



sDocument title	Provisional Annotated Agenda
Code	1-2
Category	DEC
Agenda Item	1 – Adoption of the Agenda
Submission date	19.3.2018
Submitted by	Secretariat
Reference	Outcome of HOD 52-2017, Paragraph 3.16

Background

In accordance with the decision by HOD 52-2017 (Outcome of the meeting, paragraph 3.16), the eight Meeting of the Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature Conservation, (STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018) will be convened on 14-18 May 2018 in Klaipeda, Lithuania.

The Meeting will start on **Monday 14 May 2018 at 10.00** and is expected to end on **Friday 18 May 2018 at 13.00**. Monday to Tuesday until 12.00 is planned for issues related to monitoring and assessment (Agenda Items 1MA-6MA). Tuesday 13.00 to Thursday 10.30 will be dedicated to joint themes (Agenda Item 1J-7J), and Thursday 11.00 until the end of the meeting on Friday will be dedicated to biodiversity and nature conservation (Agenda Items 1N-6N).

Focal items of the meeting are to:

- Monitoring and assessment session: discuss the proposal to withdraw recommendation 10/1, the review and possibly update and amend the deadline information on reporting on the monitoring results in the manuals and guidelines, updating of monitoring guidelines and monitoring manual, including additions to the endorsed turbidity, chlorophyll-*a* and water transparency guidelines to include also Earth Observation methods, and discussing any data issues related to the updating of core indicators and 'State of the Baltic Sea' report
- Joint session: finalizing the update of the State of the Baltic Sea report, implementation and update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, including the work on indicators and indicator reports, clarifying issues relating to Recommendation 17/2, HELCOM dedicated work on climate change, Review of the State and Conservation Working Group.
- Nature conservation session: discuss ongoing work related to recommendations under the Group, discuss and plan future work related to marine protected areas, categorization of protective measures of birds, discuss and agree on a project proposal for migrating birds, as well as updating of the HELCOM checklist/red list.

Meeting documents will be submitted by the Secretariat to the [document library](#) of the [STATE&CONSERVATION 8-2017 Meeting Site](#) via the [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#). The Secretariat has prepared a [document template](#) and recommends using the template when submitting documents to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat kindly requests the Contracting Parties and Observers to observe the deadlines for submission of documents to a HELCOM meeting. Basic documents and documents requiring action or a decision to the Meeting should be submitted in electronic format to Professional Secretary, Jannica Haldin (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) by **18 April 2018**, at the latest. Documents containing comments to the basic documents as well as information documents should be provided to the Secretariat by **3 May 2018**.

Participants are kindly requested to register for the Meeting by answering the [Participation Survey](#) at their earliest convenience, and **not later than 4 May 2018**. Instructions for the use of the Meeting Portal are available on the [HELCOM Website](#).

Monitoring and assessment

Agenda Item 1MA Adoption of the Agenda: Monitoring and assessment

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2MA Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat

The Meeting is invited to take note of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the group and to particularly note those ToRs specifically pertaining to the work on monitoring and assessment.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the work plan of the group and to particularly note the tasks, and their proposed timing, specifically pertaining to the work on monitoring and assessment.

Agenda Item 3MA Development and implementation of Recommendations

[RECOMMENDATION 10/1 ABNORMAL SITUATIONS IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT](#)

STATE&CONSERVATION 7-2017 took note of the proposal by Estonia to withdraw Recommendation 10/1 'Abnormal Situations in the Marine Environment' and instead increase cooperation with other European initiatives, including BOOS, Copernicus Marine Service and EMODNet. The meeting acknowledged the value of the data being compiled via BOOS, CMEMS and EMODNet and discussed how the information could be made use of in the HELCOM framework. The meeting welcomed the offer of Estonia to present a proposal how to proceed with this issue at STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

Estonia is invited to present a proposal on how to proceed with increased cooperation with other European initiatives, including BOOS, Copernicus Marine Service and EMODNet, and the withdrawal of Recommendation 10/1.

[RECOMMENDATION 19/3 MANUAL FOR THE HELCOM JOINT COORDINATED MARINE MONITORING](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note that the revised version of this Recommendation, as presented by State and Conservation, was adopted by HELCOM 39-2018.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified. Lead country for this recommendation is Estonia.

- a) Follow-up of action "monitoring of the state of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea should be performed in accordance with the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy and the HELCOM Monitoring Manual";
- b) Follow-up of action "annual coordinated monitoring data, as committed by the Contracting Parties in the HELCOM Data and Information Strategy, should be reported or made available to the Commission on deadlines given in the HELCOM Monitoring Manual".

Revision of HELCOM monitoring

STATE&CONSERVATION 7-2017 agreed to initiate the review, and possibly update and amend, the deadline information on reporting on the monitoring results in the manuals, guidelines and in Table 1 and welcomed the

offer of the co-Chair, Mr. Urmas Lips, Estonia, to do an initial overview and present it for consideration and revision by STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

Estonia is invited to present the overview (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on the following steps in the update process.

