



Document title	Accomplished and upcoming activities of the BSAP update
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Background

In accordance with the [Strategic plan](#) the BSAP update has so far focused on evaluating the implementation of existing HELCOM actions and agreements and to develop and agree on a framework for the updated BSAP. HELCOM activities, such as the analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) and the HELCOM ACTION project, are also underway with the development of supporting information for the update process. In 2020 the BSAP update enters a phase where the content of the new plan should be created, including the formulation of new actions.

This document provides an overview of already implemented activities and the timing of upcoming activities and decisions in 2020. The work plan for the Fish Group has been updated and is included in Annex 1.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the information and use it as appropriate in the planning of work for the BSAP update.

Background

The document makes reference to activities agreed through the [Strategic plan](#) for the BSAP update. Annex 1 includes an updated work plan for the Group.

1) Alignment of ongoing work with the strategic plan for the BSAP update

In accordance with the Strategic Plan, the BSAP update has now completed the ‘formulation phase’ in which HELCOM Working Groups have focused on evaluating the status of implementing the current BSAP and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013. As part of the formulation phase, the structure of the BSAP has also been reviewed and HOD 56-2019 agreed on a provisional adjustment to the BSAP structure. The adjustment of the BSAP structure also included the review and revision of HELCOM objectives which has been carried out by Working Groups and a set of new and revised objectives were provisionally agreed at HOD 57-2019. The adjusted BSAP structure and objectives are presented in [document 3-1](#).

The work has now moved into the ‘Creating the content phase’, in which HELCOM Working Groups will finalize the review of existing HELCOM actions. The ongoing analysis of sufficiency of existing measures to improve the state of the Baltic Sea was initiated by the HELCOM SOM Platform and ACTION project in 2019 and preliminary results will be available in March 2020.

In 2020, the ‘Renaissance phase’ is also initiated which is the main phase for proposing new actions for the updated BSAP as outlined in the following sections.

Three phases of the BSAP update

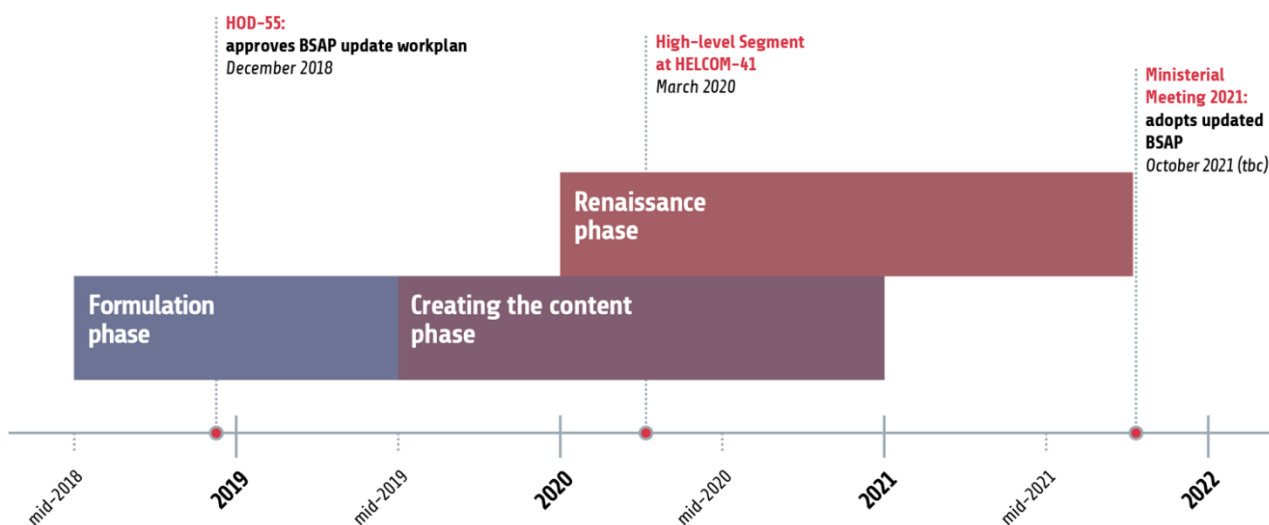


Figure 1. The three phases of the BSAP update according to the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update, agreed at HOD 54-2018.

