

Work package 4

Deliverable: D4.9 Report of European regional seas research and innovation conference

Lead organization: Innovation Fund Denmark, IFD Task Leaders: BONUS EEIG on behalf of IFD

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The main outcomes

- A detailed account of the BANOS CSA End Conference is outlined entailing discussion and comments of the highlights and successes of the BANOS CSA by BANOS CSA members, strategic partners and the audience of the BANOS CSA End Conference.
- First initiated by BANOS CSA in the sequence of European regional seas workshops held in the consecutive European Maritime Days in Burgas (2018) and Lisbon (2019), the establishment of the future plans of the cooperation involving the European regional seas is put forward in the framework of the Horizon Europe's climate neutral, productive and sustainable blue economy partnership candidate. This is further detailed in a separate session (following the BANOS CSA End Conference and carried out on the same platform) that looks beyond the existence of BANOS CSA and BONUS EEIG titled 'the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters' organised solely by the DG RTD B4 Unit.

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

The successful development of a sustainable blue economy in regional sea-basins surrounding Europe is critically dependent on generation and implementation of new scientific knowledge and innovation. Within the family of the European regional seas' programmes, there is a wealth of methodologies and approaches available for foresight studies, research programming and establishing strategic research and innovation agendas. Collaboration with these running or planned initiatives (BONUS, BLUEMED, PRIMA, North Atlantic, Black Sea) will support distilling common processes, methodologies and implementation strategies. In addition, common EU initiatives to support sustainable blue growth, more efficient implementation of relevant policies and directives (e.g. CFP, MSFD, MSP, WFD) and reaching SDG 14 in each sea-basin, requires unifying approaches and common targets. It is therefore important to identify potential synergies and develop cooperation procedures with the parallel regional seas' research and innovation initiatives. Project's strategic partner - JPI Oceans plays an important role in articulating overarching, common strategic marine and maritime research and innovation agenda of the participating States. Thus, within this task close cooperation with both JPI Oceans and the on-going and new actions in the Atlantic, the Black Sea, in the Mediterranean etc. will be established. Completion of this task will be marked by organising the European regional seas conference and launching a systematic collaboration network among the regional sea programmes. Implementation of this complex task will continue from M2 to M36; and will culminate in running a European Regional Seas' Conference coupled to the 3rd Project Assembly (M36).

N.B. First initiated by BANOS CSA in the sequence of European regional seas workshops held in the consecutive European Maritime Days in Burgas (2018) and Lisbon (2019), the establishment of the future plans of the cooperation involving the European regional seas is put forward in the framework of the Horizon Europe's climate neutral, productive and sustainable blue economy partnership candidate. As the only deliverable of this task, in the D4.9 (i.e. Report of European regional seas research and innovation conference (T4.8, M36)), a summary report outlines the End Conference of the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action which was held on 18 October 2021. Furthermore, the End Conference platform was also provided to the Commission to run a separate session for the End Conference participants under the title 'The future of R&I for healthy seas and ocean in Europe: the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters'. This deliverable encompasses a detailed record of the BANOS CSA End Conference itself. Further information on the R&I European partnerships' development in the wider landscape is obtainable from the Commission DG RTD B4 Unit and other sources, the recording of the full day (this including both the BANOS CSA End Conference and the separate Commission's session) can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/VzPDx7TDvoM>.

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1 Delivering a report of the European regional seas research and innovation conference

As the activity of the BANOS CSA will end on 31 October 2021, the concluding conference planning was set in motion in spring 2021 with contacts made between the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA) coordinating office BONUS EEIG and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD). Consequently a plan was confirmed to run the BANOS CSA End Conference online on 18 October 2021. In addition to the BANOS CSA End Conference, a separate session to be organised by the Commission DG RTD B4 Unit, was agreed to be hosted on the same platform immediately following the End Conference under the title 'The future of R&I for healthy seas and ocean in Europe: the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters'.

The already well-established trend from previous key BANOS CSA events in the field of research and innovation (R&I) of having representatively balanced and geographically widely spread key stakeholders among the participants continued: A total of over 100 key people from a total of 17 countries got online in the morning of 18 October 2021, with 49 % representing the science community followed up closely by 37 % share of the policy & management sector. (See Figures 1 & 2.) The legacy of BANOS CSA as well as its predecessor BONUS Art. 185 of well-established stakeholder-balance in the respective stakeholder audiences witnessed also here and achieved in the case of the latter though more than a decade-long consistent and pro-active approach of engagement with key actors, sets a bar high for the wider policy-driven science-policy coordination and interactions in the European regional seas' R&I landscape in future. It is in the hands of the Member States, the Commission and the shaping of the future R&I landscape to hold the momentum and understanding of what a regional seas' approach can accomplish in optimal way when defining actions to ensure a healthy future of our shared seas for the generations to come. The highlights, successes, wealth of information and actions taken both in BANOS CSA and earlier in BONUS Art. 185, much of which were highlighted during the BANOS CSA End Conference, continue to be valuable building blocks for the future European regional seas' agenda.

