



Outcome of the third HELCOM Workshop on implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (WS RAP ML 3-2018)

Introduction

Referring to the Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018 ([para. 3.29](#)) the Workshop on implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (WS RAP ML 3-2018) was held in Riga, Latvia, on 9 October 2018. The Workshop was held back to back with the Ninth Meeting of the HELCOM Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area (PRESSURE 9-2018) on 10-12 October.

The workshop aimed to identify the state of the implementation of particular actions of the HELCOM RAP ML ([HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#)) and discuss lessons learned from their on-going implementation. Representatives of the HELCOM countries and Observers, scientific and public organizations as well as other stakeholders were invited to discuss:

- the progress achieved in the implementation of the particular regional actions and their current implementation status according to the results envisaged in the RAP ML (lead countries and co-leaders to present);
- encountered constraints and barriers hindering implementation of the regional actions;
- suggestions for possible practical solutions to overcome encountered obstacles and future perspectives to accomplish the actions;
- proposals for joint HELCOM activities to facilitate the accomplishment of the actions and achieving their implementation goals.

The Workshop was attended by representatives of all HELCOM Contracting Parties except for EU and Lithuania, and Observers from CCB, KIMO International, PlasticsEurope Polska, WWF Poland and WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme. Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife participated as invited guest to the Workshop. The list of Workshop Participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

The Workshop was moderated by Mr. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Professional Secretary, and Ms. Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary and Ms. Marta Ruiz, Associate Professional Secretary acted as secretaries of the Workshop.

Ms Silviya Nora Kalnins, Deputy Director of the Department of Environmental Protection of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and Ms. Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Executive Secretary welcomed participants.

Setting the scene

1. The Workshop took note of the following information by the Secretariat (**Presentation 1**):
 - Current status of the RAP ML implementation and commitments of the Ministerial Declaration 2018;
 - Outcome of the Fifth European Regional Seas Coordination Meeting on the Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Regional/Action Plans on Marine Litter held in Vrachati, Greece, on 4-5 July 2018;
 - Analysis of the linkages between the RAP on ML and the EU Plastic Strategy (document 1-4).

2. The Workshop took note of additional information on the BSAP update process as provided by the Executive Secretary.
3. The Workshop took note that the ecological objectives and management objectives for different sectors are to be included in the BSAP update.

Actions on land based sources

General improved waste prevention and management

4. In relation to action RL3. (Lead country - Germany) on sharing best practice on waste management, the Workshop took note of the update information as contained in **Presentation 2** by Germany. The link between action RL3 and the Waste Directive EU 2018/851 was pointed out. The questionnaire on waste management for the OSPAR area that may be applicable to the HELCOM area was presented, which is linked to the Top litter items identified in the OSPAR area.
5. The Workshop discussed the possibility of jointly addressing RL1, RL2 and RL3.
6. The Workshop agreed that Germany will prepare a questionnaire for HELCOM countries based on the OSPAR experience, to compile background information for drafting HELCOM guidelines on best practice on waste management to prevent waste turn into marine litter (RL3) and probably addressing cleaning and collection systems to prevent litter from land entering the aquatic environment (RL2) and marine litter references in waste management plans (RL1). Germany will draft the questionnaire by **23 October**, which will be then submitted to EN-Marine Litter for further input and commenting by **13 November** with subsequent endorsement by PRESSURE via correspondence. Results of the questionnaire will be submitted to PRESSURE 10-2019 for consideration.
7. The Workshop took note of the outcome of the HELCOM-Interreg workshop on marine litter and eco-design held on 15 June 2018 in Berlin, Germany (document 2-3), and discussed the “Principles for design reducing/preventing marine litter” steamed from the workshop.
8. The Workshop took note of the Swedish update in connection to actions RL 1, RL2, RL4, RL5, RL6 and RL7 as contained in document 2-2 to be used when the respective actions are considered by the Workshop.
9. The Workshop took note of the Finnish challenge competition where stakeholders from different sectors participated, and nearly 100 different ideas on how to reduce the litter entering the sea were provided. A project studying degradation of bio-based replacing materials has recently been launched.
10. The Workshop took note that a coordination meeting between different institutions government will be held in Estonia, in November 2018.
11. The Workshop was of the view that principles listed in the document 2-3 are a good bases for further development in cooperation with designers and industry and that there is a need to compile relevant national information. Additional discussion is foreseen in terms of resources availability and identification of the final product of action RL5. Germany offered to investigate the possibility to present HELCOM work on action RL5 in the “[Design for Sustainability 2018](#)” event to be held on 11-12 December in London, UK.
12. The Workshop discussed other than micro-litter aspects of storm water management to prevent marine litter to enter the marine environment from heavy weather events (RL4), and took note that there was no additional information to share. The Workshop agreed to consider micro-litter and the measures to prevent its release to the marine environment with storm water in connection with action RL7.

