



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

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### Background

Sufficiency of measures (SOM) analysis, carried out by the HELCOM ACTION project and the HELCOM SOM Platform, supports the update of the BSAP by assessing what kind of improvements in environmental state and pressures can be achieved with existing measures by 2030-2035, and whether these are sufficient to achieve good environmental status (GES) in the Baltic Sea. The methodology for the SOM analysis has been developed by the ACTION project with guidance from the SOM Platform, and it has been endorsed by GEAR 22-2020 ([Outcome](#), para 4.21).

SOM Platform 3-2020 considered the first interim results of the SOM analysis for benthic habitats and non-indigenous species and provided comments on their presentation ([Notes](#), para 3.5). After that, additional data has been collected and the methods have been developed. In addition, the presentation of the results has been improved based on discussions and comments from, in particular, the SOM Platform, Expert Network on Economic and Social Analyses ([Outcome of EN ESA 9-2020](#), Agenda Item 4) and ACTION project. HOD 58-2020 noted the importance of presenting the uncertainties related to the results and proposed that an example of the presentation of the results is prepared for review by the Gear Group before HOD 59-2020 ([Outcome](#), para 4.40).

This document presents the first results of the SOM analysis for all nine topics included in the analysis: hazardous substances, litter, input of nutrients, birds, mammals, fish, benthic habitats, noise and non-indigenous species. The results have been submitted to the four thematic HELCOM BSAP UP workshops organized in August and September 2020 to provide supporting background information for the evaluation of proposed new actions in the workshops, as well as SOM Platform 4-2020 meeting. In addition to the main result, i.e. the probability of achieving GES/specific state improvements/pressure reductions with existing measures, the documents present findings on which pressures contribute to state components, what are the reductions in pressure inputs from existing measures, how effective are measure types in reducing pressures, and which activities contribute to pressures.

In addition, this document lists updates and revisions to the reporting and presentation of the SOM results based on review of the results and input gathered e.g. from SOM topic teams. It also describes the schedule of SOM work in the autumn 2020.

The results of the SOM analysis will be amended and revised in the autumn 2020 based on additional analyses and feedback received. The final results should be available in October after input from HELCOM groups and networks and validation of input data by the Working Groups.

## Results of the SOM analysis

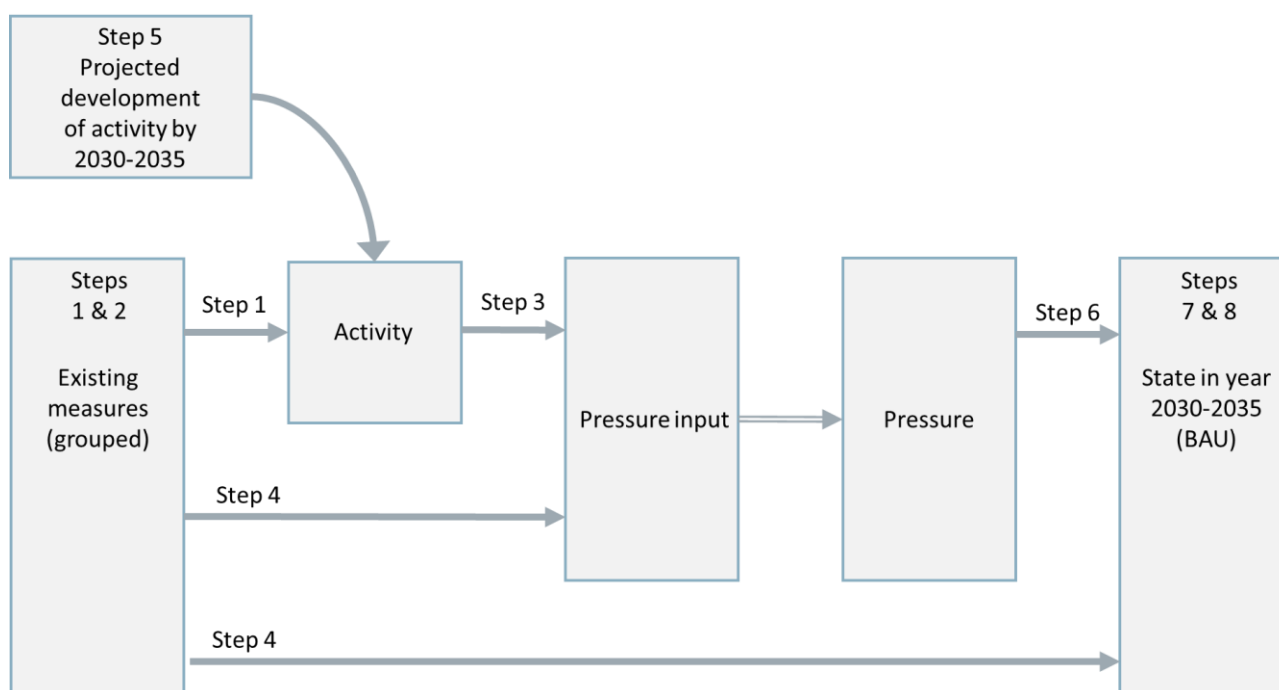
### Background

The SOM analysis involves estimating the status of the marine environment at a specific future point in time, given measures in existing policies, their implementation status and projected development of human activities over time (Figure 1).

