



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
13-2020

Online, 5-8 October 2020

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The revisions made in this document are shown with red colour.

Background

In accordance with the decision by HOD 57-2019, the thirteenth Meeting of the Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation (STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020) will be convened online on 5-9 October 2020.

The Meeting will start on **Monday 5 October 2020 at 9.00 CET** and is expected to end on **Friday 9 October 2020 at 14.00 CET**. The Meeting will focus on Joint and Nature conservation and Biodiversity sessions. Monday to Wednesday **13:00** will be dedicated to joint themes (Agenda Items 1J-9J), and Wednesday **14.00** to Friday 14.00 is planned for issues related to Nature conservation and biodiversity (Agenda Items 1N-7N).

Focal items of the meeting are to:

- **Joint session:** update process of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, including finalization of the review of synopses on potential new HELCOM actions related to the work of State and Conservation WG; as well as implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan.
- **Nature conservation and biodiversity:** MPA LIFE application; as well as development and implementation of Recommendations regarding nature conservation and biodiversity.

The Meeting will be Chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group Ms. Marie-Louise Krawack (Denmark), Chair of nature conservation and biodiversity topics and Mr. Norbert Häubner (Sweden), Chair of monitoring and assessment related topics.

Meeting documents will be submitted by the Secretariat to the [STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 Meeting Site](#) via the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#). The Secretariat has prepared a [document template](#) and recommends using the template when submitting documents to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat kindly requests the Contracting Parties and Observers to observe the deadlines for submission of documents to a HELCOM meeting. Basic documents and documents requiring action or a decision to the Meeting should be submitted in electronic format to Professional Secretary, Jannica Haldin (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) by **9 September 2020**, at the latest. Documents containing comments to the basic documents as well as information documents should be provided to the Secretariat by **28 September 2020**.

Participants are kindly requested to register for the Meeting by answering the [Participation Survey](#) at their earliest convenience, and **not later than 28 September 2020**. Instructions for the use of the Meeting Portal are available on the [HELCOM Website](#).

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Joint session

Agenda Item 1J Adoption of the Agenda: Joint themes

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Annotated Agenda for the Joint themes (1J-9J), as contained in document 1-2.

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

HELCOM

The Meeting is invited to take note that Germany has taken on the Chairmanship for HELCOM, for the period 2020-2022 and take note of the structure and priorities of the Chairmanship.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcomes of relevant recent HELCOM meetings (document 2J-1).

EU

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the EU Baltic Sea Ministerial meeting, to take place in Lithuania, 28 September 2020.

Agenda Item 3J Update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and associated activities

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated Work Plan for the update of the BSAP, endorsed by HOD 58-2020 (document 3J-1).

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 58-2020 agreed on the year 2030 as the target year for implementing the BSAP. With regard to the target year for achieving good environmental status for the Baltic Sea, the meeting further agreed to include in the updated BSAP a reference to the 2007 BSAP and the HELCOM assessments.

Drafting of the updated BSAP

The Meeting is invited to take note of the detailed plan for drafting of the updated BSAP and the preliminary timetable (document 3J-2, presentation). *The Meeting is invited to review the segment specific preamble text for the biodiversity segment, in line with the guidance provided, and endorse it for submission to GEAR 22-2020 and to HOD 59-2020 for review, noting that the drafting will continue in the DG BSAP in spring 2021 (document 3J-3).*

The Meeting is invited to consider the content of the draft Annex for the biodiversity segment of the updated BSAP and agree on how to take the work forward in order to ensure that the work is finalized prior to HOD 60-2021 (document 3J-4).

Guidance and validation of work under the SOM Platform

Progress on analysing sufficiency of measures

*The Meeting is invited to consider **and comment on** the results of the analysis of sufficiency of measures (documents 3J-5, 3J-6, 3J-7 and 3J-8).*

The Meeting is invited to take note of the validation of input data to the SOM analysis.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress of the cost-effectiveness analysis (document 3J-9).

Actions to be included in the updated BSAP

Finalizing existing actions

HOD 58-2020 agreed in principle on the rephrased and concretized existing HELCOM actions to be transferred to the updated BSAP with the understanding that further drafting based on the written comments will take

place. HOD 58-2020 invited DG BSAP and HELCOM Working Groups to continue work on those actions where the need for further work has been identified.

