



Thematic Report

11th Annual Forum of the EU
Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region:
EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION



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A word from the organisers

The event was organised by the City of Turku and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. This is what the heads of these organisations said in their welcoming speeches to the Forum:



” *We need each other’s knowledge and know-how to innovate, grow and achieve regional prosperity. Our success is built of opportunities which we can seize best together.*

Minna Arve, Mayor of the City of Turku



” *The COVID-19 crisis shows that no country is immune to global threats. As the CBSS Secretariat, we are ready to foster all joint initiatives, because a truly sustainable, safe and secure, and connected region can only be achieved through cooperation, collaboration and trust.*

Grzegorz Poznanski, Director General of the CBSS Secretariat



” *It is vital that the Strategy will in the future serve as a platform to enhance the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the transition to green and digital economy, described in the Green Deal. It could also help in economic recovery due to COVID 19 pandemic. Furthermore, combating climate change, halting biodiversity loss and enhancing the circular economy must be key pillars of our green and sustainable recovery.*

Pekka Haavisto, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland



Inspiration from the keynote speakers



” *My main idea today is to remind all of us how broad variety of possibilities we have. My message is: we have to find the right partners and forums for our actions [...] We should keep our minds open, sometimes the right forum might be an informal one, sometimes an international music festival is where the new ideas, inspirations and new friends can be found. The key is – right level and right forum. And I am very sure that you today are very right persons to do that!*

Tarja Halonen, 11th President of Finland



” *Your new Action Plan and today’s Annual Forum are important steps toward transition and cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region. This is important for Europe. We must use this opportunity to prepare and to kickstart the implementation of the Green Deal across region and beyond. This for me is confirmation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy’s role in promoting development in the region as well as European Union priorities: the European Green Deal and European Digital Strategy.*

Elisa Ferreira, Commissioner, Cohesion and Reforms, European Commission



” *One of the three key objectives of the EUSBSR is Save the Sea. This objective is particularly crucial today, considering the dire situation of our dear Baltic, chocking with nutrient runoffs and unsustainable fishing practices. [...] Dumping of contaminants and pollutants such as marine litter is also a problem. We have a sure responsibility to protect the Sea through our agricultural practices, through our fishing methods and through the way we take care of its environment. We need to act all together!*

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner, Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, European Commission

Forum in facts and figures



PANELLISTS AND SPEAKERS

REPRESENTING: EU Commission, national governments, intergovernmental organisations, EUSBSR community, business, research and education, NGOs, youth





PANELLISTS AND SPEAKERS FROM 10 Baltic Sea Region countries

What shaped the Forum: background and the Forum's philosophy

In late 2019, when the 11th EUSBSR Annual Forum was conceived, the EUSBSR community – already 10 years old and developing a new Action Plan – needed a fresh look at its achievements and challenges as well as an inspirational vision and the renewed political support to guide us **“Towards a Decade of Innovation and Sustainability”** as the slogan of the Forum stated. There was also a need to look at all three objectives of the strategy: **Save the Sea, Increase Prosperity and Connect the Region** in a holistic manner as indivisible and equally important for the well-being of the people living in the BSR. Since the objectives and, therefore, the EUSBSR Policy Areas are interconnected, the main philosophy of the Forum was to reconnect them in **innovative cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary teams** which would tackle some of the most pressing issues from different angles.

This philosophy was applied to the Forum workshops, where the organisers were encouraged to team up with their peers from the other Policy Areas, and to the composition of the plenaries. During the Forum, three plenaries were planned to gather diverse, cross-sectoral panels of experts, who were asked to discuss the ways to advance the Strategy's objectives while 1) reflecting on the best cooperation models, 2) finding new emerging fields for common action and 3) setting the stage for the next decade of the Strategy.

The organisers' plans were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, unfolding during the planning process of the Forum and causing severe economic and social impacts in the region. It forced the organisers to switch to the fully digital format and added a new dimension to the workshops and the plenaries.

As stated in the **report from the EU Commission on the Implementation of EU macro-regional strategies** “In the current exceptional circumstances triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent economic crisis, cooperation among countries and regions is needed now more than ever. The crisis has economic, fiscal and social consequences that cannot be tackled by any single country alone [...] Against this background, the MRS have a significant role to play in helping participating countries and regions to tackle the economic crisis by implementing EU priorities such as the European Green Deal, the European Digital Strategy, ‘An economy that works for people’ and ‘A stronger Europe in the world’ in a coordinated manner. Sustainable tourism, SME support, transnational innovation need particular attention.”

Well aware of these new challenges for the EUSBSR, the organisers and the panellists paid much attention to the role the EUSBSR plays in fighting the pandemic, while still following the initial philosophy of the Forum and providing

a multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral, holistic look at the other common issues in the region. Below is the short summary of the three plenary discussions. The summary is composed with the aim to highlight prevailing topics and main agreements reached by the experts, capture the essence of the audience input and thus to provide the EUSBSR community with a set of recommendations, a roadmap, complementing the new Action Plan and assisting the EUSBSR community in its implementation in the next decade.

How to read the report?

If you are interested in the summaries of the discussions or inspiring quotes from the speakers, please read this report from the beginning till the end. If you are busy and searching for areas where you can apply your international cooperation efforts to make the most difference in the region – move directly to the sections marked **“EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas.”** It continues throughout the report and can provide inspiration for your new cooperation initiative.



An aerial photograph of a tropical island. The island is covered in dense green forest. A long, narrow wooden walkway or boardwalk winds through the trees. In the center, there is a small wooden structure. The island is surrounded by a sandy beach and clear blue water. The text "What we discussed in the plenaries" is overlaid in white on a semi-transparent green background in the center of the image.

**What we discussed
in the plenaries**

First plenary: Cooperating for Innovation and Sustainability – better together (even during a pandemic)!

Main question for the panellists:

What are the most successful ways for cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region? What are the obstacles?

