

Work package 3

Deliverable: D3.6 The website, a cross-cutting virtual platform to fit the future joint Baltic Sea and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (BANOS)

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The main outcomes

- Measures are outlined to organise, package and store – for future use as is to be viewed appropriate – the vast amount of information generated and accumulated online (www.bonusportal.org) during the implementation of the predecessor programme BONUS
- The BANOS CSA project's (2018-2021) online presence (www.banoscsa.org) is outlined as additional support and future reference
- A set of key recommendations is issued to guide the development of the future BANOS website once the implementation structure and format of the future Programme as planned in the BANOS CSA is known

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Description of task: (i.e. as in the Description of Work)

The website of the new, future joint Baltic Sea and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (BANOS) is envisaged as the leading, virtual stakeholder platform, visiting card as well as the communications tool that needs developing at early stage on allowing solid online presence of BANOS CSA and the future programme from the very beginning. It is to feature dedicated areas for call information, projects, news, events, different stakeholder and end-user groups i.e. science community, policy makers, SMEs etc., an online repository of all publications and other materials produced by the programme etc. The BONUS portal of the ongoing BONUS Art.185 programme serves as a good basis on which to develop the new website while adhering to the new brand (T3.1), yet allowing the legacy and previous phases of BONUS to be obtainable through the same forum. After finalising the website development plan, a service provider will be subcontracted in M6 and by M9 website sign-off and launch is envisaged.

N.B. This task was divided from the very start of the BANOS CSA project, with a view that the bulk of it would be undertaken at the very end of its project cycle (corresponding with M30-36 after the 6 months' extension of BANOS CSA granted due to knock-on effects to operation caused by COVID-19 crisis). An intermediate website to cater for immediate BANOS CSA online presence was developed in early months of BANOS CSA implementation, nevertheless. In the end, the website development process for the future BANOS Programme with a sub-contracted, dedicated service provider could not be initiated as the implementation structure of the future joint BANOS Programme (as planned in the BANOS CSA) was not known in time for this to become possible i.e. a minimum of 5 months prior to the end of BANOS CSA.

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1 Executive summary

The Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA) is preparing a framework for the joint Baltic Sea and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (BANOS), to be ready in October 2021. Task 3.6 *Website development and launch* is included under the umbrella of work package 3: *Communications, dissemination and stakeholder engagement*.

Already in late 2018, from the very outset of the BANOS CSA, it was decided to postpone the future programme's website development to the very end of the BANOS CSA project cycle. The reason for this was to gain first a good oversight and understanding of the implementation structure and form of the future BANOS Programme. This was necessary since already at the beginning of BANOS CSA it became clear that the form of the future programme would be a different one from that of its Art. 185 predecessor programme, the joint Baltic Sea Research and Development Programme (BONUS), on which the BANOS CSA preparation plans were originally overlaid. This in turn meant that the framework building of the future programme in the BANOS CSA project would need to be tailored further while the project was being implemented, in order for the preparation work to be as usable as possible in the yet unknown operational implementation structure. Furthermore, knock-on effects of other deliverables' delay due to COVID-19 pandemic crisis had a bearing also in consideration of many BANOS CSA tasks, including the website development task 3.6. During the first part of 2021, it became also evident that even with the 6 months extension of BANOS CSA, the remaining time period would not lend itself to a thorough and holistic planning of the future programme's website. This mainly because for this work to take place, it would have been prerequisite to know a minimum of 5 months prior to the end of BANOS CSA the future programme's implementation structure and related level of ambition in its communications' measures, including the development of the online presence.

Instead, measures to organise, package and store – for future use as is to be viewed appropriate – the vast amount of information generated and accumulated online during the implementation of the predecessor programme BONUS, was considered a priority. In addition, since the website development for the future BANOS Programme at the start of BANOS CSA was not possible, instead in month 3 of the BANOS CSA, a website was established to serve purely the BANOS CSA project's immediate online needs: the website www.banoscsa.org was established under the same domain as the predecessor website of www.bonusportal.org, both managed by BONUS EEIG, the Secretariat of BONUS and Coordinator of the BANOS CSA project. In 2021, the migration of the BONUS legacy to be part of the BANOS CSA externally facing part of the website was completed.

The main outcome of this deliverable is a www.banoscsa.org module stored in a transportable format for future use (as deemed most appropriate), i.e. an offline copy of the BANOS CSA website as it stands at the closure of the BANOS CSA. The substance of the offline copy is also detailed in this report together with a set of key recommendations, both intended to guide the development of the future BANOS website.

