



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
5-2016

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Document title	Project proposal PEG QA 2017-2019
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Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	4J – HELCOM indicators and assessments
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Submitted by	Chair of HELCOM PEG
Reference	STATE & CONSERVATION 2-2015, paragraph 2MA-14 in the outcome

Background

The current PEG QA project ends by 2016. This document contains a project proposal for 'Quality assurance of phytoplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM PEG QA)' for the years 2017-2019.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider and endorse the project proposal for PEG QA 2017-2019.

Annex 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (PROJECT NO. XX.XX)

1. Title of the project:

Quality assurance of phytoplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM PEG QA)

2. Project Manager(s):

Ms. Iveta Jurgensone, Latvia, 2017-2019

3. Proposing party:

Contracting parties: Latvia

4. The body supervising the project:

HELCOM State and Conservation

5. Target and activities:

The main target of the project is to ensure and maintain high quality standard of the international Baltic Sea regional phytoplankton monitoring within the HELCOM COMBINE Programme. This should be achieved by:

- Maintaining annual training courses (workshop)
- Maintaining the phytoplankton biovolume list
- Intercalibrations
- Maintaining the HELCOM Monitoring guidelines for Phytoplankton - Species composition, abundance and biomass (currently Combine manual Annex C-6).
- HELCOM PEG will serve as a forum for:
 - discussion and review of phytoplankton indicators developed by Lead Countries and to dedicate part of annual meetings to this objective,
 - commenting the HELCOM phytoplankton indicator reports and indicator evaluations for use in HELCOM assessments,
 - supporting the definition of data requirements for phytoplankton indicators and an appropriate data reporting format to ensure that the COMBINE database hosted by ICES provides the data needs for HELCOM phytoplankton indicators.

The main activities within the project will be carried out at the annual workshops. Intersessional activities will be organized if needed. The following types of activities are planned:

Activity:

Training courses

Aim:

To maintain continuity and high quality in phytoplankton identification and quantification, in particular because a new generation of phytoplankton researchers and analysts are currently joining the PEG;
To follow recent changes in taxonomy of problematic and important phytoplankton groups in order to keep the PEG Phytoplankton list up to date.

Intercalibrations

To keep the high standard of phytoplankton monitoring in the Baltic Sea, to assure the comparability of results.

Further unifying the counting method	To continuously update the HELCOM monitoring manual for phytoplankton species composition, abundance and biomass.
Revision of the biovolume file	To add new species and size classes when necessary; to update the biovolume file according to recent taxonomical changes in co-operation with ICES Data Centre.
Production of environmental fact sheets	Updating and production of environmental fact sheets to track changes in phytoplankton community structure.
Platform for phytoplankton indicators	The project will serve as a forum for discussion of phytoplankton indicators being developed in HELCOM and review the results of the indicator evaluations of the HELCOM holistic assessment (HOLAS II) to be finalized 2017-2018.

At the training courses it is planned to consider:

- a) Identification of phytoplankton species;
- b) Maintaining and upgrading of the expertise for identification of alien species;
- c) Making representative and validated images of the Baltic Sea phytoplankton species public in the HELCOM PEG image gallery at, www.Nordicmicroalgae.org.

Intercalibrations and further unifying the counting method includes:

- a) Interlaboratory intercalibration and checking the general methodology, species identification, counting strategy, biovolume estimation etc.
- b) For the professional planning and statistical evaluation of the intercalibration, an expert with a short-term contract has to be employed (approximately 3 months)

The venue of the workshops will be circulated between the Contracting Parties and their marine laboratories. Suggested host countries are: Russia in 2017, Sweden in 2018 and Latvia in 2019.

The project period is three years. Ms. Iveta Jurgensone, Latvia, will be the convener during 2017-2019.

6. Expected results

The outcome of the project will be:

- a) Annual reports from the 3 workshops to HELCOM State and Conservation;
- b) Annually revised species/biovolume list of Baltic Sea phytoplankton species;
- c) Updated HELCOM Monitoring manual for Phytoplankton - Species composition, abundance and biomass;
- d) Review the indicator evaluations for phytoplankton
- e) Intercalibration report to HELCOM/ICES;
- f) Updated environmental fact sheet;
- g) Continuation of contribution of quality-checked images to the HELCOM PEG image gallery at, www.Nordicmicroalgae.org;
- h) Final report (2017-2019).

