

**THE BALTIC AND NORTH SEA
COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION
(BANOS CSA)**

Deliverable 3.5

BANOS communications and stakeholder engagement strategy

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The BANOS Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (D3.5) outlines the starting point of the framework for the future programme's strategy at the time when the future BANOS programme's structure and form are still to be confirmed. Once decided, this will have a critical bearing also to the future programme's Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and its implementation. As a key delivery mechanism for the entire programme, the communications (WP3), and all the tasks within, have their bearing in finalizing the strategy. I.e. the first stages of the tasks completed (D3.1. and D3.2.), those currently under development (D3.3.) and those to be completed towards the end of BANOS CSA (D3.4. and D3.6.) will all contribute to the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and related Action Plans. Hence the strategy will be revisited once the future programme's structure and form has been confirmed, all other BANOS CSA communications tasks have been completed and BANOS starts.

T3.5. DoA: The ongoing BONUS Art. 185 has invested in communications as a key support mechanism in delivering the programme's objectives. Development of a communications and outreach strategy has been the backbone of the communications approach and entails within its framework consideration of dissemination of results, as well as wide exploitation of these results as possible (in particular for improving policies and regulations) as well as strategic communication and related targeted measures that promote the programme and its projects' portfolio as widely and effectively as possible based on its set objectives. These activities have contributed in a strategic and cross-cutting fashion to gaining visibility and consistency to the ongoing BONUS Art. 185 programme and its research governance framework that has been a forerunner and a model for other EU regional seas. The experience gained through the development and implementation of the ongoing BONUS Art. 185 communications strategy serves as a basis in broadening it to entail also the North Sea region. In addition, the realities and specifics of the greater North Sea region will be considered and incorporated especially by exploiting the results of the Task 3.2. – stakeholder mapping – to ensure that the strategy serves the new joint Baltic Sea and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme as a whole. Based on the broadened scope and specifics of the two regional seas, the new, broadened communications strategy will address the wide brand management, communications approaches (entailing dissemination and exploitation of the programme results), messages, tools and activities that provide opportunities for the programme to grow and engage with its stakeholders in the entire area of the programme's coverage, and beyond, in order to ensure successful programme delivery and its visibility. All in all, the overarching approach across different preparatory activities in BANOS CSA will ensure a smooth start for the new joint Baltic Sea and North Sea research and innovation programme. The communications strategy will be first considered at a relatively early stage of the proposed action (M5) with the formulation to be completed (M13-14) once the stakeholder mapping (3.2.) is ready.

1. Introduction and objectives

The overall purpose of this strategy document is to outline the development of the communications and stakeholder engagement efforts designed to serve effectively BANOS, the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme.

In the very core of BANOS, as planned in the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA), is the programme's efforts towards **unlocking sustainable blue growth in North European seas**. BANOS vision and mission is foremost to *foster high-level cooperative research and innovation across the Baltic Sea and the North Sea and to support sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services with robust and sound science*. The future BANOS sets to underpin and develop EU and national policies and strategies with particular consideration of Europe's blue growth strategy in the BANOS region, achieve high level of scientific, administrative and financial integration and generate strong EU added value and impact.

Hence, through its structured governance and management action, the BANOS CSA consortium leads the development of the future Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (BANOS SRIA) as well as all mechanisms to implement the future BANOS programme. The three strategic objectives make up the scope of the future programme, each underpinned by multiple specific objectives.

- **Healthy seas and coasts**, with the aim to increase the ecosystem resistance and resilience by better understanding the natural processes and how they are affected by human activities.
- **Sustainable blue economy**, with the aim to optimize the use of marine resources while minimizing the negative impact through understanding the cumulative effects of human activities on marine ecosystem functioning.
- **Human wellbeing**, with the aim of establishing an ecosystem-based marine governance, including early engagement of all appropriate stakeholders.

Communications is a key delivery mechanism of BANOS. It aims to enable strong and the most desirable public presence, active stakeholder engagement as well as effective knowledge dissemination and information sharing from the very start of the programme. The stakeholder dialogue with multi-level and multi-directional communication flow is envisaged as a continuous and cross-cutting element in all BANOS' implementation activities including those of all the projects it will fund in future. Also, in the core of BANOS communications is driving and supporting mechanisms necessary to unlock sustainable blue growth through creation of profound impact that BANOS will thrive to create in the coming years (once the programme is launched).

