**PILLAR 3: Environmental Quality**



**ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR YEAR 2019**

Prepared by Pillar Coordinators, supported by the relevant EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, and approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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| ***Background:***  As provided in the TSG Rules of Procedure (Point 8), every year, by end-February, Pillar Coordinators shall submit to the Governing Board an Annual Progress Report for the pillar concerned covering the preceding year (1st January-31st December).  The Annual Progress Report, jointly prepared by Pillar Coordinators, with the support of the relevant EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, is approved by the respective TSG prior to transmission to the Governing Board.  The Governing Board will be called to take note of the aforementioned reports, and, on that basis, to establish an Annual Progress Report for the EUSAIR as a whole, to be presented to the EU-28 High Level Group on macro-regional strategies and to the EUSAIR political/ministerial level.  ***General remarks:***  The following table of content and the template itself show the sections that should be completed (none of them should be left blank or deleted from the report). If necessary and justified, additional (sub) sections could be added.  The report shall not exceed a maximum number of 5 pages (*Arial 12 or equivalent*).  Additionally, please note the following:   * The information should be well-structured within each of the sections and should be synthetic and to the point, addressing the content and not aiming for quantity. * Do not include information which could be found elsewhere, e.g. minutes of the meetings or list of TSG members. * The language should be direct and clear. Using acronyms, jargon or internal technicalities is not recommended. * Refer to factual information, and be as concrete as possible. Vague and general comments (e.g. "the situation is progressing favourably and quite rapidly") without justification should be avoided. * Any other important information (monitoring reports etc) should be added as annexes. |

1. **TSG PROCESS (GOVERNANCE)**

The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and its Action Plan are key documents in order to implement sustainable development in the macro-region. In the Action Plan are defined four Pillars that address the core challenges and opportunities for the macro-region.

Regarding the Governing Board (GB) documents/rules all pillars are co-chaired by EU and non-EU countries. According to this, Republic of Slovenia and Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina are co-chairs of the Pillar 3 - Environmental Quality. Following the setting-up process of TSG3, all countries nominated their representatives in TSG3, and the Rules of Procedures of TSG3 was adopted in 2015, as well.

TSG3 organized two meetings in 2019: 10th meeting (13-14 March 2019, Zagreb, Croatia) and 11th meeting (12 November 2019, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina). Seven countries participated in the meetings in Zagreb (Croatia), \_\_\_\_\_\_ in Sarajevo (BiH) with the representatives from DG REGIO, EUSAIR Facility Point Lead partner and project partner Municipality of Izola and other invited guests with the approval of TSG 3 members.

Within the Mediterranean Coast and EU Macro-regional Strategies Week 2019 were also organized two events: TSG 3 workshop “How to progress from TSG 3 priorities towards EUSAIR macro-regional projects” on 19th and 20th of September 2019 and joint conference organized by EUSAIR TSG3 and TSG4 “Evaluation and Preservation of Environment for Tourism”. EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators for TSG3, members with EUSAIR Facility Point, members from all TSGs, EUSAIR Facility Point representatives, Commission representative(s), representatives from the sectors/Ministries were present at the TSG 3 workshops in Izola (SI) and at the TSG 3/4 conference in Poreč (CRO) and Izola (SI).

**1) TSG 3 meetings:**

In the TSG3 meetings were discussed the following key issues, in order to ensure an efficient implementation of EUSAIR and its Action Plan.

* **In Zagreb**: were presented a recap of Technical PC meeting and GB in Brussels, were discussed proposition for filling the template for priorities according to Discussion Paper of Catania declaration, were presented and approved TSG 3 Annual report 2018, were agreed by consensus the title “Marine spatial planning as cross-cutting theme of the TSGs of the EUSAIR” for the TSG 3 Panel session for the 4th EUSAIR Forum in Budva. TSG 3 members take note of the document for monitoring and evaluation process. The Stakeholder Platform was presented. Also were presented the state of the art of inter-pillar projects TSG 1/3 and TSG 3/4. And as most important was also presented the state of the art of mono-pillar TSG 3 project ideas development process.

1. **In Sarajevo:** TBA

**2) Workshops organised by TSG 3:**

**Workshop “How to progress from TSG 3 priorities towards EUSAIR macro-regional projects”**, 19-20 September 2019 (Izola, Slovenia). The focus of the first day was the workshop which objective was to identify concrete ideas for future project under the priority topic on monitoring and management of marine protected species (3MPS) based on marine protected areas (MPA), as important mechanism for protection of marine species. To better understand the discussed ideas workshop included presentations of state of MPAs in Adriatic-Ionian region. The participants concluded that the future project idea on monitoring and management of 3MPS is ‘’To improve conservation status and ecosystem status of selected species – Posidonia oceanica and Caretta caretta.’’ With the focus on improvement of knowledge about with emphasis on monitoring, and implementation of concrete conservation measures to address threats as anchoring, by-catch, underwater noise, marine litter and pollution, including light pollution. It was also recognized that MSP is an important tool for conservation of migratory species, since it is able to address threats at larger scale then f.e. MPAs (particularly threats such as transport etc.).