The main components of the analysis are assessing: the contribution of activities to pressures (Step 3), the effect of existing measures on pressures (Step 4), the effect of development of human activities on pressures (Step 5), and the effect of changes in pressures to environmental state (Step 6). The result is the state (in terms of pressure reductions or improvements in environmental components) in 2030-2035, which can then be compared to the threshold for good environmental status, when available (Step 7). This allows assessing the probability to achieve GES with existing measures.

It is worth noting that in the SOM analysis, pressure inputs and pressures have been distinguished from each other. their relationship is one of the following: 1) pressure input and pressure are equivalent or assumed to be equivalent, 2) pressure input and corresponding pressure are present in the analysis but no connection is made between them, or 3) only the pressure is present in the model. For eutrophication, both the pressure input (input of nutrients) and pressure (effects of eutrophication) are present in the analysis, but they are not connected (i.e. option 2, see Figure 3). Thus, for some pressures, the analysis has not been able to include a quantitative link between the pressure inputs and pressures. Subsequently, it has not been possible to include reductions in all pressures when calculating the pressure reductions or the probability to achieve state improvements, and thus, the projected pressure reductions and state improvements are likely underestimated in the analysis. In particular, this is the case for the effects of eutrophication, which is a significant pressure to many state components.

A detailed description of the SOM methodology and data collection is presented in [this document](#).



**Figure 1. General schematic of the main components of the SOM analysis**

The SOM analysis presents the first attempt to quantify the effects of existing measures and policies on the environment and achieving objectives. It presents a Baltic Sea level assessment on the overall sufficiency of

existing measures for a variety of environmental topics. The results of the analyses are based mainly on expert elicitation, and thus they should be interpreted appropriately. The findings do not provide complete and final answers on the reductions in pressures or improvements in state and should thus also be considered in relation to other relevant results and assessments.

### Presentation of SOM results

The SOM results are presented in the format of percent shares or probabilities. The main finding of the analysis is the probability to achieve GES or specific state improvements/pressure reductions, taking into consideration the effects of existing measures and changes in the activities on pressures. The contribution of activities to pressures, the effect of measures on pressures, and the significance of pressures to state components are presented as percent values (e.g. how many percent would the measure reduce the pressure). Results are presented mainly in tables, which show the the most likely (expected) values and standard deviations. Standard deviation is a way of showing the variation in the values. When it is high, values are spread over a wider range, and when it is low, values are closer to the most likely value. Figures and graphs presenting distributions are mainly included in the annexes. They show the same results as the tables but allow either more detailed information or alternative visualisation of the results.

For the data that are based on expert surveys, the confidence rating gives the most common answer to experts' assessment of the confidence in their own survey responses on a low-moderate-high scale. More detailed information on how each result has been calculated is presented in [a separate document](#).

### SOM results documents

The first results of the SOM analysis are available as nine separate documents (one per topic). They are the same documents as submitted to the four BSAP UP workshops, and available in a [dedicated folder](#) on the SOM workspace.

- [hazardous substances](#)
- [litter](#)
- [input of nutrients](#)
- [birds](#)
- [mammals](#)
- [fish](#)
- [benthic habitats](#)
- [noise](#)
- [non-indigenous species](#).

The documents present the results based on the expert-based data (survey responses). Literature data on the effectiveness of measures have been collected but are not included at this point. The projected development of human activities is based on the most likely future development until 2030 (for details, see the SOM [methodology document](#)).

### Identified amendments and revisions to the reporting and presentation of the SOM results

Several points of development and improvement have already been identified, e.g. based on feedback from the SOM topic teams. This section provides a list of proposed changes to the reporting and presentation of the SOM results, categorized based on their type. They are still to be implemented.

