



8th Steering Committee meeting of the Policy Area Nutri “To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels” of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2015

Opening:

The eight meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the EUSBSR Policy Area Nutri (PA Nutri) was called to order at 13:00 on 9th December, 2015, at the premises of the Ministry of the Environment in Helsinki (Finland) by the Policy Area Nutri Coordinators (PACs). The meeting was organised back-to-back with the 49th Meeting of the HELCOM Heads of Delegation (HELCOM HOD) on 10-11 December, 2015.

Present:

1. Sanni Turunen, chair, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
2. Andrzej Podcianski, PAC Nutri, National Water Management Authority, Poland
3. Laura Saijonmaa, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
4. Kristiina Isokallio, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
5. Baiba Zasa, NFP Latvia, Ministry of the Environment, Latvia
6. Enn Liive, NFP Estonia, Ministry of the Environment, Estonia
7. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, HELCOM Secretariat
8. Alexander Somoza, DG REGIO, European Commission

Invited guests:

9. Leena Anttila, PAC Bioeconomy, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland
10. Anja Nysten, NEFCO
11. Esa Salminen, Vahanen Environment Oy
12. Minna Pyhälä, GreenWords

Apologies:

1. Adriana Dembowska, PAC Nutri, National Water Management Authority, Poland
2. Josefin Wallden, NFP Sweden, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management
3. Anne-Mette Hjortebjerg Lund, NFP Denmark, Ministry of the Environment and Food, Denmark
4. Heike Imhoff, NFP Germany, Ministry of the Environment, Germany
5. Wera Leujak, NFP Germany, Federal Environment Agency, Germany
6. Airida Deimontate, NFP Lithuania, Environment Protection Agency, Lithuania



A. Introduction

Sanni Turunen welcomed the participants and presented the agenda of the meeting. The topics discussed were: draft report on the assignment to identify new flagship projects, stakeholder seminar in Poland and PA Nutri work and communication plans.

B. Draft Report on identification of new flagship projects

Sanni Turunen introduced the issue noting that the assignment is a continuation of the previous identification exercise after two years of evolution and in the stage where the Baltic Sea EU member states have created the new Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) programmes of measures.

Esa Salminen from Vahanen Environment Oy presented the consultant draft report including the 11 flagship project proposals. The SC commented and discussed on the project proposals and it was agreed that the consultant will deliver the feedback to the respective project leaders. The feedback will be annexed to these minutes.

The SC saw the project numbers 1. manure standards, 2. biogas rejects, 3. nutrient data, 4. study on internal loading, 5. combating internal leakage and recycling of phosphorus, 6. nutrient pollution from Ukraine and 10. wetlands as the most promising projects of the 11 proposals. However, all project proposals seeking flagship status will be assessed by the SC and invited to the SC meeting once further developed.

The SC discussed whether the proposed projects would benefit for further help by the consultant. Due to the fact that the assignment will end in January 2016, the SC preferred to put the remaining consulting input in providing a good feedback to the project leaders and complete the report with the comments received.

It was agreed that the consultant will finalise the report once possible further written comments from the SC have been received. The SC members can send the comments to Sanni Turunen by 16th of December 2015 the latest and she will compose and deliver the comments to the consultant at 18th December 2015. The final report will be ready to be published by the end of January 2016.

Laura Saijonmaa informed that HELCOM HODs will during the following the 49th meeting discuss the future actions of HELCOM based on draft joint documentation of regional coordination of MSFD programmes of measures in the Baltic Sea Area.



These include a couple of actions relevant to PA Nutri, namely related to Baltic blue growth and the internal nutrient loading from the sea bottoms, where the PA Nutri flagship projects are currently developed (proposed projects no. 4 and 5 in the consultant draft report) or implemented (the flagship project BBG). It was noted that it is important to ensure that the flagship projects support HELCOM actions and keep on close cooperation between PA Nutri and HELCOM.

C. PA Nutri Flagship

Sanni Turunen informed that currently PA Nutri has three ongoing PA Nutri flagships (NutriTrade, BBG and IWAMA) and four flagships are under development (BEST, BaRuWa, SUWMAB, SmallWWTPs). Potential PA Nutri flagship projects are evolving mainly through seed funding and the consultants' assignment. The SC should follow the situation and consider the need for updating the EUSBSR Action Plan at the next SC meeting. More detailed information about the funded projects is attached at the PA Nutri SC presentation, which was sent to the SC after the meeting and published at the PA Nutri webpage.

