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| Document title | Proposal for revised indicator template and website development |
| Code | 3J-17 |
| Category | DEC |
| Agenda Item | 3J – Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects |
| Submission date | 13.9.2021 |
| Submitted by | Secretariat |

Background

This document contains an overview of the proposed new HELCOM indicator template and website for use in HOLAS III. The revision of both aspects is presented below in the form of a basic structure. This structure functions as the basis for initiating the actual technical implementation in digital/online format. The proposed structure retains the major components of the existing indicator template and website. The proposed revisions include some reordering of components, the addition of new components where relevant, and a general re-working of the visual presentation and functionality of the tools, however maintains all the existing components and functionalities.

Once the updated format is finalized the Secretariat will support the indicator leads and experts by transferring the latest versions of the old indicator report to the new template. The aim would be for the transfer to be complete and made available to the relevant indicator leads in spring 2022, enabling them to start the updating of the 2022 reports.

The template for the indicators has also been updated to include general guidance for each section to support indicator leads in filling the template in a harmonized manner. The design and functionality (e.g. extractable sections and filtering options) aspects of the indicator template and website are not directly addressed in this document. The aim with this document is to secure approval of the general structure so that the Secretariat can initiate the implementation of these changes. The more technical steps will be addressed prior to the finalization of the indicator work in 2022. Once the structures and design aspects have been implemented these will be presented to Contracting Parties for further evaluation. It is however key that the main structures and components to be implemented are agreed at this stage.

The document is presented in two sections, one addressing the indicator template and the second addressing the indicator website. A few specific questions are placed within the document (highlighted in yellow) where the need for specific guidance has been identified.

The template has been revised based on the input received from the indicator leads who were invited to review the proposed changes at the information event for HELCOM indicator lead ([IND-INF 1-2021](#), and [Notes](#)) and offer the opportunity to raise questions or provide guidance. In addition to addressing earlier shortcomings and the input by indicator leads, this new template aims to address issues raised in [document 3-5 to GEAR 24-2021](#) related to the application of regional assessments (e.g. under HELCOM) under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), which could further support HELCOM Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States.

Resources to implement these developments have been secured via the HELCOM BLUES project. It is important to note that the aim of the new system (e.g. website part in particular) will be developed to ensure flexibility, for example to add new indicators within the different 'levels' or move components within the general structure.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- Review the proposed structure and provide guidance as needed.
- Approve the general structure and presentation.
- Approve the use of 'short names' to facilitate presentation of the indicators online.

Section 1: HELCOM indicator template towards HOLAS III

The document below provides an overview of the structure itself, and the component parts. The final editable template into which leads will compile the indicator reports will be developed subsequently and where possible technical improvement will be included to facilitate improved visual harmonisation (e.g. guidance of figure presentation and format), more automated functionality between the editable templates and meeting documents or website interfaces, or options to directly extract the specific details that may support HELCOM Contracting Parties with other relevant commitments (e.g. under the MSFD for those HELCOM Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States).

Within the document there are sections currently highlighted in **blue**. These indicate sections that relate to issues raised under [document 3-5 to GEAR 24-2021](#). The proposal is that once the template functionalities are applied these components within the indicator template a technical solution would be explored to enable these 'MSFD-related' sections to be directly extracted as a separate document or download.

It should be noted at this stage that the technical solutions have not yet been explored but will be the following step in the procedure once the general structure have been endorsed. In addition to the above, the technical solutions will also explore permanent DOIs for reference/archive purposes, hyperlinks between relevant section within the indicators, and the option to provide specific references/links to sections within a report (e.g. to a specific methodology).

The following section addresses the indicator template, i.e. the sections and structure that form the basis of the indicator reports.

Indicator name (abbreviated version)

1. Please provide the approved indicator name in full (e.g. Number of drowned mammals and waterbirds in fishing gear) – *no limit on text, clear concise titles.*
2. Please provide the approved/proposed short-hand (abbreviated) indicator name for use in online presentation of the relevant material (e.g. Mammal and waterbird bycatch) – *30 characters (including spaces) limit.*

1 Key message

Ideally the key message should fit on a single A4 page to allow for it to be presented in full at the top level of the indicator presentation. It should be noted that the indicators should be written with the audience in mind and that the audience includes the general public, managers and policy makers, and scientists. Therefore, it is important to strive towards text and presentation that can be easily understood and applied as well as accurately portrays the science, data and findings.

The key message should contain the following components:

1. A single (or several if required) key message map illustrating status (i.e. indicator evaluation outcome*) and the area assessed. *Where the development of these maps is not automated the Secretariat can provide support to produce them in the correct format.*

*the indicator evaluation outcome, commonly termed status within this template, will differ between different indicator categories, For example the outcome of a pressure, driver or risk indicator may not specifically be a status evaluation – however, the equivalent 'indicator evaluation outcome' is what should be presented (i.e. a summary of the evaluation).

