



Document title	Status of work on the implementation of the analyses of sufficiency of measures (SOM)
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Background

HOD 54-2018 approved a [strategic plan](#) for the BSAP update and HOD-55-2018 agreed on a detailed [work plan](#) for the work.

According to the Strategic plan for the BSAP update, an analysis of sufficiency of measures should be carried out to support the selection of new and strengthened HELCOM actions. The sufficiency of measures analysis entails assessing whether the implementation of existing measures is sufficient to reach good environmental status in the Baltic Sea, taking into account the projected future changes in human activities. The analysis will be carried out through the *ad hoc* HELCOM Platform for analyzing sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform), established by HOD 55-2018, and the HELCOM ACTION project which is co-funded by the EU. These two work strands will prepare analyses of sufficiency of measures for topics addressed by HELCOM using the same methodological framework, while focusing on different specific topics.

- HELCOM ACTION project will consider measures related to by-catch of mammals and birds, impacts on the seafloor, MPAs as a conservation and protection measure, and eutrophication.
- SOM Platform will focus its work on hazardous substances, non-indigenous species, marine litter, underwater noise, and biodiversity aspects not covered by the ACTION project.

According to the [ToR for the SOM Platform](#), the input of data, analyses and preparation of syntheses that are required to fulfill the planned work is primarily to be based on a Lead Country approach. HOD 55-2018 agreed that Contracting Parties would inform the Secretariat of interest and possibility to lead the work on the topics, fully or partially, by 15 January 2019. As of to date lead country offers have been made for Underwater noise (Denmark) and marine litter (Estonia), and a co-lead for hazardous substances (Denmark).

HELCOM SOM Platform held its first meeting 28 February-1 March 2019 ([HELCOM SOM Platform 1-2019](#)). At the Meeting, Mr Urmas Lips, Estonia, was elected as Chair and Ms. Soile Oinonen, Finland, as Vice-Chair of the SOM Platform. The Meeting discussed and further developed the methodological framework for the analyses, discussed the organization of work under the SOM Platform, and concluded on a format for the preparation of synopses to support the selection of potential new HELCOM actions. This document presents next steps for the organization of work and gaps in terms of offers to lead the work on specific topics to be addressed under the SOM Platform. The outcome of the HELCOM SOM Platform 1-2019 will be circulated shortly.

The next meeting of the SOM Platform is planned to take place 16-17 September 2019. The Secretariat will set up a workspace for the SOM platform at the HELCOM Meeting Portal. At this site a table will be set up to indicate national offers of the countries to lead the work, and where contributions of ACTION project and the Secretariat can be expected.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the information on the progress of work on the implementation of the analyses of sufficiency of measures (SOM) including the kick of meeting of the SOM Platform,
- take note of the election of chair and vice-char for the platform,
- note the status of leads offered to carry out the work and encourage Contracting Parties to offer the leads for the remaining topics,
- note that further work on the methodological framework by the ACTION project and the SOM Platform will be carried out with the aim to have the methodology presented for endorsement by GEAR 20-2019,
- approve organizing the next meeting of the SOM Platform 16-17 September 2019,
- agree to the proposal that synopses on potential new HELCOM actions can be submitted by Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, international projects, and HELCOM Observers.
- mandate engagement of relevant HELCOM expert bodies (expert groups, networks, correspondence groups etc.) in the topical teams for the SOM analysis, with the task to contribute to the expert based evaluations and validation of input of data and information to the SOM analyses, to be initiated this spring, and that the upcoming meetings of the WGs will provide further guidance on such engagement as needed.

Topical teams

The SOM Platform will meet regularly to discuss the framework for the analyses, to follow the progress of work, and to prepare for HELCOM Working Group meetings and workshops. For each of the topics to be addressed under the SOM Platform, a team is to be established consisting of a Lead country, as many co-lead countries as willing, and at least one expert on economic and social analyses (ESA) to follow and support the work. The topical teams will furthermore engage relevant HELCOM networks and expert groups and HELCOM SOM Platform 1-2019 made proposals on such engagement. These topical teams will work intersessionally and are expected to contribute to the collection of data and information and expert evaluations, in a first step with regard to:

- prioritization of activities and pressures to be included in the analysis and relative contribution of activities to pressures,
- the responses of indicators and state components to changes in pressure,
- information on effects of measures on activities, pressures and state, based on a list of relevant policies and measures that will be included in the analysis,
- possible time lags in the effect of measures on environmental state.

Guidance on how to collect the required information and how to carry out expert-based evaluations will be provided according to a time-table agreed at SOM Platform 1-2019. The information is required by June-August 2019 pending data type.

Validation of the input to the SOM analyses will take place in fall 2019 e.g. via regular meetings of Working Groups, Expert Groups or dedicated online meetings.

Lead countries, co-lead countries

The role of lead countries is to coordinate, plan and contribute to the work in the respective topical team so that that the required information for the SOM analyses can be delivered, e.g. setting up intersessional activities and meetings, and propose in what steps to engage expert groups. Planning is to take place in communication with the Secretariat e.g. to check that the time-table is consistent with the needs for the SOM analyses and BSAP the update. Secretariat can also support with presentation of tasks to expert groups and networks to be engaged in the work.

To date there are Lead country offers on underwater noise (Denmark), and marine litter (Estonia), and co-lead offers for hazardous substances (Denmark) (Table 1). Finland and Sweden have also offered to support the work on hazardous substances. While the experts from the HELCOM ESA network have been nominated to the SOM platform, assignment of ESA experts to the individual topical teams still needs to be done.

An important outcome from the discussion at SOM Platform 1-2019, is that for some of the topics the relevant level for analyzing the effect of measures on the state of the environment is relatively detailed, e.g. that hazardous substances are not suitable to consider in bulk but should rather be considered by groups of substances, and that for biodiversity the suitable level of analyses is in some cases groups of species (e.g. coastal fish) and in other cases even specific species (mammals, migratory fish). This also opens up for the possibility take the Lead/co-lead of work at the more detailed level as identified as relevant for the analyses.

Preparation of synopses to support the BSAP update

Both the Strategic Plan for the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) update and the ToR for the SOM Platform outlines the production of syntheses as a step to support the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. Synopses of existing studies will be prepared to support identification of potential new HELCOM actions to be included in the updated BSAP. HELCOM SOM Platform-1 concluded on a suitable format for such synopses and proposed that they could be prepared and submitted by Contracting Parties, HELCOM subsidiary bodies, and also by international projects and HELCOM Observers. The proposed format will be supplemented by guidance and made available to HELCOM Working Groups. The synopses are to be prepared by end of 2019 at the latest.

Table 1. Overview of current lead country offers on topics covered by the SOM Platform

	Non-indigenous species	Marine litter	Underwater Noise	Hazardous substances (by subgroups)	Birds (by functional groups)	Mammals (by species)	Fish (by coastal fish, migratory fish)	Benthic habitats	Pelagic habitats¹
Lead		Estonia	Denmark					ACTION project with regard to loss and disturbance to benthic habitats	NA
Co-lead				Denmark (support from FI and SE)					NA

¹ Pelagic habitats covered elsewhere in ACTION project or SOM Platform