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Report on Pillar 3 State of play and work ahead

Technical meeting of Pillar Coordinators
Brussels, 9 October 2024



Contents

- EUSAIR Revision – any updates since GB approval of input document
- Key conclusions from last TSG meeting
- Status of 2023 Progress Report
- Any events organised/attended
- Any update on Flagships
- Plans for Autumn TSG meeting (date, topics)
- Plans for other activities (with Presidency or other)

EUSAIR Revision – any updates since GB approval of input document

- No substantive changes regarding TSG 3 section. Just changes to make it more easy to read.



Key conclusions from last TSG meeting

- *C. 1. The agenda was adopted with an amendment to the original item No. 5 (EUSAIR Forum 15-16 May 2014, Croatia), which became the new item 4. Additionally, the Item Decision on the revision of the Action Plan was added as item 5. The original Item 4 (Recap of activities of TSG3 coordinators from the last meeting) became Item 6, and the item Conclusions and next steps of Day 1 became Item 7. The rest of the items of the agenda changed accordingly.*
- *C.2. The minutes of the 19th TSG3 meeting (On-line, 17 November 2023) were adopted with the integrations from Italy.*
- *C.3. The Item was adopted with the following title: “Modification of the Annual Progress Report for the year 2023 following the written procedure”. The Annual Progress Report for the year 2023 was also adopted with the amendments from Italy.*
- *C.4.: The members approved the title and conditionally the three panellists for the panel session. A document containing the short bios and presentations of the panellists will be distributed to all TSG 3 members. Upon receipt, TSG 3 members will provide their final agreement.*
- *C.5.: The list of indicators was adopted and the Action Plan was revised and agreed on.*
- *C.6.: The members were informed about Technical Meeting of EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators, 21th February, Zagreb, Croatia, the Governing Board, 21th – 22th February, Zagreb, Croatia and the conference Biodiversity and Marine Protection in EUSAIR: A Contribution to EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, 14 March 2024, Brussels, Belgium.*



Key conclusions from last TSG meeting

- *C.8: The projects “Towards the long-term in-situ conservation, sustainable fisheries and improving the marine environments in the Adriatic-Ionian region”, with the acronym COSFI-MAR, »Using high quality research to strengthen dialogues and institutional capacities for effective implementation of MSP/ICZM in support of inclusive and sustainable growth in the AIR”, with the acronym CROSSPILLAR ICZM&MSP, “Botanical Gardens as Biodiversity Shelters and Nurseries”, with the acronym Bio-Shelters and “Renewal of the adaptation of coppice forests in a drastically changing environment + Secure diversity through a holistic approach for the most threatened Mediterranean conifer ecosystems: combining genetic, physiology, biodiversity indexes, germination and restoration”, with the acronym FOREST READAPT + SEC-DIV-CONIFERS, were discussed and agreed on that the further work of the projects should be done with the mentioned names and acronyms.*
- *C.9: The activity plan for potential TSG3 events in 2024 has been presented and agreed on.*
- *C.10: The members were informed about Greece’s preparation for the upcoming EUSAIR presidency and potential schedule matters.*
- *C.11: The mailing list of standing members should be updated. A Document file should be circulated and among the TSG3 members in order to be updated with the accurate TSG3 members’ information.*
- *C.12: A concern was raised about the coverage for travel expenses, potentially impacting the ability of members to participate in on-site meetings and events. Therefore, it was decided to discuss the issue in the frame of the Governing Board.*



Status of 2023 Progress Report

- *The Annual Progress Report for 2023 was approved, incorporating amendments from Italy, during the 20th TSG3 meeting held in Zagreb on April 8, 2024.*
- *The report has been successfully uploaded to the intranet .*



Any events organised/attended

- **TSG 3 Pillar session at 9th EUSAIR FORUM:** „Blue and green corridors: implementation of TSG 3 EUSAIR flagships, with Interreg IPA ADRION”

The panelists have highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts and the need to respect environmental and biodiversity issues. Their presentations reaffirm TSG 3's commitment to establishing and investigating green and blue corridors, which are of utmost importance for scientific research. Ensuring safety and security within these corridors, particularly in the face of climate change, remains a primary objective.

The panel's focused on tangible results from a decade-long TSG3 effort, as outlined in TSG 3's four flagship projects, underscores the necessity of securing additional funds to scale up these projects and ensure their successful implementation.



Any events organised/attended

➤ **Biodiversity and Marine Protection in EUSAIR: A contribution to EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030**

At the event, the following conclusions were adopted:

- Commitments should be made at macro-regional and national level to ensure that by 2030, at least 30% of the AIR coastal and marine areas are effectively preserved and managed, thus aligning the region with the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 SAPBIO and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Based on the legal analysis and scenario it could be possible to expand marine protected areas by 24% (from 10% to 34%) by 2030. In addition, strictly protected areas would be increased from 0.5% to over 12%. Such an expansion should be rooted in existing legal frameworks and initiatives, with a particular emphasis on regions beyond 12 Nautical Miles (NM).
- Efforts should be intensified to implement national and transboundary Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management to provide a framework to balance systematic conservation with the development of sustainable and resilient blue economy.
- National pledges should be made to stop the degradation and encourage the restoration of marine and coastal areas through the implementation of regional frameworks and agreements, particularly the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 - The Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity - SAPBIO.

