

## 2018 was the sixth full year of implementation of BONUS



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The aim of BONUS is to enhance region’s research capacity and underpin the development and implementation of ‘fit-for-purpose’ regulations and management practices. This is a precondition to respond effectively to the major environmental and key societal challenges which the region faces, and will face, in the coming years.

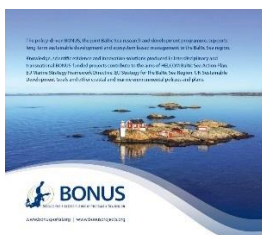
Another aim of BONUS is to improve the effectiveness of the

Baltic Sea region’s environmental research programming and approach by integrating the research activities in the Baltic Sea system into a durable, cooperative, interdisciplinary well-integrated and focused multi-national programme.

### **BONUS Strategic Research Agenda is now sufficiently covered**

BONUS has launched four calls (2012 including two separate parts i.e. research and innovation, 2014, 2015 and 2017), and selected 48 projects for funding. By the end of 2018, all projects of the Viable ecosystem and Innovation calls of 2012 and Sustainable ecosystem services call of 2014 (28 projects together) have been completed; 12 projects of Blue Baltic call 2015 and 8 projects of Synthesis call 2017 are ongoing.

Today, all 19 themes of the BONUS strategic research agenda are satisfactorily covered. The objective of the final ‘BONUS call 2017: Synthesis’ is to synthesise the research outputs that address the challenges for sustainable use of the Baltic Sea ecosystem services. Accordingly, the topics selected for this call extend across the strategic objectives and themes of the BONUS strategic research agenda. Projects are expected to analyse as broad body of research outputs as necessary for robust and unbiased review and credible gap analysis, including, but not limited to, the outputs of research done within BONUS.



[BONUS SRA coverage by projects -display](#)



Further information on all BONUS funded projects can also be found in [BONUS project portfolio](#) update 2018.

### **Highlights from the projects' reports show major contributions to development and implementation of the Baltic Sea related policy action plans**

Research results based on a jointly agreed BONUS strategic research agenda are making major contributions to development and implementation of the Baltic Sea related policy action plans. Resulting from efficient activities and communications towards stakeholders, BONUS has established itself firmly in the broad landscape of key networks crossing over a variety of sectors in the Baltic Sea region.

During 2018, the final three projects of 'BONUS call 2012: Viable ecosystem' (BLUEPRINT, INSPIRE and SOILS2SEA) were completed (other projects of this call were completed by the end of 2017). The summary statistics collected about the projects' performance revealed that the BONUS projects are contributing significantly to the aims of the programme: By the end of this reporting period, the BONUS projects have made together 136 suggestions for designing, implementing and evaluating the efficacy of relevant public policies and governance on international, European, the Baltic Sea region or national level (Call 2012: Viable ecosystem – 72; call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services – 57; call 2015: Blue Baltic – 7).

More than 1200 scientists from the BONUS projects participated in different stakeholder committees. All projects were particularly active in organising stakeholder events and involving stakeholders from the very beginning of their projects' implementation. Altogether projects organised more 150 different international, national and regional stakeholder events during the reporting period. Seven out of eight 'BONUS call 2017: Synthesis' projects started their implementation in October and November 2018. One Synthesis project (BONUS XWEBS) started on 1 January 2019.



BONUS call 2017: Synthesis' project coordinators (from l. Ketki Kulkarni, BONUS BALTIMARI replacing the coordinator Pentti Kujala, Viivi Fleming-Lehtinen, BONUS DESTONY, Mikael Skou Andersen, BONUS TOOLS2SEA, Jan Dierking, BONUS XWEBS, Kristian Meissner, BONUS FUMARI, Soile Oinonen, BONUS ROSEMARIE, Maurizio Sajevo, BONUS MARES and Mats Lindegarth, BONUS SEAM, at the BONUS synthesis projects [kick-off in Copenhagen, 5 November 2018](#)  
Photo: Minna Frii, BONUS EEIG

### **Clustering and cooperation for stronger impact of research**

During 2018, a major emphasis remained on production of synthesising outcomes of the BONUS research. The highlight of the plan of projects' clustering and collaboration activities for 2018 was the joint final conference presenting the findings of BONUS 'drainage basin' projects: [The 3<sup>rd</sup> BONUS symposium: Sustainable ecosystem governance under changing climate and land use in the Baltic Sea region](#). It took place in Gdansk, Poland, from 14 to 16 March and attracted a broad international

audience of stakeholders including management and decision makers, scientists and civil society. This symposium was organized jointly by BONUS SOILS2SEA, GO4BALTIC, BALTICAPP and MIRACLE projects.



