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| Document title | Challenges in data availability for 2021 from the CPs for HOLAS III |
| Code | 3J-57 |
| Category | CMNT |
| Agenda Item | 3J – Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects |
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| Submitted by | IN Eutrophication |
| Reference | IN-EUTROPHICATION 21-2021, outcome par. 6.6 |

Background

IN-EUTROPHICATION 20-2021 discussed possible problems associated with not meeting the HOLAS III deadline for reporting data for 2021 and whether data scarcity will result in spatial biases. To better anticipate potential gaps in data availability, IN-EUTROPHICATION 21-2021 reviewed where data gaps could be expected, based on input reported to STATE&CONSERVATION 13-2020. The meeting proposed that for basins where data are available, data from all years will be used, but for those basins where data are missing, the assessment would exclude 2021.

This document summarizes current knowledge on the availability of regularly reported 2021 monitoring data for the HOLAS III eutrophication assessment for following the current HOLAS III timeline (HOD 58-2020 Document 5-5). Based on the information provided, delays in data reporting for 2021 are expected for Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, and Russia.

Based on this information IN-EUTROPHICATION 21-2021 noted that delaying the data reporting deadline by only a few months in 2022 would significantly improve the quality of the eutrophication assessment, reflecting that processing biological data, especially those regarding benthic fauna, takes more time.

The meeting noted that the process adopted in HOLAS II, of publishing a preliminary and then an updated eutrophication assessment, was undesirable. Given the efficiency of the eutrophication assessment process in HEAT, the meeting was of the opinion that a three-month delay (to the end of August 2022) in reporting deadline for eutrophication parameters would allow IN-EUTRO to make full use of Contracting Parties' monitoring data and result in a better assessment without risking the overall HOLAS III timeline.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider the summary of the data availability from the Contracting Parties and to agree on a way forward.

Introduction

IN-EUTROPHICATION 16-2020 ([Outcome](#), Annex 2) raised difficulties in reporting of the 2021 monitoring data by end of May 2022. However, several Contracting Parties have signaled the possibility to be able to report nutrient data for 2021 by end of May 2022. It therefore appears that monitoring data for 2021 would be missing from only few Contracting Parties, if data submission are successful and extraction is carried out immediately after HOLAS III data collection deadline (Table 1).

IN-EUTROPHICATION 21-2021 further discussed this issue and highlighted that delaying the data reporting deadline by some months in 2022 would significantly improve the quality of the assessment, acknowledging that processing the biological data, especially those regarding benthic fauna, takes more time.

Input from data rapporteurs

In general, it was perceived by some Contracting Parties and IN-Eutrophication that a specific request/data call from the Secretariat well in advance could facilitate the early reporting of 2021 monitoring data in first half of 2022. However, for some Contracting Parties it would not result in speeded reporting since some processes simply cannot be speeded up.

It should be noted that the requested earlier reporting is very close to some defined quality assurance processes (e.g., statistical tests on the dataset before used in national processes and submitted to international use) thus it can pose data quality issues for the assessment.

Summary of gathered information

Latest monitoring data that can be reported by end of May 2022 per data type and Contracting Party is displayed in the table below.

Summary of gathered information

Table 1. Latest monitoring data that can be reported by end of May 2022 per data type and Contracting Party is displayed in the table below. CPs that have indicated possible delays in data reporting are highlighted in yellow.

| Integrated assessment theme | Data flow | Core indicators (n) | Deadline | DEN | EST | FIN | GER | LAT | LIT | POL | RUS | SWE | Reference |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| Eutrophication | Nutrients, chl-a | 7 | 1 September | 2021* | 2021 | 2021 | <i>2020</i> | 2021 | <i>2020</i> | <i>2021</i> | 2020 | 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IN-Eutro (<i>italic</i>) • Data submitters (bold) |

* By the end of May most of the Danish marine nutrient data will only be quality assured by the Agency for the Protection of the Environment – unless the process with reporting the status of Danish marine areas is speeded up.