The event also gave opportunity for presentation of other topics which main focus following the Environmental quality ideas and conservation of the marine environment from different aspects. One of projects was SEADRION, that presented studies for promoting the sea pumps for cooling/heating of the buildings, like feasibility study for the building of Municipality of Izola. The event also held a guided discussion about European Group for Territorial Cooperation as effective tool for Cross-border MSP (EGTC). The participants could also see the results of the analysis from data gathering at the last year event Draw the Coast that showed that people see the area as a community area.

During both days all four TSG3 mono-pillar project ideas were presented in the scope of recognising the further activities and improvements toward concrete projects. After the presentations it was concluded that is important to share multilevel governance on transboundary level to focus and be concrete in actions for better quality of life in future on shared coast and sea and to capitalize what is already achieved and known and use it in further projects, actions.

**Joint conference organized by EUSAIR TSG3 and TSG4 “Evaluation and Preservation of Environment for Tourism”,** Poreč (CRO) 26th and Izola (SI) 27th September 2019**:** The first joint international conference of pillars Environmental Quality (TSG 3) and Sustainable Tourism (TSG 4) of the Adriatic-Ionian region (AIR) was held on 26th and 27th September 2019. The conference took place as part of the International Mediterranean Coast Week and macro-regional strategies 2019 event with the slogan SEA4FUTURE. It was not only the first joint event of two EUSAIR Pillar, but also the first time two transnational programmes, ADRION and Mediterranean, joined forces. The conference addressed sustainable tourism issues, taking into account local ecosystems, nature and cultural heritage. The event was attended by participants from 8 different European countries.

First day of the conference was held in Poreč, Croatia, with the aim to present global, regional, national and local attitudes, policies and activities tackling sustainable and responsible tourism development, which considers environment, climate, people and heritage on the whole as important elements of tourism. The first day of the conference provided food for thoughts for all levels of governments and governance in the AIR. The overall conclusion was that it is mainly people who are causing problems so it is up to people to find out smart solutions to overcome them. Most of the problems are actually very similar or the same in all the regions so it would only be prudent try to find the solutions that could work in our destinations.

On the second day, that was set in Izola, Slovenia, several good practices were presented to preserve the environment and natural heritage both locally and internationally. Also it was presented the TSG 3/4 cross-pillar project: Managing touristic flows in marine protected areas (MPA). This topic is also common to Mediterranean program projects like INHERIT which aim is to valorise and conserve the Mediterranean coastal and maritime natural heritage by promoting sustainable tourism strategies. The identification of new values and the quality of destinations will form an important foundation for the development of sustainable, higher quality tourism products and at the same time provide basics for conservation of natural resources. It is important to encourage the development of new innovative tourism products and also include new ways, like digitalisation, for presenting the heritage and potential of advanced technologies to boost positive tourism impacts and manage touristic flows in MPAs to conserve the sensitive ecosystems in AIR.

**3) TSG3 also contributed to the:**

* **Technical Meeting of EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators, 20th February 2019, Brussels.** TSG 3 coordinators presented the TSG 3 work in 2018 and work plan in 2019.
* **Meeting of the Governing Board of the EUSAIR, 20-21 February 2019.** TSG 3 coordinators presented the TSG 3 work in 2018 and work plan in 2019.
* **4th EUSAIR Forum in Budva** (Montenegro) on 6-7 May 2019. PCs and TSG 3 members with support of the EUSAIR Facility Point project partners Municipality of Izola and Regione Marche organised and participated in the PILLAR SESSION B: Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as Cross-Cutting Theme of the TSGs of the EUSAIR. The session focused on MSP as cross-cutting theme of the TSGs of the EUSAIR as important for the cooperation among the Adriatic-Ionian region, especially cooperation under implementation of Barcelona convention towards an effective implementation of MSP for a careful and responsible management of the Adriatic-Ionian Sea in synergies with EUSAIR pillars Blue Growth, Connecting the Region and Sustainable tourism.
* **Technical Meeting of EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators, 21th October 2019, Belgrade.** TSG 3 coordinators presented the TSG 3 work in 2019 and work plan ahead.
* **Meeting of the Governing Board of the EUSAIR, 21-22 October 2019, Belgrade.** TSG 3 coordinators presented the TSG 3 work in 2019 and work plan ahead.