2 The BONUS website

The development of the future BANOS website according to the BANOS CSA work plan was based to a substantial degree on the experience gained in BONUS. Hence, as the BANOS predecessor's website, the BONUS website at www.bonusportal.org which spearheaded as the central BONUS communication tool for more than a decade, needs closer examination.

In BONUS Art. 185 (2010-2020) dedicated sections of the website were maintained and updated with the most up-to-date information available, providing a central hub for interaction and materials' repository serving specific stakeholder groups of the BONUS community, i.e. scientific community, policy makers, funders, NGOs, civil society and others with a stake in the R&I landscape in the region. The website traffic reached appr. 40 K visits and far over 100 K page views on many consecutive years in 2010's. In the hive of activity, the BONUS Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) was developed and updated, and based on it, five BONUS calls issued online, 48 projects funded and implemented, and finally many supportive programmatic actions such as project clustering, synthesis, stakeholder platform events spearheaded by the BONUS Forums, training of young scientist etc. all shared www.bonusportal.org as their central online base. All the online activity also shared one mutual aim: to impact policies and regulations in support of sustainability and ecosystem based management, and ultimately ensure a better future of the Baltic Sea for future generations to come.

The independent BONUS interim and final evaluations¹, as well as the impact assessment² carried out on scientific excellence and stakeholder engagement, all provided overwhelmingly positive feedback on nearly all accounts by different stakeholder audiences of the BONUS community, key ones being the scientific and policy communities, in particular praised were also the communications efforts, including the BONUS key tool, i.e. the website.

Hence, it is of key importance to ensure that the legacy of BONUS is available to be carried forward to the next phases as viewed appropriate. To this end, in spring 2021, all essential online information of the 48 multidisciplinary and transnational BONUS projects, the SRA updates, its key stakeholder platform – the BONUS Forums - and other key elements of the BONUS Programme were migrated for future use and building blocks as part of the BANOS CSA project website www.banoscsa.org. Also migrated were central information of the earlier BONUS+ and ERA-NET phases. Consequently, the BONUS website was closed in March 2021, the news feeds discontinued, with only www.bonusportal.org landing page containing the BONUS legacy 2020 video remaining and redirected to the BANOS CSA website. Also, the BONUS projects' website maintained by BONUS EEIG, Twitter and Facebook accounts are (gradually being) dissolved. Finally, some stakeholder audience specific parts,

¹ Independent Evaluation Panel appointed by European Commission (2014). Interim Evaluation Report of the Joint Research and Development Programme BONUS; as well as Expert Group on Meta-Evaluation of Art. 185 initiatives appointed by European Commission (2017). Meta-Evaluation of Article 185 Initiatives. doi: 10.2777/421843. European Commission.

² BONUS EEIG (2017). BONUS making a difference: Impacting on scientific excellence and policymaking in the Baltic. BONUS briefing number 26. BONUS EEIG.

Q&As for projects & SME partners etc., with a common nominator in many cases their intended short-term use only, were not included in the migrating process.

2.1 Migrating BONUS legacy related information for future reference and use

At www.banoscsa.org/BONUSlegacy can be found all the migrated contents of the BONUS online information and materials for potential future use as viewed appropriate. All information and links appearing in this BONUS legacy section are reflecting the information and links available as of 1 March 2021 obtained from the (earlier) BONUS website www.bonusportal.org.

The landing page of the section contains the introductory text and the BONUS legacy video prepared for the concluding BONUS seminar held on 24 November 2020. The landing page reads as follows:

"BONUS Art. 185 (2010-2020)

The joint Baltic Sea Research and Development Programme (BONUS) ran in 2010-2020 (strategic phase 2010-11, implementation 2012-20). It was funded jointly by the national research funding institutions in the eight EU member states around the Baltic Sea (DK, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, PL, SE) and the European Union for a total of EUR 100 million. Russia participated in BONUS through bilateral agreements.

In the following pages, under the BANOS CSA, which prepares the framework for the future Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (BANOS), the materials made available online during the BONUS Art. 185 and the previous BONUS phases (i.e. BONUS+ and ERA-NET) have been concised and stored for the reference and future use as appropriate."

The three links provided from the landing page include 1) BONUS Programme, 2) BONUS Projects and 3) History sections. Below the information structure of these three sections is detailed.