Prevailing themes from the conversation

- Baltic Sea environment
- Examples of successful cooperation: reducing toxic emissions, sustainable maritime transportation, education
- Improving implementation of the Strategy
- Recovery from the pandemic

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Concrete actions suggested

- Address climate change more adequately
- Support green options and renewable energy
- Pay more attention to the Baltic Sea environment, expand marine protected areas
- Connect industries, authorities and research for open-minded dialogue on sustainable maritime transportation
- Increase business involvement into sustainability cooperation. Clearer regulations and co-funding will help reach targets and increase investments into sustainability
- Acknowledge the differences between nations in the BSR and embrace them. It is the source of strength for the region
- EUSBSR, CBSS and HELCOM are effective formats for cooperation; however, there is a need for more coordination between them
- Intensify cooperation with neighbouring countries, it is key to improved Strategy implementation
- Increase interdisciplinary cooperation between researchers from different countries for sustainable solutions

Strong agreement or disagreement

Agreement	Disagreement
Prioritise cooperation for sustainable recovery from the pandemic	none
Success of international cooperation lies in the national level priorities	

Quotes

” *We co-operate regionally, but we still think nationally. The next level is to start thinking regionally - also when we implement.*

Bettina Rafaelsen, Chief Market Manager, COWI, moderator

” *Climate doesn't care about which country has the lowest CO2 emissions*

Jonas Faergeman, Chair, #ReGeneration2030 Steering Committee (Youth) climate reality leader

” *Baltic University Program is really a teamwork. Over borders, over countries and cultures and disciplines... This is internationalisation in practice.*

Madeleine Granvik, Director, Baltic University Programme

” *This practical co-operation between Russia, Estonia and Finland has actually prevented several oil accidents in the Gulf of Finland.*

Tiina Tuurnala, C.E.O., Finnish Shipowners' Association

” *If we only look at the national level, we come in contradictions with what the neighbours do. Good co-operation in the Baltic Sea can achieve much better and broader objectives than if you are looking only at the national level. The sustainable economy needs to broader dimension.*

Christos Economou, Acting Director, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission

” *Now it is really time to be smart and make sure that the recovery work we are doing is done in climate- and environmentally friendly way. This helps us to take care of the health of our Baltic Sea.*

Krista Mikkonen, Minister of the Environment and Climate, Finland

Vox populi: results of the interactive poll among the Forum's participants

What is the most effective format of cooperation in the BSR?

Training inclusive open diverse Digital transnational teams
exchanging good practice macro-regional balanced territorial cooperation
learning-by-doing beneficial **Projects** Sustainability Innovation
regional free-will **Project** personal virtualmeetings
network Flagships BSYP **networking** implementation
Interesting Education **communication** Balticness cool Direct connection
Cooperation makes our actions sensible for much more people than we assume!
Same goals Horizontal Actions Resilience
Multistakeholder field days to look at good example



Second plenary: Working together, merging knowledge and skills! Emerging areas of joint, multidisciplinary actions

Main question for the panellists:

What are the promising areas of joint, multidisciplinary actions in the region? What are the challenges/barriers for such actions?

Prevailing themes from the conversation

- Lessons learned from cooperating during the COVID-19 pandemic
- What will the 'new normal' be after the COVID-19 pandemic has ended?
- Age groups, vulnerable groups and diversity – creating more inclusive societies
- Non-economic value creation: SDGs, health and well-being, bioeconomy and sustainability

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Concrete steps suggested

- Intensify collaborative and comparative research to increase resilience of vulnerable groups affected by the pandemic: senior citizens, families with children, self-employed, commuters, etc.
- Explore measures for supporting good mental health during pandemic, especially for young people
- Utilise art and culture in improving well-being and health among people
- Include health and well-being as important measurements of successful cooperation
- Better inclusion of young people in decision-making processes in the BSR. Decisions made today impact their future
- Invest in sustainable bioeconomy, which has big potential for value creation
- Collect and systematise lessons learned in cooperating during COVID-19 pandemic: we can return to a better, improved "new normal"
- Increase bottom-up and people-to-people contacts for more effective cooperation
- Increase cooperation in digitalisation. Create common understanding of risks and opportunities connected to AI and robotics.
- Advance real-time economy by applying technologies such as AI and blockchain

Strong agreement or disagreement

Agreement	Disagreement
Need for engagement of youth and greater inclusiveness.	Social disruption and the use of digital tools.
Lessons learned from the cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic will provide new tools for intensifying cooperation.	Some meeting participants expressed a very positive response to many of the digital tools (such as videoconferencing) and the possibilities they unlock, however, other participants highlighted the risks of the digital domain and the human need for physical social interaction.

Quotes

” *The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has achieved a great deal during its 10 years of existence, but it can do much more in the future, especially for the economic reconstruction after the pandemic.*

Mika Lintilä, Minister of Economic Affairs, Finland

” *The idea of real-time economy is to create a real-time business environment where administrative operations and financial transactions will be created and processed automatically in digital form. We can forget paperwork and businesses can focus on business growth. We need a change in companies and governments, by applying digital technologies, including AI and blockchain.*

Taavi Aas, Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure, Estonia

” *Without meeting and socialising, we are losing an important side of our lives – when we are coming out of these dire times, let’s use the best of what we have learned during the pandemic but also build back a society that has been disrupted.*

Krystyna Wróblewska, General Secretary, Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation

” *There is a great confidence in bioeconomy as means to address multiple challenges and to create a balanced growth, not only for the sake of profit, but people and planet as well.*

Morten Jastrup, Managing partner, Nordic Sustainability

” In the times of the pandemic we have seen many countries turning inwards and prioritising their own interests. It is a problem we need to discuss in order to better prepare for the future, because cooperating in times of crisis is a benefit for everyone. Viruses and bacteria do not respect borders.
Ülla-Karin Nurm, Director, The Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being

” For us, the younger generation, mobility is an important point. We are not able to travel at the moment, we are not able to go on exchange. And it is huge problem for our region in the future. Because if we do not know each other, if we didn't get in touch with each other, there is no such thing as our region!

Aline Mayr, Representative, Baltic Sea Youth Platform

” For future crisis, we need to increase research cooperation – we have great data and surveys – we just need to link it together.

Andreas Edel, Executive Secretary, Population Europe / Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Berlin, Germany

Vox populi: results of the interactive poll among the Forum's participants

What are the most promising areas of joint, multidisciplinary actions in connecting the region?

Involv stakeholders particularly civil society youth platform and gender equality ngos
networking events creative industries emergencypreparedness projects & platforms
future-orientation **Research** Climate change Environmental protection Sustainability
Platforms localenergy Energy climate **Environment** ecology online communication
sociaty People committment **Education** creative industry neighbours
Ageing Eutrophication **Health** **Innovation** networking
culture Green innovation sea **Security** **Science** Knowledge Youth
climate adaption Mobility digitalisation entrepreneurship tourism
Developing common curricula for high education and sharing the best educational practices
Sustainable development Seasafety

Third plenary: Shaping the prosperous, competitive and sustainable future of the Baltic Sea Region – what will guide us for the next 10 years?

Main question for the panellists:

What will guide the EUSBSR community during the next 10 years?

