



Notes from the Fifth Meeting of the ad hoc HELCOM Platform on sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform 5-2020)

30 November 2020, online

Contents

Introduction	2
Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda	2
Agenda Item 2 Results and reports of the SOM analysis	2
Agenda Item 3 Cost-effectiveness analysis of new measures	4
Agenda Item 4 Any other business	5
Agenda Item 5 Notes from the Meeting	5
Annex 1. List of participants	6

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Introduction

0.1 The Fifth Meeting of the ad hoc HELCOM Platform on sufficiency of measures (SOM Platform 5-2020) was held on 30 November 2020, online. All Contracting Parties except for EU, Germany and Poland, as well as the Observer Baltic Farmers' Forum on Environment, took part in the meeting. The list of participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

0.2 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Urmas Lips, Chair of SOM Platform.

0.3 Ms. Susanna Kaasinen, Ms. Heini Ahtiainen and Mr. Luke Dodd, HELCOM Secretariat, acted as secretaries of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

1.1 The Meeting adopted the agenda as contained in document 1-1-Rev.1.

Agenda Item 2 Results and reports of the SOM analysis

2.1 The Meeting considered the final results of the SOM analysis and the topic reports on hazardous substances, marine mammals, input of nutrients, benthic habitats, non-indigenous species and noise (document 2-1-Rev.1, **Presentation 1**).

2.2 The Meeting took note that the methodology report is ready. The Meeting also took note that the work on the main report is ongoing, and a draft will be finalized by the end of the year.

2.3 The Meeting took note that time will not allow for sending the main report for comments before the end of the year and it will be published as the ACTION project report. However, if the results of the SOM analysis will be published as a supporting document for the Ministerial Meeting 2021 as a HELCOM report, the report will be further refined in 2021.

2.4 The Meeting took note that the topic reports on hazardous substances, marine mammals, input of nutrients, benthic habitats, non-indigenous species, noise, fish and birds have been sent to experts for review and the report on litter will be sent for expert review shortly.

2.5 The Meeting invited the ACTION project and Secretariat to make the fish and birds reports available in the SOM Platform workspace. The Meeting invited the SOM Platform to send comments to the reports to the Secretariat (heini.ahtiainen@helcom.fi; luke.dodd@helcom.fi) **by 4 December 2020**. The Meeting took note that expert comments providing interpretation and contextualization of the results, as well as suggestions for clarifications and editorial changes are welcome.

2.6 The Meeting took note that the end year of the BAU scenario will be changed from 2030-2035 to 2030 in all the reports if not changed already.

2.7 The Meeting took note of the clarification that results excluded from the topic reports due to insufficient data will be excluded from the main report as well.

2.8 The Meeting recalled that analysing the sufficiency of existing and proposed new measures is part of the cost-effectiveness analysis. The Meeting took note that there is uncertainty in the estimation of effectiveness of measures and this applies also to the effectiveness of new measures which were in many cases quite vaguely described in the synopses.

2.9 The Meeting noted that the SOM results are a source of supporting information for selecting new actions for the updated BSAP in addition to other knowledge and assessments. The Meeting took note that the probability of achieving state improvements or the projected pressure reductions might be underestimated for some topics, due to the lack of linkage between pressure inputs, pressures and state components.

2.10 The Meeting welcomed the addition of the summary boxes as start of the topic reports and highlighted that it would be also important to mention the lack of data in such summaries.

2.11 The Meeting suggested that the limitations in the coverage of the analysis, e.g. with regard to pressures, should be mentioned in the summary and discussion sections since some proposals for new measures address aspects that are not covered by the SOM analysis. The Meeting also pointed out that while for some topics large pressure reductions are expected based on the SOM analysis, it does not necessarily mean that all gaps are covered.

2.12 The Meeting took note that information on existing measures and their estimated impacts will be added to the topic reports.

2.13 The Meeting pointed out that some elements of the topic reports, e.g. methodological information, are repeated under different chapters and do not always provide consistent information. The Meeting suggested to describe how the assessment was made mainly in the methodology section.

2.14 The Meeting supported the proposal to include in the main report an overview of the probability to achieve/maintain GES, state improvements or probability to achieve reduction targets. The Meeting suggested to reconsider the use of colour coding in the overview. The colour green might be interpreted to indicate a high (e.g. over 70%) probability to reach GES, although in the proposal it was indicating probability above 50%.

2.15 The Meeting discussed the proposal to develop a categorization that indicates possible reservations on the use of the results by element or topic but did not conclude on whether such categorization should be developed. The Meeting took note that the categorization would represent the project's subjective view and would not be used for excluding some results, e.g. from the main report. The Meeting took note of the varied views on whether it is more useful to present such information in the text or as a separate table, and the comment that no additional categorization should be created but it should be based on the information presented in the reports or the already used classification for the qualitative, semi-qualitative or quantitative presentation format.

Non-indigenous species

2.16 The Meeting suggested that the implications of having a base year of 2005-2016 for the activity-pressure contributions derived from the AquaNIS database should be discussed in the report.

