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## Background

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) will be held in Riga, Latvia, on 9 October 2018. The Workshop will be 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) to be held on 10-12 October.

The Workshop will be opened **at 10.00 on Tuesday, 9 October**, and it is expected to terminate **by 17:00 on the same day**. The Workshop will be held at the premises of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia (Peldu iela 25, Riga).

Almost 3 years has passed since the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter was enacted by [HELCOM Recommendation 36/1](#). Nonetheless, the matter remains on top of the global political agenda as well as the regional one. It was prominently illustrated by the outcomes of the debates at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting Brussels 2018 where five Member States identified prevention of marine litter as one of the priority aspects of the protection of the Baltic Sea environment. The HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 recognized marine litter as a pressure of special concern and stressed the importance of eliminating discharges of litter from land and sea-based sources to the Baltic Sea.

The HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 paid special attention on the plastic pollution of the marine environment, including also micro-plastics. The Ministers committed development of appropriate measures to address micro-plastics in riverine inputs, urban waste water effluents as well as storm water based on an increased knowledge on the scale of the problem.

In general, the Ministers univocally expressed determination to combat marine litter through coordinated implementation of the HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML).

The aim of the Workshop is 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 will be 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 evaluation of the implementation of the RAP ML and proposed joint activities to facilitate the implementation of the particular regional actions from RAP ML will be submitted to PRESSURE 9-2018 for consideration and endorsement.

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## Annotations to the Provisional Agenda

### Implementation of the regional actions of the RAP ML.

#### Setting the scene

A brief overview of the current status of the RAP ML implementation will be given by the Secretariat.

The Workshop will be informed of the outcome of the 5th European Regional Seas Coordination Meeting on the Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Regional/Action Plans on Marine Litter held on 4-5 July 2018, in Vrachati, Greece (by the Secretariat).

The “State of the Baltic Sea – 2018” report states that the most frequently occurring beach litter items at Baltic Sea scale are attributed to eating, drinking or smoking activities, such as food wrappings, bottles or lids, as well as plastic pieces of different sizes. These items are common in all parts of the Baltic Sea, together with items related to industrial packaging, such as sheeting, strapping bands and masking tape (based on data from fifteen sub-basins) ([Outcome of HOD 54-2018](#), para. 4.21 and [document 4-16](#)).

The European Commission adopted on 16th January 2018 its Strategy for Plastics ([Strategy](#) and [Annexes](#)). Among other issues, it envisages reduction options for single use plastic items. Specifically, [Annex 2](#) of the Strategy contains “List of measures recommended to national authorities and industry” where key measures encouraged for regional authorities to conduct are listed. The Workshop is invited to consider an analysis of the linkages between the actions in the RAP on ML and the list of encouraged actions to regional authorities contained in the EU Plastic Strategy in relation to the most frequently occurring beach litter items at Baltic Sea scale (document to be submitted later).

#### Session 1. Actions on land based sources

##### General improved waste prevention and management

**RL3. (Lead country - Germany).** Share best practice on waste management in order to identify and address loopholes that makes waste turn into marine litter, including the issue of landfills, regulations and enforcement.

Germany may wish to inform on a questionnaire on waste management for the OSPAR area that may be applicable to the HELCOM area ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.32);

Finland is invited to inform of the results of a national survey on the sources of macro-litter and identification of loopholes for waste in recycling facilities.

The Workshop is invited to inform of the national activities contributing into the implementation of the action and propose joint activities to advance the implementation and contribute into the implementation of RL3.

**RL5. (Lead country - Germany).** Establish a dialogue and negotiate on solutions with business and industry to (i) develop design improvements that reduce the negative impacts of products entering the marine environment, and (ii) reduce over- packaging and promote wise packaging.

Germany may wish to inform on the outcome of the HELCOM-Interreg Workshop on Marine Litter and Ecodesign held on 15 June 2018 in Berlin (PRESSURE 8-2018, [document 3-2](#)).

Finland and Sweden might wish to contribute with information on on-going national activities.

