**PILLAR 3: Environmental Quality**



**ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR YEAR 2018**

Prepared by Pillar Coordinators, supported by the relevant EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, and approved by TSG 3 on dd.mm.yyyy [through written procedure/at the [number] TSG meeting]

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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 three meetings in 2018: 8th meeting (20-21 March 2018, Rome, Italy) where no quorum was obtained, once again 8th meeting (19-20 June 2018, Tirana, Albania) and 9th meeting (13 November 2018, Budva, Montenegro). Four countries participated in the meetings in Rome (Italy), five in Tirana (Albania) and five in Budva (Montenegro) 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.

As well TSG 3 workshop “Support of TSG 3 project concept development”, 7th and 8th May 2018 (Budva, Montenegro) and “How to progress from mono-pillar towards joint inter-pillar projects” on 20th and 21st of September 2018 within the Mediterranean Coast and EU Macro-regional Strategies Week were organized. EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators for TSG3 and members with EUSAIR facility Point were present at the Workshop in Budva and for TSG 3 and TSG 1 PC, interested members from all TSGs, EUSAIR Facility Point representatives, Commission representative(s), representatives from the sectors/Ministries were present at the workshops in Izola (Slovenia).

**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 Rome** since no-quorum was obtained there was no formal discussion neither conclusions taken. There was an exchange of view on possible next steps such as organisation of a technical workshop to take place before the 3rd EUSAIR Forum in Catania. A regular TSG 3 meeting to take place after the workshop (after the 3rd EUSAIR Forum in Catania) to fine-tune and approve the outcomes of the workshop and resume regular TSG 3 work. A letter was addressed to the Governing Board, highlighting the problem of countries not participating in TSG 3 meetings and the subsequent lack of quorum, as well the possibility of losing funds for strategic project development under the EUSAIR Facility Point WP 2 because of such situation.
* **In Tirana** was discussed: the state of art regarding the Matrix, for which TSG 3 mandates the co-chairs to prepare and send a letter regarding the matrix to the GB, in order to get guidance on the use of the matrix and to express a clear position on this issue. The labelling process: after reviewing Guiding Principles underpinning the labelling process and common to all TSGs the TSG3 decides to apply all of the guiding principles to the four projects that are under discussion and to evaluate the labelling process application results, once concluded. The four project concepts which were explicitly detailed reviewed at the workshop in Budva and agreed upon TSG 3 for further development process. Cross-pillar project ideas were agreed between and submitted by TSG 3 and 4. Another project idea was under preparation between TSG 3 and 1 and the proposal send to TSG 1 for acceptance of further joint development.

1. **In Budva** The follow-up of the Catania Declaration point 6 among the TSG members. In particular, an agreement was found on priorities to be forwarded to the NCs for the way ahead of negotiations of the Partnership Agreements matching the EUSAIR Action Plan, based on four already agreed project concepts, Monitoring and evaluation process foreseen within WP 3 EUSAIR Facility Point project for TSG 3, state of the art and inputs from TSG 3 members on transformation of project concepts into bankable projects (mono and inter-pillar projects concepts), Annual report.

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

* **Workshop** **“Support of TSG 3 project concept development”**, 7-8 May 2018 (Budva, Montenegro) was dedicated to the revision and development of four project concepts based on four priority framework of actions reviewed and discussed during the 7th meeting in Belgrade (December, 2017). The four project concepts were: To promote a sustainable growth of the AI region by implementing ICZM and MSP also to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona convention (ICZM&MSP), Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems (PET HAB ECO), Monitoring and management of marine protected species (3MPS) and Adriatic/Ionian Sub/regional Oil spill contingency plan (ASOSCoP). All were detailed reviewed and amended by the TSG 3 members and prepared to be officially agreed on the 8th TSG 3 meeting in Tirana.
* **Workshop “How to progress from mono-pillar towards joint inter-pillar projects”**, 20-21 September 2018 (Izola, Slovenia) was dedicated to mono-pillar project presentation, content verification from different perspectives and levels – presentation of project already in the process of implementation, financial opportunities by the European Commission and to discuss next steps of development for inter-pillar project idea between TSG 3 and TSG 4 “Managing Tourism Flows in Protected Areas” (ADRIONet) and between TSG 3 and TSG 1 on MSP and ICZM. Issues/questions that were discussed touched the issue of te strategic meaning of projects, concretisation of results, visibility of results, multilevel governance problem, Stakeholder platform, neglecting the decision makers, inclusion of different socio-economic aspects, definition of geographical areas, and others.