The Meeting is invited to finalize the remaining open actions, in line with what has been agreed by HOD 58-2020 and endorse them for submission to HOD 59-2020 for provisional agreement (document 3J-10).

Proposed new actions

The Meeting is invited to consider the outcome of the BSAP UP workshop on biodiversity, to be held on 31 August – 2 September 2020 (document 3J-11).

The Meeting is invited to further elaborate and endorse for submission to HOD 59-2020 possible new actions based on the outcome of the BSAP UP workshop.

*The Meeting is invited to identify possible gaps in the set of measures for the updated BSAP and propose measures to fill the gaps, as well as **agree on a process for assessing the proposed measures in a similar manner to those submitted through the synopses.***

The Meeting is invited to take note that further work on the proposed new actions will take place in DG BSAP and HOD meetings, in line with the BSAP updated workplan.

HELCOM Explorer

The Meeting is invited to take note that the reporting on the implementation status of the national actions will take place via nominated national contact points in autumn 2020.

The Meeting is invited to report on the status of the joint actions of relevance for State and Conservation WG (document 3J-12).

HELCOM Science Agenda

The Meeting is invited to take note of the activities of the Science Agenda TG and progress on developing the HELCOM Science Agenda ([doc 3J-13](#)).

Agenda Item 4J Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects

Projects

Proposed projects

LIFE MPA project

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress on planning a HELCOM led MPA project for submission under the EU LIFE funding instrument and that the plan will be further developed.

SAMBAH II

The Meeting is invited to take note of the update on the application process for SAMBAH II.

The Meeting is invited to take note that due to time constraints of the application process and changes in workload resulting from Covid-19 the HELCOM Secretariat regrettably could not take partner role in the project.

MSFD call 2020

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress on a joint HELCOM application for the DG ENV/MSFD call 2020.

Ongoing projects

HELCOM ACTION Project

The Meeting is invited to take note of the reporting of relevance stemming from the HELCOM ACTION project and guide the project team and report direction in the final preparation, as needed (**documents 4J-18, 4J-19 and 4J-20**).

HOLAS III

The Meeting is invited to note that HOD 58-2020 considered and approved the elaborated timeline for the HOLAS III assessment, acknowledging that adjustments to the timeline may occur as the process progresses and also approved the proposed way forward for filling gaps in expertise for the HOLAS III assessment.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 recognized some of the challenges in reporting 2021 data within the timeline set out for HOLAS III and invited the Secretariat to draft a data call for HOLAS III, covering established HELCOM dataflows needed for the indicators and integrated assessments, clearly outlining the altered timelines for reporting for 2021 data, to be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

*The Meeting is invited to consider the proposed setup of the HOLAS III assessment working structure, including proposal for which HELCOM meetings would be invited to endorse and approve the various deliverables **and endorse the proposal for submission to GEAR 23-2020 for endorsement and HOD 59-2020 for approval (document 4J-2)**.*

Continued development of HELCOM core indicators

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated information on indicator lead and co-lead countries, the nominated experts appointed for their development and the development status of the indicators and provide input as needed (document 4J-3).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overall progress on the further development of HELCOM indicators, in line with what has been agreed in the respective topic specific workplans (document 4J-4).

Beach litter indicator

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 discussed the issue of a common database to host HELCOM beach litter monitoring data and agreed on the use of an existing database for the purpose. The meeting invited the EN-Marine Litter to consider which database would best fit HELCOM purposes (e.g. EMODnet or ICES DOME databases), including financial resource implications and long-term continuation of the database, so that the discussion on the topic can continue at STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

EN Marine Litter is invited to inform the Meeting on which database would best fit HELCOM purposes for beach litter monitoring data.

The Meeting is invited to select a suitable database for beach litter monitoring for further consideration (document 4J-5).

In relation to the assessment of the beach litter indicator within HOLAS III, STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 invited EN-Marine Litter to provide recommendations on use of assessment scale and trends in HOLAS III for State and Conservation to consider. The meeting further invited the network to consider the threshold value for this indicator once established at EU level.

