



BONUS

SCIENCE FOR A BETTER FUTURE OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Review 2015



BONUS

BONUS, the joint Baltic Sea research and development programme, is funded jointly from the national research funding institutions in the eight EU member states around the Baltic Sea and the European Union's Seventh Programme for research, technological development and demonstration by a total of EUR 100 million for the years 2011–2017. The BONUS EEIG is the legal management organisation of BONUS.

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Texts by: Laura Eskelinen, Maija Sirola
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Foreword

■ By now the multinational cooperation within the BONUS programme has demonstrated its great importance to the Baltic Sea region and wider. Equally, during the last years, the funding organisations within the Baltic Sea countries have demonstrated a strong will to cooperate and join forces. In particular the international collaboration with joint research and innovation calls has formed a solid base to help the progress towards our mutual goal of long-term sustainable use of the Baltic Sea goods and services. The plan in a



pipeline of an expansion to “BONUS 2” and the North Sea area is also a logical step forward in a continuum of the valuable, forward-looking model that BONUS represents – also to other forms of future regional research and innovation cooperation with common European value.

Mats Svensson

Chair of the BONUS
Steering Committee 2015/16

Head of the Research and
Environmental Objectives

Swedish Agency for
Marine and Water Management

Executive summary

■ BONUS, the joint Baltic Sea research and development programme has had a major structuring effect on the research field of the Baltic Sea region: currently all BONUS participating states are channelling their programmatic Baltic Sea research funding through the BONUS programme. In 2015, BONUS continued to enhance region’s research capacity and underpin the development and implementation of ‘fit-for-purpose’ regulations and management practices and by this, effectively responding to the major environmental and key societal challenges which the region faces and will face in the coming years.

So far, BONUS has launched three calls (2012, 2014 and 2015), and consequently 28 research or innovation projects are ongoing. The eight most recent projects, funded from the ‘BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services’, started in April. Also a plan of clustering activities, designed together with the ongoing BONUS projects, was put in place in 2015. The themes of the BONUS strategic research agenda that are yet to be sufficiently covered by BONUS projects were opened on 9 November in the ‘BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic’. With a total funding of EUR 30 million, such further projects are envisaged to start their implementation in early 2017.

Resulting from efficient activities and communications towards stakeholders, BONUS has established

itself solidly into the broad landscape of networks crossing over a variety of sectors in the region. The key stakeholder events over the year included, among other, the Latvian EU Council Presidency events of the Baltic Sea Science Congress and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Annual Forum. Also, the BONUS Young Scientists Club sponsored a hugely popular training session about ‘seven secrets of being extremely effective researcher’.

The funding for the projects of the BONUS calls 2012 and 2014 coupled up with the funding of the ‘BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic’, amount to almost 90 % of the total EUR 100 million funding base of BONUS. The fate of the reserve remaining will be decided in the coming year.

By the end of 2015, an outline document of the successor programme worth EUR 200 million had been submitted to the European Commission after nearly three years of preparation. The document entails a proposal to extend the geographical scope of the programme to the North Sea and to form of a joint northern European regional seas programme for the years 2018-2023.

The following pages provide key events and highlights of the third full year of activity of the BONUS programme from 1 January until 31 December 2015.



Introduction

■ The environmental protection efforts in the Baltic Sea region need efficient solutions to sustain a healthy Baltic Sea ecosystem for future generations. The challenges of combatting eutrophication, mitigating climate change effects and maintaining sustainable ecosystems, among other, are huge. These common challenges are best tackled collectively by all Baltic Sea countries – based on sound knowledge and a thorough understanding of the environment we live in and contribute to – starting from everyday consumer choices we make around the Baltic Sea.

The states bordering the Baltic Sea are cooperating in BONUS, the joint Baltic Sea research and development programme to provide policy-makers with the information they need to achieve greater sustainability.