Prevailing themes from the conversation

- New EUSBSR Action Plan: what is new?
- Funding priorities for the next programming period
- Strategy implementation on the local level
- Green transition: opportunities and challenges
- Improving cooperation with neighbouring countries
- Recovery from COVID-19 pandemic

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Concrete steps suggested

- Improve communication, enhance visibility of EUSBSR actions to gain greater political support
- Align EUSBSR activities with SDGs, EU Green Deal – focus on green actions, bio- and circular economy
- Increase cooperation with and between technology companies in the BSR for green transition, support such cooperation by harmonising regulations in the region
- Involve cities, municipalities and territories into green transition
- Include neighbouring countries (RU, NO) into concrete cooperation within the EUSBSR Policy Areas and projects. Better utilise funding opportunities open for neighbouring countries.
- Build on the momentum, created by the involvement of several key players such as HELCOM, CBSS and the EUSBSR in the actions towards the same objectives.

Strong agreement or disagreement

Agreement	Disagreement
Enhance communication to gain national support and visibility.	None

Quotes

” *There are different new instruments that we are working on that together with the work on the future mainstreaming programmes from cohesion policy should give us a sufficient range of tools to come out of crisis and come back to sustainable development, then ensure that it stays and is actually linked to the green and digital transformation that we agreed on at the European Level... EUSBSR is very well placed to achieve these goals!*

Normunds Popens, Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

” *In the new Action Plan, we needed to include the UN SDGs, take into account EU strategies and programmes and the future multi-annual financial framework. And the emerging challenges such as climate change, pandemics, demographic changes and migration. We needed more focus and measurable indicators, so we could measure what the Strategy has achieved.*

Helena Tuuri, Ambassador for Baltic Sea Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland

” *A greener Europe will be in the focus. That will include addressing the impact of climate change on the water management and on a marine drive economy. The programme will encourage activities supporting circular economy, low-carbon energy systems and green transport. The same goes for the other priority: to make the BSR societies and economies more innovative and more resilient to external disturbances. The programme will particularly address the public sector. Innovative, competent and reliable public services are at the heart of every functioning democracy. They have a great impact on creating change and development.*

Susanne Scherrer, Director of the Interreg Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat

” *All the priorities and actions of the EUSBSR Action Plan have corresponding activities and priorities in the Russian documents of strategic planning. So, the dialogue of two strategies is perfectly possible and should be promoted.*

Igor Kapyrin, Deputy Director of Department of European Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, member of the monitoring committee of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region

” Regarding our priorities going forward together, I think it’s clear that the green transition should be the focus of our endeavours! Can our region be the global leader in green transition? Can we build back better than anyone else?

Risto E.J. Penttilä, C.E.O. Nordic West Office

” Involving the lower levels could help to push this ownership of regional cooperation from the bottom up. This is definitely the case of Norway where regional and local actors are paying more attention to the Baltic Sea cooperation

Ann Irene Sæternes, Head of European Affairs, Eastern Norway County Network

” EUSBSR, HELCOM and CBSS share similar objectives when it comes to the health of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea.

Rüdiger Stempel, Executive Secretary, HELCOM





**Putting our heads together
– the Forum's workshops**

Workshops in facts and figures

13
CROSS-
SECTORAL
online workshops

600
WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS

ON AVERAGE:
3
POLICY AREAS/
HORIZONTAL
ACTIONS
as co-organisers
per workshop

What shaped the workshops: background and main philosophy

Many challenges in the Baltic Sea Region are common for several countries and have a multisectoral nature. The solutions to these challenges would benefit from being addressed together by various countries and sectors. The workshops during the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2020 aimed to facilitate a stronger dialogue between the different EUSBSR Policy Areas and to bring together stakeholders from different countries and sectors to form innovative constellations to find common solutions to these common challenges.

The Forum organisers believed that effective cross-sectorial, multi-level, and transnational cooperation leads to innovative and practical

solutions. It was evident that during the past ten years of the Strategy, face-to-face time with the stakeholders has become more and more valuable in the fast-changing, busy, and ever more connected world. The workshops were planned to let the participants use the time of the Forum more efficiently – by putting their heads together and coming up with the new ideas which will set the agenda for the next ten years of the Strategy.

Thirteen workshops were carried out before the Forum and gathered more than 600 participants, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the organisers to change the format from physical to virtual. Guided by the same cross-sectoral philosophy as the Forum's plenaries, each workshop was organised by multiple BSR actors, combining the knowledge accumulated in each Policy Area and Horizontal Action into a powerful idea-generating platform. The workshops resulted in many concrete, innovative ideas and recommendations, covering a wide range of issues, common for many Baltic Sea Region countries.

How to read the report?

Each workshop's results are summarized below. The priority was given to ideas, suggestions or recommendations which could serve as basis for concrete joint actions. Such suggestions and recommendations are marked as **"EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas"** and continue throughout the document, compiled to be an inspiration for the whole EUSBSR community.

1. Where Land and Water meet in the Baltic Sea Region 2050

Organiser

VASAB Secretariat, PA Spatial planning

Contact

Liene Gaujeniete, VASAB Secretariat,
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Challenges

How do we plan for a better future? What kind of tools could help us make better, more sustainable decisions? How can we be better prepared for unexpected developments? During workshop, multiple different development scenarios which have been elaborated during the last years, were presented and discussed. How could they be applied in spatial planning? How and why terrestrial and maritime spatial planning must be integrated? What lessons can we learn from the scenarios and scenario building in the time of pandemics.

Workshop introduced 6 different scenarios (3 from ESPON BT2050 project and 3 from Finnish Maritime Spatial Planning process): "Well-being in a Circular Economy" with a "slow life" in the BSR,

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- Use spatial scenarios as instruments of preparing for the unexpected

"Growing into Green-tech Giants" with a rapid eco-development, "Dancing with Big Businesses" with economic growth as a main driver, "Profitability under the environment's terms" and "Baltic Sea of Restrictions and Tensions" when the Baltic Sea becomes a playing field for superpowers.

Expected positive change

The mentioned scenarios will be used to elaborate strategic spatial documents, so the benefits of the method are enhanced. Although Europe and the BSR has been facing many changes during the pandemic and some of the foreseen future trends have accelerated (e.g. eHealth development, remote working, alternatives to mass tourism), in the long run their impacts seem to be minor. It shows a need for radical policies to change the course of territorial development.

If the planning is a process to prepare for the future, the pandemic has raised the discussion on the various aspects and possibilities for which we have to prepare. Spatial scenarios can be used as an effective instrument to be better equipped for the unexpected.