7. Consistency with HELCOM priorities **yes** **no**

8. Timetable

The project will be carried out in 2017-2019 as a continuation to the ongoing HELCOM PEG project for 2014-2016. More specific timetable:

Regular tasks will be discussed during all workshops, especially:

- discussion on new species and size classes that have occurred in the previous year's samples including non-indigenous species
- discussion of new environmental fact sheets and updating of the existing one
- harmonization of species identification by common microscoping of samples from the Baltic Sea
- harmonization of analyzing methods by discussing the methodology and committing intercalibrations
- information on recent changes in taxonomy of planktonic microalgae
- new images to add to the phytoplankton image gallery
- information on new relevant literature, projects about e.g. the development of phytoplankton indicators, meetings and conferences.
- review of phytoplankton indicators being developed by Lead Countries.

Specific tasks for the separate workshops are:

Workshop 2017

- a) A training course on cyanobacteria, teacher will be decided in 2017;
- b) Planning of the next intercalibration;

The workshop will be held in St.Peterburg, Russia.

Workshop 2018

- a) A training course on diatom resting spores and dinoflagellate cysts, Anna Godhe Sweden;
- b) Planning the next project (2020-2022).

The workshop will be held in Sweden.

Workshop 2019

- a) Presentation of the results from the intercalibration;
- b) A training course on diatoms, teacher will be decided in 2018

The workshop will be held in Latvia.

Specific tasks to support the development and evaluation of phytoplankton indicators

2017:

Comment on phytoplankton indicator analyses made for the HOLAS II report and indicator evaluations on phytoplankton by February 2017.

2018:

Comment on phytoplankton indicator reports and indicator evaluations according to deadlines agreed in the HOLAS II project.

9. Budget

9.1. Total costs

The total costs for HELCOM from 2017 to 2019 are estimated to be **15480** EUR.

9.2. Costs divided per financial year

Estimated costs for HELCOM**2017:**

Compensation for teaching (120 EUR/h, 8 hours)	960 EUR
Travel and accommodation for the teacher	1000 EUR
Administrative costs	1100 EUR
Travel and accommodation for project manager to present the PEG work in the HELCOM State and Conservation meeting	600 EUR
SUM	3660 EUR

2018:

Compensation for teaching (120 EUR/h, 8 hours)	960 EUR
Travel and accommodation for the teacher	1000 EUR
Administrative costs	1100 EUR
Preparation of intercalibration	1500 EUR
Travel and accommodation for project manager to present the PEG work in the HELCOM State and Conservation meeting	600 EUR
SUM	5160 EUR

2019:

Compensation for teaching (120 EUR/h, 8 hours)	960 EUR
Travel and accommodation for the teacher	1000 EUR
Compensation for teaching evaluation of ringtest (intercalibration)	3000 EUR
Administrative costs	1100 EUR
Travel and accommodation for project manager to present the PEG work in the HELCOM State and Conservation meeting	600 EUR
SUM	6660 EUR

9.3. Sources of financing divided per financial year

In general both HELCOM and the host countries finance the workshops and activities therein:

2017: HELCOM and Russia

2018: HELCOM and Sweden

2019: HELCOM and Latvia

The share of the host country is estimated to be ca. 1500 EUR annually. The estimated costs for HELCOM do not cover the expenses of the national experts expected to participate in the project.

10. Additional requests

10.1. From the Contracting Parties

The Contracting Parties are supposed to cover the travel expenses for the participation of the national experts in the workshops.

11. Procedure of nomination of the Project team members

The present phytoplankton expert group consists of the following experts:

Hans Jakobsen	Denmark
Andres Jaanus	Estonia
Annely Enke	Estonia
Kaire Kaljurand	Estonia
Marko Järvinen	Finland
Heidi Hällfors	Finland
Sirpa Lehtinen	Finland
Jeanette Göbel	Germany
Norbert Wasmund	Germany
Regina Hansen	Germany
Susanne Busch	Germany
Iveta Jurgensone	Latvia
Irina Olenina	Lithuania
Janina Kownacka	Poland
Slawomira Gromisz	Poland
Wojciech Kraśniewski	Poland
Andrey Sharov	Russia
Evgenia Lange	Russia
Chatarina Karlsson	Sweden
Siv Huseby	Sweden
Helena Högländer	Sweden
Lars Edler	Sweden
Malin Mohlin	Sweden
Marie Johansen	Sweden
Ann-Turi Skjevik	Sweden

12. Signatures of the project managers

Ms. Iveta Jurgensone

Chair of HELCOM Phytoplankton Expert Group

13. Opinion of the chairman of the relevant body**14. Opinion of the Executive Secretary****15. Decision of the heads of Delegation**

(Reference is to be given to the relevant Minutes of the Heads of Delegation's Meetings)

_____ to establish _____ not to establish