The development and implementation of this communications and stakeholder engagement strategy forms the backbone of the communications approach and activities undertaken in BANOS. The strategy addresses the brand, engagement tools, activities and tailored plans that provide opportunities for the programme to grow and engage with its stakeholders in BANOS region and wider.

The broad BANOS communications objectives include:

1. *Corporate* – Enhancing effective ways to communicate with stakeholders to strengthen delivery of aims, reach, brand and visibility of the entire programme and its presence in the landscape it operates in
2. *Cause* – Raising awareness of the Baltic and North Sea ecoregions and of the need to practice effective management and knowledge-based governance that in turn can support unlocking of long-term sustainable blue growth in North European seas

3. *Programme* – Enhancing scientific knowledge and innovation and their use generated in the BANOS funded projects across policy and socio-economic landscape by establishing dialogues and transferring aims, progress and results of a strong, policy-driven research and innovation programme to stakeholder groups for their action and use

To realize the BANOS communications objectives effectively and to ensure the growth of the programme's outreach and its potential impact, the strategy builds on the following areas: Brand, stakeholders, communications tools, corporate and stakeholder specific communications plans, annual calendar of activities, evaluation as well as other, specific guidelines as viewed necessary in a changing policy landscape in which BANOS operates (e.g. rapid response guides etc.).

2. BANOS brand

As one of the very first deliverables of the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA), the brand, and consequently the name, of the future programme are now readily available. The strategic communications agency together with the lead of BONUS EEIG carried out the related development work (D3.1. separate report). Of many existing ways to map a brand, the expert team chose to use a model based on Mats Urde's Brand matrix tool¹. This forms a concrete, easy-to-use tool that works on many different levels: strategic, competitive, interactive and communicative. It encloses:

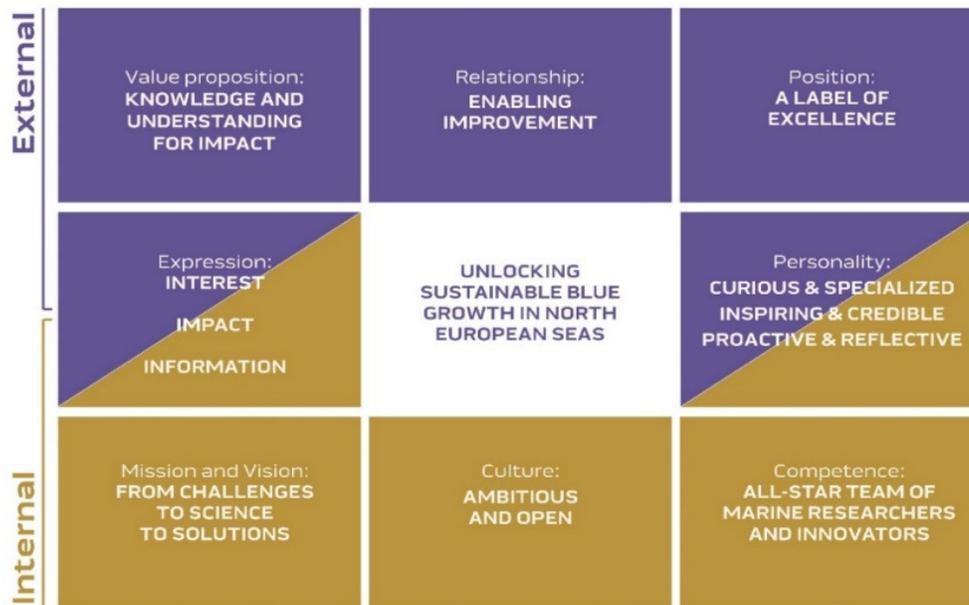
- Eight different features that encircle the brand core
- Internal and external features of the brand

As a result of the development work, the new programme was confirmed also to be known simply from hereon as **BANOS**, the joint **Baltic and North Sea** Research and Innovation Programme. The guidelines related to the use of the brand are included in the BANOS brand book (available for internal use) and later will be elaborated to the bespoke use of BANOS. This book includes guides on BANOS house style, colour use, logo elements, use of acknowledgements, and its current application in a format usable in the BANOS CSA project phase.