Example key message map:

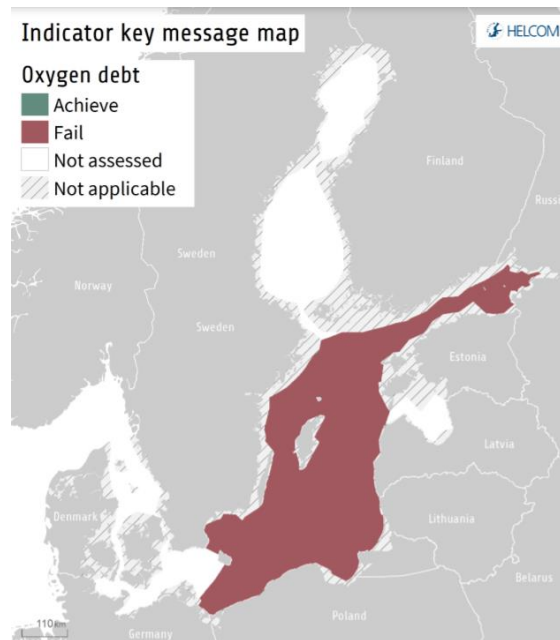


Figure X – Key message. Status assessment results based on evaluation of the indicator ‘Oxygen debt’. The assessment is carried out using open sea areas of Scale 4 HELCOM assessment units (defined in the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy Annex 4 ([link to be added at final stage](#))). To access interactive maps at the HELCOM Map and Data Service: Oxygen debt ([link inserted at final stage](#)).

Example figure.

- The following guidance should be followed: utilising the approved HELCOM colour scheme, identifying areas (assessment units or aggregations of them) as achieving the threshold value (e.g. green), failing the threshold value (e.g. red), not assessed (blank/white), or not applicable (dashed lines).
 - In addition, the figure legend should include the following information: The name of the indicator, the fact that it is a status assessment, a statement on the HELCOM assessment unit scale applied, and a link to the HELCOM Map and Data Service (MADS) for the specific map. See *example above*.
2. A short text presenting the key message and findings or take-home messages/highlights. This can also be supported by a series of concise bullet points (maximum of five). Key information should be covered including for example: the **parameter assessed (e.g. oxygen, abundance of a species, size and total stock)**, the evaluation outcomes, important results, major changes (improvements or deteriorations), etc. *As a guide the text should where possible be circa 500-1000 words (including spaces).*

1.1 Citation

The data and resulting data products (e.g. tables, figures and maps) available on the indicator web page can be used freely given that it is used appropriately and the source is cited. The indicator should be cited as follows:

HELCOM (YEAR). Indicator name. HELCOM core indicator report. Online. [Date Viewed], [Web link]. ISSN 2343-2543. *A permanent URL or DOI will also be created at the final production stage.*

The above text, adapted to be specific to each indicator, should be included.

2 Relevance of the indicator

This section should address three separate components: Ecological relevance, Policy Relevance and Relevance for other assessments.

• 2.1 Ecological relevance

The ecological relevance or importance of the given indicator and evaluation should be clearly documented, highlighting for example why such assessments are important, what they can show and what the possible implications are. The information should be as concise as possible and highlight key issues. The content will differ greatly between indicators and topics but aspects such as how concentrations of a substance have known toxic effects or bioaccumulate, how concentrations of a substance/element lead to algal blooms, or how changes in a species or taxonomic group influence key ecosystem functions are relevant to address. The text should aim to summarise why the indicator is important, what such status assessments can show, and where in the Baltic Sea ecosystem the impacts can be expected. *As a guide the text should where possible be circa 500-1000 words (including spaces).*

• 2.2 Policy relevance

Policy relevance is a critical component of the HELCOM indicators and where relevant three major policies need to be addressed directly: the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The table below should be used as the structure for addressing policy relevance. Further guidance is provided within the table itself.

Table X. Policy relevance of this specific HELCOM indicator. *Example table.*

| | Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) | Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------|---|----------|---|--|---|---|---|
| Principal link Dominant link Essential link Major link Fundamental link Direct link | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify the BSAP Segment, aims and Objective(s) relevant. For example: Biodiversity - Favourable status of Baltic Sea biodiversity. Viable populations of species. Select the information most directly and specifically related to the indicator in question. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify the specific MSFD Descriptor and Criteria which the indicator (in its current form) directly addresses (i.e. where it would be utilised by HELCOM Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States). The information should be provided in text and numeric form. For example, Descriptor 8 ‘Contaminants’ – Criteria 1 ‘Concentrations of contaminants’ (D8C1). <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Descriptor</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Criteria</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc)</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc)</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Descriptor | X | Criteria | X | MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc) | X | Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc) | X |
| Descriptor | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Criteria | X | | | | | | | | | |
| MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc) | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc) | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Additional link Auxiliary link Complementary link Indirect link | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other relevant BSAP information with relevance, but to which the indicator itself may not specifically be developed to address. For example, other BSAP segments, aims and objectives may have relevance, or more | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify other relevant MSFD Descriptors and Criteria to which the indicator may offer relevant information (though in its current form does not directly address) or which may be relevant to the indicator in question. For example, an indicator addressing fish may also have relevance to food webs (though in the current form may not directly address the issue) | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------|---|----------|---|--|---|---|---|
| | recent issues for example documented under Ministerial Declarations. | <p>or concentrations of hazardous substances may be relevant to the assessment of fish populations.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="847 286 1390 584"> <tr> <td data-bbox="847 286 1118 322">Descriptor</td> <td data-bbox="1118 286 1390 322">X</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="847 322 1118 358">Criteria</td> <td data-bbox="1118 322 1390 358">X</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="847 358 1118 456">MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc)</td> <td data-bbox="1118 358 1390 456">X</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="847 456 1118 584">Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc)</td> <td data-bbox="1118 456 1390 584">X</td> </tr> </table> | Descriptor | X | Criteria | X | MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc) | X | Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc) | X |
| Descriptor | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Criteria | X | | | | | | | | | |
| MSFD feature addressed (e.g. seals, eutrophication, etc) | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Element of the feature assessed (e.g. species, habitat, contaminant, etc) | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Other relevant legislation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of other relevant policies (e.g. UN SDGs and WFD) • Clear definition of relevant components with links where possible (e.g. to specific annexes, documents or webpages) | | | | | | | | | |

