



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
15-2021

Online, 4-8 October 2021

Document title	Additional input related to Draft EG Hazardous substances ToRs and process for update
Code	3J-96-Add.1
Category	INF
Agenda Item	3J – Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
Submission date	27.9.2021
Submitted by	Secretariat

Background

This document contains additional information related to document 3J-96 'Draft EG Hazardous substances ToRs and process for update'. This information is provided to support the decision making on document 3J-96.

The additional information provided relates to feedback received from the PRESSURE 'ad-hoc drafting group' (PRESSURE 14-2021 [Outcomes paragraph 8.7 - 8.9](#)) under the process set out in document 3J-96 and includes both a visualisation of the ToRs content requested by that group and direct written input provided after the meeting.

The comments and input received to date are briefly summarised in the document below and these factors will be taken into account when carrying out further revisions of these ToRs, in particular when finalising the work plan that remains to be added.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information provided and use it as necessary to support decision making on document 3J-96.

Additional input related to Draft EG Hazardous substances ToRs via the PRESSURE ad-hoc drafting group

Section 1 – brief overview of input received that will be addressed in next version of these ToRs

The information provided below represents a summary of comments received so far. Where necessary additional information has been added by the Secretariat in response to the comments to help provide clarity.

General

- Objectives and tasks mentioned covers the elements of a DPSIR or DAPSIM or other versions of causal frameworks suitable for organizing hazardous substance management aiming to a full management cycle, and includes work also with “unknowns” and ambitions to update the priority list regularly.
- The overall aim and high ambition with the new ToR and acknowledge the broader and more strategic role of the group generally supported.
- Important to note that the broader role of EG HZ will require a new way of working, likely new nominations to the group and new topic teams, and that it is expected that this will require more resources from the CPs i.e. that CPs will need to dedicate a higher degree of expert work than today in order to fulfil the aims.
- Role, expectation and functioning of topic teams within the new group will be important and needs to be clarified to ensure good function. Consideration on possible core group or task core groups could be one approach, keeping in mind the coherence of the group and having all the work strands connected.
- Division of tasks and responsibilities between the CPs (i.e. in the group) and the Secretariat (including potential additional Secretariat role) will also need to be clear.
- Coordination of these aspects within the group will therefore be vital.
- There are a number of key strategic issues included in the ToR and these will need specific resources and intersessional work between ordinary meetings. One way of handling this would be to have a specific topic team dedicated to strategic discussions, reporting back to the whole group at the meetings and giving the whole group the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Some tasks have multiple purposes/links and thus some overlap occurs – may be possible to shorten the current ToRs if these key links can be shown in a different way. But important not to lose the broad focus in doing so.
- The task to *“Develop a structured and viable holistic regional approach that establishes a clear and structured strategy to address hazardous substances throughout their management cycle in the Baltic Sea region”* will be critical in prioritising the next steps off a broader “wish-list” and will be important in making sure the activities have a clear purpose and plan for how the results are used.
- The current task related to *“a structured and viable holistic regional approach”* could be further developed/defined to ensure it encompasses the following: *“Develop a workplan that covers and links, in a logical way, all elements of the management cycle, including work with sources, measures and follow up of all activities. The plan should cover, and present separate strategies, for work with both well-known and emerging/unknown chemical threats and focus on activities that benefit from regional cooperation.”*
- We propose to clarify that based on the strategic approach a regional action plan for hazardous substances will be developed with the same time frame as BSAP. As we understood it, this will also form the basis for the expert group HZ workplan, covering current priorities of the regional action plan and outlining specific tasks for the upcoming 2-3 years.