The BANOS brand matrix elements that are applied from BANOS CSA onwards in all BANOS planning, development and implementation work are as follow (with a view of a total adoption and related roll-out by the start of BANOS):

¹ Urde, Mats. "The corporate brand identity matrix." *Journal of Brand Management* 20.9 (2013): 742-761.

BANOS
Brand matrix



Notes on the BRAND matrix:

THE BRAND CORE

The core message forms the epicentre of the brand. It's not a slogan, but rather an internal mindset and attitude that guides all our efforts: it is the one thing we want everyone in the BANOS programme to be able to recognize and remember.

Core message: Unlocking sustainable blue growth in North European seas

- **Unlocking** serves as an internal reminder of our attitude: we are on a positive mission to find, reveal and create solutions and opportunities. This should be reflected internally in the way we work, and externally in how we interact with our stakeholders.
- **sustainable blue growth** underscores our values and core expertise. It helps us select the right partners and makes our mission and vision relevant to a wider group of stakeholders.
- **in North European seas** is the context in which we operate. This context reminds of our collaborative efforts across the sister seas.

COMPETITION (Value proposition + Competence)

Value proposition: Knowledge and understanding for impact

We provide top marine knowledge in a way that is easily translated into understanding and results in impact in North European seas.

Competence: All-star team of marine researchers and innovators

We connect top scientists with the innovation field under a common agenda. We provide a platform for real collaboration with regional stakeholders, who are involved early on.

STRATEGY (Position + Mission and vision)

Position: A label of excellence

To work as a guarantee that every project under the programme produces top-notch knowledge and innovation – for effective, impactful and usable knowledge and innovation.

Mission and vision: From challenges to science to solutions

To foster high-level cooperative research and innovation across the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. To support sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services with robust and sound science.

INTERACTION (Interaction + Culture)

Relationship: Enabling improvement

Our key stakeholders appreciate our advice and see that we are willing to engage in dialogue to help them in science-informed policy and decision-making in support of sustainability.

Culture: Ambitious and open

Openness is the secret sauce of our culture. It reflects how we work: in a trusting, transparent and unprejudiced way. It also showcases our values and attitudes: we're not just open, but ambitious in our drive for collaboration, communication, and diversity.

COMMUNICATION (Expression + Personality)

Expression: Interest → Impact → Information

We want to generate understanding and drive impact. To do so, we must engage our audience. While scientists may be tempted to lay on the facts and evidence first, doing so risks losing the audience. That's why whenever we talk about the programme or its projects outside the purely scientific field, we start with the big picture. We carry our audience through what's going on and why it's meaningful – and only then lay on the evidence.

Personality: We are curious & specialized / inspiring & credible / proactive & reflective

We are highly specialized, credible and reflective of our behaviour and results. However, we want to go beyond the traits of traditional research institutions: we pride ourselves in being curious and interested in topics beyond our immediate research and innovation agenda; we want to inspire others to join; and we have a proactive approach to driving policy and creating impact.

3. Stakeholders

In order to enable the INTERACTION feature of the BANOS BRAND matrix (above) i.e. “*Our key stakeholders appreciate our advice and see that we are willing to engage in dialogue to help them in science-informed policy and decision-making in support of sustainability.*”, the intelligence gathering related to the stakeholders is a key area of focus in the BANOS communications strategy. Furthermore, with the BANOS BRAND matrix value proposition “*We provide top marine knowledge in a way that is easily translated into understanding and results in impact in North European seas.*” combined with the communication expression “*We set the scene and raise interest, explain the potential impact, and only then share our facts and information.*” set by default the bar high of continuous, impactful dialogue with stakeholders to ensure that those who are critically needed to engage in order to move the sustainable and healthy seas agenda forward are truly on board.

