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Kaisa Kononen,
Executive Director of BONUS (I.)

Anne Christine Brusendorff,
Executive Secretary of HELCOM (r.)



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BONUS Forum 2011, continued from cover....

Also, RISKGOV project highlighted the pivotal role that the strengthened governance structures, science-policy interactions and stakeholder communications have in effective stakeholders' contributions to the sustainable governance of the Baltic Sea ecosystem.

"Present and future changes in precipitation over the Baltic Sea catchment will cause a decrease in salinity and loss of marine biodiversity", said the coordinator of AMBER, **Joachim Dippner** from the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde who shared results of the AMBER scientists in the day's second panel addressing the past and future scenarios of the Baltic Sea.

A fellow panelist, HYPER project's coordinator **Jacob Carstensen**, highlighted that oxygen depletion – so-called hypoxia – has spread drastically from less than 10,000 km² before 1950 to over 60,000 km² in recent years, a trend very closely linked with nutrient inputs. Moreover, INFLOW coordinator **Aarno Kotilainen** from Geological Survey of Finland added that observations on past changes together with model simulations suggest that ongoing climate warming will increase the environmental problems (i.e. lack of oxygen) of the Baltic Sea in the future.

The results of the BALTIC-C project indicate a strong probability of eutrophication having a key role in variation in acid-base balance of the Sea. The results are based on the first integrated Baltic basin model framework now developed on all major river inflows of carbon, alkalinity and nutrients, atmospheric load and interaction with the North Sea. The effects of increased gas accumulation in the Baltic sediment studied by BALTIC GAS project show, among other, that shallow gas in the seabed may pose hazards to seabed structures such as wind farms, pipelines, power cables and off-shore drilling operations by destabilising the sea floor.

For the first time databases and models developed via the decision support system Nest assures realistic Baltic-wide estimates of anticipated nutrient reductions and their costs. "The total costs of achieving the HELCOM's Baltic Sea Action Plan targets would undoubtedly be lower if the cost-effectiveness of different measures were taken into account in the allocation of the country specific quotas", said **Fredrik Wulff** from the Baltic Nest Institute and the coordinator of the RECOCA project. Along with the ECOSUPPORT project, RECOCA took part in the third panel

addressing the management of nutrient loads for the good of the Baltic Sea. Also, according to the PROBALT project in this session, what is particularly needed is a macro-regional, binding, cost-effective and fair agreement on the prevention of eutrophication in the Baltic Sea.

In the day's fourth and last panel focus was on healthy biological diversity of the Baltic Sea. The BALTGENE coordinator **Kerstin Johannesson** from University of Gothenburg said that many authorities do not pay enough attention to sustaining genetic diversity. Policies dealing with management of genetic biodiversity are either lacking or too complex to be implemented, or they are open to a wide range of interpretation, this in spite of the need for genetic diversity to sustain populations of plants and animals. According to BAZOOCA scientists studying the Baltic zooplankton cascades, it is the fishery policy that remains the key tool for management of the Baltic ecosystem as fisheries continue to be the largest regulatory factor for the pelagic food web in the Baltic.

Providing a way for managers to obtain useful maps on the distribution of habitats and species were the foci of PREHAB project presenting its

results to end the project presentations of the day. PREHAB's predictive modelling demonstrates the necessity of putting management actions in a spatial context. "The people of the Baltic Sea countries value a clean and healthy sea and are willing to pay for the mitigation actions", said the PREHAB coordinator **Mats Lindgarth** from the University of Gothenburg.

"These results emphasise the importance of avoiding simplifications and the need for a holistic view when scrutinising the environmental problems of the Baltic Sea", said Anna Jöborn. "Knowledge for example on impacts of climate change, eutrophication and acidification on the ecosystems and biodiversity as well as on structures of governance is important when trying to solve these problems and plan management." As the BONUS+ projects are soon ending the question of their contingency plans arose. "Several of the projects have created new databases or tools relevant for policy and my hope is that these are made the best possible use in the future. The role of policymakers and managers is then to enable the development of monitoring to what is needed to have even more reliable predictions", Anna Jöborn added.