- Related to the above two comments: The current wording is associated with the proposed action in the BSAP update process: “Develop a regional strategic approach and, on the basis of that approach, an action plan for HELCOM work on hazardous substances by 2024” that also includes two criteria for achievement, 1) *Regional strategic approach on hazardous substances is developed* and, 2) *Regional action plan on hazardous substances is adopted*. The detailed information provided in the comment will be included in the requirements for this task.
- Antimicrobial resistance should be included in section “Substances of priority and emerging concern” in the bullet “Ensure that new issues/substances of concern, and relevant expert proposals, are highlighted to the relevant HELCOM Working Groups;” Eg. “Ensure that new issues/substances of concern (including e.g. increases in antimicrobial resistance occurrence), and relevant expert proposals, are highlighted to the relevant HELCOM Working Groups.”
- Not all PFASs are to be considered contaminants of emerging concern as some are heavily restricted and this should be reflected in the purpose section (e.g. pharmaceuticals or certain groups of PFASs).
- Under the heading ‘tasks’, in the specific section following also identify radioactive substances and oil spills in tasks outside of the groups area (as included in bold here): The tasks of the group cover a wide range of different aspects related to hazardous substances (as well as contaminants of emerging concern), and can be considered to include all contaminants that are not encompassed by other designated HELCOM groups (i.e. excludes: marine litter, underwater noise, **radioactive substances and oil spills**).
- Consider the inclusion of ICES in the final section addressing ‘Scope’, as included in bold here: Consideration should also be given to collaborative work with relevant groups (e.g. other HELCOM expert groups or Working Groups) or organizations (e.g. OSPAR, EU, EMEP, CLRTAP, **ICES**).

Additional smaller editorial comments were received and will be taken into the next version of the text.

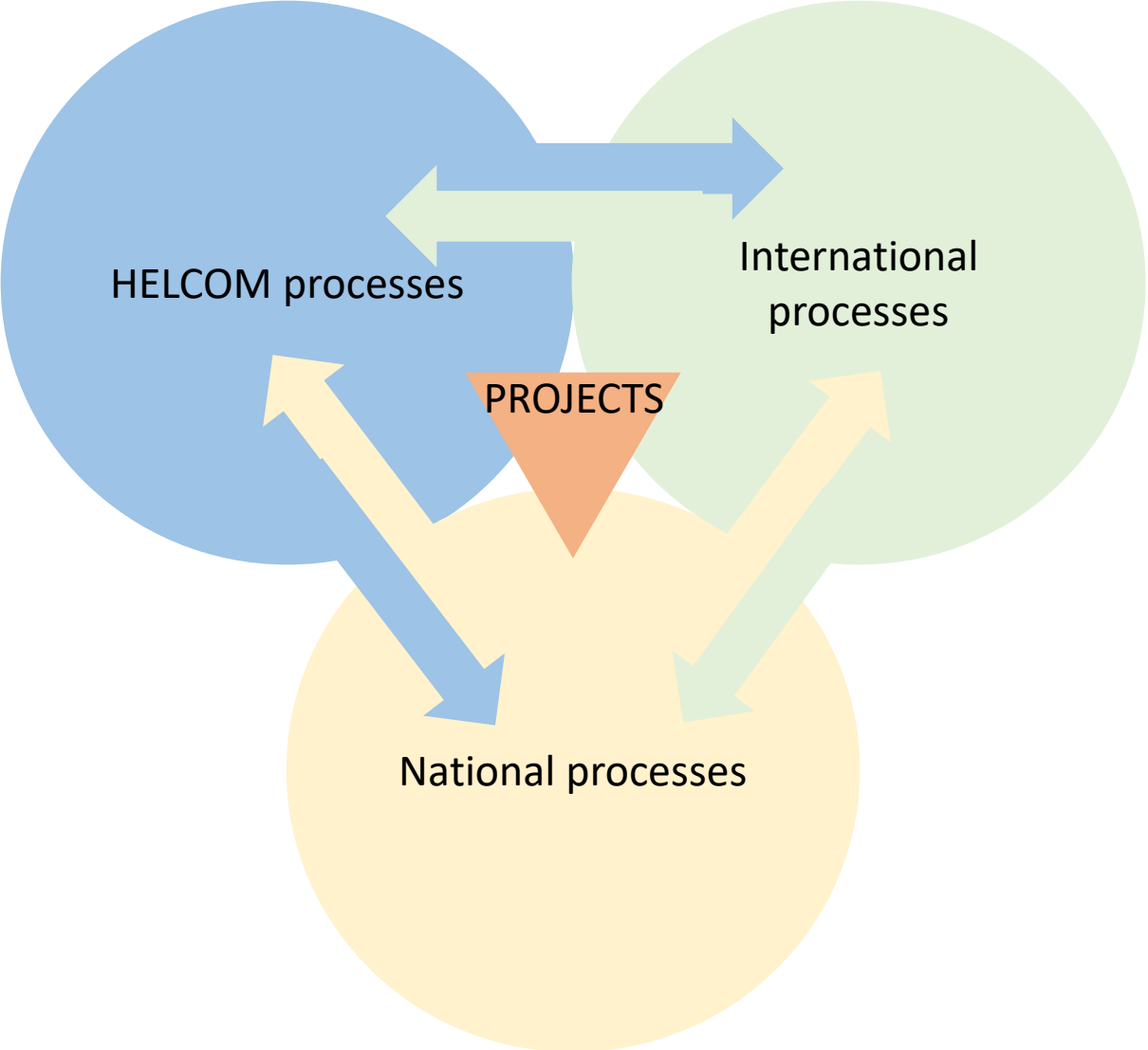
Section 1 – First version of ToR visualization

