



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
13-2020

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Submitted by	Finland

Background

Referring to STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 the meeting agreed that lead country Finland will develop a reporting template for reporting on Recommendation 35/1, 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.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the suggestions and comments on the reporting format for the recommendation.

Below are listed the different parts from the recommendation. Below the in cursive our comments and some proposals on possible topic wise questions. We have highlighted topics that could be used using the MPA data base. The further the data base could be used, the less there would be a need for a separate reporting. This of course is dependent on that the contracting parties use and update the MPA data base. Finland could send a reminder of updating the MPA data base once every year. Even though the reporting cycle has been to set to six years at the moment, the use of the MPA data base could allow for a yearly follow up.

1. reach the target set by the HELCOM 2010 Moscow Ministerial Declaration that 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 where scientifically justified. In addition, where ecologically meaningful, coastal terrestrial areas can be included;
 - a. *The secretariat follows this, so no need for individual contracting parties to answer. Use of MPA DB. The CPs are obliged to report to the secretariat of any new areas.*
2. 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;
 - a. *Have reviews been made during the past XX years?*
 - b. *Has new HELCOM MPAs been designated based on these during the past XX years?*
 - c. *Has any of these been in the offshore area?*
-> These questions could be incorporated into the MPA DB? At least points b) and c).
3. ensure that HELCOM MPAs inter alia provide specific protection to those species, habitats, biotopes and biotope complexes included in the HELCOM Red Lists, as agreed in the HELCOM 2013 Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration, by considering these in the site selection procedure as well as in site management (for example by specific conservation and restoration measures including restoration of degraded ecosystems);
 - a. *This needs a bit more thinking. Could this be done via the MPA DB? Is it enough if even one MPA has red listed species/habitats as justification?*
 - b. *Could the species/habitat specific measures e.g. conservation plans, restoration (or lack of them) be incorporated into the DB?*
 - c. *When can this be seen as fulfilled? When as certain percentage of occurrences/coverage are within the network?*
4. ensure, when selecting new areas, that the network of HELCOM MPAs is ecologically coherent and takes into account connectivity between sites including for example migration routes, species mobility and areas of special ecological significance such as spawning areas;
 - a. *Should this be done on the whole network level or also locally? This could be done by the secretariat as part of future coherence analyses. The CP:s could then answer if the results from the analyses have been taken into account.*
5. make use of computer-based site selection tools such as MARXAN for a HELCOM-wide approach which maximizes the chance of creating a coherent network of HELCOM MPAs and at the same time minimizing the impact of pressures and conflicts with other interests;
 - a. *As above this should be done for the whole network, so no need for individual answers?*

6. encourage Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States to designate when feasible all appropriate Natura 2000 sites as HELCOM MPAs, and to consider all Natura 2000 sites as well as other marine protected areas when evaluating the network of marine protected areas;
 - a. *Has all appropriate N2000-sites been designated as HELCOM MPAs?*
 - b. *If not, why?*
7. encourage Contracting Parties which are also OSPAR Contracting Parties to designate, when appropriate, OSPAR MPAs as HELCOM MPAs in order to harmonize the networks where the conventions geographical scope overlap;
 - a. *Have all or partially all appropriate OSPAR MPAs, been designated as HELCOM MPAs?*
 - b. *If not, why?*
8. manage HELCOM MPAs effectively and to 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, as agreed in the HELCOM 2013 Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration;
 - a. *This could be followed using the MPA DB? Following the Status from Designated to Designated and managed?*
9. update the management plans when necessary and in accordance with other legal requirements with a maximum of 12 years intervals;
 - a. *This could be followed using the MPA DB? Perhaps need to add options for "update not necessary" into the column "Intended revision date..".*
10. harmonise the designation of neighbouring HELCOM MPAs in transboundary marine areas, and where appropriate to join forces between neighbouring states when setting up management plans or measures for such HELCOM MPAs
 - a. *Has transboundary co-operation been done?*
 - b. *If yes, in which MPAs?*
 - c. *Could this information be added to the MPA DB General information and follow up from there? And link the areas involved to each other in the data base.*
11. 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, including the placement of monitoring stations inside the MPAs (for those Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States this monitoring may be linked to the monitoring related to the implementation of relevant EU legislation);
 - a. *Could be the management plan effectiveness followed using the MPA DB from the "Implemented monitoring programs" section?*
 - b. *Species and habitat specific monitoring can be filled into DB.*
 - c. *Into the data base could be added a section for scientific research programs, to enable follow up on these.*
12. include HELCOM MPAs as areas of particular ecological significance in coastal and maritime spatial planning processes and incorporate their management provisions in spatial plans and Integrated Marine and Coastal Management Strategies, respectively;
 - a. *Has HELCOM MPAs been included into the processes?*
 - b. *Have the management provisions been included?*
13. 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, such as MSFD requirements, in particular those concerning spatial protection measures
 - a. *Secretariat. No need to ask individual CPs?*

14. apply the newest IUCN categorisation system when describing the HELCOM MPAs in order to allow for global comparisons of regional networks;
 - a. *Possible to follow from the MPA DB.*

15. perform identification, designation and legal protection of HELCOM MPAs according to HELCOMs criteria and guidelines and base all management plans or measures on relevant HELCOM publications such as “Planning and management of Baltic Sea Protected Areas: guidelines and tools” (BSEP 105). For EU Member States the respective EU requirements and guidelines are regarded as adequate for designating and managing HELCOM MPAs
 - a. *Not sure how to approach this. List the relevant guide lines and ask if they have been applied?*

16. modernize the HELCOM MPAs database as agreed in the HELCOM 2013 Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration, taking into account and harmonizing with other similar databases;
 - a. *Secretariat. No need to ask individual CPs.*

17. 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);
 - a. *Possible to follow from the MPA DB.*

18. regularly assess the status and development of HELCOMs MPAs according to the time tables set by HELCOM and to ensure that the assessments are applicable for corresponding EU and global reporting;
 - a. *Secretariat?*