

Earth Syst. Dynam. Discuss., referee comment RC2
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Comment on esd-2021-54

Anonymous Referee #2

Referee comment on "Human impacts and their interactions in the Baltic Sea region" by
Marcus Reckermann et al., Earth Syst. Dynam. Discuss.,
<https://doi.org/10.5194/esd-2021-54-RC2>, 2021

This manuscript is an ambitious endeavour, covering very much field. The topic is very important and I congratulate the authors for taking up the challenge.

However I think some major improvements need to be done with the manuscript.

First of all, it is a review paper, yet the methods of the review have not been outlined at all. While a full systematic review might be too much to carry out, the methods of article finding and selection should be clearly explained and - to the extent possible - repeatable.

Secondly, the criteria for the "++" and "?" categories should be clearly defined and constant throughout the article. This is not currently the case. For example, on r. 1106 -> and 1118, it says there is a + effect, but there are no references to back up these claims. On row 1120 the text says "may be" but it is marked as +, not as ?, and the given reference doesn't relate to tourism at all.

Secondly, the paper is unnecessarily long. It covers a lot of ground, which makes it long by necessity, but that being the case, the authors should be extra careful to include only relevant information. At the moment, the introductory sections for each pressure are way too detailed. It would serve the paper better to just give the necessary amount of background that is needed to understand the bullet points below, not give a general review of the pressure.

I recommend that the authors

- shorten the manuscript considerably
- check the consistency of the criteria of the + and ? classes across all of the work (also considering the joint effects that are implicitly considered as missing!)
- outline the review process