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Background

The United Nations General Assembly decided in June 2015 ([Resolution 69/292](#)) to develop an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. A Preparatory Committee was established to make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS. The Preparatory Committee held two sessions each in 2016 and 2017.

An [Intergovernmental Conference](#) was convened to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee. In accordance with Resolution [72/249](#), the International Conference will address the following topics: marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits; measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; environmental impact assessments; and capacity building and the transfer of marine technology.

First session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction was held on 4-17 September 2018. The Conference will meet for four sessions. The second and third sessions will take place in 2019, and the fourth session in the first half of 2020.

[Statement by the President of the Conference at the closing of the first session](#) contains reports from discussions of the informal working groups – e.g. the Informal working group on measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas - which highlight the different proposals that are under negotiations.

There are no areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Baltic Sea but a new global treaty dealing with area-based management tools such as marine protected areas may have implications also for HELCOM and to the work on e.g. maritime spatial planning and marine protected areas.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.