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## Background

According to the Strategic plan for the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, agreed by HOD 54-2018, an analysis of sufficiency of measures to reach HELCOM goals and objectives is carried out to support the selection of new and strengthened HELCOM actions for the updated BSAP. HOD 56-2019 endorsed the approach for analysing sufficiency of measures (SOM) and its use to support the BSAP update as contained in document 2-3 to HOD 56. Specification of some of the steps of the approach, in particular the evaluation of effect of measures and response in state components to pressure reductions, was discussed and supported by HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019 ([document 2-2](#), and [document 2-2 Att 1.](#)).

The timetable for preparing the SOM analysis is governed by the overall work plan for the BSAP update. A general time-table for the SOM analysis is included in the BSAP update work plan (Outcome of HOD 56-2019, Annex 2) and is also included in Annex 1 to this document for reference.

In autumn 2019 a number of HELCOM workshops and sessions will take place to support the SOM analysis and Working Groups are furthermore requested, as relevant, to validate the data and information that goes into the analysis. In spring 2020 the Working Groups will carry out a review of proposals on new HELCOM actions (synopses). When the results of the SOM analysis and the review of synopses are ready a set of thematic BSAP UP workshops will take place in late spring 2020 with the aim to discuss the results and make proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP. The workshops will take place in addition to the regular Working Group meetings.

This document summarizes the activities that will support the agreement on new actions for the update of the BSAP, the steps taken to support the SOM analysis in autumn 2019, and the activities that will take place in spring 2020. The full outcome of HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019 is available in as a separate meeting document ([document 4-2](#)).

## Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the proposed thematic BSAP UP workshops in spring 2020 to discuss results of the SOM analysis and other supporting activities with the aim of proposing new actions for the updated BSAP,
- take note of the ongoing development of criteria for considering the proposed new actions at the thematic workshops,
- consider and discuss the ongoing activities under the HELCOM SOM Platform.

## Progress on BSAP update activities and the analysis of sufficiency of measures

### Background

#### 1) Ongoing activities to support the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan

There are multiple ongoing activities to support the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. Figure 1 illustrates how some of the main activities are contributing to the agreement on the content of the updated BSAP. The results of the activities will jointly form the basis for a first selection of new actions for the BSAP, to take place at the planned thematic BSAP UP workshops in spring 2020.