Measures to tackle top items

13. The Workshop welcomed that the “FanLESStic-Sea – Initiatives to remove microplastics before they enter the sea” project application submitted to the 3rd call of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme has been recently approved, and that the project is to start on 1 January 2019. The project will contribute to actions RL4, RL6 and RL7 of the RAP ML.
14. The Workshop took note that the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics held on 29-31 May in Nairobi, Kenya is now [available](#). The Meeting

- took note of additional information provided by Sweden of the proposal made during the meeting of developing a new architecture to tackle marine litter and microplastics based on three pillars: the Regional Seas Conventions, the Basel Convention and a new platform to work on waste stream pollution.
15. The Workshop took note of the outcome of the “Baltic Solutions for Plastic Pollution” Workshop co-organised by IUCN and CCB, held in Riga, Latvia on 8 October 2019. The feedback from HELCOM countries in the further development of the project was encouraged. Also, the on-going work at EU level in connection to the proposal of directive on the single use plastic items as well as microplastics restrictions in the ECHA framework was commented. The need for more visibility in HELCOM countries of the HELCOM RAP ML was pointed out. A suggestion was made to make the results of research outcomes available. Documentation from the workshop will be available in the CCB website.
 16. The Workshop took note of the presentation by Sweden on their national case study on monitoring microplastics in different matrices as well as identification of sources of microplastics (**Presentation 3**, in connection to action RL6 and RL7).
 17. The Workshop took note that in Germany storm water and sewage sludge have been identified as the main sources of microplastics rather than wastewater from WWTPs.
 18. The Workshop took note of the information by Finland that the PhD thesis of J. Talvitie “Wastewater treatment plants as pathways of microlitter to the aquatic environment” (2018) is [available](#).
 19. Closing the discussion on the state of knowledge base on micro-litter in the Baltic Sea region, the Workshop welcomed the offer by CCB to produce an initial draft of revised HELCOM Recommendations on waste and storm water management intended to integrate into these Recommendations specific requirements concerning prevention of micro litter with support by the FanPLESStic-Sea project. HELCOM countries will provide national available information.
 20. The Workshop took note of the information from Poland that the final report on the assessment of the importance of sewage related waste coming from the upstream waste flow RL8 is to be ready by the end of 2018. The Workshop agreed that the Secretariat will investigate the possibilities how to share the report with River and River Basin Commissions once the report is available. The Workshop discussed how to conclude this action and agreed that with this approach the action will be considered concluded. This also might be a starting point for implementation of the action RL13.
 21. The Workshop discussed potential tools for regional coordination of the activity to reduce the use of plastic bags including regular national reporting as part of action RL10.
 22. The Workshop took note of the views by Germany that there may be a need of further consideration on the effectiveness of additional reduction measures to those included in the EU framework.
 23. In relation to action RL9, the Workshop took note of the status of the Danish project survey of EPS in the Baltic Sea (**Presentation 4**).
 24. The Workshop welcomed the work conducted on action RL9, and invited countries to contribute to the questionnaires. The Workshop also took note that a draft report will be subject of a commenting round by all interested parties in December. The final report will be available in March 2019. It will include a catalogue of measures and alternatives to the use of EPS.
 25. The Workshop discussed a future plan to accomplish action RL9 and its final outcome and agreed to come back to this issue once the report is available.
 26. Regarding action RL11 on cooperation on the establishment and/or further development of deposit refund systems, the Workshop took note of the information by Estonia that no further progress has been made on this action. The Workshop was of the view that there is a need to continue working on this action to encourage cooperation.