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

* **3rd EUSAIR Forum in Catania** (Italy) on 24-25 May 2016. 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 Plenary session II: Financing opportunities: Environmental quality with the focus on potential financing opportunities to support the implementation of the priorities of environmental quality endorsed by TSG 3 and on potential financing opportunities. Also organised was a SIDE EVENT on Eco-connectivity in the Adriatic-Ionian region with the scope to draw on the importance of "eco-connectivity" and its implementation in the future planning (ICZM and MSP) on national and regional level within the Adriatic-Ionian Region/EUSAIR. Green and Blue Corridors are the key for a more efficient cooperation in the implementation of "eco-connectivity" among protected areas in AIR, Alps and Dinaric ecoregions.
* **Workshop “EUSAIR workshop on facility point plus & facility point activities”,** 30 October 2018 (Athens, Greece) was dedicated to the project concepts for Pillar 1, presentation of EUSAR Facility Point WP T2 facilitating strategic project development and financial dialogue Project and Facility Point plus call for inter-pillar projects, presentation of inter-pillar project for MSP & ICZM, suggested by TSG 3 as proposal for a joint project with TSG 1, presented by TSG 3 coordinator dr. Mitja Bricelj.

1. **MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS**

**In 2018:**

1. According to Rules of Procedures two meetings with quorum and one with no-quorum of TSG 3 were organized. The meetings were hosted: 1) by Italy in Rome - due to a lack of legal quorum according to the RoP, no decision was adopted; 2) by Albania in Tirana and 3) by Montenegro in Budva.
2. Organisation of two TSG 3 workshops, one hosted by Montenegro in Budva and one by Slovenia in Izola.
3. Agreement on four mono-pillar project concepts among TSG 3 to be further developed under EUSAIR Facility Point strategic project WP T2 – Facilitating strategic project development and financial dialogue.
4. two inter-pillar projects ideas agreed to be further developed under Facility Point Plus (FP+). Inter-pillar project TSG 3 and 1 on MSP and ICZM to be prepared for submission under FP+. Inter-pillar project TSG 3 and 4 Managing Tourism Flows in Protected Areas” (ADRIONet) submitted under open call FP+ for further development.
5. Active participation of TSG 3 at the 3rd EUSAIR Forum in Catania, 24-25 May 2018 with organisation of the Plenary Session II: Financing opportunities: Environmental quality and SIDE EVENT Eco-connectivity in the Adriatic-Ionian region.
6. Active participation of TSG 3 members at the Mediterranean Coastal and EU Macro-regional Strategies Week, which was organised in the framework of INTERREG V-B ADRION strategic project: Supporting the governance of the EUSAIR. In particular for the development of the project concepts was very important TSG3 workshop “How to progress from mono-pillar towards joint inter-pillar projects” (20-21 September 2018, Izola, Slovenia). More about the mentioned event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Al9eknj1n78>
7. Official recognition of the Matrix by the Governing Board, at the 8th Governing Board meeting on 3-4 October 2018 in Podgorica, Montenegro as official methodological tool for identification and development of possible inter/cross-pillar project idea.
8. Participation at the Athens workshop “EUSAIR workshop on Facility Point plus & Facility Point activities”, where the TSG 3 coordinator dr. Mitja Bricelj presented the inter-pillar project for MSP & ICZM, suggested by TSG 3 as proposal for a joint project with TSG 1.
9. **MAIN ISSUES/CHALLENGES ENCOUNTRED**

Main challenges encountered in 2018 are:

* Non-participation of some of the EUSAIR Countries at the TSG 3 meetings.
* Consequently, the work of TSG 3 especially the process of project development was slowed down, with a negative impact also on the work within EUSAIR Facility Point in W T2 Facilitating project development and financial dialogue – which caused a delay of the project concept development process.
* Organizational matters within TSG3.

