



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Expert Group on environmental risks of hazardous
submerged objects
Berlin, Germany, 4 May 2018

SUBMERGED 6-2018

Outcome of the 6th Meeting of the Expert Group on environmental risks of hazardous submerged
objects (SUBMERGED 6-2018)

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Outcome of the Sixth Meeting of the HELCOM Expert Group on
environmental risks of hazardous submerged objects (SUBMERGED 6-2018)

Introduction

0.1 In accordance with the outcome of SUBMERGED 5-2016 and intersessional consultations with the Co-Chairs, the Sixth Meeting of the HELCOM SUBMERGED Expert Group (HELCOM SUBMERGED 6-2018) was held on 4 May 2018 in Berlin, Germany, at the premises of Schleswig-Holstein Representation to the German Federal Government.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by representatives from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden. The List of Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.3 The Sixth Meeting of SUBMERGED focused on considering the current status of the draft SUBMERGED Assessment and developing a work plan for its finalization.

0.4 The Meeting was welcomed by State Secretary Ingbert Liebing, Representative of the State of Schleswig-Holstein to the German Federation, and Mr. Jens Sternheim on behalf of the host, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

0.5 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Jens Sternheim, Co-Chair of SUBMERGED for munitions. Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary, acted as Secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1, 1-2

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda as contained in document 1-1.

Agenda Item 2 Matters arising from other HELCOM meetings and ongoing HELCOM work

Documents: 2-1, 2-2

2.1 The Meeting recalled the Outcome of SUBMERGED 5-2016 (document 2-1). The Meeting further recalled that HOD 50 had approved the prolongation of the work of the SUBMERGED Expert Group until the end of 2018 with the change that for clarity the Group moves from standing Chairs to topic chairmanship, using the currently identified topic leads (munitions: Germany and Poland, wrecks: Finland) as rotating Chairs.

2.2 The meeting noted that representatives from Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia have not attended SUBMERGED meetings, leading to significant challenges in obtaining complete information about submerged objects in the Baltic Sea.

2.3 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of other HELCOM processes and meetings of relevance to the SUBMERGED Expert Group, as presented by the Secretariat, e.g.:

- HELCOM RESPONSE 24-2018;
- HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2018; and
- HELCOM 39.

2.4 The Meeting took note that RESPONSE 24-2018 had noted that the responsibility for wrecks in some countries lies with other authorities than the pollution response responsibility. RESPONSE 24 had thus requested one of the Co-Chairs of SUBMERGED to take part in the HELCOM MARITIME 18-2018 meeting to inform about SUBMERGED information requests.

2.5 The Meeting took note of document 2-2 (Secretariat) containing information on the HELCOM Maritime Assessment 2018 which was published on 9 March 2018. Members of the SUBMERGED Expert

Group have contributed to the development of Chapter 18, which contains an overview of submerged hazardous objects in the Baltic Sea.

Agenda Item 3 HELCOM SUBMERGED Assessment

3.1 The Meeting took note of a presentation by Sweden (**Presentation 1**) on the common complete picture of dumped munitions, mines and wrecks in the Baltic Sea, showing that information on the presence of such items is still missing in particular from Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia.

3.2 In this context, Finland informed that data on the presence of wrecks in Finland exists, but is classified. Work is ongoing for declassification to enable inclusion in the SUBMERGED Assessment.

3.3 The meeting took note of a presentation by Germany (**Presentation 2**) on work being undertaken to chart submerged munitions in German waters.