#### General changes

- Implement minor changes on pressure reductions and state improvements based on changes in activity-pressure contributions for the topics of hazardous substances, mammals and birds
- Add information on the impacts of measure types that combines information on the effectiveness of measures types and activity-pressure contributions

- Add description of the human activities scenarios and how they impact the outcomes to help understand and correctly interpret the results, explain which activities change and affect pressure reductions and which activities do not
- Add information on the state components most affected by the pressure in question (e.g. significance of effects of litter on state components)
- Ensure that the concept of pressure inputs and pressures is applied consistently across topics
- Address caveat that most data are based on the opinion of a limited number of experts
- Add explanations, interpretations and conclusions on the results
- Add information on what purposes the results could be used
- Add information on the practical implications of the work and how to use the results
- Achieving GES/state improvements/pressure reductions
  - a. Include information on how many experts answered what
  - b. Consider a simpler way of presenting results than the current graphs, especially graphs on cumulative probability functions are rather difficult to read
- Projected pressure reductions
  - a. Clarify what is the difference between reductions in pressure inputs vs. effectiveness of measure types (pressure reduction takes into account information on existing measures and activity-pressure contributions)
  - b. Add information on which measures are driving the pressure reductions
  - c. Explain the role of changes in human activities on pressure reductions
  - d. Clarify what is the baseline (BAU vs. existing measures that have an effect in 2016-2030/2035)
- Effectiveness of measure types
  - a. Indicate which measure types are hypothetical and which have a corresponding existing measure, and look into whether it is possible to indicate whether a measure type has been/is being implemented
  - b. Clarify that the effectiveness is presented per activity, not across all activities, and does not take into account activity-pressures contributions, i.e. the measure type reduces XX% of the pressure input from the specific activity and not of the total input
- Activity-pressure contributions
  - a. Clarify what are activities and sources outside the Baltic Sea

#### *Topic-specific changes*

- Hazardous substances
  - a. Clarify how existing pollution is included in the analysis
  - b. Add discussion on geographic variation of status across the Baltic Sea
- Litter
  - a. Calculate how much total beach litter would be reduced in addition to reductions in the top litter items, additional table to show the percentages of total beach litter
  - b. Provide percent share of each item as their share of total beach litter in Table 3 based on monitoring data (need to consider whether it can be presented as an average for the Baltic Sea or separately for the sub-areas in an annex)
  - c. Consider whether the activity-pressure contributions can be added for the overall beach litter, averaged either across litter items or across sub-areas (or both)
- Fish
  - a. Indicate which are assessed based on GES in Table 3
  - b. Ensure that the correct spatial scale is used in Table 5
- Mammals
  - a. Ensure that the correct spatial scale is used in Table 5.1
- Noise

- a. Pressure reductions for impulsive noise: note that future changes in the activity *coastal construction* have not been included in the development of human activities scenarios and examine options of taking it into consideration when calculating the pressure reductions
- b. Add explanations to Table 3.4 to give it the appropriate context
- c. Note that some of the SOM noise results should not be used in place of a literature backed CBA/EIA due in part due to the simplifications of using a single metric of percent reduction in place of the interacting metrics of decibels and hertz and the combination of noise injury and disturbance into the single pressure of impulsive noise

#### Editorial changes

- Improve outlook, presentation and explanation of graphs and figures, and provide an example showing how they should be interpreted
- Decimals in data tables could be taken out and numbers rounded to integers
- Add what data have been used in the calculation in each table caption
- Check that NA is always explained in the tables

#### Schedule of the SOM work in the autumn 2020

Table 1 presents the remaining tasks in the SOM analysis of existing measures and their timetable in the autumn 2020. The work is carried out by the ACTION project, the SOM Platform, SOM topic teams and the HELCOM Secretariat, with input and guidance from HELCOM groups and networks.

First results of the SOM analysis have been provided as background information to the BSAP UP workshops in August and September 2020. Input data to the SOM analysis are sent for validation to HELCOM Working Groups and Expert Groups in August/September 2020. The results of the SOM analysis are also provided to Working Groups' fall meetings for review. Both the main report (see Document 3-1) and topic reports, describing the methodology and results of the analysis, will be finalized by the end of 2020.

Final SOM results will be available in October following SOM Platform 4-2020 and validation of input data by Working and Expert Groups, both taking place in September.

Table 1. Timeline for SOM analysis of existing measures

Task	Responsible	Timing (month in 2020)
<b>BSAP UP workshops</b>	Secretariat, experts	August-September
<b>Validation of input data</b>	Working Groups, Expert Groups	September
<b>SOM Platform 4-2020 meeting</b>	SOM Platform/Secretariat	September
<b>Providing results to Working Group meetings</b>	ACTION/Secretariat	August-October
<b>Preparing overall and topic-specific reports to support BSAP update</b>	ACTION/Secretariat	June-December
<b>Potential SOM Platform 5-2020 meeting</b>	SOM Platform/Secretariat	November