Copenhagen, 26 April 2018

The Baltic Sea Region – an interconnected system

PA Safe and PA Ship – planning for policy impact

4 and 5 April 2018

Final minutes

PART I: EUSBSR – a macro-regional, comprehensive and inclusive framework
This session included presentations from HAC Capacity represented by Anders Bergström and PACs Jouni Lappalainen and Cilia Sonne Allermann.

Presentation from HAC Capacity
Anders Bergström started out with a short introduction to the European system of macro-regional strategies stating that there are issues that cannot be solved on a national level and therefore cross border cooperation is important. The four macro-regional strategies should be seen as laboratories for a new Europe. Cooperating in these strategies allow national states to work together on solving regional issues but also provide a space for trials and errors to be made. Macro-regional strategies are complex entities as they bring different perspectives together and is based on multilevel governance.

The European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) was launched in 2009 as the first macro-regional strategy, and with the 10-year anniversary coming up next year there is an opportunity to review the EUSBSR and the cooperation format. However, the format is complex as it consists of five groups of implementing stakeholders ranging from formal, e.g. HAC, PAC, NC, Steering Committees, National Policy Area Focal Points, to more informal stakeholders, e.g. local and regional authorities, civil society, businesses. The complex structure can be difficult to navigate in and that is why the PACs are there. They function as architects by initiating the development process, identifying stakeholders, appointing flagship leaders and designing and building the collaboration platform (e.g. Interreg, SI, CBSS).

By reviewing the EUSBSR it becomes clear that it might have more policy impact if the terms of flagships are redefined. The proposal is to not just see flagships as projects but to see them as a chain or a system of projects pooled in thematic groups. In this way processes can be built for policy impact instead of only starting projects.

The project format is going to end in time as they are too limited. They often end with a final conference and a report but the results are not always reaching real policy impact. Therefore, according to Anders Bergström, if we want to influence EU development we need other cooperation formats and *processes* could be one solution for gaining the desired policy impact.

The presentation ended in a discussion about the added value of the cooperation and the projects. It was clear that sometimes it is difficult to pinpoint the added value. However, some of the benefits of cooperating in a region is bigger impact internationally, innovation, a cleaner and safer Baltic Sea and common deployment. It was noted that regional cooperation can be used in other settings too e.g. in EU policy making and internationally. There is for example a focus on the northern countries

and the Baltic Region for especially clean technology and clean shipping which we should take advantage of as a region.

PA Safe and PA Ship presentation – where are we today?
Jouni Lappalainen began with a historic overview of the Flagships under PA Safe and argued that PA Safe already has what could be defined as a process because some Flagships have continued on the results of previous Flagships. Furthermore, cooperation between Flagships has already started e.g. ChemSAR and DiveSmart Baltic.

Cilia Sonne Allermann also gave a historic overview of the Flagships under PA Ship and told that some Flagships under this policy area also have built upon results from previous Flagships thereby arguably being a process e.g. in terms of the Flagship EnviSUM which is based on the results of the Flagship INNOSHIP from 2013.

Therefore, the two PACs argued that the framework of Flagships being processes instead of only projects might fit PA Safe and PA Ship as the thought of working this way is not foreign to the two Policy Areas.

The PACs ended the presentation by telling that a new revision of the action plan is coming up which should be seen as an opportunity so reboot the framework, the way we work together and the actions we want to achieve together. Some of the challenges with the current action plan is how we measure success by the targets and indicators, how to influence the political and the international level e.g. IMO and there is also a need for discussing what actions we want to focus on in the future.

This lead to an open discussion about the difficulties by ensuring that the projects and results actually influence policy.

PART II: Planning for policy impact
In this section the discussion focused on policy impact and the relation between projects, processes and policy.

Regarding policy impact the discussion centered around that policy impact can take a variety of forms. It can be in the form of educating policy-makers, influencing policy formulation and setting standards through common agreements; it can be in the form of the bottom-up approach, where industry implement results from projects before they have reached the legislative level making the legislative level wanting to implement/endorse the (best) practice of the industry; and it can be in the form of projects, leaders and others in the industry being drivers for change. However, one argument was that the only way to make an impact on policy is to find the right channels to reach the right people. This is where the process perspective vs the project perspective might be more useful and be an added value to the work in PA Safe and PA Ship.

Regarding the relationship between projects, processes and policy it was argued that this is more or less circular and continues indefinitely. Policy can be seen as guidelines. Processes can be seen as the way to achieve goals or certain priorities for the Baltic Sea Region of the future – the future we want to pass on to the generations to come e.g. a cleaner and safer Baltic Sea. Processes are a serial of targets to achieve the goals and can consist of multiple projects. The processes will hopefully influence policy by the results from the projects and vice versa.

