



## **EUSBSR National Contact Points**

### **Non paper on EUSBSR governance**

FINAL- 2014-2-12

#### **Background**

- Council Conclusions of 22 October, 2013 :

*“RECOGNISING the parliamentary dimension as an important link between the macro-regional strategies and society as a whole, both at regional and national as well as European level.”*

*“6. UNDERLINES the importance of responsibility and ownership of the Member States concerned and their regions and local actors which should be strengthened through recognizing the strategies as horizontal responsibility of the governments as a whole, inviting more active participation of line ministries, allocation of adequate staff and enhancing political support in the implementation of macro-regional strategies at all levels (EU, national, regional, local). A clear and long-term commitment of the stakeholders is a prerequisite for the success of the macro-regional concept.”*

*“7. RECOGNISES the territorial dimension of the EU sectorial policies and therefore ENCOURAGES the inclusion of the macro-regional strategies on the agenda of the Council in its relevant formations as and when appropriate in order to ensure closer links to the respective EU policies, leading to added value in strengthening EU territorial cohesion.”*

*“9. [...] INVITES:*

- a) the Commission to continue playing a leading role in strategic coordination of key delivery stages of the macro-regional strategies, in partnership with the Member States and in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, [...]”*

*“22. INVITES the Commission to facilitate the discussions on improving the governance of the macro-regional strategies and to report to the Council by the end of 2014, including streamlining the reporting, reviewing and follow-up.”*

- Expectations of Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn, expressed in the 4<sup>th</sup> EUSBSR Annual Forum in Vilnius on 11 November, 2013 on the need for increased political ownership and leadership by the Member States.
- Polish-Swedish non paper Governance for the EUSBSR, 3 December 2013.

#### **Guiding principles**

- Political leadership by EUSBSR Member States.
- Strategic coordination and monitoring by the European Commission.
- Best use of relevant existing cooperation, both in EUSBSR formats and other cooperation bodies.
- Effective implementation of the Roles and Responsibilities of EUSBSR stakeholders (listed in Action Plan of February, 2013); no major overhauling changes in the Governance structure.

- Ensuring EU- integrity of the EUSBSR and improving the link to the EU-institutions.
- Enhancing the constant and transparent communication on EUSBSR related activities among the main stakeholders. Recognizing vital importance of Member States to support active coordination of PA and HA. While acknowledging the added value of certain PA:s and HA:s being coordinated by non-Member States, to seek to fully assume responsibility of Member States for the implementation of EUSBSR, including coordination of Priority Areas and Horizontal Actions. <sup>1</sup>.
- Reinforcing ownership and leadership at PAC and HAL level. Priority areas to be considered not only as expressions of priority, but also distribution of responsibility and creation of practical and relevant thematic networks in the respective policy areas.

## **Elements of Governance**

### National contact points

- Rotating Chair for NCP meetings 6 month basis (yearly co-chairing advisable), taking stock of EU-presidency rotation and at a voluntary basis between EU-presidencies, also tied to location of the Annual Forum. The review of rotating Chair for NCP meetings will be done by the end of 2015
- Tasks of Rotating NCP Chair:
  - agenda setting, in cooperation with DG REGIO and other relevant DGs,
  - ensuring the briefing on EUSBSR matters to be included on the agenda of regular Baltic Sea European Directors meetings (held twice a year; briefing to be held by EU director of NCP chairing country),
  - assisting the European Commission in preparation and convention of the EUSBSR Annual Forum, including deciding on thematic topic/topics of Annual Forum. Possibility to combine Annual Forum with other high-level political events supporting the chosen thematic topic of the Annual Forum, at the same time ensuring the focus on and visibility of EUSBSR,
  - Chair completion report,
  - if the NCP chairing coincides with EU presidency, mainstreaming the EUSBSR into the relevant EU policies/agendas (e.g. addressing it in the different Council formations, increasing EUSBSR visibility in other EU institutional Fora).
- Option of NCP meetings with the CBSS CSO, ND SG or other regional organizations and platforms based on common challenges if needed.

### Steering Committee

- Considering the relevance and primarily in the PA:s and HA:s coordinated by non-MS, PACs and HALs should be empowered with steering committees, consisting of all relevant priority area and horizontal action focal points, appointed by EUSBSR Member States and the representatives of the relevant DGs of the European Commission.
- Each Steering Committee should have Terms of Reference, adjusted to particular priority area or horizontal action. ToR should be drafted according to the main principles (suggested by the DG REGIO), in consultation with relevant DGs and PAFP/HAFP and adopted by consensus of SC members.
- Clear links with the relevant DGs should be established, primarily by taking part in the steering

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<sup>1</sup> Action Plan of February 2013, "Introduction", 7 para: "Typically, one Member State coordinates each priority area or horizontal action, and they work on implementation in close contact with the Commission and all stakeholders, i.e. other Member States, regional and local authorities, inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies. Other bodies may also be nominated to coordinate an area or action. They need to ensure that the Action Plan is consistent with all EU policies"

committee meetings.

- Ensuring coherence with CBSS/ND and other working bodies whenever relevant.

NCPs are encouraged to work closely with respective Managing authorities of relevant EU Programmes, especially the ESIF Programmes, with a view to:

- Improving existing or setting up new transnational coordination and cooperation to provide high quality projects and results.
- Working out harmonized methods of monitoring the results.

#### National Parliaments

- Welcome informal meetings of Members of European Affairs Committees from EU national parliaments of the Baltic Sea Region (; initiated during the Lithuanian Presidency by Seimas, on 27 October 2013).
- Welcome the discussions in the EU national and regional parliaments on macro-regional strategies (initiated during the Lithuanian Presidency and planned to be continued during other EU Presidencies, e.g. Greece. 24-25 Nov 2013 Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees on Environment Protection and the Committees on State Administration and Local Authorities, entitled *Macro-regional strategies: Development and Prospect.*)
- Welcome result oriented debates of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference on the matters important for the growth of the Baltic Sea Region, in the areas of mutual interest.