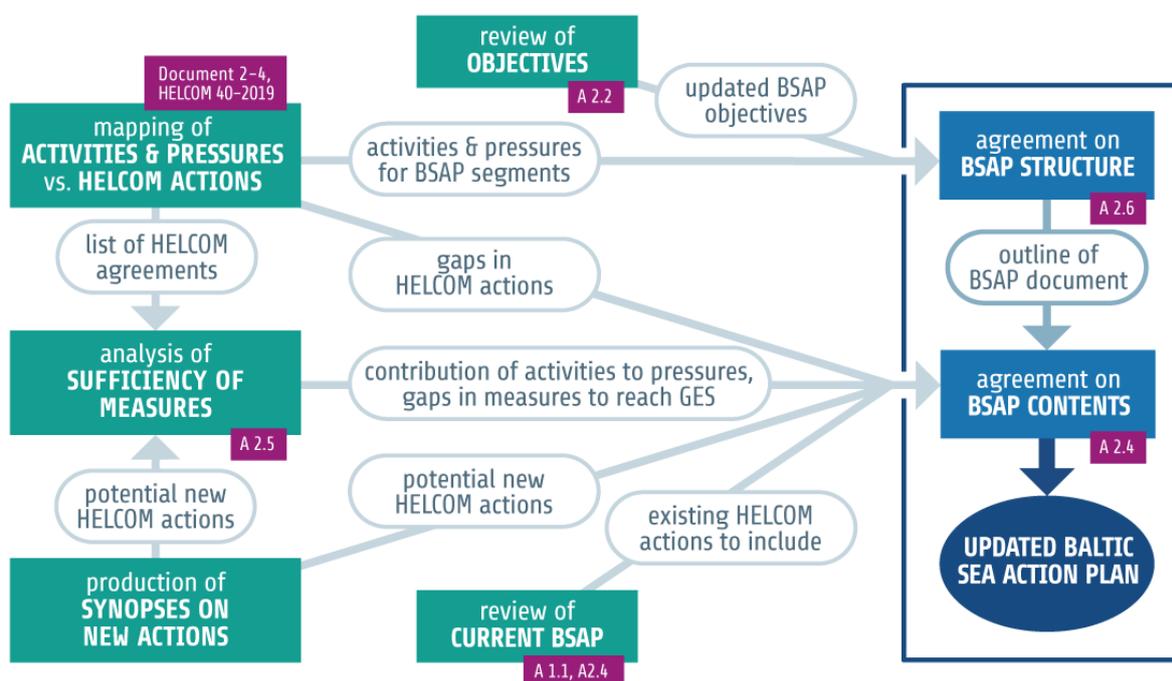


Figure 1. Ongoing activities that contributes directly to the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan.

#### Main components of Figure 1

##### Agreement on BSAP structure

The 'BSAP structure' refers to the strategic goals and objectives of the BSAP. HOD are currently reviewing the goals of the BSAP and HELCOM Working Groups are reviewing existing ecological and management objectives and proposing additional objectives for new topics covered by HELCOM work. The 'BSAP structure' is primarily meant to communicate HELCOM aims and main areas of work to the wider community and it will also be used to organize the final BSAP document. Information on a provisional 'BSAP structure' and the ongoing development of ecological and management objectives is available in a separate meeting document.

##### Agreement on the content of the updated BSAP

Three main activities will contribute to the agreement on the content of the updated BSAP; a) the SOM analysis, b) the production of synopses on new actions, and c) the review of the current BSAP.

- a) Analysis of sufficiency of measures

The analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM) will contribute to identifying gaps in measures to reach good environmental status. Such gaps will be possible to identify for a number of state components (mammals, birds, fish, benthic habitats) and pressures (input of nutrients, hazardous substances, litter, underwater noise, non-indigenous species, loss and disturbance to the seabed, by-catch). First results of the SOM analysis should be prepared by March 2020 and an initial evaluation and interpretation of results will be carried out at the 3<sup>rd</sup> HELCOM SOM Platform meeting which will take place 24-26 March 2019.

Several sub-products of the SOM analysis can also provide standalone support for identifying and selecting new actions:

- list of existing agreements to improve the Baltic Sea environment have been collated, including HELCOM actions and relevant national and international measures agreed under other policies ([document 3-1 and 3-1 Att1](#), HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019). These lists will be used to support the evaluation of effectiveness of measures but can also provide good examples on measures that may be considered for actions at the regional level.
- the relative contribution of different activities to specific pressures is being estimated. This analysis will indicate which activities that are of main concern in the Baltic Sea region and will provide support for identifying how new actions and measures are best directed to improve the environmental status. The evaluation is ongoing through surveys carried out by HELCOM expert network e.g. EN Marine Litter, EN Noise, and EN HZ.
- effectiveness of measures. The main mode for retrieving estimated effectiveness of measures will be an expert evaluation based on grouping of measures, complemented with data from published literature. In addition to the expert-based surveys, information on individual measures is also collected and will provide quantitative information on effectiveness for at least a sub-set of measures.
- activities and pressures of main concern to the Baltic Sea environment are furthermore mapped against existing HELCOM agreements and actions. This work will contribute to identifying qualitative gaps in HELCOM actions, i.e. to identify areas of work where HELCOM is currently less active. A progress report on this mapping was presented to HELCOM 40-2019 ([HELCOM 40-2019, document 2-4](#)).

b) Production of synopses on new actions of the updated BSAP

According to the agreement at HELCOM 40-2019, an invitation to make proposals on new actions for the updated BSAP has been extended to HELCOM Working Groups, expert groups and networks, observers, BONUS projects, as well as a general invitation to international projects. The synopses on potential new HELCOM actions and measures should follow a [predefined format](#). One type of required information is on the effectiveness of the proposed new action.