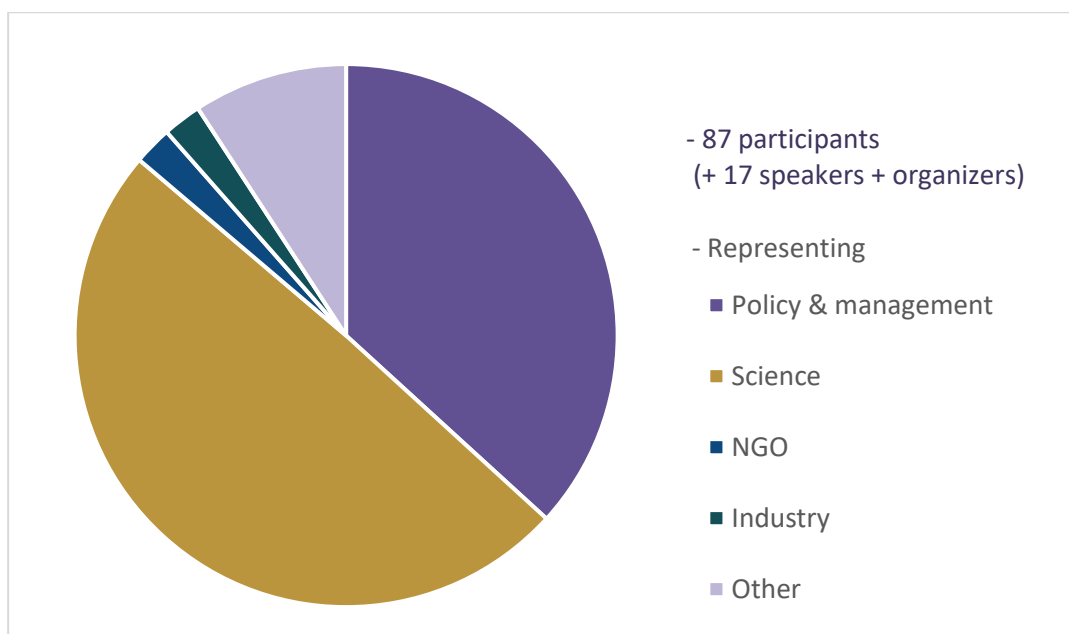


Figure 1. Participants of the BANOS CSA End Conference, 18 October 2021

17 countries
including all
BANOS CSA
countries

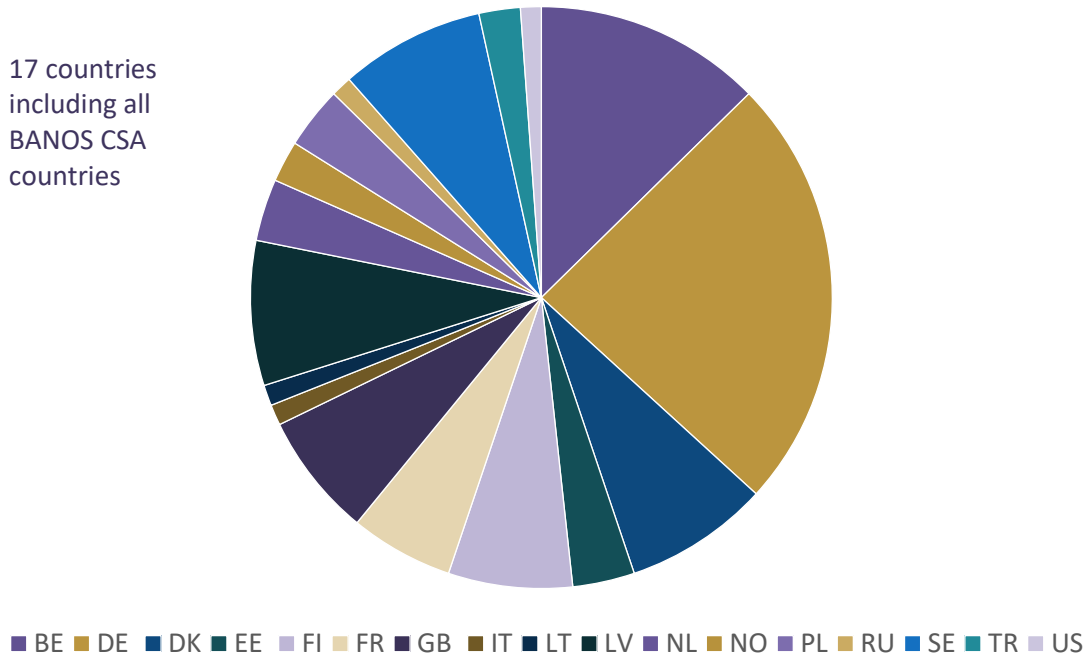


Figure 2. Geographic coverage of the participants attending the BANOS CSA End Conference on 18 October 2021

2 The End Conference of the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action

The BANOS CSA End Conference was moderated by **Karoliina Koho**, Project Officer and the ‘co-coordinator in practice’ of BANOS CSA. Koho welcomed everybody to the Day and introduced the agenda followed by **Andris Andrusaitis**, the coordinator of BANOS CSA and the Acting Executive Director of BONUS EEIG, who then delivered the welcome words for the conference audience.

2.1 Welcome words by BANOS CSA Coordinator Andris Andrusaitis

Andrusaitis opened the conference by outlining the history behind the foundation of the now ending BANOS CSA project: Already in 2016, an expert group coordinated by BONUS EEIG published a report titled 'Towards sustainable blue growth: Outline of the joint Baltic and North Sea research and innovation programme', which provided the initial blueprint of implementing a future, joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (i.e. BANOS). Consequently in November 2018, responding to a call launched by The European Commission, the BANOS CSA was kicked off. Research and innovation funders of 13 countries surrounding the Baltic Sea and the North Sea came together to build the foundations for the future BANOS Programme.

Andrusaitis continued by saying that a lot has happened since the start of BANOS CSA: Greatly renewed EU's Research and Innovation Framework Horizon Europe has started, rapid development around the other European regional seas has taken place and a new European partnership encompassing all regional seas under the theme of sustainable blue economy is being developed. On the other hand, major complications have been seen during the BANOS CSA implementation: the UK has left the European Union with uncertainties and further clarifications necessary in regards of its future relation to the EU and the Horizon Europe. Also the covid-19 pandemic is still impacting our everyday lives and forcing reformulation of many related policies.

Andrusaitis went on to note that on the backdrop of not always having the certainty or clarity of the rules of the game, the BANOS CSA team has done its best in projecting the future knowledge needs and optimal ways of implementing the future BANOS Programme (as planned in BANOS CSA). All work packages of BANOS CSA have produced a rich, recommending materials, including the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

(BANOS SRIA), strategies for strengthening the impact as well as very practical aspects of implementing the Programme.

2.2 Welcome speech by Director John Bell, Healthy Planet, DG RTD, European Commission

Next Koho welcomed to the virtual stage Director **John Bell** of Healthy Planet, DG RTD, European Commission for his opening speech.

Bell first congratulated the BANOS CSA consortium for its key achievements under the especially difficult period and went on to note the role, foundation, legacy of the Baltic Sea Research and Development Programme BONUS. Bell noted that BONUS had been instrumental in upscaling and extending the programme to the two seas and that BONUS was the very first regional seas' Programme on marine and maritime issues in the EU promoting ecosystem-based management. As its important legacies, BONUS has served as important source of inspiration to other regional seas' initiatives such as BlueMed in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea's strategic R&I agenda development. BONUS succeeded in integrating previously fragmented R&I across the Baltic Sea region and developing an effective strategic research agenda with a Programme undertaken by all Baltic states to tackle the sea's ecosystem challenges and to ensure sustainable development. This is a significant achievement not to be underestimated.

Bell moved on to note that the willingness to enlarge this endeavour of transnational cooperation to the North Sea as another clear result of success and statement of ambition. BONUS cooperation has been very effective in pooling resources for R&I and realising projects with an effective science policy interface, for example through a very strong cooperation with HELCOM, and through the dissemination of results in stakeholder outreach which is very often the most difficult part of the work. Bell continued to say that BONUS can be an exemplary initiative to other regional sea basins and can contribute to transferring best practice and showing how we can build on solid foundations. There are definitely common challenges with other sea basins as all are aiming at common marine and maritime policies of the EU and at developing their own strategic research agendas, building their own cooperation, and very importantly, building communities of research, policy and socioeconomic stakeholders. The pooling of resources and cooperation across the sea basins – as shown in BONUS – is now possible. The foundations are in place, not only in scientific ground but also at the programme and results management level, beneficial to all and across Europe.

Bell went on to note that the timing of BANOS CSA could not be better. The R&I policy ambition for seas and Ocean is at a new level of ambition in the context of the European Green Deal. The European Commission has set the overarching goal for the EU to have a climate neutral Europe by 2050 that is environmentally sustainable and achieved in a just and fair transition. In this, R&I is a critical enabler to enable an acceleration of transition particularly in the time frames that we have with the tipping points of climate and biodiversity. To ensure that our ecosystems are properly observed, protected and regenerated, that innovation is springing from this to enable new forms of work and sustainability, and to ensure that the change for those who are most affected is supported, fair and just. We need science R&I to light the way through this century by demonstrating, piloting and scaling up approaches and solutions. It has a new responsibility to set direction, to try and accelerate solutions and particularly to engage with society and those who will be most affected by the changes ahead. At the heart of the Green Deal, our new Horizon Europe Programme for R&I which started this year, and which offers new initiatives, moves beyond traditional R&I topics to try and support the kind of work that BANOS CSA is doing in accelerating green, and increasingly blue, transitions. BANOS work across the basins of the Baltic and the North Sea will be seen to be critical.