To this end, the identification of priority key stakeholders has been carried out as a separate *BANOS CSA Communication, dissemination and stakeholder engagement* task. This has entailed a BANOS CSA consortium mapping analysis of stakeholder attributes in relation to BANOS aims across the global to local levels led by VLIZ. This mapping exercise has been based on the degree of both power and urgency of different

stakeholders in a scale of 1-5 (top score being 5)²; all stakeholders included were viewed to have a strong legitimacy. In particular, the North Sea region has been carefully looked at in order to ensure that the stakeholder landscape represents in the most balanced way both the Baltic and the North Sea. The result of the stakeholder mapping is reported in a separate report (D3.2) and is used as the basis of different stakeholder groups included in this communications strategy. Noteworthy is also *mapping of and potential collaboration with the transnational initiatives* (D3.3) underway as a subset of the wider stakeholder mapping task noted above, which also will have its influence in the implementation of the wider BANOS communications strategy.

A total of over 800 stakeholders were identified (so far) and grouped to belong to 1) research and innovation community, 2) policymakers, 3) industry, 4) civil society, 5) complementary groups, and as a group to be explored separately at later time, the media. Stakeholders from the research and innovation community are represented best, mainly through universities and other research performing institutes. The policy field is represented mostly through national ministries and their administrations, and funding agencies. Companies, company innovation clusters and trade associations in equal parts make up the industrial share of stakeholders. The civil society includes the NGOs and private funding bodies and thrust funds. The complementary group is of key importance as includes the members and strategic partners of the programme itself. Most stakeholders' activities are predominantly conducted within national borders. About 13% of identified stakeholders operate on a European-wide scale. Another 10% act on a global interest, and 4% of stakeholders focus on a particular macroregion, which most often translates to the Baltic Sea and/or the North Sea basins.

The media as stakeholder group has been singled out for separate consideration at later time when BANOS starts. This is foremost for the following reasons: 1) By nature the media landscape is ever changing, in today's reality this intensifies even more so with relatively recent and new communications channels frequently being added to the mix, such as e.g. different social media tools, and ideally requiring a full strategy of its own in regards of outreach and key stakeholders. This will be most cost-effective to be drawn when BANOS starts and the most current, operational reality is truly tangible to us. 2) The corporate level communications with media in the predecessor programme BONUS Art. 185 has been, due to its resource-heavy demands, heavily channelled through the members' media and communication departments to make most of the media networks and other intelligence related in different and current, cultural and national settings. 3) The projects funded by the programme are requested to formulate from the very start their own communications and stakeholder plans aligned with the corporate strategy from the very start of the project cycle, addressing also media relations. Application of these approaches noted in 2) and 3) are foreseen to be part of the future programme as well. 4) The global, EU and regional media and their use, are to be embedded to the strategies as well e.g. EU CORDIS etc.

Research and innovation community: Research performing institutes, universities, research infrastructure networks, research and innovation networks, academic associations

Policymakers: Global, EU, intergovernmental and advisory bodies, national ministries and their administrations, funding agencies and programmes

² Ronald K. Mitchell et al. "Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts." *The Academy of Management Review* (1997): Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 853-886.

Industry: Companies, company innovation clusters, technology platforms and trade associations

Civil society: NGOs and private funding bodies, thrust funds

Complementary groups: members and strategic partners

Media: separate consideration at later time, the beginning of BANOS

4. BANOS communications tools

The most important communications ‘tool’ for stakeholder engagement in the BANOS predecessor programme BONUS Art. 185, was in fact a platform, the BONUS Forum. This ‘platform’ format will act as the basis on which also the BANOS CSA task *Forming the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme’s stakeholder platforms* (D3.4) will be built on and first tested in practice when the Strategic Orientation Workshop takes place 31 March – 2 April 2020 to discuss and agree on the future BANOS Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. The Forum events, organised annually or biennially, formed the key stakeholder platform in BONUS Art. 185 to carry out consultations and share results of the BONUS funded projects with policymakers and other key stakeholders. It aimed to bring together representatives of ministries across all relevant sectoral borders of the Baltic Sea countries – environment, transport, agriculture, forestry and science – dealing with matters related to the Baltic Sea system research and governance. It also facilitated and advanced the pan-Baltic integration of research, including the joint use and planning of infrastructure capacities, not only by assisting in highlighting research needs, but also by facilitating of the integration of research funding.