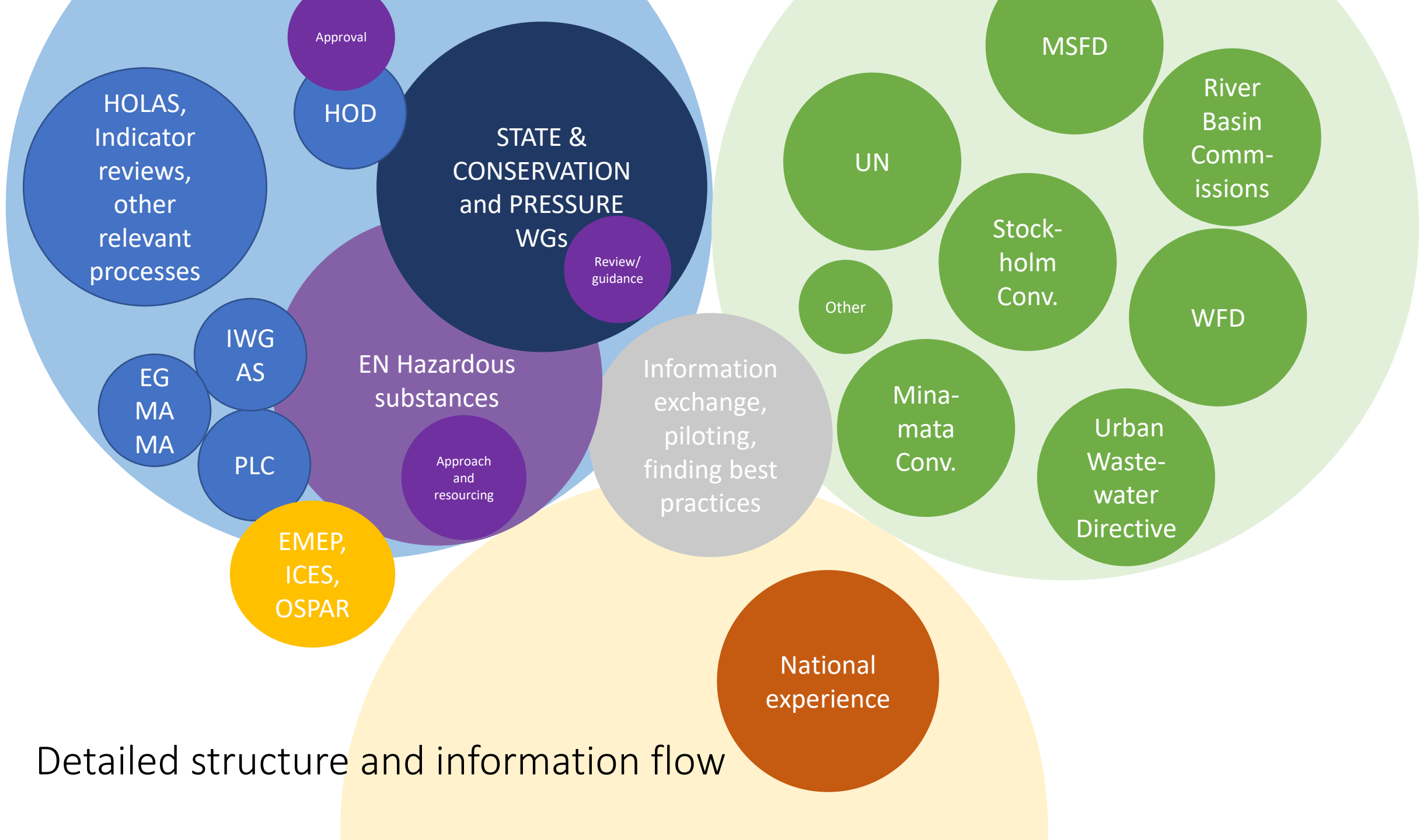
The first version of the ToRs visualized to provide an overview of the interlinkages between sections and tasks, as requested by the PRESSURE ad-hoc drafting group, is provided as an attachment to this document (document 3J-96 ADD.1 ATT.1 HZ ToRs - visualized_Version 1).

