

# BALANCE

## Stakeholder Communication Guide





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| Authors<br>Christiane Feucht, WWF Germany<br>Jochen Lamp, WWF Germany<br>With editorial and text contributions from<br>Tony Hare<br>Illustrations by<br>Erik Liebermann<br>Layout by<br>Astrid Ernst, Text- und Bildgestaltung |                         | Date<br>7 Dezember 2006   |         |          |         |
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## 1 PREFACE

**This communication guide is designed to help those involved in sustainable management in the Baltic Region to use the powerful tool of effective communication to deliver results in their work.**

It is part of a stakeholder involvement strategy in respect to marine management and zoning that will be developed within the frame of the BSR INTERREG IIIB project BALANCE (<http://www.balance-eu.org>). The final document of this report will include this guide, a stakeholder database and guidelines for stakeholder participation.

### 1.1 Who should use this Guide?

**This guide is mainly addressed to public authorities and policy makers, since they have the official responsibility and competence, and can be driving forces for sustainable management.**

We also recognise that initiatives are likely to be triggered by action groups, NGOs or other organisations. We are convinced that they will also find helpful tools and advice for their communication activities in this guide.

Governments and authorities have a range of instruments to influence the behaviour of citizens (Hesslink in Hamú et al., 2004). Traditionally the two main types of instrument have been the ‘stick’ – typically laws and regulations – and the ‘carrot’ – for example tax reduction or subsidies.

Here, we would like to stress the importance of a third category of instrument: ‘social’ instruments. Communication, education and public awareness are valuable tools which can generate understanding and stimulate public engagement.

We recognise that using communication widely as a strategic tool for any management activities and making it strategic will take up a considerable amount of time and resources. In the process of rezoning the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Australia, for example, the park authority engaged ‘Extension Officers’ to facilitate

the communication between the groups. We believe that this was one of several influential factors in the acceptance of the new zoning plan.

We would encourage readers to use professional training on this subject. We strongly believe that strategic communication will be an invaluable asset for the achievement of sustainable marine management.

#### **Why should authorities use this guide?**

Authorities are obliged by law to organize the participation of the public and of stakeholders in the different legal acts when changing or designating new uses for an area. The most relevant way of doing so is via communication. This guide helps identifying the appropriate ways of communication for different situations and thus better targeting and communicating more efficiently. Good communication raises awareness and understanding for solutions that the authorities are going to present. If done properly, it can enhance public support for a decision and create long-term commitment of concerned inhabitants and stakeholders and co-ownership for those decision.

Though it seems at short term like an added effort to invest in communication it may turn out to save resources and funds when giving communication a prominent role. The effort to calm down conflicts or even political and juridical campaigns against a taken decision can be much higher and more time consuming than investing these recourses and building trust in the initial phase of such a process.

Numerous examples show the significance and importance of stakeholder involvement for the success of marine management. Communication between all actors is the crucial element in public affairs. Providing information and ensuring transparency will lead to a fair and open process and is likely to ensure the future conservation of the site.

Furthermore the involvement of stakeholders is especially important when it comes to the management of areas where little information is available. Local ecological knowledge can be a great asset.

Gaining trust and confidence is fundamental to any initiatives involving decisions over people's private land and livelihood.

Winning people's trust is only possible if a genuine interest is shown in their views and if these views are also taken into account in decisions over the future conservation of the site (Sundsteht 2004).

## 1.2 About this Guide

**This Communication Guide provides ideas and experience which can help to promote and foster zoning in marine management with relevant and concerned parties and stakeholders. It addresses the importance of communication between all actors and stakeholders and demonstrates ways to carry out communication successfully.**

This Communication Guide provides a response to the need for communication in practical nature conservation and planning work. It is a BALANCE initiative and aims to enhance good nature conservation especially in marine spatial planning and management, taking into account the needs and views of all groups interested in or concerned by the subject. It is designed to contribute to better understanding by stakeholders about the objectives and constraints connected with a new management regime. For the authorities conducting the process it also increases awareness about the perceptions and expectations of users and stakeholders.

This guide will help you to perform your communication activities more strategically and more efficiently by providing tools and guidelines. It also provides you with different examples of what has worked elsewhere and which steps and components were helpful when implemented.

However, it is worth noting that:

- The guide is not exhaustive – there are many other resources available in print and online; and training/coaching/advice from communication professionals can often complement and strengthen communication activities.
- It has no particular legal standing.
- Although it does not attempt to provide comprehensive guidance on stakeholder participation (which also includes involvement, cooperation and empowerment) it does suggest valuable steps towards participation.