BONUS:

- is the first and only programming and funding initiative in operation integrating marine and maritime research and by this also contributing increasingly to sustainable blue growth and related EU strategies.
- funds research and innovation projects of high excellence and relevance based on the strategic research agenda drawn together with over 800 stakeholders across the Baltic Sea macroregion and the EU.
- influences the ecosystem based management action in the Baltic Sea and the wider European landscape. It collaborates closely and systematically with the most important regional organisations such as HELCOM, VASAB, CBSS and ICES.
- contributes new scientific knowledge for implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive in the Baltic Sea marine region, the EU Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning, the EU Blue Growth agenda and other national, regional and European coastal and marine environmental and sustainability policies and plans.
- communicates the sound knowledge, ecoinnovation and sustainable solutions generated in BONUS projects through established scientific and end-user stakeholder platforms.
- creates a bridge between and for the European and Russian scientific communities by establishing bilateral agreements with Russian funding institutions.
- co-finances its actions through real money funding by the participating countries and the EU. For years 2011-2017, half of the EUR 100 million funding has been generated by the BONUS members, the national funding institutions in eight Baltic Sea countries and the other half by the EU.

BONUS vision

Economically and ecologically prosperous Baltic Sea region where resources and goods are used sustainably and where the long-term management of the region is based on sound knowledge derived from multidisciplinary research

BONUS objective

To integrate the Baltic Sea System research into a durable, cooperative, interdisciplinary and focused multinational programme in support of the region's sustainable development

BONUS phases

- **BONUS ERA-NET (2003–2008)**
- **BONUS+ (2009–2011)**
- **BONUS 2011–2017**
- **BONUS continuation beyond 2017, proposal of the joint Baltic Sea and the North Sea research and innovation programme 2018–23**

National integration to the BONUS programme

The BONUS programme has had a major structuring effect on the research field of the Baltic Sea region as all participating states are currently channelling their programmatic Baltic Sea research funding through BONUS.

Denmark "...In Denmark, BONUS is the only broadly covering marine research funding programme. It constitutes the largest internationally coordinated research effort by the Danish Innovation Fund..."



Fritz Köster, Innovation Fund Denmark

Estonia "...Opportunity of transnational cooperation and the thematic scope of BONUS have been highly appreciated by research community in Estonia..."



Maria Habicht, Estonian Research Council

Finland "...The BONUS programme was initiated in Finland, Finland has supported establishment of BONUS structures and is strongly committed to the BONUS process..."



Laura Raaska, Academy of Finland

Germany "...Germany highly appreciates the multinational cooperation within BONUS. Joint activities are the basis to develop the essential knowledge base for sustainable use of marine resources and maintenance of ecosystem services..."



Joachim Harms,
Forschungszentrum Jülich Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH

Latvia "...BONUS is an important step for implementing the European Maritime Policy and Marine Environment Strategy in all European Seas, and thus it is in a common interest of all European coastal states including Latvia..."



Linda Klūga, State Education Development Agency
at the Ministry of Education and Science

Lithuania "...Lithuania does not have a specific national research programme for the Baltic Sea research and hence it is extremely important for Lithuania to join the BONUS programme..."



Aistė Vilkanauskytė, Research Council of Lithuania

Poland "...BONUS has been since its inception a crucial tool for integration of scientific research relevant to Baltic Sea carried out by Polish research and research technology organisations..."



Leszek Grabarczyk, National Centre for Research and Development

Sweden "The BONUS programme is of great importance for Sweden... international collaboration between the Baltic states with joint research calls is the basis to develop the research area of sustainable use of the Baltic Sea."



Mats Svensson, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water
Management and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

► To view full statements on videos, visit www.bonusportal.org/sc



Highlights 2015

January

■ The independent review of the BONUS interim assessment becomes public as the European Commission's conclusions are sent to the European Parliament and the Council.

"BONUS's macro-regional approach to the Baltic and its catchments has enabled stronger impact than a broader programme directed towards the EU as a whole could have achieved". (COM (2015) 34)



March

■ BONUS attends the European Commission's kick-off conference of maritime stakeholders' platform in the Baltic Sea region that calls for BONUS shared values of stakeholder-driven, cross-Baltic approach to innovation, sustainability, skills and qualifications.

■ BONUS introduces at the European Competitiveness Council meeting its future plans to extend the programme geographically to the North Sea.

■ BONUS takes part in a series of JPI Oceans organised workshops inputting to different ocean governance related areas ranging from coastal and maritime planning and good environmental status to human well-being.

April

■ Eight Sustainable ecosystem services projects BALTCOAST, BALTICAPP, BALTSPACE, GO4BALTIC, GOHERR, MIRACLE, SHEBA and STORMWINDS – worth a total of EUR 17,3 million – start their implementation.

■ The BONUS review 2014 gets published outlining a record high year of stakeholder engagement for BONUS and close to 40 000 visits to the BONUS website.