Update of HELCOM Monitoring Manual

Contracting Parties are invited to provide any changes to the updated national information in the Monitoring Manual.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform on tentative revision of national information and to propose updates to the Monitoring Manual **by 20 April**, by using the guidance provided in document 3MA-1.

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 considered the revised proposal for a regional monitoring sub-program of continuous noise, as presented by Sweden. The meeting supported in principle the proposed contents of the regional monitoring sub-program of continuous noise, but noted that since the document was submitted late, some Contracting Parties need more time for providing their national comments. The Meeting invited Contracting Parties to provide their comments on the proposed contents of the monitoring sub-programme to the Lead Party Sweden (Norbert.haubner@havochvatten.se) and the Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) by 8 December 2017.

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 invited EN-Noise to initiate a discussion to facilitate a regionally coordinated approach to noise monitoring, based on the proposal outlined in document [2MA-12](#) and invited EN-Noise to make improvements to the proposal based on the comments provided by State & Conservation national contacts and to present a further developed proposal for consideration of STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

EN-NOISE is invited to present a further developed proposal on a regionally coordinated approach to monitoring.

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on proposed amendments to the Monitoring Manual.

Review and update of HELCOM monitoring guidelines

The Meeting is invited to take note of the publication on the [HELCOM website](#) of the following monitoring guidelines endorsed by STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2018: determination of salinity and temperature using CTD, monitoring of turbidity, determination of chlorinated hydrocarbons in sediment, determination of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in sediment and determination of persistent organic compounds in seawater.

The Lead and assisting countries for specific HELCOM monitoring guidelines are outlined in document 3MA-2. The Lead Countries/expert groups responsible for the monitoring guidelines are invited to present the outcome of the review and update of the monitoring guidelines:

Lead Country Sweden:

- dissolved oxygen
- physical oceanography

Lead Country Finland:

- turbidity
- use of satellite data for monitoring of transparency

Lead Country Germany:

- contaminants in water, sediment and biota;
- determination of heavy metals in sediment

HELCOM EN-HZ is invited to inform on progress with development of monitoring guidelines for PFOS in biota and water and for HBCDD in biota and sediments.

HELCOM EN-Noise is invited to inform on progress on monitoring of continuous underwater noise.

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 supported the development of additions to the endorsed turbidity, chlorophyll-*a* and water transparency guidelines to include also Earth Observation methods, and welcomed the offer of Finland to present drafts to STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

Finland is invited to present drafts containing information on Earth Observation methods for the guidelines on turbidity, chlorophyll-*a* and water transparency (documents to be submitted later).

STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 agreed that Recommendation 29/2, which includes Guidelines on sampling and reporting of marine litter found on beaches, will be superseded by [Recommendation 36/1](#) once the HELCOM monitoring guidelines for marine litter on beaches have been developed and included in the HELCOM Monitoring Manual (cf. [Outcome of STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016](#), para. 3J.9).

HELCOM EN-Marine Litter is invited to inform on progress with development of HELCOM monitoring guidelines for marine litter on beaches. The Meeting is invited to consider, comment and endorse the submitted guidelines and agree that they are transferred to the HELCOM Monitoring Manual.

Agenda Item 4MA Plans for implementation of the work plan and emerging issues

The Meeting is invited to discuss any further plans relating to implementing the work plan and/or identifying emerging issues.

Agenda Item 5MA Any other business

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the monitoring and assessment theme.

Agenda Item 6MA Outcome of the Monitoring and assessment session

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by attendants of the monitoring and assessment theme.

Joint session

Agenda Item 1J Adoption of the Agenda: Joint themes

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2J Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat

The Meeting is invited to take note of the outcome of the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2018 and use the information as appropriate (document 2J-5).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the plan for updating the Baltic Sea Action plan (document 2J-1)

The Meeting is invited to take note of the HELCOM report “Implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan 2018 – three years left to reach good environmental status” (document 2J-2), and in particular the status of the implementation of regional and national actions related to the work of the State and Conservation, and initiate discussions on how the remaining actions could be implemented by 2021.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the HELCOM Maritime Assessment (document 2J-3).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overview of the work of the Expert Groups, Intersessional Networks and projects associated with the group (document 2J-4), and consider and approve the updated workplan and ToRs for JWGBIRD (document 2J-6), and provide input to guide the update of the ToRs for EN-BENTH, which is to take place in 2018.

The Secretariat will inform the Meeting of the outcomes of relevant recent HELCOM meetings (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information by the co-Chair on the outcome and discussions in the HELCOM-VASAB MSP group.

Agenda Item 3J HELCOM indicators and assessments

Indicators

Updating of HELCOM core indicator reports

HELCOM has agreed on a set of core indicators and associated threshold values that form the basis for the integrated assessments of the ‘State of the Baltic Sea’ report. Lead countries on the indicator development and HELCOM expert bodies have provided indicator evaluations for HOLAS II based on data for the period 2011-2016. Endorsed core indicator reports will be made available on the [HELCOM website](#) as supporting material to the ‘State of the Baltic Sea’ report.