Also, the legacy of BANOS predecessor’s communications tools developed in the BONUS ERA-NET and BONUS+, and then from 2010 onwards under BONUS Art. 185 were audited for consideration in the new BANOS context and an in-house pool of communications tools to cater for the communication needs on the broadest programme and stakeholder levels identified. This is a starting point on which to build future channels and tools on while ensuring adequate means of continuous communications and dialogue with stakeholders from early on. Further refinement needs emerging in the process from the specific communications objectives, target audience specific plans etc. are tailored/added/refined as/when viewed appropriate. The following tools in the “BONUS, BANOS CSA, BANOS continuum” are included:

BANOS COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS	ACTIONS REQUIRED	ENVISAGED SCOPE & OTHER INFO
BANOS brand and name ‘equity’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 brand features BANOS name Internal and external dimensions 	Adhere to 8 features emerging from the Brand Matrix. Implement in BANOS CSA as appropriate, in full by start of BANOS – visibility, credibility, consistency	INTERNAL – Consortium members to adhere, use, disseminate EXTERNAL – ALL public facing forms of materials and interaction adhere to related guides
Website www.banoscsa.org > design & formulation & replacement in www.banos.org > separate key task of BANOS CSA (D3.6)	integration of brand & content, online presence, strategic online structure based on new brand, BANOS objectives and aims	EXTERNAL – 1 st point of online contact to broad stakeholder audiences with inclusion of specific areas of key interest, forms the most important online presence of BANOS

Intranet www.banoscsa.org > design & formulation to www.banos.org intranet - Internal use only	Create together with the external facing website (D3.6)	INTERNAL – sharing information within the BANOS community members etc.
BANOS CSA brochure > BANOS brochure	Develop (Nov 2018) and update (19 etc.) ...	EXTERNAL – The most brief and broad entry point
'In Brief' newsletter hybrid of BONUS and BANOS CSA (former BONUS) > later BANOS	update concept and name, consider reader survey and related outreach plan, soft/hard copy distributions, contacts, guidelines for writers by start of BANOS	EXTERNAL – More in-depth news and views of interest to BANOS community/stakeholders Publishing schedule: twice a year (e.g. May & November)
BONUS > BONUS & BANOS CSA e-bulletin > later BANOS e-bulletin	update concepts, delivery and outreach (i.e. tracking); provide guidelines, confirm form	EXTERNAL – A brief, broad & frequent online entry point to BANOS
BONUS > BANOS CSA > later BANOS Briefings	On brand following a series form > BANOS CSA briefing no 1, next no 2 on SRIA executive summary...	EXTERNAL – specific 4-pager BANOS topics of key interest e.g. key information, executive summaries, call fact sheets, summaries of cross-projects' knowledge synthesis etc.
BONUS > BANOS CSA > later BANOS Reports	BONUS series > BANOS CSA deliverables > BANOS report series	EXTERNAL – In depth substance-oriented series of BANOS reports
Templates > BANOS CSA > later BANOS	New brand (word, powerpoint, policy briefs)	INTERNAL – for the use of the BANOS members etc. in presentations etc.
Events, conferences	Presentations, keynotes, workshops, exhibition, BONUS to BANOS symposia	EXTERNAL – at all levels (corporate, cause, programme) impacting and promoting BANOS INTERNAL: spreadsheet for records!
Exhibition materials	BANOS CSA roll-ups > BANOS roll-ups etc.	EXTERNAL – promotional conference and events' materials
Social media	@BONUSBaltic > @BANOS_CSA > @... BANOS	EXTERNAL – Immediate heads-up format of announcing new and taking part in the most current topics in fast moving landscape - a brief & visible entry point
Blogs	Impacting/promoting BANOS tbc	EXTERNAL – specific & also wider targets
Media releases, articles, interviews, relations	Bespoke media relations, articles, distribution channels, translations, national distributions etc. impacting/promoting	EXTERNAL – specific & also wider targets – existing contacts, one-2-ones, networks etc.
Other	tbc journals, annual reviews, Q&As, stationery, notepads, pens, gifts etc.	TBC

5. Corporate and stakeholder specific communications plans

The practical communications plans are developed centrally as living documents and will need regular reviewing and updating. However, it is important to develop detailed plans that are specific to key stakeholders and that deliver on communications objectives. The communications tools are used as delivery mechanisms, with more and new introduced as and when appropriate. Continuous stakeholder dialogues, media interactions and other means add to the overall mix.