Actions addressing third parties

27. The Workshop discussed the organization of the exchange of experience on best practices to prevent litter from river streams entering the marine environment and communication with River basin

- management authorities (RL13). The Meeting took note of the information from Finland that feedback from the Blastic project, which will be available at the end of the year, is envisaged.
28. The Workshop discussed which criteria, related to mitigation littering, might be promoted for inclusion in international certification systems (RL12). The Workshop identified fora as relevant to communicate with (e.g. flue flag scheme and Nord Swan criteria for cosmetics).
 29. In relation to action RL14 on landfills which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment, the Workshop agreed to repeat the questionnaire prepared by Estonia in 2016 and conclude on accomplishment of the action based on the summary report prepared by the lead country. The Workshop encouraged all countries to respond to the questionnaire.
 30. The Workshop welcomed the information on beach clean-up campaigns organized in 2018 in Russia as well as in some other HELCOM countries (document 2-1 and video presentation).
 31. The Workshop took note of Latvian presentation (**Presentation 5**) on their experiences and wrap up of the outcomes of the seven years of monitoring and how they use this information not only as a data set but also for public awareness raising and engagement of the municipalities. Over forty sites are monitored during the summer season. Within the Blastic project litter sinks are being mapped and flows and prioritizing the issues at municipal level for further implementation of municipal waste management. It was encouraged to adopt a beach at regional level.
 32. The Workshop took note of the information shared by Estonia and Germany on the “World Cleanup Day 2018” held on 15 September, supported by the “Let’s do it” movement. Estonia proposed HELCOM to be an annual carrier of one of this clean-up beaches events.
 33. The Workshop discussed the need of regional coordination of the cleaning actions (RL15) and was of the view that there is a need to make these activities more visual.

Actions on sea based sources

Actions addressing shipping related waste

34. The Workshop took note of the information from Finland on the state of the report that collects a best practice - model on recycling of ELB (End-of-Life boats) (action RS1, **Presentation 6**). The Workshop agreed to invite countries to provide feedback on the following issues to Finland (Hanna Haaksi, hanna.haaksi@pssry.fi):
 - Number of boats: How many leisure boats (from 2,5 m to 24 m in length) are there in your country? Where is this number derived from and when was it estimated? Is there a boat register in your country? If a register exists, is the data available somewhere? please indicate where
 - Legislation: How are ELB’s treated in your national legislation? If they are not mentioned or treated, please indicate this too.
 - Waste flow calculations: Are any waste flow calculations made in your country in regards of ELB’s? How many ELB’s will be in need of dismantling in the near future (5 years, 10 years, 15 years’)?
 - Practices and FRP recycling/reuse: How are ELB’s dismantled and disposed in your country? Is there a FRP recycling or reusing scheme in place? If a scheme is in place, please describe it.
 - Any other information on the matter that would be useful in fulfilling action RS1.
35. The Workshop agreed to invite countries to reply to the questionnaire by the end of **December 2018**. Subsequently, a report summarising the outcome of the questionnaire will be submitted for consideration to PRESSURE 9-2019.
36. The Workshop took note of the information from Sweden on national funding for recycling of recreational boats (document 3-1 and **Presentation 7**), and that an update from the recycling of recreational boats is not yet available.
37. The Workshop took note of the information from Germany that by way of a follow-up to the “Analysis of penalties and fines issued by OSPAR and HELCOM Contracting Parties for waste disposal offences at sea” it is planned to organise a seminar with the participation of interested CP as well as other relevant