Related links

Workshop video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcJ-RjkgKKU

Territorial Scenarios for the Baltic Sea Region, BT 2050 full report: www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/ESPON%20BT%202050%20_%20Main%20Report_0.pdf

2. The ESA-Baltic Earth Workshop on Earth Observation in the Baltic Sea Region

Organiser

European Space Agency and the International Baltic Earth Secretariat at Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht

Contact

Anna Burzykowska, European Space Agency, anna.burzykowska@esa.int

Challenges

The satellite Earth Observation provides unique and critical observations that can address many open questions related to the Baltic

sea dynamics, geological and ecological processes. One main message that stems from the discussion was that the most remote sensing methods rely on empirical calibration/validation of the developed satellite data products and monitoring services, and therefore there is a need for in situ data and training courses for learning in situ methods. A lot of Baltic in situ data is currently stored in numerous databases (SeaBASS, NOMAD, MERMAID, ICES, HELCOM, etc.) and are run by various organisations, but it would be useful to have a meta-database with an overview of where different Baltic data can be found. The participants also identified the need for more synergy between models and ocean variables, with a focus on coastal issues such as sediment transport, erosion, coastline changes and river discharge.

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- Continue the research agenda for Baltic Science Challenges and maintain the role of the Baltic Earth community in providing authoritative forum to define science research priorities (and review the results) as well as in defining the future needs for data and regional-level observations.
- Consolidate the drivers for the next Baltic Regional Initiative Call for Proposals to be organised by the European Space Agency. The community would also benefit from the partnership with European Union-driven research programmes (i.e. Horizon Europe) to build on synergies between different existing projects and research efforts which could be pursued in the framework of the joint ESA - EC DG RTD Earth Science Initiative.

Expected positive change

The result of ESA efforts is to provide up-to-date and quality information about the state of the Baltic Sea basin with satellite data, in situ data, machine learning and cloud computing which can lead to delivery of more accurate and actionable information about the status of the main environmental variables in the region (such as water quality, sea level rise, sea-land interaction, coastal erosion, salt intrusion) and

impact of different economic developments in the region on the health of the basin ecosystem (role of agriculture fertilizer runoff in Baltic eutrophication, role of industrial developments such as energy infrastructures, transport, urbanization).

Related links

[The Programme, Abstracts and Participants](#)



3. Risks and (Untapped) Potential of Digitalisation in Ports and at Sea

Organiser

PA Safe (Finnish Transport Safety Agency and the Danish Maritime Authority, PA Ship (Danish Maritime Authority) and PA Secure (CBSS Secretariat, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency)

Contact

Rasmus With, Danish Maritime Authority (DMA),
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Challenges

Digitalisation is a driver of innovation and sustainability across all sectors, it effectively addresses many of the global challenges that

citizens and businesses face today. Digitalisation also affects global shipping and ports, where macro-regional collaboration on maritime digitalisation can help turn environmental challenges into new opportunities in line with the EU Green Deal, strengthen crisis management and rescue capabilities in ports and at sea, as well address the rising threat of cyberattacks.

Expected positive change

The workshop resulted in a series of project ideas and policy recommendations to the policymakers of the BSR which include, among others, establishing the Baltic Sea Region as a testbed for harmonizing ports and their link to ships; the need for a project focused on a decision support system to avoid human errors and setting up a regional collaboration to enhance cybersecurity.

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- Establish BSR as a testbed for harmonising ports and their link to ships
- Initiate projects focused on combining results from various other projects and disseminating knowledge and know-how from solutions developed in each project
- Initiate a project on the risks related to the human element of digitalization and automation: what information is needed to support (human) decisions?
- To mitigate cyber security threats, maritime stakeholders should seek to strengthen their monitoring systems and upgrade outdated systems
- Initiate BSR regional collaboration to enhance cyber security

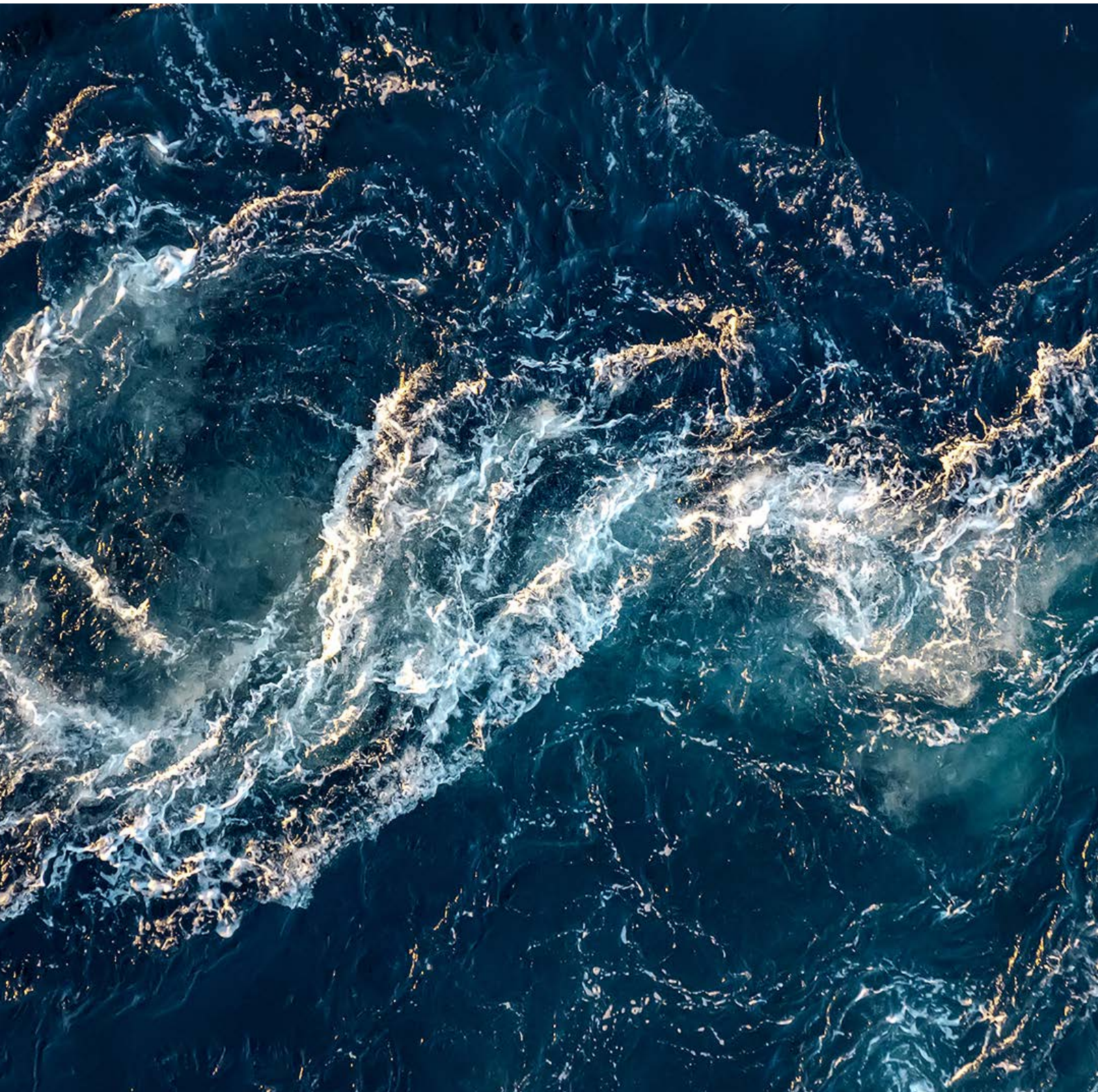
Related links

[Security Policy Area on Maritime Safety and Security – PA Safe](#)

