



## Workplan of the HELCOM Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Submerged Objects (EG Submerged), 2025-2026

Approved by the HELCOM Sea-based Pressures Working Group via correspondence in November 2024

No	BSAP action	Task	Lead, responsible bodies and interlinked activities	Next steps and comments	Output
1		Finalize the HELCOM Thematic Assessment on Hazardous Submerged Objects in the Baltic Sea (Submerged Assessment) on wrecks for publication.	Lead: Sweden  Responsible: EG Submerged, WG Sea-based pressures	Submission of draft Submerged Assessment on wrecks for consideration by WG Sea-based pressures.	The Submerged Assessment (Volume 1 and 2) is adopted by HELCOM and published on the HELCOM website.
2	S35	Maintain the HELCOM thematic assessment on hazardous submerged objects as a living document, including munitions and wrecks, and regularly update the information in the HELCOM Map and Data Service (MADS)	Responsible: EG Submerged, Contracting Parties, Secretariat	Contracting Parties to provide new data, to be considered by EG Submerged. The Secretariat to include approved data in MADS.	A regularly updated Submerged Assessment and up to date interactive maps in MADS.
3	S34	Develop Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for comprehensive risk assessment of munitions, wrecks and hazardous submerged objects by 2025 and implement the Best Available Techniques (BAT) for environmentally sound and safe management by 2028.	Responsible: EG Submerged; WG Response; WG BioDiv  Interlinked activities: Relevant research projects	Initiation of development of BEP/BAT during 2023, to be finalized by 2025. BET/BAP being implemented by 2028.  The focus should be on a site specific environmental and technical risk assessments.	BEP/BAT and control of threats posed by munitions, wrecks and other hazardous submerged objects in the Baltic Sea are in place and are being implemented for environmentally sound and safe management.
4		Develop and maintain, as well as monitor, application of a HELCOM toolbox for assessment of site-specific environmental risks related to potential abandonment, relocation and intended recovery or clean-up of dumped munitions and contaminated wrecks.	Responsible: EG Submerged  Consultation with relevant HELCOM groups, as needed, in particular related to environmental risks.	Consultation with relevant HELCOM groups, as needed, in particular related to environmental risks.	

			Interlinked activities: BSAP action S34 and relevant research projects.		
5		Develop and maintain a knowledge collection of best available technologies on dealing with dumped munitions and other submerged hazardous objects.	Responsible: EG Submerged, Contracting Parties  Interlinked activities: BSAP action S34. Relevant research projects and national activities	Contracting Parties to submit relevant information to meetings of EG Submerged.	Publication of an up-to-date knowledge collection of best available technologies.
6		Act as platform for discussions about further needed actions tackling the potential challenges posed by dumped munitions and other submerged hazardous objects.	Lead: Co-Chairs of EG Submerged  Responsible: EG Submerged Interlinked activities: Research projects and discussions within other fora.	Continuously at meetings of EG Submerged.	
7		Contribute to a common operational picture about the distribution of munitions and explosives of concern in the whole Baltic Sea region.	Responsible: EG Submerged  Interlinked activities: Research projects and discussions within other fora.	Understanding of the concept of common operational picture: consulting framework on dissemination of data.  This task relates also to munition constituents as reflected in task 6 below.	Having published data in the HELCOM Map and Data service (MADS)
8		Based on the picture and a common understanding of distribution processes of munition constituents it will support Contracting Parties to identifying hot spot areas, perform site-specific risk assessments and discuss a possible prioritization of affected areas for further coordinated actions in addition to existing national ambitions for comprehensive risk managements.	Responsible: Contracting Parties, EG Submerged  Interlinked activities: Relevant research projects		Coordinated action and risk management efforts.
9		Seek cooperation with OSPAR relating to such objects close to the HELCOM area which could affect the convention area, especially in the Skagerrak.	Lead: Contracting Parties that are also OSPAR Contracting Parties, Secretariat	OSPAR is initiating a new reporting format on observed munitions and incidents. Contracting Parties that are also	

				OSPAR Contracting Parties are invited to submit further information to EG Submerged sessions.	
10		Look into the possibility and need to develop a reporting system for observed munitions and incidents in the Baltic Sea.	Lead: Contracting Parties, EG Submerged, Secretariat	<p>The reporting system should use the OSPAR reporting system as a starting point.</p> <p>The aim and intended use of the reporting system, as well as possible issues related to confidentiality, should be considered before launching the system, taking also into account the availability of resources at the HELCOM Secretariat.</p>	
11		Continuously assess, support and consult with specific research or scientific projects to keep previously issued recommendations up to date or to add recommendations as deemed necessary	Responsible: Contracting Parties, EG Submerged	Continuous work intersessionally and at meetings of EG Submerged	Fit for purpose and up to date recommendations related to hazardous submerged objects.
12		Acting as specific stakeholder and actively convey time-sensitive information on recent findings	Responsible: EG Submerged	Continuous work intersessionally and at meetings of EG Submerged	
13		Contribute to developing and maintaining procedures for training of crews of response vessels that can be engaged in emergency response actions involving dumped munitions.	Responsible: EG Submerged, WG Response	<p>Meetings of EG Submerged to develop and maintain procedures, for consideration by WG Response.</p> <p>Contracting Parties have procedures for the crews of response vessels in place. Contracting Parties and observers are invited to submit further information to facilitate a discussion on the need for</p>	Procedures for training of crews of response vessels in place.

				further procedures on the topic. Information sharing may be a more appropriate task for EG Submerged rather than developing and maintaining such procedures.	
14		Review and update the Guidelines for Fishermen on how to engage with submerged hazardous objects.	Lead: Poland Responsible: EG Submerged, WG Fish	EG Submerged to review the Guidelines for Fishermen.  Input requested from the Fish Working Group, as appropriate.	Up to date and fit for purpose Guidelines for Fishermen.
15		Facilitating exchange of information in relation to the Nairobi Convention in case a ship sinks and poses a threat to the marine environment, human health or navigation.	Responsible: EG Submerged  Interlinked activities: Developments within the International Maritime Organization (IMO).	Information on what national authority is responsible for implementing the Nairobi Convention would be useful to include in the wrecks part of the Submerged Assessment.	