stakeholders (action RS2). The seminar, “Prevention of and sanctions on illegal waste disposal from ships at sea”, is scheduled to take place 29-30 November 2018 in Berlin, Germany. The seminar is supported by the Network of Prosecutors on Environmental Crime in the Baltic Sea Region (ENPRO) and the North Sea Network of Prosecutors and Investigators (NSN). The seminar is planned for 50-60 participants. Registration is open until the 15 of October (details on registration can be found in the “save-the-date” information submitted to PRESSURE 9-2018 as [document 4-4](#)).

38. The Workshop took note that MARITIME 18-2018 took note of the information on HELCOM activities to tackle marine litter pollution ([document 6-1](#)), considered possible contribution to the RAP on ML, in particular with regard to actions RS2, RS3 and RS4 and agreed that marine litter is an important issue and to postpone further contribution to this work from the Maritime Group, and that it should be aligned with the work to be conducted in IMO. The meeting also agreed to share the outcome of the discussion on this issue with this Workshop ([Outcome of MARITIME 18-2018](#), para. 6.8-6.11).

Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture

39. In relation to action RS5, the Workshop took note of the Swedish approach proposal to address fishing gear together with a report on “Survey on Harbour Reception Facilities at selected Baltic Sea fishing harbours” conducted by Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy in the frame of the MARELITT Baltic project (document 3-2).
40. The Workshop took note of the presentation by WWF Poland on the implementation status of the ‘MARELITT Baltic project as well as the idea of a follow-up project (“Baltic Sea Blueprint”) (**Presentation 8**). The Workshop welcomed the work conducted as well as the idea of the follow-up project. The Workshop agreed to nationally explore the possibility of joining the project proposal consortium and inform WWF Poland (Ms. Sylwia Migdal, smigdal@wwf.pl) accordingly. Initial positive feedback was provided by Latvia and Russia.
41. The Workshop considered the overview of the results of the regional questionnaire to compile information on national activities with regard to ALDFG (in connection with actions RS6, RS7, RS10, RS11 and RS12) (document 3-3 Rev 1), but due to time constraints was not in the position to provide suggestions for PRESSURE 9-2018 regarding further regional actions on ALDFG.

Remediation and removal measures

42. The Workshop took note of the information on implementation of the action on mapping snagging sites and a risk assessment for identifying where accumulation of ghost nets pose a threat to the environment (RS10) and suggested to investigate technical solutions to reflect maps prepared by MARILITTE project in HELCOM Map and Data service.
43. The Workshop took note that the Swedish ghost net reporting tool for recreational fishers and the public is to be available by the end of 2018.

Actions on education and outreach

44. The Workshop discussed actions on education and outreach in connection with action RL 15.

Further work to achieve RAP ML targets

RAP ML follow up tool

45. The Workshop considered the proposal to organize the information contained in the follow-up table of the implementation of the RAP ML as contained in document 4-1, and agreed to submit it to PRESSURE for consideration.

46. The Workshop considered the evaluation of the implementation of the RAP ML as contained in the attachment to document 4-1, and agreed to provide additional information if need to the Secretariat by **30 October 2018**.
47. The Workshop agreed that there is a need to continue holding regular Workshops on implementation of the RAP ML. Participants suggested to select themes for the next workshop based on the suggestions by countries and prioritization of actions. The actions without leadership should also be considered to identify reasons of not implementing and find way for future progress.

Wrap up and closing of the Workshop

48. The Workshop agreed to submit the outcome of the Workshop to PRESSURE 9-2018 for consideration.

Annex 1 List of Participants

Representing	Name	Organisation	Email address
Moderator			
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Contracting Parties			
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