BONUS BALTSPACE PROJECT

Publishable summary report – Second reporting period (April 1 2016 to March 31 2017)

1   BONUS BALTSPACE overall goals and expected final results

The **overarching aim** of the BONUS BALTSPACE project is to:

Provide science-based approaches and tools to clarify and improve the capacity of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) as a policy integrator, and thereby enhance the capabilities of society to respond to current and future challenges of sustainable Baltic Sea governance.

Specifically, BONUS BALTSPACE aims to:

• Develop an analytical framework for analysing integration in MSP to diagnose shortcomings and inefficiencies.

• Identify concrete obstacles to improved efficiency and effectiveness based on detailed studies of strategically selected case studies and through continuous input into the research process from external experts, practitioners and stakeholders.

• Develop and evaluate MSP approaches and tools, which target improved integration of MSP processes.

2   Work carried out during the reporting period

The second year of BONUS BALTSPACE has been centred on progressing research and development linked to the project's key specific aims:

First, we have put substantial efforts into validation and refinement of the analytical and methodological framework based on case study results and input from practitioners and stakeholders. This updated framework was subsequently published in a report on *Possibilities and Challenges for MSP Integration* (available at www.baltspace.eu). The work drew on the findings of the report on *Baseline-Mapping and Refined Case Study Design* (available at www.baltspace.eu), which provided contextual information for each case-study setting. Through this preliminary empirical grounding process, the analytical framework was subsequently revised and elaborated with additional dimensions to allow for a deeper interrogation of the role of *integration* in MSP in the Baltic Sea region.

Second, we have performed a set of in-depth case studies to analyse socio-ecological and institutional contexts in which integration challenges are embedded in MSP practices in terms of, for example, challenges and opportunities for integration. The case studies built on document analysis and a range of actors were interviewed. These interviews included actors involved in, and responsible for, MSP in each country/case study setting as well relevant national authorities, sector representatives, scientists, Intergovernmental organisations and other affected actors, such as fishers, wind power entrepreneurs, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), municipality representatives and lower level experts and decision makers, among others.

Third, to facilitate the development of MSP approaches and tools focussed in BONUS BALTSPACE, we commenced specific case-specific development and testing activities linked to the targeted tools. Although this development will not be finalised until year 3 of the project, much progress and case-specific insights have already been gained on if, and how, various integration challenges in MSP can be addressed with the focussed tools and approaches

Finally, to allow continuous input from external experts, practitioners and stakeholders, we have continued to put substantial efforts into *developing an extended peer review process built on MSP Dialogue Forum meetings*. Five dialogue events were carried out during the second year to provide input into the operationalization of the research.

3   Main results achieved during the reporting period

Being an ambitious project targeting the complex issue of MSP and its integration challenges, BONUS BALTSPACE obviously generates an extensive and complex span of results linked to its development of an analytical framework, its in-depth case studies and its development and testing of MSP tools and approaches.

This means that we cannot give a full account of all significant results during the reporting. Nonetheless, some important achievements and results arrived at during this reporting period are mentioned below:
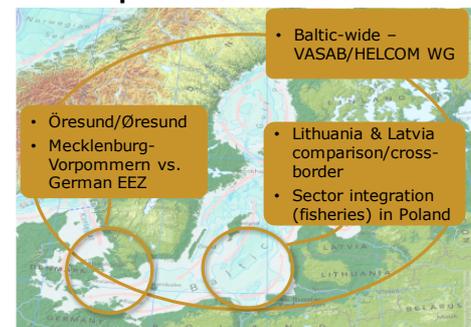
First, our results relating to the development and verification of the analytical framework have provided significant contributions to the scholarly understanding of various types of integration challenges in MSP and their relation to Sustainable Development discourses and ambitions (Table 1). Apart from contributing to an improved analysis, monitoring and evaluation of MSP in the Baltic Sea and beyond, we argue that this ultimately will provide possibilities to develop science-based advice on how to improve MSP processes in the Baltic Sea region.

Table 1. Relations between integration dimensions and sustainable development discourses.
(from Saunders et al. 2016: BONUS BALTSPACE Deliverable D1.2)

Integration Dimension/ Institutional Ambition	MSP Implementation Emphasis	Links to Sustainable Development Discourse
*balance	ecological boundary conditions/limits - win-win	affects whether environmental protection or maritime development is privileged
vertical (territorial)	top down - bottom up	affects strategic decision-making and possibilities for more 'localised' influence
*cross-border (territorial)	disjointed - coherent	affects possibilities for a harmonised approach across scales to development and environmental protection, as well as between adjoining areas/or areas of shared interest
horizontal- policy/sector	ad hoc - strategic	affects likelihood of effective consideration (trade-off/synergies) of multiple sustainable development goals
stakeholder	tool for legitimacy - implementation efficiency	affects possibility for participation and deliberation
knowledge	scientific knowledge - stakeholder knowledge	affects the scope of the evidence-base and opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders' knowledge to be valued
*temporal	static - adaptive	affects the capacity of the MSP process to adopt a reflexive approach over time

*indicates new integration dimensions added from the original analytical framework (D1.2)

In-depth case studies of MSP

- Baltic-wide – VASAB/HELCOM WG
- Öresund/Øresund
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern vs. German EEZ
- Lithuania & Latvia comparison/cross-border
- Sector integration (fisheries) in Poland

Second, we argue that MSP and its integration challenges need to be studied, understood and ultimately developed in light of the specific administrative, legal and sectoral contexts in which it is embedded. Therefore, the in-depth case studies that we have performed (see map) provide invaluable empirical insights to facilitate the analysis and evaluation of the focussed integration challenges, as well as the further development of Baltic Sea MSP. Because of the extensive empirical material and the broad range of analytical and practice-based results and recommendations generated in these case studies, it is not possible to give a full account here. Highlighting some key insights from the cross-case analysis of policy/sector integration can, however, illustrate the kinds of insights generated:

- *Over-arching approach.* Although the Ecosystem Approach (EA) and MSP often are portrayed as mutually constitutive, it is not given that they can always be merged because of their different foundations. Sometimes implementation is likely to be facilitated by a joint approach, but in other cases separation can be more fruitful.

- *Incorporation of transnational aspects.* Institutions above the state level provide boundaries for policy-spaces at lower levels. Given these boundaries, potentials for bilateral and sub-regional coordination need to be made part of the elaboration of domestic MSP strategies to improve overall efficiency.

- *Promotion of bilateral coordination.* When coordination at bilateral or sub-regional levels is hampered by substantial differences in domestic MSP-relevant institutions, functional, content-oriented and communicative alternatives can provide useful approaches.

- *Managing sector power differences.* Inclusion of stakeholders in decision-making processes can result in marginalisation of sectors with weak stakeholders or users. To the extent this contradicts political objectives, stakeholder influence may need to be tempered.