**Workshop organized by Serbia: Development and drafting of joint plans for cross-border habitats and ecosystems management, and joint plans for managing big carnivores TBC**

1. **MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS**

**In 2019:**

1. According to Rules of Procedures two meetings with quorum of TSG 3 were organized. The meetings were hosted: 1) by Croatia in Zagreb; 2) by Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
2. Organisation of one TSG 3 workshop hosted by Slovenia in Izola, one joint conference organized by TSG 3 and TSG 4 hosted by Croatia in Poreč and Slovenia in Izola and Workshop organized by Serbia: Development and drafting of joint plans for cross-border habitats and ecosystems management, and joint plans for managing big carnivores TBC.
3. Further steps in development process on four mono-pillar project concepts among TSG 3 under EUSAIR Facility Point strategic project WP T2 – Facilitating strategic project development were implemented.
4. Two inter-pillar projects ideas: Inter-pillar project TSG 3 and 1 on MSP and ICZM and TSG 3 and 4 Managing Tourism Flows in Protected Areas” (ADRIONet) were submitted under open call FP+ and administratively approved on 13th August 2019.
5. Active participation of TSG 3 at the 4th EUSAIR Forum in Budva, 6-7 May 2019 with organisation of the pillar Session B: Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as Cross-Cutting Theme of the TSGs of the EUSAIR.
6. Active participation of TSG 3 members at the Mediterranean Coastal and EU Macro-regional Strategies Week 2019, which was organised in the framework of INTERREG V-B ADRION strategic project: EUSAIR Facility Point. In particular for the development of the mono-pillar project concepts was very important **TSG3 workshop** “How to progress from TSG 3 priorities towards EUSAIR macro-regional projects” (19-20 September 2019, Izola, Slovenia). And for cross-pillar collaboration was very important the **joint conference organized by EUSAIR TSG3 and TSG4** “Evaluation and Preservation of Environment for Tourism”, Poreč (CRO) 26th and Izola (SI) 27th September 2019. More about both mentioned event: video TBA
7. GB…..
8. Participation at the …. .
9. **MAIN ISSUES/CHALLENGES ENCOUNTRED**

Main challenges encountered in 2019 are:

TBA

Key messages to GB, High Level Group or Governments in 8 EUSAIR countries:

TBA

1. **THE WORK AHEAD**

According to Rules of Procedures at least two meetings of TSG 3 per year will be organized. In the year 2020 the 12th meeting and the 13th. The countries that will host the meeting are TBD.

TSG 3 workshops on national level will be held in each country for further development of mono-pillar projects concepts under WP T2 of the EUSAIR Facility Point project and cross-pillar project concepts under Facility Point Plus.

TSG 3 will actively participate in the 5th EUSAIR Forum in Belgrade (Serbia) May 2020 with organisation of possible plenary session for Environmental quality in collaboration with the organisers.

The Slovenian EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner Municipality of Izola and Lead Partner Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with other co-organisers are going to organize the Mediterranean Coastal Week (September 2019 – date TBD) within which a TSG 3 workshop will be organized. Title and detailed information will be defined by the organizational committee.

In the year 2019 TSG3 will mainly focus on:

* Implementation of recommendation and conclusion of TSG 3, Governing Board and EUSAIR Forum.
* Organisation of two TSG3 meetings according to the RoP.
* Possible organisation of workshops for the development of mono-pillar and cross-pillar projects concepts.
* Further discussion on actions/priorities that have macro-regional value in environmental quality and thus sustainable development within the 12th and 13th TSG 3 meetings;
* Contributing to the 5th EUSAIR Forum in Belgrade, in accordance to the Agenda of the Forum, yet to be prepared;
* Further implementation of activities for development of Environmental Quality in the Adriatic-Ionian region as continuation of the activities.
* Maintaining and improving cooperation between pillars to achieve the best output for all of them while using an ecosystem approach.