The current table (in existing indicator template) identifies the terms in the table as Primary and Secondary. This has created some confusion and inconsistent filling of the tables due to the specific relevance of those terms for the MSFD. A number of terms are proposed above, with the proposal from the Secretariat being the one that has not been struck through. The main reason behind this selection is that these terms can be applied to both the MSFD, and the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), as well as other policy initiatives, in a similar manner and do not have potentially conflicting definitions or associations. This is considered important since the table addresses a number of policy initiatives (in particular the BSAP and the MSFD) and aims to highlight comparability and interlinkages. The guidance would then support appropriate completion of the table.

- **2.3 Relevance for other assessments**

The key factor to address under this section is if and how the indicator is utilised in one of the HELCOM integrated assessments (e.g. HEAT, BEAT or CHASE) and thus also the relevant HOLAS assessment it enters. Methodological detail of the application of the integrated assessments is not required, that aspect being addressed under those tools, but a clear description of if the named indicator is utilised in 'downstream' assessments is needed. *As a guide the text should where possible be circa 500 words (including spaces).*

3 Threshold values

Information related to threshold values should be clearly presented in both graphical and text format. *The Secretariat can support in production of necessary figures aligned with the style and presentation of the indicator reports.*

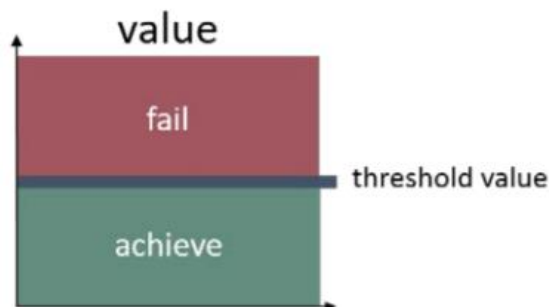


Figure XX – Threshold value(s). Schematic representation of the threshold value applied in the ‘indicator name’ core indicator (*the threshold values are presented in the table below*). *Example figure.*

The schematic presentation should visually show the threshold value setting logic applied in the indicator. Where a single value is applied as the threshold value for all areas (assessment units) then this value can be reflected in the figure legend. Where multiple threshold values as applied, for example threshold values differ between multiple assessment units, then the relevant information should be tabulated below the schematic presentation (see example below). Even where a single value is used then this should still be represented in the table to support possible technical solution and functionalities.

It should also be clearly noted in this section if the threshold values have been adjusted compared to earlier assessments of the same indicator.

Table XX – Threshold value(s). Assessment unit specific threshold values applied in this indicator. The indicator is evaluated using scale X (2, 3 or 4) HELCOM assessment units. *Example table.*

| HELCOM Assessment unit name (and ID) | Threshold value (Units) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Kattegat (SEA-001) | X.XX mg/l |
| Great Belt (SEA-002) | X.XX mg/l |
| | Not assessed |
| | Not relevant |
| | |
| | |

Should this table become very extensive, e.g. for indicators addressed at Scale 4, the table may be most appropriate as an annex. However, in the majority of such cases (e.g. hazardous substances or eutrophication indicators) it is likely that the same threshold value (or a limited number) is applied to all assessment units (or aggregated clusters) and thus a technical solution will be explored to generate this subsequently and the table presented here could provide the single threshold value (limited number) and identify that it is applied to all (grouped) assessment units.

- 3.1 Setting the threshold value(s) (method/reference/logic)

This text section should detail the specific method and logic behind the threshold value(s) applied. In addition, it should clearly indicate how they were derived and/or provide clear referencing to the background information for how they were developed – including relevant referencing. A final step will also be to include a link to a summary of the HELCOM decisions related to each threshold value (i.e. the outcome at which they were approved) that will be produced as part of the indicator web page renewal process.

As a guide the text should where possible be <1500 words (including spaces).

4 Results and discussion

The results and discussion section should combine graphical presentation of the results, status maps, and text to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the indicator evaluation and its purpose. The three main sections below should be addressed.

Please follow the colour and design guidelines when making figures and images (the aim is to develop this as part of the next design phase). Should you require support please request it from the Secretariat.

- 4.1 Status assessment

The status assessment should clearly describe the results and outcome of the current indicator evaluation (based on the national monitoring data entering the evaluation). The status assessment should be described in text form and supported by maps, images, and suitable graphics.