The Workshop is invited to inform on national initiatives including those taken by the private sector contributing into the implementation of the action.

## Actions without leadership

RL1. Prepare and agree on HELCOM guidelines on marine litter.

Sweden and Germany are contributing. Participants are invited to discuss further steps to elaborate the guidelines and end elaborate practical proposals for PRESSURE WG to include their drafting into PRESSURE's Work Plan. The outcomes of RL3 might be utilized as a starting point.

RL2. Provide HELCOM guidelines on best practice routines with regard to cleaning and collection systems to prevent litter from land entering the aquatic environment.

There is neither leadership nor contributors to this action. The implementation might be considered in connection with RL1 as a part of waste prevention and waste management plans.

RL4. Improvement of storm water management in order to prevent litter, including microlitter, to enter the marine environment from heavy weather events.

Sweden and CCB expressed their will to contribute into the implementation of this action. Finland and Germany may also wish to inform of the results of national and international projects.

Since the contributors are mainly addressing micro-litter and the measures to prevent its release to the marine environment with storm water, the Workshop is invited to consider this aspect of the action's implementation together with action RL7. The Workshop is invited to discuss other than micro-litter aspects of storm water management to prevent marine litter.

### Measures to tackle top items

**RL7. (Lead country – Sweden, co-lead - Finland)** Compilation of available techniques as well as research and develop additional techniques in waste water treatment plants to prevent micro particles entering the marine environment.

Sweden and Finland are invited to inform on the progress achieved in the implementation of the action. All other participants are invited to contribute to the discussion.

The Workshop is invited to discuss next potential steps towards publication of a regional report on techniques to remove micro particles in waste water treatment plants to accomplish this action.

**RL8. (Lead country - Poland)** By 2017 an assessment of the importance of sewage related waste coming from the upstream waste flow is produced. By 2018 share assessment with River and River Basin Commissions and identify measures including the implementation of related regulations; missing elements are identified and guidelines for improvement are presented.

Poland may wish to share the final report on the assessment of the importance of sewage related waste coming from the upstream waste flow RL8 where the conclusions reached are included ([Outcome of PRESSURE 7-2017](#) para. 3-20, [document 3-5](#)). Finland may wish to contribute into the discussion. Contribution by the international projects (e.g. Blastic) is also welcomed.

The Workshop is invited to conclude on the accomplishment of action RL8.

**RL9. (Lead country - Denmark)** By 2017 an overview of the most significant sources of EPS ending up in the marine environment is produced, in cooperation with OSPAR. Make recommendations to the Contracting Parties on voluntary agreements with the industry on changes in product design and applying best practices when handling EPS by 2019.

Denmark may wish to inform of the feedback received of the two questionnaires on EPS circulated to PRESSURE contacts in April 2018.

Finland might wish to inform of their national activities to substitute EPS in packaging for transportation.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects including related activities in OSPAR. The Workshop is invited to conclude on a future plan to accomplish the action and its final outcome.

**RL11. (Lead country - Estonia)** Cooperate on the establishment and/or further development of deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (e.g. glass, plastics and aluminum).

Estonia may wish to provide a report on the survey conducted in 2016 (Annex 2 of the [Outcome of WS RAP ML 2-2017](#)).

No progress in implementation of the action has been informed since April 2017. Workshop participants are invited to provide an update on the status of their national deposit refund systems and plans for their further introduction/advancement, including possible solutions regarding passenger ships. The Workshop is invited to conclude on practical steps for further implementation of the action.

### **Actions without leadership**

RL6. Establish an overview of the importance of the different sources of primary and secondary microplastics. Evaluate products and processes that include both primary and secondary micro plastics, such as fibers from clothing, assess if they are covered or not by legislation, and act, if appropriate, to influence the legal framework, or identify other necessary measures.

Many Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention are running national activities or participating in international projects aimed at identifying the sources of primary and secondary micro-plastics. Also regional NGOs are involved in this work. Participants are invited to briefly inform on the progress achieved. In particular, IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) is invited to provide an update since PRESSURE 8-2018 ([document 3-5](#)) of the two years project they are leading on marine pollution caused by microplastics in the Baltic Sea.

