



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
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Agenda Item	2J – Matters arising from other HELCOM projects and assessments
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Submitted by	Secretariat
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Background

Pressure 3-2015 considered and agreed on the revised Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Expert Network on Marine Litter (Annex 2 to the Outcome). The Meeting agreed that the Terms of Reference may be amended in the future as work progresses, and noted it will be presented to the next meeting of the State and Conservation WG.

This document includes the Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Expert Network on Marine Litter.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

HELCOM Expert Network on Marine Litter Terms of Reference (ToR)

The call for establishing this network has been raised through the need to (i) facilitate the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and (ii) develop core indicators to be used for the second HELCOM holistic assessment of the ecosystem health.

The duties of the expert network are detailed in the following sections to be fulfilled in the period 2015-2018. PRESSURE will regularly revisit the progress of the work according to these ToR and will consider arrangements for further work beyond 2018.

Facilitate the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter

As part of the work of the Pressure Working Group and in cooperation with Maritime Working Groups and other groups as appropriate the HELCOM EN-Marine litter will>

1. Provide its expertise for the Pressure WG to organize and facilitate practical implementation of the regional actions in HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 and follow-up. More specifically, the HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will support and cooperate with the Lead Parties for the individual regional actions.
2. Will seek synergies with other Regional Seas Conventions, namely OSPAR and Barcelona Convention, in implementation of actions of common interest;
3. Provide expert input, as may be requested by e.g. Maritime WG, on relevant measures to reduce the sources and impacts of marine litter in the HELCOM area.

Monitoring and assessment

The HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will:

1. Act as the platform for discussion and review of HELCOM indicators on marine litter being developed by Lead Countries and appointed experts as part of the work by State and Conservation Working Group. More specifically, the HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will support Lead Countries in the further development of HELCOM indicators on marine litter, namely,
 - a. development of a GES-boundary for the pre-core indicator 'Beach litter' with the aim of adoption by the end of 2016 at the latest;
 - b. development of monitoring guidelines to enable coordinated monitoring of beach litter;
 - c. assay existing methods and develop regionally coordinated monitoring programmes for the candidate indicator 'Microlitter in the water column' aiming at shifting it to pre-core indicator and eventually to core indicator;
 - d. assay existing methods and develop regionally coordinated monitoring programmes and collect existing data for the candidate indicator 'Litter on the seafloor' aiming at shifting it to pre-core indicator and eventually to core indicator;
2. Update the indicator reports at regular intervals as decided in HELCOM. The HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will update the indicators reports on marine litter by mid-2017 and further update the reports as relevant by mid-2018, or as otherwise agreed in the HOLAS II project;
3. Ensure timely and quality assured delivery of indicator based assessments of marine litter. The HELCOM EN-Marine Litter will provide the expert input needed in order to deliver the thematic assessment on marine litter within the framework of the HOLAS II project by mid-2017 and to the further update of the assessment following the planned national consultation period leading up to the updated assessment to be delivered mid-2018;
4. Will seek synergies with other Regional Seas Conventions, namely OSPAR and Barcelona Convention, regarding monitoring and assessment; Will investigate outcomes of the studies and pilot activities across Europe related to monitoring of litter in rivers and scope for the river and sea monitoring harmonization

once experts on this issue have been nominated to the EN. Timing for this activity still need to be discussed.

The network consists of experts nominated by Contracting Parties and will be open to Observers according to HELCOM procedures.

The expert network will function as a joint network of Pressure WG and State and Conservation WG receiving guidance from both HELCOM working groups according to their mandates (Pressure WG overall coordination of the RAP ML; State and Conservation indicators, monitoring and assessment) and providing support to other groups, in particular Maritime WG, as may be requested.

The nominated experts will be invited to meet in the framework of meetings of Pressure WG and State and Conservation WG, to be chaired by the Chair/Co-Chairs of these Working Groups, respectively. The expert network is encouraged to work as much as possible via correspondence. However separate physical meetings can be organized if needed.

The HELCOM Secretariat will provide administrative support to the network.