

BONUS BALTCOAST PROJECT

Publishable summary report – First reporting period (April 1 2015 to March 31 2016)

Date: May 30, 2016

1 BONUS BALTCOAST overall goals and expected final results

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

Overcome the lack of a holistic approach for coastal research and management which integrates different human activities with ecosystems capacity and environmental forcing, therefore, BONUS BALTCOAST has the ultimate objective of developing a coherent and systematic management approach that encompasses multiple impacts in a spatially heterogeneous context, by using Systems Approach Framework (SAF) as a tool to be applied through case studies that reflect current regional management challenges and develop a generic tool for integrated system assessment.

Major objectives are to:

- a) to further-develop a Systems Approach Framework (SAF) for science and policy integration in the coastal zone into an applicable, user-friendly tool with high practical relevance that allows users to manage with multiple, complex, and diverse issues in the coastal zone and integration of spatial information and concerns;
- b) to tackle major thematic coastal issues that require a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach, in a manner that is structured, transparent and provides a framework to deal with complex issues and applicable for evaluating solutions with end-users;
- c) to further-develop and apply an indicator-based concept that allows users to measure the sustainability and the success of SAF, ICZM and MSP, as well as a concept to integrate the SAF into existing policy frameworks (e.g. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Integrated Maritime Policy, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Water Framework Directive (WFD), Natura 2000 as well as the Baltic Sea Action Plan);
- d) to carry out intensive SAF training and education for academics and professionals in order to increase the capacity to deal with complex coastal issues in a systematic way;
- e) to strengthen and link existing Baltic ICM activities and initiatives into a lasting Baltic coastal management competence network.

2 Work carried out during the reporting period

The first year of BONUS BALTCOAST work is characterised by a broad range of activities including analytical work, setting up of the six case studies, internal and external training measures as well as tool development and various forms of communication with external experts, stakeholders, the broad public.

The SAF manual was scrutinised and critically appraised with the aim of revising the sequence of tasks within the framework. The SAF was adapted to the BONUS BALTCOAST project and first training sessions with those partners which work within the case study sites (CSS) were held in 2015 and early 2016. This included methodologies for DPSIR/CATWOE description, stakeholder mapping, governmental and institutional mapping (Issue ID) and methodologies for stakeholder engagement, development of conceptual models, identification of boundaries of the virtual system and of applicable drivers and indicators (System Design) as well as the development of the Ecological-Social-Economic (ESE) model components adjusted to data and information available.

To better understand today's practice in Integrated Coastal Management as well as strengths and weaknesses of the current SAF approach BONUS BALTCOAST started an in-depth retrospective analysis on the basis of a

comprehensive interview series within 19 best-practice case studies covering all Baltic countries as well as a wide range of coastal themes and key approaches. The reviewed cases address a wide range of ICM themes such as coastal protection, tourism management, integrated managements of harbour cities and coastal resorts, restoration of coastal habitats and others more.

The application of the SAF in six Baltic CSS has been started. Apart from the internal training provided, obstacles and bottle-necks in the SAF application were identified and suggestion made to circumvent these problems. Within the CSS the involvement and discussion of and with stakeholders as started. Twenty stakeholder meetings and workshops were organised by BONUS BALTCOAST already within its first year.

The development of user-friendly tools that shall later be integrated into the SAF application, namely of an indicator-based system to assess success of ICM initiatives as well as the state and progress towards sustainability and of a tool for stakeholder participation and preference analysis to support planning processes, has been started. First results for both were presented discussed with an international audience during the BONUS BALTCOAST workshop session ‘Integrated Coastal Zone Management – New Tools and Approaches’ at the 7th EUROLAG Symposium in March 2016.

BONUS BALTCOAST also started first teaching activities, such as a 2-weeks training on coastal management that was given in April 2015 in Germany to 14 Lithuanian students with different backgrounds. It followed a 10 days intensive teaching course on coastal management for 12 students at Klaipėda University in Sept. 2015, with strong involvement of BONUS BALTCOAST scientists. BONUS BALTCOAST partners have agreed on a concept for training and education lectures, the teaching modules are now under preparation and will be tested during a summer school. This 2-weeks summer school will be given in August and September 2016 together with the BONUS BALTSPEACE project.

3 Main results achieved during the reporting period

As a result of the re-analysis it became apparent that various elements of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) as defined by the SAF are already standard within the Baltic Sea Region, partly because they have been included in European regulations and/or in national law. However, also shortcomings of the SAF were identified, such as the absence of a monitoring and evaluation step. We found also some deficits that seem to be systematic challenges in ICM processes, for instance challenges caused by long planning and implementation periods. Preliminary results of the re-analysis were presented and discussed with an international audience at the EUROLAG conference in Murcia, Spain, 1 March 2016. The draft results have been forwarded within the consortium to inform the application of the SAF in the CSS, the tool development in as well as dissemination and training activities. Currently a report on the outcomes of the re-analysis as well as a scientific paper are under preparation.

Between the BONUS COCOA and BONUS BALTCOAST projects the fields for potential cooperation were systematically assessed and as a first outcome joint sampling campaigns in the Curonian and Szczecin lagoon in 2016/17 under involvement of COCOA-partners have been agreed.

To raise awareness about coastal problems and ICM challenges among the broad public, several press releases, newsletter contributions and short articles were published and are available on the BONUS BALTCOAST website.