OBJECTIVE 1: Corporate – Enhancing effective ways to communicate with stakeholders to strengthen delivery of aims, reach, brand and visibility of BANOS

- *Ensuring adequate stakeholder mapping, communications tools development and contacts database management to maximize effectiveness and timeliness of the communications programme*
- *Ensuring effective integration of communications activities with programme, individual projects, advocacy and fundraising development*
- *Promoting success stories highlighting issues in which BANOS has made a positive difference and influenced positive change, or tangible steps towards positive change*
- *Promoting the image of BANOS and the top science on Baltic and North Sea which it supports as a source of serious, objective and credible information*
- *Promoting our working partnerships with policy makers, funding institutions, EU bodies and other*
- *Demonstrating BANOS’s credibility with and respect from policy makers, funding institutions, EU bodies and other*
- *Promote frequent use of the BANOS brand, where appropriate, in non-BANOS communications materials and with new partners and supporters, new communications tools and media*
- *Establishing, managing and encouraging use of brand and house style guidelines*

OBJECTIVE 2: Cause – Raising awareness of the Baltic and North Sea ecoregions and of the need to practice effective management and knowledge-based governance

- *As under OBJECTIVE 1 above; in addition:*
- *Supporting BANOS in identifying and drafting communications to support knowledge-building in various levels and to raise awareness*
- *Exploring importance of regional public awareness activities related to mutually agreed selected topics and themes that can be delivered through events, conferences, actions planned in the external environment*
- *Facilitating discussion and debate in forging consensus on positions related to priority issues*
- *Providing communications tools to support awareness building on priority issues, such as Q & As, briefings, presentation material, website development to be used across the region and different stakeholder platforms*
- *Providing media relations and public engagement tools, training and assistance, where appropriate*

OBJECTIVE 3: Programme i.e. projects – Enhancing scientific knowledge and its use across policy and socio-economic landscape by transferring aims, progress and results of a strong research and innovation projects to various stakeholder groups for their action and use

- *As under OBJECTIVE 1 and 2 above; in addition:*
- *Identifying and acting upon opportunities – proactively and systematically – to engage close partners – and new – in BANOS communications*
- *Ensuring proper guidelines, procedures and processes are in place to ensure good working relationships and understanding with and among partners, e.g. preparations for stakeholder events, plan and act together when and where appropriate*

- *Lead and support BANOS members' organizations, media departments and other staff in familiarizing with the communications process, tools, materials, guidelines and other support and resources available*
- *Coordinating and supporting cross-project cooperation towards stronger outreach and stakeholder engagement (e.g. series of BANOS Symposia (in analogy BONUS Symposia))*
- *Supporting knowledge synthesis as an enabler of an improved dissemination and knowledge transfer from projects to different stakeholders*

6. Annual calendar of activities

In order to capture the very different types and areas of activities under each of the three communications objectives and detailed in the objectives of the BANOS programme i.e. corporate, cause and programme (entailing the projects), annual activity plans are developed and updated centrally, and as appropriate, more detailed activity/event/publication specific roadmaps with responsibilities and timings produced. The success criteria can entail e.g. X times that the BANOS results are expected to be picked up in a meaningful way by the national media or X times the BANOS knowledge is picked up by EU/regional/national policy bodies etc.

