Overview of HELCOM matters related to harbour porpoise

20th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group
13-15 March 2024
Third HELCOM holistic assessment (HOLAS 3)

All HOLAS 3 products are now published!

- 59 indicator reports (can be found on the new HELCOM indicators webpage)
- Thematic Assessment Report on Biodiversity (main report compressed)

For full resolutions downloads:

- Thematic assessment of biodiversity 2016-2021 PART 1 (Preface – Chapter 7)
- Thematic assessment of biodiversity 2016-2021 PART 2 (Chapter 8 – References)
- Thematic assessment of biodiversity 2016-2021 ANNEXES

- Thematic Assessment Report on Hazardous substances, marine litter, underwater noise and non-indigenous species
- Thematic Assessment of Report on Economic and Social Analysis
- Thematic Assessment Report on Spatial Distribution of Pressures and Impacts
- Thematic assessment of eutrophication
- Updated data and data layers in HELCOM Map and Data Services
- Intro video on indicators
- Intro video on economic and social analyses
- Intro video on holistic assessment

Summary report: https://stateofthebalticsea.helcom.fi/
Review of HOLAS 3 and development towards HOLAS 4

→ Informal Consultation Workshop on HOLAS review and development
  • 18-19 March 2024
  • All HELCOM Working and Expert Groups were invited
  • Based on the comments received during HOLAS 3 + post-HOLAS3 review process
  • Policy match + technical aspects towards the initiation of the HOLAS 4 development phase
  • Themed sessions, one on marine mammals (by-catch will be considered under Marine Mammals and Waterbirds, but independant work plan to be considered)
Baltic Sea Action Plan: action B8

B8: “By 2022 at the latest, specify knowledge gaps on all threats to the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise population, and by 2023 for the western Baltic population, including by-catch and areas of high by-catch risk, underwater noise, contaminants and prey depletion. Knowledge gaps related to areas of high by-catch risk are to be addressed and by 2028 at the latest additional areas of high by-catch risk for both Baltic Sea populations are to be determined. To strengthen the Baltic harbour porpoise population, by 2025 identify possible mitigation measures for threats other than by-catch and implement such measures as they become available.”

→ Publication in December 2023 of the report
Authors: Sven Koschinski (Meereszoologie, DE), Kylie Owen (Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet, SE), Katarzyna Kamińska (DR MRiRW, PL).
Review of the Guideline for the implementation of ecosystem-based approach in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Baltic Sea area

- From 2016: **new policy landscape / new round of MSP**
- Review process by a dedicated Task Force and guided by the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG

- **Parallel process** with drafting the Guidelines for Cetacean-sensitive Maritime Spatial Planning for the ASCOBANS Area
  - Communications with the HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG to ensure synergies (cf. IC HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 4-2024, 19-21 March 2024)
Red List II project

- Data call from 30.11.2022 to 02.05.2023
- Maps of extent of occurrence and area of occupancy for mammals
- Threat categories deriving from the Swedish tool EDIT
  → Lack of information raised by experts / 2 populations should be assessed differently
- New assessment to be provided soon
- Mammal WS on 10 April / confirmation to be sent soon to the relevant contacts

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Expert Group on Marine Mammals (EG MaMa)

Informal Consultation Session (IC EG MAMA 2-2023) on 12-14 September 2023 in Stralsund, Germany

• New Terms of Reference and workplan (2023-2024)
• Data flow:
  • Mortality data for harbour porpoise → HELCOM-ASCOBANS database under HELCOM Biodiversity database
  • Harbour porpoise acoustic monitoring data → HELCOM Biodiversity database
  • Uncommon marine mammals species in the HELCOM Area: work in progress

• Information on IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force on Important Marine Mammals Areas
• Reporting of HELCOM Recommendation 17/2 “Protection of the Harbour Porpoise in the Baltic Sea Area”
• Update on ASCOBANS work (e.g. bycatch, workshops, surveys, offshore renewable energy Working Group, etc.)
• Information and discussion on bycatch mitigation for the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise, relating to the BSAP and the EC Marine Action Plan
• Other topics of relevance: bycatch, SAMBAH-II : IC HOD 3-2023 “urgent need for funding to revitalize HELCOM work on the critically endangered Baltic Sea harbour porpoise and consider the next steps.”
• Cooperation with EG Foodweb: HOLAS 4+ / foodweb assessment

• IC EG MAMA 3-2024: 26-28 November 2024 in Lithuania / Baltic Seal Rehabilitation Center
Helcom 50th anniversary

How the results of HOLAS 3 can be used to strengthen the implementation and reach the goals of the BSAP?

➢ Proud past!
➢ Where do we stand?

By invitation in Riga but online streaming available.
Thank you!

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