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<b>Agenda Item</b>	3J-Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
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### Background

The document below provides a template filled by indicator leads to provide an overview of progress to STATE & CONSERVATION 15-2021. Key aspects such as methodologies, spatial extent changes, assessment scales and threshold values are presented, identifying ongoing work and other relevant issues towards HOLAS III. This process builds on the prior review of indicator development carried out under STATE & CONSERVATION 14-2021 (summarised in [document 4J-16 Rev.1](#), and detailed within numerous documents under agenda item 4J). The focus of these development works is the completion of indicator development and adjustment work for HOLAS III by the end of 2021, as previously agreed under HOD 57-2019 ([document 4-20](#), [Outcomes paragraph 4.51](#)).

The aspect of threshold values in particular is a key issue as threshold value approval will be carried out at HOD 61-2021, with these same templates being submitted to HOD at the same stage as submission to State and Conservation 15-2021 (to allow for the longer national processes required that culminate in approval at HOD).

The document below addresses a single indicator and as well as the generic 'action requests' relating to endorsement of the proposed application in HOLAS III (and the threshold values proposals, where relevant), specific additional requests or statements are also indicated within the separate sections of the document to help guide where further input/discussion/guidance may be needed.

This template aims to report the indicator development for HOLAS III, allowing for technical guidance and endorsement by STATE & CONSERVATION 15-2021 and also simultaneously to facilitate the threshold value approval process by HOD 61-2021.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- provide further technical guidance to the indicator leads and experts, including specific requests defined within the document;
- consider and endorse the proposed developments of the indicator for use in the HOLAS III assessment.

## Copper

<b>Indicator name</b>
Copper
<b>The State and Conservation meeting is requested to endorse the proposed indicator for copper as a core indicator for application in HOLAS III.</b>
<b>Scale of assessment for HOLAS III and rational</b>
<p>The assessment scale will be Scale 4 and be aligned with other existing HELCOM HZ indicators.</p> <p>Since this indicator is new it may be relevant to carry out the first assessment at a larger scale (the data may be a limiting factor initially, an issue that will only be apparent once the HOLAS III data call has concluded), e.g. scale 3. This approach would not impact on the inclusion of the indicator to CHASE as the assessment units are nested and can be utilised in CHASE, as is already carried out for Radioactive substances.</p> <p><b>The State and Conservation meeting is requested to endorse the Scale of assessment, as proposed by EN-HZ, for the HOLAS III assessment and the inclusion of the subsequent results into the CHASE integration of hazardous substances (concentrations).</b></p>
<b>Spatial coverage of the indicator for HOLAS III</b>
<p>The spatial coverage can not be fully defined at this stage as the indicator is new. There has been effort to have as broad a spatial coverage as possible by including copper in the HOLAS III data and requesting that Contracting Parties review the availability of copper data under their WFD assessments, where relevant. An overview of data availability is included in the preparatory reports developed during the indicator development process, for example <a href="#">see p. 14 of an overview report presented at EN-HZ 15-2021</a>. This data coverage would indicate reasonably broad coverage of the major HELCOM assessment units, and would also cover several coastal assessment units even at Scale 4.</p>
<b>Methodology to be applied for HOLAS III and rational</b>
<p><i>The methodology applied provides an assessment of the concentrations of copper in sediment against a set threshold value, similar to other hazardous substances concentration indicators. A statistical assessment is carried out to determine if the threshold value has been achieved or failed. In case of failure, local natural background concentrations can be investigated and if higher than the threshold value, the natural background concentration can be considered as the threshold value. The latest summary of the methodological approach applied is outlined in the <a href="#">draft indicator development document</a> presented to EN-HZ 15-2021. In the longer-term it would be envisaged that the assessment protocol would be further built into the existing MIME assessment tool and any subsequent automation of that.</i></p> <p><b>The State and Conservation meeting is requested to endorse the methodological approach set out for assessing concentrations of copper in the marine environment (for sediment).</b></p>
<b>Threshold value setting logic and rational</b>

<p>Threshold value setting for copper concentrations in sediment have followed the Technical Guidance Document No. 27 (European Commission, 2018) that sets out the general process for deriving the EQS threshold values. The process involved discussion at several EN-HZ meetings and also a series of 3 technical workshops that were carried out at the EU level. The threshold value proposed therefore takes into account relevant aspects such as natural background concentrations and also conversion factors (e.g. carbon). The process to achieve the threshold values is described in full detail within the <a href="#">draft indicator development document</a> and also a <a href="#">presentation given to EN-HZ 15-2021</a>. The overall approach for setting the proposed threshold values therefore applied the most robust regional approach and derived threshold values considered to represent the highest confidence (i.e. EQS values and their derivatives).</p>
<p><b>Threshold value(s)</b></p>
<p>Copper: Primary threshold – newly proposed <b>QS from EQS 30 mg/kg d.w. (5% CORG) in sediment</b> as the threshold value to establish this indicator in HELCOM.</p> <p><b>The State and Conservation meeting is requested to endorse the newly proposed threshold value, as proposed by EN-HZ, for the HOLAS III assessment.</b></p> <p>Future development of threshold values for water and biota sampling matrix types has also been initiated. If available, it is proposed that these components would be evaluated within the indicator report for HOLAS III (as part of future development work) and therefore not included in the overall indicator overview/summary (i.e. key message and overall status assessment) and consequently not included in the CHASE integrated assessment (i.e. only the fully developed and endorsed assessment based on sediment threshold values would form the indicator evaluation and enter CHASE).</p>
<p><b>Other significant issues that need to be addressed or presented to State and Conservation</b></p>
<p>No specific issues are noted for the current process.</p>
<p><b>Latest indicator report or (for new indicators) initially completed indicator template</b></p>
<p>The latest version of the indicator is available on the HELCOM indicator web page, <a href="#">here</a>.</p>