The Guide contains a Communication Toolkit and a set of examples from typical marine management processes in which a range of communication tools were applied. These are chosen to help allow readers to select the appropriate parallels for their cases and to tailor their own communication work.

## 2 BALANCE AND COMMUNICATION

One of the overall goals of the BALANCE project is to provide guidance in the zoning process to managers and decision makers, by turning science- and map-based decision-making tools into practical tools.

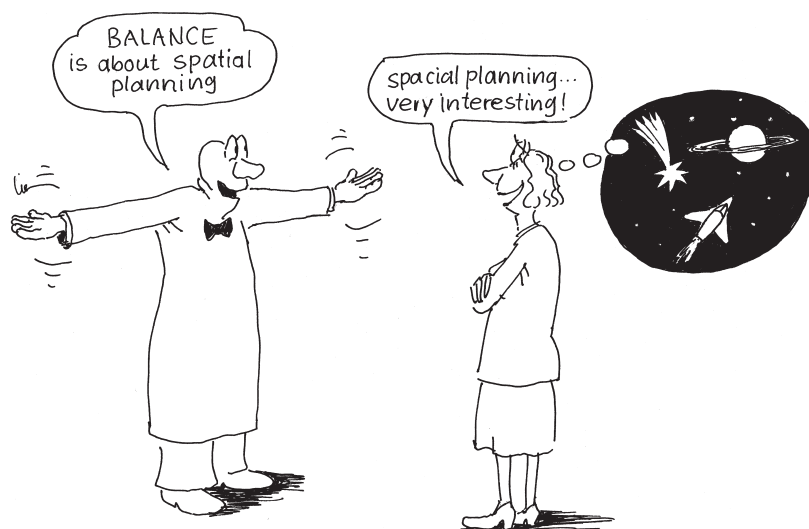
When designing the BALANCE project, the team anticipated that it was not only necessary to develop the background tools for management but to offer assistance regarding how to bring the messages out to the affected target group.

One of the most important elements of this task is communication. Communication can have many faces and layers: languages (professional and national languages), cultures, habits in different regions and also different ways of perceiving management issues in different circumstances (local, coastal communities, international business, international and multinational political for overarching issues).

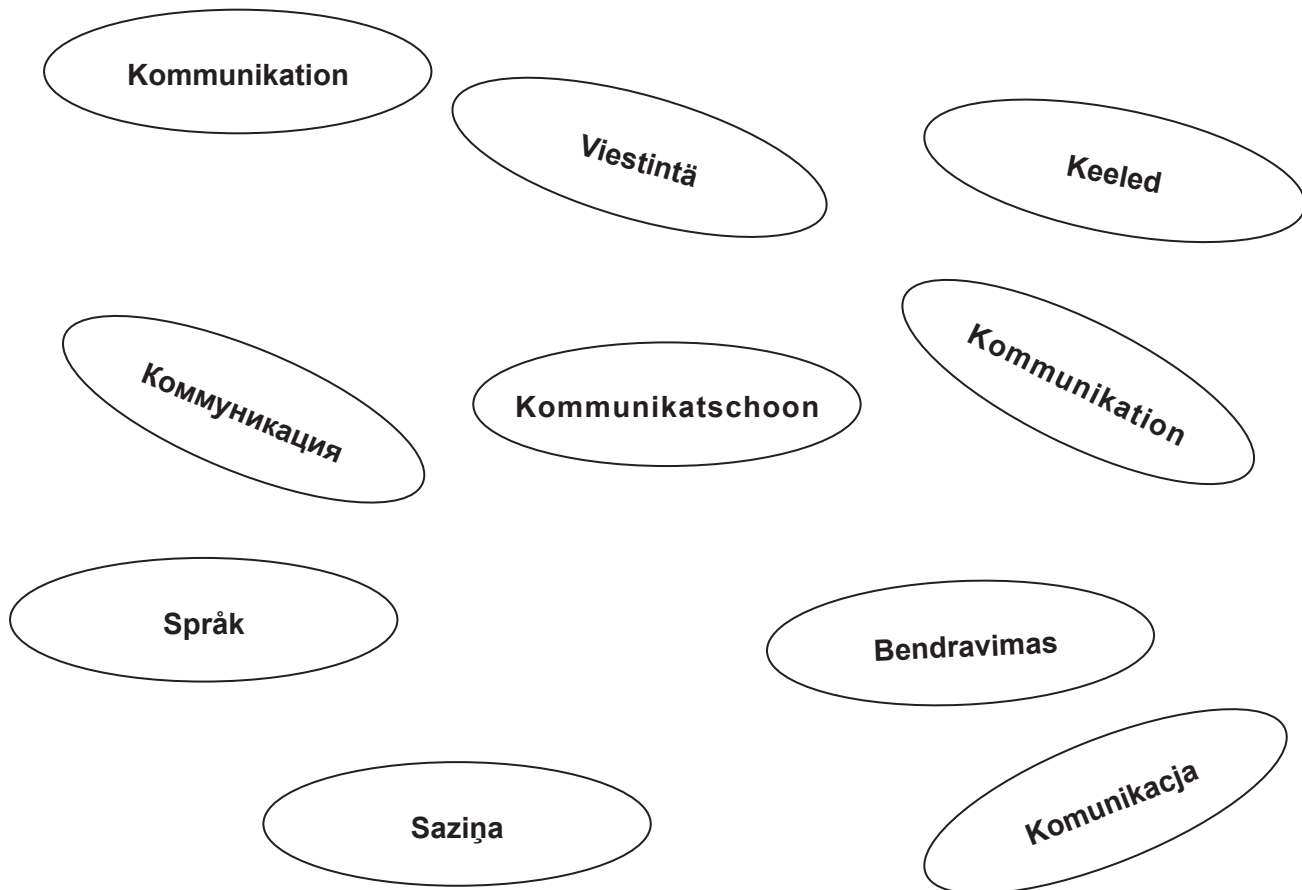
Indeed, to involve ‘real people’ in the decision-making process, and to make the objectives of management authorities understandable, convincing and motivating, communication needs to be take place in the contexts of the different languages and perceptions of people in the Baltic region.