D. Stakeholder seminar

Andrzej Podscianski informed on the plans of a stakeholder seminar. The seminar would take place in Poland (Warsaw or by the coast) in March or in April 2016. It would be a one day event, and the 9th SC meeting of PA Nutri was suggested to be held on the day before. The suggested topics are small waste water treatment plants, wetlands and sludge management. The PACs invited the SC members to suggest candidates to moderate the seminar and relevant stakeholders to be invited.

The PACs will send a further email poll of the date and place to the SC. The PACs got some suggestions on the number of topics and target audience, and come back once further developed.

E. Communication and Work Plan 2016

The realised work plan 2015 and planned work plan 2016 for PA Nutri were presented. Regarding the reporting to the Commission, Alexander Somoza informed



that a consolidated report covering all of the macro-regional strategies will be done in yearly basis. Exact timing and content will be clarified.

The PACs proposed that there will be two SC meetings at 2016: the first back-to-back with stakeholder seminar and the second back-to-back with EUSBSR Annual Forum 8-9 November. The PACs are planning to take more active role in the next Annual Forum once the focus of the forum is presented.

Sanni Turunen informed that a communication strategy of the EUSBSR is being developed. The national coordinators (NCs) are expected to approve it at their meeting on 11 December 2015 in Warsaw. Implementation of the strategy will be done on a project basis, funded by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme. The call will be launched on 14 December 2015.

F. Other issues

The SC was informed that PAC Finland plans to apply funding from the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014 - 2020 for coordination together with PA Hazards. The PACs wish to develop some joint activities. The deadline for submitting the application is 28 January 2016.

The SC was informed about [KEEP](#) (Knowledge and Expertise of European Programmes, [keep.eu](#)) developed by INTERACT. It is a website based database and search engine of aggregated information of projects and beneficiaries in Territorial cooperation/Interreg.

Alexander Somoza informed about the process of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme. After modifications of the programme Russia will be fully eligible as a project partner and may participate in the 2nd call of projects for funding in the beginning of 2016. Regarding other potential funding instruments relevant to the EUSBSR he informed that Interact is developing a full overview of all European, regional, national and private funding instruments in the Baltic Sea Region for the stakeholders. The SC was also informed on the process of the EU Court of Auditors' report on effectiveness of the EU measures to combat eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. The report will be published February-March 2016 after which it will be discussed by the EU Parliament and the relevant Council working group. Regarding PA Nutri the draft report concludes that PA Nutri has raised the awareness and visibility of the issue in wider public and increased the effectiveness to combat eutrophication in some countries although it is difficult to measure to which extent it is PA Nutri contribution.



The SC discussed the weak participation in the SC meetings by some countries. It was again noted to be due to the lack of resources in some countries and the difficulty to distinct the EUSBSR work from what is being done in HELCOM. Baiba Zasa mentioned the very good meeting between HELCOM HODs and the NCs together with relevant PACs last year as a part of 47th HELCOM Heads of Delegation meeting¹. Some countries see overlap in the actions. The lack of resources is both human and financial.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 16:00 by the PACs.

¹ <https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/HOD%2047-2014-186/MeetingDocuments/Outcome%20of%20HOD%2047-2014-Rev.1.pdf>

Comments on proposed project concepts

All presented project ideas were found to be generally good although not all were seen to fully fit the criteria of the PA Nutri Actions (see project specific comments below). Those projects that were seen to fulfil the PA Nutri Action and Flagship criteria are encouraged to further develop the proposals taking into account the following general comments as well as the more specific feedback listed separately for each project idea.

Further developed project concepts that fulfil the PA Nutri Flagship criteria will be invited to present their proposals at the next meeting of the PA Nutri Steering Group at spring 2016.

General comments

For many of the projects there is a need to further negotiate the involvement of different partner organizations and to clarify their roles.

The project budgets need to be considered and potential funding sources identified and listed.

For improving the possibilities to get funding the project outcomes and expected results need to be expressed very concretely. Also the long-term effects of the results (including sustainability) should be described.