The Meeting is invited to agree on the amendments to the core indicator on reproductive status of marine mammals, as proposed by Finland.

The Meeting is invited to consider and agree on the publication of core indicator reports updated during the update of the ‘State of the Baltic Sea’ report (documents to be submitted later).

The Meeting will be informed on the current status of data flows and data hosting arrangements for each HELCOM indicator.

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 took note of information by Lithuania that steps have been taken to secure the availability of the AquaNIS database also in the future and noted the request of Lithuania to consider possibilities to obtain regular funding for the maintenance of the database, e.g. from the HELCOM budget. The meeting invited Lithuania to provide an estimate of the cost for the database maintenance to State & Conservation for further discussion.

Lithuania is invited to present a cost estimation for the maintenance of the AquaNIS database.

Continued development of HELCOM core indicators

State and Conservation agreed to carry out intersessional work to further develop proposals for HELCOM future work on indicators and welcomed the offer by Sweden to support the process. The Meeting decided to come back to this issue at the next State and Conservation meeting.

The Meeting is invited to consider a draft HELCOM plan for future indicator work, to be developed based on the intersessional activities and discussions in GEAR 18-2018 (to be submitted at a later stage).

The Meeting will be informed on preliminary plans to arrange a joint indicator workshop with OSPAR.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress on the development of the indicators on acidification, condition of benthic habitats and diclofenac.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the list on indicator Lead and co-Lead countries, the nominated experts appointed for their development and the development status of the indicators (document to be submitted later) and update the information as needed.

Assessments

'State of the Baltic Sea' report (HOLAS II)

The first version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report prepared by the HOLAS II project was published in June 2017 and is available via <http://stateofthebalticsea.helcom.fi/>. By June 2018 the report will be updated to include data to cover also the year 2016, fill data gaps, and possibly include new threshold values and indicators that have become operational during 2017 (cf. Outcome of HOD 51-2016, para 6.2).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the progress on the update of the State of the Baltic Sea report (document to be submitted later).

Regional consultation

A regional consultation on the report 'State of the Baltic Sea – first version 2017' was carried out in October-December 2017. Background information and a summary of the consultation is provided in document 3J-1. Specific and technical comments on the content and communication of the report will be considered by the HOLAS II meeting, 9-10 April 2018. A sub-set of comments from the regional consultation which address technical/scientific related proposals which could be considered in future HELCOM work have been identified and collated for the Meeting to consider (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the results of the regional consultation of the State of the Baltic Sea report, as well as discuss how the identified sub-set of comments from the regional consultation that address technical/scientific related proposals received during the consultation process could be considered in future HELCOM work.

Endorsement of the updated 2018 version of 'State of the Baltic Sea' report (HOLAS II)

The HOLAS II project has prepared a draft of the updated 2018 version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report that is aimed to be finalized by June 2018. The report has been updated to include data to also cover the year 2016, fill in data gaps, refine methodology based on identified issues and include new threshold values and indicators that have become operational during 2017 (cf. Outcome of HOD 51-2016, para 6.2).

The Meeting is invited to endorse the draft 'State of the Baltic Sea' report and recommend its approval to HOD 54-2018.

Approval of supplementary reports to the updated 2018 version of 'State of the Baltic Sea' report (HOLAS II)

The HOLAS II project has prepared draft supplementary reports on the integrated assessments of eutrophication, hazardous substances, biodiversity, as well as Cumulative Impacts, and Social and Economic Analyses to support the updated 2018 version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report. These supplementary

reports are intended to support the the updated 2018 version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report and are aimed to be finalized by June 2018.

The Meeting is invited to approve the draft supplementary reports on integrated assessments of eutrophication, hazardous substances, biodiversity, as well as Cumulative Impacts, and Social and Economic Analyses and agree on their publication in the BSEP series.

Agenda Item 4J Monitoring guidelines for biota

The Lead and co-Lead countries for specific HELCOM monitoring guidelines are outlined in document 3MA-2.

The Lead Countries/expert groups responsible for the monitoring guidelines for biota are invited to present the outcome of the review and update of the monitoring guidelines and submit draft guidelines to the Secretariat (jannica.haldin@helcom.fi) by **20 April 2018**, according to the following:

- Sweden: marine bird health,
- JWG BIRD is invited to inform on progress on updating the guidelines on monitoring bird health.

The Meeting is invited to consider and endorse the guidelines and agree that they are transferred to the HELCOM Monitoring Manual.

Agenda Item 5J Development and implementation of Recommendations

[RECOMMENDATION 21/3 SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TOURISM IN THE COASTAL ZONES OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

At STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 Latvia requested to postpone the discussion on review of HELCOM Recommendation 21/3 'Sustainable and Environmentally friendly tourism in the Coastal Zones of the Baltic Sea Area' until STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018, when Latvia will report on review of the recommendation after ongoing national consultations with tourism experts.

Latvia is invited to report on the review of the Recommendation.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Reporting format exists (List of 7 questions) for this Recommendation but reporting interval on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified. There has been no reporting on the implementation of this Recommendation since its adoption in 2000. Lead country for this recommendation is Latvia.