### 2.1 Why do we need to communicate marine management / zoning?

- Zoning is a new and (to most people) unknown approach for spatial planning – an activity that will be carried out in the future which may affect all activities in marine areas. Establishing a dialogue between different interest groups and conservationists can help root out unfounded fears about the impact of zoning and management.
- Marine Management is the result of an interactive process among competent authorities, users and interested stakeholders in order to develop a shared and sustainable use (and non-use) regime for a given marine area. In an interactive process, communication is the critical element in any exchange of ideas and solutions.
- Zoning can relate to different scales, from regional (Pan-Baltic) and national to local, and can affect different stakeholders (and may, for example, also affect private land and property rights).
- Managing marine areas is a planning process that is suitable to integrate public concern in the decision-making.



## 2.2 Some background on communication



### **What is communication, and why do we communicate?**

Communication is the transmission of messages between people, with the intention of generating some form of action.

Communication is central to all human activities and is a powerful tool for achieving almost any goal.

Communication is not an end in itself. It is a powerful tool for delivering results. In conservation, communication skills are central to delivering effective and sustainable conservation results.

**More background about communication:**

Many definitions of communication, and many descriptions of theories about communication, are available in print and on the internet. They are interesting technically, but the best way to understand and employ communication is through action and experience. Therefore the case studies presented in this Guide are probably of more value than theoretical papers.

However, we have included a few theoretical references here for those who wish to explore the more technical aspects of communication:

This site provides a fairly user-friendly introduction to Communication Theory. The first few sections are useful, though the later materials are heavier:

<http://www.rdillman.com/HFCL/TUTOR/tutor0.html>

To explore such theoretical areas as semiotics (semiotics „deals with meanings and messages in all their forms and in all their contexts“; „the subject matter of semiotics is the exchange of any messages whatsoever“- in a word, communication), there is an introduction at:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>

There are several ways of transmitting information to people. These include both one-way and two-way communication mechanisms (Pomeroy et al. 2004, Table 1):