■ Hosted by the Estonian Liaison Office for EU Research and Innovation, research initiatives BONUS and JPI Oceans consider ways to cooperate and contribute



to the Horizon 2020 research priorities in the areas of Blue Economy and Resource Efficiency.

■ BONUS speaks at the PE2020 Public Engagement Innovations for Horizon 2020 stakeholder conference as one of the six PE2020 pilots.

May

■ The Latvian Embassy in Finland organises with BONUS a joint Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union seminar on maritime spatial planning attended by 50 diplomats, members of the Baltic Sea scientific community, NGOs and country municipalities.

■ Popular BONUS exhibition runs in the main European Maritime Day event in Athens (attended by over 500 participants) under the theme of BONUS continuation plans beyond 2017.

June

■ A HELCOM article "Happily ever after – HELCOM meets BONUS results" notes how more precise nutrient reduction targets for each Baltic coastal country have been possible thanks to the BONUS RECOCA project.

■ The first ever policy day is convened under the auspices of the Baltic Sea Science Congress co-organised by BONUS Forum and attended by 150 participants. The role of science and the attitude of the research community towards the blue growth initiative get discussed for the first time in this arena.



"This is timely, worthy effort, and deserves continuation at the future forums of the Baltic Sea scientists." BSSC participant, 17 June 2015

■ The BONUS Young Scientist Club seminar "Seven secrets of extremely successful researchers" gets a record-high 121 young scientists learning how Hugh Kearns from the University of Adelaide describes the key habits that make a difference to how quickly and easily one completes his/her research.

"I think everyone will say that we spent a great time listening and discussing among us the difficult life of early career scientist struggling between science, supervisors, distractions and sense of guilt. It was a mind opening seminar that will help for sure all of us attending it to give a new boost to our studies and research." Young scientist participant, 15 June 2015

- At the 6th Annual Forum for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the BONUS speaks in plenary about sustainable competitive Baltic Sea region and runs a workshop session titled "Niches matter more, borders less" for an audience of 50. The BONUS exhibition attracts a steady flow of visitors, among them Commissioner **Carlos Moedas** for Research, Science and Innovation, the European Commission.

August

- Commissioner **Moedas** visits the BONUS Steering Committee meeting and tweets "*Baltic Sea is as unique as work done by BONUS*".



September

- A data-base of over 500 entries of international, peer reviewed scientific articles and book chapters by BONUS+ projects is published on the BONUS website. Preliminary analysis provides statistical evidence on BONUS impact regarding collaboration and scientific excellence.

- An opportunity to learn about the science being carried out in three collaborative BONUS projects BAMBI, BIO-C3 and INSPIRE gets showcased at the 2015 ICES Annual Science Conference under the title "From genes to ecosystems: spatial heterogeneity and temporal dynamics in the Baltic Sea".

- BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic worth EUR 30 million gets preannounced with a view to fund future top research and innovation projects.

- BONUS speaks at the European Parliament Expert Roundtable on environmental state of the Baltic Sea to an audience of Members of the European Parliament and their assistants and other Brussels based interest groups.



October

- The Biological Reviews publishes a critically important article "Long-term temporal and spatial trends in eutrophication status of the Baltic Sea" involving scientists from BONUS COCOA and HYPER projects.

- BONUS speaks at the conference organised by the European Commission DG Mare on topic of "Drivers of the Blue Growth in the Baltic Sea Region".

- BONUS acts as a host of discussions during a get-together of the European Union research attaches from BONUS continuation plan around the North Sea.

November

- 'BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic' worth EUR 30 million opens for competitive proposals.



December

- 'BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services' kick-off conference focuses on substance of each eight projects and gets viewed as highly valuable information sharing by the other 18 BONUS projects participating.

- A BONUS clustering initiative gets underway aiming at strengthening the overall programme-level impact. A total of 14 cluster-actions for years 2016 and 2017 get outlined for further consideration and action.

- BONUS introductory video is launched at the BONUS information event for the European community opened by Director **John Bell**, DG Research and Innovation. The session is attended by 100 stakeholders including members of the European Commission, the European Parliament, country offices and other Brussels based stakeholders.

- The BONUS triple meeting brings together the BONUS Steering Committee, Advisory Board and Project coordinators to discuss topics of relevance and attend a BONUS evening school where DG Research and innovation expert introduces the topic of measuring impact of science.