The opening paragraph should contain a clear overview/summary of the status findings for the current assessment period.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

- 4.2 Trends

Trends offer an insight into the finer details that may not be possible to address with a status assessment alone (i.e. an assessment against a threshold value that determines if it is failed or achieved). This section should provide information on long term trends where possible that may offer explanatory power, for example if there is a general improvement or worsening of the situation (in assessment units or at sampling stations), or if there is no change in values. Trends should be described in text form and supported by maps, images, and suitable graphics.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

The trend between the current indicator evaluation and prior evaluations should also be addressed (where an indicator is in its second or more iteration). This section should ideally cover all major trends in each assessment unit where they are observed, include a general Baltic Sea regional overview of the trends (if appropriate), and if required can be tabulated as an annex.

This section should ideally be concise so that it can be extracted for MSFD reporting purposes for example and include key terms such as stable, improving, deteriorating (see table below in 'discussion text' section).

- 4.3 Discussion text

This discussion section should bring together the data and information provided above and incorporate suitable scientific contextual information derived from outside of the indicator evaluation itself (including

relevant reference material). Key issues to consider in this discussion text include: the potential consequences of the current status, if trends may show an improving or worsening situation related to the status evaluation, how the current assessment compares to previous assessments (e.g. improving or worsening), if trends can offer any insights related to measures (e.g. successful implementation), or what trends may have been expected if no measures had been implemented (i.e. showing how measures have made an impact even if status has not been fully achieved at this iteration). This section offers the opportunity to incorporate information that is not directly derived from the monitoring data and indicator evaluation itself, information that can support the indicator evaluation of provide additional broader scientific context that is relevant for interpretation or application of the indicator.

| HELCOM Assessment unit name (and ID) | Threshold value achieved/failed | Distinct trend between current and previous assessment. | Description of outcomes, if pertinent (<i>max 250 words</i>). |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Kattegat (SEA-001) | Achieved | Stable | Indicator evaluation failed to achieve the threshold value and trends are stable between this and previous assessment. Long natural recovery times. |
| Great Belt (SEA-002) | Failed | Stable | |
| ... | Not assessed | Improving | |
| | Not relevant | Deteriorating | |
| | Achieved | First indicator iteration | |
| | | No trend | |

It is critical that any changes made between the current assessment and any older assessments of the same indicator (e.g. threshold value adjustments, assessment unit changes, or alterations in methodology) are clearly addressed in this section. The impacts of these when comparing between assessments must be clearly outlined.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

5 Confidence

The confidence if the assessment should be documented. The way in which confidence is derived will likely differ greatly between each indicator (and may be dependent on the level of automation or development) and it is thus important that the approach taken is clearly documented in the report.

The confidence may be derived from an expert-based evaluation or from a categorical/numeric approach and may be derived on the basis of the indicator as a whole or at the assessment unit level (i.e. a separate assessment of confidence for each evaluated assessment unit within the indicator).

Ideally the confidence will be derived based on multiple relevant components and at the assessment unit basis. The following components are valid to consider when determining the confidence: confidence in the applied threshold value, confidence in the applied methodology, spatial coverage of the data, and temporal coverage of the data. Other aspects may also be relevant for different indicators or as indicators develop further.

Where relevant, aspects such as validation or ground-truthing should also be addressed under this section of the report.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

6 Drivers, Activities, and Pressures

This section should provide as much detail as possible on the pressures, activities and drivers of consequence for the indicator, thereby providing an overview of the causal framework that is addressed (see DAPSIM causal framework in the [HELCOM indicator manual](#)). Such information is critical for management purposes, for example for the appropriate setting and targeting of measures.

Where information exists, for example documented inputs, driver indicators, or pressure indicators, these should be referred to and appropriately linked together to the status assessment (or trends) made in the indicator.

Linking to relevant lists of activities and pressure (e.g. under the BSAP or MSFD) is also relevant.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

7 Climate change and other factors

This section should address key issues that can impact the indicator and its evaluation (i.e. the topic addressed by the indicator), including the potential for the indicator to achieve good status in the future. Factors such as climate change and ‘natural lags’ in recovery should be addressed to provide a broad context for the indicator evaluation and also to support management decision making.

Specific information that may support this (relevant in 2021) include work carried out under the HELOCM ACTION Project, particularly work package 5, and the EN CLIME fact sheets. The EN CLIME fact sheets will be shared with the indicator leads to facilitate leads completing this section.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

8 Conclusions

Clear conclusions should be provided that tie together the above components, i.e. the current status evaluation, the confidence, trends, pressures, climate change and other factors, and supporting contextual information. The conclusions section will likely be similar to components of the key message section, however, this section should allow greater flexibility to expand on the key messages in a broader manner.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

- **8.1 Future work or improvements needed.**

The majority of HELCOM indicators, as with all scientific output, contain uncertainties or assumptions or there may be known improvements in the methodology or monitoring that could be implemented. This section provides an opportunity to document where future work or improvements may be valid to further improve aspects of the indicator and thereby increase the confidence in the indicator evaluation further.

This section should provide a clear and transparent overview of where improvements of future work can be envisaged and will support future prioritisation as well as maintain a transparent approach to the HELCOM indicators and their development. The developments needed should be categorised, where needed, under issues related to assessment units, threshold values, methodological aspects, or monitoring.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

9 Methodology

The methodology should be detailed in full, including references to relevant scientific literature and/or HELCOM agreements that relate to it.