**Table 1:** Communication mechanisms.

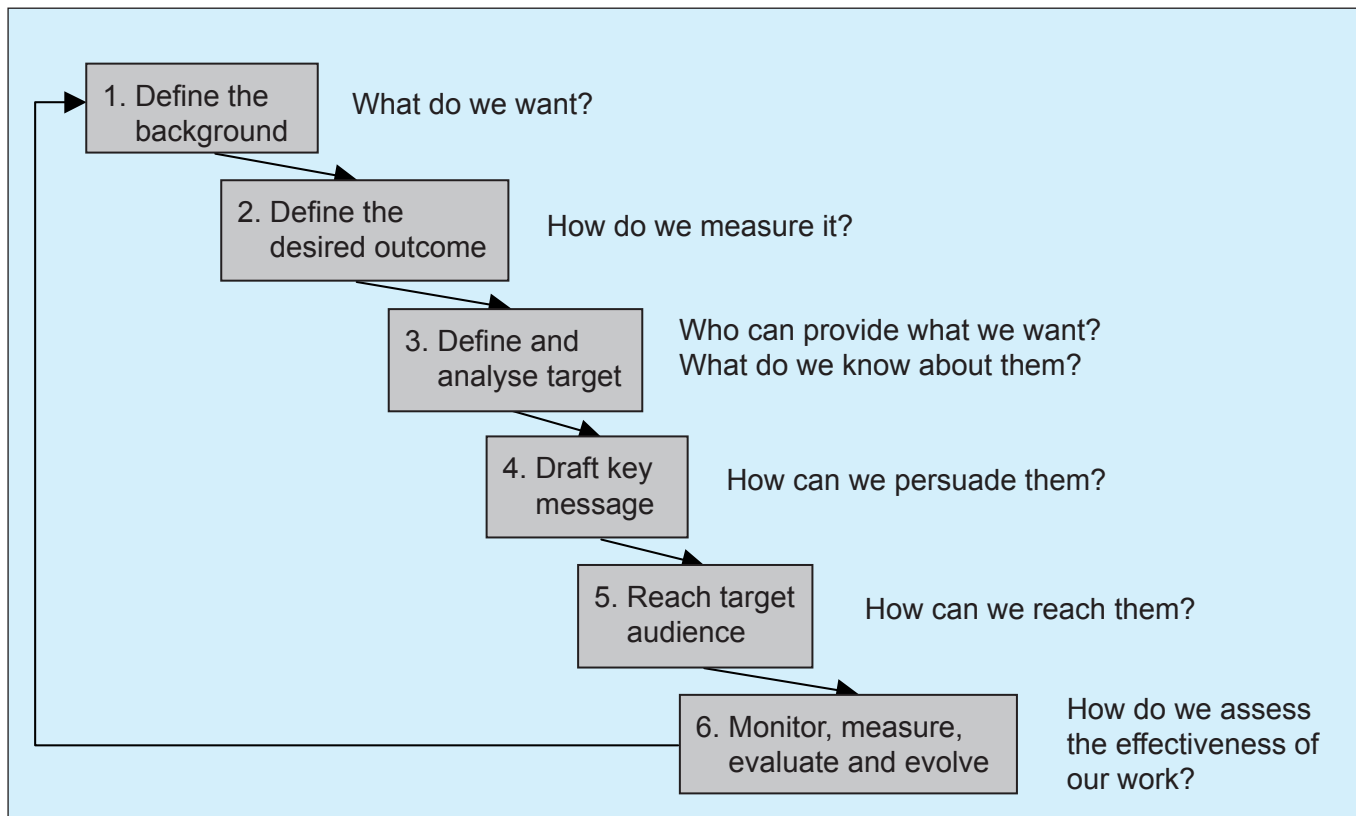
| One-way   | Two way   |
|---|---|
| Written materials (reports, papers)                         | Group discussions (in-person)                             |
| Visual materials (posters, pictures)                        | One-on-one discussions (in-person)                        |
| Oral presentations (in person)                              | Remote communications: telephone, video phone, web camera |
| Mass media: news papers, magazines, radio, television, film | Internet: e-mail and Internet chat rooms                  |
| Internet: World Wide Web                                    | Physical and electronic bulletin boards                   |



### 3 TOOLBOX: APPLYING THE BEST TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

#### 3.1 The first step in successful communication: take a strategic view

By following a cascade of questions a strategic framework for a communication strategy can be built. The basic principle is that we communicate with the intention of generating some form of action (Hare 2006).



**Fig. 1:** A strategic framework for effective communication.

Before, you start, clearly define who is leading the communication work? Make sure that someone coordinates it.

**Define the Background – What do we want?**

The critical facts in defining the background is: we never know everything, so we should start our communication when we decide that we have enough information. More information will emerge as the communication work progresses.

**Desired Outcome - How do we measure it?**

What we are trying to achieve? For better results and effectiveness, the defined outcome needs to be measurable. Even the rather vague outcomes sometimes suggested, such as awareness, can be measured – and must be, because otherwise there is a danger that the communication work is ineffective, or wastes resources.

