Estonia: can report when e.g. new area is designated, but considers annual reporting to the database to be too resource intensive.

3N.90 The Meeting took note that the Secretariat has been invited to provide yearly information on the status of the MPA network and agreed that in the context of this the Contracting Parties will be invited to provide information on if the information in the database has been reviewed in the given year.

3N.91 The Meeting took note of the comment by Denmark that it would be beneficial if there were more nuanced options for the reporting than yes or no.

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

3N.92 The Meeting took note of the following information from the Contracting Parties on national work relevant to the Recommendation 37/2:

- Estonia has the national threat evaluation of mammals, fish and birds (including migratory birds) has been finalized. Lamprey that was HELCOM redlisted in 2013 has been analysed. Birds have been listed separately for breeding season, migration and wintering season. For breeding birds: 49 species dependent of marine area were analysed, of which 24 were redlisted, for wintering birds 33 species or subspecies were analysed, of which 4 were redlisted, for mammal populations ringed seal was listed endangered and grey seal and Eurasian otter of least concern.
- Finland has finished their national red-list of species in the beginning of 2019. Due to the data collected through the VELMU project, Finland was able to assess a lot of marine groups for the first time, especially amongst algae and invertebrate species. The results can be further explored in the webservice of [the Red List of Finnish Species](#).
- Sweden will publish new national red-list in 2020

3N.93 The Meeting recalled that 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.

3N.94 The Meeting took note of a draft template for reporting on the level of implementation of the actions under Recommendation 37/2, as presented by Germany (document 3N-10), and made further suggestions for further edits to the template, as provided in document 3N-10 rev.1.

3N.95 The Meeting agreed to, once the changes have been implemented, test the template by implementing the first round of reporting on the Recommendation using the template by STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019, as this allows CPs to use some of the information collated for the BSAP UP Recommendations reporting for the exercise.

3N.96 The Meeting considered the schedule for reporting on the Recommendation. The Meeting considered the suggestion to use either a 3 or a 6 year reporting interval period and agreed and that the final frequency of reporting will be agreed at STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 when there is a better understanding of the workload involved in using the template for reporting.

3N.97 The Meeting took note of the reporting done under OSPAR recommendations on species protection and conservation as presented by Germany (document 3N-7). The Meeting considered that some of the reporting questions in the OSPAR reporting approach are also valid for HELCOM Recommendation 37/2. Germany informed the Meeting that therefor the respective questions were incorporated into the draft reporting template for Recommendation 37/2.

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'

3N.98 The Meeting took note that no updates in information on national conservation plans for species and biotopes categorized as threatened according to HELCOM 2013 Red List have been received since STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 (document 3N-2). The Meeting noted that 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).

3N.99 The Meeting took note that of the following information from the CPs:

- Estonia are currently working on Natura 2000 habitat directive reporting, and after completing the process will report to the HELCOM inventory.
- Denmark will report an overview for birds after the Meeting, and overview for other species groups and habitats will also be reported before STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.
- Germany has completed inventories for both species and habitats and will report to the secretariat as soon as possible.

3N.100 The Meeting took note of the comment by Germany that it seems some threatened red listed fish species might be missing from the document and the Meeting invited the Secretariat to cross-check the information and report back to STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019. Germany will send a list of missing species to the Secretariat.

3N.101 The Meeting took note of the approval process of the action plan for the protection and recovery of Baltic sturgeon. The Meeting took note that the action plan was approved by HOD-55 2018 and adopted by HELCOM 40-2019 and that the Meeting endorsed the establishment of an Expert Group on Baltic Sturgeon (EG STUR) during the Joint Session

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'

3N.102 The Meeting recalled that 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 took note that JWG BIRD has been contacted but the group has not yet had meeting and hence there are no further proceedings on the matter.

3N.103 The Meeting took note of the information that JWG BIRD has been approach with an invitation to hold their next meeting in Helsinki, at the premise of the HELCOM Secretariat.

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'

3N.104 The Meeting took note of the information that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 14th meeting last November, 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 organization.