- Synergies with nine projects funded from the first Interreg Baltic Sea Region call get earmarked for potential BONUS collaboration.



BONUS projects update

BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services

■ Eight successful projects – only every sixth proposal – were chosen to share the funding amount of EUR 15 million in the BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services.

Champions were Swedish and Finnish institutions – both coordinating the work of three consortia. Danish and German institutions coordinate one project each. There are 64 participating organisations in the projects representing all BONUS states as well as one partner from Russia and one from France. The biggest number of partners in BONUS projects is from Sweden (15) with Finland a close second (14 partners).

The proposals were decided according to one ranking list based on the scientific and/or technological excellence, quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management, potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results.

The outcome is very satisfying – six themes out of the BONUS strategic research agenda were opened for this call and all six themes are addressed as key themes among the selected projects. The most popular theme opened – Governance structures, policy performance and policy instruments – was selected as a key theme by three projects funded.

BALTCOAST

► A systems approach framework for coastal research and management in the Baltic



Coordinator:
Gerald Schernewski

www.bonusportal.org/BALTCOAST

- Total budget: EUR 2.9 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 2.3 Integrated approaches to coastal management

Project partners

Germany

- Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde (coordinating partner)

Denmark

- Technical University of Denmark - National Institute of Aquatic Resources, Copenhagen

Estonia

- Institute of Ecology, Tallinn University

Latvia

- University of Latvia, Riga

Lithuania

- Marine Science and Technology Centre, Klaipėda University

Poland

- Institute of Hydro-Engineering, Polish Academy of Sciences, Gdansk

Sweden

- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala

BALTICAPP

► Wellbeing from the Baltic Sea – applications combining natural science and economics



Coordinator:
Kari Hyttiäinen

www.bonusportal.org/BALTICAPP

- Total budget: EUR 2.0 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.2 Linking ecosystem goods and services to human lifestyles and wellbeing

Project partners

Finland

- University of Helsinki (coordinating partner)
- Natural Resources Institute Finland, Helsinki

Denmark

- Aarhus University

Germany

- Kiel Institute for the World Economy

Poland

- University of Warsaw

Sweden

- Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, Norrköping
- Stockholm University

BALTSPACE

► Towards sustainable governance of Baltic marine space



Coordinator:
Michael Gilek

www.bonusportal.org/BALTSPACE

- Total budget: EUR 2.0 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.3 Maritime spatial planning from local to Baltic Sea region scale

Project partners

Sweden

- Södertörn University (coordinating partner)
- Swedish Institute for the Marine Environment, Gothenburg

Denmark

- Aarhus University, Department of Bioscience

Germany

- Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht, Centre for Materials and Coastal Research
- Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research, Warnemünde
- s.Pro - sustainable projects GmbH, Berlin

Lithuania

- Coastal Research and Planning Institute, Klaipėda University

Poland

- Maritime Institute in Gdansk

GO4BALTIC

► Coherent policies and governance of the Baltic Sea ecosystems

www.bonusportal.org/GO4BALTIC

- Total budget: EUR 2.0 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.1 Governance structures, policy performance and policy instruments

Project partners

Denmark

- Aarhus University (coordinating partner)

Estonia

- Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre

Finland

- University of Helsinki
- Natural Resources Institute Finland, Helsinki

Poland

- University of Warsaw

Sweden

- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala



Coordinator:
Berit Hasler

SHEBA

► Sustainable shipping and environment of the Baltic Sea region

www.bonusportal.org/SHEBA

- Total budget: EUR 2.9 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.1 Governance structures, policy performance and policy instruments

Project partners

Sweden

- IVL, Swedish Environmental Research Institute, Stockholm (coordinating partner)
- Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg
- Swedish Defence Research Agency, Stockholm

Denmark

- University of Southern Denmark, Odense

Estonia

- Marine Systems Institute, Tallinn University of Technology

Finland

- Finnish Meteorological Institute, Helsinki
- SYKE, Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki

France

- Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Marseille Interdisciplinary Centre for Nanoscience

Germany

- Helmholtz Zentrum Geesthacht, Centre for Materials and Coastal Research
- Ecologic Institute, Berlin

