



Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



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Work Plan 2023 - DRAFT

1. Background

The European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) is the first macro-regional strategy in Europe uniting eight Member States (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden). It was approved by the European Council in 2009. The Strategy aims at reinforcing cooperation within the region in order to face several challenges by working together as well as promoting a more balanced development in the area. Its three overall objectives are to **save the sea**, to **connect the region** and to **increase prosperity** in the region.

The Strategy is complemented by an Action Plan. The latest revision of the Action Plan came into force in February 2021. The review brings several changes to the administration of EUSBSR and the actions of the Policy Areas are revised. The revised Action Plan comprises 14 *Policy Areas* representing the main areas where the EUSBSR can contribute to improvements. Coordination of each policy area is allocated to a Member State or Member States or alternatively to an organization or to an intergovernmental or non-governmental body which oversee its implementation in close contact with the Commission and all stakeholders involved.

The revised Action Plan states that the meetings of Steering Groups (SG) of the Policy Areas are prepared and organized by the SG Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective PAC/PACs. The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. The National Coordinators Group (NCG) is informed of policy area work plans and substantial reports and any major changes in operation of the Policy Area.

Finland and Poland act together as Policy Area Coordinators (PACs) of **Policy Area NUTRI** (PA Nutri), **'Reducing nutrient inputs to the Sea to acceptable levels'**.

This document defines the foreseen tasks, resources, work plan, follow up and monitoring for the period 1/1/ 2023 – 31/12/2023 with some additional long-term goals for year 2024.

2. Objectives

PA Nutri contributes to the first main objective of the EUSBSR, **to save the sea**. More specifically, PA Nutri is connected to two sub-objectives of the Strategy: *'Clear water in the sea'* and *'Rich and healthy wildlife'*. The success in meeting these sub-objectives can be assessed by the targets and indicators approved by the Steering Group of PA Nutri (the SG) developed for the EUSBSR Action Plan.

PA Nutri serves as a cross-border and cross-sectoral policy tool for cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. The actions are designed to reduce nutrient losses and manage nutrients more efficiently to mitigate eutrophication and mediate to mitigate climate change.

PA Nutri supports the implementation of European Union directives, the Helsinki Convention and HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP, update adopted in October 2021) and promotes development of strategic PA Nutri projects and opportunities for their financing.

Flagships in PA Nutri can be projects, or other important processes or other ideas. There should be flagships supporting each Action. Flagship processes can include anything that is seen as important in improving continuity between project cycles, flow of information from old projects to new projects and between areas and organisations around the area of the EUSBSR. During 2023 different ideas for flagships will be tested. The aim is to find out flagship concepts that work for PA Nutri.

Table 1: Actions for the policy area as laid out in the Action plan (2021).

Action	Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/ deadline	Data source
1: Reduce nutrient emissions from agriculture and other diffuse sources	Practical activities focusing on preventing or reducing of nutrients leakage	Number of actions/projects/pilots	2/2020	4/2025	PA Nutri, PA Nutri projects
	Regional policy messages	Number of online publications of policy messages	1/2020	4/2025	PA Nutri, PA Nutri projects & platforms
2: Reduce nutrient emissions from urban areas and other point sources	Activities focusing on reduction of nutrient emissions	Number of actions/projects/pilots	2/2020	4/2025	PA Nutri
	Regional policy messages	Number of online publications of policy messages	0/2020	2/2025	PA Nutri, PA Nutri projects & platforms
3: Develop and promote safe and sustainable nutrient recycling	Activities focusing on recycling of nutrients	Number of actions/projects/pilots	2/2020	4/2025	PA Nutri, PA Nutri projects & platforms
4: Address nutrients already in the Baltic Sea	Activities focusing on reducing of nutrients accumulated in the BS	Number of actions/projects/pilots	0/2020	2/2025	PA Nutri, flagships

3. Tasks

The tasks of the policy area coordinator include:

1. Facilitating the involvement of and cooperation with relevant stakeholders from the entire macro-region and in close cooperation with those and in partnership with the Steering

Group¹ members: Implementing and following-up the policy area towards targets and indicators defined in the Action Plan. Whenever relevant, propose reviews of the indicators and targets set.