The poster session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> BONUS Symposium was conveniently located in the area reserved for lunches and networking breaks.

Photo: Karin Tonderski

In May 2018, a research synthesis paper “[The Baltic Sea as time machine for the future coastal ocean](#)” was published by [Science Advances](#) (DOI:10.1126/sciadv.aar8195) and quickly attracted attention in the research community and international media. This publication was an outcome of several years of joint effort by eight (!) BONUS projects encouraged and supported by the BONUS project cooperation and clustering strategy.

***Communications and dissemination spearheaded an integral part of BONUS delivery***

The communications and dissemination activities of BONUS continued during the reporting period as a cross-cutting element in BONUS stakeholder activities and as an integral part of the BONUS programme delivery. BONUS materials and exhibitions were disseminated extensively, including the central [BONUS](#) and [BONUS projects'](#) websites and related BONUS e-bulletin alerts, as well as the in two issues of [BONUS in Brief](#) newsletter. Distributions covered the wider BONUS community i.e. policy makers, funders, researchers and others with an interest to BONUS information and results.



[BONUS in Brief May 2018](#)



[BONUS in Brief November 2018](#)

At programme level, BONUS continued its wide array of activities directed to the broad spectrum of stakeholder communities. During the reporting period, the Secretariat attended 33 different seminars, policy forums and conferences as invited speaker, participant, observer, member of steering committee, member of advisory board or exhibitor.



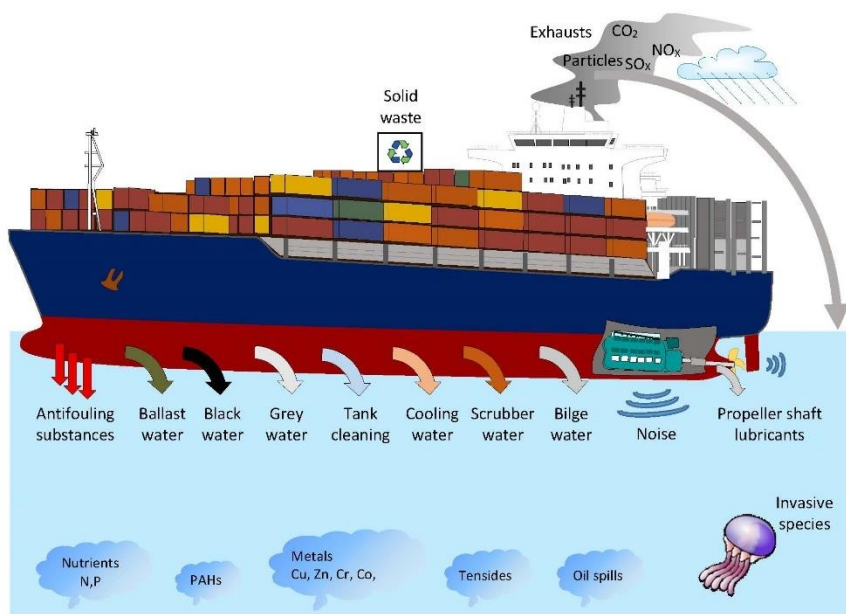
BONUS presented in European Parliament on 16 May 2018: **Member of the European Parliament Mrs. Miapetra Kumpula-Natri** hosted 'BONUS in the European Parliament'. Opening words were delivered by **Director of Bioeconomy John Bell, DG R&I** of the European Commission. Presentations of the event are available at [BONUS website](#).  
Photo: Minna Frii, BONUS EEIG



**Commissioner Karmenu Vella** visiting the BONUS stand at the European Maritime Day 2018, Burgas.  
Photo: Willem De Moor, JPI Oceans

Sea-basin cross collaboration in R&I continued to be a key area of focus of BONUS action also in 2018. Such cooperation is recognised for its critical importance, not only to share best practices and methodologies, but also knowledge, as was also noted at the successful cross-regional cooperation workshop convened in [Burgas at the European Maritime Day \(EMD\) 2018](#) and now to be continued at [EMD 2019](#) in May in Lisbon with five European regional seas joining forces for a joint workshop '*Towards stronger cross-basin R&I collaboration*'.

The BONUS SHEBA 'Sustainable shipping' project led the preparation and running of a workshop on sustainable shipping in the Baltic Sea beyond 2020 during the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region's Annual Forum held in Tallinn in June 2018. With support of Andris Andrusaitis of BONUS EEIG who was moderating the workshop, and a very inspiring programme and speakers with topics ranging from air-bourne pollution to underwater noise, the workshop attracted a crowd of participants.