Poland

- Maritime Institute in Gdansk



Coordinator:
Jana Moldanova

GOHERR

► Integrated governance of Baltic herring and salmon stocks involving stakeholders

www.bonusportal.org/GOHERR

- Total budget: EUR 1.9 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.1 Governance structures, policy performance and policy instruments

Project partners

Finland

- University of Helsinki (coordinating partner)
- University of Oulu
- National Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki

Denmark

- Aalborg University

Sweden

- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala



Coordinator:
Sakari Kuikka

STORMWINDS

► Strategic and operational risk management for wintertime maritime transportation system

www.bonusportal.org/STORMWINDS

- Total budget: EUR 1.8 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 3.1 Enhanced, holistic cross-sector and cross-border maritime risk analysis and management, including effects of new technologies, human element, climate change effects in open water and in ice, and interaction with onshore activities

Project partners

Finland

- Aalto University, Espoo (coordinating partner)
- Finnish Meteorological Institute, Helsinki
- Finnish Geospatial Research Institute, Helsinki
- Novia University of Applied Sciences, Turku
- Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki

Estonia

- University of Tartu
- Tallinn University of Technology

Russia

- Institute of Numerical Mathematics, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

Sweden

- Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, Norrköping

► www.bonusportal.org/ses



Coordinator:
Pentti Kujala

MIRACLE

► Mediating integrated actions for sustainable ecosystem services in a changing climate

www.bonusportal.org/MIRACLE

- Total budget: EUR 1.9 million
- Duration: 3 years, 1.4.2015–31.3.2018
- Key theme addressed: 4.1 Governance structures, policy performance and policy instruments

Project partners

Sweden

- Linköping University (coordinating partner)
- Stockholm Environment Institute
- Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, Norrköping
- Uppsala Centre for Sustainable Development, Uppsala University

Denmark

- University of Copenhagen

Germany

- Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institut, Braunschweig
- Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Magdeburg

Latvia

- University of Latvia, Riga
- Latvia University of Agriculture, Jelgava

Poland

- Institute of Meteorology and Water Management, Warsaw
- POMInnO Sp. Zo.o., Gdynia



Coordinator:
Karin Tonderski



BONUS call 2012: Viable ecosystem services and Innovation parts

■ The seven projects funded from the ‘BONUS call 2012: Viable ecosystem services’ report after their first year of implementation to have contributed 22 times to development and implementation of relevant regulations, policies and management practices. Projects had made also 14 suggestions, all based on the projects’ work, for designing, implementing and evaluating relevant public policies and governance plans and 179 BONUS researchers had served as members in stakeholder committees e.g. 80 different ICES, 16 HELCOM and 13 European Commission led working groups. Also, a few innovation projects funded from the ‘BONUS call 2012: innovation’ report to have assisted or assessed the policy making in 17 occasions and participated 28 times in the different stakeholder committees. The BONUS website hosts summaries of all periodic reports.

www.bonusportal.org/ve | www.bonusportal.org/inno

BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic

■ The ‘BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic’ was launched on 9 November 2015. The call closed on 10 March 2016 with mandatory preregistrations made a month earlier. A total of EUR 169.1 million funding was requested by 75 proposals that are competing for funding of EUR 30 million available. The themes opened were decided to be those not yet sufficiently covered by the ongoing 28 projects (see table on next page). The evaluation and panel meetings will take place in May and proposals will be informed about their outcomes in June 2016. The earliest envisaged start of successful projects will be in January 2017.

www.bonusportal.org/bb



Table: Coverage of the 19 themes included in the BONUS strategic research agenda

RESEARCH THEMES (ABBREVIATED TITLES)	CURRENT STATUS OF THE KEY THEMES' COVERAGE	THEMES OPENED IN THE 'BONUS CALL 2015: BLUE BALTIC'
1.1 Dynamics of biogeochemical processes	*	
1.2 Changing biodiversity	BAMBI, BIO-C3	
1.3 Food web structure and dynamics		●
1.4 Impacts of hazardous substances		●
2.1 Changes in catchment land cover patterns	SOILS2SEA	
2.2 The role of the coastal systems	COCOA	
2.3 Integrated coastal management	BALTCOAST	
2.4 Eco-technological approaches	MICROALGAE, OPTITREAT, PROMISE, SWERA, ZEB	●
3.1 Maritime risk analysis and management	STORMWINDS	
3.2 Effects of air and water pollution by shipping	SHEBA	
3.3 Improving stock assessments, spatial heterogeneity of stocks	INSPIRE	
3.4 Evaluation framework for fisheries management	*	
3.5 Sustainable aquaculture in the Baltic Sea		●
4.1 Governance structures, performance and policy instruments	CHANGE, GO4BALTIC, GOHERR, MIRACLE	
4.2 Linking ecosystem goods and services to human lifestyles and well-being	BALTICAPP	●
4.3 Maritime spatial planning	BALTSPACE	●
5.1 Integrated monitoring programmes	BLUEPRINT	●
5.2 Innovative measurement techniques	AFISMON, FERRYSCOPE, FISHVIEW, HARDCORE, PINBAL	●
5.3 User-driven ICT services	ANCHOR, ESABALT, GEOILWATCH	●