1. **OTHER INFORMATION**

**ANNEX 1**

**ATTENDANCE AT TSG 3 MEETINGS IN REPORTING YEARS 2019**

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| **Pillar 3** | 10th meeting  City: Zagreb  Date: 13-14/03/2019 | 11th meeting  City: Sarajevo  Date: 12/11/2019 |
| EU Countries  *[please list them]* | *Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, represented by designated members* | *TBA* |
| Non-EU countries  *[please list them]* | *Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia represented by designated members* | *TBA* |
| **TOTAL** | ***7*** |  |

**ANNEX 2**

**MACRO-REGIONAL PROJECT/MEASURES**

*Indicate the macro-regional projects/measures identified by the TSG as having a macro regional value and contributing to the achievement of the Pillar's objectives in line with the EUSAIR Action Plan*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project/measure title** | **Main activities**  *Short description of the project/measure, what are the objectives, added value for the EUSAIR, envisioned period…* | **Mono / *Cross Pillar project***  *Indicate, if the project has a mono or cross pillar approach, in case of cross-pillar, indicate the relevant pillar(s)* | **Status**  *Describe the status of the project/measure (e.g. project idea/concept, mature project ready for implementation, project under implementation or completed, etc.)* | **Involvement of EUSAIR countries** | **(Targeted) funding sources** |
| **To promote a sustainable growth of the AI region by implementing ICZM and MSP also to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona convention,**  **Acronym: ICZM&MSP** | Combining ICZM and MSP as inclusive and complementary governance instruments/approaches, strengthening institutional capacities to apply the ecosystem approach to protect the environment and manage natural and cultural assets, to keep in balance environmental protection and social-economic development, also considering the increasing pressures of human activities and environmental changes.   * Main Activities: defining gaps in marine and coastal knowledge including expertise needed for ICZM and MSP case studies implementation * mapping and assessment of socio-economic activities and environmental relevant issues * identify conflicts and propose sustainable options for action * facilitate adoption of National Strategies on ICZM (ICZM Protocol), including consideration on maritime spatial planning (MSP Directive) and in line with the UNEP/MAP Common Regional Framework on ICZM | mono-pillar | Project concept | All EUSAIR Countries |  |
| **Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems.**  **Acronym: PET HAB ECO** | The project aims at improving the resilience of large carnivores populations at transnational level in the face of environmental threats and risks, mainly for bears. The activities to be undertaken are primarily related to conservation and restoration of large carnivore populations, public awareness activities to bring these unique species to the public’s attention and restoration of ecosystems in which they play a key role.   * Activities: Enlarge and make more efficient the ecological corridors-networks, manly for bears. (e.g.: analyzing and gathering information on gaps from all relevant stakeholder regarding large carnivores’ distribution and already existing networks (Emerald, Natura 2000...))   Develop joint researches to:   * acquire better knowledge of large carnivores behaviour, habitats etc. * How to improve the efficiency of the corridors (propose concrete tools and guidelines from research activities) * Conflict management (at all levels: international, national, local) promoting a new management practices and the development of innovative technologies * Research and monitoring activities as gathering of the data on populations is of highest priority * Development of regional action plan for large carnivore monitoring and protection | Mono-pillar | Project Concept | All EUSAIR Countries |  |
| **Monitoring and management of marine protected species**  **Acronym: 3MPS** | Addressing the threats to biodiversity caused by human activities, like deterioration of water quality (in particular impact of marine litter, micro plastic and chemical pollutants) and by bio toxins.  Foreseen WPs: Establishment of monitoring network towards marine litter,  Implementation of monitoring activities  Analyses and study on level of impact on threatened populations  Defining regional management measures regarding marine litter in order to combat impact on threatened species.  Methodology guidance on analyses regarding level of impact coming from marine litter on threatened species. | Mono-pillar | Project Concept | All EUSAIR Countries |  |
| **Adriatic/Ionian Sub/regional Oil spill contingency plan**  **Acronym: ASOSCoP** | Aims to examine and update the existing contingency Plan for the Northern Adriatic Sea and possibly to extend it, to other interested Adriatic countries by coordinating it with the existing national contingency Plans; in order to prevent and reduce Oil spill impacts on the coast, raise awareness on pollution prevention, produce a contingency plan that will define standard operational procedures and roles of stakeholders in the event of marine and coastal pollution from Oil Spill. | Mono-pillar | Project Concept | All EUSAIR Countries |  |
| **Managing Tourism Flows in Protected Areas**  **Acronym: ADRIONet** | General objectives  a) Environmental quality:  - To ensure a good environmental and ecological status of the protected areas by 2020 in line with the relevant EU acquis and the ecosystem approach of the Barcelona Convention;  - To contribute to the goal of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restore them in so far as feasible, by addressing threats to marine and terrestrial biodiversity.  b) Sustainable tourism:  - Improving the quality and innovation of tourism offer and enhancing the sustainable and responsible tourism capacities of the tourism actors across the macro-region. | Inter-pillar – TSG 3 and 4 | Project concept submitted under FP+ | All EUSAIR Country |  |
| **Project on MSP and ICZM** | Combining ICZM and MSP as inclusive and complementary governance instruments/approaches, strengthening institutional capacities to apply the ecosystem approach to protect environment and manage natural and cultural assets with the aim of good governance of economic activities in this sea region and implementation of common plans which will drive to innovative maritime and marine growth in the A-I region by promoting sustainable economic growth and jobs as well as business opportunities in the blue economy sector. | Inter-pillar – TSG 3 and 1 | Project Concept | All EUSAIR country |  |