EN Marine Litter is invited to provide recommendations on the use of assessment scale and trends in HOLAS III for the beach litter indicator.

Based on the recommendations, the Meeting is invited to agree on the use of assessment scale and trends for the beach litter indicator in HOLAS III (document 4J-5).

Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes pre-core indicator

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 expressed general support for the work under Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes pre-core indicator and encouraged the co-leads to consider the issues raised, in particular focusing on the development of threshold value and to continue to involve the EN Benthic in the work, possibly through an extra meeting of the EN before STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 invited the indicator co-leads, with support from the Secretariat, to prepare a time plan for further work to finalize the core indicator, to be submitted as information to the State and Conservation WG.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 further invited the indicator co-leads to present an updated indicator report for STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 for further discussion on threshold values and shifting the status of the indicator from pre-core to core indicator, at latest by HOD meeting in June 2021. The meeting further invited the indicator co-leads, together with the Secretariat and the Co-chairs of State and Conservation to prepare a realistic time plan for further work, including a possible extra meeting of the EN, taking into account the Danish time requirements.

The indicator co-leads are invited to present an updated indicator report to the Meeting.

The indicator co-leads, together with the Secretariat and Co-Chairs of the WG are invited to present a realistic time plan for further work to the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress on the cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator.

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the time plan for further work on the cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator (document 4J-16).

Waterbird indicators

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated indicator workplan for waterbirds (document 4J-6).

Oxygen dept indicator

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 recalled that Sweden will no longer be able to lead the work on the oxygen debt indicator.

The Contracting Parties are invited to consider taking the lead on the oxygen debt indicator and inform the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) on their possibility to lead the indicator.

HELCOM Indicator Manual

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 considered the draft HELCOM Indicator Manual Version 1.0 and agreed to come back to the discussion on the Manual at STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 and invited the Secretariat to continue the work to finalize the Manual and submit a final draft to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 and GEAR 23-2020.

The Meeting is invited to consider the final draft HELCOM Indicator Manual and endorse it for submission to HOD 59-2020 for approval (document 4J-7).

HELCOM Data Flow Project (DataFlow)

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress of the HELCOM DataFlow project.

The Meeting is invited to review the draft data call for HOLAS III (document 4J-1).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overview of expected 2022 data reporting timelines for regular HELCOM dataflows (document 4-17).

HELCOM Holistic Assessment Methodology Development Project (MetDev)

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 endorsed the submission of the project plan for information to HOD 58-2020 and agreed to come back to the discussion at STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The Meeting is invited to review the updated project plan for MetDev and endorse it for submission to HOD 59-2020 for approval, thus enabling the work to begin in early 2021 (document 4J-8 rev.1).

Finalized projects

The Meeting is invited to take note of and approve the HELCOM Checklist of Baltic Sea Macro Species 2.0, the final report of the HELCOM BaltiCheck project (document 4J-15).

HELCOM Expert Groups under the guidance of the State and Conservation WG

Phytoplankton Expert Group (PEG)

The Meeting is invited to take note of the summary of work of the PEG, as prepared by the Chair of the Expert Group (document 4J-9).

Intersessional Network on Eutrophication (IN EUTRO)

IN EUTRO 16-2020 concluded that all Contracting Parties present at the meeting are for moving to EQR (Eutrophication quality ratios) values and agreed to propose the change to State and Conservation.

The Meeting is invited to consider the proposal by IN EUTRO to change from using Eutrophication ratios (ERs) to Eutrophication quality ratios (EQRs).

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

The Meeting is invited to note the proceedings towards a Climate Change Fact Sheet (document 4J-10).

The Meeting is invited to recall that the intersessional online meeting of State and Conservation to be held on 15 February 2021 is aimed at approving the key messages for the Climate Change Fact Sheet.

HELCOM Expert Group on Marine Mammals (EG MAMA)

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the Terms of Reference for EG MAMA 15-2021 (document 4J-11).

Baltic Sea MPA Managers Network (EN MPA MANET)

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 took note of progress with regards to arranging the 2020 MPA MANET workshop and welcomed the information that Denmark is exploring the possibility to host the workshop.