- a) Follow-up of action “to base their tourism development policy and plans for new tourist projects, and in particular their financial incentives, on the "GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA", as contained in the Attachment to this Recommendation”
- b) Follow-up of action “that all development, marketing and management of tourism should be based on the criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically sound in the long term, economically viable, as well as ethically and socially equitable for the local communities and also be oriented on the objectives, principles and obligations of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992);
- c) Follow-up of action “that for the development of large scaled tourist projects that need new specific infrastructure be preceded by a spatial planning process on national or regional level and be incorporated into, e.g. integrated coastal zone management plans;”
- d) Follow-up of action “that Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or similar procedures according to each Contracting Party's national law be carried out, before realizing tourism infrastructure and tourism operations, because they have significant negative impacts on biological and landscape diversity”
- e) Follow-up of action “all Contracting Parties work together and design bi - or multilateral transboundary strategies for environmentally friendly tourism development in order to harmonise activities aiming at sustainable use and the preservation of the natural beauty and biodiversity of the coastal area of the Baltic Sea”

[RECOMMENDATION 24/10 IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED MARINE AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN ACTIVITIES IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note of the following:

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 amended the Recommendation as contained in document 5J-3-Rev.1 and endorsed the Recommendation 24/10 with the mentioned amendments and requested the Secretariat to forward the updated Recommendation to HOD 53-2017 for adoption.

HOD 53-2017 endorsed the draft revised HELCOM Recommendation and agreed that it will be forwarded to HELCOM 39-2018 for adoption.

HELCOM 39-2018 took note that Poland could not agree on the revised Recommendation 24/10 ‘Implementation of integrated Marine and Coastal Management of Human Activities in the Baltic Sea Area’ and invited Poland to clarify the reservation at the next meeting of the State & Conservation Working Group.

Poland is invited to clarify their reservation.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work relevant to the actions listed below.

[Reporting on the Recommendation](#)

The implementation of this Recommendation should be evaluated at regular intervals, at least every three years. There has been no reporting on the implementation of this Recommendation since its adoption in 2003. Lead country for this recommendation is Estonia.

- a) Follow-up of action “to identify laws and regulations of relevance for the use and protection of marine areas and, the authorities responsible for their implementation (governmental, sub-national or municipal sector officials)”
- b) Follow-up of action “to identify stakeholders with interests concerning the marine areas”
- c) Follow-up of action “to apply the principles laid down in the EU Directive on environmental assessment of plans and programmes⁴ and the EU Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), relevant for introducing human activities in marine and coastal areas”
- d) Follow-up of action “to identify interacting and/or conflicting interests, obligations and activities of private and public stakeholders. This can for example be carried out following the DPSIR concept”
- e) Follow-up of action “to organize and implement an offshore management process that brings together the groups defined in “b” and “d”
- f) Follow-up of action “to develop criteria, standards and guidelines that are needed for integrated management of human activities by sector authorities, as well as development of practical and applicable ways to share responsibility for plan management, implementation and enforcement”
- g) Follow-up of action “to identify the major planning and management issues for human activities in offshore areas”
- h) Follow-up of action “to identify data gaps and gaps in knowledge that may impede planning and management of human activities in offshore areas, e.g. lack of spatial data on marine and coastal biodiversity (distribution of habitats and species) and natural resources, use of land and water areas, demography, traffic, oil transport, etc., as well as problems connected with access to data”
- i) Follow-up of action “to set up and carry out a scheme to fill in the identified data and knowledge gaps, e.g. by inventories and mapping of biodiversity (e.g. habitats and species) and resources, analysis of existing data or sharing experiences between authorities and stakeholders”
- j) Follow-up of action “to improve assessments of the status of biodiversity and of impacts of human activities on the marine and coastal environment”
- k) Follow-up of action “to develop and implement an overall management plan for human activities for marine areas addressing the tasks in a to j”

Agenda Item 6J Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets

The Meeting is invited to take note of possible updates to the existing HELCOM Baltic Sea Environment Fact Sheets, including the update of the BSEFS Abundance and distribution of round goby (document to be submitted later). The Meeting is also invited to consider and approve the publication of possible new Fact sheets.

Agenda Item 7J Progress of relevant HELCOM projects and assessments

The Meeting is invited to take note of information provided by relevant expert groups, networks and projects.

Agenda Item 8J Future work

Proposal for dedicated HELCOM work on climate change

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 took note of the document proposing future HELCOM work on climate change and agreed to discuss the issue at the next meeting. Contracting Parties were invited to provide feedback on the document and propose potential new ideas regarding HELCOM work on climate change to the Secretariat.

The proposal has been further developed by the Secretariat based on the input received from the Contracting Parties, deliberations by HELCOM Heads of Delegation and the outcome of the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2018.

The Meeting is invited to consider the further developed proposal for dedicated HELCOM work on climate change (document to be submitted at a later stage) and agree on how to take the work forward.

