



9th 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
April 27, 2016

Opening:

The ninth meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the EUSBSR Policy Area Nutri (PA Nutri) was called to order at 10:00 on 27 April, 2016, at the premises of the National Water Management Authority in Warsaw (Poland) by the Policy Area Nutri Coordinators (PACs).

Present:

1. Andrzej Podscianski, chair, PAC Nutri, National Water Management Authority, Poland
2. Sanni Turunen, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
3. Adriana Dembowska, PAC Nutri, National Water Management Authority, Poland
4. Laura Saijonmaa, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
5. Josefin Wallden, NFP Sweden, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management
6. Alexander Somoza, DG REGIO, European Commission
7. Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, HELCOM Secretariat (online)

Invited guests:

8. Seppo Knuuttila, RelNutData, Finnish Environment Institute, SYKE
9. Anders Stigebrandt, BASROD, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
10. Bengt Simonsson, CIL, TechMarket Sweden AB
11. Torbjörn Andersson, CIL, TechMarket Sweden AB
12. Dominika Wroblewska, URBLUME, Gdansk University of Technology, Poland
13. Anna Richert, CONSUME, WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme, Sweden

Apologies:

1. Kristiina Isokallio, PAC Nutri, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
2. Baiba Zasa, NFP Latvia, Ministry of the Environment, Latvia
3. Marit Ristal, NFP Estonia, Ministry of the Environment, Estonia
4. Anne-Mette Hjortebjerg Lund, NFP Denmark, Ministry of the Environment and Food, Denmark
5. Heike Imhoff, NFP Germany, Ministry of the Environment, Germany
6. Wera Leujak, NFP Germany, Federal Environment Agency, Germany
7. Airida Deimontate, NFP Lithuania, Environment Protection Agency, Lithuania



A. Introduction

Andrzej Podscianski welcomed the participants and presented the agenda of the meeting. The meeting was divided into two sessions: the first session for the SC members, flagship candidates and ongoing flagship and second session for the SC members only. The topics discussed were: presentation, discussion and decisions on the potential flagships for PA Nutri, discussion of existing and emerging PA Nutri flagships, PA Nutri activities and greetings from the European Commission. Presentations will be published at the PA Nutri webpage: <http://groupspaces.com/eusbsr-nutrient-inputs/pages/documents>

B. Presentation and decision of new potential flagships

In the first session five new flagship proposals (RelNutData, BASROD, CIL, URBLUME, CONSUME) were presented by invited project leaders. In the second session the SC members discussed the proposals and decided on the new flagships to be recommended to the Commission for adoption by the EUSBSR National Coordinators (NC).

RelNutData - Sufficient and reliable nutrient loading data - The River Daugava catchment area (project leader: Finnish Environment Institute, SYKE)
Presented by Seppo Knuuttila

The project addresses the problem of incomplete and uncertain nutrient loading data, especially in shared catchment areas, which has been acknowledged at HELCOM Pollution Load Compilation work. The River Daugava has been selected to serve as a pilot area for the project activities since the phosphorus load to the Gulf of Riga is still increasing and it is one of the basins with most gaps and uncertainties. The developed model and methods for monitoring could potentially be later applied to other river basins as well and the project serves as a pilot for harmonizing methods to estimate source apportionment in the Baltic Sea region. The project provides information to support the member states with work related to HELCOM, Water Framework and Marine Strategy Framework Directives.

The SC suggested involving Russia and Belarus as (associated) partners to the project as they are also end users of the results. The project is still negotiating partners to join the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme (Interreg BSRP) application. However, there is a strong interest and support from Latvia to



cooperate with Finnish and Swedish experts on the matter. Belarus has also expressed willingness to participate.

The SC discussed the reason the Finnish VEMALA model had been chosen and if it can be adjusted to meet the different conditions. The project leaders have had long time experience of the operational use of the VEMALA model in Finland and it is also used for River Neva to model the transboundary nutrient loads from Finland and Russia. Some adjustments might be needed and it would be good to compare different models used in big rivers.

The SC suggested further refining the methods for the Interreg BSRP application. Also, in the partnership and end users it needs to be clear that the project results bring benefits to the whole region and sustainability is ensured after the project period. The output of the project is well described but concrete impact is lacking: the data set is used in the context of HELCOM in regard to the national nutrient reduction targets.