2.1.1 BONUS Programme section

BONUS Programme, i.e. the section's landing page, includes the following overall introduction:

"The starting point of BONUS, the joint Baltic Sea research and development programme (Art. 185)

16 August 2010, Helsinki... In June 2010, the European Parliament supported the European Council's decision that launched a new research and development programme to protect the Baltic Sea, BONUS (Art. 185), worth of EUR 100 million for the years 2010-2017.

In particular, the exceptionally high support by the Members of the Parliament – 97 % of votes for BONUS – reflected well the status of BONUS as the first model case for the development of science-based management of the European regional seas. BONUS thus serves the whole Europe, not only the Baltic Sea.

“Regional research governance frameworks at regional seas level do not exist yet, except for BONUS.”

Review of regional research governance frameworks for the purpose of future articulation of maritime governance at the EU level, MARCOM+ 2011

BONUS brings together the research communities of marine, maritime, economical and societal research to address the major challenges faced by the Baltic Sea region. A full understanding of the Baltic Sea system requires sound knowledge that is scientifically first-rate and relevant for society.

The EU framework provides a mechanism for combining national research funding and for using this in the work aiming to meet the challenges of today. Over the past years the EU regulations have showed a paradigm shift from substance and sector based directives to integrated approaches such as the Water Framework Directive, the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Roadmap for Marine Spatial Planning. The development of European macro-regional policy within Baltic and Danube regions in particular are viewed as pioneers.

“BONUS deserves special attention as a valuable, forward-looking model for other forms of future regional research cooperation with common European value, such as those in the regions of Danube, the Mediterranean Sea and the North Sea.”

Lena Ek, Member of the European Parliament
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Understanding and predicting global change in the Baltic Sea region requires integrated approaches and integrated research for the Baltic Sea System at several levels. We also need a full understanding of the Baltic Sea System in connection with relevant societal options for planning and remediation.

In particular, it is important for BONUS to work together with relevant stakeholders and provide them an opportunity to participate in shaping the strategic research agenda and exploit its outcomes. Furthermore, in addition to the competitive calls announced based on the strategic research agenda, BONUS supports cooperation actions such as young scientists activities, workshops, conferences, training courses, synthesis work as well as dissemination and specific stakeholder events. These activities are implemented either directly by the BONUS Secretariat or through dedicated assignments selected in open competition.

BONUS is funded jointly by the national research funding institutions in the eight EU member states around the Baltic Sea (DK, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, PL, SE) and the European Union for a total of EUR 100 million for the years 2010–2017. Russia participates in BONUS through bilateral agreements.

BONUS Art. 185 programme's origin stems from earlier ERA-NET phase (2003-2008) and piloting BONUS+ projects (2009-2011). See [BONUS history](#) for more information.”

The eight sub-sections, under the BONUS Programme -landing page, follow the information structure as detailed below:

- Strategic Research Agenda
- Strategic Orientation Workshops
 - First SOW

- Second SOW
- Competitive Calls
 - BONUS call 2017: Synthesis
 - BONUS call 2015: Blue Baltic
 - BONUS call 2014: Sustainable ecosystem services
 - BONUS call 2012: Viable ecosystem
 - BONUS call 2012: Innovation
- BONUS Forum
 - 8th BONUS Forum 2020
 - 7th BONUS Forum 2018
 - 6th BONUS Forum 2017
 - 5th BONUS Forum 2015
 - 4th BONUS Forum 2014
 - 3rd BONUS Forum 2012/13
 - 2nd BONUS Forum 2011
 - 1st BONUS Forum 2010
- Young Scientist Activities
 - 7th YSC 2019
 - 6th YSC 2017
 - ICES-BONUS YS Workshop 2016
 - PE2020 social media training 2016
 - 5th YSC 2015
 - 4th YSC 2013
 - 3rd YSC 2011
- BONUS Symposia
 - 4th BONUS Symposium: Food web knowledge synthesis for the Baltic Sea
 - 3rd BONUS Symposium: Sustainable Ecosystem Governance under Changing Climate and Land Use in the Baltic Sea Region
 - 2nd BONUS Symposium: Shipping and the environment
 - 1st BONUS Symposium: Science delivery for sustainable use of the Baltic Sea living resources
- BONUS Network
- BONUS Media
 - In Brief
 - BONUS series

2.1.2 BONUS Projects section

BONUS Projects, i.e. the section's landing page, includes the following overall introduction:

"This section provides information related to all BONUS research and innovation projects that received funding from the competitive calls announced in 2012-2017 and the pilot BONUS+ projects that were implemented in 2009-2011.