**Target Audiences - Who can provide what we want?**

List the target audiences and prioritise them. When naming a target audience, try to avoid broad, general terms like ‘the general public’ and ‘the government’. These are too unspecific, and can lead us to waste resources trying to reach large number of people when we actually usually need to reach more specific audiences.

The audiences often referred to as the public can usually be segmented into more accurate groupings (which are easier and more cost- and effort-effective to reach) through careful target audience analysis.)

So, for each Target Audience:

**Define the target audience...**

... as clearly as possible. The better we define our Target Audience the more we will understand them. And the more we understand them, the more effectively we will be able to reach them. Seek out relevant information on the factors that define the target audience. Useful information includes:

- The Target Audience’s involvement in the issue (how relevant is it to them?)
- Their awareness of the issue (we need to determine this by asking them about the issue – see ‘target audience research’ below.)
- Their attitude to the issue (again, we can get an idea of this by doing some research.)
- Their demographics (the characteristics of an audience based on socio-economic factors such as age, sex, religion, social status, family status, income, sexual orientation, educational level and social class.)
- Their psychographics (the characteristics of an audience based in personality, ideology, values, beliefs, and general attitudes: it includes aspects like the newspapers they read/radio they listen to/ TV they watch.)
- Their lifestyle (do they go to the cinema? Eat vegetarian food? Have carpets or prefer bare floors? Read novels?...etc., etc..)

It is also very useful to know what are their barriers to acceptance of the call to action, and what would motivate them to accept the call to action.

We can find out about our target audiences through research e.g. questionnaires or interviews (see below).

**Draft the Key Message - How can we persuade them?**

The key message should be tailored to the Target Audience. A Key Message should always include a benefit for the Target Audience.

A key message is not a mantra or a script. It is an ‘image’ of what needs to be said to the target audience to persuade them to take the action required to deliver the desired outcome.

People involved in communication work can take the key message and put it into their own words.

### Reach the target audience - How can we reach them?

When we have achieved some understanding of the Target Audience we are ready to communicate with them.

There are many different ways we can reach our audiences. They range from the interpersonal – one-to-one meetings – to mass communication – national and international TV and the (global) internet. The most important aspect to remember is that we need to choose the tool/s carefully.

Far too many communication initiatives fail because those supposedly carrying out the communication fail to go through the process of analysis, and simply decide to produce a leaflet, for example, a website or an educational pack. While these may be suitable options in some cases, they are not necessarily the right approach every time.

A very valuable part of Target Audience research is to ask the Target Audience about the types of communication that they notice, that influence them. This can guide us in our work to reach the Target Audience, because it provides us with guidance on appropriate activities and products, from meetings to leaflets, to media and advertising.

### Measure, monitor, evaluate, and evolve - How do we assess the effectiveness of our work? What are the most relevant facts relating to the issue?

As we carry out our communication work, it is vital to be sure that the work is delivering the results we want. If it is doing so then we should continue with it until we reach our goal. If it is failing in some way, we need to evaluate the process we are using and evolve it, perhaps by changing the tool, adapting the key message, or going back to the target audience to try to find out why they are not doing what we want them to do. It is important to use the right measures – outcomes, not outputs. So in a leaflet-based awareness raising exercise, the correct measure is not the number of leaflets produced, but the change in levels of awareness in the target audience.

Note: the above is just one approach to communication strategy. It is tested, successful and robust. Even so, you should find the appropriate approach for your own work – many resources are available in print and on the internet.



Red berry example by Tony Hare

### 3.2 Some communication tools

The choice of tools we can employ to communicate is enormous! We list a few of them below (Table 2). But the critical question is: “Which are the right tools to use?” This will become clearer to us the more we know about the Target Audience.

Too often, communication work consists of a ‘knee-jerk’ response:

“We need to communicate.  
LET’S PRODUCE A LEAFLET!”

Leaflets can sometimes be the best communication tool. But not always.

We need to remember the huge range of possible tools available to us, and – using our knowledge of the Target Audiences – determine which tool/s will be most useful and effective for us.

Note that some tools are actions (such as meetings) while others are things (such as newsletters). It is the nature of communication that things and their use become conceptually united (e.g. writing a leaflet is an action; the leaflet is an object; using the leaflet is an action, etc.)

For the sake of clarity, we use the term ‘tools’ here to include both actions and things – it is just as reasonable to divide our communication elements into (for example) activities and resources.