The SC decided to recommend RelNutData project to the Commission for adoption by the EUSBSR NCs as a PA Nutri Flagship and to be added to the Annex of the EUSBSR Action Plan.

BASROD - Studies of Baltic Sea restoration by oxygenation of the deepwater (project leader: University of Gothenburg, Sweden)
Presented by Anders Stigebrandt

The objective of the project is to develop and describe a method to reduce the total P loading by about 100 000 tonnes/year by shutting off the internal source of phosphorus from anoxic bottom by oxygenation of the deepwater. Based on the estimates, by oxygenating the Baltic Proper for 10 years, a phosphorus level of 1940s could be reached. Before starting the activities, there is a need for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment. The end product of the project proposal is a guidance book and scientific papers.

The SC discussed if there are satisfactory cost estimations and cost-benefit analyses for reducing phosphorus. In the Bornholm basin the estimated cost for phosphorus was 10-15 euros/kg P.

The SC discussed the political willingness to install such large scale system in the Baltic Sea. The project leader acknowledged that it will be a long process and there is resistance even among the professionals. However, it is not enough to restore the state of the Baltic Sea by focusing only on external loading.

The SC noted that the project proposal was interesting on a scientific level and this type of comprehensive analysis is needed, but the proposal was missing the practical side that would be relevant from the PA Nutri perspective. The SC suggested that the project should broaden the partnership and the scope to include cost-benefit analysis and technical and political feasibility studies in order to result more practical outcome that can be implemented. The meeting noted that the topic should be studied and brought forward.

The SC concluded that the project in its present state cannot be proposed as a flagship. The SC will follow the development of the project and if the scope and project partners are developed beyond scientific level and to more practical outcome, the SC will reconsider the flagship application. The SC noted that internal loading is part of PA Nutri actions and the issue is important also as a part of the work on programmes of measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

CIL - Combating internal leakage and recycling of phosphorus (project leader: TechMarket Sweden AB)
Presented by Bengt Simonsson

The aim of the project is to reduce internal phosphorus leakage by recovering organic material from the seabed and to oxygenate the bottom water. The project also plans to find funding for restoration efforts through circular economy framework. The retrieved sediments could be used as fertilisers or an energy product, but this is outside of the scope of the proposed project. The method has been tested in a Swedish lake and at the sea at 120 meters during a demonstration project funded by the BSAP Fund.

The SC discussed the feasibility of the suggested mechanism for cost recovery and how the polluter pays principle would work in practice.

Although the activities were very concrete on reducing nutrients from the seabed, the SC saw the project too narrow and business oriented and was worried about the environmental and legal aspects. The SC was hesitant to encourage activities on such large scale before environmental and legal assessment of the project were elaborated.

The SC also discussed the partner composition and underlined that there should be clear macro-regional dimension to meet the flagship criteria.



The SC was not interested to support the project on a large scale before the legal aspects, environmental impact assessment and financing model are elaborated. The project scope should also include the end use of the retrieved sediment to get a complete overview of the method.

URBLUME - Blue Green Cities Towards Mitigation of Eutrophication Problem
(project leader: Gdansk University of Technology)
Presented by Dominika Wroblewska

The project develops methods and technologies to prevent urban water pollution and enriching water biodiversity by implementing water sensitive urban design (WSUD) systems in urban areas around the Baltic Sea.

It was noted in PURE project that storm water is a source of different pollutants. In a long term WSUD systems could improve the water quality, water retention and environmental quality in highly urbanized areas. Output of the proposed project would be set of technical solution and new planning methods and promoting the solution.

The SC discussed the nutrient reduction potential and how the project addresses the PA Nutri criteria and goal to reduce nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea. The SC noted that the project description is not mature enough and the partnership is lacking clear macro-regional cooperation.

The SC decided not to support the project as a PA Nutri flagship. However, the SC members found the project plans interesting on a more general level and could provide contacts or information of similar activities around the Baltic Sea region. The SC suggested that the project leaders should be in contact with the EUSBSR HA Spatial Planning and HA Climate coordinators and check the activities of NonHazCity and BalticFlows projects.