The deadline for submitting synopses is end of 2019. According to the work plan for the BSAP update the synopses are to be reviewed by Working Groups in spring 2020. More information on this review is addressed in section 3 of this document.

c) Review of the current BSAP

In addition to new actions, the updated BSAP document will include existing HELCOM actions that are not fully implemented by 2021. HELCOM Working Groups are currently reviewing the implementation of the existing BSAP and HELCOM Ministerial Declarations 2010 and 2013 and will propose actions to be included also in the updated BSAP. In this step the Working Groups are also considering potential needs to rephrase existing actions, e.g. to ensure that they are up to date.

## 2) Ongoing work under the SOM Platform and ACTION project

The SOM analysis is supported by two coordinated activities:

- a) The HELCOM platform for analyzing sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform), established by HOD 55-2018. The second meeting of the SOM Platform was held 16-17 September 2019 ([HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019](#)).
- b) The HELCOM ACTION project which is co-funded by the EU and will run in 2019-2020. The kick-off meeting of the project was held 25-27 February 2019.

The organization of work was detailed in [document 5-7, GEAR 20-2019](#). Briefly, the work is implemented according to the following:

- HELCOM ACTION project addresses measures related to by-catch of mammals and birds, impacts on the seafloor, MPAs as a conservation and protection measure, and eutrophication.
- The SOM Platform focuses its work on complementary topics to the ACTION project, i.e. hazardous substances, non-indigenous species, marine litter, underwater noise, and biodiversity aspects not covered by the ACTION project.
- For the analyses under the SOM Platform, 'Topic teams' have been established based on a lead country approach, expertise on economic and social analyses (ESA), and engagement of relevant HELCOM expert groups and networks. The topic teams work mainly intersessionally and contribute with data and information to the analyses to the SOM analyses.
- The contribution to the SOM analyses under the ACTION project is carried out by the project partners and a dedicated work package for analyzing sufficiency of measures.
- The Topic Teams and partners of the ACTION project are providing input and information to the SOM analysis, either through the collation of quantitative data or through expert-based evaluations.

For the topic teams that work under the SOM Platform, updated workplans were presented and discussed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> SOM Platform meeting. The updated plans can be retrieved through the following links:

- [Mammals, waterbirds, migratory fish](#) (led by Secretariat; migratory fish now led by Finland)
- [Hazardous substances](#) (Lead Sweden, Co-lead Denmark, Support Finland)
- [Underwater noise \(Lead Denmark\)](#)
- [Marine litter \(Lead Estonia\)](#)
- [Non-indigenous species](#) (led by Secretariat)
- [Biodiversity – coastal and commercial fish](#) (Lead Sweden)

The ongoing work by the ACTION project is summarized in Progress on BSAP update activities and the analysis of sufficiency of measures to HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019. A specific document related to ACTION WP 5, on condition that influence achievement of GES, will be submitted at a later stage.

The ACTION project WP6 includes also tasks related to regional cost-effectiveness analysis of new measures in updated BSAP. A preliminary plan for the cost-effectiveness analysis, including guidance for providing cost data to support the analysis, was presented in SOM 2-2019 ([document 2-4](#)). The cost-effectiveness analysis builds on the SOM results and approach, and consists of assessing the effectiveness of new measures, joint effects of measures, cost estimation and finding optimal sets of new measures. An important element in the work is the collection of effectiveness and cost data on proposed new measures. The data on the effectiveness of new measures will be collected mainly through ACTION WPs, SOM topic groups, and some available estimates may also come from the synopses on potential new actions. Potential contributors of cost data are the EN ESA, ACTION WPs, SOM topic groups, and all the same parties who have taken part in filling in the synopses on measures

### 3) Contribution from Working groups in autumn 2019/spring 2020

#### Validation of input to the SOM analysis

Heads of Delegation agreed intersessionally on a dedicated workshop on hazardous substances to support the SOM analysis to be held 22 October 2019, Brussels, prior to Pressure 11-2019.

HOD 56-2019 also agreed to convene a set of biodiversity related workshops and sessions to support the SOM analysis in autumn 2019 ([Outcome para 2.6](#));

- Mammals: 26-27 September, back-to-back with EG MAMA 13-2019, (24-26 September), Helsinki, Finland
- Birds: 3 October linked to HELCOM-OSPAR-ICES JWGBird, 2019, (30 September-4 October), Tartu, Estonia
- Fish: workshop 4-6 November 2019, Warsaw, Poland.
- Benthic habitats: 14 November incorporated in the agenda of EN-BENTHIC 3-2019, (14-15 November 2019), Helsinki, Finland

A key role of the Working Groups is to validate the data and information that goes into the SOM analysis, including the identification of main pathways for pressures, effectiveness of measures, and linking reduction in pressures to improvement in state components. This information is gathered from existing literature and models or by the implementation of expert-based surveys. The validation of different steps of the SOM analysis is detailed in [document 3-10, HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019](#).