2) Chiefly achieved activities

Adjustment to the BSAP structure

The adjustment of the overall structure of the BSAP and associated goals and objectives (cf activity 2.2) can be considered as a chiefly achieved with the provisional agreements on revised goals and objectives of HOD 56-2019 and HOD 57-2019. The adjusted structure and objectives will now be used to organize meeting documents and as a framework for the drafting of the BSAP document. In case found relevant, e.g. if the continued work identifies objectives as redundant or missing, further adjustments can still be proposed during the BSAP update process.

Reporting on HELCOM Recommendations

Working Groups proposed in 2019 to report on a sub-set of HELCOM Recommendations to support the BSAP update (cf activity 2.3). The selected Recommendations were chosen based on their relevance for the analysis of sufficiency of measures. While reporting is still missing from selected countries, the task can be considered as finalized by Working Groups for the purpose of the BSAP update. HOD 57-2019 however pointed out that the implementation gaps, both for recommendations, the current BSAP and Ministerial Declarations, should be further analysed by HELCOM Working Groups.

SOM approach and collation of input to the analysis

The analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) was initiated in spring 2019 through the establishment of the HELCOM SOM Platform by HOD 55-2018 ([Outcome, para 3.23](#)). The framework for the approach was agreed by HOD 56-2019 ([Outcome, para 2.16](#)) and the collation of input to the analysis has been ongoing since the start of work.

Shortly, the SOM analysis will contribute to identifying gaps in existing measures to reach good environmental status and support identifying needs for new actions for the updated BSAP. The analysis is guided by the HELCOM SOM Platform, established by HOD 55-2018, and carried out through the HELCOM ACTION project¹ and through the lead by Contracting Parties on specific topics covered by the analysis.

The SOM analysis relies on estimating the status of the marine environment at a specific future point in time, given measures in existing policies, their implementation status and predicted development of human activities over time. Data to be used in the model has been collected from literature, models and experts.

Collation of information on existing measures in HELCOM, nationally and globally, was completed in autumn 2019 ([link to lists](#)). These lists have been used to group individual measures into a set of 'measure types' for each of the topics addressed in the SOM analysis.

Input to the SOM analysis also includes data on 1) activity-pressure contributions, 2) effectiveness of measures, 3) state-pressure linkages and 4) projections of human activities. The collation of these data is expected to be completed in February 2020 (see document [3-4 Progress of SOM analysis](#)).

For activity-pressure contributions, a data-driven approach has been used for some topics (loss and disturbance to the seabed, introduction of non-indigenous species, input of nutrients). For the remaining relevant topics, an expert-based approach has been employed and activity-pressure surveys have been distributed to relevant HELCOM expert bodies and nationally nominated SOM experts.

Expert-based surveys have also been the main approach to retrieve information on effectiveness of measures and pressure-state linkages. They were implemented in December 2019 – February 2020. The expert pool was formed from the representatives of the relevant HELCOM expert networks and groups, as well as additional experts nominated by Contracting Parties (representatives of HELCOM Working Groups

¹ HELCOM ACTION project is co-financed by the EU and coordinated by HELCOM.

and SOM Platform) specifically for the task. Expert data on the effectiveness of measures will be complemented with the results of a literature review.

Projected development of human activities is based on compiling relevant national and regional literature and the report will be reviewed by SOM Platform 3-2020.