3N.105 The Meeting took note of the information on national processes to identify marine areas of ecological significance which have been initiated in Finland, as presented by Lasse Kurvinen, Finland (**presentation 22**).

3N.106 The Meeting took note of work on red-listed Ecosystems in Finland, as presented by Lasse Kurvinen, Finland (**presentation 23**) and congratulated Finland on the work.

Agenda Item 4N [Links to Ongoing Work under the habitats and Birds Directives](#)

4N.1. The Meeting recalled that 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

4N.2. The Meeting took note of the following progress, questions and challenges related to the ongoing national reporting for Article 17.

- Finland: has finalized the reporting for the Habitats Directive. Reporting for the Bird Directive is ongoing. In the process of reporting some joint meetings with Sweden and Estonia have been held, and the countries noticed differences in the approach to reporting.
- Estonia: has habitats directive reporting going on, the results are not yet finalized.

4N.3. The Meeting considered that the differences in the approach to reporting indicate a strong need for more coordination at a regional level to ensure consistent reporting and reiterated their support for using HELCOM as a platform to facilitate regional cooperation for the implementation and reporting for the Habitats and Birds Directive.

4N.4. The Meeting took note of comment by CCB that biogeographical seminars should be considered highly relevant processes for all CPs and help with consistency in interpreting the directive and the reporting guidance. The Meeting further noted that the seminar had sessions related to the species and habitats in the Baltic Sea, and encouraged Contracting Parties to take a look at the [report](#) of [the Second Marine Biogeographical Process Seminar](#).

4N.5. The Meeting took note of the information on the Marine Expert Working Group meeting as presented by Penina Blankett, Finland. The Meeting took note that the EU Commission welcomed the information that there are plans for establish a network for MPA Management in the Baltic Sea under the auspice of HELCOM and encourage CPs and the RSC's to support the work of the MPA Management network. The Meeting further noted that the group discussed on how LIFE and EMFF funding mechanisms could be utilized for marine N2000 management.

4N.6. The Meeting agreed that, with respect to the strong focus on marine protection and conservation management of the Conservation Session of State and Conservation, it would be highly relevant and viewed as very beneficial by the CPs if a representative from the EU Commission/Biogeographical Process could attend State and Conservation Meeting. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to approach the EU with an invitation to the upcoming meeting of the Working Group.

Agenda Item 5N [Plans for implementation of the work plan and emerging issues](#)

5N.1 The Meeting discussed further plans for implementing of the Workplan. The Meeting considered that in STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019, in addition to the already planned work, it would be beneficial to ensure dedicated time for the following topics:

- The possibility to come together regionally to specifically lift marine issues, including both MPAs and “the 90%”, under the Post-2020 process
- Sharing information on projects and ongoing national research and focus on the biodiversity/conservation relevant project results from ACTION and SOM.
- How EBSAs and MSP concepts such as green infrastructure can be utilized.

Agenda Item 6N [Any other business](#)

6N.1 The Meeting did not consider any other bussiness.

Agenda Item 7N Outcome of the Nature conservation session

7N.1. The Meeting adopted the outcome of Nature Conservation theme and noted that the outcome will be available (together with outcomes of the joint and monitoring and assessment themes) at the STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 Meeting Site, together with the documents and presentations considered by the Meeting.

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Annex 2 List of guidelines open for new lead countries/co-leads

Contaminants in seawater:

Guideline on the determination of tracemetals (Cd, Pb, Cu, Co, Zn, Ni, Fe), including mercury, in seawater (former B11, Appendix 1) or split into two guidelines tracemetals and mercury (similar to biota)

Contaminants in biota:

Guideline on the determination of trace metallic elements in biota (former Annex B12, Appendix 4)

Guideline on the determination of total mercury in marine biota (former Annex B12, Appendix 5)

Parts of Part D Programme for monitoring of CONTAMINANTS and their effects:

Germany currently has the lead on these as well but as these are to be updated together with the new web structure this part will need the information from all countries and it is perceived that a Lead Country approach is no longer the most suitable option to deal with these.