[Policy Area – PA Ship](#)

[Policy Area Secure](#)

[Workshop description](#)



4. Baltic meets Arctic: Young people in the heart of a sustainable future

Organiser

City of Oulu with Arctic Mayors Forum, Regional Council of Oulu, Regional Council of Lapland, Arctic Centre -University of Lapland and International Barents Secretariat

focus of the discussions were: regional identity and values, unequal regional development and the issues with urban-rural division, sustainable change and the backsides of green growth, COVID-19 and cross-border contacts, democracy and youth engagement.

Contact

Anne Rännäli-Kontturi, City of Oulu,
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Expected positive change

Better engagement of youth in making the region sustainable.

Challenges

The topics discussed captured what young people see as the main challenges in the region's development and what values they find important. The terms "young" or "youth" cover people under the age 18 and 18-34. The

Related links

www.oulu2026.eu/balticmeetsarctic

www.barentscooperation.org

www.arcticcentre.org/EN

www.lappi.fi/lapinliitto/fi

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- The focus should be shifted from economic growth as a measure of regional development to the value of a good life
- Technological development to combat climate change alone is not enough; a systematic socioeconomic change is needed. There needs to be a shift in mindset from traditional economic growth to de-growth, and a focus on downscaling our lifestyles and resource needs
- Young people should have the right to get their voices heard and acknowledged when decisions that directly or indirectly affect their future are made

5. Unlocking the nutrient recycling potential in the Baltic Sea Region

Organiser

BSR WATER Platform (Platform on Integrated Water Cooperation), Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission (UBC SCC), SuMaNu Platform (Sustainable Manure and Nutrient Management for reduction of nutrient loss in the Baltic Sea Region), Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG) in cooperation with Stockholm Environment Institute and Organe Institute, Denmark

Contact

Kaj Granholm, Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG),
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EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- Unify policy regulation on the management and use of phosphorus (P) in agriculture, considering all P sources and taking soil P into account.
- Make safe P recovery and recycling from sewage sludge an obligation after a transition period of 10 years. Increase cooperation between WWTP's to establish joint sludge treatment and P-recycling business models
- Create economic incentives and support mechanisms to produce recycled fertilizers and for farmers to substitute mineral fertilizers with recycled fertilizers.
- Launch cross-sectorial communication programs involving farmers, advisors, food industry and consumers dealing with issues related to the development and use of recycled fertilizer products and how circular solutions are linked to sustainability
- Based on the model of the energy sector, require blending a percentage of recycled nutrients in mineral fertilizer products

There was wide consensus on the fact that nutrient management and, in particular, nutrient recycling needs a stronger push using a range of policy tools such as:

- regulatory instruments to increase the minimum standard of manure and sewage sludge management
- economic instruments to create a market and demand for circular nutrients,
- communication instruments to reach farmers and consumers

Challenges

Unsustainable use of manure and fertilizers in agriculture, the surplus of nutrients in intensive livestock production areas and lack of implemented solutions to recycle nutrients from wastewaters are critical issues to solve and to scale up circular economy, mitigate climate change and reduce eutrophication in inland and marine waters in the Baltic Sea Region. The workshop was based on results from two Interreg platform projects (SuMaNu & BSR Water), as well as the BONUS RETURN project with the aim to find solutions and overcome the barriers for implementing nutrient recycling from urban and agricultural sources.

Expected positive change

More sustainable agriculture, less eutrophication, healthier soils and ecosystems and increased consumer empowerment. Business opportunities and the BSR as a circular bioeconomy forerunner.

Related links

www.bsrwater.eu/about

www.balticwaterhub.net

www.balticsumanu.eu

www.bonusreturn.eu



6. Macro-regional research cooperation - a crucial factor for implementing the Green Deal in the Baltic Sea Region

Organiser

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities (lead partner of Baltic Science Network (BSN)), University of Turku, Ministry of Science and Higher Education Republic of Poland

Contact

Tom Schumacher, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, tom.schumacher@bwfg.hamburg.de

Challenges

The EU Green Deal's aim is to achieve a climate neutral Europe by 2050. Such change can be made possible if science and research provide the evidence base with which policymakers can initiate new policies, which in turn needs to be accepted by society at large. To achieve this, the science-policy-society interface is crucial,

as well as how and to whom science is communicated. In this workshop we took a closer look at how science and research cooperation can contribute to a Green Deal for the BSR.

Expected positive change

The BSN region is well positioned to benefit from a Green Deal transition and act as a pioneer for other macro-regions. The potentials can be maximized by defining specific targets for the macro region. By fostering science cooperation that follows a multi-disciplinary, cross-cutting, and inclusive approach science can play an important role in ensuring that transition is actually taking place and measures are implemented.

Related links

www.baltic-science.org

Suggestions and recommendations

- A multi-disciplinary approach in science and research is very important to provide real solutions
- The concept of citizens' science helps to bring results to the people and ask for their feedback
- Improved storytelling and art can be important tools to raise people's interest in science and encourage behavioural change. New media channels shall be used to reach out to the youth
- Regulations and laws are important tools but including bottom-up approaches are key to foster sustainability and ensure citizens' involvement
- The BSR is well positioned to benefit from a green deal transition but should define macro-regional specific challenges, solutions and targets
- A number of successful programmes and initiatives such as HALOS, BAMOS, and the BSN Network are well positioned to foster science and research cooperation towards a sustainable BSR
- These programmes not only foster research on relevant topics but are providing room for cooperation and learning from each other
- In the BSR multiple efforts have been made to reduce the carbon footprint of science itself, both at the individual level but also at networks. These provide good examples, lessons-learned and should encourage others to follow
- Funding mechanisms can promote multi-disciplinarity and inclusiveness via the funding criteria. They can further support reduction of carbon footprint of the projects and programmes itself by specifically adding respective requirements to the funding regulations

7. Umbrella funding for small- and micro-scale initiatives in the BSR

Organiser

PA Culture coordinators, Impact foundation, Agata Etmanowicz

Contact

Rafat Jewdokimow, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Poland, rjewdokimow@mkidn.gov.pl

Challenges

How can we link the local and grassroots approach of many cultural actors to the aim of

connecting the Baltic region, how can many small projects and initiatives help fostering societal and economic resilience? How can we organise a funding instrument that minimises the bureaucratic burden for communities in cultural cooperation by facing also the legal requirements?