3.4 The Meeting took note of a presentation by Poland (**Presentation 3**) on dangerous shipwrecks in the Gdansk Bay.

3.5 The Meeting agreed that while lots of scientific information is available, the gap between the scientific research and the policy makers within the HELCOM framework would need to be bridged, in order to facilitate actions to mitigate the problems related to submerged hazardous objects.

a. Review of the current structure

3.6 The Meeting took note of the current overall status and structure of the SUBMERGED Assessment, as presented by the Secretariat and the topic chairs (the current material for the SUBMERGED Assessment can be found in the [SUBMERGED Workspace](#)).

b. Content of chapters on underwater munitions

3.7 The Meeting considered the current content of the draft chapters on underwater munitions and noted that progress has not been made since SUBMERGED 5-2016.

c. Content of the midterm symposium of UDEMM

3.8 The Meeting took note of the outcome of the scientific International Symposium for sea-dumped munition and UXO, held jointly by UDEMM (<https://udemmm.geomar.de/>) and DAIMON (<https://www.daimonproject.com/>) projects on 2-4 May 2018, back-to-back with SUBMERGED 6-2018.

d. Hints from the DAIMON Project

3.9 The Meeting took note of a presentation regarding preliminary results of the DAIMON Project (**Presentation 4**).

e. Human activity map on EMODnet

3.10 The Meeting took note of the relatively recent EMODnet Human Activities portal that was initiated in 2013 (<http://www.emodnet.eu/human-activities>), offering access to different datasets, e.g. waste disposal.

f. NATO, JPI-O and US activities

3.11 The Meeting took note of information on the recent developments regarding the joint action “Munitions in the Sea” (JPI-O) and “Sea Dumped Munitions and Environmental Risk” (NATO Science & Technology Organization) as well as the most recent outcomes of “Munitions Underwater” (US DoD’s Environmental Research Programs).

Agenda Item 4 Work plan for the finalization of the HELCOM SUBMERGED Assessment

Documents: 4-1

4.1 The Meeting took note of the list of official contacts of the SUBMERGED group as nominated by competent Ministries of the coastal countries (document 4-1) and updated it as contained in **Annex 2**.

4.2 The Meeting considered the future work and plan for the finalization of the HELCOM SUBMERGED Assessment.

4.3 There were views that the SUBMERGED Assessment should be finalized in 2018 as planned, noting also that the completion date as agreed by the HELCOM 2013 Ministerial Meeting was already 2015.

4.4 On the other hand, it was pointed out, that a number of ongoing projects, in particular DAIMON, UdEMM and ROBEMM will be able to fill many of the current knowledge gaps in 2019, and that it could therefore be beneficial not to finalize the Assessment before the outcomes of those projects are available.

4.5 Following extensive discussion, it was agreed that an interim HELCOM SUBMERGED Assessment should be submitted to RESPONSE 25-2018, and subsequently to HELCOM HOD 55 in December 2018 for approval. The intention would be to see this interim Assessment as a living document and to update it as soon as new information is available, starting with an update when the outcomes from the relevant projects can be incorporated in the Assessment (to be expected by mid-2019). The Meeting agreed that RESPONSE 25 would consider and HOD 55 should decide whether the work should continue through the prolongation of the mandate of the SUBMERGED Expert Group or through other arrangements such as ad hoc workshops or correspondence.

4.6 The Meeting agreed that consideration of the matter by the Heads of Delegation would also provide an important opportunity of bridging the gap between the scientific expertise and the decision making process on the political level.

4.7 The Meeting agreed that the Co-Chairs would be responsible for finalization of the chapters on wrecks and munitions, respectively, and that they would liaise with the Secretariat for assistance, as appropriate.

Agenda Item 5 Next meeting

5.1 The Meeting tentatively agreed that the next SUBMERGED meeting would be held on 12 November 2018 in Rostock-Warnemünde, Germany, back to back with the BALEX DELTA 2018 project After Action Review and RESPONSE 25-2018, subject to confirmation from the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME) Germany.

Agenda Item 6 Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 6-1

6.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting (document 6-1). The final Outcome, including the Annexes, will be prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Meeting and made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal.

Annex 1 List of Participants

Name	Representing	Organization	E-mail
Marit Mätik	Estonia	Estonian Ministry of the Interior	marit.matik@siseministeerium.ee
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HELCOM Secretariat			
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Annex 2 List of SUBMERGED Contacts

Representing	Name	Organisation	E-mail address
Contracting Parties			
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