



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature  
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION  
15-2021

Online, 4-8 October 2021

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<b>Document title</b>	Draft Terms of Reference for EG MAMA 16-2022
<b>Code</b>	3J-38
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<b>Agenda Item</b>	3J – Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
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*Note that this document was submitted after the established deadline due to the fact that the outcome of the EG MAMA 15-2021 meeting was adopted on the 17 September 2021. It will be decided by the Meeting whether the document can be discussed or is postponed to the next meeting.*

### Background

This document contains the draft Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Expert Group on Marine Mammals (EG MAMA) drafted at the latest meeting of the group, EG MAMA 15-2020, held online 14-16 September 2021.

Extract of outcome from EG MAMA 15-2021:

6.3 The Meeting amended and agreed on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the next meeting, including an Annex outlining the main tasks and membership of the Teams, and agreed on submitting the draft ToRs for endorsement by STATE & CONSERVATION 15-2021.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the Terms of Reference for EG MAMA 16-2022.

## Annex 2 Draft Terms of Reference for EG MAMA 16-2022

The HELCOM Expert Group on Marine Mammals (EG MAMA) will during its 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, and in the intersessional period leading up to the meeting, do the following:

### 1. Indicators:

- a. The Marine Mammal Health team will further develop existing and new indicators for the health and blubber thickness of seals and porpoises including considering expanding the reproduction indicator to include ringed seal, harbour seal and harbour porpoise, and report to **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- b. The co-Leads for the Harbour Porpoise Abundance and Distribution indicators, together with the Harbour Porpoise Abundance and Distribution Team, will continue the work on developing the indicators on Abundance and population trends of harbour porpoise and Distribution of harbour porpoise, and report to **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- c. Mr. Sven Koschinski, and Volker Dierschke, Germany, in collaboration with Poland and Sweden and supported by CG FishData, will continue the work on the development of the indicator 'Number of drowned mammals and waterbirds in fishing gears' and report to **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

### 2. Management plans of marine mammals:

- a. The national representatives to EG MAMA are requested to review the new and updated national management- and action plans from their respective countries against the guidelines developed by SEAL 8-2014 and present the results for discussion at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- b. The national representatives to EG MAMA are requested to review and update the document on status of management plans of marine mammals by submitting the information to the Secretariat ([laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi](mailto:laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi)) prior to **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

### 3. Dataflows for data on seals and harbour porpoise:

#### *Data on abundance and distribution of marine mammals*

- a. The Secretariat to report back on how development of the HELCOM Biodiversity Database has been modified to accommodate abundance survey data for seals and harbour porpoise.

#### *Registered mortality of marine mammals*

- b. All Contracting Parties to provide data on the mortality, including information on bycatch and illegal killing, of seals and harbour porpoises for year 2018- 2021 in advance of EG MAMA 16-2022.

#### Data for seals

#### *Mortality of Seals*

- a. Denmark to report mortality data from previous years from Kattegat in advance of **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

#### Data for harbour porpoise

- a. The Contracting Parties are invited to report to the HELCOM/ASCOBANS Database on Harbour Porpoise prior to **EG MAMA 16-2022** by providing the data to the HELCOM Secretariat ([laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi](mailto:laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi)).
- b. Consider categories of the reporting format to be clarified for bycatch by the Marine Mammal Health Team and the Harbour Porpoise Abundance and Distribution Team.
- c. Nomination of national contacts for updating the HELCOM/ASCOBANS harbour porpoise database to be submitted to the Secretariat ([laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi](mailto:laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi)).
- d. **EG MAMA 16-2022** will be invited to take note of progress on the follow-up regarding the reporting of acoustic monitoring data and to consider data reporting needs
- e. Germany, to inform **EG MAMA 16-2022** on the progress within OSPAR and ASCOBANS to develop databases for strandings of cetaceans, including geographic information, and to propose how to harmonize the HELCOM data collection with this initiative.

4. Monitoring guidelines:

- a. The monitoring guideline for the draft target organ health indicator for marine mammals will be further improved by the Health Team intersessionally and presented at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- b. The Harbour Porpoise Distribution and Abundance indicator team will continue the work on drafting monitoring guidelines for distribution and abundance intersessionally and present at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

5. Work on Baltic Sea harbour porpoise:

- a. Ms. Penina Blankett, co-chair of the ASCOBANS AC to report on activities of ASCOBANS and Ms. Ida Carlén, Chair of Jastarnia Group, to report on activities of the Jastarnia Group at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- b. Update the **EG MAMA 16-2022** on the progress of the SAMBAH II and HELCOM BLUES projects.

6. Precautionary Approach Level (PAL) for seals

- a. Present progress on drafting a preliminary project proposal for PAL for seals in the Baltic Sea.