At the workshop on sustainable shipping organized by BONUS SHEBA at the EUSBSR Annual Forum, speakers shared the newest scientific findings on the emissions from ships, different related environmental pressures, their impacts on the ecosystem and potential ways of mitigation.

Original drawing: BONUS SHEBA

A major highlight of the year was also the [7th BONUS Forum and the 8th HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan Stakeholder Conference: Research and innovation for sustainability](#) held in Copenhagen on 6 November. Organised in association with the key strategic partners OSPAR, ICES and JPI Oceans, this event highlighted the importance of cooperative efforts related to environmental policy and sustainable use of marine ecosystem services the northern European regional seas, further dissemination of BONUS results as well as enhanced synergies across the region, Europe and wider.



Participants of the BONUS-HELCOM stakeholder conference in Copenhagen on 6 November 2018.

Photo: Minna Frii, BONUS EEIG

The science-policy interface developments further tightened within the BONUS-HELCOM collaboration. Following the invitation by HELCOM, BONUS started preparations for a session dedicated to science input in support of the HELCOM's Baltic Sea Action Plan, eventually held at the 40 meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area in March 2019.

### **Effective use of resources**

The funding for the projects of the BONUS calls 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2017 (including in-kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions) constitute 95,4 % of the total funding of EUR 98,4 million reserved for implementing the BONUS programme. From the total cash contribution – EUR 26,105 million – reserved for funding the projects of the ‘BONUS call 2012: Viable ecosystem’, 99 % is consumed after finishing the projects, respectively 96,5 % of the EUR 5,812 million cash funding for projects of the ‘BONUS call 2012: Innovation’ and – after the end of the third reporting period – 99 % of the EUR 17,333 million cash funding for projects of the ‘BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services’. From the total EUR 5 million contribution reserved for the running costs of the BONUS programme 99 % – EUR 4,926 million – was consumed by the end of 2018.

By the end of 2018, BONUS has signed 27 bilateral agreements with 19 national providers of in-kind, free of charge research infrastructures from seven BONUS countries. Signing of the Synthesis projects’ co-financing agreements in the autumn of 2018 reiterates further the well-functioning practise of national funding institutions that ensure the continued use of common rules for EU and national funding.

### **Staff changes in BONUS EEIG**

#### **Dr. Kaisa Kononen, the grand old lady of BONUS retired in July 2018**

Since 2007 until July 2018, Dr. Kaisa Kononen worked as the first and only Executive Director of BONUS. She led the Secretariat’s work of management coordination and monitoring of the BONUS activities. Kaisa was the key part in every step of the way since pre-BONUS times and steered BONUS to become the impactful, macroregional programme it is today. Since Kaisa’s retirement, Dr. Andris Andrusaitis has acted as the Acting Executive Director of BONUS.

*“In the beginning BONUS was only a vision of better and more effective research to solve the common problems that the Baltic Sea is facing. It is satisfying to see that after 15 years the vision has now become the reality.”* Kaisa Kononen, May 2018



*“I am happy that in my professional role I have been able to use my energy for BONUS. Now it is time to release that energy for the other roles and networks of my life”*, says Kaisa (in photo: Kaisa with her dogs Luna and Miya).

Photo: Tom Regelski

## **Towards a new partnership**



**Twelve Baltic and North Sea countries work together in BANOS CSA.**

The Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA) 'Towards a Baltic and North Sea research and innovation programme' runs from November 2018 until spring 2021.

- [BANOS CSA 'at a glance' flyer](#)
- [BANOS CSA briefing no. 1](#)

Photo: istock

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Visit the BANOS CSA website at [www.banoscsa.org](http://www.banoscsa.org).

Following the Horizon 2020 call H2020-BG-2018-2020 launched on October 2017 a consortium coordinated by BONUS EEIG submitted a proposal for the coordination and support action (CSA) "Towards a joint Baltic and North Sea research and innovation programme". The proposal was positively evaluated and on 1 November 2018 implementation of the project (BANOS CSA) commenced. Partners in this activity are 15 key national research and innovation funding agencies representing 11 EU member states and Norway. The Joint Programming Initiative Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans (JPI OCEANS), International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) as well as the implementing bodies of two regional sea conventions: HELCOM and OSPAR are strategic partners of the action. BANOS CSA will continue for 30 months and will be completed in April 2021. The future programme, as planned in BANOS CSA, is envisaged to start in 2021.

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