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<b>Document title</b>	Update on establishment of Bogskär MPA in Åland
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<b>Agenda Item</b>	7 Any other business
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<b>Submitted by</b>	CCB
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## Background

Within in a few days in December 2023, a decision was taken and then annulled to designate a Natura 2000 area, Bogskär, in the southern Åland Sea. As a response to this, the case was appealed by Ålands Natur och Miljö and the issue was brought last year by CCB to IC WG BIODIV 3-2024 and IC HOD 5-2024. Following the considerations at these meetings, the Ministry for the Environment in Finland invited the stakeholders, Provincial Government of Åland, Finnish authorities, and NGOs (Ålands Natur och Miljö, WWF and CCB), to a dialogue to further discuss the process for establishing the Bogskär Natura 2000 area.

Recently, the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland [dismissed the appeal](#) to overturn the decision by the Provincial Government of Åland to establish this area as an MPA. However, the Court found that the grounds for the decision of the Provincial Government of Åland to revoke the establishment of the MPA were based on factual [errors in the procedure](#) for establishment of a nature reserve. This means that the procedure did not take into account [Åland's MSP](#), concerned stakeholders were not properly consulted (e.g. neither companies with exploration rights in large parts of the area nor Åland Fishermen's Association) and certain statutory rights and rights based on international agreements were not considered. The Court also confirmed that a new decision in the case will be issued by the Provincial Government of Åland after further preparation for establishment of the MPA has been completed and errors above rectified.

WWF and CCB thank Finland for the efforts undertaken and welcome all parties involved in further driving the case towards establishment of the Bogskär MPA as a valuable nature reserve of the Baltic-wide importance, inviting stakeholders for a series of consultation workshops. Given the complexity and sensitivity of the issue, a suggestion was submitted by WWF and CCB [to IC HELCOM 3-2025](#), proposing that stakeholder workshops are organised and that these are moderated by a neutral party. CCB also submitted a document to EG MPA 6-2025 to bring the topic for discussion and share outcomes from IC HELCOM 3-2025. Under IC HELCOM 3-2025, the session noted information from Ålands Government that there will be a process for developing scenarios, with information provided by the BIODIVERSEA-LIFE project, for the re-establishment of the Bogskär MPA. This process will last until April. Moreover, the session concluded that discussions about the topic will through the HELCOM procedures and structures, supporting Finland and Åland, in which additional stakeholders can be invited.

## Action requested

The Session is invited to [note](#) of the updated information regarding the Bogskär MPA.