3) Spring 2020

Finalization of the review of existing HELCOM actions by Working Groups

Working Groups have had three tasks related to existing HELCOM actions from the current BSAP and HELCOM Ministerial Declarations adopted after the BSAP (cf activity 1.1 and 2.4):

- to propose rephrasing or new target years, as needed, for actions that are not likely implemented by 2021. In accordance to the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update action that are not implemented by 2021 will form the basis for the updated BSAP.
- to evaluate if agreement paragraphs from the HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2018 need further specifications in order to be turned into concrete actions. The aim is that concretized actions that are not carried out by end of 2020 will be included in the updated BSAP.
- to evaluate actions that were previously labelled as ‘too general’ to be included in the follow-up system of HELCOM actions, consider if they should be proposed to be addressed in the updated BSAP, and in that case to propose how they can be concretized.

At the start of 2020 all Working Groups are underway with the evaluations and final proposals are expected to be prepared by regular Working Group meetings or intersessional meetings held in the first quarter of 2020. The proposals will be used as supporting information to the BSAP UP workshop in May 2020 (see below) and presented for endorsement to HOD in June 2020.

Technical review of synopses by Working Groups

As agreed by HELCOM 40-2019, proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP can be submitted by Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects, Observers, according to an agreed format. By end of January 2020, 73 synopses were received. The proposals will in a first step be reviewed by HELCOM Working Groups in spring 2020, including to identify possible gaps in the proposals (see separate meeting document). This review step will provide the first opportunity for the Working Groups to jointly discuss proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP. Deliberations on new actions will continue throughout 2020.

Validation of input to the SOM analysis by Working Groups

The data from the expert surveys on activity-pressure contributions, effectiveness of measures and pressure-state linkages, as well as the literature review on the effectiveness of measures will be validated by HELCOM Working Groups in spring 2020. The validation will take place intersessionally (via email correspondence) or in the WG spring meetings, depending on the timing of the meeting. Validation by the Fish Group is expected to take place intersessionally in the period April-May. Topic-specific summary statistics and distributions of the responses will be presented for validation. The data will also include summary information of the background of the respondents, i.e. their country, organization type, field and years of experience.

SOM analysis and HELCOM SOM Platform 3-2020

The ongoing analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) is presented in detail on a dedicated page at the [HELCOM website](#), as well as [a webinar](#) given in January 2020. Preliminary results of the SOM analysis will be

available in March 2020 and the 3rd Meeting of the HELCOM SOM Platform, to be held 24-26 March, Helsinki, Finland, will make an initial evaluation of the results and prepare for the BSAP UP workshops that will be held in May 2020, as agreed by HOD 57-2019.

In addition to overall descriptions of the SOM methodology and results, topic-specific reports describing the methodology and findings for each topic will be prepared with the assistance of SOM topic teams, when they have been established. Contributions to these topic-specific reports are appreciated.

BSAP UP workshops

In May 2020 BSAP UP workshops will be held to further discuss the proposals on new actions based on the following background material:

- **Lists of existing actions proposed to be included in the updated BSAP**, based on the evaluation by HELCOM Working Groups. These actions will provide the basis for the updated BSAP and will be made available for information to the workshops. From point of the SOM analysis these actions are assumed to be implemented during the timeframe of the SOM analysis.
- **Results of the SOM analysis and associated information.** In addition to identifying tentative gaps in existing measures the SOM analysis also provides information on e.g. the relative contribution of activities to pressures, most significant pressures affecting state components, pressure reductions required to achieve GES/status improvements, status improvements/pressure reductions from existing measures, and time lags between measures and environmental state.
- **Proposals on new actions based on the submission of synopses**, as evaluated from technical point of view by previous Working Group meetings.

To support the evaluation of proposals on new actions, common criteria will be used during the workshops as developed by the SOM Platform and endorsed by the GEAR Group.

The HELCOM SOM Platform has emphasized that the BSAP UP workshops should be carried out from a technical and scientific point view and not consider policy related issues. HOD 58-2020 will be informed on the outcome of the workshops while autumn meetings of HELCOM Working Groups will continue deliberations and work further on the formulation of potential new actions for the update BSAP and prepare a consolidated proposal for HOD in December 2021. It is considered as important that national representatives of HELCOM Working Groups attend the BSAP UP workshops for founding the validity of the outcome.

