



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
3-2015

Helsinki, Finland, 9-13 November, 2015

Document title	Lead and assisting countries for HELCOM Monitoring Programme topics
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Category	INF
Agenda Item	2MA – Revision of HELCOM monitoring
Submission date	15.9.2015
Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

The review of the COMBINE manual and need to develop new monitoring guidelines from topics where this is missing was discussed at the second meeting of State and Conservation. A Lead Country approach was agreed for the review and development of specific HELCOM monitoring guidelines. The role of Lead Countries is to review the existing guidelines, taking into account the information on [current use of monitoring guidelines provided by Contracting Parties through the previous reporting request](#), and to present a proposal on how the guidelines could be updated to State and Conservation 3-2015. The Lead and assisting countries for specific HELCOM monitoring guidelines are outlined in this document.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the Lead and assisting countries for the HELCOM Monitoring Programme topics and consider how to take forward the development of those topics that are lacking a Lead/assisting country.

The Lead Countries for monitoring guidelines are invited to present the outcome of the review of the existing guidelines and propose how the guidelines can be updated and provide this information to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) **by 19 October 2015**.

Estonia is invited to review and propose a general text and associated references to substitute Part B Annex B1-B5 of the current COMBINE manual.

Lead and assisting countries for HELCOM Monitoring Programme topics

Programme topic	Sub-programmes	Lead country/Need for review
Birds	Marine wintering birds abundance and distribution	No need for review
	Marine breeding birds abundance and distribution	ICES/OSPAR/HELCOM JWG Birds
	Marine bird health	Lead: Sweden
Mammals	Seal abundance	No need for review
	Health status	Lead: Sweden
	Harbor porpoise abundance	Not concluded. Existing harbour porpoise surveys in the Belt Sea use an established protocol . To be referred to as HELCOM monitoring guidelines? No regular monitoring in the Baltic Proper at this time.
Fish, shellfish and fisheries	Coastal fish	No need for review
	Migratory fish	No need for review
	Offshore fish	No need for review
	Commercial shellfish	Not concluded. Nephrops are monitored through ICES coordinated Nephrops underwater TV surveys . Monitoring of bivalve populations is not coordinated Baltic wide.
	Fisheries by-catch	Not concluded. A strategy is needed for acquiring accurate by-catch data. New requirements under the revised DCF should be considered. Proposed to be taken forward in cooperation with Fish Group.
Hydrography	Water column hydrological characteristics (temperature, salinity, transparency, turbidity)	Lead: Sweden Use of satellite data: Estonia and Finland
	Water column physical characteristics (waves, currents, sea level)	Lead: Sweden Use of satellite data: Estonia and Finland
	Ice	No need for review
Hydrochemistry	Water column chemical characteristics (O ₂ , pH, pCO ₂ , H ₂ S)	Lead: Sweden
	Nutrients	Lead: Sweden
Phytoplankton	Phytoplankton – Pigments	Lead: Sweden and Finland Use of satellite data: Finland
	Phytoplankton - Species composition, abundance and biomass	No need for review
Zooplankton	Zooplankton - Species composition, abundance and biomass	Review ongoing by ZEN-QAI
Seabed habitat distribution and extent	Habitat-forming species and substrates	HELCOM intersessional network of benthic experts, considering
	Seabed habitat physical characteristics	HELCOM intersessional network of benthic experts
Species distribution and abundance (benthic community)	Hardbottom Species	Lacking lead and assisting countries.
	Softbottom fauna	Lead: Finland
	Softbottom flora	Monitoring guidelines are proposed to be developed linked to the tentative development of indicators on softbottom flora.

Programme topic	Sub-programmes	Lead country/Need for review
Non-indigenous species	Non-indigenous species ¹	Lead: Lithuania Assisting country: Germany
Inputs	Nutrient inputs from atmosphere	No need for review
	Nutrient inputs from landbased sources	Guidelines are being revised within the PLC-6 project and will be published during Spring 2015.
	Contaminant inputs from atmosphere	No need for review
	Contaminant inputs from landbased sources	Guidelines are being revised within the PLC-6 project and will be published during Spring 2015.
	Acute pollution	No need for review
Concentration of contaminants	Contaminants in water	Lead: Germany
	Contaminants in sediment	Lead: Germany Co-lead: Poland
	Contaminants in biota	Lead: Germany Co-lead: Poland and Sweden
Biological effects of contaminants	TBT /imposex	Sweden
Contaminants in seafood	Contaminants in seafood	CPs to inform on national approaches/links between environmental and health authorities.
Litter	Macrolitter characteristics and abundance/volume	Proposed to be taken forward by Lead Countries working on the development of marine litter indicators.
	Microlitter particle abundance and characteristics	State and Conservation 2-2015 considered it too early to develop guidelines for microlitter particles.
Underwater noise	Ambient noise (no info yet)	Not yet monitored. Monitoring guidelines proposed to be developed linked to the development of indicators and tentative monitoring programme of noise. Recommendations will be provided by the BIAS project.
	Registry of impulsive sounds (no info yet)	As above
Benthic Physical loss and damage	No info yet	To be elaborated

¹ Note that [agreed HELCOM port monitoring protocol exists](#) and is currently being updated. What is lacking is a common approach for reporting and using information on non-indigenous species from regular biological monitoring programmes such as for phytoplankton, zooplankton, macrophytes, benthic fauna.