Hanna Aho

In discussion the BONUS+ coordinators Joachim Dippner from AMBER (I.), Anders Omstedt BALTIC-C and Boris Chubarenko, Russian Foundation for Basic Research



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Sif Johansson (I.), Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Åke Hagström, Swedish Institute for the Marine Environment and Cecilia Lindblad, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency



Peter Crawley, Directorate General for Research and Innovation of European Commission (I.)

Anders Lindholm, Directorate General for Regional Policy of European Commission representing the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (r.)



BONUS Executive Director Kaisa Kononen (l.) in discussion with Christian Alecke (middle), Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany and Joachim Harms (r.), Chair of BONUS Steering Committee and CEO Jülich Research Center, Germany

The comments from the floor underlined the integrity of science and the importance of transparency as well as constant dialogue between science and policy to strengthen the trust between different Baltic Sea region actors. The Forum ended with an introduction to the BONUS strategic research agenda 2011-2017 and the BONUS thematic call 2011 opening in the first half of 2012 by **Andris Andrusaitis**, Programme Manager of BONUS.

The Forum which was quoted by some participants as the best stakeholder event that they have ever attended was concluded by Anna Jöborn's recitation of this year's literature Nobel prize winner Tomas Tranströmer's apt poem for the Baltic Sea titled 'Aurelia'.

The information packed day was viewed online from the BONUS website by further 'virtual participants' and the presentations of the day are now viewable via the BONUS website.

"Sharing this diverse and current knowledge at BONUS Forum with policymakers who actually design and implement marine and maritime policies in the Baltic Sea countries is crucially important," said Kaisa Kononen, the Executive Director of

BONUS. "We need to ensure that the open science-policy dialogue continues and that progress is made for the good of the Baltic Sea region. Also by engaging dedicated key stakeholders who act as opinion leaders makes a difference."

The annual BONUS Forum is a platform for continuous dialogue between the Baltic Sea science and the stakeholders. Next year the BONUS Forum will focus on the revision needs of the BONUS strategic research agenda. The Forum outcome will contribute to the BONUS strategic orientation workshop in spring 2013 where the content of the BONUS thematic call opening in late 2013 will be finalised. The participation of stakeholders will once again have a critically important role to play in the region wide partnership.

Further information about the BONUS Forum 2011 can be found on the events page at www.bonusportal/BF11, including videos on the 16 BONUS+ presentations (hosted by YouTube).

All the 16 BONUS+ briefing documents can be downloaded from www.bonusportal.org/briefings



Andrzej Tonderski (l.), POMCERT, Poland and member of BONUS Steering Committee for the duration of BONUS+ and Mats Lindegarth, coordinator of the BONUS+ project PREHAB



Henrik Fossing (l.) from the BONUS+ project BALTIC GAS and Anne Christine Brusendorff, Executive Secretary of HELCOM



BONUS Forum 2011 facilitator Anna Jöborn, Head of research, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and Anders Omstedt, coordinator of BONUS+ project BALTIC-C



Ida Reuterswärd, Ministry of Environment, Sweden



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BONUS+ project RISKGOV coordinator Michael Gilek and Katarzyna Smolarz from the University of Gdansk

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Chair of the BONUS Steering Committee, Dr. Joachim Harms



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On 1 July 2011, Dr. **Joachim Harms**, from the Jülich Research Centre, Germany was appointed as the Chair of the BONUS Steering Committee. Dr. **Maija Bundule** from the Latvian Academy of Sciences acts as the current Vice Chair. The BONUS Steering Committee chairmanship rotates and changes 1 July of each year.

As the highest decision making body of BONUS, the BONUS Steering Committee consists of representatives from the national funding institutions that are members of BONUS. The Steering Committee convenes approximately three times a year and decides on the budget and strategic activities.

Dr Joachim Harms, what is your professional background?

I am a marine biologist. I did my Diploma and PhD thesis on Helgoland, a small island in the North Sea.

For the full list of representatives of the BONUS members in the BONUS Steering Committee, visit www.bonusportal.org/steering

I worked with Crustaceans and food web changes. In 1994 I started to work for the Project Management Organization Jülich, responsible for research administration and funding activity of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Today I am CEO.