All workshops will take place at the premises of the HELCOM Secretariat, Helsinki, Finland.

- Hazardous substance and litter: starting at Tuesday 12 May at 10.00 and ending on Wednesday 13 May at 16.00.
- Eutrophication: starting Thursday 14 May at 10.00 and ending at Friday 16 May at 14.00.
- Maritime activities, underwater noise, non-indigenous species, response actions: starting at Monday 18 May 13.00 and ending at Wednesday 20 May at 13.00.
- Biodiversity, loss and disturbance to the seabed, extraction of species (including by-catch, hunting), spatial measures (MPA, MSP): starting at Tuesday 26 May at 10.00 and ending at Wednesday 28 May at 16.00.

Technical implementation of the updated HELCOM Explorer

One activity of the Strategic Plan for the BSAP update is to update and improve the data base and associated visualisation of status of implementation of HELCOM actions through the HELCOM Explorer (activity 2.1). HOD 57-2019 agreed on the further development of the functionality and interactive design which will be implemented by the Secretariat in spring 2020.

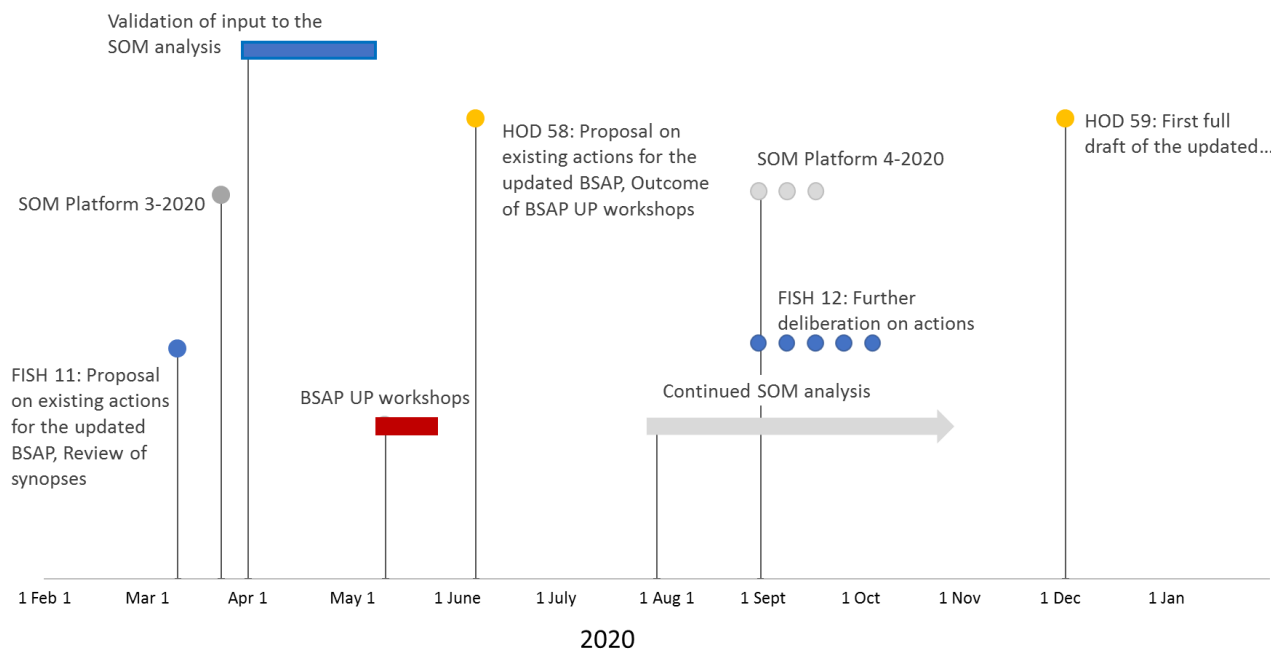


Figure 2. Indicative time-line of activities in 2020. Blue denotes activities directly linked to WGs, grey to the SOM analysis, and yellow considerations by HOD. WG representatives are also expected to participate in the BSAP UP workshop but these workshops are cross-cutting. One dot denotes meetings with set date, several dots indicate likely period for meetings that do not have confirmed dates.