The Meeting is invited to take note of changes with regards to arranging the 2020 MPA MANET workshop due to Covid-19.

Expert Network on Hazardous Substances (EN HAZ)

The Meeting is invited to review the technical details of the proposal for regular screening of hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea region and propose improvements where relevant, indicate, using table in Annex II, if participation is anticipated and what samples are considered, e.g. number, matrix, spatial distribution if possible, explore the possibility of securing national resources to carry out the work and endorse the submission of the document to HOD 59-2020 for consideration and approval (document 4J-14).

Strategic discussion on EGs

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 took note of the overview of existing Expert groups and gaps in Expert group structure for HOLAS III, presented by the Co-Chair. The meeting discussed the identified gaps and agreed on the further steps to improve the organization of HELCOM expert groups in order to facilitate the development of necessary assessments for HOLAS III.

The Meeting is invited to take note that HOD 58-2020 approved the proposed way forward for filling gaps in expertise for the HOLAS III assessment, as proposed by STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

*The Meeting is invited to take note of progress in implementing the approved proposals and provide further guidance as needed (**documents 4J-11 on foodwebs, 4J-12 on commercial fish, 4J-13 on pelagic habitats**).*

Agenda Item 5J Development and implementation of Recommendations

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overview of Recommendation reporting deadlines under State and Conservation WG to be presented by the Secretariat (document 5J-1) and continue discussion on reporting of the Recommendations, as agreed by STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

RECOMMENDATION 16/3 PRESERVATION OF NATURAL COASTAL DYNAMICS

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Denmark.

Reporting template exists, however reporting for the Recommendation has not been specified.

Denmark is invited to present a suggestion for reporting frequency for the Recommendation.

The Meeting is invited to agree on the reporting frequency for the Recommendation.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the progress on development of guidelines on sustainable tourism, as presented by Latvia. The meeting noted that no proposals for revising the Recommendation were received. The meeting welcomed the information by Latvia that the intention is to present a draft to STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 and agreed to come back to the Recommendation at the next meeting of the Working Group.

Latvia is invited to present a draft proposal for revising the Recommendation to the Meeting.

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Latvia.

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

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the results of a workshop providing a platform for closer cooperation with planners and producers of Baltic Sea biodiversity data (VELMU) nationally in Finland, as presented by Finland and invited Finland to present the outcome of the EMMA process with regards to MSP at STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

Finland is invited to present the outcome of the EMMA process with regards to MSP at the Meeting.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 further took note of progress regarding the joint scoping workshop with HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG and took note that the proposal will be further considered at the WGs upcoming

meeting. The meeting supported the proposal to explore the possibility to combine the planned work with the recently started HELCOM MSP Platform project for capacity building.

The Meeting is invited to take note of progress on arranging a joint scoping workshop with HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Estonia.

Reporting template will be developed by 2021. The reporting interval for the Recommendation is six years and reporting will next take place in 2022.

Agenda Item 6J Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 supported that IN EUTRO and PEG will work bilaterally during spring 2020 to resolve unclarity regarding biomass and satellite data use.

The Chair(s) of IN EUTRO/PEG are invited to present to the Meeting the outcome of the issue regarding biomass and satellite data use.

*The Contracting Parties are invited to provide information on any changes or updates to the Environment Fact Sheets to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) by **10 September 2020**.*

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updates to the existing HELCOM Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets since STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 (document 6J-1). *The Meeting is also invited to consider and approve the publication of any new fact sheets.*

The Meeting is invited to take note of the new setup of Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets on the updated HELCOM website.

Agenda Item 7J Future work

Election of Co-Chairs

The Meeting is invited to elect co-Chairs and vice-Chairs for the Working Group for the time period of 2021-2022 representing the monitoring/assessment and biodiversity/nature conservation components, respectively.

Work plan

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the upcoming tasks as outlined in the working group's work plan. The meeting invited the Secretariat to include a column in the tables outlining progress and to come back to planning future work at STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updated work plan and to plan for future work of State and Conservation and endorse the submission of the updated workplan for submission to HOD 59 for approval (document 7J-1).