Any events organised/attended

➤ **Biodiversity and Marine Protection in EUSAIR: A contribution to EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030**

At the event, the following conclusions were adopted:

- States should be encouraged to ratify and implement The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex VI whilst promoting the importance of the designation of a Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.
- Transboundary cooperation is required at regional level to operationalise the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 SAPBIO, and other relevant policies to harmonise national plans and strategies. Further strengthening and expansion of the Quadrilateral Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic Sea should provide an appropriate mechanism through which to promote cooperation.
- Further emphasis should be placed on the coordination and digitisation of data for wide-ranging sentinel species to identify areas of connectivity for blue corridors and as indicators of regional health. As part of this, augmented citizen science programmes will further promote the shared value and recognition of the unity of the rich natural heritage of the region.
- Regional institutions should provide sufficient support to the non-EU countries to reach the regional targets outlined by the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 SAPBIO. This would enable further dialogue with The Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) and access to capacity building and other support from the regional activity centres.

Any events organised/attended

- **Consultation within TSG 3: Construction Activities in the Sea and on the Seashore and Achieving good environmental status of the Sea**, within 9th Mediterranean Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week.
- The Izola - Koper coastal zone is part of the wider area of the Gulf of Trieste and also part of the EUSAIR pilot area for the implementation of the TSG3 flagship project ICZM & MSP - Integrated Coastal Zone Management and MSP- Maritime Spatial Planning, thereby contributing to the ICZM joint regional planning under the Barcelona Convention at EUSAIR level. The Ministry responsible for Spatial Planning, together with the EUSAIR Facility Point, played a key role in the abolition of motor traffic and the creation of a bathing and recreation area.
- This area is an example of good practice in participatory planning, involving the general public as well as spatial planning professionals. The event will address the complex issue of construction interventions in the sea and on the seafront, with a central focus on preserving the good environmental status of the sea, in particular the protection of infralittoral habitats. It presented the natural features of the sea, the requirements and characteristics of construction interventions in sensitive areas, and the impacts of interventions on the marine and coastal ecosystem, including climate change. The Slovenian National Ocean Decade Committee, which is part of the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO, is also involved in the organization of the workshop.



Any update on Flagships

- **SP4EUSAIR developed: *Report on current flagships and developed implementation formats***
- Following **challenges** have been identified:
 - **Methodology shortcomings in EUSAIR Strategy Implementation:** Initial lack of organization and clear methodology at the beginning of the EUSAIR strategy, leading to the development of various implementation formats across pillars.
 - **Lack of Financial Resources:** The challenges related to funding within the EUSAIR Pillar 3 framework primarily revolve around the difficulty of securing suitable funding sources that align with the goals and priorities of strategic projects.
 - **Cross-Pillar Collaboration Difficulties:** The main challenges include difficulties in securing suitable funding sources that align with the multi-sectoral nature of these projects, as well as challenges in coordinating responsibilities among diverse stakeholders from different pillars. Additionally, embedding these projects is difficult because they are linked to multiple themes, while funding sources often require operations to be strictly within a single priority or specific theme.



Any update on Flagships

- The following **needs** have been identified **as crucial** to address for the further development of Pillar 3
 - **Enhanced Collaboration:** There is a need to increase the involvement of participating countries in the project development process. This involves actively encouraging countries to propose new project ideas/proposals and submitting them for funding.
 - **Effective Project Implementation:** Ensuring the successful execution of projects is a priority. This includes addressing challenges related to the practical implementation of strategic projects to achieve intended outcomes.
 - **Strategic Development of New Projects:** Further development of existing projects and the creation of new initiatives that address emerging issues, such as climate change adaptation, are needed. This requires proactive engagement from member countries in proposing new project ideas.
 - **Enhanced Cross-Pillar Collaboration:** There is a need to improve coordination and allocation of responsibilities across different pillars to support the development of cross-pillar projects. Clear guidelines and better communication channels are essential to address these coordination challenges.
 - **Identifying Suitable Funding Sources:** There is a need to explore diverse funding options and align them with the goals of Pillar 3 activities.



Plans for Autumn TSG meeting (date, topics)


- Next TSG 3 meeting foreseen in November 2024
- Adoption of the agenda
- Formal adoption of the Minutes of the 20th meeting of TSG-3, 8-9 April 2024, Zagreb
- Recap of activities of TSG3 coordinators from the last meeting
- Presentation of Greek presidency programme and activities
- Presentation of new project idea proposal
- Presentation of NAMIRS project results
- Activity plan of possible TSG 3 events for 2024/2025
- AOB
- Conclusions and next steps



Plans for other activities

- Focus on blue economy with interpillar projects to enhance resilience of river basins and coastal areas for sustainable use of water and marine resources.
- Building synergy with other sectors (programmes, conventions to implement source-to-sea« approach to enhance the health of marine eco system on transboundary , subregional, regional and interregional level (case: Danube River Basin, Black Sea, the Mediterranean, EUSAIR/COP 23, Portorož 2023).
- Working hand in hand with the young generation.
- SP4EUSAIR - New project idea proposal
- StEP- Development and promotion of Innovation and Circular Economy - Living lab (HUB) EUSAIR





Thank you for your attention!

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