



# Baltic Sea is our blue home: We need to know, enjoy and preserve it

## PROJECT NEWSLETTER 1/2019

**BONUS MARES (Multi-method Assessment for Resilient Ecosystem Services and Human Nature System Integration)** is an EU-funded research project that studies how ecosystems and the benefits they provide (goods and services) link to human lifestyles and well-being.

BONUS MARES realises a robust analysis of knowledge transfer and interaction between science and policy about the goods and services provided by the Baltic Sea ecosystems.

### Research partners:



Pellervo Economic Research



Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel



UNIVERSITY OF TARTU  
Estonian Marine Institute

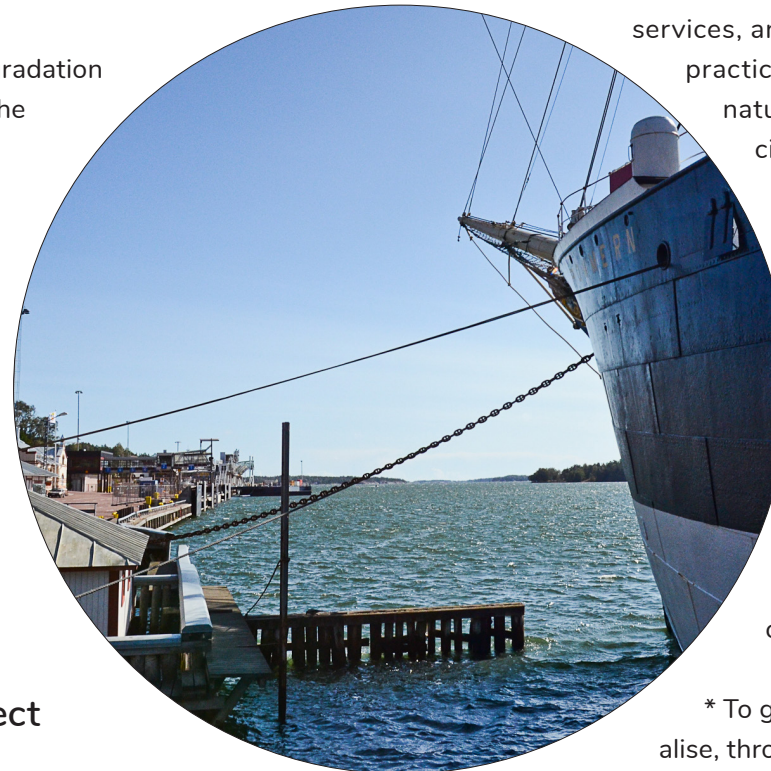


### The Challenge

The widespread degradation of ecosystems and the consequent impacts on the services they provide have determined the need for international and Europe-wide sustainability policies for regulating their use. Understanding the complex socio-ecological interactions has become crucial.

### What the project aims to do

\* To assess the quality and adequacy of different valuation methods for the charac-



terisation of the Baltic Sea ecosystem services, and to identify best practices for integrating natural capital into decision-making. This is done by an extensive literature review on ecosystem goods and services in the Baltic Sea Region, specifically focused on its coastal system, threatened by multiple pressures and climate change.

\* To geographically visualise, through an on-line interactive platform, current states and possible future scenarios of ecosystems with their functions and benefits.

## What's going on – an extensive literature review

**BONUS MARES has defined a framework for the systematic literature review(1) of existing knowledge on marine ecosystem services provided by mussel reefs, submerged vegetation and seagrass beds in the Baltic Sea, as well as on methods used for their appreciation.**

The literature review assesses ecosystem services interactions and trade-offs, as well as the adequacy of valuation methods to explain their environmental, economic and social dimensions, including the positive and negative synergies with human well-being.

3 089 scientific articles are currently being reviewed. The findings and knowledge generated will contribute to the successful implementation of the EU directive on maritime spatial planning and the EU 2020 Strategy.

## What's coming soon – the MARES Geo-portal

BONUS MARES is currently planning the on-line platform for the geographical representation of ecosystems functions (goods

and services) in the Baltic sea area and methods for their valuation. This main intention is to realise a participatory, amusing and user-friendly process of social learning: invitations for active participation will be sent to potentially interested experts and stakeholders.

The highly participatory approach planned by BONUS MARES has already attracted the attention of the Unit for Environmental Communication of Uppsala University. BONUS MARES has been proposed for a collective interview and focus group to be held in Kiel in the end of June, on the value of the stakeholder participation in research projects. The aims and modes of implementation of the multi-actor and transdisciplinary approach, as well as its related benefits and challenges will be discussed.

Some preliminary results on the literature review and the opening of the active participatory exercise are expected by the end of the summer. To keep up to date with the latest project activities and



Project coordinator Maurizio Sajeve

results, please see the BONUS MARES website [mares.ut.ee](https://mares.ut.ee) and tab “Activities”, where the latest findings will be reported.

1 Heckwolf Melanie, Peterson Anneliis, Horne Paula, Jänes Holger, Karttunen Kaisa, Kotta Jonne, Künne Jana, Liversage Kiran, Mäkilä Kimmo, Orav-Kotta Helen, Reusch Thorsten B.H, Ruuskanen Olli-Pekka, Savikurki Anni, Sajeve Maurizio (2019). The systematic meta-evaluation of ecosystem services provided to humans by selected Baltic Sea ecosystem elements. European Marine Biology Symposium (EMBS)



## Know your scientist -introducing Maurizio and Jonne

To make our research more accessible and give further insight into the project, we asked a couple of our researchers some profound questions about their work and motivations. - Let's hear their answers!

"Why did you choose this line of work - what drives you, what do you aspire to achieve? What is your role in BONUS MARES?"

### **Maurizio Sajeva**

*project coordinator*

*PhD Governance and Sustainability  
Pellervo Economic Research, Finland*

"When I chose to embrace the career of scientist, the first thought was to try to do something useful for society and for the environment. Also, the desire for knowledge generates the adrenaline for continuous discovery and development. I am very interested in all scientific fields, and I believe in the uniqueness of science, as the continuous search for the 'possible truth'. Unluckily there is only one life available for this. As an economist, my approach is to promote economics as a more objective and hard science, less dependent on political orientations, basing on a concept of

use of resources for accomplishing human needs. This systemic approach aims to build equilibrium between human development and environmental sustainability, a process of social learning about development as freedom within systems' boundaries."

"I am the coordinator of BONUS MARES and working in particular on the meta-evaluation of ecosystem services' evaluation methods as well as on its representation in the geoportal, in cooperation with UTARTU."

### **Jonne Kotta**

*PhD, Marine biologist  
Estonian Marine Institute,  
University of Tartu, Estonia*

"I guess that this has to do with curiosity, creativity and willingness to expand horizons that are three important personal qualities of mine. But likewise I learned at a very young age that marine science is a truly unique and cool profession to choose. Namely, I am a second generation marine ecologist. I have far too many ideas and too little



Marine biologist Jonne Kotta

time. If we look around, we have too many societal challenges related to the destruction of marine environment. By linking scientific advances and policy I have a hope to stop some of this destruction and turn problems into possibilities."

"In the project I develop the overall concept of valuation of ecosystems and disseminate the novel knowledge using sophisticated but easy-to-use online tools."