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

* ***Regarding the presented issues/challenges we ask the GB to actively support TSG 3 coordinators and encourage all EUSAIR Countries to participate at TSG 3 meetings and be proactive in other activities as well, with the goal of successfully implementing the EUSAIR Action plan and give to all the countries the opportunity to contribute to a better quality of life in the Adriatic-Ionian region.***

1. **THE WORK AHEAD**

According to Rules of Procedures at least two meetings of TSG 3 per year will be organized. In the year 2019 the 10th meeting and the 11th. 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 4th EUSAIR Forum in Montenegro, May 2019 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 10th and 11th TSG 3 meetings;
* Contributing to the 4nd EUSAIR Forum in Montenegro, 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 2018**

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| **Pillar 3** | 8th meeting  City: Rome  Date: 20-21/03/2018 | 8th meeting  City: Tirana  Date: 19-20/06/2018 | 9th meeting  City: Budva  Date: 13/11/2018 |
| EU Countries  *[please list them]* | *Greece, Italy, Slovenia, represented by designated members* | *Italy, Slovenia represented by designated members* | *Italy, Slovenia, Greece represented by designated members* |
| Non-EU countries  *[please list them]* | *Montenegro represented by designated members* | *Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, represented by designated members* | *Montenegro, Serbia represented by designated members* |
| **TOTAL** | ***4*** | ***5*** | ***5*** |

**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 “Support of TSG 3 project concept development”, 7-8 May 2018, Macro-regional, Budva, Montenegro** | The workshop was organised with the aim to review in detail and amend the four projects concepts for further development under EUSAIR Facility Point WP T2. | The Workshop was aimed at TSG 3 members, partners and potential proponents and Lead partners of the projects. | * EUSAIR facility Point Lead Partner will send an official letter confirming that more than in the AF indicated three (3) project can be developed within the EUSAIR Facility Point support * An invitation letter to PAP/RAC to participate in the project to promote sustainable growth of the AI region by implementing ICZM and MSP will be sent before the next TSG 3 meeting. * An invitation letter to REMPEC to participate in the project Large-scale Contingency plan will be sent as well a technical meeting will be organized. * An invitation letter to all eight EUSAIR Countries will be sent to express their willingness at institutional level to participate to the project Large-scale Contingency plan by answering the three questions: a) Which countries are willing to be a part of the project and how involved would they be? b) Are the countries prepared to go through to the multilateral commission? c) Are the countries prepared to start a discussion on PSSA? * Italy will update the project concept Large-scale Contingency plan. * A technical meeting for identifying the focus of the project concept Monitoring and management of protected species will be organized. * Next TSG 3 meeting will be held in June. Proposed dates are 12th-13th June or 19th-20th and will be decided by Doodle Tool. * All four project concept will be updated by Facility Point Izola and sent to all TSG 3 members in further amendment for approval at the next TSG 3 meeting. * **TSG 3 members can amend the four project concept not later than 25th May 2018**. |
| **TSG 3 workshop: How to progress from mono-pillar towards joint inter-pillar projects",20-21 September 2018, Macro-regional, Izola, Slovenia** | The first part of the workshop will be dedicated to the presentation of four concrete strategic projects concepts identified and confirmed within Thematic steering group for Pillar Environmental quality of European Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region Action plan (hereinafter EUSAIR). In cooperation with the thematic pillars of Sustainable Tourism and Blue Growth of the EUSAIR Action Plan, the second part of the workshop will upgrade these environmental projects with the content of sustainable tourism in marine protected areas and marine spatial planning with the needs of sustainable marine growth. Together with interested public and some project partners, the possibilities and opportunities for further development within the EUSAIR pillars of Environmental Quality, Blue Growth and Sustainable Tourism will be highlighted by defining good practices for further development of the Adriatic-Ionian Region. | EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators for TSG3 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). | * Results of all mono- and inter-pillar project concepts must be as concrete as possible and try to not overlap with already existing ones. * National Institute of Biology (NIB) will take the role of Lead partner for the mono-pillar project concept Monitoring and management of marine protected species - 3MPS. * TSG 1 and TSG 3 project will be sent to all TSG 1 members in confirmation and amendments with geographical areas and potential project partners from each country. * TSG 1 and TSG 3 project will be sent to IT TSG 1 members to try to include/merge their proposal on MSP into the attached project idea in order to have one common proposal. * TSG 3 and TSG 4 project proposal will be submitted to the Facility Point plus with smaller amendments. |