- **9.1 Scale of assessment**

The HELCOM assessment unit scale should be clearly stated, including a link to the [HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy Annex 4](#). Aggregations or division of these existing scales of assessment should also be clearly documented here, including the logic for such approaches (e.g. population level groupings, depth division, or ecological relevance).

- **9.2 Methodology applied**

The indicator methodology should be clearly documented to enable external users to replicate the indicator evaluation carried out. Where tools for applying the indicator methodology are available (e.g. R code scripts) these should also be linked to in this section.

It is critical that all assumptions applied in the methodology are clearly documented.

- **9.3 Monitoring and reporting requirements**

The monitoring requirements should be clearly defined, including all supporting parameters or factors that are required for the indicator evaluation. Where existing and agreed HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Guidelines are already in place this section can be brief and provide direct links to the established documents. However, if no such documentation is in place or there are deviation from existing reference material then this section should be more descriptive to cover the topic in detail.

If improvements are required in relation to the monitoring requirements (or HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Guidelines remain to be developed) then this should be documented in the previous section 'Future work or improvements required'.

No specific word limit applied here. Ideally the opening paragraph for each section would provide a sufficient summary to be possible to extract as a stand-alone short version.

10 Data

The data and resulting data products (e.g. tables, figures and maps) available on the indicator web page can be used freely given that it is used appropriately and the source is cited.

The above text should be included in this section.

Below this text a list of the data (e.g. metadata) included in the assessment should be presented. The list should provide a name of the data/result, a short description of it, and a link to the data/result file. The list should provide a complete overview of the data so that it is possible for an external user to replicate the indicator evaluation carried out. The section should therefore offer access, via the HELCOM Map and Data

Service (MADS), to the raw data and the result data (data files and maps). *Links to the relevant data will be included via the HELCOM Secretariat data team at the latter stages of indicator preparation.*

All relevant data (raw data and indicator evaluation result data) for the indicator assessment should be made available, including for the national review process and so that it can be prepared for the HELCOM Map and Data Service (MADS). Should, in certain cases, data restrictions or aggregations have been agreed through the appropriate HELCOM processes (e.g. for the protection of species or habitats) then these should be reflected in the text to clearly indicate that certain data is not available.

No specific word limit applied here.

11 Contributors

A list of contributors should be provided reflecting the contributors to the latest version of the report. The following division is proposed: HELCOM indicator lead(s) and co-leads (nominated leads and co-leads), contributors (individual names and/or relevant HELCOM groups that have contributed significantly), and acknowledgements (individual names and/or relevant HELCOM groups that have been involved).

No specific word limit applied here.

12 Archive

This section should contain a list of all previous versions of the indicator, including the permanent links or DOIs for those documents.

No specific word limit applied here.

13 References

This section should include all references utilised in the report. Links should be provided where possible.

No specific word limit applied here.

14 Other relevant resources

This section should contain other relevant information required for an overall or in-depth understanding of the indicator (method and/or evaluation). For example, additional data sheets, figures, supplementary information, **regionally agreed lists of species, lists of priority substances, source of the list of MSFD elements (this covers the two prior also)**, or other relevant information not possible to include in the reference list or other section.

No specific word limit applied here. It may be most appropriate to provide a brief introduction to each item, with links provided where possible to the item, and then the specific annexes (as needed) can be included at the end of the overall document or via designated section within the indicator website.

Section 1: HELCOM website structure towards HOLAS III

This section addressed the proposal for the general structure of the HELCOM website for indicators. The structure and website itself is addressed first, with design aspects to be added later. The later parts of this section then address the application of the indicator template (as outlined above in section 1) within the online view (website).

First level of web page view:

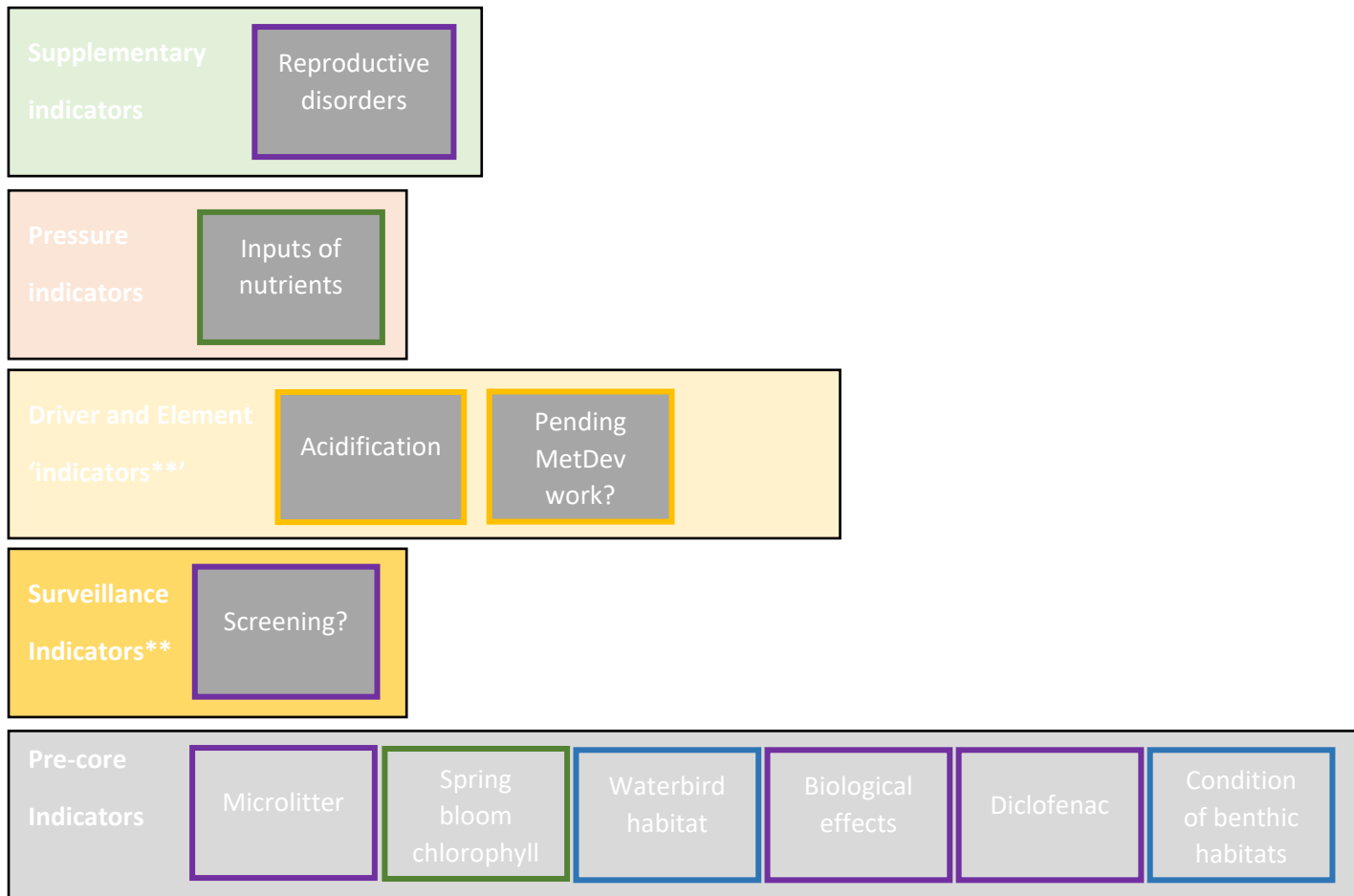
This section represents the front page of the new indicator website. Art/graphics and design will be added at a later implementation stage. In addition to graphics and design, colour will be used to link to the BSAP segments. The process addressed by this document is on gaining endorsement on the proposed structure, including on the presentation and/or division of indicators to allow a hierarchical presentation approach within the website.

The names included within this section also represent the proposals for the 'short names' or abbreviations for the indicators to facilitate easier presentation in online formats. At the technical implementation stage it will also be explored to enable the full name of the indicators to appear when the cursor is placed over the name/image.

Within the 'first level' view on the indicator web page the indicators are divided into clear sections based on type and level of development/approval to ensure clarity on the divisions applied. This factor will also be included as a design component so that there is, for example, clear visual differentiations between core and pre-core indicators, or status and pressure indicators.

The presentation below provides an overview of the proposed 'first level' view of the indicator webpage.

| Information | Indicator manual | Threshold values | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| Status indicators | Grey seals * | Harbour seals* | Ringed seals* | Harbour porpoise* | Waterbirds * | Bycatch | Coastal fish * | Migratory fish* | |
| | Commercial Fish* | Zoo-plankton | Phyto-plankton | Benthic habitats* | | | | | |
| | Nitrogen* | Phosphorus * | Water transparency | Oxygen* | Chlorophyll | Cyano-bacterial blooms | | | |
| | Metals* | TBT and imposex | Radioactive substances | Persistent organic pollutants* | Sea eagle | | | | |
| | Marine litter* | Underwater noise* | | | | | | | |
| | Oil spills | Non-indigenous specis | | | | | | | |



*these indicators/categories relate directly to the following pages and proposals included therein.