Next meeting

The Meeting is invited to note that STATE & CONSERVATION 14-2021, focusing on Monitoring and assessment and Joint sessions, will likely be held in Sweden, on 3-7 May 2021 and that an intersessional meeting of State and Conservation will be held online on 15 February 2021, focused on review and approval of the key messages for the HELCOM Climate Change Fact Sheet.

The Meeting is invited to agree on the dates for the STATE & CONSERVATION 15-2021 meeting.

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

Agenda Item 8J Any other business

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

Seals-fisheries interactions

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 noted the view by Poland and Denmark on the increasing importance to consider seal-fisheries interactions and agreed to discuss seals-fisheries interactions at STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 further agreed that a dedicated discussion on fisheries and joint recommendations should be included in the agenda of STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the [outcome of the workshop on seals-fisheries interactions](#), organized in Copenhagen, Denmark on 27 June 2019, as well as the results of the discussion on these topics by EG MAMA 13-2019 (document 8J-1) and discuss the issue.

Housekeeping

The Meeting is invited to consider and update the list of contacts and observers of the Working Group (document 8J-2).

Agenda Item 9J Outcome of the Joint themes

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

Nature conservation and biodiversity

Agenda Item 1N Adoption of the Agenda: Nature conservation and biodiversity

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Annotated Agenda for Nature conservation and biodiversity (1N-7N), as contained in document 1-2.

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

HELCOM

The Meeting is invited to take note that due to delays and uncertainties regarding the arrangements surrounding the international Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC) resulting from Covid-19, the team arranging the special symposium on MPA networks, co-organized by HELCOM, has decided to withdraw the symposium from the 2020 Congress and will instead aim to submit it to the next Congress.

EU

The Meeting is invited to take note of the publication of the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#).

CBD

The Meeting is invited to note that CBD COP 15 will be held in the second quarter of 2021 and the meeting will discuss the new strategic plan of CBD including the new biodiversity targets.

IUCN

The Meeting is invited to take note of information regarding the first IUCN WCPA regional workshop on OECMs (**Other effective area-based conservation measures**), focused on North African and the Eastern Mediterranean, which took place in Tunis, Tunisia on 10-11 February 2020. The workshop focused on how to identify, advance and report on OECMs.

Agenda Item 3N Development and implementation of Recommendations

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

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Finland.

The Recommendation states that implementation should be reported to the Commission every 6 years and that the HELCOM working group in charge stays in contact with the Contracting Parties for information and cooperation in this matter. The latest reporting has been undertaken in 2019 as part of the BSAP update process. The next scheduled reporting will take place in 2025.

[RECOMMENDATION 17/2 PROTECTION OF HARBOUR PORPOISE IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

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

The Meeting is invited to note that the amended Recommendation 17/2 was adopted by HELCOM 41-2020 in March 2020.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Poland.

Reporting on the progress in implementing the Recommendation should be reported to the Commission every four years, in line with reporting to ASCOBANS Meetings of Parties. The latest reporting has been undertaken in 2019 as part of the BSAP update process.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 welcomed the information that Poland will commence work on developing a reporting template for Recommendation 17/2, a draft of which will be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

Poland is invited to submit the reporting template for the Recommendation and present it to the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the reporting template (document 3N-1), to be submitted by Poland.

- a. give highest priority to avoiding by-catches of harbour porpoises, particularly following the recommendations of ASCOBANS and the Jastarnia Plan, in order to achieve the ecological objective of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. By-catch of harbour porpoise, shall be significantly reduced with the aim to reach by-catch rates close to zero, recognizing that the Baltic Proper population of harbour porpoise is more threatened than the WBBK population

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

The Meeting is invited to take note of the [ICES special request advice on an EU request on emergency measures to prevent bycatch of common dolphin and Baltic Proper harbor Porpoise](#) and consider integrating the advice into the revised Recommendation (document 3N-11).