Expected positive change

Using opportunities of in-kind funding provides small initiatives with facilities for implementation of their ideas. Targeted actions for capacity building of cultural actors will lead to integration of groups beyond the 'usual suspects' (=well organized organisations with necessary financial resources) and will help producing and realising new innovative ideas.

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- The current regulations allow indirect support tools for citizen-run microprojects in certain circumstances. A better use of this option could meet the identified requirements
- The new Interreg programme period could provide possibilities for small projects. PA Culture will support this development in the further programming process and promote to cultural actors the use of opportunities given by (experimental) small project funds
- Cultural actors shall be informed about the possibilities within new (Interreg and other) programmes as soon as possible after programming is finalised

Related links

www.eusbsr-culture.eu

www.kulturfokus.de

www.sempre-project.eu

www.berwaldhallen.se/en/balticseafestival-2019/contact-baltic-sea-festival

southbaltic.eu/joint-secretariat

www.ostsam.no

eacea.ec.europa.eu/homepage_en

www.art-impact.pl



8. STEAM – Science and Technology Path for Every Child and Youngster

Organiser

STEAM Turku project / City of Turku, UBC Task Force Supporting Youth Employment and Well-Being, EUSBSR Flagship project School to Work

Contact

Matti Mäkelä, Head of the PMO, City of Turku / Education Division, matti.makela@turku.fi

Challenges

How to build a science and technology path for every child and youngster through education, collect and introduce best practices and further deepen the cooperation between the Baltic Sea region in the matter.

Expected positive change

By implementing the proposed actions, the cooperation within the Baltic Sea region will be deepened, students and pupils will be encouraged to engage with subjects of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, and the local government officials and teachers will have wider network for advocating STEAM subjects through their work.

Related links

www.turku.fi/en/steam-turku

www.turku.fi/en/beyond2030

www.s2wflagship.eu/education-and-training

EUSBSR Roadmap 2020–2030: Bank of Ideas

Suggestions and recommendations

- Create a STEAM Baltic Sea region network with joint academic activities including short-term courses, joint projects, student exchange and joint teacher training activities
- Organise study visits, workshops and seminars
- Set up an international competition for secondary level education students (in the workshop the Beyond 2030 Challenge from Southwest Finland was used as a case example)
- Create a material bank for STEAM activities on a platform that is open for everyone
- Explore shared virtual learning environments

9. The art of staying healthy – Can culture improve our wellbeing?

Organiser

Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)/PA Health, Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) on behalf of PA Culture, Finnish Arts Promotion Centre Taike

Expected positive change

Implementing these steps can create synergies between the cultural and health sectors: art is reaching larger and different audiences, positive impact on health through culture. As a result - improvement of health and well-being of the population in the Baltic Sea Region

Contact

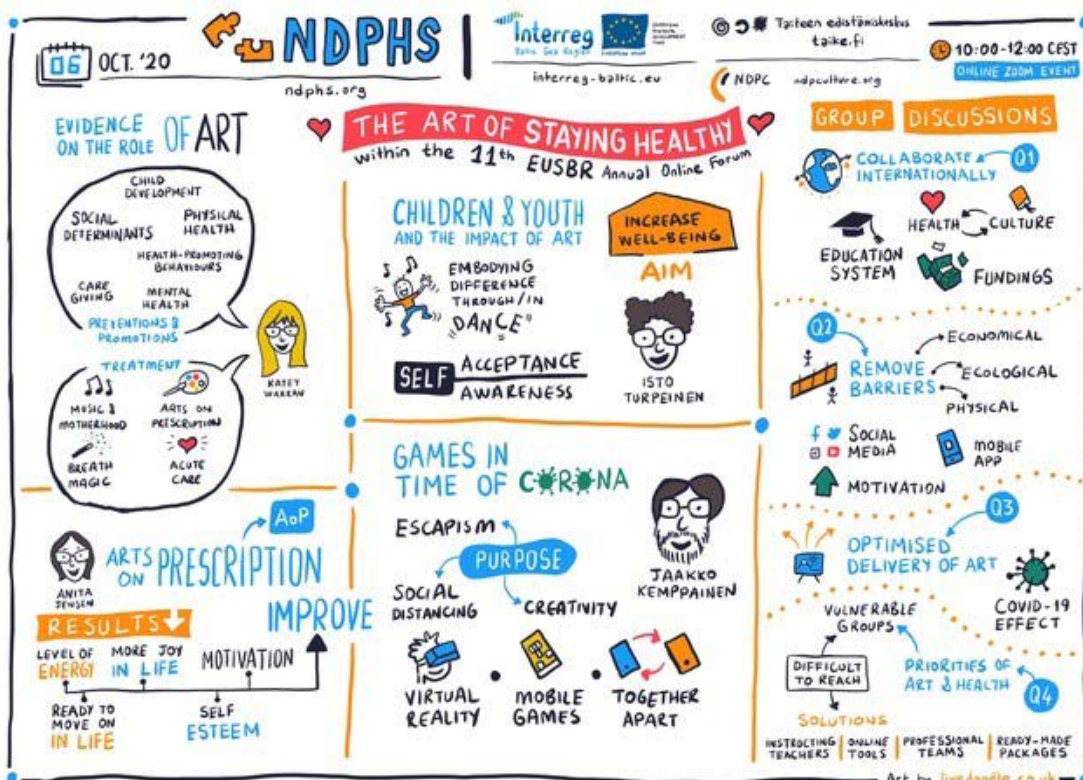
Wiebke Seemann, NDPHS,
wiebke.seemann@ndphs.org

Related links

NDPHS: www.ndphs.org
 NDPC: www.ndpculture.org/home
 Taike: www.taike.fi
 Video of the results: youtu.be/Alfp_WCgOUI

Challenges

How arts-based interventions can be better used in the future to benefit the health and well-being of the population.