#### Review of synopses of potential new actions for the updated BSAP

HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019 discussed how the evaluation of proposed new actions (synopses) should be carried out and supported a three-step approach (Figure 2) which includes an initial technical review by Working Groups (in accordance with work plan for the BSAP update), the application of criteria for consideration of new actions at the thematic BSAP UP workshops (criteria under development), and the evaluation of cost-effectiveness on proposed new actions as prioritized by the thematic workshops. The review by the relevant HELCOM Working Groups will take place at their spring meetings in 2020 or intersessionally as needed, focusing on:

- a) evaluating if the proposals are sufficiently substantiated, i.e. if appropriate supporting references and evidence of effect have been provided,
- b) if it is technically feasible to implement the proposed actions, e.g. is a proposed technique sufficiently developed to be considered for practical implementation,
- c) identify potential gaps in the proposed new actions.

The Secretariat and the Chair of the SOM Platform will elaborate on the guidance of the technical review by the Working Groups and share it with the SOM Platform representatives for further development by end of 2019.

The criteria to be applied at the thematic BSAP UP workshops will be developed intersessionally under the Lead by Sweden and Latvia and input from the SOM Platform representatives, with a view of presenting them for consideration by HOD 57-2019. The proposal for the analysis of cost-effectiveness was presented to HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019 and will be further discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the SOM Platform.