Bell continued his speech by saying that the four Horizon Europe's Green Deal Missions represent the big novelties in attempt to deliver evidence-based solutions to some of the greatest challenges facing our work or that aim to deliver measurable impacts in some of the critical systemic changes that are ahead: transition by design, transition that needs to be scaled up, deployed, replicable across our very fragile ecosystems, sea systems, rivers, sea basins. The mission to restore our ocean and waters looks at the whole water system, the

hydrosphere, and tries to set up a systemic approach addressing the ocean and waters and sea basins as one. Its aim is to deliver on the European Green Deal by putting the blue into the green. It is designed to achieve the EU's 2030 measurable targets across a number of policy areas, notably biodiversity and climate. This is done by three priorities - protecting and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity, preventing and eliminating pollution, and making blue economy climate neutral and circular. These will be supported by massive action across knowledge terms of the digital twin and connecting up with the knowledge that is there, making it available to decision makers and the involvement of citizens in the process. In the first development and piloting phase between now and 2025, the mission will roll out lighthouses in major European sea and river basins as the mission sites. Sea basins will be basis from where R&I based transitions will be driven. This includes a lighthouse for the Baltic and the North Sea. The focus will be on using marine and coastal resources to reduce net greenhouse gas and other emissions and decarbonising the maritime economy but also to look at the other objectives of the mission. BANOS CSA work has been perfect preparation for this next, big step. Engagement with member states associated countries and other partners in these regions will be critical to establish the lighthouse and to reach the mission objectives in local settings. In this respect the Baltic and North Sea strategic research cooperation and community practice can play a key role in the building of the mission lighthouse to solve the problems in this part of Europe for future. Reflecting on the mission is welcomed by maybe organising community of practice to meet with the commission mission team before the end of the year led by DG Mare and DG RTD, to look at the mission implementation plan and propose some suggestions on how to build on the great foundations put in place by BANOS CSA in the Baltic and the North Sea.

Horizon Europe in its strategic plans also envisages the creation of 49 partnerships and the central one of these will be the climate neutral, productive and sustainable blue economy partnership. This is a candidate, co-funded partnership between the Commission and the member states and associated countries. The partnership has produced the high-level strategic research and innovation agenda at the beginning of the year and the call for the proposal will open at the end of this month. Both initiatives can benefit from the mobilisation, partnering and structuring effect that BANOS CSA has been driving.

To conclude opening remarks Bell noted furthermore that the shared, balanced BANOS SRIA is an important and timely and qualitative work of analysis, mapping national and transnational R&I priorities and the consultation of a wide array of stakeholders which is critical to transition. The BANOS SRIA provides an important milestone and solid basis to contribute to the new, sustainable blue economy strategy in the Baltic and the North Sea countries and beyond and is maybe a seabed for the mission lighthouse for the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. Whether we talk about the mission, the partnership, the Horizon Europe Programme in its entirety, what matters is the constant engagement, cooperation and willingness to continue to work to enhance the much-needed knowledge, to upscale it, to co-create with the coastal communities and to jointly deploy the proposed solutions. For the Baltic and the North Sea and all who live and work and depend upon them, the next decade will determine the futures.

2.3 BANOS CSA achievements & future steps – different perspectives

The next part of the conference focussed on looking at the BANOS CSA achievements in more detail (Annex 1). First Koho introduced the BANOS CSA members from the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea and the North Sea (i.e. BE, DK, EE, FR, DE, LV, LT, NL, NO, PL, SE, UK), the strategic partners (HELCOM, OSPAR, JPI Oceans, ICES) and the observers (Academy of Finland, BELSPO, European Commission). Then she outlined the five work packages of the BANOS CSA and the deliverables that have been carried out in the course of 36 months ending in October 2021. Finally Koho noted that key deliverables include the BANOS SRIA, different strategies to ensure lasting impact of the future Programme and many more that all are public materials with summaries available also online in the BANOS CSA website for downloads.

2.3.1 BANOS Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda 2021

Koho moved on to introduce the most central BANOS CSA milestone, namely the entire process of developing the BANOS SRIA which was launched in June 2021. Under coordination of Koho, over 20 experts who formed the drafting team did the lion share of the drafting and finalising work of the SRIA together with the BANOS CSA Secretariat. In addition, online consultations and a specific strategic orientation workshop in spring 2020 focussing on stakeholder engagement were held, contributing greatly to the development process. All in all, the making of the BANOS SRIA was a true co-creation process involving a total of over 200 stakeholders' contributions. The scoping carried out at the beginning of the BANOS CSA resulted in the end to three strategic objectives of BANOS SRIA: 1) Healthy Seas and Coasts, 2) Sustainable Blue Economy and 3) Human Wellbeing, all aiming to support and enable ecosystem-based management in the Baltic and the North Sea region. In addition, three attributes define the scope of the future Programme, namely the climate, ecosystem and the region it is designed for. Furthermore, the three strategic objectives are underpinned by nine specific objectives and those in turn are still detailed to 32 more defined, outcome focussed R&I themes. THE BANOS SRIA is highly policy relevant document with clear links to policies on global, European, regional policy arenas e.g. European Green Deal, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Climate strategies, Blue Growth Strategy, HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy etc. In addition, BANOS SRIA has clear links to 11 United Nations SDG goals, the most important being the SDG 14: Life below water.

Furthermore, Koho noted that in the SRIA, there is a dedicated section detailing the BANOS impact enabling strategies, each created as a separate deliverable, which have been developed in order to achieve truly long-lasting impact in the future BANOS Programme. Among other, specific strategy for future Programme's innovation approach, open science, open access, open data and citizen science, important strategy for sea-basins' cooperation, human capacity and skills development, collaboration across different funding streams and effective communications were noted to be among these strategies.

2.3.2 The BANOS CSA member and strategic partner perspectives

Next Koho welcomed to the online stage a selection of BANOS CSA members and strategic partners who presented BANOS CSA highlights from their personal perspectives.

Petra Wallberg, representing BANOS CSA member – Senior Research Officer in Swedish Research Funding Agency for Environment, FORMAS:

Wallberg began by noting that the BANOS CSA work will be an excellent contribution to the UN Ocean Decade. Besides the BANOS SRIA, there are many other excellent documents. FORMAS led the initial scoping work and the BANOS SRIA process was very open and transparent, while the drafting team ensured the high-quality of the BANOS SRIA. However, excellent science is not enough, and in BANOS CSA also a document on open science, encompassing open access, open data, citizen science are of central importance and Wallberg encouraged all to have a closer look of these strategies. On the national level, Sweden has and is engaging with the missions, and UN Ocean Decade, both for which FORMAS acts as the national contact point. Wallberg concluded by saying that FORMAS will make the best use possible of the BANOS CSA documents in these processes and thanked BONUS EEIG for its excellent work and outcomes achieved in the BANOS CSA.

Ann-Katrien Lescrauwaet, representing BANOS CSA member – Director of International Relations at FLANDERS MARINE INSTITUTE, Belgium

Representing also the Flemish Government in this conference, Lescrauwaet noted that linking the Baltic and North Sea fits perfectly with the Flemish Government's strategic and political intentions of looking North to the northern partners. Lescrauwaet aired appreciation of BANOS CSA providing also the experience and legacy of BONUS while at the same time brought in new ideas from additional North Sea partners. It was and will be a perfect marriage. She continued by saying that the impact focus of BONUS and BANOS and the dynamism of interaction between science facilitators and the working field around the Baltic is something that is inviable 'to us'. Flanders tries to be an active and agile contributor to international marine research coordination

frameworks. The marine research in Flanders is eminently an international affair and VLIZ supports the government in this representation in the many international contexts where marine science cooperation is organised. The government has enabled several international organizations to be co-hosts in influence such as an important office of international and Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, which focuses on data, information and information sharing, and capacity development.

Another point that Lescrauwaet raised is that to the extent possible, engagement with the EU or within the EU framework development programme such as the partnerships and the missions, the mission Ocean is carried out. In this context, Lescrauwaet noted the BANOS SRIA to be a real guiding document in helping to prioritize issues to be covered in the upcoming partnerships but also in other initiatives. Flanders is a strong supporter of the Ocean Decade and in this sense, the approach in BANOS SRIA to look at the Ocean science for sustainable development is very welcomed and valuable. Compared to being a region in a relatively small country, a very big and active marine science community exists with efficiency and effectiveness being very important. Hence since the joint programming initiative Oceans has emerged and BANOS CSA has joined the scene, the focus of attention is very much on the Horizon Europe partnership and the oceans and waters mission. Different parallel initiatives should not compete but cooperate, or at least show complementarity. Lescrauwaet concluded by noting that Flanders is looking anxiously and with a great interest to see what subject will be addressed under the first goal of the blue economy partnership. In this, the BANOS SRIA is a very important guiding document for the ministry, funding agencies and VLIZ that represents the community of more than 1.5K experts in marine science.