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of concerns by NGOs with regards to NATO mine clearance exercise and its impact on harbour porpoise in the Marine Protected Area Fehmarn Belt and further took note of a question by Germany, if other countries have had similar NATO experiences in their national waters, as the NATO mine sweeping of the remaining mines from second world war concerns the entire Baltic Sea area and invited the Contracting parties to provide information on this at STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The Contracting Parties are invited to provide information on national NATO mine sweeping exercises carried out recently and their possible effects on harbour porpoises.

- b. Continue to carry out regular large-scale regional surveys, such as SAMBAH, SCANS and MiniSCANS, of abundance, density and distribution, as well as coordinated national monitoring programmes of harbour porpoise distribution, abundance and density where appropriate

Germany is invited to inform the Meeting on the status of LIFE application for the SAMBAH II project.

[RECOMMENDATION 27-28/2 CONSERVATION OF SEALS IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

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

The Meeting is invited to take note of the statement drafted by EG MAMA 14-2020 on establishing Precautionary Level Approach (PAL) (**doc 3N-13**) as well as progress on other tasks identified for EG MAMA in relation to the recommendation by S&C 11-2019.

The Meeting is invited to take note of a screening study on hazardous substances in marine mammals, as presented by Germany (**doc 3N-14**).

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Sweden

The Recommendation states that the effectiveness of the Recommendation is to be assessed in 5 years' time with regard to the conservation of seals in the Baltic Sea Area, and whether amendments are necessary. The latest full reporting took place in 2017 and reporting is mainly prepared by the EG MAMA group.

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

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

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

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

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 agreed that a Migratory birds correspondence group should be established, preferably as a subgroup of JWG Bird. The meeting took note that the Secretariat will contact the OSPAR and ICES Secretariats to ensure there are no barriers for establishing the subgroup under JWG BIRD. The meeting further took note that if barriers are encountered, the CG can be established directly under HELCOM.

Following clarification from ICES and OSPAR Terms of Reference will be drafted, jointly with the Chair of JWG BIRD, and presented for review at STATE & CONSERVATION 14-2020 (Joint session).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the plan forward.

HELCOM monitoring guidelines for seabirds at sea

The Meeting is invited to consider the draft monitoring guidelines for seabirds at sea submitted by Germany (document 3N-8).

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

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Finland.

Reporting frequency on the implementation on this Recommendation is six years and the next reporting will take place in 2021, as agreed by STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 agreed that lead country Finland will develop a reporting template for reporting on the Recommendation, including a request to report on both for which MPAs management plans are available (which could be done through the MPA database), and on other measures. The Meeting invited Finland to submit a draft format to STATE&CONSERVATION 13-2020.

Finland is invited to submit the reporting format for the Recommendation and present it to the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the draft reporting format (document 3N-2) to be submitted by Finland.

Revision of the Recommendation

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 took note of the observed possible update needs for Recommendation 35/1, as presented by Finland, and noted the comment by Denmark that the updated Recommendation should strive to have as long a shelf life as possible without losing the level of ambition and that relevant outcomes from the BSAP update are important to be included in the update and by CCB whether synopses related to MPAs will be scrutinized when updating the Recommendation and whether the Aichi targets mentioned on the first page will be updated based on the new CBD biodiversity targets stemming from the post-2020 process.

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 welcomed written comments also from other Contracting Parties to be submitted to Finland (lasse.kurvinen@metsa.fi) before STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 and agreed to come back to the discussion on the revision of the Recommendation 35/1 at STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The Contracting Parties are invited to submit possible comments regarding the update of the Recommendation to Finland (lasse.kurvinen@metsa.fi) well advance of the Meeting.

Finland is invited to present the update needs for the Recommendation to the Meeting (document 3N-12).

The Meeting is invited to discuss the proposed updates, review the recommendation for additional updates and agree on including the revision of the Recommendation as an action for the updated BSAP.

MPA project proposal

STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019 supported the idea of a MPA related project proposal for LIFE 2020 call 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.

A planning session on topics, scope and structure of the project proposal was carried out by STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 and the Secretariat was invited to further develop the structure and topics to be included and to share the plan for further input with TG MPA and State and Conservation in spring 2020. The plan was presented for initial input in December 2019, revised based on the received comments and a TG MPA meeting (TG MPA 13-2020) to discuss the plan and the way forward was held in June 2020.

