



Document title	Polybrominated biphenyl ethers (PBDE)
Code	3J-67
Category	DEC
Agenda Item	3J-Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
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Submitted by	Secretariat

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.

Polybrominated biphenyl ethers (PBDE)

Indicator name
Polybrominated biphenyl ethers (PBDE)
Scale of assessment for HOLAS III and rational
The assessment scale will not change and will be at Scale 4, as applied in HOLAS II.
Spatial coverage of the indicator for HOLAS III
The spatial coverage is anticipated to increase due to greater data availability in the HELCOM COMBINE data (hosted by ICES), due to longer time series data, due to efforts within EN-HZ to review and update reported data, and due to ongoing work in the Baltic Data Flows project (e.g. national support for Latvia to develop national database solutions and enhanced reporting to COMBINE).
Methodology to be applied for HOLAS III and rational
EN-HZ concluded the review and discussions related to relevant supporting parameters and agreed to maintain AI and CORG, where relevant. The conclusion is therefore that the methodology applied will be identical to that used under HOLAS II.
Threshold value setting logic and rational
The threshold value for biota is undergoing a review process under the EU EQS setting structure.
Threshold value(s)
<p>The threshold value for PBDE in biota is currently undergoing a review process at the EU level where the EQS values are derived. The current timeline for this process is unclear and thus there is no direct possibility to provide an update or proposed new threshold value. However, the following process was proposed and endorsed by the GEAR Working Group, pending approval at HOD (GEAR 24-2021 Outcomes paragraph 5.26 and 5.27):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Should the newly approved EQS value be available for the current HOLAS III development stage approval process (i.e. now) it would be presented. 2) Should that not be possible, but the new EQS value be approved via EU processes prior to the indicator evaluations being run for HOLAS III (i.e. the running of the MIME assessment tool in circa May 2022), then an intersessional approval process within HELCOM would be established and the new threshold value could be applied in HOLAS III. 3) Should that not be achieved then the existing and already approved threshold value (i.e. as applied under HOLAS II) would be maintained for HOLAS III. <p>State and Conservation is invited to support this approach.</p>
Other significant issues that need to be addressed or presented to State and Conservation
No specific issues are noted for the current process.
Latest indicator report or (for new indicators) initially completed indicator template
The latest version of the indicator is available on the HELCOM indicator web page, here .