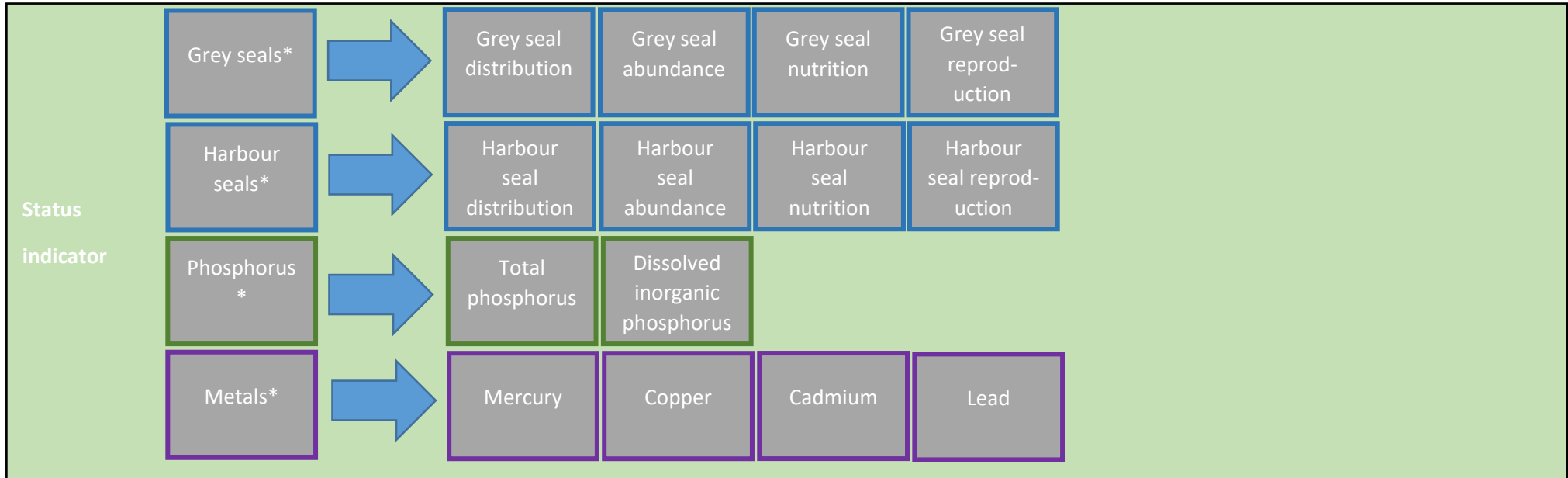
**the driver and element (and surveillance) indicators will not contain threshold values and are more reminiscent of 'fact sheets'.

The information section will provide 1) a direct link to the published indicator manual, and 2) a listing of all the approved threshold values and the relevant HELCOM meetings where they were approved.

'Second level' of web page view:

Those 'boxes' marked with * in the above image are represented in this section, i.e. once clicking on the logo/name of the 'first level' image that summarises a species or group of items it will open the a new series of logos/names that enter the specific indicator topics (see image example below).

Here a few examples are given visually, but below a full listing is made in text form to identify the details and to show the proposed 'short names'.



The table below presents the 'second level' division (note that some of the indicators currently listed here are undergoing development and approval processes etc so the listing may not be the final 'outcome' at HOLAS III and indicators currently listed here may for example end up under pre-core for HOLAS III). Thus, this is simply an example to plan the structure of the web page and indicator reports.

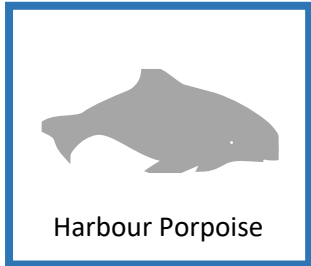
| First level name | Grey seals* | Harbour seals* | Ringed seals* | Harbour porpoise* | Waterbirds* | Coastal fish* | Migratory fish* | Commercial fish* | Benthic habitats* |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Second level division (short names) | Grey seal distribution | Harbour seal distribution | Ringed seal distribution | Harbour porpoise distribution | Waterbirds breeding season | Coastal fish key groups | Salmon abundance | TBC | Cumulative impact on benthic habitats |
| | Grey seal abundance | Harbour seal abundance | Ringed seal abundance | Harbour porpoise abundance | Waterbirds wintering season | Coastal fish key species | Trout abundance | TBC | Soft-bottom macrofauna |
| | Grey seal nutrition | Harbour seal nutrition | Ringed seal nutrition | Harbour porpoise nutrition | Waterbirds breeding success | Coastal fish size structure | | | Condition of benthic habitats |
| | Grey seal reproduction | Harbour seal reproduction | Ringed seal reproduction | Harbour porpoise reproduction | Waterbird habitat | | | | |

| First level name | Nitrogen* | Phosphorus* | Oxygen* | Metals* | Persistent organic pollutants* | Marine litter* | Underwater noise* |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|---|-----------------|-------------------|
| Second level division (short names) | Total nitrogen | Total phosphorus | Oxygen debt | Mercury | Hexabromocyclododecane | Beach litter | Continuous noise |
| | Dissolved inorganic | Dissolved phosphorus | Shallow water oxygen | Lead | Polybrominated biphenyl ethers | Seafloor litter | Impulsive noise |
| | | | | Cadmium | Perfluorooctane sulphonate | | |
| | | | | Copper | Polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxins and furans | | |
| | | | | | Polyaromatic hydrocarbons and metabolites | | |

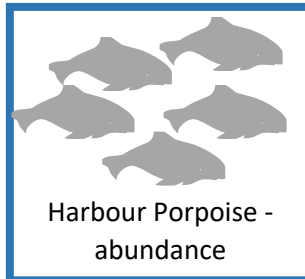
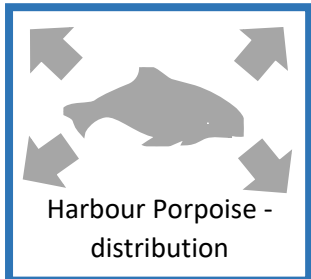
Simplified example of basic design for website

Below a simplified example of how the two-level hierarchical website presentation, and rough design idea, would be applied.