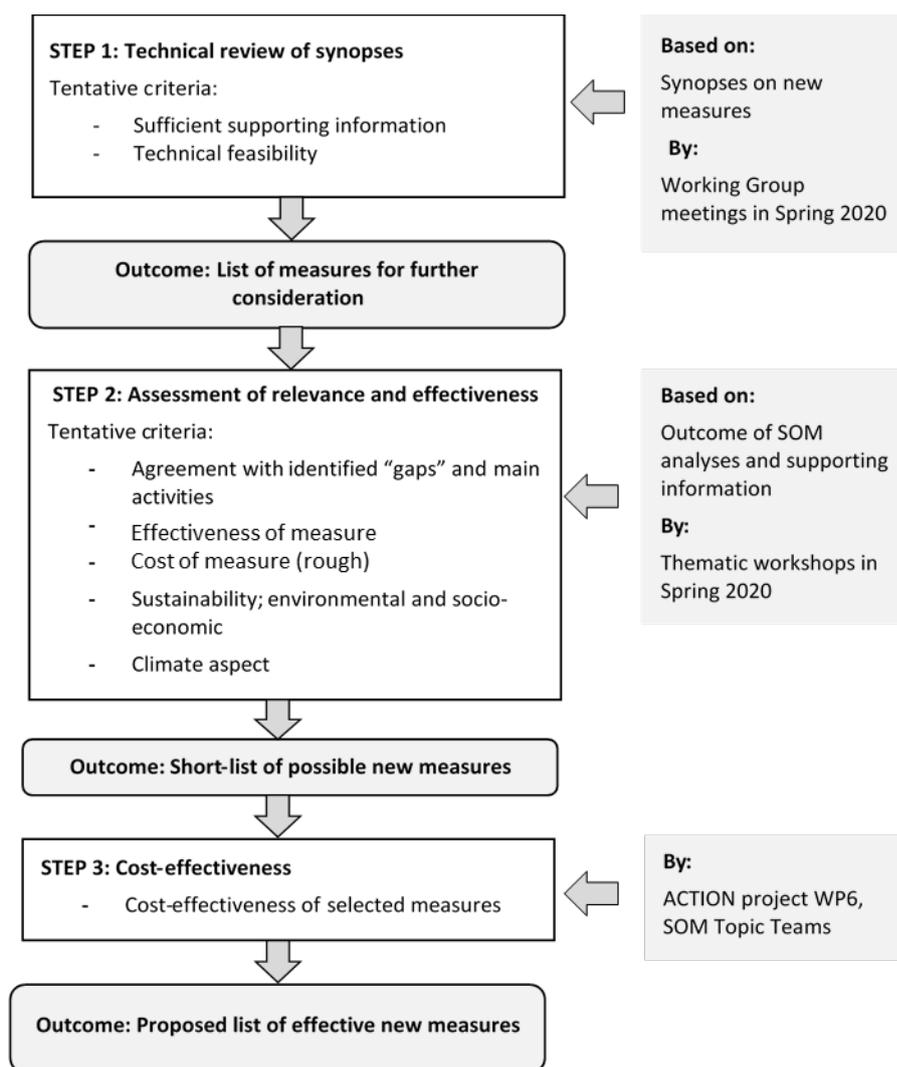


Figure 2. Draft step-wise approach for consideration of proposed new actions for the updated BSAP. Note that the criteria will be further developed in autumn 2019.

#### 4) Themes and timing of BSAP UP thematic workshops

According to the workplan for the BSAP update, dedicated thematic workshops will be held in spring 2020. The workshops will consider the combined results of ongoing activities, i.e. results of SOM analysis and mapping exercises, synopses on new actions, lists of existing HELCOM actions etc. The outcome of these workshops is expected to provide first proposals of new actions for the updated BSAP, corresponding to step 2 in Figure 2.

HELCOM SOM Platform 2-2019 discussed the grouping of themes and timing of the thematic BSAP UP workshops, taking into account dates of already planned HELCOM meetings and other meetings that may attract the intended expertise. SOM Platform agreed on the following proposals:

- back-to-back workshops on hazardous substances and litter (2 days), and eutrophication (1.5 days) in the period 11-15 May (exact dates to be tbd),
- cross-cutting workshop on maritime activities, underwater noise, non-indigenous species, response actions, 18-20 May,
- cross-cutting workshop on biodiversity, loss and disturbance to the seabed, extraction of species (including by-catch, hunting) and spatial measures (MPA, MSP), in the period 25-29 May (days tbd)

#### 5) Next steps; activities in autumn 2021

In autumn 2020, further deliberations of proposed new actions will take place based on the outcome of the thematic workshops. Such deliberations are planned to take place through regular Working Groups meetings. This will be supported by continued work of the SOM Platform and ACTION project by a) re-running the SOM analyses with the proposed new actions included to evaluate how the new actions will contribute to reaching good status, and b) analysing cost-effectiveness of proposed new actions. A full draft of the updated BSAP should be ready for consideration by HOD in December 2020. It should however be noted that HOD are informed of and have the possibility to guide all the steps leading up to the draft updated BSAP. 2021 is planned to be used for deliberations and finetuning of the BSAP content, primarily by HOD.

## Annex 1. Timetable for Tasks of the SOM Platform (as of HELCOM SOM Platform 1-2019)

YEAR	2019				2020			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Indicative steps								
Approach	ACTION/ SOM proposal 2nd version end of March	GEAR agreement 15-17 May 2019						
Collation of data and information input to analyses		SOM Platform/ ACTION End of June						
Synopses on potential new measures		Lead countries, international projects, NGOs	Lead countries, international projects, NGOs	Lead countries, international projects, NGOs				
2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting SOM Platform			16-17 September 2019					
Expert-based input to SOM analyses. review of synopses			WGs, EGs, (SOM Platform, ACTION project)	WGs, EGs (SOM Platform, ACTION project)				
Running BAU on existing measures				SOM Platform/ ACTION	SOM Platform/ ACTION			
3 <sup>rd</sup> SOM Platform meeting					March 2020 (joint meeting ACTION WP6)			
Thematic workshops, to discuss results and propose potential new actions						WGs, EGs, experts May/June 2019		
Assess status with potential new HELCOM actions							SOM Platform/ ACTION	
Cost-effectiveness analyses							SOM Platform/ ACTION	
4 <sup>th</sup> SOM Platform meeting							September 2020	
Continued elaboration and endorsement of new/strengthened HELCOM actions							WGs	WGs
[Benefits of the BSAP as a whole]							SOM Platform	SOM Platform