



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature  
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION  
13-2020

Online, 5-9 October 2020

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<b>Document title</b>	HELCOM Workshop on Commercial Fish - Draft ToRs and plan
<b>Code</b>	4J-12
<b>Category</b>	DEC
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4J – Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
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### Background

State and Conservation 12-2020 discussed the potential need for additional structures to support work in newly identified themes that have no direct Expert Group coverage within the existing HELCOM structures (State and Conservation 12-2020, [Outcome paragraph 4J.61-2](#)). The outcome of State and Conservation 12-2020 was presented to the HOD 58-2020 ([Document 5-14](#)) and the proposals made were endorsed (HOD 58-2020, [Outcome paragraph 5.17-21](#)).

The following document provides a draft proposal for how to achieve good input to HOLAS III via these new Correspondence Groups or Workshops, including provisional timelines and Terms of Reference (ToRs).

Nominations for the groups/workshops should be submitted to the Secretariat ([owen.rowe@helcom.fi](mailto:owen.rowe@helcom.fi)) **by Friday 30 October** to initiate planning and preparatory work.

This document specifically addresses the draft plan and ToRs for a HELCOM Workshop on the topic of Commercial Fish.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- review the content of the draft ToR and the provisional time plan and improve the focus and details as needed,
- endorse the draft ToRs and the provisional time plan and their submission to GEAR 23-2020 for information and HOD for intersessional approval,
- initiate national processes to provide nomination of experts to populate the group and the planned workshop (including the preparatory work required in advance of them).

## HELCOM Workshop on Commercial Fish

### Draft Terms of Reference HELCOM Workshop on Status Assessment of Commercial Fish (HELCOM ComFish WS 1-2021)

The HELCOM Workshop on Commercial Fish (HELCOM ComFish WS 1-2021) will be a single event to bring together regional experts on the topic and synthesise information into a solid plan ahead, the ultimate goal of the process being an improved and functional assessment of commercial fish for the Third Holistic Assessment of the Baltic Sea (HOLAS III).

#### Validity of ToRs

Single event Workshop planned for March 2021 (Period of validity for the overall work: Autumn 2020 – autumn 2023).

This Workshop will be a single event and any extension of the work or further meetings or Workshops will be carried out via discussion with, and decisions made by State and Conservation.

#### Main aims and focus of the group:

- 1) Review the topic specific work plan generated in the Second HELCOM Indicator Workshop ([Fish work plan](#))
- 2) Devise and review a list of species of relevant in the Baltic Sea,
- 3) Review policy requirements for an assessment of commercial fish,
- 4) Review the data available through ICES,
- 5) Devise a full assessment of commercial fish (including in ecological terms) to provide a stronger assessment in HOLAS III,
- 6) Establish valid indicators/assessment approaches that can be viable long-term components of HELCOM assessments.

The work in HELCOM on indicators and assessments needs to be driven by the best available scientific knowledge, but should also consider aspects that may influence the design or application of assessment, including: the need for comparable and harmonized regional assessments, potential sub-regional variation, data availability and ecologically relevant assessments of status. These factors are key in the development of a solid assessment, and confidence evaluation, that offers the broadest and most inclusive regional coverage possible.

#### Organization of work

A core team, including Chair(s) for the workshop, will be identified to plan the agenda and preparatory work for the workshop.

The Workshop will be guided by the State and Conservation Working Group. Information flow to State and Conservation is a key factor after the workshop to maintain information flow, discuss future developments and gain approval on the proposed work ahead towards HOLAS III. Where relevant national or regional projects may also offer relevant input to the Workshop and work ahead. The HELCOM Secretariat will provide administrative support to the workshop. The indicator coordinator ([owen.rowe@helcom.fi](mailto:owen.rowe@helcom.fi)) and the Professional Secretary responsible for State and Conservation ([Jannica.Haldin@helcom.fi](mailto:Jannica.Haldin@helcom.fi)) will act as contact points to support the preparation and running of the Workshop.

#### Reporting

The Chair(s) of the workshop will report back to the State and Conservation WG on the activities of the workshop. For State and Conservation WG this will take the form of an agenda item at WG meetings.

## Membership

Nominations for the core team to plan the workshop will be provide by the CPs.

Nominations for the workshop will be provided by the CPs. Where possible the Worksop will be formed of experts already active in HELCOM processes. Additional nominations are anticipated where Experts have knowledge on the assessment of commercial stocks and experience with ICES stock assessment processes for the relevant Baltic Sea stock.

Nominations should be submitted to the Secretariat ([owen.rowe@helcom.fi](mailto:owen.rowe@helcom.fi)) by **Friday 30 October 2020**.

## Provisional time plan and proposed workflow

### **Step 1: Nominations to populate the WS – 30 October 2020**

Nominations of national Experts will be made by State and Conservation Contacts to the Secretariat ([owen.rowe@helcom.fi](mailto:owen.rowe@helcom.fi)) **by Friday 30 October, 2020**.

### **Step 2: Identify preparatory work required – by 15 January 2021**

Known preparatory work includes: 1) Identify a core team to plan the agenda and preparatory work, 2) Prepare a list of species including those listed as priority species for assessment or monitoring under relevant policy documents, 3) Summary of data available through ICES, 4) Summary of existing assessment approaches applied or previously developed/discussed (under HELCOM and ICES).

### **Step 3: Workshop – March 2021**

The following topics will be addressed at the Workshop:

- Aims of Workshop (short introduction)
- What was used in HOLAS II.
- HOLAS III and indicator development deadlines (short introduction)
- Topic specific indicator work plan (short introduction)
- Policy requirements, e.g. BSAP, MSFD D1 and D3 (short introduction)
- Species lists (presentation and discussion)
- Data availability through ICES (overview)
- Define plan ahead for HOLAS III
  - What will be done for HOALS III, what is needed for the assessment
  - What indicators make an overall assessment
  - What threshold values will be applied in selected indicators
  - How is ecological status assessed by the proposed indicators
  - What will be the required work ahead to achieve the assessment at HOLAS III and who will take it forward
- Outcome to be provided to State and Conservation (circa April 2021).