CONSUME - Consumer guide for Sustainably produced Meat (project leader: WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme)
Presented by Anna Richert

The aim of the project is to develop meat guides further and launch them in newly targeted countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). The proposed project includes the development and inclusion of a criterion for eutrophication and best practice



guide for more sustainable production methods. The aim is to reduce the footprint of meat consumption and production.

WWF has a long time experience working with awareness rising activities. For example, the seafood consumer guides has shown to be an effective tool in changing the market, fisheries management, as well as policy. The SC noted that the project tackles the problem already at the source.

The SC suggested adding Poland as a partner and including in the project a description of activities already planned in Finland. The SC noted that if the project applies for funding from the Interreg BSRP, it could be beneficial to elaborate the outcomes (guidance, impact of the guide, references to Sweden and Germany) of the results more to show what the impact of this particular project is.

The SC decided to recommend CONSUME project to the Commission for adoption by the EUSBSR NCs as a PA Nutri Flagship and to be added to the Annex of the EUSBSR Action Plan.

C. Existing and emerging PA Nutri flagships

Sanni Turunen informed that currently PA Nutri has three ongoing PA Nutri flagships (NutriTrade, BBG and IWAMA), which are now starting their activities, four flagships under development (SUWMAB, BEST, BaRuWa, SmallWWTPs) and one emerging flagship (SIGWET). In the first session of the meeting one of the flagships under development (SUWMAB) presented their current plans. In the second session of the meeting the SC members decided on the status of the emerging flagship and discussed the developing project plans.

The SC stressed the importance of seeking alternative funding sources and recommended all PA Nutri flagship projects to consider other than the Interreg BSRP as well, since the Programme will finance only limited number of projects from the 'Clear Waters' priority.

SIGWET - Increasing significance of midfield wetlands to combat Baltic Sea eutrophication (Seed project leader: WWF Poland, Main project leader: Institute of Technology and Life Sciences, Poland)

By issuing a letter of support on 30 October 2015 to the fourth call of the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility, the PACs recognised the potential of the project to become



PA Nutri Flagship in the future. The project was granted the seed funding in the spring 2016. It will implement the seed activities during April 2016 - April 2017 with the view to prepare the main project application for the Interreg BSRP or other funding instruments.

The SC decided to recommend SIGWET project to the Commission to be adopted by the EUSBSR NCs to be added to the Annex of the EUSBSR Action Plan as a PA Nutri Flagship.

SUWMAB - Strategies for sustainable communal wastewater management in the Baltic Sea Region (project leader: Gdańsk University of Technology, Poland)
Presented by Dominika Wroblewska

The main objective of the project is to promote constructed wetlands in rural municipalities as a measure of domestic wastewater treatment. The project has also included two new activities: 1) local wastewater treatment plant up to 2000 PE in areas with scattered development or touristic areas with fluctuation of PE like resorts, camping sites, shelters etc. 2) polishing stage of treatment after biological one toward renaturalization of waste water and removal of biogenic compounds and photogenic microorganisms as well as emerging pollutants (pharmaceuticlas, POPs).

The SC noted that 'awareness rising' is not concrete enough activity, addition of tangible results would be more efficient: for example expressing the increased number of pilot cases that could be replicable. In the funding application it is important to describe in concrete terms what the project wants to achieve.

The project is going to apply in the second call of the Interreg BSRP and the PACs will provide a support letter once the concept note is finalised.

BEST - Better Efficiency for Sewage Treatment (project leader: City of Helsinki, Finland)

The project aims to improve treatment of industrial effluents at municipal waste water treatment plants. The revised project plan will focus on nutrient discharges and contents of different hazardous substances in industrial wastewaters entering the municipal waste water treatment plants. The project aims to develop sustainable cooperation and optimal treatment with municipal authorities, water utilities and industrial companies. The project is going to apply in the second call



of the Interreg BSRP and the PACs will provide a support letter once the concept note is finalised.

BaRuWa - Baltic Rural Wastewater (project leader: POMInnO Sp.zo.o., Poland & Technical University of Berlin, Germany)

The project addresses challenges related to a lack of appropriate wastewater treatment in rural areas in the Baltic Sea Region, insufficient know-how of available technologies, public perception, and barriers for market development. If the project is planning to apply in the second call of the Interreg BSRP, the PACs will provide a support letter once the concept note is finalised. The PACs may also provide support with alternative funding sources.