Rhodri Baines, representing BANOS CSA member – Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science in UK (CEFAS) – UK-Europe Business Lead in the International Funding and Partnerships Directorate

As the lead to secure projects and strategic partnerships for CEFAS and UK government, Baines started by noting that he will focus on the value that BANOS CSA has provided for CEFAS over the period of the programme. There are three main areas:

Under work has been the report of measures of maintaining UK collaboration after Brexit and investigating UK interest in standalone funding activities. The situation has changed substantially since October 2019 when the engagement – to fulfil this task – began with diverse range of stakeholders from across the EU and UK R&I sector. It has been difficult to plan ahead as the UK's final position was uncertain until December 2020 when the trading cooperation agreement was announced, including UK's association to Horizon Europe. The situation became less uncertain, however, not clear. Cooperation is key to supporting implementation of international goals and target and we all must accelerate cooperation between governments, businesses, civil society to tackle complex pressures affecting our marine environments. The BANOS CSA related engagement has kept this collaborative approach at the forefront of future R&I discussions for the last two years. As a result of this, there is strong UK interest in the future BANOS implementation mechanisms. The first area BANOS provided real value is that the engagement has provided an essential conduit for CEFAS to develop European activity through continued collaboration. The second area is that raising awareness of BANOS and investigating the future collaboration has assisted in developing wider CEFAS activity i.e. expanding collaborative partnerships and informing strategic planning of national programmes. This strategic planning includes taking forward Defra's marine natural capital and ecosystem assessment programme, which aims to take a natural capital approach from theory to practice and hoping to transform our decision making and our ability to sustainably manage the country's marine resources. The UK will seek to share this knowledge and best practice as approaches develop and to collaborate internationally to ensure these programmes are building on existing knowledge. These above first points are examples of the value that BANOS has provided.

The last point is touching upon what value BANOS can provide in the future: The BANOS activity can provide the Baltic and North Sea platform to translate global aims and commitments such as the SDGs into actionable outcomes, offering as adaptive, collaborative mechanisms with partners such as the sustainable blue economy partnership, also ICES and HELCOM and further afield to other regional seas to develop environmental and social outcomes. Due to previous success of BONUS and the imminent successful completion of BANOS CSA,

any future BANOS activity should be a trusted mechanisms to deliver outcomes relevant to policy, science and society. Well done the BANOS Secretariat and all the partners.

Rüdiger Stempel, representing BANOS CSA strategic partner – HELCOM Executive Secretary

Stempel started by telling a story: When I came on board here at HELCOM in August 2019, one of the first organizations that contacted me, and that we actually sat down together with and cooperated with, was BONUS, the BONUS Secretariat. This is indicative of a very close and synergistic relationship that our two organizations have. And why is that? HELCOM pride ourselves in being a science policy interface so that our decisions are not random decisions, they are based on science. But we ourselves at HELCOM need someone to do the science that underpins our decisions for us. This is where BANOS, and previously BONUS, come in. We need a funding and facilitating mechanism for science and research such as BONUS, we are dependent on that. We look forward to continuing the work we started undertaking many years ago with BONUS, now with BANOS. I would like to stress that BONUS has been instrumental in supplying the latest science on a wide array of Baltic environmental matters to various HELCOM processes including the Baltic Sea Action Plan update (HELCOM BSAP). This week's HELCOM ministerial meeting will be accepting the HELCOM BSAP update in which the BONUS and BANOS CSA have been instrumental in bringing this about. As an example I can tell you that the BONUS policy briefs were not only used by HELCOM itself but also our contracting parties to inform national policies on the matters they touch on. At HELCOM we are glad that this can now continue with BANOS and it's SRIA. After the adoption of the HELCOM BSAP, HELCOM continues to be dependent on science and scientific underpinnings and look forward to continuing work together with BANOS. Themes of BANOS SRIA are very much aligned with HELCOM action areas. The widened geographical scope of BANOS is also very conducive to our work because Baltic and North Seas are interlinked, we are in the same bio-geographical regions, and despite different strategies and challenges we also face common challenges that we can best tackle by cooperating. Therefore the expansion is highly beneficial. The HELCOM ministerial meeting will also adopt its own science agenda this week and again here we can overlap in a positive sense with BANOS and feel that our respective science agendas will be of mutual interest to both. Besides supporting HELCOM activities, the HELCOM science agenda will also inform partners about research needs of HELCOM. Having cooperated at the early stages of the development of our respective agendas, we can develop most relevant tools for both of our organizations. Stempel concluded that this is an END conference, but work will go forward in future. However, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the BONUS Secretariat for many years of excellent and very close and trustful cooperation.

Thorsten Kiefer, representing BANOS CSA strategic partner – JPI Oceans Executive Director

Kiefer began by saying that the term inspiration has been dropped in repeatedly by previous speakers and it has been characteristic even for Kiefer himself despite having come in to JPI Oceans only after BANOS CSA had started. BANOS CSA has looked always like a very good place to look towards to full inspirations and for guidance on how things are done well. One inspirational step was that BANOS did the step from BONUS in combining two sea basins, in a way scaling up and expanding the scope and going towards pan-European approach that is what JPI Ocean stands for, and where the exchange of knowledge, expertise and so on, is taking place. Another thing inspiring to look towards was really good communication carried out by the Secretariat. But what impressed me perhaps the most from where I was participating, is the co-design and co-creation process while developing the BANOS SRIA. In particular noteworthy is the Strategic Orientation Workshop which in no time had to be changed from a face-to-face event to an online format (due to start of covid-19 pandemic) which worked so well and set a gold standard on how to run these meetings with interactive elements online. So here a very collegial congratulations from one secretariat to another, very well done and this extends to many other things that the BONUS Secretariat has done.

JPI Oceans took the lead early on when countries were preparing for this partnership on sustainable blue economy in 2019, and then in 2020 started doing an early draft proposal and then the draft partnership SRIA. All those actions were a pathway that JPI Oceans based on regional sea basins' agendas. A lot of BANOS SRIA will be seen in the design of the currents of the partnership development. In fact, while the BANOS SRIA was

only an early draft in 2020, it was already a very good and coherent document, and I was surprised to hear that this was only the beginning of the process as the BANOS SRIA wasn't launched until a year later in June 2021. So now it is a very mature and coherent outcome that defines the legacy of BONUS and calls for everyone else to pick it up. Another legacy is probably the community building, for instance the diverse composition of the participants in this End Conference demonstrates this. This is a really strong value of regional organizations that have much better access to diverse stakeholders than is possible at European, pan-European or even global scale. Another legacy is within the JPI Oceans, meaning its complementarity and the pan-European partnership in which countries that are still in BANOS CSA are also participating in, and leading in turn to a natural flow of ideas into JPI Oceans. A concrete example of this now is a call for underwater noise. The call text is being prepared currently together with participating countries and BANOS CSA and other regional sea-basins for co-branding of BANOS. This will provide a very concrete outcome of BANOS, facilitated by JPI Oceans. Finally, with BANOS CSA now ending, there is a concern of fast turn-over process of coordination projects. With Horizon Europe BANOS ideas can live on but in my experience of 20 years in R&I and science-policy management, coordination and collaboration initiatives are not like R&I projects. You cannot so easily turn them on and off. We are going back to stakeholder engagement and community building and so on. This is not an easy thing to do, to work and build up trust, it requires stamina to bring management and coordination to fruition. Hence if we design and develop landscapes in our fields, we must keep in mind the differences in time scales for these coordination efforts compared to R&I. The BANOS team has had that, so again congratulations to a very strong and inspiring project and initiative.