The plan was considered by TG MPA 13-2020 which agreed on the following plan for taking the work forward:

1. The Contracting Parties and Observers will inform the Secretariat (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) on their interest to participate in the project; give a resource estimate needed and provide further comments to the project proposal by **24 August 2020**.
2. The Secretariat will collate the comments and submit them to the Contracting Parties and observers by **31 August 2020 at the latest**.
3. Meeting of TG MPA dedicated to the MPA LIFE application will be held online on **4 September 2020 (provisionally 10:00-16:00 EET)**.
4. The outcome of the TG MPA meeting will be submitted to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 (5-9 October) for guidance for further development.

The Meeting is invited to consider the outcome of TG MPA 14-2020 as well as the updated project proposal (document 3N-3) and agree on the way forward, with the intention that an application be submitted for the 2021 LIFE call.

Round table of specific national MPAs

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 agreed that those CPs who are interested can prepare a presentation on one of their MPAs including concrete examples of measures and management (or development of management), conservation objectives etc. and that a round table for this is to be included in the agenda of STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The interested Contracting Parties are invited to express their interest to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) and prepare a presentation on one of their MPAs including concrete examples of measures and management, conservation objectives etc.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the current status of MPA management plans and MPA coverage contained in the HELCOM MPA database and noted that the lack of a coherent and topologically complete data

set to be used in the analysis has presented a challenge. The meeting considered that a data call for the Contracting Parties to submit data layers with national borders and coastlines should be a first step. The meeting also invited the Secretariat to submit a document outlining all encountered issues in more detail, including example maps, for further discussion.

The Meeting is invited to consider the list of issues encountered regarding the data for assessing MPA coverage from the MPA database (document 3N-4) and agree on the way forward.

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

- 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'

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

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the background information on the delineation of various classification schemes done under the SPICE project and the definitions for the MSFD broad habitat classes as proposed by Evans et al. in 2016. The meeting took note that it is not fully clear why the offshore circalittoral and littoral classes have been excluded by the SPICE project, as they occur in the Baltic Sea, and further investigation is needed to clarify this.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 agreed that as a next step the Secretariat will contact the authors of the relevant SPICE WP 4 report to try to clarify why the habitats in question were excluded and come back to this issue in the joint session in STATE&CONSERVATION 12-2020.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the clarification on the matter by the Secretariat.

- 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'

Finland is invited to present the outcome of a HELCOM workshop on habitat mapping and monitoring held in November 2019 and Sweden is invited to present the plan and progress regarding the second HELCOM workshop, to be held in Uppsala in the week 16-10 November 2020, which will focus habitat modelling and data use.

- e) Follow-up of action 'assess the effectiveness of the management plans or measures of HELCOM MPAs by conducting monitoring, and where feasible scientific research programmes, which are directly connected to the conservation interests of HELCOM MPAs'

STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 invited Germany to keep the Working Group updated on the progress regarding activities on assessing management effectiveness of the OSPAR MPA Network.

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

The Meeting is invited to take note of the report on Work Package 3 on analyzing sufficiency of MPAs as a measure under the HELCOM ACTION project.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the national EBSA process in Finland, referred to as EMMA, which was at the time out for the final commenting round. The meeting invited Finland to present how the work was received in STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

Finland is invited to present the outcome of the national EBSA process and how the work was received.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of the proposed amended list of pressures for the draft Guidelines for MPA pressure evaluation, agreed on the list of pressures and invited Finland to continue updating the guidelines based on the revised list. The meeting invited Finland to submit the draft of the guidelines and the list of pressure for review to State and Conservation contacts prior to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

TG MPA 13-2020 scrutinized the updated draft Guidelines and welcomed further comments to be submitted to Finland (lasse.kurvinen@metsa.fi) by 31 August 2020. The meeting agreed that Finland will edit the draft guidelines according to the suggestions of TG MPA 13-2020 and comments to be submitted and submit the updated guidelines to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 for review.

Finland is invited to submit the updated Guidelines to the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to consider the draft updated Guidelines for MPA pressure evaluation to be submitted by Finland (document 3N-5) and agree on their publication.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the situation with the MPA designation guidelines.