10. Marine mammals - fisheries interaction:

- a. Present progress from the data collection, assessment and mitigation measures related to bycatch.
- b. Follow up on the progress regarding the ICES Special Request Advice on Emergency Measures for Harbour Porpoise.
- c. Exchange information on progress of ongoing initiatives regarding seal-fish interactions, specifically with regards to Anisakid parasites in the Baltic Sea ecosystem.

11. Intersessional activities of the teams

- a. The Marine Mammal Health Team is requested to inform on their intersessional activities at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

- i. The Health Team will continue intersessional work on the reproductive rate to discuss the team's proposal and theoretical approaches for setting thresholds and methods for the assessment.
  - ii. The Team will strive to further work on the Anisakid nematode species in marine mammals resident in the Baltic Sea and strive to expand the work to include fish health and intermediate hosts.
  - iii. The Team will strive to hold a second necropsy workshop, with practical sessions of postmortem investigations on marine mammal species, taking Covid-19 restrictions into account.
  - iv. The Team will hold online meetings as needed to discuss e.g. indicator development.
  - v. Work intersessionally to improve the HELCOM-ASCOBANS reporting format in collaboration with the harbour porpoise abundance and distribution team. The sub-group is invited to present a preliminary plan for the group in **February 2022** to be reviewed by the expert group and to finalize the reporting format for use prior to the next meeting of EG MAMA 16-2022.
- b. The Seal Distribution team is requested to inform on their intersessional activities at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- i. To intersessionally discuss and prepare a suggestion of updated borders with the seal population team to amend the sub-units used for presenting grey seal survey results to improve the ecological relevance of the units, rather than representing administrative borders and present suggestion(s) for further discussion at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
  - ii. Update results of discussions on the appropriate level of reporting count data to the HELCOM Biodiversity database within the Seal distribution and abundance team to evaluate the extent of the assessment units used by HELCOM together with the Secretariat in order to agree what is possible from a data reporting viewpoint [brief update, e.g. short document].
  - iii. The Seal Distribution team is requested to collate metadata on the existing telemetry tag deployments and present the results at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- c. The Seal Population team is requested to inform on their intersessional activities at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
- i. Countries to present the results of the 2021 seal survey results for ringed, harbour seal and grey seal and, to the extent possible, 2022 survey results for grey seal and ringed seal. The Lead of the team is invited to present the results at the **EG MAMA 16-2022**.
  - ii. Present results and developments in calibrating novel methods for ringed seal surveys, with an aim of drafting monitoring guidelines.
  - iii. Follow up on the proposal to change the management unit status of the harbour seals in Kattegat and the western Baltic submitted to **STATE&CONSERVATION 15-2021**.
- d. The Harbour Porpoise Abundance and Distribution Team is requested to inform on their intersessional activities at **EG MAMA 16-2022**.

- i. Work intersessionally to improve the HELCOM-ASCOBANS reporting format. The sub-group is invited to present a preliminary plan for the group in **February 2022** to be reviewed by the expert group and to finalize the reporting format for use prior to the next meeting of EG MAMA 16-2022.
- ii. Work intersessionally to define the geographical areas in the reporting form for the registered mortality of marine mammals, with regard to harbour porpoise mortality data.

## ANNEX 1: Role and membership of the EG MAMA Teams

**Marine Mammal Health Team**

Role of team:

To review marine mammal health data. This team will identify need for research relevant to assess marine mammal health status and collect information and evaluate results.

Team Membership:

<b>Representing</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>
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## Harbour Porpoise Abundance and Distribution Team

### Role of the Team:

To function as a cooperation and coordination platform in order to harmonize national harbour porpoise work, including monitoring, on a regional scale to achieve sufficient data quality for the harbour porpoise indicators. To support the indicator leads in their work to maintain and develop indicators for harbour porpoise.

### Team Membership:

Representing	Name	Email
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WWF	Antti Halkka	antti.halkka@sll.fi

**Seal Population Team**

Role of Team:

To develop and coordinate abundance and trend monitoring and undertake abundance and trend estimations

Team Membership

<b>Representing</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>
Estonia	Ivar Jüssi (Team Lead)	ivar.jussi@gmail.com
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## Seal Distribution Team

### Role of Team:

1. Review of seal distribution data
2. Gather information on, and evaluate research on seal movements, e.g. from satellite tagging programmes;
3. Identification of suitable habitats for breeding, moulting, and at sea distribution for harbour seals and moulting and at sea distribution for grey seals and ringed seals.
4. Identification of protected areas for seals in the Baltic either on a national, HELCOM or EU level and evaluate the protection regime;
5. Identification of those habitats already used by seals with a view to a potential establishment of those habitats identified under 2. and 3. as potential protected areas for seals; and
6. Work on the suggestion to use the degree of geographical coverage (expansion) of suitable habitats in the Baltic Sea as reference levels for the distribution reference levels. Development/Specification of this objective as an indicator for the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

### Team Membership:

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