Jörn Schmidt, representing BANOS CSA strategic partner – Chair of the ICES Science Committee

Schmidt started by noting that from the ICES perspective that being an intergovernmental organization that all 13 BANOS countries are also members of, the BANOS CSA is of high relevance. As noted by HELCOM, relying on funding and facilitating mechanisms of structures like BONUS and then of BANOS, and also other funding mechanisms, is really what we have been looking forward to, also in the future. It is all about people as there are 4000 scientists from these 13 BANOS CSA member countries currently active in ICES. They have been also active in many BONUS projects and linked with ICES expert groups etc. As a regional programme to translate global aims to actionable outcomes in a coherent way is something we have seen in BONUS and its projects, this has worked particularly fantastic in bringing all these scientists together. Now reaching out to the North Sea and having a similar approach for other sea-regions can only be congratulated. Also, BONUS was an enabler for the Baltic Sea science and BANOS, as it has been written, also an enabler to extend that. Also the idea of science for policy and decision making is where ICES can be a strong cooperating partner as well and where we would benefit very strongly from the BANOS strategy. There is no lack of strategies nor high level documents i.e. Green Deal, UN Ocean Decade SDGs, and in BANOS SRIA these are well picked up and made actionable by transferring them from global to regional scale, and this is where the strong value lies in BANOS. Also a systemic approach of co-designing and co-producing the BANOS SRIA in a very transparent process and linking different aspects in very systemic approach. Schmidt concluded that ecosystem-based management in the centre of BANOS SRIA is very much aligned with ICES work but also all the other factors of BANOS SRIA are. Interdisciplinary approach is also not only bringing the scientists together but also bringing all the different actors together, this being a huge strength of the programme. Congratulations.

3 Conclusions

To conclude the circle, Koho invited Andrusaitis once more to the stage and to share his final thoughts reflecting on the highlights mentioned during the End Conference. Andrusaitis started by thanking all the speakers and noting that BANOS CSA has been a real team exercise, not only involving the BANOS Secretariat's 'dream team' but also involving the whole, committed BANOS CSA consortium. He emphasised the BANOS SRIA's tangible character by stating it having been a sign of bravery and ambition when from the very beginning taking on the model from BONUS in developing a rather detailed SRIA with 32 themes underpinning its truly tangible character to what will take place in 3-5 years and showing the impact even later. As SRIA is very forward looking

and unique, so is its co-creation, a methodology that is shown to be the right one, stemming already from the BONUS experience.

Another point made by Andrusaitis was that the mission and the role of science does not limit itself to creating scientific knowledge. BANOS CSA has from the beginning focussed on impact and developed a wealth of strategies, which is another great achievement that can only be encouraged to be examined and made the best use of by all.

As the final highlight, Andrusaitis noted the coordination and collaboration around the European regional seas, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Atlantic, initiated by BONUS and BANOS CSA [in the sequence of European regional seas workshops held in the consecutive European Maritime Days in Burgas (2018) and Lisbon (2019)], and the establishment of the future plans of the cooperation involving the European regional seas being put forward in the framework of the Horizon Europe's climate neutral, productive and sustainable blue economy partnership candidate. When the proposal was written, it was not known how this would develop. From the very beginning, BANOS CSA, and before it BONUS, has emphasised the immense value of the regional seas' approach, not to create bubbles but to create meaningful partnerships and missions, and we look forward to how these are to materialise. Andrusaitis concluded that the elemental unit of regional sea-basin is where the management and sustainable use and good environmental status should be achieved. This is the best level to engage the stakeholders, nowhere else can this be achieved better or more impactfully than on regional scale. Hence a partnership of partnerships would certainly be the way forward.

Furthermore, several participants from their individual perspectives commented and congratulated the BANOS CSA consortium and in particular the BONUS Secretariat, for all the work done. Then the BANOS CSA End Conference was concluded by a few words from Koho outlining the future steps from hereon. Besides the BANOS CSA now ending, also other regional seas initiatives namely BlueMed in the Mediterranean, AANChOR and AORA CSA in the Atlantic and the youngest CSA of the Black Sea are all be part of the Horizon Europe 'Climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy Partnership candidate' process. A separate session hosted by the BANOS CSA End Conference platform but organised solely by the European Commission DG RTD B4 Unit titled 'The future of R&I for healthy seas and ocean in Europe: the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters' was held directly after the BANOS CSA End Conference. The video of the session can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/VzPDx7TDvoM> and further information on the developments obtained from the Commission's RTD B4 Unit.



BANOS CSA achievements & future steps – different perspectives

The END Conference of the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action

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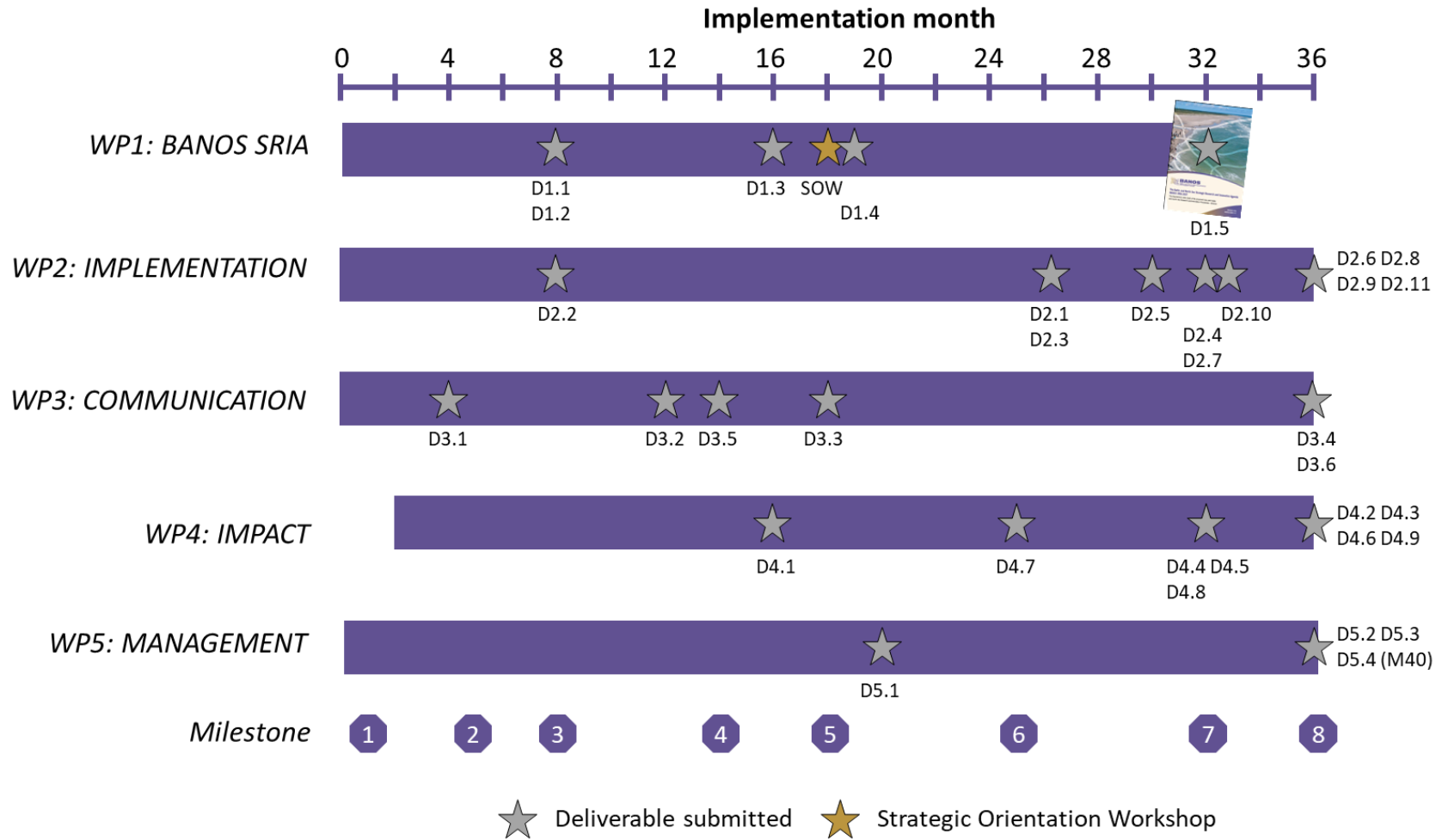
www.banoscsa.org

