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<b>Document title</b>	Guidance from State and Conservation on the CumI indicator
<b>Code</b>	3-1
<b>Category</b>	CMNT
<b>Agenda Item</b>	3– Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes
<b>Submission date</b>	1.6.2021
<b>Submitted by</b>	Secretariat
<b>Reference</b>	

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## Background

EN BENTHIC 5-2021 considered the progress and remaining open issues in developing the Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator and took note that the indicator leads will submit a comment document to STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021 on issues requiring input from the WG drawing on the outcomes of the Meeting.

STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021 expressed appreciation for the work done by the indicator leads and EN BENTHIC and noted that Denmark and Sweden wished to send additional comment on the indicator to the Secretariat.

This document contains the comments received from State&Conservation on the overview of progress made on *Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes* indicator and planned work towards HOLAS III as submitted to STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021. The original document (inclusive of comments by Sweden) is included as Annex 1.

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited take note of the guidance from STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021 and to consider the comments by Sweden to support the discussions on finalizing the indicator.

## STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021

The following comments were provided as feedback to document 4J-31 rev. 1 at STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021 ([Outcomes paragraphs 4J.77-81](#)). The document (inclusive of comments by Sweden) is included as Annex 1.

4J.77 The Meeting took note of the Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator (document 4J31-Rev.1, Presentation 6), as presented by the Secretariat.

4J.78 The Meeting expressed appreciation for the work done by the indicator leads and EN BENTHIC. 4J.79 The Meeting noted the comment by Denmark that the indicator is a good solution for HOLAS III, however towards HOLAS IV a more data driven approach should be developed for those aspects where possible.

4J.80 The Meeting noted the comment by Sweden that the choice of sensitivity values used, as well as which habitats are included in the indicator evaluation, has a strong impact on the results and thus the aim should be to use the same sensitivity scores and habitat types across the region to avoid disparate results from the same indicator.

4J.81 The Meeting noted that written comments will be provided via e-mail by Denmark and Sweden by 21 May 2021, to be submitted to the Secretariat ([owen.rowe@helcom.fi](mailto:owen.rowe@helcom.fi)).

## Indicator name: Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes (CumI)

Indicator 'status', including planned change by HOLAS III – if applicable:

'Pre-core' – aim to request upgrade to operational core indicator by HOLAS III.

Contact name(s), should further information of discussion be identified:

- Lead: Germany - Torsten Berg, Isabelle Taubner, Axel Kreutle, Kristine Brüggemann
- Co-lead: Sweden - Antonia Nyström-Sandman

Currently being developed under the auspice of:

- EN BENTHIC

Overview of planned development areas:

Area of development	Threshold value(s)	Methodology	Spatial extent and coverage	Assessment unit changes and/or new assessment Scale proposals (especially for new indicators)
	X	X	NA	X

## 1. Workplan

### 1.1 Aim by HOLAS III:

The aim remains to achieve an operational core indicator by HOLAS III.

### 1.2 Brief summary of longer-term plans, if relevant:

Post-HOLAS III and should greater data availability become available (e.g. higher frequency or resolution data, or new/improved sensitivity factors) for any of the activities and pressures used in the indicator then there would be a need to further develop the indicator to match these developments. This aspect is the same for all indicators where the underlying science and data quality improve and require adaptation to incorporate the best available information.

### 1.3 Progress achieved since HOLAS II:

- This indicator has been the focus of much of the work carried out under EN Benthic since the indicator review process was completed.
- The following meetings and workshops have carried out a sequential process to work through the indicator issues and development in a stepwise manner: [EN BENTHIC WS1-2020](#), [EN BENTHIC WS2-2020](#), [EN BENTHIC 4-2020](#), and [EN-BENTHIC 5-2021](#).
- A broad understanding of the methodology and assessment of the Cuml indicator has been achieved in EN BENTHIC and there is a general consensus on it forming.
- Data limitations have been identified as part of the process as well.

### 1.4 Alterations from existing work plan (if planned):

NA

### 1.5 Further work planned in 2021:

- The developments proposed under the prior meetings of EN BENTHIC (in particular finalised under EN BENTHIC 5-2021) will be implemented.
- The updated indicator will be presented at a June meeting of EN BENTHIC (currently planned for 15 June, 2021).
- The finalised work will be presented the State and Conservation 15-2021 for approval on the methodology and threshold values, with a view to application in HOLAS III as a core indicator.
- The above outcome from State and Conservation 15-2021 will be transferred to HOD for full approval (i.e. on core status and threshold values).

### 1.6 Barrier to progress work:

None currently identified.

### 1.7 Cooperation:

Comparability with OSPAR assessment (under indicator BH3) is considered in the development work taking place.

## 2. Provision of data for indicator

### 2.1 Data process for HOLAS III:

- The indicator leads and data team at the Secretariat have been cooperating to ensure all available data can be gathered via the HOLAS III data call or data requests to ICES (e.g. under the HELCOM BLUES project).
- Some aspects are covered via the BLUES project, such as data on fisheries activities.
- Some data are covered under the 'speeded data call' for HOLAS III, such as dredged materials.