[BONUS research and innovation project portfolio, update 2021](#), gives an overview to all the BONUS projects.

[Briefings on projects' outcomes](#) provide summaries of the key results from each call.

Two [BONUS impact assessment studies](#) were carried out in 2017, with emphasis on *impact on scientific excellence and dissemination* and *BONUS delivery, performance, and stakeholder opinions*.

BONUS calls and projects funded

[Viable ecosystem research projects \(2012\)](#)

Implementation of the projects 2014-2018

[Innovation projects \(2012\)](#)

Implementation of the projects 2014-2017

[Sustainable ecosystem services research projects \(2014\)](#)

Implementation of the projects 2015-2018

[Blue Baltic projects \(2015\)](#)

Implementation of the projects 2017-2020

[Synthesis projects \(2017\)](#)

Implementation of the projects 2018-2020

Earlier projects

[BONUS+ projects](#)

Implementation of the projects 2009-2011"

The nine sub-sections, under the BONUS projects -landing page, follow the information structure as detailed below:

- Viable ecosystem 2014-2018
 - BAMBI
 - BAMBI partners
 - BIO-C3
 - BIO-C3 partners
 - BLUEPRINT
 - BLUEPRINT partners
 - CHANGE
 - CHANGE partners
 - COCOA
 - COCOA partners

- INSPIRE
 - INSPIRE partners
- SOILS2SEA
 - SOILS2SEA partners
- Innovation 2014-2017
 - AFISMON
 - AFISMON partners
 - ANCHOR
 - ANCHOR partners
 - ESABALT
 - ESABALT partners
 - FERRYScope
 - FERRYScope partners
 - FISHVIEW
 - FISHVIEW partners
 - GEOILWATCH
 - GEOILWATCH partners
 - HARDCORE
 - HARDCORE partners
 - MICROALGAE
 - MICROALGAE partners
 - OPTITREAT
 - OPTITREAT partners
 - PINBAL
 - PINBAL partners
 - PROMISE
 - PROMISE partners
 - SWERA
 - SWERA partners
 - ZEB
 - ZEB partners
- Sustainable ecosystem services 2015-2018
 - BALTCOAST
 - BALTCOAST partners
 - BALTICAPP
 - BALTICAPP partners
 - BALTSpace
 - BALTSpace partners
 - GO4BALTIC
 - GO4BALTIC partners
 - GOHERR
 - GOHERR partners
 - MIRACLE

- MIRACLE partners
 - SHEBA
 - SHEBA partners
 - STORMWINDS
 - STORMWINDS partners
- Blue Baltic 2017-2020
 - BALTHEALTH
 - BALTHEALTH partners
 - BASMATI
 - BASMATI partners
 - BLUEWEBS
 - BLUEWEBS partners
 - CLEANAQ
 - CLEANAQ partners
 - CLEANWATER
 - CLEANWATER partners
 - ECOMAP
 - ECOMAP partners
 - FLAVOPHAGE
 - FLAVOPHAGE partners
 - INTEGRAL
 - INTEGRAL partners
 - MICROPOLL
 - MICROPOLL partners
 - OPTIMUS
 - OPTIMUS partners
 - RETURN
 - RETURN partners
 - SEAMOUNT
 - SEAMOUNT partners
- Synthesis 2018-2020
 - BALTIMARI
 - BALTIMARI partners
 - DESTONY
 - DESTONY partners
 - FUMARI
 - FUMARI partners
 - MARES
 - MARES partners
 - ROSEMARIE
 - ROSEMARIE partners
 - SEAM
 - SEAM partners

- TOOLS2SEA
 - TOOLS2SEA partners
- X-WEBS
 - X-WEBS partners
- Briefings on projects' outcomes (including BONUS briefings 29-33 on Innovation, Viable ecosystem, Sustainable ecosystem services and Blue Baltic calls)
- BONUS impact studies 2017 (including impact on scientific excellence and dissemination as well as delivery, performance and stakeholder opinions)
- Forum of Projects Coordinators
- Information for participants (all guidelines for projects' participants)

2.1.3 History section

BONUS History, i.e. the section's landing page, includes the following overall introduction:

“The continuous development of the 'BONUS approach' over time can be traced back to the early 2000s. The BONUS programme Art. 185 (funded for years 2011-2020) is built on BONUS+ and BONUS ERA-NET:

BONUS+ (2009-2011) tested the mechanisms of collaboration among the national funding institutions with a total of 16 projects funded for EUR 22 million and involved over 100 research institutes and universities in the implementation of these projects

