



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

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Note that this document was submitted after the established deadline. It will be decided by the Meeting whether the document can be discussed or is postponed to the next meeting.

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 8J-9 to the STATE & CONSERVATION 10-2019. The approach was consolidated at the [Kick-off meeting of the SOM Platform](#) and an updated version has been submitted for approval by GEAR 20-2019 (15-17 May 2019). Implementation of the framework relies on a lead country approach and the formation of topic teams. However, lead countries have not been established for all the biodiversity topics and therefore the Secretariat has drafted a proposal covering the geographic scale of analysis and state variables for Birds and Marine Mammals. The proposals follow the recommendations of [SOM 1-2019](#) and HELCOM core indicators whenever feasible, and has been circulated to the SOM platform for comments. The Secretariat still encourages countries to take lead roles on all or part of these topics.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.

Proposal for SOM Biodiversity: Birds

It is proposed that the SOM analysis be carried out at the whole Baltic scale by bird functional groups for both the [Abundance of waterbirds in the breeding season](#) and [Abundance of waterbirds in the wintering season](#) indicators. This approach is presented in the HELCOM core indicator reports for both topics and is in line with the recommendation from [SOM 1-2019](#).

Proposal for SOM Biodiversity: Marine mammals

It is proposed that the SOM analysis be carried out as follows:

- Grey seal population trend and abundance at the whole Baltic scale in line with the [core indicator report](#).
- Ringed seal population trend and abundance for two sub-basin groups ([Bothnian Bay, The Quark, Gulf of Bothnia], [Åland Sea, North Baltic Proper, Gulf of Finland, Gulf of Riga]) in line with the [core indicator report](#).
- Harbour seal population trend and abundance for three sub-basin groups ([Kattegat including the Limfjord sub-population], [Great Belt, The Sound, Kiel Bay, Bay of Mecklenburg, Arkona Basin, Bornholm Basin], [Western Gotland]) in line with the [core indicator report](#).
- Harbour porpoise population trend and abundance for two sub-basin groups ([Kattegat, Great Belt, The Sound, Kiel Bay, Bay of Mecklenburg, Arkona Basin], [Bornholm Basin and west]) based on sub-populations presented in HOLAS II targeted to the soft GES metric "natural and robust abundance"¹ as identified in the [BSAP](#).

These recommendations are in line with the outcome of [SOM 1-2019](#).

Proposal for SOM Biodiversity: Fish

A proposal for Fish was circulated to the SOM platform; however, Sweden has since taken on the role of lead country for the topic and will guide development of the proposal going forward.

Proposal for SOM Biodiversity: Red list species and biotopes

It was proposed that red list species, biotopes and associated existing targets² in HELCOM could be analysed as a biodiversity indicator at [SOM 1-2019](#) and interest in the topic has continued. Such indicator and targets could in principle be used in the analyses. However, no country has offered to lead on the topic and it is therefore not planned for inclusion in the SOM analysis at this time.

¹ "By 2021 all elements of the marine food webs, to the extent that they are known, occur at natural and robust abundance and diversity"

² for example the existing targets: 'By 2015, improved conservation status of species included in the HELCOM lists of threatened and/or declining species and habitats of the Baltic Sea area, with the final target to reach and ensure favourable conservation status of all species', 'By 2010 to halt the degradation of threatened and/or declining marine biotopes/habitats in the Baltic Sea, and by 2021 to ensure that threatened and/or declining marine biotopes/habitats in the Baltic Sea have largely recovered'