Annual calendar of activities – Table for OBJECTIVE 1, 2, 3 separately (on budgets available)			
STAKEHOLDER	ACTIVITY	TIMING	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Research and innovation community			
Policymakers			
Industry			
Civil Society			
Complementary groups			
Media			
	General PR formulation		
	Message formulation		
	Public affairs		
	Media relations		
	Publicity materials		
	Events		
	Website/electronic/social media		
	Other		

7. Projects' level communication plans

With a practice adopted in the predecessor programme BONUS Art. 185, a dedicated communications plan addressing the wide area of dissemination, project results uptake and stakeholder engagement, including end-users, is required to be planned and integrated to each BANOS project from the very beginning of the project cycle.

A template based on the one used in BONUS Art. 185 will be further developed as appropriate and adopted. It will cover 1) internal communications describing how the internal communications in the project will be arranged, what form will it be structured, what tools and means will be used, and what responsibilities all

above will require, and 2) external communications and dissemination of results (end-user and other stakeholder focussed) describing how the external communications of the project will be arranged, identification of primary and secondary stakeholder audiences and their justification/rationale aligned with the BANOS corporate communication strategy, as well as targeted communications and dissemination actions. Use of a practical and tangible table to give a breath of what is planned to be done (To whom/what, where/when/by whom and which means/with what impact) will also be attached for a reference point and continuously updated (as appropriate) practical guide throughout the implementation of the project.

Furthermore, the new programme will request its projects to involve the key end-users of the research results already in the planning phase of the project proposal. Given the policy oriented nature of BANOS, it is essential that projects and end-users communicate with each other throughout the programme and individual project cycles. During the projects' implementation, the key stakeholders should be involved as members of the project advisory board or steering committee or even as project participants. Furthermore, a template designed for BONUS Art 185 projects' policy briefs was developed to ensure consistency and improve the conveying of key results to policymakers who use the new knowledge in their work. Similarly, such template is seen to be useful in the future BANOS programme.

The coordination and support to cross-project cooperation which enhances stronger outreach and stakeholder engagement as has been done in the predecessor programme's central support of the BANOS Symposia will be also carried forward to the new programme. Related to this, the underlined links to ensure adequate communications support in regards of knowledge synthesis as an enabler of an improved dissemination and knowledge transfer to different stakeholders (linked to D4.2.) is another key consideration of the project-level communications efforts.

When executed well, and considered throughout the project implementation, the dialogue with stakeholders can have a critical impact in improving the relevance of the research at the decision-making level and the society at large, stimulate and raise aspirations, develop knowledge and understanding and enable stakeholders to contribute to the research.

8. Evaluation

Measures for success of the communications efforts on the **output and outcome levels** are used and these are the basis for improving the communications efforts of BANOS continuously. Also these are made publicly available e.g. in a summary format of the external annual reports produced and elsewhere as appropriate.

Information on **output level** is included using the following metrics and changes in these over time as accurately as possible:

- Number and relevance of web visitors in any given time broken down by different sections, weekly, monthly, annual traffic (Google analytics or equivalent)
- Number and relevance of links and referrals to the website from other websites (Google analytics or equivalent)
- Number and relevance of e-bulletin recipients and their feedback & other behaviour (e-bulletin service)
- Number of copies distributed/subscribed of the newsletter
- Number of copies distributed/requested of BANOS publications and other materials
- Number and relevance of responses to BANOS surveys and online polls
- Number and relevance of BANOS references by EU, macro-regional, national, regional and local level policy/decision makers

- Number and relevance of quotes, tweets, likes, mentions, references to BANOS
- Number and relevance of articles published in relevant media
- Number and relevance of events attended as keynote speaker, workshop leader, facilitator, exhibition participant

For the **outcome level**, reaching the aims and objectives set for the programme, in particular the impact it creates over time is the key measure of the communications success as well, given its integral part in the programme delivery.