HZ ToRs - visualised

Draft V1

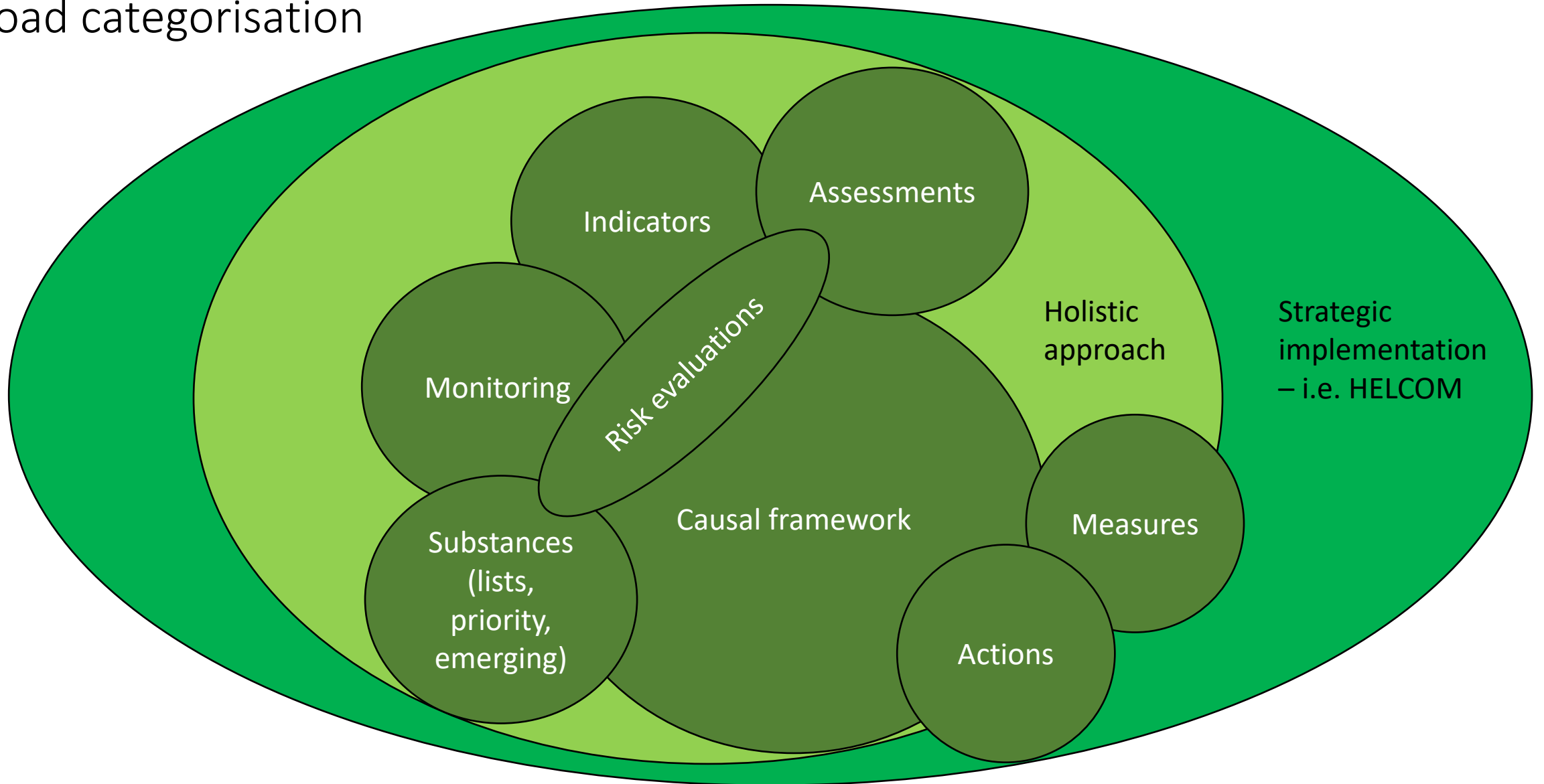
General structure and information flow

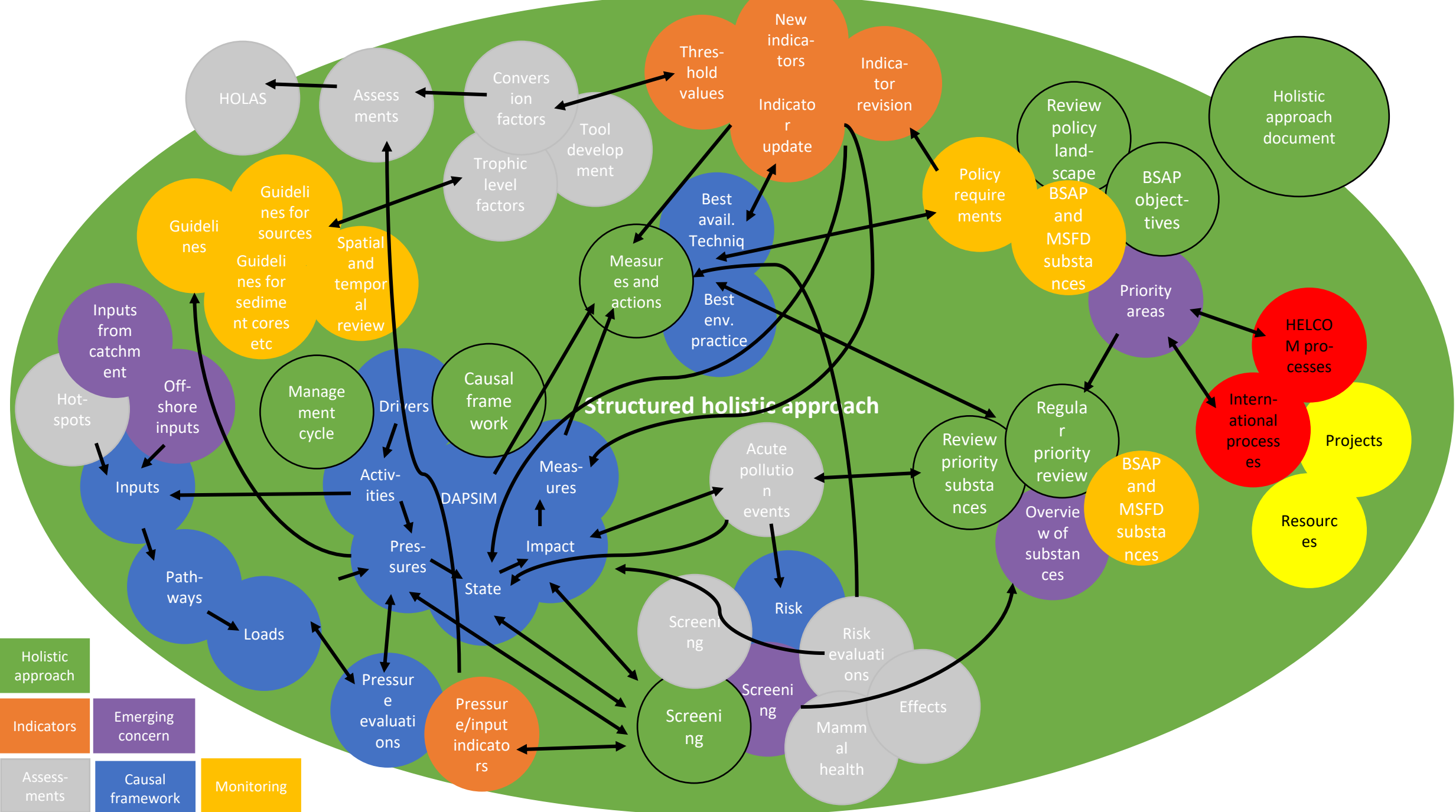




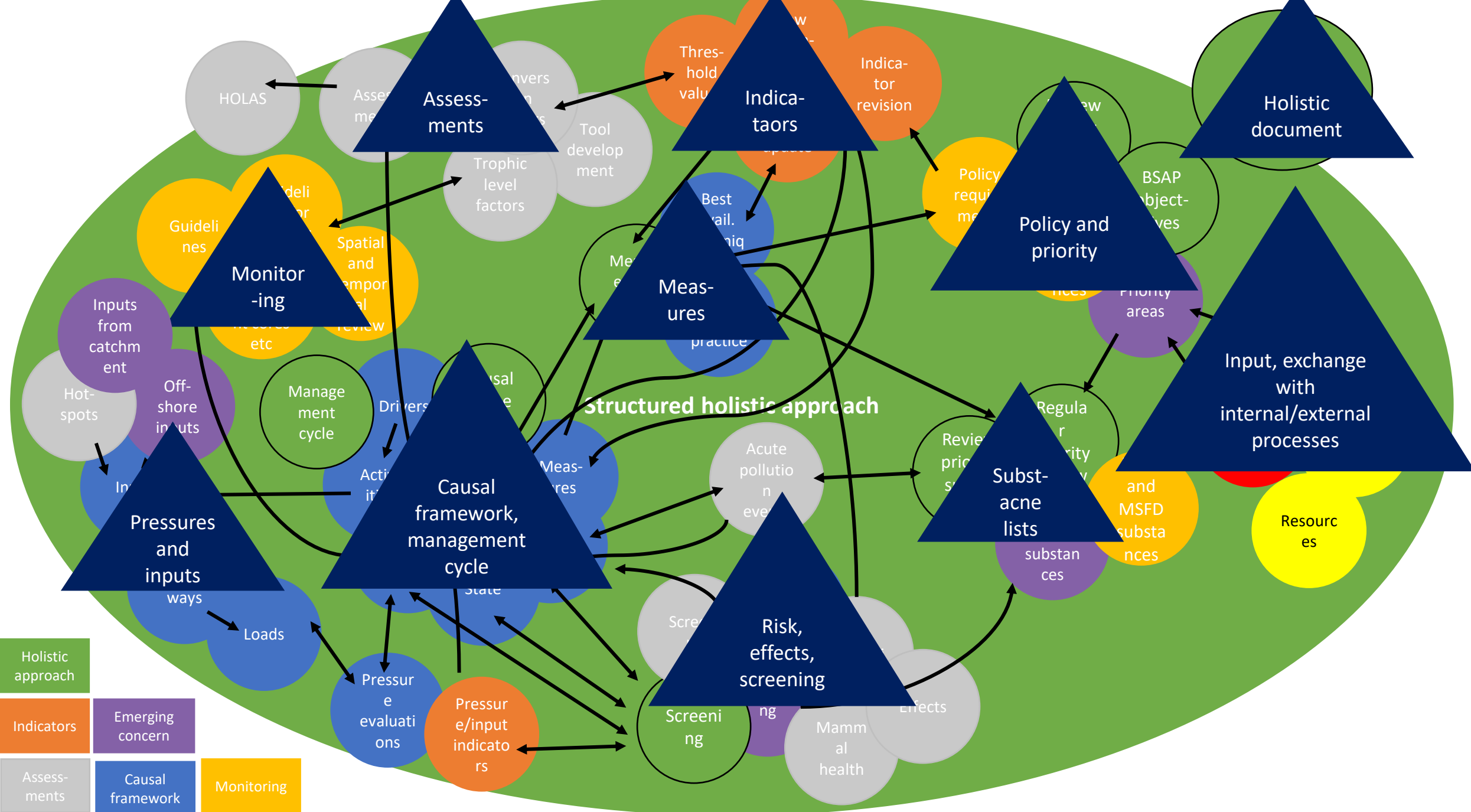
Detailed structure and information flow

Broad categorisation





Colours relate to separate sections in 'tasks' list in ToRs. There is some obvious overlap/repetition as different tasks would apply same 'item' for slightly different purpose.



Big blue triangles represent summary categories within flow chart. Notes that not all flows are shown here too, e.g. HELCOM processes influence every steps here.