



Document title	Guidance for the technical review of the synopses
Code	3-8
Category	CMNT
Agenda Item	3 – Implementation and update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan
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Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

A request to submit proposals for new actions to the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) was circulated by the Secretariat to all HELCOM Working Groups, expert groups, networks, observers etc. in May/June 2019. The proposals were requested by the end of 2019 and to be developed as synopses, making use of a common format provided by the Secretariat.

The attached document contains Guidance for the technical review by the Working Groups of the synopses with proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP. The Guidance has been developed by the SOM Platform, in order for all Working Groups to undertake the reviews of proposed actions relevant to their work by using the same criteria.

A [separate Excel table](#) is provided as an attachment of this document for undertaking the technical review of all synopses related to the Fish Group. Provisional responses to questions 1, 3 and 4 have been provided by the Secretariat in the Excel table.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to use the Guidance for reviewing the synopses with proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP.

Guidance for review of synopses on new HELCOM actions

Background

HELCOM has invited submissions of proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP with closing date at the end of 2019. As a response, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, HELCOM observers, and HELCOM and BONUS projects have submitted synopses of about 80 potential new actions. According to the BSAP work plan, HELCOM Working Groups will carry out a first review of the synopses at their regular meetings in spring 2020. Such review round aims to provide a preliminary (qualitative) evaluation focusing on the technical aspects and substance of the proposals. The review should, in this first step, be carried out from a scientific point of view and focus on technical feasibility of the measures, not legal or other aspects of feasibility. At the BSAP UP workshops in May 2020, further deliberation and evaluation of the proposals will continue based on a set of criteria agreed by the GEAR Group (see document 3-5), also taking into account the results of the ongoing analysis of sufficiency of measures. The outcome of the Working Group Meeting will be used as a basis for the BSAP UP workshops.

The Working Groups are asked to consider the proposals in their field of expertise and to give feedback on the following aspects/questions:

- 1) to suggest whether a submitted proposal is best categorized as a measure, research need, or monitoring/data need. All types of proposals will be considered in the BSAP update process but only those that can contribute directly to the reduction of pressures or improvement of the state of the environment will be considered when analysing of sufficiency of measures in the updated BSAP. Proposals related to research needs will be considered for the HELCOM Science Agenda that is under development.
- 2) to consider whether a proposal is a new measure or is already entirely/partly covered by an existing HELCOM action. In the latter case, identify if the proposal should be, or already is, taken into account in the review and revision of existing HELCOM actions.
- 3) to evaluate if the proposal is sufficiently substantiated, i.e. if appropriate supporting references and evidence of effect have been provided. This step could make use of a scale low-medium-high.
- 4) if the proposed action concerns a technical measure, evaluate if it is technically feasible to implement the proposed measure, e.g. is the proposed technique sufficiently developed and tested to be considered for practical implementation. This step could make use of a scale low-medium-high.
- 5) to identify potential gaps in the proposed new action; it could be that a measure/action has to be implemented first (before the proposed action) or some steps are missing in the proposal.
- 6) consider gaps and overlaps for the set of synopses: are there any central issues for HELCOM work that are not represented in the set of existing actions or synopses (activities, pressures, state components highlighted in HELCOM strategies, Ministerial Declarations). If yes, identify how the gap could be resolved, e.g. for a lead country to prepare additional synopses. Are there overlaps? If overlaps exist, suggest merging of proposals.

Note that no proposals will be excluded at this stage; the aim is to identify how the proposal is placed in the framework of existing HELCOM actions and make a qualitative evaluation of the technical soundness of the synopses.

FISH TEMPLATE:

Proposed measure: XX		
Question	Response option	Comments/suggestions
1. Is the submitted proposal best categorized as a measure, research need, or monitoring/data need	Measure / research need / monitoring or data need	...
2. Is it a new measure or entirely/partly covered by an existing HELCOM action	New measure / Partly covered by existing action/Covered by existing action	[Clarify the potential overlap]
3. Is the proposal sufficiently substantiated	Low-medium-high	...
4. Is it technically feasible to implement the proposed measure	Low-medium-high (or Not applicable)	...
5 Potential gaps in the proposed new action	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential gap. The submitters could be asked to complement the synopsis]

Consideration of the set synopses		
6a. Potential gap in the set of proposed new actions	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential gap and propose how it could be resolved]
6b. Potential overlap between proposed new actions	Yes/No	[Clarify the potential overlap]