* Covered broadly as a sub-theme in earlier BONUS calls.

BONUS Young Scientists Club

■ At the first day of the 10th Baltic Sea Science Congress on 15 June 2015, BONUS organised an extremely successful fifth BONUS Young Scientists' Club event with world-renowned researcher trainer Hugh Kearns revealing the seven secrets of extremely successful researcher. The event was attended by over 100 young scientists around the Baltic Sea.

Planning of further BONUS young scientists' training got underway as the PE2020 team held a workshop with BONUS young scientists to seek their

training needs in the area of public engagement. The preparations were initiated and a social media and blogging workshop that was eventually held in March 2016. Further training opportunities are planned for later in 2016 and 2017 together with BONUS collaborative partners.

www.bonusportal.org/ys



Communicating with the society

■ The key stakeholder events over the year included the Latvian EU Council Presidency seminar on the topic of maritime spatial planning organised jointly by the Latvian Embassy in Finland and BONUS in May; the European Maritime Day in Athens in May; the first ever policy day convened jointly by the 10th Baltic Sea Science Congress and the 5th BONUS Forum in Riga in June; the 6th EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Annual Forum in June; and the BONUS information event for the European community in Brussels in early December. Altogether, the BONUS Secretariat attended, spoke, observed and/or participated in nearly 50 conferences, advisory board meetings, seminars and other international events with an underlined relevance to BONUS.

► for highlights see www.bonusportal.org/events

The BONUS website continued to spearhead the BONUS communications tools. In 2015, another 5000 increase from previous year brought the total number of BONUS website visits to 45 000 and unique visitors to 25 000.

► The BONUS website is the leading communications tool of BONUS featuring dedicated areas for the programme, projects, news, events, publications and stakeholders. www.bonusportal.org

The BONUS in Brief newsletter was published in May and December and distributed electronically and via post and handed out in tens of BONUS exhibitions organised over the year.

► BONUS in Brief is published to keep the BONUS community, including partners and supporters, informed about current views and news about BONUS activities and accomplishments. www.bonusportal.org/inbrief

The BONUS e-bulletin alerts went out 15 times to 3000 subscribers in 2015 with over a quarter of recipients being regular followers of the BONUS news and updates.

► The BONUS e-bulletin provides latest news and events several times per month by email to subscribers www.bonusportal.org/bulletin

The first year of visitor information on the new BONUS projects' led website recorded a total of 28 000 visits of which half were to the most popular blogs section of the website. The unique page views amounted to 18 000 and 9 000 respectively.

► The BONUS projects' website is managed by the projects themselves and serves as a first point of contact and latest information to all 28 ongoing BONUS projects. www.bonusprojects.org

The PE2020-Public Engagement Innovations for Horizon 2020 project consortium chose the new BONUS projects' website and in particular the young scientists' blogging initiative as a real-time case-study with additional training on social media and blogging confirmed for March 2016. Also, a catalogue of innovative tools and instruments within PE2020 was published in 2015 providing a rich picture of innovative public engagement in Europe, including the BONUS case-study.

► <http://pe2020.eu/>

Through the BONUS projects' own efforts, use of social media, e-bulletins and the over 60 news items published on the BONUS website and media releases and advisories issued, BONUS projects and/or BONUS related topics were covered in various media around the Baltic Sea hundreds of times over the year.