4) Autumn 2020

SOM analysis

The SOM analysis will continue after the BSAP UP workshops to prepare two additional supporting analyses for the selection of new actions for the updated BSAP.

- 1) The SOM analysis is planned to be re-run with the proposed new actions included. This requires however that the effectiveness of the tentative new actions can be estimated. Such re-run can indicate how far the updated BSAP can contribute to reaching good environmental status. The re-run could be done based on the outcome of the BSAP UP workshops, but if feasible also later in the process when the new actions have been agreed.
- 2) Analysis of cost-effectiveness of proposed new actions that can have a measurable effect in the marine environment. In addition to information on the effectiveness of new actions, this requires assessing their costs, either qualitatively, semi-quantitatively or quantitatively. The analysis will be carried out by the ACTION project under the guidance of the SOM Platform. The approach and need for background data will be discussed at the 3rd Meeting of the HELCOM SOM Platform.

Continued deliberation on new actions for the updated BSAP by Working Groups

Working Group meetings in autumn 2020 will continue to formulate the new actions to be included in the updated BSAP, based on the outcome of BSAP UP workshops. Agreements at the Working Group level is required at this time to prepare a proposal for HOD in December 2020. Intersessional activities will be scheduled as needed. The continued SOM analysis in autumn 2020 as described above is expected to provide additional background information to support the task.

Reporting by countries on the implementation of HELCOM agreement

In autumn 2020 Contracting Parties will be requested to report on the status of implementation of national actions from the BSAP and Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013. The information will be included in the updated HELCOM Explorer together with the reporting on HELCOM Recommendations that was carried out in 2019. The role of Working Groups in the reporting is not decided.

Drafting of the updated BSAP

In 2020 the drafting of the updated BSAP document will be initiated based on the agreement by HOD 57-2019 (see separate background document). Working Groups will contribute directly through formulation of proposed actions and supplementary material to the actions. The overall drafting of the updated BSAP will be carried out by national representatives appointed by HOD. An initial meeting to discuss the drafting process by national representatives will tentatively take place in spring 2020 but the major effort to draft the BSAP document is expected to take place in autumn 2020. A first full draft of the BSAP document is to be presented to HOD in December 2020.

Annex 1 Updated BSAP work plan for the Fish Group

The [Strategic plan](#) for the BSAP update identifies the phases and activities in the BSAP update and the main responsible bodies. The [workplan](#) for the BSAP update, agreed by HOD 55-2018, clarifies the timing and more detailed steps of activities from the Strategic Plan.

This document is an update of the work plan of the Fish Group including timetables for addressing the individual activities of the plan. The formulation of new actions for the updated BSAP and the upcoming BSAP UP workshops in May 2020 are also reflected. It should be noted that a workshop that will address proposed new actions for the updated BSAP related to biodiversity, loss and disturbance to the seabed, extraction of species (including by-catch, hunting), spatial measures, 26-28 May 2020 May 2020, tentatively in Helsinki, Finland.

Work plan for the Fish Group

Timetables for each activity

Use of terms and symbols in tables

The titles of activities refer to the adopted activities of the Strategic plan for the BSAP update. Activity 1.2 and 2.1 of the Strategic plan are not included in the work plan for the Fish Group since their implementation will not be carried out by Working Groups.

'Tasks' are short version of tasks adopted through Strategic plan for the BSAP update – for full text, see the [original plan](#).

'SOM Platform' refers to the *ad hoc* interdisciplinary platform on analyses of sufficiency of measures that was established by HOD 55-2018 and '[HELCOM ACTION project](#)' refers to a HELCOM coordinated projected that is co-financed by the EU.

