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TITLE: Activity-footprints, pressures-footprints and effects-footprints ? Walking the pathway to determining and managing human impacts in the sea

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ABSTRACT:

Determining the overall effects of human activities on the estuaries, seas and coasts, as a precursor to marine management, requires quantifying three aspects. These are: (a) the area in which the human activities take place, (b) the area covered by the pressures generated by the activities on the prevailing habitats and species, in which pressures are defined as the mechanisms of change, and (c) the area over which any adverse effects occur. These features can be respectively termed the activities-footprints, the pressures-footprints and the effects-footprints. The latter in turn incorporates both the effects on the natural system and the effects on ecosystem services from which society extracts goods and benefits. This viewpoint article explains the rationale behind this typology and proposes definitions for each of these three types of footprints.

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