2.17 The Meeting invited the ACTION project to clarify the activity "activities and sources outside of the Baltic Sea" and check if both marine and inland aquaculture are included in the analysis since currently the report gives contradictory information on this activity.

Input of nutrients

2.18 The Meeting took note that PLC data from 2014 is used for Sweden and Denmark due to data availability at the time the analysis was made (February/March 2020).

2.19 The Meeting pointed out that the activity-pressure contributions on page 6 contain information that is not included in the PLC 6 or 7 source apportionment and invited the project to clarify the source of this information. The Meeting took note that the activity-pressure contributions are based on PLC data but further developed by ACTION WP4 and are new outputs of the ACTION project.

2.20 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the analysis does not take into account the reallocation of nutrient reductions due to time constraints.

2.21 The Meeting recalled that there was no pressure-state survey for input of nutrients and took note that the information on page 14 on the state components most affected by eutrophication is derived from the surveys for other topics.

2.22 The Meeting took note that the SOM assessment is done per PLC sub-basin and that, while a whole Baltic Sea assessment might technically be accomplished with the current data, such an assessment has not been standard practice in the SOM analysis.

Benthic habitats

2.23 The Meeting took note that Table 7 shows the five most significant state components affected by loss and disturbance to seabed based on expert responses from five SOM pressure-state surveys. The ranking is made based on significance scores and percent contribution of different pressures to state components. This transformation into percent enabled pooling the data from the different surveys and providing information on state components most affected by pressures. The Meeting also took note that in the revised version of the report, the pressures with insufficient data have been removed from the table in order to avoid confusion.

Underwater noise

2.24 The Meeting pointed out that in Table 4 only a few state components are listed. The Meeting took note of the clarification that for some state components there was insufficient data due to low number of responses, which is why they could not be listed. The Meeting invited the project to add in the text information on sensitive species, such as harbour porpoise, although this information could not be included in the table.

Agenda Item 3 Cost-effectiveness analysis of new measures

3.1 The Meeting considered the progress of the cost-effectiveness analysis (document 3-1, **Presentation 2**).

3.2 The Meeting took note of the clarification that “Scaling the effectiveness and costs of new measures based on the scenarios of the extent of implementation” refers to creating scenarios that specify the application extent of measures (e.g. the spatial area) to enable assessing the effectiveness and costs of measures and ensure the costs and effectiveness are for the same application extent. These are needed as the analysis requires information on to what extent the measure applies and that in the synopses the proposed measures are often described vaguely.

3.3 The Meeting highlighted the importance of presenting the results in a format that is understandable. The Meeting took note that it has yet not been decided how the final results will be presented and that proposals for suitable graphs etc. could be sent to SYKE (liisa.saikkonen@ymparisto.fi).

3.4 The Meeting took note of the clarification that the costs and effectiveness of each individual proposed new measure that has been classified as “measure” or “step towards measure” (as far as it is possible to attain information on the costs and effectiveness), as well as the sum of all proposed new measures will be included in the analysis. Time allowing, also analysis of sub-groups of measures could be conducted.

3.5 The Meeting provided the following comments regarding the cost-effectiveness analysis:

- It would be better to consistently use the term “extent of application” rather than mix it with the term “extent of implementation”.
- The outputs should specify the application extent, cost, effectiveness and potentially the topic and multiple effects for each measure or grouped measure assessed.
- The effectiveness of measures should be clarified, i.e. that it refers to the capacity of the measure to reduce pressure.
- It should be clarified what is meant by sets of measures.

- The same topic structure could be followed as in the SOM analysis.

3.6 The Meeting took note that the results will be ready by the end of the year and regretted that there is no time to comment on a draft report.

3.7 The Meeting took note of the proposal to reflect in the final report that the cost-effectiveness report has not been reviewed by the CPs.

3.8 The Meeting took note of the proposal to provide costs for each country and noted that this is difficult since while there are some unit costs available, the application scale of the measures for each country is lacking.

3.9 The Meeting took note that there are high uncertainties in the results of the cost-effectiveness analysis due to e.g. the difficulties in assessing the application extent of proposed new measures across the region, vagueness of the description of proposed new measures and lack of cost data.

Agenda Item 4 Any other business

4.1 The Meeting recalled that as the work on the SOM analysis and the ACTION project will come to an end in 2020, this is the last meeting of SOM Platform.

4.2 The Meeting thanked the ACTION project for the extensive work on the SOM analysis.

4.3 The Meeting thanked Mr. Urmas Lips for chairing the SOM Platform.

4.4 The ACTION project thanked the SOM Platform for the useful comments and guidance for conducting the SOM analysis.

Agenda Item 5 Notes from the Meeting

5.1 The Notes from the Meeting were finalized after closure of the Meeting and circulated for approval by the participants in writing

Annex 1. List of participants

Name	Representing	Name of organization (in English)	Email address (to be displayed in the participant list)
Urmas Lips	Chair of SOM Platform	Tallinn University of Technology	urmas.lips@taltech.ee
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