Review of the State and Conservation Working Group

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 (cf. para 6J-7 of the Outcome) took note of the proposal by Sweden to carry out an evaluation of the work of State & Conservation with the aim of contributing to the overall task of analysing the consequences of the streamlining of HELCOM carried out in 2014. The meeting noted that Heads of Delegation have agreed that this task be carried out after the 2018 Ministerial Meeting. The Meeting was of the view that it would be valuable to consider feedback from the Contracting Parties in the State & Conservation group on the review of the HELCOM structure by STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

The Heads of Delegation will at their next meeting on 14-15 June 2018 review the work of the new groups State & Conservation and Pressure.

The Meeting is invited to provide their feedback on the work of the group under the new structure (document to be submitted at a later stage).

Agenda Item 9J Any other business

The Meeting is invited to consider and update the list of contacts and observers of the Working Group (document 9J-1).

The Meeting will be informed of the upcoming joint BONUS-HELCOM conference on 6 November 2018 (document to be submitted later).

The Contracting Parties are invited to consider their possibility to host future meetings of the Working Group.

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the mandate of the Working Group.

Agenda Item 10J Outcome of the Joint themes

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by attendants of the joint themes.

Nature conservation

Agenda Item 1N Adoption of the Agenda: Nature conservation

The Meeting is invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2N Matters of relevance for the Meeting and information from the Secretariat

The Meeting is invited to take note of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the group and to particularly note those ToRs specifically pertaining to the work on biodiversity and conservation.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the workplan of the group and to particularly note the tasks, and their proposed timing, specifically pertaining to the work on biodiversity and conservation.

Agenda Item 3N Development and implementation of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 15/1 PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL STRIP

The Meeting is invited to take note that the revisions to this Recommendation were approved at HELCOM 39.

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

The recommendation states that implementation should be reported to the Commission every 6 years and that the HELCOM working group in charge stays in contact with the Contracting Parties for information and cooperation in this matter. The latest reporting on the recommendation took place in 2014 and the lead country for this recommendation is Finland.

- a. Follow-up of action 'take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection of biodiversity and nature (biology and geology) as well as recreational values of the coastal strip'
- b. Follow-up of action 'that a generally protected coastal strip therefore be established outside urban areas and existing settlements'
- c. Follow-up of action 'that in this protected coastal strip activities which would permanently change the nature and landscape not be allowed except when proved to be in overwhelming public interest and that intensive forestry and intensive farming including drainage be restricted'
- e. Follow-up of action 'a zone of at least 3 kilometres landwards from the mean water line should be established as a coastal planning zone'

RECOMMENDATION 16/3 PRESERVATION OF NATURAL COASTAL DYNAMICS

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Reporting on the implementation on this Recommendation has not been specified. Lead country for this recommendation is Denmark.

- a. Follow-up of action 'the dynamic character and permanent change of the coast should be recognized and accepted as a natural process and that new coastal defence measures outside settlements normally not be executed except when integrated coastal zone management plans provide otherwise'
- b. Follow-up of action 'that active cliffs as sediment supplier and natural coastal flood areas as potential nutrient traps should not be subject to any new coastal defence measures except when integrated coastal zone management plans provide otherwise'
- c. Follow-up of action 'coastal areas outside settlements that have been subject to episodic flooding before they were dyked for land use purposes only, should be restored as coastal wetlands through removal or relocation of dykes further inland, wherever possible'
- d. Follow-up of action 'if coastal defence measures are necessary, natural materials such as stones, sand, soil or wood shall be preferred to artificial materials (concrete, asphalt or plastic)'
- e. Follow-up of action 'coastal defence measures be nationally or regionally incorporated into integrated coastal zone management plans'
- f. Follow-up of action 'inform HELCOM about new projects and master plans for coastal defence measures'

RECOMMENDATION 17/2 PROTECTION OF HARBOUR PORPOISE IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 considered and supported the proposed revision of HELCOM Recommendation 17/2 on Protection of harbor porpoise in the Baltic Sea area for countries being also ASCOBANS parties and welcomed the offer of Poland to amend the Recommendation according to the proposal, for consideration of the meetings of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group in March 2018 and HELCOM SEAL 12-2018 before submitting it for endorsement to STATE & CONSERVATION 9-2018 and subsequently for adoption by HODs and the annual Commission meeting in Spring 2019.

Poland is invited to inform the meeting on the progress of the work.

Reporting on the Recommendation

The Recommendation states that a report on the implementation of this recommendation should be made available to the Commission every three years. The latest reporting took place in 2015, by those countries who are also parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS). The Lead country for this recommendation is Poland.

- a. Follow-up of action 'avoiding by-catches of harbour porpoises, particularly following the recommendations of ASCOBANS and the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Plan'

The Meeting is invited to take note of work relating to this action currently ongoing under the work on bycatch indicator and the Fish working group.

- b. Follow-up of action 'take action in close co-operation with ASCOBANS and ICES'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the invitation, sent by the Secretariat at the request of STATE & CONSERVATION 6-2017, to the ASCOBANS Jastarnia group regarding support to develop the indicator on harbour porpoise abundance, as well as the corresponding response from the Jastarnia group Chair to the letter sent by State and Conservation on expanding cooperation between the Jastarnia Group and HELCOM (document 3N-3).