**ANNEX3**

**PILLAR / TSG EVENTS AT NATIONAL OR MACRO-REGIONAL LEVEL IN THE REPORTING PERIOD**

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| **Event / Country / National or Macro-regional** | **Short description** | **Participants *(what kind of participants)*** | **Main outputs** |
| **TSG 3 workshop: How to progress from TSG 3 priorities towards EUSAIR macro-regional projects”, 19-20 September 2019, Macro-regional, Izola, Slovenia** | The first part was dedicated to the presentation of concrete  strategic projects concepts identified and confirmed within  TSG 3 followed by the Workshop with potential MPA  relevant national and regional organisations and institutions with the objective to identify in cooperation with relevant stakeholder concrete ideas for future project under the priority topic on monitoring and management of marine Initially, focus was given on MPA, as important mechanism for protection of marine species. The workshop was upgraded by day 2 presentation of MSP&ICZM mono-pillar project concept. The representatives of European Group for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) will introduce the possibilities of EGTC as an effective tool for Cross-border Maritime spatial planning. Followed by the Regional open days by SEADRION project within which new innovative approaches of heating or cooling with sea water are developed. The workshop was an opportunity to present new, innovative ideas for further development of the EUSAIR Environmental Quality. | EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators for TSG 3 and members for TSG 3 and 1, interested members from all TSGs, EUSAIR Facility Point representatives, Commission representative(s), representatives from the sectors/Ministries were present at both workshops in Izola (Slovenia). | - The proposed objective of the future project on monitoring and management of marine protected species (3MS) is ‘’To improve conservation status and ecosystem status of selected species – Posidonia oceanica and Caretta caretta.’’  - Focus is on improvement on knowledge about these two species, with emphasis on monitoring, and implementation of concrete conservation measures to address threats.  - Threats to particularly address with the project are anchoring (for Posidonia o.), as well as by-catch, underwater noise, marine litter and pollution, including light pollution for existing and potential nesting sites (for Caretta c.)  - The existing 3MPS projects’ log-frame would be updated based on results of the workshop and it will be submitted for approval at the next TSG 3 meeting.  - Project proposal will be then further elaborated in the form required by the specific tender for the EU funding and communicated with interested parties – projects participants.  - Beyond the scope of the proposed future 3MS project, it was recognized that MSP is important tool for conservation of migratory species, since it is able to address threats at larger scale then f.e. MPAs (particularly threats such as transport etc.). This fact should be taken into account when planning cross-pillar projects.  - Further multilevel governance approach is needed.  - Share multilevel governance on transboundary level to focus and be concrete in actions for better quality of life in future on shared coast and sea and to capitalize what is already achieved and known and use it in further projects, actions.  - A workshop dedicated to the overview of already established solutions for the issue of large carnivores and how to capitalize it will be organized Serbia before the next Forum, May 2020. |
| **Joint conference organized by EUSAIR TSG3 and TSG4 “Evaluation and Preservation of Environment for Tourism”, Poreč (CRO) 26th and Izola (SI) 27th September 2019, Macro-regional** | Conference on "Evaluation and preservation of the environment for tourism" is being organized in line with the priorities of the EUSAIR Action Plan jointly including Pillar 3 – Environmental Quality and Pillar 4 Sustainable tourism related to green tourism (taking into account: biodiversity, ecological connectivity, tourism and eco-services). The conference will tackle sustainable tourism with a special reference to local ecosystems, natural and cultural heritage and identification of new destination values and qualities, as the foundation for development of high quality tourism products. The aim and results of the conference will be the guidelines for sustainable destination management, which will serve to support design of tourism products based on natural and cultural environmental values of urban, rural and coastal areas. This will help strengthen the network of protected areas on land, coast and sea. | EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators for TSG 3 and TSG 4 members for TSG 3 and 4, interested members from all TSGs, EUSAIR Facility Point representatives, Commission representative(s), representatives from the environment sectors/touristic sector/Ministries/other interested public were present at the conference in Poreč (Croatia) and Izola (Slovenia). | **TBA** |
| **Workshop organized by Serbia: Development and drafting of joint plans for cross-border habitats and ecosystems management, and joint plans for managing big carnivores TBC** | TBC | TBC | TBC |