**Table 2:** Communication Tools.

| Personal Communication | Media  | Print material                   | Events               |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Public meetings        | TV   | Press releases                   | Special events       |
| Information sessions   | Radio  | Info kits                        | Celebrities          |
| Forums                 | Print (newspapers, magazines, newsletters etc.)              | Brochures/leaflets               | Campaigns            |
| Round tables           | Web (sites)  | Letters                          | Competitions         |
| Conferences            | Other electronic media (internet, intranet, extranet, email) | Reports                          | Interviews           |
| Brainstorms            | Video/DVD/audio-visuals/photos                               | Sets of recommendations          | Guided tours         |
| Workshops              | Commercial   | Feasibility studies              | Theatre performances |
| Personal meetings      | Exhibitions  | Books                            |                      |
| Visits                 | Photos   | Questionnaires                   |                      |
| Formal processes       | Posters  | FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) |                      |
|                        |  | Information/education packs      |                      |

### 3.3 The essence of successful communication – reaching the Target Audience

**Understanding target audiences is central to effective communication! When we understand our target audiences we are well placed to work out how best to communicate with them to persuade them to do what we want them to do.**

Note – ‘Target Audiences’ and ‘Stakeholders’ are sometimes considered separately. However, in practice the two terms are effectively interchangeable. A stakeholder community is a Target Audience, for example.

In fact, all stakeholders are effectively Target Audiences, though it could be argued that not all Target Audiences are Stakeholders.

In the first place it is important to find out how to approach target audiences (if not directly, then through contacts, secretaries etc.). Be aware of the actual and the preferred channels of your target audience.

#### Surveys

Surveys are an important instrument for gaining information about attitudes, opinions, knowledge and behaviour of people. Surveys are standardized to ensure reliability, generalizability, and validity. Every respondent should be presented with the same questions and in the same order as other respondents.

Survey can be differentiated according to the way of communication is used:

*Interviews:* Face to face & Telephone survey

*Questionnaires:* Written survey & Online-survey

Complementing this guide, BALANCE will produce a handbook for surveys in which examples, experiences and different methods for the facilitation will be presented.

#### Interviews

Interviews can be used as the vehicle for questionnaires, and can be more widely used to gauge a target audience’s knowledge of and attitudes towards an issue. It is an efficient way of collecting information from a large number of respondents but require a staff of skilled interviewers. A clear advantage is that questions can be clarified with the respondent in order to ensure the understanding.

#### Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a useful technique to carry out target audience research. It is also known as *self-administered survey* and broadly used to gather information in order to provide better service or goods.

Questionnaires have advantages over some other types of surveys in that they are cheap, do not require as much effort from the questioner as verbal or telephone surveys, and often have standardized answers that make it simple to compile data. However, such standardized answers may annoy or frustrate users.

Questionnaires are also sharply limited by the fact that respondents must be able to read and understand the questions and respond to them. Thus, for some demographic groups conducting a survey by questionnaire may not be practical.

### Target audience analysis

When research has been carried out, it is possible to compile a table based on the six characteristics named above:

**Table 3:** Possible matrix for stakeholder (audience) analyses.

| Involvement | Awareness | Attitude | Demographics | Psychographics | Lifestyle |
|-------------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|-----------|
|             |           |          |              |                |           |

Other forms of analysis can be used. Here for example, is a theoretical table drawn up for fishermen in the Baltic:

**Table 4:** Example for a target audience analyses.

| Target audience              | Attitude/ Characteristics                                  | Organisation  | Interest                 | Internationality   | Communication-type            | Communication channels  | Affection  |
|------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Example:</b><br>Fishermen | Driven by regulations, used to accept regulations, rivalry | Nationally organised in associations and cooperatives | Secure income and future | Preferably national language, little international engaged | Targeted direct communication | Face to face meetings, workshops, meetings in small groups, short summarizing documents, maps | Negatively affected by MPA management regulation |

Target audience analysis helps to identify the specific characteristics of your target audience. The target audience may be a large group of people or just one or a few specific individuals that you need to reach. Therefore you should think of ways how to reach these people in the right and appropriate way to make them listen and understand.