Suggestions and recommendations

- There is very good evidence for the health-promoting benefits of arts and culture, e.g. in addressing social determinants of health, improving child development, adopting health promoting behaviors, preventing ill health (both physical and mental health) and assisting caregiving (both for carers and patients)
- These positive effects have been successfully utilized in Arts on Prescription schemes, for example in Malmö, Sweden
- Art and culture have a very positive effect on children and youth. For example, dance pedagogy in Finnish primary schools has shown great results in developing awareness of and openness to differences and diversity and increased the participants' self-acceptance and self-awareness
- Games and virtual reality have served as a tool for escaping reality, creating shared experiences while distancing socially and expressing creativity during COVID-19, and have the potential to do so beyond the pandemic
- The connection between culture and health needs to be better understood and promoted to actors of the health and cultural sectors, other sectors (e.g. education) and policy-makers
- Future efforts need to create more and better opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable groups to experience art and culture, which will also improve their well-being
- The health and cultural sectors need to find better channels for cooperation and interaction
- One suggested solution: Creation of a joint Taskforce on the impact of art and culture on health and well-being between the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) and the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)

10. Common Road Map for COOPERATION in BSR: Joint actions for Sustainable Region

Organiser

HA Neighbours (CBSS Secretariat), HA Capacity (Swedish Institute, UBC), City of Turku, St. Petersburg Government - Committee for External Relations of Saint-Petersburg, Leontief Centre.

Contact

Daria Akhutina, Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat, daria.akhutina@cbss.org

Challenges

To ensure the sustainability and social welfare of the entire Baltic Sea Region there is an urgent call for actions for all BSR countries to implement the objectives of the Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goals.

Expected positive change

By developing the mechanisms and cooperation platforms guided by common task and goal and using the same framework, will

improve the effectiveness of the actions taken. Also, will avoid the overlapping of different measures and activities those saving resources and making it complementary targeting the most relevant challenges and areas of common interest to improve the status all three pillars of sustainable development: environment, economy and social wellbeing. A practice-oriented and more systematic dialogue, aiming at identifying additional possibilities for practical cooperation and increasing the number of partners in joint activities is ensured.

Related links

www.cbss.org

si.se/en

www.turku.fi/en/frontpage

kvs.spb.ru/en

www.leontief-centre.ru

Video of the workshop results:

youtu.be/vUtpEWd6TKU

Suggestions and recommendations

The overall goal to develop the Baltic Sea Region as a Model Region for the 3 pillars of sustainability: environmental, social and economic can be achieved only by joint efforts of all BSR countries. The workshops participants agreed:

- To recognize the implementation of the UN SDGs as a common task for both EU and non-EU countries of the BSR
- To use SDG's as a relevant framework for further cooperation among the stakeholders of the Region
- To start drafting of the Joint Action Plan for Sustainability of the Baltic Sea Region, including the measures and instruments for its implementation

11. The Sustainable Bioeconomy: Trends and Value Chain Opportunities

Organiser

The Nordic Council of Ministers - PA Bioeconomy, EUSBSR – PA Innovation, The BSR S3 Ecosystem platform Nordic Sustainability

Contact

Michelle Gordon, Nordic Sustainability,
mgo@nordicsustainability.com

Challenges

How can policymakers across the Baltic Sea Region support a growing bioeconomy that seeks to harness the best of their local biological resources for strong, resilient, and environmentally sustainable economic growth?

Expected positive change

The two reports provide evidence to help guide the future direction of policy for the bioeconomy in the region and help align policy makers with the areas in greatest need of support to realize a transition to a sustainable economy based on renewable, biological materials instead of fossil fuels.

Relevant links

The Nordic Council of Ministers report: Ten Trends for the Sustainable Bioeconomy in the Baltic Sea Region and Nordic Arctic: pub.norden.org/nord2020-037

The Interreg BSR project BSR S3 Ecosystem: projects.interreg-baltic.eu/projects/bsr-s3-ecosystem-214.html

Video of the workshop results: youtu.be/ymEvO-kieBU

Suggestions and recommendations

- Two newly released reports were presented that address this challenge
- The first, Ten Trends for the Sustainable Bioeconomy in the Nordic Arctic and Baltic Sea Region, highlights developments that policy makers should be aware of that are expected to influence the future growth of the bioeconomy in the region, including the potential impact of COVID-19
- The second report, BSR S3 Ecosystem, conducted a pilot value chain mapping exercise in the area of circular bioeconomy to identify areas of opportunity for value chain innovations created through macro-regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region
- The ensuing debate focused on how to create momentum for the transition towards a sustainable, circular bioeconomy. Panellists agreed that the bioeconomy holds great potential, but faster action, stronger networks and better collaboration and communication is key to mobilize stakeholders to move the bioeconomy out of infancy

12. Reducing security risks related to the climate change and mainstreaming climate agenda in EUSBSR after 2020

Organiser

CBSS Secretariat, Union of the Baltic Cities
(UBC) Sustainable Cities Commission

Contact

Björn Grönholm, Union of the Baltic Cities
(UBC) Sustainable Cities Commission,
bjorn.gronholm@turku.fi

Challenges

There are several current climate change-related security risks that have been identified in the region. The CASCADE Project is looking into these and looking for models, tools and

recommendations, such as risk assessment methodologies focusing on climate change risks, tailor-made for the local level, and specifically for the BSR.

Expected positive change

Improved resilience and preparedness nationally and on the Baltic Sea Region level. Improved cooperation between national authorities and mainstreaming climate strategies in all Policy Areas by 2030.

Relevant links

www.cascade-bsr.eu

Suggestions and recommendations

The CASCADE project demonstrates, the importance of strengthening political and public support for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as well as improving the work in DRR by:

- Tailoring the Sendai Framework to the regional context and its challenges
- Strengthening multilevel and cross-sectoral cooperation to enable a common, coherent approach in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
- Develop stronger coordination mechanisms for effective planning of implementation and cooperation as well as information exchange
- Increasing the systemic support from the national for local level planning
- Improving guidance and support (incl. financial)

Furthermore, cooperation on macro regional Climate Change issues can be strengthened by:

- Establishing strong leadership to approach the climate agenda holistically, using a common language, benchmarking performances and exchanging practices
- Utilising existing institutional capacity and forums to strengthen the climate agenda in the EUSBSR, in order to meet the EU climate policy goals
- Having a focal point that will be responsible for driving the climate agenda in the BSR and ensuring efficient facilitation of raising climate issues through different strategic instruments
- Building a consortium of regional organisations with relevant experience and stakeholder groups that would ensure proper implementation of climate objectives

