

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HELCOM WORKING GROUP ON REDUCTION OF PRESSURES FROM THE BALTIC SEA CATCHMENT AREA (WG PRESSURE)

The new subsidiary body will have the role to provide the necessary technical underpinning to the work on nutrient and hazardous substances inputs from diffuse sources and point sources on land, including to the follow-up of the implementation of the nutrient reduction scheme. It will focus on developing solutions to the policy-relevant questions and needs.

The WG will investigate implementation progress to identify gaps and reduction potential in different land sectors and in non-Contracting Parties and will come up with proposals for measures or actions to address these.

The group will also lead the work on marine litter in HELCOM, including addressing sources on land and coordination of implementation of the upcoming Regional Marine Litter Action Plan with other subsidiary bodies according to their respective expertise. The WG will also lead the HELCOM work on underwater noise at sea, likewise in cooperation with other subsidiary bodies.

The WG will be responsible for producing and contributing, as appropriate, to deliverables and milestones of the Roadmap of HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach, in a manner coordinated with other ongoing HELCOM processes. The group will cooperate with other subsidiary bodies i.e. on cross cutting issues, including with GEAR to the extent necessary for GEAR to ensure integration and coherence of work to reach Good Environmental Status of the marine environment across the working groups. The Group will seek synergies with work carried out in other forums e.g. related to EU, OSPAR, Gothenburg Protocol under the UN ECE CLRTAP, EUSBSR, and map these into its working programme.

The work will follow the assessment cycles and deadlines agreed in Baltic Sea Action Plan and the Ministerial Declarations (Roadmap of HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach), meaning that not all the issues will be taken up on each occasion, but the agenda will be more flexible, planned according to the finalized/upcoming tasks.

The WG will guide and utilize the results of HELCOM work on pollution load compilations in *ad hoc* structures, e.g. in order to orientate these towards more policy usable reports and products.

The WG will ensure the necessary expertise to respond to requests to assess specific pollution sources at land as need may be. Priority is given to reducing inputs. Being aware of the need to speed up the steps towards the recovery of the Baltic Sea, innovative measures may be needed as complementary action.

The Working Group will be complemented with *ad hoc* working arrangements, i.e. expert and correspondence groups, intersessional processes, and projects with specific tasks and limited duration as they are an efficient and flexible way of working to solve specific problems, address urgent issues, and develop clearly identified products according to predefined deadlines. The support by the *ad hoc* arrangements will allow the WG to focus their work on reviewing the results, providing advice and guidance, and developing policy recommendations, according to its respective mandate. The Roadmap of HELCOM activities on ecosystem approach will be used as a planning tool for such HELCOM *ad hoc* work.

Based on the general rule that projects are decided by the Heads of Delegation, the Working Group will have an initiative to propose setting up projects.

Meetings will be scheduled to keep up with the HELCOM activities and coordinate with other relevant meetings.

Terms of Reference of the WG:

The duties of the Working Group are to:

- A. Advise the Commission in carrying out its duties under Article 20 of the Helsinki Convention, especially in relation to Articles 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 16, 24 as well as Annexes I, II and III;
- B. Provide support for the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, Ministerial Declarations and HELCOM Recommendations, including preparation of implementation reports, as well as propose strategies, guidelines and recommendations in the area of its expertise according to the existing priorities as well as requests by the Heads of Delegations and subsidiary bodies;
- C. Coordinate and organize the monitoring and assessment activities of HELCOM related to waterborne and airborne discharges, emissions and inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances;
- D. Monitor and assess the implementation of the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme, as well as support the review of the scheme based on the best available scientific knowledge in cooperation with other relevant subsidiary bodies and institutes and modeling centres, as may be necessary;
- E. Identify current and emerging issues related to point sources of land based pollution and assess the effectiveness of the measures being adopted and the need for any additional or different measures, including in relation to remaining hot spots from the list of the Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme.

To fulfill these duties the Working Group will:

1. Develop and maintain a system to evaluate progress by the HELCOM countries in meeting their country-allocated nutrient reduction targets of the HELCOM nutrient reductions scheme, follow-up on the progress and prepare reports and recommendations for improved implementation;
2. Cooperate on pollution prevention from waste water treatment, including sustainable handling of sewage sludge;
3. Cooperate to address nutrient emissions and inputs from non-Contracting Parties to meet the expected reductions according to the HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme, e.g. in relation to the Gothenburg Protocol under the UN ECE CLRTAP as well as EU NECD, the work of river basin management commissions/bodies;
4. Identify and prioritize needs for further reduction of nutrients, with the aim to bridge the gap in translating the nutrient reduction scheme into area or site-specific implementation, with a view to, among others, pointing to investment needs;
5. Follow-up major regional and national projects addressing land-based pollution from diffuse (as far as load compilation is concerned) and point sources with regarding the implementation of HELCOM commitments and come up with new initiatives based on the identified gaps;
6. Share best practices and solutions for limiting emissions and losses of hazardous substances from existing sources and exchange information of EU BAT, BEP, REACH and other legislation and of activities concerning new and emerging substances (e.g. pharmaceuticals);
7. Lead regional implementation of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan and coordinate its implementation with relevant subsidiary bodies to enable their substantial contribution;
8. Lead the work on underwater noise, including evaluating inputs of noise to the marine environment with the view to developing regional action on underwater noise as far as necessary, in coordination with relevant subsidiary bodies.
9. Guide Pollution Load Compilations (PLCs) (Water, and Air in cooperation with EMEP) and continuous work on improving data reporting and quality, as well as prepare assessment reports meeting policy needs, and in relation to PLC be responsible for that:
 - HELCOM core indicators for pressures on marine environment are developed and operationalized (in cooperation with EMEP) to serve e.g. holistic assessments according to the goals and objectives of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, HELCOM Ministerial Declarations, and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive for those Contracting Parties also being EU Member States;

- PLC associated technical guidelines for quality assurance are developed and updated to ensure confident monitoring and assessment results for inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances, taking into account the existing international guidance documents;
 - PLC database is developed and maintained;
10. Respond to the requests to assess individual or newly identified point sources of pollution as may be needed;
 11. Cooperate with, and seek synergies with the relevant work carried out in global and European levels relevant for the group such as in EU, OSPAR, UNEP 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, etc.;
 12. Contribute to other deliverables and activities as requested and prioritized by HELCOM.
 13. Further develop and maintain additional pressure indicators, e.g. concerning inputs to the marine environment of noise, litter and hazardous substances and other emerging issues.

The Working Group will report to the Heads of Delegation.