Germany joined BONUS in December 2007, what has been the most memorable event since then in BONUS?

In 2008 we developed a joint research programme for the BONUS+ Call and built on that the research agenda for the upcoming period of 2011 to 2017.

The research activities of BONUS+ are now in their final stage. The presentation of the results presented in Gdansk in October 2011 demonstrated the success of each single project and therefore the success of the whole joint initiative. This confirms best, the resources allocated were justified.

As for the future of BONUS, what are its strengths? Can BONUS really make a difference?

During the last years the funding organisations within the Baltic countries demonstrate a strong will to cooperate and join forces. The cooperation is based on personal trust and fairness. This allows to address difficulties and to look for solutions in a cooperative way. What counts is: We will further jointly support qualified research activities for a sustainable development of the Baltic region.

BONUS+ public engagement award 2011

The winner of the award for the best BONUS+ public engagement activity or product 2011 is *GeoDome visualization platform - Stakeholder decision support by scientific communication* by BONUS+ ECOSUPPORT project. The BONUS Steering Committee Chair **Joachim Harms** handed the award to the project's coordinator **Markus Meier** from the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute on 24 October at the BONUS Forum 2011 in Gdansk, Poland.

The evaluation panel for the award **Erik Fellenius** (BONUS Steering Committee), **Ilkka Herlin** (BONUS Advisory Board) and **Maija Sirola** (BONUS Secretariat) reviewed the entries and concluded the following on the winning entry: "ECOSUPPORT has made a clear investment of time, resources and dedication in the *GeoDome visualization platform* to provide a new and innovative way to engage meaningfully with the key end-users, allowing visitors to become more receptive of the research on the state of the Baltic Sea under different scenarios of nutrient supply, pressure from fisheries and impact on climate change, and to collect feedback to continue developing *GeoDome* and to better address the end-user specific knowledge needs and demands of the future."

The panel also awarded special mentions to... **BALTGENE**: For a successful stakeholder seminar: Targets and indicators for gene level biodiversity, Resilience and future adaptation in forests, inland waters and marine environments depend on genetic variation, 18th October 2010, Nagoya, Japan.

Lena Ek (third from left), Environmental Minister of Sweden holding the "fresh" BONUS+ public engagement award together with *Ms Gabriella Lindholm* (left), chairlady of HELCOM and *Ms Helén Andersson* and *Patrick Wallman* from the *GeoDome* team in front of the *GeoDome* at the networking village of the EUSBSR and BDF Forum 2011 in Gdansk, Poland.

BALTICWAY: For outstanding public engagement effort and high level key stakeholder involvement related to the topic of the environmental impact assessment of the Nord Stream pipeline.

HYPER: For commendable drive and focus on young scientists and young people, in particular on proactive knowledge sharing with wider public at the 8th Baltic Festival of Science in Poland and school children's knowledge building on Baltic Sea science on board of a research vessel.

As important as to celebrate this year's winners is, also we look into the future with particularly timely considerations of public engagement action. The emphasis of the BONUS programme increasingly leans towards very strongly embedded stakeholder engagement. In the future this will translate into considered communications strategies by each project funded by BONUS that will further support much needed dialogue between the BONUS projects and end-user and other key stakeholder audiences. /MS



Tina Neset, CSPR

BONUS at the networking village of the EUSBSR and BDF conference 2011

BONUS participated in the networking village of the EUSBSR and BDF conference 2011 with a display of the BONUS+ results showcased in a series of posters and briefing documents. In addition, the visitors had a chance to gain an insight on BONUS future activities, the strategic research agenda and the BONUS thematic call 2011 that opens 1 December 2011.

On the second day of the event, BONUS Executive Director **Kaisa Kononen** was joined by Professors **Fredrik Wulff** from the RECOCA project and **Jacob Carstensen** from the HYPER project to present on chosen topic of eutrophication to the networking village visitors. /MS



Audience listening to the BONUS presentation



BONUS+ posters on display at the networking village