- g) Follow-up of action 'modernize the HELCOM MPAs database'

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

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

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

[RECOMMENDATION 37/2 CONSERVATION OF BALTIC SEA SPECIES CATEGORIZED AS THREATENED ACCORDING TO THE 2013 HELCOM RED LIST](#)

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

The lead country for this Recommendation is Germany.

The reporting frequency for the Recommendation is 6 years and the next reporting will take place in late 2020, as agreed by STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 welcomed the offer from Germany to develop a matrix-based reporting template further and to send it out for review and testing prior to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020, with the intention to finalize and approve the template at the meeting. The meeting invited the Secretariat to compile lists of the red listed species occurring in the waters of each country and provide these to Germany prior to the review and testing of the updated reporting template.

Germany is invited to submit the reporting template for review and testing prior the Meeting.

The Meeting is invited to finalize and approve the reporting template (document 3N-9) and agree on carrying out the reporting, which is to take place before end of the year.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 agreed to follow-up on the agreed action 'Activities to support conservation of Baltic Sea species and biotopes/habitats categorized as threatened according to the HELCOM Red List' by testing the categorization of conservation measures proposed by the Meeting (Outcome STATE & CONSERVATION 5-

2016, Annex 3), and by updating the inventory of national conservation plans for species and biotopes threatened according to the HELCOM Red Lists.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the updates in information on national conservation plans for species and biotopes categorized as threatened according to HELCOM 2013 Red List, as presented by the Secretariat (document 3N-6). *The Contracting Parties are invited to update the living document on the inventory of national conservation plans.*

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

The Meeting is invited to jointly discuss the preferred interpretation of the term conservation plan.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 invited the JWG BIRD group to prioritize for which species HELCOM could bring the most value and suggest most effective measures.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 took note of comments and proposals from JWG BIRD on prioritization of bird species in HELCOM work and on conservation measures as presented by the Secretariat ([document 3N-8](#)). The meeting supported that information on real population sizes of the species are needed.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 agreed that as a next step, the Contracting Parties will check nationally whether and how the suggested measures are implemented for the species listed in the document, and report back to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020.

The Contracting Parties are invited to check whether and how the suggested measures are implemented for the species listed in the [document 3N-8](#) of STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 and provide this information to the Meeting.

GEAR 21-2020 invited State and Conservation WG to highlight any species which warrant (sub)regional measures.

The Meeting is invited to review the list of threatened and declining species occurring in the waters of more than one CP, as prepared by the Secretariat at the request of GEAR 21-2020, with the intention of identifying species for which transboundary coordination of measures or joint measures could give added value (document 3N-7).

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

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

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

Reporting on the Recommendation

Lead country for this Recommendation is Germany.

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

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 agreed to report on the Recommendation with a 6-year frequency, with the first reporting taking place in late 2020 and consecutive reporting taking place in the year following Article 17 reporting under the Habitats Directive for those CPs who are also EU member states.

STATE & CONSERVATION 11-2019 welcomed the offer by Lead country Germany to develop a reporting format and to send it out for review and testing prior to STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020, to be finalized and approved at the meeting.

Germany is invited to submit the reporting template for review prior to the Meeting.

The Contracting Parties are invited to consider and test the reporting format (document 3N-10) in advance of the Meeting and the Meeting is invited to finalize and approve the reporting format.

The Meeting is further invited to agree on the reporting of the Recommendation to be carried out by end of the year.

Agenda Item 4N [Links to and ongoing work under the Habitats and Birds Directives](#)

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

The Contracting parties are invited to present progress, questions and challenges related to the work on the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

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

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

The Meeting is invited to initiate the discussion on and planning for the update of the HELCOM Red List, preliminarily planned to be available by the end on 2024.

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

The Meeting is invited to take note of the management briefs for species and habitats in the Baltic Sea, submitted by CCB (document 6N-2).

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

[Housekeeping](#)

The Meeting is invited to review and, as necessary, amend the list of members of TG MPA (document 6N-1) to ensure that all the relevant experts are included.

Agenda Item 7N [Outcome of the Nature conservation and biodiversity session](#)

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