Consortium members, partners and observers



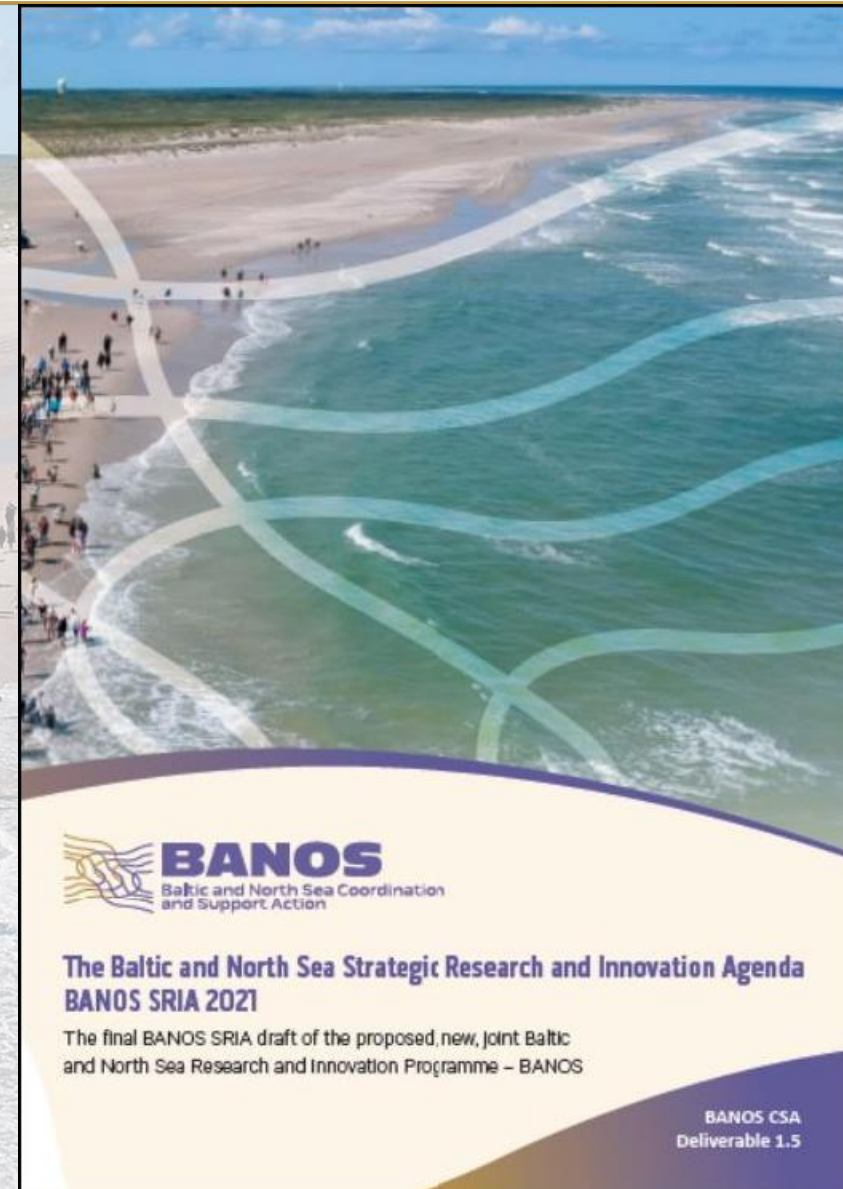
Strategic partners



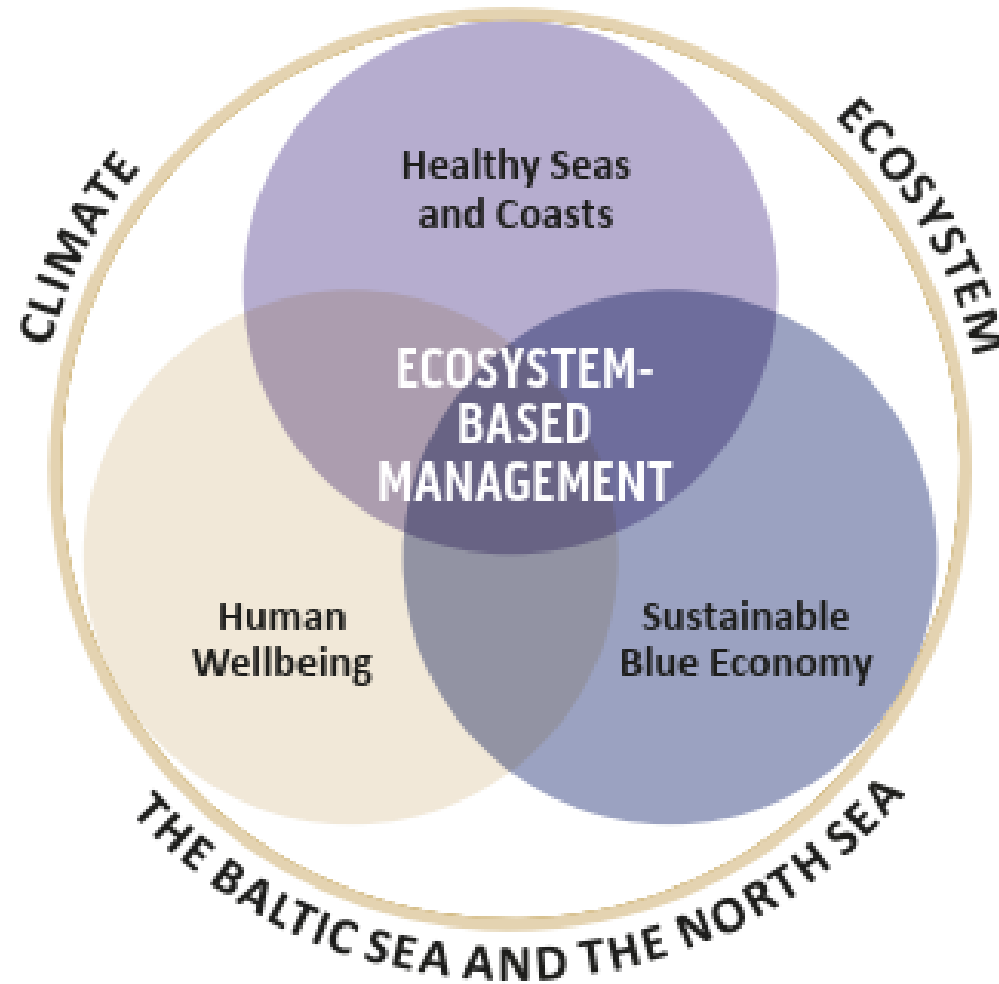


BANOS SRIA 2021: the new R&I agenda for the Baltic Sea and the North Sea

www.banoscsa.org/SRIA2021

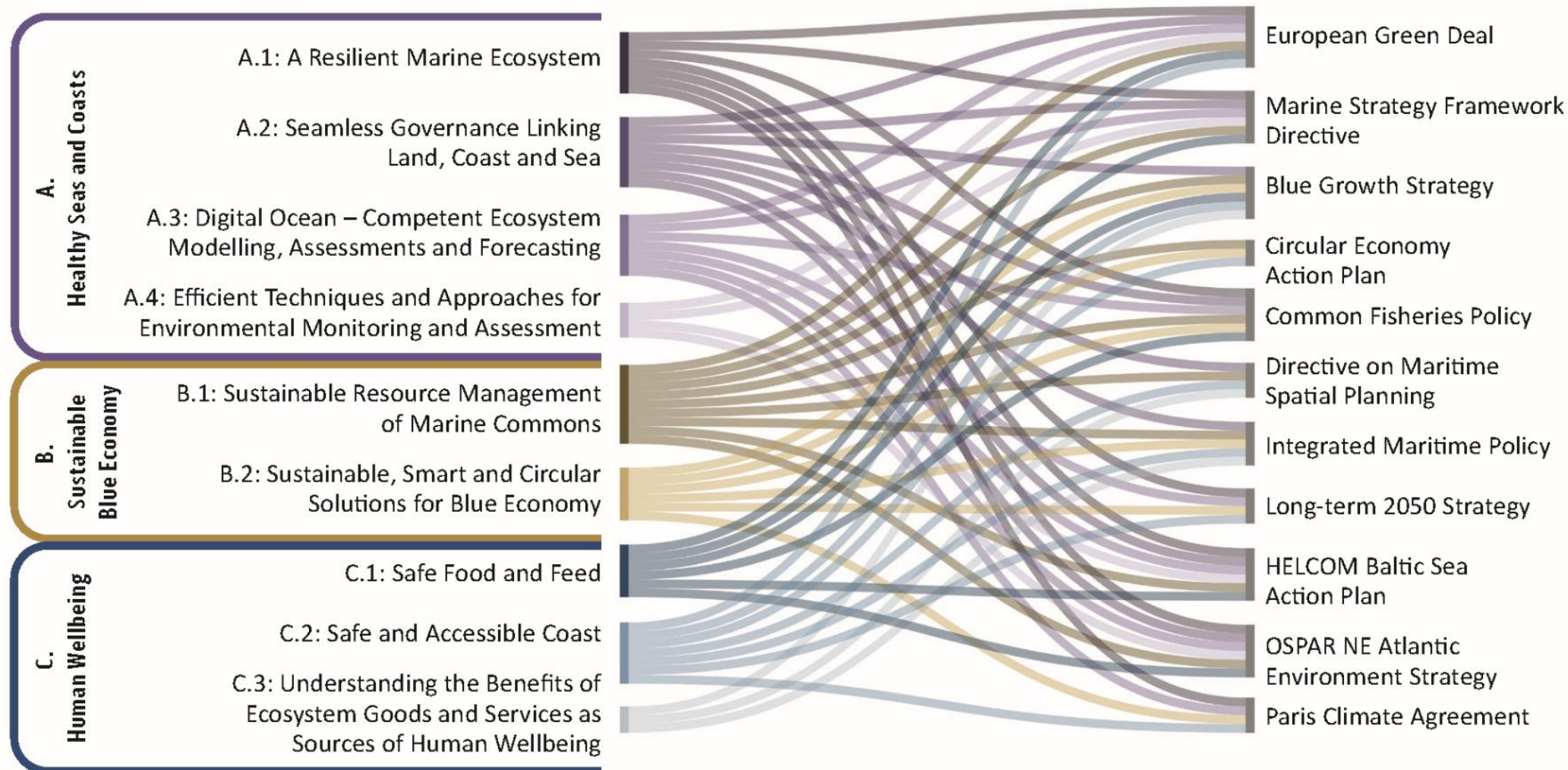


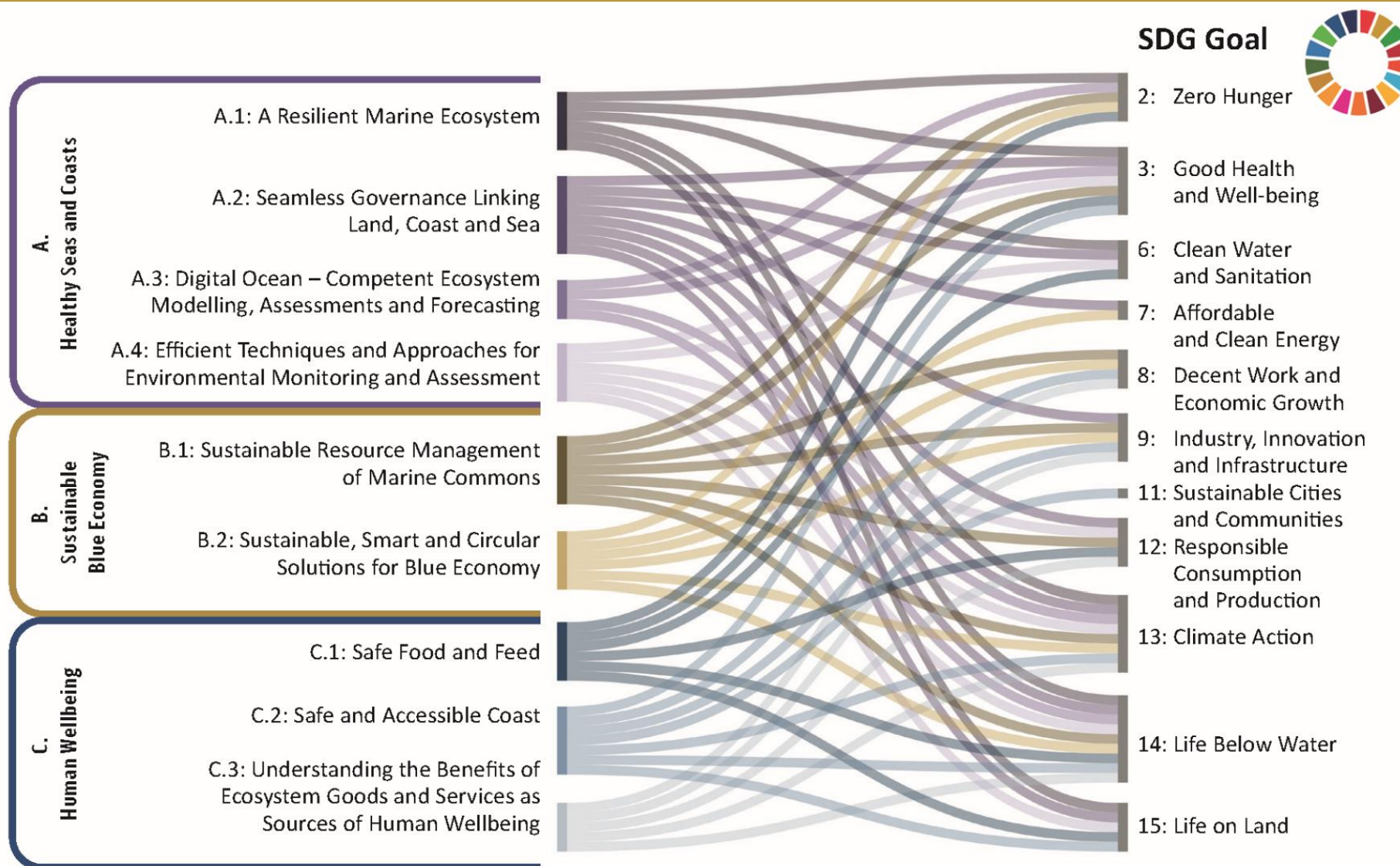
BANOS SRIA: Strategic Objectives



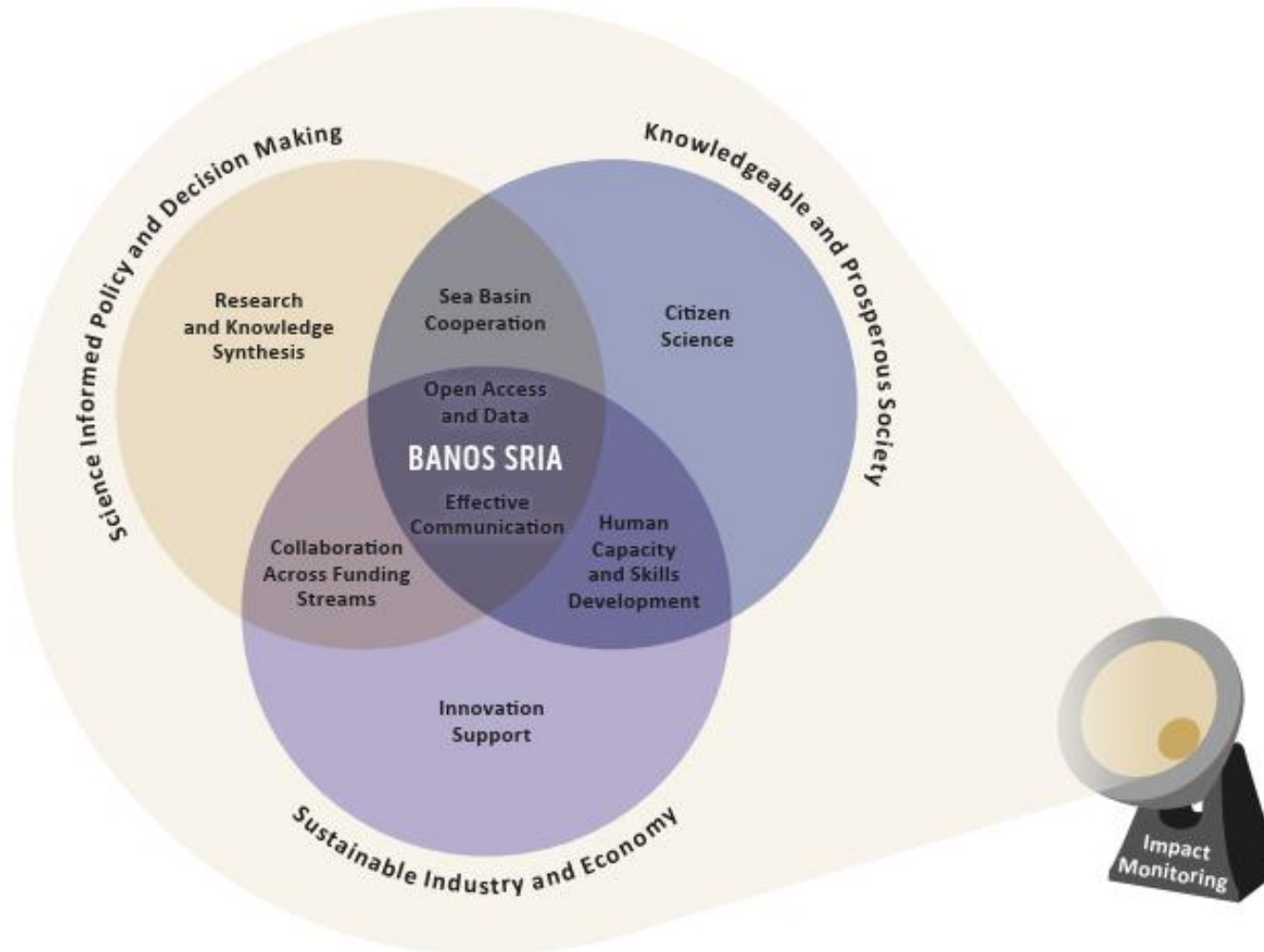
Strategic Objective A: Healthy Seas and Coasts		Strategic Objective B: Sustainable Blue Economy	Strategic Objective C: Human Wellbeing