In a process perspective the overarching priorities or goals of the Policy Area are divided into thematic issues/groups which are led by Flagships. The Flagships are led by a flagship leader and function as a management team for a cluster of projects under a certain thematic issue.

During this session there was also a discussion of funding because the current funding programmes give funds to projects and not processes. Therefore, there is a challenge in locating the financial funding for the new Flagship concept being processes instead of projects. However, Anders Bergström gave some examples of how PA Education have received funding for some of their Flagships – funding not coming from Interreg and the like.

Part III: Designing flagships
This section was structured around working in groups on actually designing a Flagship using the process perspective.

The participants were asked to start designing Flagships within the identified three themes which were agreed upon by the two Steering Committees in Brussels in May 2017:

- Enforcement of environmental regulations
- Autonomy and Digitalisation
- Future maritime competences

Part IV: Strategic communication
Four subjects were up for discussion under this session:

1. ***Channels for reaching policy impact***

It was argued that project managers/flagship leaders sometimes feel alone in trying to influence the policy level due to different aspects e.g. the complexity of the channels; project partners might forget to tell the managers who they have met and/or because the project partners are not aware of their power.

However, it was agreed upon that existing channels such as the IMO, HELCOM, the European Commission (different DG's) and committees in national parliaments and the European parliament should be used more and more systematically. It was also argued that it is useful for project managers to be present at certain events e.g. the EUSBSR Annual Forum and European Maritime Days.

It was argued that a way to maximize policy impact is by approaching policy makers and institutions from several angles. By using the existing channels systematically, we could gain more impact on policy. E.g. by introducing results to the National Baltic parliaments and the European Parliament. One suggestion was the possibility of coordinating in the expert groups in the Commission where every member states have a representative. Another suggestion was to talk directly with the relevant DGs and involve them in the Flagship from the beginning. If all of these channels were used at the same time it would arguably maximize the policy impact, and if the results and ideas are good enough European institutions and politicians might take it to the IMO where they can become global standards.

2. ***Early involvement of end-users***

It was argued that it is not enough to involve end-users early as they have to be involved *continuously* too. One suggestion to secure the involvement of end-users was to include the end-users in the formulation of the problem and not only in finding the solutions. This, however, was stressed as being a long process because you need to build a network e.g. by using existing contacts to e.g. the national ship owner associations or project partners. When such a network is established it also have to be nurtured and projects and results have to be kept relevant to the end-users. However, should you succeed in this, you will have a solid network to use in future Flagships as well, so the argument was that it is time well spend and the relevance will make the involvement long term.

3. ***Steering group make-over (how to create a more dynamic steering group)***

This subject was not planned but rose from the two-days discussions. It was argued that with the revision of the Action Plan it might also be time to review the Steering Committees and the meetings in order for them to be more dynamic and visionary. The Steering Committee decide the priorities for the Policy Area and by that sets the course for the PACs' work.

One suggestion was to have two different groups – a formal group consisting of ministerial representatives and other authorities, and another group consisting of non-authorities. The formal group could meet in connection to the EUSBSR Annual Forum and discuss the formal settings. The informal group could meet at another time to discuss scope, projects and goals. This way it would be a Steering Committee meeting as we know it and a meeting of flagship leaders.

Another suggestion was to copy PA Education. They have two meetings per year – one in connection to the Annual Forum and one in Brussels. PA Education invite member states, Flagships and DG REGIO to the meeting at the Annual Forum, and in Brussels they invite additional 30 people e.g. other DG's and thematic experts. It is easier to get Brussels based people to attend a meeting in Brussels than somewhere else. Furthermore, PA Education has Flagship based meetings which are organized by the flagship leader, respectively, in order for the different stakeholders in the Flagship to coordinate.

Part V: Conclusions and next steps for PA Ship and PA Safe

There were a lot of topics to work on e.g. locating the right stakeholders;

how to integrate the projects – process perspective; develop flagships further; methods of stakeholder involvement and the Steering Committee format/meeting format.

However, the next steps for the PACs were summed up by the PACs as being the following:

- to have an internal discussion about the outcome from this workshop – how to build upon the fruitful discussions from the workshop
- Work on the up-coming revision of the action plan taking the discussions from the workshop into account
- Start the process of identifying potential flagship leaders for the different future actions under the revised Action Plan
- Look at the format of the Steering Committee