



## EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Nutri

### Steering Group meeting

Date: 07/06/2024

Time: 10:00–12:30 EST

Location: online

### MINUTES

#### 1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair welcomed the participants and declared the meeting open. All participants introduced themselves, and the youth representative was welcomed to join as a quest.

#### 2. Approval of the agenda

It was suggested to change the order of agenda points, to accommodate scheduling conflicts. The agenda was approved with the suggested changes.

#### 3. Agenda Item 2, updates from BSP and DG REGIO

Anja Karppinen representing BSP does not have any updates to give. Juhan Magnusson reminds about attendance at DG event in Brussels next week, which will be attended by members of the commission and several DG.

#### 4. Agenda Item 3, youth representative as a quest

Youth representative from CBSS's Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum, Simona Jakaite joined the meeting as a quest.

#### 5. Agenda Item 5, Funding for PAC-work

It was discussed that new round of funding will have to be applied from Interreg BSR. The deadline for funding application will be in September, and Steering Group will be asked to approve it with a letter of support. Questions presented to the Steering Group were: 1) is it acceptable to continue as the present project is structured, with PA Hazards as a partner, 2) what the role of Polish co-PAC's will be, 3) and should seed money be also applied.

It was discussed that PA Hazards has always been a partner for PA Nutri, and it is good to continue with that. Poland will discuss internally how they want to proceed. Seed money might have reporting requirements that will be extra burden. It was discussed that those requirements should be first found out.



## 6. Agenda Item 6, Action plan update

About the Action Plan update of EUSBSR it was discussed that many Policy Areas have more detailed Actions or Indicators than what PA Nutri has. Anja shared that in final event of Latvian presidency the Action plan update was also discussed and results from the meeting will be shared later. An online event will be organized by BSP for Steering Group members during autumn. Elsi suggested to have a separate Nutri working meeting to discuss Nutri's Actions.

Josefin says that there are missing pieces of information about the right path to take with the actions needed. Magda would like to see more precise work. Anja will deliver date of sg info session when decided. Josefin says that a meeting close to the annual forum is a good idea, as Elsi suggested earlier. It was agreed that a separate working meeting will be arranged.

## 7. Agenda Item 7, Platform-project call - Priorities

Interreg BSR is opening a call for platform-projects during autumn. The deadline for applications will be in December according to the preliminary timeline. Interreg has communicated, that they would like PA coordinators to be involved in platform-project idea development, and possibly also as a project partner or associated partner.

Elsi mentions the potential of a nutrient recycling platform but there is a lack of projects directly related to the topic. She asks for opinions on prioritisation of topics and how much she should get involved in the platform development and asks if there is interest from Poland regarding participation on the platform.

Magda suggests internally discussions on priority topics from different countries and groups. She sets a deadline to discuss platform participation to 15th of August.

Elsi talks about water re-use topic and a public panel discussion (<https://eusbsr.eu/event/riding-the-wave/>), mentions that it can be viewed online.

## 8. Agenda Item 4, Post-2027 consultations - Interreg BSR

At 10:50 o'clock people representing Interreg Baltic Sea Region (BSR) joined the meeting to discuss consultations about post-2027. Magda welcomes Elena Kolosova, Eeva Rantama and Charis Loupasi and they introduce themselves.

Loupasi presents Interreg BSR and some information about projects that are funded by Interreg BSR and contribute towards PA Nutri (slides in attachment). Elena continues and says the Interreg BSR is consulting stakeholders about international cooperation. The questions for discussion were (as copy-pasted to chat):

- In which topic do you see the biggest need and potential for transnational cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region?
- What currently works well in transnational cooperation in this topic and should be either preserved or reinforced?
- What currently does not work well in transnational cooperation in this topic and should be improved?



- Is there a need for some infrastructure projects to be implemented in transnational cooperation?
- Are there things that you would like to do under Interreg but cannot? Why?
- What is the most important novelty that you would like to see in the Future Interreg? Share your creative ideas!

It was discussed that nutrient recycling and issues relate to water framework directive would be beneficial topics for international cooperation in future. Existing networks should be strengthened, and the full catchment area of the Baltic Sea should be included to cooperation. Even within the countries nowadays involved in cooperation there is still need for more exchange of experiences in order to get ideas about what needs to be done. Involvement of youth and universities is important.