SmallWWTPs - Small wastewater treatment plants (project leader: Turku University of Applied Sciences, Finland)

The main objective of the project is to enable small waste water treatment plants (300-3000 persons) in the Baltic Sea region to reach the purification standards and to increase the capacity of small waste water treatment plant owners, staff, planners and operators by introducing to them what are the most cost-efficient technologies for small scale treatment.

The SC noted that in the funding application the results of the project should be better described, for example: the project results in higher purification standards and higher cost-efficiency of small waste water treatment plants in the region. In other words, the results should be concrete, tangible and measurable, if possible.

The project is going to apply in the second call of the Interreg BSRP and the PACs will provide a support letter once the concept note is finalised.

D. PA Nutri activities 2016

Sanni Turunen presented the outcome, provided by the moderator Mikhail Durkin, of the PA Nutri stakeholder seminar '*Reducing nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea - how to strengthen project partnership in the region*'. The seminar took place at the Office of the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship in Gdansk, Poland, on 14 April 2016. The seminar looked for concrete opportunities to save the Baltic Sea by reducing nutrient loading from diffuse and point sources in rural areas and waste



water treatment sludge management. It brought together over 60 participants, including implementers, policy makers and representatives of funding instruments interested in project development and possibilities for regional cooperation. Presentations of the seminar are available at PA Nutri webpage: <http://groupspaces.com/eusbsr-nutrient-inputs/pages/seminar2016>

Sanni Turunen informed that PA Nutri participated in organising a two day seminar '*Recycle nutrients for clear waters - Forum for Action*' in Helsinki on 19-20 April 2016. The objective of the seminar was to introduce initiatives that enhance the recycling of nutrients contained in manure and wastewater sludge. The seminar gave an overview of political and administrative measures, as well as presented success stories in nutrient recycling from various parts of Europe. It brought together businesses, research, administration and NGOs to finding new solutions to nutrient recycling. More information and links to presentations in slideshare and YouTube at Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland webpage: <http://mmm.fi/en/recyclenutrients>

The SC was provided information about PA Nutri plans together with PA Hazards, PA Bioeconomy and HELCOM to organise a joint seminar in the next EUSBSR Annual Forum in Stockholm, Sweden, on 8-9 November 2016. The planned topic of the seminar is '*Closed loops for clear waters - on the nexus between resource recycling and a toxin free environment*' with a focus on waste water sludge and manure. Sanni Turunen will distribute the latest draft to the SC via email and the SC members should provide comments and suggestions to the draft by 9 May 2016. The deadline for submitting seminar proposals to the Annual Forum is 17 May 2016.

Sanni Turunen informed that the Interreg BSRP is planning to organise two workshops on project clustering during the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2016. The first workshop will focus on the topic of *clear waters* and discuss the added value of clustering of projects cross funding programmes. The second workshop will discuss the added value of project clusters within *blue growth* topic. PACs Nutri are invited to join the panellists on the *clear water* workshop.

The SC decided to have the next PA Nutri SC meeting back-to-back with the next EUSBSR Annual Forum on 8-9 November 2016.

E. Other issues

Alexander Somoza provided greetings from the European Commission:



- Recently published book on Environmental Governance of the Baltic Sea (editors: Gilek, M., Karlsson, M., Linke, S., Smolarz, K.).
- DG REGIO has provided new flagship templates that PACs should use when recommending new flagships to DG REGIO.
- Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of macro-regional strategies. The Commission is to prepare a single report on the implementation of the 4 existing macro-regional strategies: the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region and the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) by the end of 2016. The PACs have received the contribution request directly from DG REGIO and also from National Coordinators. Deadline for the contribution is 31 May 2016.
- European Commission is planning to organize a seminar about the implementation and achievements of the EUSBSR.
- Recently released Special Report from the European Court of Auditors '*Combating eutrophication in the Baltic Sea: further and more effective action needed*'. The SC should reflect on what we could learn and take on board in the future work. It was suggested to draw lessons learned for the next SC meeting. The PACs will prepare a suggestion.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 16:35 by the PACs.