The Meeting is invited to take note of information regarding the latest Jastarnia group meeting.

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information on the status of the HELCOM-ASCOBANS harbor porpoise database, as well as the national contacts for maintaining the data, as handled by the Seal EG (document 3N-1).

The Meeting is invited to identify and appoint State & Conservation contacts who could in the future report on the annual work in the ICES Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC).

The Meeting is invited to take note of the annual compilation of registered marine mammal mortality, including information on bycatch and strandings of harbour porpoises, collected by the Seal expert group (document 3N-4).

- c. [Follow-up of action 'establishment of marine protected areas for harbour porpoises within the framework of the Baltic Sea Protected Areas \(BSPAs\)](#)

The Meeting is invited to take note of information by Sweden on newly appointed conservation areas for harbor porpoise and the description of a large area in the Baltic Sea as an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area related to harbor porpoise.

[RECOMMENDATION 21/4 PROTECTION OF HEAVILY ENDANGERED OR IMMEDIATELY THREATENED MARINE AND COASTAL BIOTOPES IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA](#)

[Draft Recommendation on biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes](#)

The draft HELCOM Recommendation on 'Conservation and Protection of Marine and Coastal Biotopes, Habitats and Biotope Complexes Categorized as Threatened According to the HELCOM Red Lists' was considered by HELCOM 38-2017. Due to three still open paragraphs the Recommendation was not adopted. HELCOM 38-2017 agreed to continue an intersessional dialogue with the aim to develop a joint draft proposal on the wording of the outstanding paragraphs.

HOD 53-2017 regretted that no progress has been achieved on the draft Recommendation and noted that all Contracting Parties with the exception of Denmark can endorse the Recommendation as it stands. Denmark informed the Meeting that their position remains the same and noted that the matter is tabled at STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018. The meeting requested the parties to continue their efforts to conclude on the issue by HELCOM 39-2018.

HELCOM 39 took note of and regretted that no further progress has been made to reach an agreement on the draft Recommendation on conservation of Baltic Sea underwater biotopes, habitats and biotope complexes and that the matter will be considered at STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

Denmark is invited to inform the Meeting on their position on the Recommendation.

The Meeting is invited to discuss and agree on the draft Recommendation with the intension to submit it to HOD 54-2018 for adoption.

[RECOMMENDATION 34E/1 SAFEGUARDING IMPORTANT BIRD HABITATS AND MIGRATION ROUTES IN THE BALTIC SEA FROM NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WIND AND WAVE ENERGY PRODUCTION AT SEA](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

[Reporting on the Recommendation](#)

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 discussed how to initiate a follow-up of the Recommendation as a whole in 2018 and welcomed the offer of Lead Country Sweden, with support of Germany and possibly Finland, to elaborate a proposal for consideration by STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018 of a project to compile maps on migration routes of birds and other necessary activities for following up on the implementation of the Recommendation 34E/1. The meeting was of the view that support from JWGBird should also be requested in the follow-up to this Recommendation.

Sweden is invited to present the proposal for such a project (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to take note of information collated by BirdLife Finland on migration routes (document to be submitted later).

The Meeting is invited to consider the proposal and agree on the further work.

The Secretariat has communicated its gratitude to HELCOM/OSPAR/ICES Joint Working Group on Seabirds (JWGBird) for assistance for developing a common understanding and guidance for carrying out the categorization for birds, as suggested by STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017.

HELCOM/OSPAR/ICES Joint Working Group is invited to provide such guidance to the meeting (document to be submitted later).

- a) Follow-up on action 'Compile and exchange information on existing, on-going as well as planned developments for wind energy facilities and wave energy installations well as on migration routes and staging areas of birds'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the improved dataset on wind energy facilities which is available through the HOLAS II work on collecting data on human activities (document to be submitted later).

- b) Follow-up on action 'Assess cumulative impacts of wind energy facilities and wave energy installations in the Baltic Sea Area on birds'
- c) Follow-up on action 'Enable appropriate planning of the use of marine space that incorporates conservation need of seabirds'
- d) Follow-up on action 'support development and use of nature friendly wind energy technology'
- e) Follow-up on action 'avoid that wind energy facilities and wave energy installations are sited in areas important for birds, and that the loss of off-shore staging habitats will be halted'
- f) Follow-up on action 'avoid that wind energy facilities are situated within major migrating routes of birds'
- g) Follow-up on action 'establishment of installations only following strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment'
- h) Follow-up on action 'including obligation for the operator to carry out adequate monitoring of impacts on birds during the operation phase'

RECOMMENDATION 35/1 SYSTEM OF COASTAL AND MARINE BALTIC SEA PROTECTED AREAS (HELCOM MPAs)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

Reporting frequency on the implementation on this Recommendation as a whole has not been specified. No reporting on the implementation of the recommendation has been done yet. Lead country for this recommendation is Finland.