'First level'

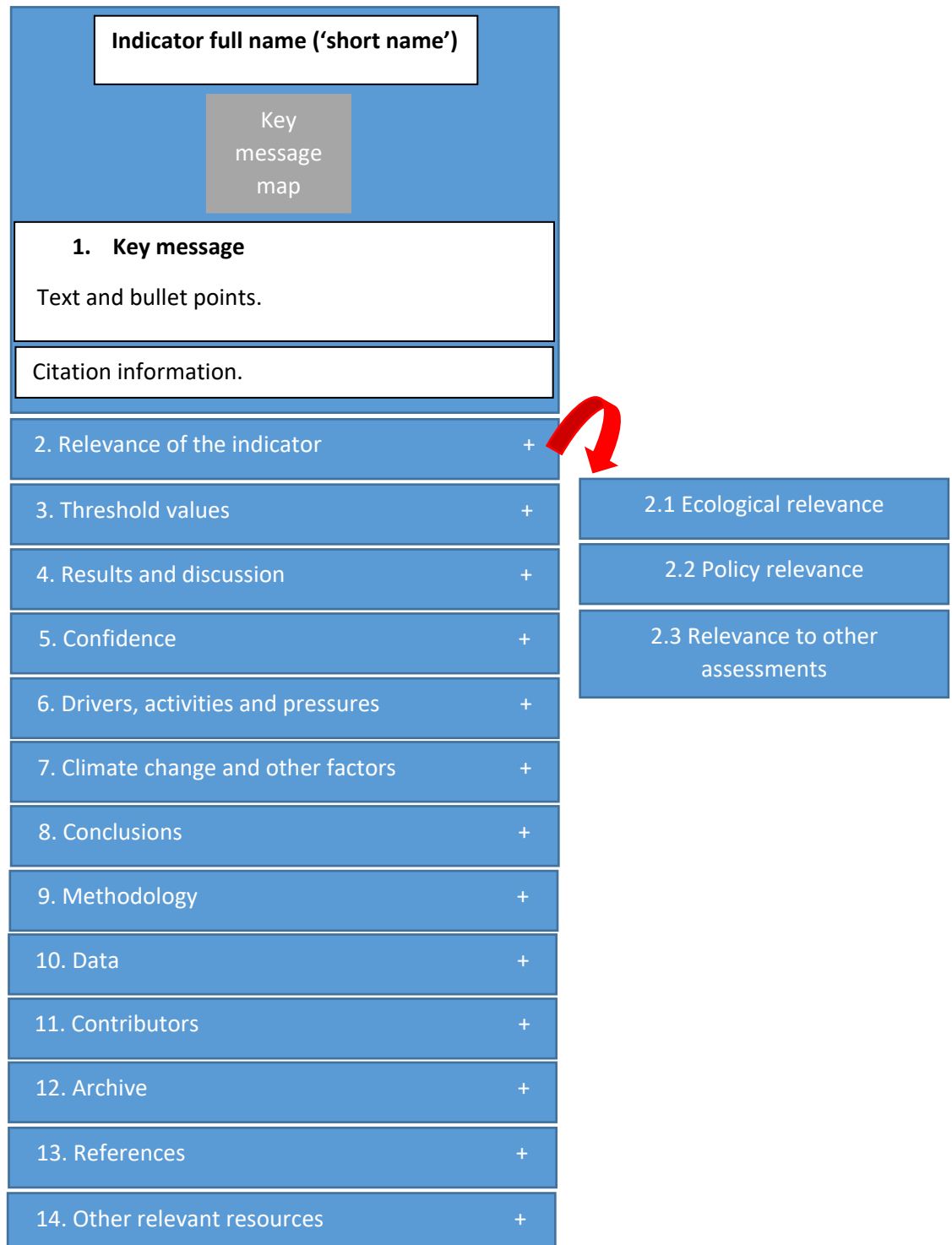


'Second level'



Within indicator structure

The indicator structure online will follow the major sections of the indicator template (as described in Section 1 of this document). The title, key message, and citation section will be visible once a specific indicator has been opened. Beneath that the other major sections (i.e. the sections numbered in the indicator template with whole numbers) will be visible as a list to click on and gain more information. A simplified example is shown below.



Other factors or functionalities

The following issues or functionalities have already been identified as important to consider under the technical development/implementation phase. **Guidance on further considerations would also be valuable at this stage.**

- Maintain the ability to link to BSAP objectives/segments and MSFD Descriptors and Criteria to each indicator.
- Maintain the filter/search option related to these above items (BSAP/MSFD).
- Maintain option to download the entire document.
- Importance to facilitate easy template for experts and Secretariat to work with, bot as the document itself and the integration of that to the online format.
- The need for permanent reference point and archive (e.g. DOIs).
- Possible value in being able to reference to specific sections within a report (e.g. to the methods).
- The need for hyperlinks within the reports.
- The need for documents to be editable by leads and commented by HELCOM Groups, prior to final publication online.
- The possibility to derive versions where specific information is extracted directly.

The digital platform and online design aspects are not considered in this document but will be addressed once the general structure and format has been endorsed. This is so that the Secretariat can have an endorsed basic structure available when embarking on the development side and identifying the correct expertise needed to achieve the best solutions.