



Terms of Reference for the HELCOM Expert Group on Wildlife Response (HELCOM EG Wildlife) 2024-2027

Approved by the HELCOM Response Working Group via correspondence in November 2023.

Purpose

In 2010 the Contracting Parties adopted HELCOM Recommendation 31E/6 on integrated wildlife response planning in the Baltic Sea Area. It recommends the HELCOM Contracting Parties to apply the Guidelines for their wildlife response planning attached to the Recommendation and requests the Contracting Parties to develop a wildlife response plan integrated into oil pollution contingency plans either on a national or sub-national/local level and exchange the details about its contents with other Contracting Parties.

The 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting agreed to develop and adopt national wildlife response plans by 2016 and agreed to strengthen the work on oiled wildlife response under the HELCOM Response Working Group through a targeted group and by enhancing cooperation with NGOs and the private sector, inter alia in order to accommodate the involvement of volunteers.

The Expert Group on Wildlife Response (EG Wildlife) works to strengthen the cooperation between the Contracting Parties in the field of oiled wildlife response. It acts as a forum for the exchange of information on progress and best practices and facilitates the creation of joint standards and cross-border cooperation in oiled wildlife response. It also, where possible, facilitates the training of national experts and exchange of training materials.

Duties

The duties of the Expert Group are:

1. To facilitate the development of national oiled wildlife response plans in cooperation with other authorities and NGOs;
2. To arrange regular (at least once a year) meetings involving all members of the group, allowing for training and information sessions that would provide added value to the national processes;
3. To produce using the Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) approved by RESPONSE 25-2018 as a reporting tool for OWR, at the end of every second calendar year, reports covering the OWR activities in the Contracting Parties and submit it to HELCOM Response Working Group for adoption. Based on the results from the reports to provide necessary support and encouragement to countries where OWR activities are less developed.
4. Resources permitting, to arrange training and information exchange activities to support and promote work of the Expert Group.
5. To contribute to involvement of NGOs and private sector in oiled wildlife response activities.
6. Other tasks according to the group's needs and vision.

Expected outcomes

Expected outcomes of the work conducted in the frame of the EG Wildlife are detailed in the workplan of the Expert Group, regularly updated by the Expert Group and approved by the HELCOM Response Working Group.

Organization of work

Each Contracting Party shall nominate at least one representative of the appropriate state body (government or agency) to the Expert Group. The Contracting Parties may choose to nominate further members as they see appropriate. The Expert Group is open to Observers according to HELCOM procedures. The Chair may invite relevant experts to attend online meetings with presentations on specific topics.

To ensure resource efficiency, the group will arrange online meetings and work via correspondence and using the HELCOM workspace. These meetings shall take place at least once a year but can be arranged more often if necessary. When necessary, face-to-face meetings shall be organized back-to-back with other Response Working Group related events.

Prolongation of the mandate of the Expert Group shall be considered at the end of the mandate period and based on the results of the work progress.

The HELCOM Secretariat will provide administrative support to the Working Group.

The Expert Group (Chair) reports to the Response Working Group.

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