



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature  
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION  
15-2021

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### Background

This document contains progress of HELCOM Data Flows project tasks carried out during 2021. This report outlines progress carried out since recent State & Conservation meeting ([Document 4J-11Rev1](#)). [Document 3J-13](#) to State & Conservation 15-2021 (“Information from HOLAS III data call and HOLAS III data collection process”) contains latest information provided by HELCOM Data Flows project on HOLAS III data collection progress and complements this document.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

## Progress of HELCOM Data Flow project

### Overall aim of the project

The aim of the Data Flow project was to carry out gap-analysis of current reporting data compared to the commitments outlined in Monitoring guidelines and the Monitoring manual and as required by indicator assessments, including also data flows feeding into spatial and pressure impact assessments and economical and social analysis. The project developed a data flow plan for HOLAS III ([State & Conservation Document 4J-11Rev1](#), Annex 1) and will proceed during second half of 2021 on Tasks related to enhancing technical solutions for data collection and data harmonization (Tasks C-E).

The project activities are defined in tasks outlined in Figure 1.

Task	2020						2021						2022																
	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A. Gap analysis	█																												
B. Analysis of data flow requirements							█																						
C. Optimisation of data flow processes																													
D. Exploring options for data harvesting and synergies																													
E. Creating data conversion tools																													
Parallel processes (HOLAS III timeline)																													
HOLAS III Data collection																													
█						Project researcher																							
█						Both project researcher and database developer																							
█						Database developer																							

Figure 1. Tasks and timeline for HELCOM Data flow project.

### Progress of Tasks and Outputs

Task A. Produce elaborated gap analysis of data flows applied currently in HELCOM assessments.  
Task completed.

Outputs produced for State & Conservation 13-2020 ([Document 4J-17](#), Overview of expected 2022 data reporting timelines for regular HELCOM dataflows), [Draft HOLAS III data call](#) document with attachments on status of data flows: ([Core indicators](#), [Pre-core and candidate indicators](#), [BSII Ecosystem components](#), [BSII human activities-pressures](#))

Task B. Analyze the data flow reporting requirements against indicator and assessment data requirements and monitoring guidelines and monitoring manual  
Task completed.

Output produced for State & Conservation 14-2021, complete [HOLAS III data call](#) and related guidance and reporting formats developed, included in the data call and made available online [via workspace](#).

Task C. Work for optimizing data management processes, data flows and infrastructure to support HOLAS III

Task ongoing.

Output produced for State & Conservation 14-2021, (Document [4J-11Rev1](#), Annex 1 “HOLAS III Data flow plan”) for obtaining data for HOLAS III outside the data call by utilizing available datasets / data products from projects / other reporting frameworks.

During 2021 under this task the project will collate available datasets for HOLAS III, e.g. from EuSeaMap and other project and data collection activities. The work will also continue for 2022 as some datasets will become available during first half of 2022.

Task D. Liaise with national data providers and explore possibilities of advancing data harvesting based reporting and synergies with other reporting data flows

Task ongoing.

In HOLAS III data call, the guidance included possibility for Contracting Parties data providers to refer to available online resource e.g. web services, that could be utilized in delivering data for HOLAS III.

[Document 3J-13](#) (“Information from HOLAS III data call and HOLAS III data collection process”) to State & Conservation 15-2021 contains suggestion to organize data reporting Q&A/helpdesk sessions during winter 2022 with Contracting Parties data providers. These workshop type of sessions would be organized to smooth the reporting exercise for Contracting Parties by providing assistance in data harmonization procedures as well as mapping available data harvesting options from national data providers catalogues and/or web services.

Task E. Create data conversion tools for data flows currently managed by HELCOM Secretariat to reduce manual workload

Task ongoing.

In order to ensure good data quality, a set of quality control procedures will be outlined and applied in HELCOM Secretariat for those datasets that are lacking regular data collection methodology available from current monitoring and data collection framework. This applies to datasets specified in data call section 2.

The data validation and conversion tools have been started and will be completed by the end of 2021 data formats have been specified. The task will develop automated workflows for importing data from reporting HOLAS III reporting format to HELCOM biodiversity database for following indicator datasets:

- Distribution of Baltic seals, ([reporting excel template](#)), ([shapefile template](#)).
- Population trends and abundance of seals, ([reporting excel template](#)), ([shapefile template](#)).
- Nutritional status of seals ([reporting template](#))
- Reproductive status of seals ([reporting template](#))
- Abundance of waterbirds in the breeding season ([coastal observations reporting format](#), [offshore data porting format](#))
- Abundance of waterbirds in the wintering season (Offshore observations ([coastal observations reporting format](#), [offshore data porting format](#)))

The current quality control check developed for biodiversity database import tool will be extended for additional attributes.