Specific Objectives	A.1: A resilient marine ecosystem	B.1: Sustainable resource management of marine commons	C.1: Safe food and feed
	A.2: Seamless governance linking land, coast and sea	B.2: Sustainable, smart and circular solutions for blue economy	C.2: Safe and accessible coast
	A.3: Digital Ocean - Competent ecosystem modelling, assessments and forecasting		C.3: Understanding the benefits of ecosystem goods and services as sources of human wellbeing
	A.4: Efficient techniques and approaches for environmental monitoring		

32 R&I themes with specific outcomes to ensure the objectives are achieved!





BANOS Impact Enablers





Thank you!

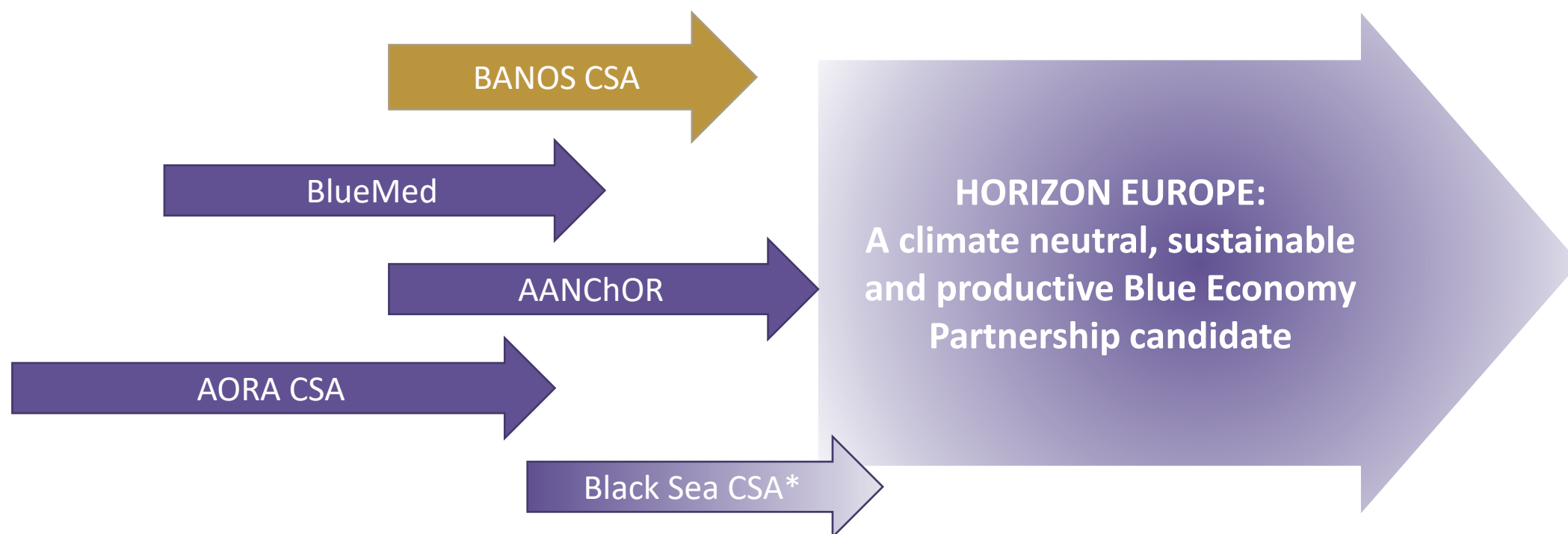
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NEXT: The future of R&I for healthy seas and ocean in Europe: the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
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** timeline approximate as dates currently not known*