## 3.4 Principles of communication

### Principles of communication with authorities

- Personal contact and dialogues are the best way to involve people
- Be very conscious about the information you share; share all necessary and relevant information
- Assure transparency
- Prepare and send out documents with all necessary information about the background and aims of your activities
- Seek knowledge and experience from others
- Recognize other opinions. Do not argue or criticize right away.
- Be open and flexible for changes and compromises
- Establish regular round-table sessions in an appropriate timeframe
- Invite only people that have a stake in a sector relevant for management in the area
- Clearly define the objective of the sessions
- Take an appropriate timeframe into account
- Jointly develop a common management goal for your area
- Take a protocol from each meeting and summarize the achievements, outline gaps of knowledge, point out next steps and forward it to all participant for comments

## Principles for communication with stakeholders

- For the first rounds of discussions, build separate stakeholder groups especially other authorities and different user groups. Later on, it is advisable to have separate, sectoral or thematic meetings with different groups
- If an issue affects only one group then it is necessary to only deal with that group
- Identify key persons and spend effort in convincing them
- Invite key stakeholders personally to meetings (formal letters won't do it)
- Don't be too formal! Create an informal atmosphere.
- Do not exhaust people with technical and bureaucratic presentations.
- Discuss a clear timeline and/or strategy for your process, but let stakeholders determine their own type and degree of involvement (agree upon the "Rules of the Game"), consider enough time for stakeholder response or input, some do not do this professionally.
- Frequent and regular meetings or contacts are necessary – maintain the momentum and ensure sufficient resources for implementation and rework
- People must feel that they are making a real contribution and not just being 'heard out'
- Take time; do not communicate with stakeholders under pressure. Be prepared to listen a long time, before you have the chance to make your point
- Choose the appropriate communication way, convenient venue and seating arrangements (not frontal, preferably round table)
- Consider how information collection exercises might also build support and ownership locally in the site and sites feature
- Provide statutory advice on conservation objectives and operations advice
- Have a clear view on your conservation objectives and be prepared to present them and justify, but try not to be too scientific
- Be prepared to prove your statements about the threat of the nature conservation objectives
- Make sure that you have facts and not merely gut feeling
- Invite neutral and accepted experts to answer open questions or to confirm your statements on this subject

Talking is a need,  
listening is an art.

Goethe

## 4 COMMUNICATING IN THE BALTIC REGION - DIFFERENT SCALES AND DIFFERENT CONCERNS

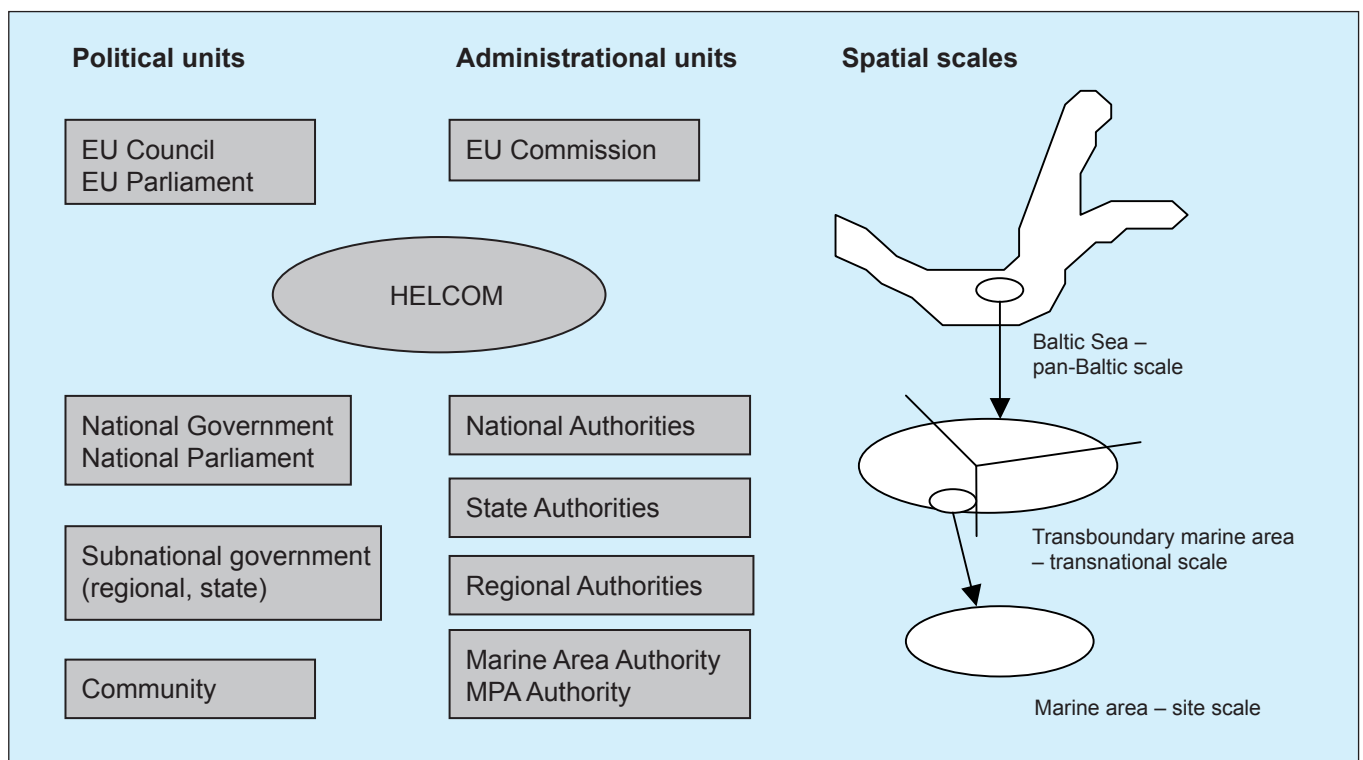
This communication guide is split into three parts, taking into account three scales of the Baltic Region and the different actors and stakeholders and different management concerns at each level<sup>1</sup>. (see Figure 2).