[BONUS+ 2009-2011](#)

BONUS ERA-NET (2003-2008) developed preconditions for BONUS
[BONUS ERA-NET 2003-2008”](#)

The two sub-sections, under the History -landing page, follow the information structure as detailed below:

- BONUS+ 2009-2011
 - BONUS+ projects
 - AMBER
 - BALCOFISH
 - BALTGENE
 - BALTIC GAS
 - BALTIC-C
 - BALTICWAY
 - BAZOOCA
 - BEAST
 - ECOSUPPORT
 - HYPER

- IBAM
- INFLOW
- PREHAB
- PROBALT
- RECOCA
- RISKGOV
- BONUS+ Briefings
- BONUS+ Background
- BONUS+ Forum of Project Coordinators
- BONUS ERA-NET 2003-2008
 - ERA-NET Work Packages
 - ERA-NET Partners & Observers

3 The BANOS CSA website

The BANOS CSA website was set up in month 3 of the BANOS CSA implementation to cater for the immediate online needs of the BANOS CSA project. In addition, the visual elements aligned with the BANOS brand development (D3.1) as well as some of the information included in the BANOS CSA website will provide building blocks when considering the future BANOS website – all dependent on the implementation structure of BANOS, yet to be determined at the time of writing this report. An off-line copy of the entire www.banoscsa.org will be made available to serve, as appropriate, in the later online presence development after the BANOS CSA project closes on 31 October 2021.

The structure of this pragmatic web presence of the BANOS CSA project include the following sections:

External sections: About us (i.e. Consortium, Strategic Partners, Advisory Board, About this website), Latest (News and Events), Get involved (i.e. E-bulletin and In Brief newsletter), Materials (i.e. reports and deliverables), Contact details, and, as the latest addition, a more substantial BONUS legacy section.

Intranet (requiring members' login): Long (or short) -term sections for the BANOS CSA consortium, observers, strategic partners, advisory board, containing information considered helpful in running the BANOS CSA project and building the framework of the future programme as detailed in the BANOS CSA work packages. Such section includes implementation guidelines, description of action and deliverables, contact information of the consortium, useful documents, minutes of different internal meetings, documents to be reviewed by the consortium, nomination lists.

4 Recommendations

While keeping in mind the principles and advances of the most current website development that the contracted service provider will be expected to follow when developing the online presence once the implementation structure of the future BANOS Programme is known, the bullet points below provide guidance on a number of key elements also needing consideration in this process.

- The aim of the website is to ensure the development of a cross-cutting, virtual, fit-for-purpose and interactive online platform to spearhead, support and add value to delivering the aims and objectives of BANOS SRIA and the BANOS Programme as a whole.
- The overall information structure of the website and its refinement to different sub-sections will be built in accordance with the chosen implementation structure of BANOS and the opportunities the chosen structure will provide together with the legacy of BONUS (of the Baltic Sea region), the predecessor of BANOS, with underlined consideration of also the context of the North Sea region.
- The website is encouraged to be built with a vision of being the leading, virtual stakeholder platform, visiting card as well as the central communications tool of BANOS.
- The BANOS brand (D3.1) will provide the overarching visual look and feel of the future website.
- The future website is recommended to consider all the stakeholder specific approaches and key sub-groups i.e. policy makers, funders, scientific community, SMEs, NGOs, civil society etc. on the basis of the outcomes available from the BANOS CSA stakeholder mapping carried out in D3.2 and D3.3 and later to be refined, specific, tailored communications strategies based on the overarching BANOS communications and stakeholder engagement strategy (D3.5).
- Different elements needing careful consideration in context of the website include, at least but not restricted to: dedicated areas for call information, projects, news, events, dedicated interactive platforms for different stakeholder and end-user groups, an online repository of publications and other materials produced by BANOS, all well structured and in easy-access formats.
- The stakeholder platforms' (D3.4, similarly to D3.6, to be developed in detail at the beginning of BANOS), are encouraged to be used for further guidance on embedding collaborative approaches.
- The information architecture is recommended to consider, and embed as appropriate, also key elements as viewed appropriate of Impact monitoring (D4.1, 4.2), Knowledge Synthesis (D4.3), Human Capacity Building and Skills Development (D4.4), Open Science (D4.5), Open Innovation (D4.6), Open Data (D4.7), Citizen Science (D4.8), Pan-European Regional Sea Cooperation (D4.9).