The Workshop will be informed on the decision on the FanPLESStic-Sea – Initiatives to remove microplastics before they enter the sea” project application submitted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> call of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme (PRESSURE 8-2018, [document 3-8](#)).

During December’s UN Environment Assembly, Member States decided to convene an Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics. The [first meeting of the Group](#) was held from 29 to 31 May in Nairobi, Kenya. HELCOM countries who attended the meeting may want to inform of its outcome.

The Workshop is invited to discuss monitoring of micro litter and exchange experiences in monitoring of microliter ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.31).

The Workshop is invited to evaluate the state of the knowledge base with regard to the sources and pathways of micro-plastic into the Baltic Sea marine environment and identify next steps needed to prepare regional overview on products and processes contributing to the input of micro plastics to the Baltic Sea.

Closing the discussion on the state of knowledge base on micro-litter in the Baltic Sea region, the Workshop is also invited to reconsider the position of regional experts with regard to the potential revision of the HELCOM Recommendations on waste and storm water management intended to integrate into these Recommendation specific requirements concerning prevention of micro litter.

RL10. Define and implement appropriate instruments and incentives to reduce the use of plastic bags, including the illustration of the associated costs and environmental impacts (e.g. establishment of levies, deposit fees, taxes or bans on plastic bags).

Finland might wish to inform on the progress in reduction of the use of plastic bags as a result of the agreement to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags (Plastic Carrier Bag Agreement). CCB is willing to contribute into implementation of the action. Participants are invited to inform on the consumption of plastic bags.

The Workshop is invited to discuss potential tools for regional coordination of the activity to reduce the use of plastic bags including regular national reporting. The Workshop is also invited to propose a working plan to establish feasible reduction targets.

Following the request of PRESSURE 8-2018 ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.31) the Workshop is invited to discuss the potential of the reduction of the use of single plastic items in the Baltic Sea region and practical actions which might be undertaken to reach such reduction. The Workshop is also invited to discuss environmental effect of such measures.

#### Actions addressing third parties

**RL13. (Lead country - Poland)** HELCOM Contracting Parties to seek cooperation with the River and River Basin Commissions, as appropriate, in order to include impacts of litter on the marine environment from riverine inputs.

The Workshop is invited to discuss 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. Poland as lead country might wish to make proposals as well as CCB which intended to contribute. Finland might wish to share their experience on collaboration with local municipalities on the matter. All countries are invited to share their experience on measures to abate marine litter transported by rivers and suggest practical steps (instruments) to integrate measures addressing the reduction of littering in river basins management plans.

#### Actions without leadership

RL12. Initiate an activity on what certification schemes could be addressed, which existing criteria could be promoted for potential inclusion in international certification systems together with ways and means how to help approving those.

The Workshop is invited to discuss which criteria, related to mitigating littering, might be promoted for inclusion in international certification systems. Participants are also invited to identify potential tools/forums to communicate the criteria with international certification systems.

#### Remediation and removal measures

**RL14. (Lead country - Estonia)** Address landfills or dumpsites including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment due to factors such as coastal erosion and vicinity to rivers.

Estonia may wish to provide a summary report on this action (Annex 2 of the [Outcome of WS RAP ML 2-2017](#)).

The Workshop is invited to discuss the results of the implementation of the action. Since the first conclusion by the lead country, based on the received feedback, indicated that all the landfills were under control in the region and could not be considered as sources of marine litter, the Workshop might propose to consider the action accomplished and not requiring any further activities.

### Actions without leadership

RL15. Establish an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, including cleaning beaches actions by local communities.

Russia may wish to present the results of “Clean beach” action 2018. The report, in addition to number of participants, will include information on the amounts of collected litter and also on classification of the items in accordance with HELCOM Monitoring Guidelines ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.23). Countries are invited to inform on national related actions.