2. Reviewing regularly the relevance of the policy area as described in the Action Plan. Propose necessary updates including the addition, modification or deletion of actions and PA Nutri projects.
3. Facilitating policy discussions in the Baltic Sea Region regarding the policy area concerned.
4. Facilitating the development and implementation of actions and PA Nutri projects defined under the policy area.
5. Conveying the relevant results and recommendations of ongoing and completed PA Nutri projects to the policy level.
6. Ensuring communication and visibility of the policy area.
7. Maintaining a dialogue with bodies in charge of implementation of programmes/financial instruments on alignment of funding for implementation of the policy area and PA Nutri projects.
8. Liaising and cooperating with other policy area coordinators in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of actions in the EUSBSR implementation.
9. Monitoring progress within the Policy Area and report on it.

4. Follow up and monitoring

PACs prepare the draft work plan annually. The draft work plan is considered and approved by the SG after which it is submitted to the NCG for information. At the end of the year, PACs prepare a report on the achievements to the SG and submit the report for the NCG for information.

The programme managing authorities and financing institutions are responsible for monitoring the progress of policy area projects according to their respective financing contracts.

5. Team and resources

Finnish Team – Ministry of the Environment, lead PAC

Elsi Kauppinen, elsi.kauppinen@ely-keskus.fi tel. +358 295023018

Polish Team – State Water Holding Polish Waters

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Facilities, financing

Interreg Baltic Sea Region, programme objective 4.2 ‘Macro-regional governance’

Ministry of the Environment, Finland, a grant for international cooperation

¹ PA Nutri steering group is composed of representatives of EU Member States at the Baltic Sea region, a Strategic Advisor from DG REGIO, as well as an observer member from the HELCOM secretariat. The work is based on PA Nutri Rules of Procedure. The steering group should meet approximately twice a year and support policy area coordinator(s) in implementation of the tasks referred.

6. Preliminary calendar for activities in 1/2023-12/2023

Activity	Time/ Place	Actions/Notes	Progress
Communication and visibility of PA Nutri	Continuously	Coherent communication with the SG, HELCOM, other relevant stakeholders, NCs and other PACs. Updating the PA Nutri webpage created under EUSBSR main page Preparing communication materials	
Choose as PA Nutri Flagship-projects transnational projects that implement Nutri actions well from among projects that have secured funding and meet requirements set for PA Nutri projects.	Continuously		
Communicate with relevant financing programmes	Continuously	Participation in embedding activities, direct contact with Interreg BSR MA/JS	
Bringing results of the PA Nutri projects into HELCOM policy discussions	Continuously	As part of FI PAC activities, communication of results.	
Informal meetings with SG	As needed	Many SG members and the PACs are new, so there is a need to get familiar with EUSBSR and PA Nutri	
Presentation of the PA Nutri to competent water authorities of Ukraine	December 2022 / January 2023	Information given to State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine and the city of Lviv Online and/or in person	
Annual report	January 2023	Annual report on EUSBSR PA activities	
Report on Interreg BSR financing	January 2023	PAC Nutri/Finland applied for financing with PAC Hazards	
Workshop(s) with HELCOM Agri and Pressure	As needed	Workshop can be about ideas for Flagship-concepts or projects together with HELCOM and possibly other organisations. Work on the BSAP Actions and aims of Nutrient Recycling Strategy that need an extra "push"	
Meetings with ongoing projects with contribution towards PA Nutri	As needed	Meet with new projects, discuss how we can help them, organise planning meetings for activities, etc.	
Meetings with present and future presidencies/chairs of PA Nutri	Spring 2023	Transfer of knowledge and current topics from present president of PA Nutri to the next presidency (from Sweden to Latvia?).	

Steering Group meeting 21	February 2023	Online Preliminary agenda: Annual report 2022, other issues	
PA Nutri Talks	March/April/May, after SG meeting	Online Topic: To be decided by the SG?	
Steering Group meeting 22	May 2023	Online	
PA NUTRI presentation to the Working Group "WFD" of the International Commission for Protection the Odra river Against Pollution	May 2023	Online participation or in person (Poland, Wrocław)	
PA Nutri Talks (optional)	June 2023	Online Topic: To be decided by the SG	If there is time, a good topic, etc, organise one more Talks-session
EUSBSR Annual Forum	Autumn 2023	PA Nutri activities	
Steering Group meeting 23	During EUSBSR Annual Forum	In person meeting	
PA Nutri Talks	October/November 2022 OR During EUSBSR Annual Forum	Hybrid/online	
Additional SG meetings, PA Nutri Talks, and other events if there is need	Any time	Hybrid/online	
Additional meetings with projects with contribution towards PA Nutri	Any time	Online	
One-on-one discussions with SG-members	At the end of the year, or any time	For example, discussions about what we learned from PA Nutri Talks, how to proceed with them in year 2024	
Drafting updated work plan for year 2024	October-December		

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