► www.bonusportal.org/news | www.bonusportal.org/publications | <http://www.bonusportal.org/projects> | BONUS in Facebook and Twitter: @BONUSbaltic

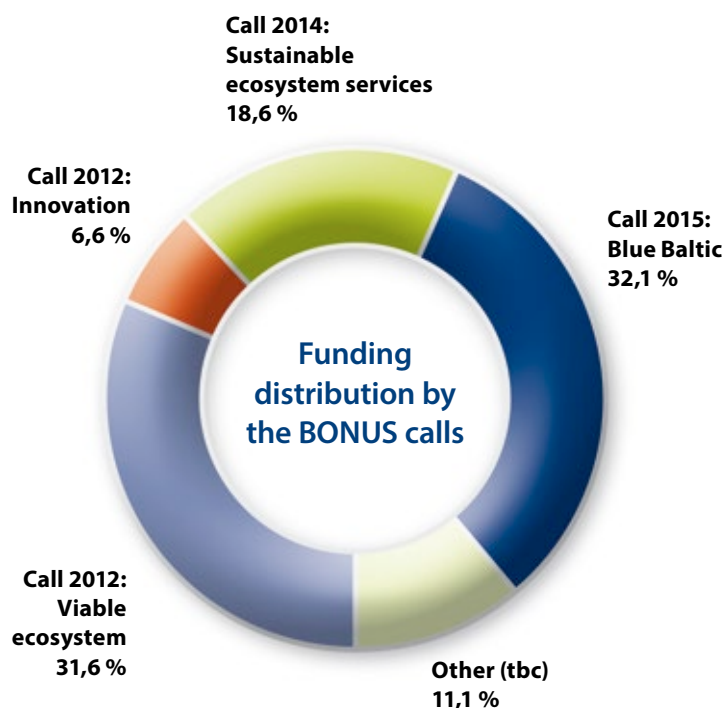


Financial review

■ The funding for the projects of the BONUS calls 2012 and 2014 constitute 57 % of the total funding of EUR 100 million reserved for implementing the BONUS programme. Together with the EUR 30 million funding of the ‘BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic’, this will amount to nearly 90 % of the funding available in the programme. The fate of the reserve remaining will be decided in the coming year.

Up to 25% of the national contribution can be provided as in kind free of charge infrastructure – the main provider Germany, followed by Poland, Sweden and Denmark - that is used in BONUS projects i.e. use of research vessels, field stations, computing facilities etc. For the BONUS programme, the use of national infrastructure generates matching EU contribution for funding projects. By the end of 2015, the indicative amount of free of charge in kind infrastructures to the BONUS projects was EUR 2,1 million.

From the total contribution reserved for the running costs of the BONUS programme in years 2011–2017, 54,5 % was consumed by the end of 2015. During the reporting period, BONUS succeeded in mobilising additional financial resources from the participating states worth of EUR 75 000.



BONUS beyond 2017

■ After almost three years of preparation, an outline document for the continuation and geographical extension of the joint Baltic Sea research and development programme BONUS, for the years 2018–2023, was submitted to the European Commission on 11 November 2015.

This proposal was prepared by EU member states adjacent to two northern European regional seas, the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. Scientific community, research funding institutions and ministries from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom contributed to its development.

The foreseen impact of the proposed programme will be evaluated by a specific ex ante impact assess-

ment procedure performed by the European Commission during the year 2016, before the proposal can be presented to the European Parliament and the Council. The new programme is envisaged to start in January 2018. BONUS looks forward to continuing negotiations for establishing this new, joint northern European regional seas programme.

► *Andrusaitis, A., D. Cox, A. Dosdat, et al. (2016), Towards sustainable blue growth: Outline of the joint Baltic Sea and the North Sea research and innovation programme 2018-2023. BONUS Publication No. 15. www.bonusportal.org/publications (category 'BONUS series')*



BONUS people (end of 2015):

BONUS Members, Steering Committee representatives and the related national funding institutions

Denmark:	Fritz Köster	Innovation Fund Denmark
Estonia:	Maria Habicht	Estonian Research Council
Finland:	Laura Raaska	Academy of Finland/FIRD Coop.
Germany:	Joachim Harms	Forschungszentrum Jülich Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH; Federal Ministry of Education and Research
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* 'BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic' is in the evaluation process and further information will be reported at BONUS website www.bonusportal.org as and when such becomes available.





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Hakaniemenranta 6
00530 Helsinki
Finland

Tel. +358 40 040 4011
Fax +358 9 4780 0044

Email: bonus@bonuseeig.fi

Web: www.bonusportal.org

Facebook & Twitter: BONUSBaltic