1. **Manure standards for more sustainable manure use and reduced emissions**
 - Relevant and in line with HELCOM work
 - Project development is actively being carried out by the Lead
 - Project fits also under PA Bioeconomy, the lead should continue cooperation with both Policy Areas)
 - Difficult to assess the environmental impact of the project
2. **Mitigating the risk of nutrient discharges from biogas production in the Baltic Sea Region**
 - Important and relevant issue that should be promoted
 - Cross sectoral issue that is also related to PA Bioeconomy
 - Good concrete outcomes
 - Need to clarify better in what situations the nutrient loss issue is of greatest concern
 - Should include an analysis of already existing measures, case examples and guidelines
3. **Sufficient and reliable nutrient loading data (ReINutData)**
 - Very important and relevant to improve the pollution load data
 - Need to clarify that the work does not overlap with the HELCOM PLC work and how it differentiates and supports it

- Should, if possible, involve transboundary river basin commissions and include efforts to better institutionalize monitoring and reporting of transboundary pollution
 - Need to consider how the project will contribute to improvement of PLC data in the long-term (i.e. input to regular monitoring/reporting)
 - Perhaps the SWABELLA project which is under development could be somehow involved (or cooperate) with this project idea
 - Could consider to focus geographically to areas where the needs are most obvious
 - Adequate resources should be allocated for project management and coordination
- 4. Studies of Baltic Sea Restoration by Oxygenation of the Deepwater (BASROD)**
- There is huge potential for addressing the internal load - the impact can be significant
 - HELCOM is discussing the relevance of addressing internal loading and this type of study, (including the development of EIA and a proposal for a monitoring system) is in line with the precautionary approach of by HELCOM
 - There was a question whether it could be feasible to combine this project idea with idea #5 below
- 5. Combating internal leakage and recycling of phosphorus (CIL)**
- Some countries supported the taking concrete actions to develop and test technologies for address the internal load of nutrients
 - The project should include an environmental risk assessment
 - HELCOM is discussing the relevance of addressing internal loading and however it seems they favour a more precautionary approach of carrying out small pilot studies
 - There was a question whether it could be feasible to combine this project idea with idea #4 above
- 6. Assessment of priority nutrient pollution sources in the Ukrainian part of the Baltic Sea catchment area (NUTRI UA)**
- Any efforts to improve availability of information from Ukraine and to involve them better in the BSR co-operation is valuable
 - May be challenging to get the data
 - Main source of pollution diffuse, potential future investment may be difficult to identify
 - The budget should be checked - it seems very low
 - Consider including an investigation of the nutrient reduction potential in the project.
- 7. Active Commitments to reach nutrient reduction Targets for the Baltic Sea (ACT Baltic)**
- The bottom-up approach is attractive.
 - Difficult to see a strong connection with the PA Nutri actions
 - Project idea seems to be pre-mature at this stage
 - Involvement of Poland is likely to be challenging since they have not adopted the revised HELCOM nutrient reduction scheme
- 8. Phosphorus removal and recovery (PHOSRRE)**

- Deliverables of the project should be more concrete, e.g. pilot tests included (application of products for lake reclamation, wastewater applications etc. very wide topic)
- Lacks a business component, e.g. implementation and technical and economic feasibility of the developed application
- The idea is research oriented and focused on technical development
- Does not seem to support regional cooperation and hence is not in line with EUSBSR objectives

9. Blue Green Cities Towards Mitigation of Eutrophication Problem

- Although the issue is interesting and important it does not have a strong link to PA Nutri Actions (from design it is a long way to actual nutrient reduction)
- As the proposal addresses cross-sectoral issues, it would be relevant to contact PA Hazards and HA Climate
- The project proposal is also relevant for addressing marine litter
- Proposal to contact PURE project contacts

10. Sustainable Communal Wastewater Management in the Baltic Sea Region / Wetland Project

- SUWMAB is already a PA Nutri Flagship, the PA Nutri coordinators should be kept informed of how the project evolves
- Will wait for the outcome of the SIGWET seed money application in Jan/Feb. 2016 before further consideration of whether to merge the two project ideas

11. CONsumer guide for Sustainably produced Meat (CONSUME)

- The idea is interesting, but seems to be outside the scope of PA Nutri
- Budget seems to be quite high
- Difficult to determine nutrient reduction potential.