Ann mentions land reclamation and problems relating to environmental facilities of land improvement systems, and that they should be more implemented. Estonia has problems with excess water. The problem is nutrients and hazardous substances moving through land reclamation systems.

Travelling costs are an obstacle when trying to involve youth or Ukrainian stakeholders, because they are usually depended on external funds and not yet involved in projects.

#### **9. Agenda Item 8, Next steps for PA Nutri Talks**

It was discussed that there are three topics that have been brought up as topics for PA Nutri Talks: water management in rural areas, nutrient recycling, and internal nutrient loading (Nutri&Hazards cooperation on sediments). The situation which each topic was discussed and if the steps that are planned are acceptable for the Steering Group.

Related to water management and extreme weather events there are two existing Nordic research networks on adaptation to climate change: [drought in agriculture](#) and [forest fires in forestry](#). The networks are managed [Joint Committee for Agricultural and Food Research](#) and [Nordic Forest Research](#) and funded by Nordic Council. The networks are research focused and there could be a benefit in facilitating implementation of their policy relevant results. One option for continuation could be to apply for external funding together with PA Bioeconomy for linking these existing networks to different stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region. It was agreed that the application could be done if it does not increase the workload too much and that Sweden's SWAM would not be able to lead such network and different lead would have to be found.

An online event about nutrient recycling is planned to be held on 23.9.2024. It will present ongoing and past projects and discuss experiences from Finland's national funds directed towards nutrient recycling.

Next steps for the sediment-topic together with PA Hazards are still open.



#### **10. Agenda Item 9, EUSBSR Annual Forum - Planned workshops**

Planned activities for the Annual Forum were presented. It was pointed out the agenda of “Sustainable rebuilding of Ukraine”-workshop is bending on the decision by Swedish Institute about covering the costs of travel for the Ukrainian speakers.

PA Nutri will have its own stand at the networking village (like all PAs). Steering Group members were asked if they participate to the Forum and if they could help with staffing the stand. Josefin and Magda promised to help with that, as long as they can also participate to the planned workshops.

#### **11. Agenda item 10, ELY-Centre organisational changes - Impact on PAC-work**

Finland is planning changes in public organisations, also in ELY-Centre. According to the plans functions of ELY-Centre will be divided to new two organisations already in 2026. One of the new organisations is a national level permit and supervision organisation that will also incorporate work functions related to WFD and MSFD. The second organisation is a regional organisation covering development, projects etc. It was discussed which organisation the Steering Group would prefer for PA Nutri’s coordinator. The decision will be done at the national coordinator -level, but good to know any preferences from the Steering Group.

Magda suggests having PAC on national level but having connections to regional level, but it’s difficult to take a stance on the subject. Elsi: National level might be easier for cooperation with the ministries, but cooperation is also needed for regional level agriculture. Josefin: Preference is for national level, but difficult to say. There was maybe a slight preference on the national level organisation, but also difficult to say from outside.

#### **12. Agenda item 11, AOB**

No other business arose for discussion.

#### **13. Agenda item 12, Timelines for next meetings, end of the meeting**

Elsi will send doodle for next Steering Group meeting and a separate working meeting to discuss the update of Actions.

Chair closed the meeting at 12:30 o’clock.



## PARTICIPANTS

Estonia	Ministry of the Environment	Liis Kikas
	Ministry of the Environment	Ann Riisenberg
Poland (chair)	Department of Water Management and Inland Navigation, Ministry of Infrastructure	Magdalena Dawidowicz
Sweden	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	Josefin Hjort
PACs	ELY-Centre of South-West Finland	Elsi Kauppinen
	ELY-Centre of South-West Finland	Wiljam Eklund
	Polish Waters - State Water Holding	Jan Pryzowicz
Observers	DG REGIO	Johan Magnusson
	BSP	Anja Karppinen
Guests	Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum	Simona Jakaite
	Interreg Baltic Sea Region	Elena Kolosova
	Interreg Baltic Sea Region	Eeva Rantama
	Interreg Baltic Sea Region	Charis Loupasi