



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of Pressures from the Baltic Sea Catchment Area

PRESSURE 10-2019

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Background

HOD 55-2018 agreed to establish an *ad hoc* platform for analysing sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform) to support the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan ([Outcome HOD 55-2018](#)). The aim of the SOM analyses is to evaluate whether existing policies are sufficient to achieve good environmental status (GES) in the Baltic Sea. The framework for the SOM analyses is outlined in document DS-3 to PRESSURE 10-2019. The approach was consolidated at the [Kick-off meeting of the SOM Platform](#) and an updated version will be submitted for approval by GEAR 20-2019.

To implement the framework and contribute with the required data and information for the analyses, topic teams will be established for each of the topics addressed by the SOM Platform. The topic teams will work intersessionally and report back to SOM Platform meetings and relevant Working Groups during the course of work. This document includes an initial plan for work to analyse the sufficiency of measures related to marine litter and information on how the work will be organized.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

Organization of work

The SOM analyses for marine litter is led by Estonia. An internal meeting for the topic team is planned for in week 16 2019. It is envisioned that the HELCOM expert network on marine litter will be engaged in the work.

Timetable

The timetable of work follows the preliminary timetable for action by the topic teams as below. Activities for 2020 are still to be outlined.

Task	Outcome/contribution	Timeline 2019
Identify relevant measures frameworks	Very short information document	April
Identify presence of time-lags between measures and pressures	Very short information document	April
Propose geographic scale of analysis	Proposal	April
Expert evaluation: activity-pressure matrix	Participate in survey	April/May
Pressure-state time-lags	Data (models, project outcomes, literature)	June/July
Measure-pressure time-lag verification	Verify time-lag effected measures from list provided by Secretariat	June-August
Measure list verification	Verify no missing relevant measures from list provided by Secretariat	June-August
Effect of measures data	Data (models, project outcomes, literature, national reports)	June-August
Expert evaluation: effectiveness of measures	Participate in survey/workshop	October
Expert evaluation: pressure-state linkage	Participate in survey/workshop	October
Development of future activities	Data (models, project outcomes, literature, national reports)	Late fall
Synopses on potential new measures	Information document	End of year

Initial plan for work

The general approach for the SOM analysis is described in Document DS-3 for PRESSURE 19-2019. Below are initial ideas on some of these issues for marine litter.

1. Measures

The SOM marine litter topic team sees the Regional Action Plan on Marine litter (RAP ML) as a good starting point for identifying relevant measures for the SOM approach, but it will need to be supplemented by other sources e.g. national PoMs and other new developments such as information on new measures, global or other regional actions or results of ongoing or finished projects dealing with marine litter. The RAP ML should form the basis for consideration of new measures.

Measures to be included in the assessment will include only the ones that are expected to have a direct effect. The HELCOM Action Plan on Marine Litter contains 15 land based, 12 sea-based and 3 educational actions to combat marine litter regionally. In addition, there are 11 land based, 10 sea-based and 6 educational voluntary national actions in the Plan aiming at decreasing the marine litter in The Baltic Sea. The actions in the Action Plan are at different level of implementation, most of them however still not accomplished.

2. Activities producing marine litter

Marine litter comes from both sea-based and land-based sources which can be further divided into primary sources of:

- Land-based:
 - land-fills

- rivers and floodwaters
- industrial outfalls
- discharge from storm water drains
- untreated municipal sewerage
- littering of beaches, coastal areas (tourism)
- Sea-based:
 - fishing and aquaculture
 - shipping (e.g. transport, tourism)
 - offshore mining and extraction
 - illegal dumping at sea

These categories refer to activities as mentioned in the SOM method document and they provide important information when analyzing sufficiency of existing measures (which can be divided to these same activity categories) and planning for new measures (if necessary).

3. Contributions of activities causing marine litter pressure

There is relatively little quantitative information of the amounts of litter originating from different activities/sources. Growing number of publications can, however, be used to indicate the relative roles of the activities/ sources. Moreover, the State of the Baltic Sea report includes the ten most frequent litter items at Baltic Sea level at different types of beaches, categorized into urban, peri-urban and rural beaches. These findings indicate that the most frequently occurring beach litter items at Baltic Sea scale are attributed to eating, drinking or smoking activities, such as food wrappings, bottles or lids, as well as plastic pieces of different sizes. These items are common in all parts of the Baltic Sea, together with items related to industrial packaging, such as sheeting, strapping bands and masking tape (based on data from fifteen sub-basins). Derelict fishing gear are among the twenty most common items in the Eastern Gotland Basin, Gdansk Basin and Kiel Bay.

For the SOM analysis it is important to receive % contributions of activities to a pressure. These can be first found from existing literature and then validated by the HELCOM marine litter experts. The team had concerns about data availability in regards to the activity-pressure linkage methods presented in the original SOM approach document but has been assured by WP6 of the ACTION project that data uncertainties will be a prominent aspect of all of the SOM approach components.

4. Comparison to targets

For analysing SOM for marine litter it is proposed not to go into specific 'state level' variables, such as 'amount of beach litter' or 'amount of ingested litter'. Additionally, because of the lack of a GES threshold, '% pressure reduction' is suggested as viable metric to evaluate the sufficiency of existing measures.

5. Geographic scope

The request in the document [Guidance 1 to SOM topic teams](#) is recognized and a proposal will be made accordingly.

There is information available on regional and sub-regional differences relating to beach litter (State of the Baltic Sea report, 2018). Litter items found at beaches are similar in all sub-basins, amounts of beach litter vary depending mostly on the number of people living in the main river catchments of the sub-basin as well as the shape of the coastline, winds and water currents.

The geographic scale has not been concluded yet, but it would be reasonable to maintain the regional level and looking at the Baltic Sea as one target area.