- Some data are covered under the ‘ad hoc data calls’ under the HOLAS III data call, such as data on activities and pressures that are also represented under the BSPI tool and subsequent developments of it.

2.2 Data related issues, if relevant:

The above data call and preparation should address the major needs in preparation for HOLAS III.

2.3 Monitoring guidelines:

Currently no specific guideline exists for this indicator and since the indicator relies on existing data streams (i.e. does not require specific monitoring to be carried out) it is not anticipated to require the development of an independent guideline.

2.4 Expected assessment scale of indicator evaluation results – if proposed change from HOLAS II or new indicator:

This proposal will be resented one the final methodological development steps are in place.

3. Guidance and approval:

3.1 Specific issues for which guidance is requested from State and Conservation:

These are addressed in Annex 1 of this document, below

3.2 Specific requests for action at the STATE&CONSERVATION 14-2021:

These are addressed in Annex 1 of this document, below

3.3 Specific requests for action expected at the next meeting of *State and Conservation*:

- The final outcome of the work, after EN BENTHIC 6-2021, will be presented.
- The methodology for HOLAS III, scale of assessment, and threshold values will be presented for approval.

Annexes:

- Annex 1: Finalization of the Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator (CumI)
- Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes updated pre-core indicator proposal, [document 4J-16](#) of State & Conservation 12-2020.
- The following meetings and workshops document the latest progress: [EN BENTHIC WS1-2020](#), [EN BENTHIC WS2-2020](#), [EN BENTHIC 4-2020](#), and [EN-BENTHIC 5-2021](#).
- The latest version of the indicator (please note it is from prior to the above meetings and developments) is available at [this link](#).

## Annex 1 Finalization of the Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes indicator (CumI)

### Background

STATE & CONSERVATION 12-2020 expressed general support for the work on the “Cumulative impact on benthic biotopes” pre-core indicator, highlighting the importance of the indicator for the upcoming HOLAS III assessment. STATE & CONSERVATION 13-2020 agreed to a time plan for the further indicator development that had been submitted to the meeting as document 4J-16. Following that time plan, the indicator co-leads did a survey among the CPs to gather feedback on the categories and values for the magnitude of pressure included into the indicator. The feedback was collected until 23 Oct 2020 and subsequently analysed. A summary was prepared and presented in EN BENTHIC 4-2020. The results were discussed in detail leading to a list of issues to be dealt with.

The following topics were investigated until the latest EN BENTHIC meeting 5-2021:

- Analyse scientific literature provided by CPs relevant to the fishing pressure, in order to review the respective CumI sensitivities, recovery potential and effects of trawling
- Test the effect of different SAR classifications and of frequency in the CumI assessment
- Review the data need per pressure in order to improve the indicator and prepare a data call for HOLAS III

EN BENTHIC 5-2021 discussed the outcome of the work and decided how to handle these issues for the finalization of the indicator.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the main outcome of EN BENTHIC 5-2021 regarding the CumI and the following decisions made during that meeting:
  - o The magnitude of pressure for trawling fishery will be assessed in the CumI using the SAR values directly. An additional intersection with frequency according to the CumI method will not be done any more (to avoid potential double-assessment of frequency).
  - o Frequency will, however, generally still be part of the CumI method and is used whenever appropriate for a given pressure.
  - o In addition to the SAR values, the upcoming data call for HOLAS III shall try to retrieve more information on the spatial distribution of trawling so an uncertainty assessment is made possible
  - o A survey will be done among the CPs (one month response time) proposing pressure-specific and overall sensitivities of the broad scale habitats (BHT) used in the CumI, based on the current values. CPs can review these sensitivities and either accept them or provide alternative values that should be used for their region. CPs can also provide an alternative biotope map to be used instead of the BHT and must then also provide a mapping from their biotope types to the BHT. This process will be started as soon as possible in order to ensure a final map with sensitivities in summer 2021.
- comment on the above decisions and give any final advice on amendments before the indicator is finalized using the above decisions.
- comment on and consider which (EUNIS) level should be used for the spatial assessment and when further information on corresponding base maps to be used in HOLAS III is available.

- comment on how exactly the CumI results will be used in HOLAS III so the data needs with respect to the output (format and content) of a CumI assessment can be prepared.
- take note of and comment on the updated timeplan:
  - **Include feedback from CPs on sensitivities until summer 2021**
  - Present a revised CumI assessment for the whole Baltic Sea at the next EN BENTHIC meeting 6-2021, including all relevant amendments decided upon from earlier meetings
  - Present a final draft of the indicator report at the next EN BENTHIC meeting 6-2021
  - Discuss the “spatial component of the threshold values proposal” in EN BENTHIC meeting 6-2021 or an additional meeting
  - Make last (minor) changes to the assessment and indicator report after the EN BENTHIC meeting 6-2021
  - Submit the final indicator report to STATE & CONSERVATION 15-2021 in order to shift the CumI to the core status for use in HOLAS III