- a) Follow-up of action 'reach goal of 10% of the marine area in all sub-basins of the Baltic Sea including the EEZ areas beyond territorial waters is covered by MPAs where scientifically justified'

The Meeting will be informed on the most up to date calculations on the distribution and coverage of HELCOM MPA's.

Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any new or planned MPAs in territorial waters or EEZ areas beyond said waters.

- b) Follow-up of action 'review whether new coastal and marine areas justify being selected as HELCOM MPAs, and to designate new sites as HELCOM MPAs where ecologically meaningful, especially in offshore area beyond territorial waters'

The Contracting Parties are invited to share information on any newly designated national MPAs which could be included in the HELCOM MPA network with the Meeting.

- c) Follow-up of action 'ensure that HELCOM MPAs inter alia provide specific protection to those species, habitats, biotopes and biotope complexes included in the HELCOM Red Lists'
- d) Follow-up of action 'ensure, when selecting new areas, that the network of HELCOM MPAs is ecologically coherent and takes into account connectivity between sites'

Contracting Parties are invited to share and take note of information on national and/or project work relating to assessing coherence and connectivity.

- e) Follow-up of action 'make use of computer-based site selection tools'

Contracting Parties are invited to present and share information and experiences on tools used for site selection in national work with the Meeting.

- f) Follow-up of action 'designate when feasible all appropriate Natura 2000 sites as HELCOM MPAs, and to consider all Natura 2000 sites as well as other marine protected areas when evaluating the network of marine protected areas'

Contracting Parties are invited to present and share information with the Meeting on any Natura 2000 areas fulfilling the HELCOM MPA criteria, but not currently designated as HELCOM MPA's.

- g) Follow-up of action 'to designate, when appropriate, OSPAR MPAs as HELCOM MPAs'

The Meeting is invited to take note of information on and discuss the possibility for cooperation on MPA work with OSPAR.

- h) Follow-up of action 'develop and apply by 2015 management plans or measures for all existing HELCOM MPAs, and to establish management plan or measures for every new MPA within five years after its designation'
- i) Follow-up of action 'update the management plans when necessary and in accordance with other legal requirements with a maximum of 12 years intervals'
- j) Follow-up of action 'harmonise the designation of neighbouring HELCOM MPAs in transboundary marine areas'

Sweden is invited to inform the Meeting on the preparation of a workshop for MPA managers.

The Meeting is invited to discuss and plan for how cooperation of management measures of pressures and impacts on MPAs, in particular for adjacent transnational MPAs can be taken further in HELCOM.

- k) Follow-up of action 'assess the effectiveness of the management plans or measures of HELCOM MPAs by conducting monitoring, and where feasible scientific research programmes, which are directly connected to the conservation interests of HELCOM MPAs'

STATE & CONSERVATION 4-2016 invited Germany to keep the Working Group updated on the progress regarding activities on assessing management effectiveness of the OSPAR MPA Network.

Germany is invited to report on the progress of the matter.

- l) Follow-up of action 'include HELCOM MPAs as areas of particular ecological significance in coastal and maritime spatial planning processes and incorporate their management provisions'

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 noted that Sweden is drafting a work plan for the task summarizing related ongoing processes in the HELCOM-VASAB MSP working group and welcomed that a more concrete proposal will be presented for the next meeting of State and Conservation.

Sweden is invited to present the proposal to the Meeting (document to be submitted later).

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on how natural values and nature conservation interests have been taken into account in their national maritime spatial plans. This was suggested by STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 to be a continuous task for the future working group meetings.

- m) Follow-up of action 'update, when necessary, HELCOM MPA related guidelines and guiding documents in order to keep them in line with new knowledge and compatible with other international criteria'

The Meeting is invited to take note of and discuss the state and need for updating the guidelines in order to keep them in line with new knowledge and recent best practices.

- n) Follow-up of action 'apply the newest IUCN categorisation system when describing the HELCOM MPAs'
- o) Follow-up of action 'perform identification, designation and legal protection of HELCOM MPAs according to HELCOMs criteria and guidelines and base all management plans or measures on relevant HELCOM publications'
- p) Follow-up of action 'modernize the HELCOM MPAs database'

The Meeting is invited to discuss the way forward on updating the database, based on the issues identified in the MPA database meeting.

- q) Follow-up of action 'continuously report the most recent numerical and descriptive data on HELCOM MPAs to HELCOMs data systems (HELCOM MPA database, GIS based map and data service)'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the overview of current data in database, and Contracting Parties are invited to highlight and report any missing information.

- r) Follow-up of action 'regularly assess the status and development of HELCOMs MPAs according to the time tables set by HELCOM and to ensure that the assessments are applicable for corresponding EU and global reporting'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the preliminary timeline overview of EU and global commitments associated with MPA work.

Future work on HELCOM MPAs

The Meeting will be informed on the state of the MPA project proposal submitted for external funding.

[RECOMMENDATION 37/2 CONSERVATION OF BALTIC SEA SPECIES CATEGORIZED AS THREATENED ACCORDING TO THE 2013 HELCOM RED LIST](#)

The Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on any ongoing or planned national work, outside of what is specified, relevant to the actions listed below.