The Workshop is invited to discuss the need of regional coordination of the cleaning actions, potential to involve all countries into the beach cleaning campaigns, distribute information on the campaigns and summarize their results. Involvement of various regional NGOs and regional initiatives as well as potential international financial tools to support the activity.

### Session 2. Actions on sea based sources

#### Actions addressing shipping related waste

**RS1. (Lead country – Finland).** Development of best practice on the disposal of old pleasure boats.

Finland is invited to inform of the implementation status of the action; particularly, on the state of the report that collects a best practice - model on recycling of ELB (End-of-Life boats). Sweden might be interested to share information on the results of the national project to improve the disposal of pleasure boats through innovative new solutions.

The Workshop is invited to evaluate the implementation status of the action and discuss the envisaged outcome of the action. The Workshop is invited to discuss potential joint activities to accomplish the action based on the lead country’s proposals aiming at elaboration of the practical suggestion to PRESSURE group.

**RS2. (Lead country – Germany).** Development of best practice in relation to inspection of MARPOL Annex V.

Germany is invited to inform on the implementation status of the action. Particularly, Germany may wish to inform on the follow-up of the “Analysis of penalties and fines issues by OSPAR and HELCOM Contracting Parties for waste disposal offences at sea” (MARITIME 17-2017, [document 6-3](#)).

MARITIME 18-2018 (25-27 September 2018) is invited to consider possible contribution to the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, in particular with regard to actions RS2, RS3 and RS4 (MARITIME 18-2018, [document 1-2](#)).

Based on the proposals of the lead country and the Outcome of MARITIME 18-2018 the Workshop is invited to discuss the implementation of the action and practical steps to achieve its goal - best practice developed in cooperation with Paris MoU.

### Actions without leadership

RS3. Further work on implementation and harmonization of the no-special-fee system in ports of the Baltic Sea countries, addressing: (i) gaps in existing regulations; (ii) enforcement and practices concerning shipping; (iii) port reception facilities auditing to assess adequacy of garbage collection; (iii) fair waste burden sharing between ports.

Based on the Outcome of MARITIME 18-2018 the Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action.

RS4. Implementation of the ISO standard (ISO 201070:2013) in relation to port reception facilities. Differentiate according to the size of the port. Promote the development of regional statistics on waste

collected in ports based on existing information as far as possible. Assess how many ports are operating according to ISO standards and to propose action as appropriate by 2017.

Based on the Outcome of MARITIME 18-2018 the Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action.

#### Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture

**RS5. (Lead country – Sweden).** Promote and disseminate best practice in relation to all relevant aspects of waste management within the fishing sector. By 2018, based on the OSPAR outcome, select best practices to be disseminated in the Baltic Sea.

Sweden is invited to inform of the implementation status of the action; particularly, of the status of progress of the report on waste management on board and in harbours. Finland might be interested to share information on the national analysis on litter sources in fishing and aquaculture.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects including related activities in OSPAR.

**RS6. (Lead country – Poland and WWF Poland).** Through a multinational project, such as the MARELITT Baltic project, together with the fishing industry and other stakeholders, develop and promote best practice in relation to ALDFG and derelict fishing gear and their removal.

**RS7. (Lead country – Poland and WWF Poland).** Compile information and elaborate guidelines on best practices to reduce the input of ALDFG from commercial and recreational fishing to the Baltic Sea taking into account geographical particularities; utilize UNEP RSC report and FAO on ALDFG as a starting point and focus on regional specifics. Guidelines developed by 2017 taking into account geographical particularities.

Poland and WWF Poland are invited to inform of the implementation status of the actions; particularly, of the status the 'MARELITT Baltic project – Reducing the impact of marine litter in the form of derelict fishing gear on the Baltic Sea environment' and its contribution to these actions since PRESSURE 8-2018 ([document 3-8](#)).

The Workshop is invited to consider an 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; [Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.13-3.18) (document to be submitted later) and make a suggestion for PRESSURE 9-2018 regarding further regional actions on ALDFG.