Annotations in tables:

1. Grey-shaded boxes indicate quarter of the year when the task will be carried and coincides in general with expected regular meetings of the Fish Group.
2. 'HOD' refers to when concrete proposals will be put forward to HOD meetings, following the regular Fish meetings. HOD are also continuously informed on activities related to the BSAP update.
3. 'X' denotes steps that have already been considered by the Fish Group.

I. Strengthening the implementation of the BSAP by 2021

Activity 1:1. Discussion on reasons for not yet accomplishing BSAP actions

Tasks according to Strategic Plan: The working groups are requested to identify the reasons for lagging behind with the implementation of BSAP. For joint actions forward planning or stock taking is to be carried out with the aim of accomplishing the actions by 2021. The discussion aims at supporting the strengthening of efforts to implement the BSAP by 2021 and beyond as agreed by the Ministerial Declaration. Actions not implemented by 2021 will be transferred to the updated BSAP.

Task for Fish: The activity is progressed through the regular working group meetings. FISH 10-2019 initiated the work to identify actions in need of new target years or rephrasing in the case they are not implemented by 2021 and thus will be transferred to the updated BSAP. SOM FISH WS 1-2019 continued the work, as reflected in document 3-3. FISH-M 7-2020 will further continue the work on actions related to migratory fish. The task aims to be completed at FISH 11-2020. The final proposals on actions to be transferred to the updated BSAP should be presented to HOD 58-2020 in June 2020.

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Initial discussion and plans		X									
Progress on joint actions, identify actions in need of rephrasing				X							
Rephrasing of existing actions				X							
Proposal to HOD on actions to be transferred to updated BSAP								HOD			

Activity 2.2. Adjustment to the overall structure of BSAP

Tasks according to the Strategic plan: a) create a nested system of the BSAP strategic goals and objectives mapped against the SDGs and other policy goals and objectives, b) reviewing the existing HELCOM ecological objectives and proposing possible amendments, to be carried out via working/expert groups, c) proposing new ecological objectives for marine litter, underwater noise and seabed damage and disturbance, to be carried out via working/expert groups, and d) identifying other possible additional issues of relevance to the overall BSAP structure. The aim is to agree on a new structure of the BSAP by HOD in December 2019.

BSAP ecological objectives and management objectives

A review of the existing HELCOM ecological objectives and management objectives is to be carried out by HELCOM Working Groups and Expert Groups as part of this activity. The aim of the review of existing objectives is to ensure that they are up to date and reflect the current topics and approach of addressing environmental status and pressures in HELCOM.

HOD 56-2019 made a provisional agreement on an adjustment to the structure of the BSAP which includes to broaden the segment on maritime activities so that it also addresses other sea-based activities. HELCOM actions related to fisheries will be foremost be associated to this segment in the updated BSAP while actions related to the conservation of fish may also be associated to the segment on biodiversity. HOD 57-2019 made a provisional agreement on revised and new objectives for the updated BSAP. This includes the objective to *“Ensure sustainable use of the marine resources”*.

The task can be considered as completed by the Group.

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Consider objectives				X							
Initial proposal on revised and new objectives				X							
Final proposal on revised and new objectives to HOD						X HOD					

Activity 2.3. Status of implementation of the current measures and agreements

Tasks according to the Strategic plan: a) identifying HELCOM agreements, not covered by the current BSAP follow-up system, for which additional reporting by CPs will be needed, b) organizing additional reporting by CPs on main agreements - focusing on measures - not covered by the current BSAP follow up; c) proposing a collection of information on other (than HELCOM) existing measures in the countries and their

level of implementation. Point c) which refers to collection of information on measures taken e.g. under WFD and MSFD, will take place under the ACTION project and SOM Platform.

Tasks for Fish: This activity was initiated in autumn 2018 with the identification of HELCOM Recommendations to report on to support the updated of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. Reporting by countries was initiated in February 2019 and the reporting will be endorsed intersessionally by HOD. **The task can be considered as completed by the Group**, although reporting from some countries are still missing. An overview of the implementation of recommendations under the Fish Group is available in document [3-10 Att1 to HOD 57-2019](#).