13. Innovation for Carbon Neutral Baltic Sea Region

Organiser

HA Climate, PA Innovation, PA Transport, PA Energy

Contact

Valdur Lahtvee, CBSS Secretariat,
valdur.lahtvee@cbss.org

Challenges

EU has already set out a clear vision of how to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. To deliver the European Green Deal, there is a need to rethink policies for clean energy supply across the economy, industry, production and consumption, large-scale infrastructure, transport, food and agriculture, construction, taxation and social benefits. Transport accounts for a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions, and still growing. To achieve climate neutrality, a 90% reduction in transport emissions is needed by 2050. Besides other measures, there is need to ramp-up the production and deployment of sustainable alternative transport fuels. By 2025, about 1 million public recharging and refueling stations will be needed for the 13 million zero- and low-emission vehicles expected on European roads. In July 2020, the Commission presented the Hydrogen Strategy for climate-neutral Europe. The strategy will explore ways to strengthen the production

and use of clean hydrogen, focusing on mainstreaming renewable hydrogen. PA Innovation, PA Transport, PA Energy and HA Climate will at joint seminar explore the status, barriers and opportunities to boost wider use of hydrogen as clean vehicle fuel and as energy storage required for wider deployment of large-scale offshore wind energy production in BSR.

Expected positive change

Better understanding on status, barriers, and opportunities of hydrogen use in transport and energy sectors in BSR. Recommendations for promoting hydrogen mobility and energy in BSR.

Related links

balticsea-region-strategy.eu/about/implementation

ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/hydrogen_strategy.pdf

knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/publication/communication-com2020301-hydrogen-strategy-climate-neutral-europe_en

www.uudenmaanliitto.fi/en/projects/bsr_access_-_clean_efficient_and_multi-modal_transport_corridors/project_library

Suggestions and recommendations

- Rapidly expand the share of RE and offshore wind in the BSR countries (targets and incentives)
- Create stable investment climate through strong H2 policy targets (e.g. quotas)
- Verify and certify the green origins & carbon footprint of H2
- Reduce fossil fuel subsidies towards a full phase-out
- Implement higher CO2 prices to level playing field
- Reduce fiscal and administrative burden on H2 (reducing or removing grid fees, surcharges or taxes)
- Initiate Cross-sector exchange between industry, research and government
- Facilitate regional /international cooperation and partnerships between countries
- Support joint offshore wind and H2 (pilot) projects in the BSR



An aerial photograph of a dense forest, likely a tropical rainforest, with sunlight filtering through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect on the ground. The image is the background for the text.

Conclusions
– what we learned
from the Forum

Conclusions

During the Forum, the EUSBSR community asked itself three main questions: **1) What works (and does not work) now? 2) Where should we turn our focus to the near future? 3) What will guide us during the next decade of the Strategy?** From the sheer scale and depth of the conversation, while the distinguished panellists and Forum goers were debating the answers to these questions, it became apparent that:

- the **Strategy is dynamic and has a dedicated stakeholder community**, ready to continue active cooperation even during a crisis
- Judging by the number of commissioners and ministers addressing the Forum, the **EUSBSR has a strong political support both at the EU level** and within the national governments
- **a cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary approach to tackling common BSR issues is effective** and should be applied in all fields of cooperation

As for the main questions of the Forum, the most comprehensive answer is the entirety of the suggestions and recommendations, which ran through this report and labelled **“EUSBSR Roadmap 2020-2030: Bank of Ideas.”**

The proposals recorded here come from the collective experience of the experts in all fields of cooperation and we, the organisers of the Forum, encourage you to find inspiration in them and use the Roadmap as a companion to the Action Plan.

1. What works (and does not work) now? What are the most successful ways for cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region?

While **joint projects and the resulting people-to-people interactions** are still the cornerstone of the EUSBSR success, there are several areas of improvement for the Strategy to continue delivering value to the BSR communities:

- Improve strategic communication and increase the Strategy’s visibility
- Increase political support for the Strategy at national level
- Engage business in the implementation of the Strategy
- Intensify cooperation with neighbouring countries
- Include all levels in cooperation – think macro-regionally but act locally
- Encourage youth participation in the implementation and decision-making

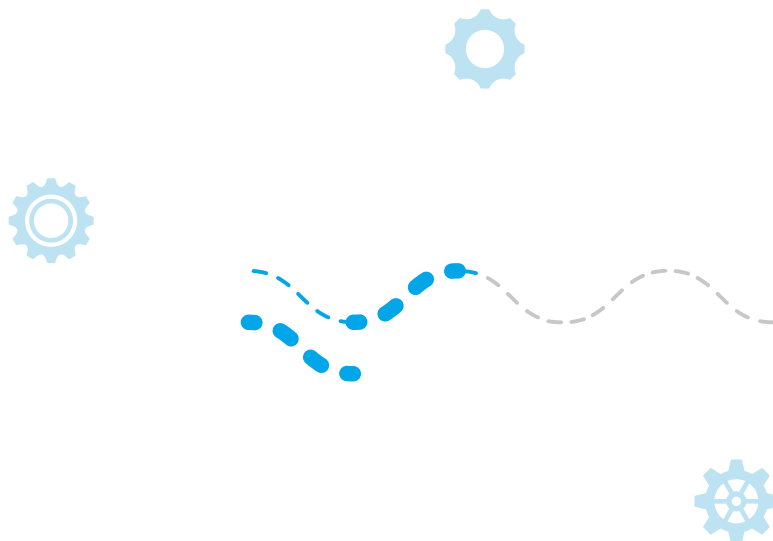
2. Where should we turn our focus to the nearest future? What are the promising areas of joint, multidisciplinary actions in the region?

The Forum goers would like to **see increased cooperation in education, research, environment, innovation, security and health**. More specifically:

- Climate change and the Baltic Sea environment together with the biodiversity loss are still the most pressing issues in the region
- In the aftermath of the pandemic the focus should be on the sustainable recovery, taking into account the needs of the vulnerable groups
- Increasing resilience of the Baltic Sea Region communities is one of the keys to the prosperous, connected region with the clean and healthy Baltic Sea
- Health and well-being must be included into the measurements of successful cooperation

3. Shaping the prosperous, competitive and sustainable future of the Baltic Sea Region – what will guide us for the next 10 years?

- Success of the new Action Plan implementation is in tailoring Global and European policies to the needs of the region. EUSBSR role in implementing the UN SDGs, EU Green Deal, European Digital Strategy is vital
- Circular economy, low-carbon energy systems and green transport as well as functioning public services should be prioritised
- Baltic Sea Region has a potential to become the world leader in green transition





More information about the 11th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR including its video recording is available at: www.annualforum2020.eu

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EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION



EUROPEAN
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DEVELOPMENT
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