



## Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Maritime Working Group (HELCOM WG Maritime)

*Approved via correspondence in February 2023 by the Heads of Delegations of the EU and the Contracting Parties to HELCOM that are also Member States of the EU.*

### Purpose

The Maritime Working Group of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM WG Maritime) works to prevent any pollution from ships – including deliberate operational discharges as well as accidental pollution, while ensuring safe navigation, in the Baltic Sea. Thus, it aims to ensure that applicable regulations are observed and enforced effectively and uniformly through close international cooperation.

### Duties

The duties of the Maritime Working Group are:

To advise the Commission in discharging its duties under Article 20 of the Helsinki Convention adopted at the Diplomatic Conference on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, Helsinki 9 April 1992, especially in respect of matters related to Articles 3 “Fundamental principles and obligations”, 8 “Prevention of pollution from ships”, 9 “Pleasure craft”, 10 “Prohibition of incineration”, 11 “Prevention of dumping”, 12 “Exploration and exploitation of the seabed and its subsoil”, 16 “Reporting and exchange of information” and 24 “Scientific and technological co-operation” as well as Annexes IV “Prevention of pollution from ships” and VI “Prevention of pollution from offshore activities” of the Convention, in relation to:

- I) Identification of current and emerging issues related to sea-based sources of pollution and proposals for actions to limit emissions and discharges, and in particular:
  - i. to consider ways and means to manage risks and potential threats from the increasing maritime transportation in the Baltic Sea area, including the introduction of non-native aquatic species and air pollution; and
  - ii. to follow-up and ensure adequate Port Reception Facilities for Ship-generated Wastes and Associated Issues, mandatory delivery of ship generated wastes and the "no-special-fee" system;
- II) Identification of current and emerging issues related to maritime safety and proposals to enhance the safety of navigation with a view to prevent pollution from ships, and in particular:
  - i. to consider ways and means to avoid accidents due to the increasing maritime transportation in the Baltic Sea area;
  - ii. to follow-up and assess the status of implementation of the 2001 HELCOM Declaration on the safety of navigation and emergency capacity in the Baltic Sea area (Copenhagen Declaration) and the 2021 Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), and contribute to their implementation;
- III. Ensuring successful convictions of offenders of anti-pollution regulations
  - i. to take measures to increase the numbers of successful convictions of offenders;

- 
- ii. to enhance trans-national cooperation between competent authorities engaged in investigation/prosecution of offenders of anti-pollution regulations;
- IV. Cooperating with other international organizations
- i. to provide for the coordination of the efforts of the Contracting Parties to the Convention in the work within other international organizations, especially the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and, where appropriate, the European Union (EU);
- V) Monitoring and assessing the implementation by the Contracting Parties of the Helsinki Convention, HELCOM Recommendations and actions in the Baltic Sea Action Plan in the maritime field, and in particular:
- i. to coordinate the reporting.

#### Expected outcomes

Expected outcomes of the work conducted in the frame of HELCOM WG Maritime are detailed in the 2-years workplan of the Working Group, regularly updated by the Working Group and approved by the HELCOM Heads of Delegation.

#### Organization of work

The Maritime Working Group consists of experts from Contracting Parties and is open to Observers according to HELCOM procedures. Delegations from Contracting Parties as well as Observers will identify a lead of delegation who will approve the nominations of the delegation they belong to. Leads of delegations will also approve meeting participants from their delegation. Additional experts and representatives of organizations can be invited to the meetings by the HELCOM Secretariat in consultation with the Chair.

The Maritime Group will hold one physical meeting per year. Extraordinary intersessional online meetings should only take place if an urgent need arises. In the physical meetings, the Contracting Parties shall ensure that at least the lead of a delegation or another delegate with the mandate to negotiate attends the meetings physically.

The Maritime Group will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for a 2-year period. The maximum mandate period for a Working Group Chair should be three consecutive mandate periods, consisting of 2 years per period, resulting in a maximum consecutive mandate period of 6 years.

The current Terms of Reference are to be reviewed periodically, every four years, or as the need arises.

The HELCOM Secretariat will provide administrative support to the working group.

The Maritime Group reports to the HELCOM Heads of Delegation.

The updated (2023) HELCOM organigram is available [here](#) on the HELCOM website.