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Propose HELCOM Recs to be reported by CPs		X									
Quality control the reporting				X							

Activity 2:4. Review of the current BSAP

Tasks according to Strategic plan: As agreed in the BSAP update guidance (HELCOM 39-2018), the Working Groups will review HELCOM actions where targets were previously evaluated as too general to follow up and propose measurable targets for those actions found relevant for possible uptake in the BSAP update.

Tasks for Fish: All actions that were previously categorized as “too general” were considered at FISH 10-2019 (document 3-1, Annex 2) and further elaborated on at the HELCOM SOM Fish workshop 1-2019. FISH 11-2020 is expected to finalize the task to provide final proposals to HOD in June 2020.

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Identify actions assigned as “too general” for uptake in updated BSAP				X							
Finalize proposal on concretized targets for existing actions						HOD					

Activity 2:5. Analysing sufficiency of measures to reach HELCOM objectives and targets

Tasks according to the Strategic plan: HELCOM has agreed to carry out an analysis of sufficiency of measures to reach HELCOM objectives and targets, to support selection of new actions for the updated BSAP (cf. document 2-6 Rev.1, HELCOM 39-2018). The activity is organized topic by topic and the analyses are carried out by the HELCOM SOM Platform and the HELCOM ACTION project (recall document 3-3, FISH 10-2019). A supporting activity for the selection of new actions is the development of synopses on potential new and strengthened measures as agreed by HELCOM 40-2019.

Tasks for Fish: The Fish Group has contributed to the SOM analysis through the HELCOM SOM-FISH WS 1-2019 that was held 4-6 November in Warsaw, Poland. The Group will furthermore validate the input to the SOM analysis (see separate meeting document). This validation will take place intersessionally in April/May 2020.

All HELCOM Working Groups, countries, observers and international projects with a regional perspective have been invited to submit synopses on potential new actions for the updated BSAP. FISH 11-2020 has the task to review the synopses received that are linked to the mandate of the Group.

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Guidance and review of analyses of SOM analyses											
Validation of input to the analyses											
Review of synopses on potential new actions for the updated BSAP											

Activity 2.6. Proposing new actions and improvement of the existing actions

Tasks according to the Strategic plan and Work plan: The analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) will be used to identify gaps between the current measures and the measures needed to reach GES. Proposals for new measures and actions will emerge via the regular work of HELCOM and its Working Groups, the preparation of synopses, and as an outcome of the assessment of the sufficiency of measures. In spring 2020 thematic workshops will be held to discuss the results of the SOM analyses and synopses and use it as a basis for proposing new or strengthened actions for the BSAP. A full draft of the updated BSAP is to be prepared by last quarter 2020.

Tasks for Fish: Take part in relevant thematic workshops. As agreed by HOD 57-2019 a workshop covering biodiversity, loss and disturbance to the seabed, extraction of species (including by-catch, hunting), and spatial measures, will take place 26-28 May 2020 May 2020, tentatively in Helsinki, Finland.

The workshop will further evaluate proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP based on the following main material:

- List of existing actions to be included in the updated BSAP, based on proposals by HELCOM Working Groups.
- Results of the SOM analysis and associated results, tentatively identifying gaps in existing measures.
- Proposals on new actions based on the submission of synopses from Contracting Parties, HELCOM Observers, and international projects. The proposals will in a first step be reviewed by HELCOM Working Groups in spring 2020, as indicated under activity 2.5.

HOD 58-2020 will be informed on the outcome of the workshops and Working Groups will further deliberate of the outcome and make a final proposal for new (or strengthened) HELCOM actions for the updated BSAP to HOD in December 2020.

YEAR	2018		2019				2020				2021
STEPS	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q
Thematic workshops/meetings* to consider results of SOM analyses and synopses and to propose new HELCOM actions								26-28 May HOD			
Further elaboration of new HELCOM actions for updated BSAP										HOD	