Reporting on the Recommendation

The Contracting Parties will report on their first activities taken to implement this Recommendation in 2018, and thereafter according to the schedule to be agreed by the State & Conservation Working Group with the aim to harmonize reporting intervals and content with EU and other reporting obligations supported by this Recommendation, using an appropriate template to be developed.

The Recommendation also states that based on the progress in implementing this Recommendation and following the next Red List assessment of the Baltic Sea species and habitats/biomes in 2019, the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention utilize new knowledge on threatened species to maintain or further improve the status of HELCOM threatened species also beyond 2021.

The lead country for this recommendation is Germany.

Planning the next HELCOM Red List assessment

HOD 53-2017 considered the suggested strategy and timetable to review the HELCOM Red List of Species and took note of the concern raised by some Contracting Parties as regards the proposed intervals of the Red List revision of being too short and highlighted the need to align the Red List work with other processes, such as HELCOM HOLAS III and reporting under different regulations, and noted national limitations with regards to expert resources within the time frame of the suggested review.

HOD 53-2017 invited the State and Conservation Working Group, together with the Secretariat, to further plan Red List assessment work and present a revised proposal for a strategy to the Heads of Delegation.

The Meeting is invited to consider the revised project proposal, focusing on the update and preparation of the checklist and associated data, to be financed jointly by Finland and Sweden with contribution by the Secretariat.

- a) Follow-up of action 'Inventory of existing and planned national and regional conservation-, recovery- and/or action plans, and by 2018 review their effectiveness and, if necessary, define future protection needs'

STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016 agreed to follow-up on the agreed action 'Activities to support conservation of Baltic Sea species and biomes/habitats categorized as threatened according to the HELCOM Red List' by testing the categorization of conservation measures proposed by the Meeting ([Outcome](#) STATE & CONSERVATION 5-2016, Annex 3), and by updating the inventory of national conservation plans for species and biomes threatened according to the HELCOM Red Lists.

The Contracting Parties are invited to update the living document on the inventory of national conservation plans (document to be submitted later).

Contracting Parties are invited to report missing and additional information on national conservation plans to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) as it becomes available (template available upon request).

STATE & CONSERVATION 7-2017 set up a drafting group to identify possible next steps for development of a guiding document for the preparation of conservation plans lead by Sweden and agreed that the outcome should be used as a basis for discussion on next steps to be discussed at STATE & CONSERVATION 8-2018.

The Meeting is invited to consider the outcome of the drafting group on regional cooperation for conservation measures (document 3N-2), take note of information on progress by Sweden and Finland on grayling and Germany and Poland on sturgeon, and discuss the way forward.

- b) Follow-up of action 'Introduce and/or update national legislation or, if more appropriate, choose different kinds of instruments (such as incentives, administrative actions or negotiated agreements), to provide for effective protection of relevant HELCOM threatened species'

Contracting Parties are invited to inform the Meeting on the use of any instruments, other than legislation, which have been used nationally to increase the effectiveness of protection for HELCOM threatened species.

- c) Follow-up of action 'Including HELCOM list of threatened species in EIA procedures in order to mitigate or limit pressures or impacts inflicted on threatened species'

Contracting Parties are invited to share any information with the Meeting on national work in relation to this action.

- d) Follow-up of action 'Selection as new or expanded MPAs for the conservation of HELCOM threatened species with the aim to improve connectivity between populations and key areas along migration routes'

The Meeting is invited to take note of the published material on connectivity of key species in the Baltic Sea produced under the BONUS program.

Contracting Parties are invited to share information on any ongoing national or project work related to connectivity between populations and areas.

- e) Follow-up of action 'Identify and/or map areas of ecological significance for individual or groups of HELCOM threatened species, also in order to support maritime spatial planning based on the ecosystem approach'

The Meeting will be informed about the outcome of the CBD Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA) in the Baltic Sea, which took place on 19-24 February 2018 (document to be submitted later).

- f) Follow-up of action 'Take measures to reduce transboundary pressures and/or impacts on HELCOM threatened migrating species'

The Contracting Parties are invited to share information with the Meeting on, or express their interest in, any transboundary efforts to reduce the pressures and/or impacts on threatened migrating species.

- g) Follow-up of action 'Encourage other international organizations or bodies to promote and strive for taking all appropriate measures in areas of their specific competence'
- h) Follow-up of action 'Improve the exchange of data on HELCOM threatened species between HELCOM and other international and national bodies that produce or use similar data in order to create synergies'

The Meeting will be informed on the planned work for a region wide database on species.

Agenda Item 4N Plans for implementation of the work plan and emerging issues

The Meeting is invited to discuss any further plans relating to implementing the work plan and/or identifying emerging issues.

Agenda Item 5N Any other business

The Meeting is invited to discuss any other business related to the themes of nature conservation and biodiversity.

Agenda Item 6N Outcome of the Nature conservation session

A draft Outcome with main decisions will be prepared by the Secretariat for consideration and approval by the attendants of the nature conservation session of the Meeting.