Finally, besides the overall evidence of the performance of the BANOS programme, also a similar approach to the gathering of performance statistics as done in the predecessor programme on projects performance monitoring would be helpful in evidence collection. Performance statistics data collected by the BONUS EEIG from the BONUS Art 185 funded projects comprise statistics on 19 categories on the projects' contributions to development and implementation of policy, regulatory management, stakeholder engagement, cross-border research integration, links to academia, and public dissemination, resulting in an extensive database. This is a unique source for evaluating the impact of all projects that have been funded under BONUS calls and similar approach will benefit also the BANOS programme. The 19 categories included in BONUS Art. 185 will be used as the basis of the development of the most desirable categories for the new BANOS programme and included (for period 2012-2020) the following:

1. Number of times the project has contributed significantly to the development and implementation of 'fit-to-purpose' regulations, policies and management practices on international, European, the Baltic Sea region or national level aimed at safeguarding the sustainable use of ecosystem's goods and services, in particular the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Integrated Maritime Policy, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and its implementation, as well as the Baltic Sea Action Plan. (Provide more information in periodic and final reports.)
2. Number of suggestions for designing, implementing and evaluating the efficacy of relevant public policies and governance on international, European, the Baltic Sea region or national level originating from the work of the project. (Provide more information in periodic and final reports.)
3. Number of times the scientists working in the project have served as members or observers in stakeholder committees, e.g. EC, HELCOM, VASAB, ICES etc. (Provide more information in periodic and final reports.)
4. Number of international, national and regional stakeholder events organized by the project. (Provide information about the number of participants and kinds of sectors represented in the periodic and final reports.)
5. Number of joint events/co-operation activities/partnerships of the project with non-Baltic research actors and other European marine basins. (Provide more information in periodic and final reports.)
6. Number of persons and working days spent by foreign scientists on research vessels participating in the cruises arranged by the project.
7. Number of persons and working days spent by foreign scientists using other major research facilities involved in the project.
8. Number of peer-reviewed publications arising from the project research with authors from, at least, two different participating states.
9. Number of entries to existing openly accessible common databases, storing original data from the entire Baltic Sea system or larger geographical area.
10. Number of popular science papers produced by the project.
11. Number of interviews to media given by the members of the project's consortium.

12. Number of multi-media products and TV episodes produced by the project with dissemination purpose.
13. Number of other international, national and regional communication, dissemination and public outreach initiatives to disseminate the project's research results.
14. Number of post graduate courses organized by the project and persons participating.
15. Number of mobility activities (persons, visit days) from the project to the other BONUS projects.
16. Number of PhD students and the number of post-docs funded by the project as well as the number of doctoral thesis defended.
17. Table of distribution of the project's research staff involved (fully or partly funded or contributed as in kind) by age class (<25, 25-49, 50-64,>64), seniority (PhD students; post-docs; assistants, lecturers, instructors and equivalent; associate professors and equivalent; and full professors and equivalent) and gender.
18. List of other significant in kind, free of charge research infrastructures used by the project for which no bilateral agreements between the infrastructure provider(s) and BONUS have been concluded (required data: description/ type of the used infrastructure(s) and metrics characterising the amount of use, and approximate monetary estimate of the in kind contribution(s)).
19. List of other than infrastructure in kind contributions the project has received (required data: type of in kind contribution and metrics characterising the received amount, and approximate monetary estimate of the in kind contribution).

9. Expectations concerning the partner organisations' (the NFIs) involvement in implementing the BANOS communications and stakeholder engagement strategy

All partner organisations of the future BANOS programme are encouraged to act as BANOS advocates and contribute to the delivery of the BANOS communications and stakeholder engagement strategy, be it within the scope of any of the three objectives outlined for the programme. All action under the future programme is expected to adhere to the BANOS brand and the related guidelines and matters requiring some specific action by the members are brought forward to the BANOS Steering Committee and Forum of Programme Managers meetings.

For instance, the most continuous and tangible form of contributions by members are envisaged through adherence to the brand guidelines in all communications including presentations and materials produced under the new BANOS programme. Also a key aspect is the enforcement of good relations with the media and communication departments of each member organization to make most of the media networks and other intelligence related in different and current, cultural and national settings to advance the aims and objectives of the future programme. For instance, a centrally formulated media release with a key message could be adapted to respective national settings and disseminated through media networks by the respective member organization's communication professionals. Also, at times the policy-driven nature of the future programme requires 'campaigning' or potentially 'crisis' communications, or other that would require an intensive effort by the members. Related guidelines will be developed and shared among the members as appropriate.