#### Actions without leadership

RS8. Identify the options to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industry, which could contribute to marine litter, including deposit schemes and extended producer responsibility. Late 2016 assess the use of OSPAR document and in consultation with the Baltic Sea Advisory Council consider and agree on the way forward to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industries.

Sweden may wish to share the results of a preliminary study of lost fishing gear from a circular economic perspective.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities. The Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action.

RS9. Investigate the use and prevalence of dolly ropes (bunches of polyethylene threads used to protect the cod end of demersal trawl nets from abrasions; synthetic fibre) in the areas of the Baltic Sea where they are used and consider the need to act. Consider the outcome of the study on the impact of dolly ropes currently

under development by the Netherlands. Baltic Sea Advisory Council is to be invited to be involved in this activity.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects including related activities in OSPAR. The Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action, including the relevance for the Baltic Sea.

#### Remediation and removal measures

**RS12. (Lead country – Poland and WWF Poland).** Enter into the partnership with international and regional organizations (e.g. KIMO, NABU, OSPAR Commission) as well as port authorities, to encourage implementation of passive Fishing for Litter schemes, to collect litter caught in fishing nets during normal fishing activities

Poland and WWF Poland are invited to inform of the implementation status of the action. Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects including related activities in OSPAR. The Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action.

#### **Actions without leadership**

RS10 Mapping of snagging sites or historic dumping grounds and a risk assessment for identifying where accumulation of ghost nets pose a threat to the environment and should be removed. As part of the assessment to be developed by HELCOM SUBMERGED by 2016. Mapping by 2017. Risk assessment by 2018.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects. In particular, Denmark may wish to share their experience from their pilot project on derelict fishing gear (the report can be found [here](#)) and Sweden on their envisaged ghost net reporting tool for recreational fishers and the public.

The Workshop is invited to discuss practical steps on the implementation of the action.

RS11. Based on the risk assessment conducted in RS10 and identification of accumulation areas, initiate removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land. The aim is to increase the removal and disposal of the nets, and that statistics are available to confirm the increasing trend.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects. In particular, Poland and WWF Poland may wish to inform of the contribution to this action from the 'MARELITT Baltic project'.

### Session 3. Actions on education and outreach

#### **Actions without leadership**

RE1. To prepare information sheets to assist Contracting Parties in developing material for education programs, especially for professional seafarers including fishermen, highlighting the marine litter problem and including codes of practice in cooperation with relevant organisations including IMO.

Participants are invited to contribute to the discussion with information on national activities and international projects. The Workshop is invited to take note of the "[OSPAR background document on Sustainable Fishing - Education at fishing academies in OSPAR countries](#)" recently published. The Workshop is invited to conclude on the scope and urgency of this action.

RE2. HELCOM website to be updated periodically based on the input from Contracting Parties on marine litter management activities.

Participants are invited to inform on marine litter management activities to be included in the marine litter section in the HELCOM website.

RE3. Develop a communication strategy for this Regional Action Plan linked in a coherent way with national initiatives/actions. This will include linking the HELCOM website to relevant projects and initiatives.

The Workshop is invited to conclude on the scope and practical steps to develop this action.

#### Session 4. Further work to achieve RAP ML targets

##### RAP ML follow up tool

PRESSURE 8-2018 requested that the follow-up table of the implementation of the RAP ML is consolidated to include only relevant information and that in the future the reporting could focus on results and conclusions rather than actions. The Workshop will be invited to consider a proposal for a new tool to the follow-up of RAP ML implementation (document to be submitted later) ([Outcome of PRESSURE 8-2018](#), para. 3.28).

##### Dialogue with stakeholders

Workshop participants are invited to discuss and elaborate on how to involve and gain support from institutions outside the HELCOM community to facilitate implementation of the RAP ML including actions to raise public awareness e.g. river basin commissions in relation to riverine litter, associations of municipalities, industry, academia, non-governmental organisations etc.

##### Wrap up and closing of the Workshop

The main conclusions and suggestions on the further steps towards implementation of the RAP ML will be summarized and discussed by the Workshop. The Report of the Workshop will be submitted to PRESSURE 9-2018 for consideration.