The three relevant spatial scales are:

- Pan-Baltic/international scale
- Transnational scale and
- Site scale.

Besides the spatial aspect of marine management, we would like to point out the hierarchical level, where management competences are carried out. These are:

- Protected Areas Authorities
- Regional, state and national authorities
- EU-Commission and international Conventions



**Fig 2.** Baltic Sea Area on different levels with the respective authorities and political bodies. HELCOM is an intergovernmental organisation and does not legally stand above national governments, but provides recommendations agreed upon by the contracting parties. HELCOM recommendations are not legally binding to Contracting Parties.

<sup>1</sup>

**Scale** describes the spatial frame in which certain activities are relevant.

**Level** describes the hierarchical frame in which certain activities should be carried out



**Pan-Baltic** visions and approaches to sea use are becoming increasingly relevant regarding the role of the Baltic region within Europe and the global framework. In the HELCOM-framework, as well as in other international fora, communication and other elements of spatial zoning have to be organized on this scale.

To address key players, communication can be used to influence decision-making bodies at an international scale. The **transnational scale** takes into account that there are transboundary features and values which only can be protected and managed if the concerned national authorities cooperate and stakeholders are well informed. Effective communication is needed to achieve transnational interaction, awareness and cooperation. Different languages and legal frameworks have to be taken into account. If marine management in the Baltic Sea is to improve, there should also be changes in international and regional policies.

On the ground, the **site scale** (with its competent management authority) is the most obvious level dealing with the planning and implementation of management in a marine area. This happens in most cases within one country and in one language. At this scale, the consequences of zoning decisions are most concrete and relate to individual persons and behaviour.

Communication between the levels is also of importance, especially when strategic directions and perspectives differ (e.g. national government positions vs. local site interests; pan Baltic strategies vs. national specific strategies,...).

**Table 5:** Examples for communication with different target audiences.

| No. | EXAMPLES  | Target audiences    |                              |                |
|-----|---|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
|     |   | (Other) authorities | Users and other stakeholders | General public |
| 1   | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Representative Areas Programme (RAP)        |                     | ✓                            |                |
| 2   | UK Multi-stakeholder management approach                                    | ✓                   |                              |                |
| 3   | WWF Voluntary agreements with recreational stakeholders                     |                     | ✓                            |                |
| 4   | LIFE-Project: Sharing scientific information on Cetaceans in Spanish Waters |                     | ✓                            |                |
| 5   | Engaging volunteers in conservation work                                    |                     |                              | ✓              |

## 4.1 General Target Audiences

### (Other) competent authorities

Such bodies can make decisions on and influence upon management factors. Effective communication with them is crucial for successful implementation and performance of a management scheme. Therefore the communication objectives have to be to share information and stimulate an active and positive attitude. By this you will find out, if your activities will have mutual benefits or possible conflicts that need a solution.

### Users and other stakeholders

They can have considerable influence on the acceptance of a management scheme and therefore on implementation and performance. They can be a crucial factor affecting the success of management.

They also can hold a considerable amount of knowledge. The overall communication objective is to inform and engage stakeholders in the management process. At a higher scale stakeholder groups will be representatives of associations, industries or other organisations (NGOs).

At the site scale stakeholder groups are mainly private users of the area and small-scale businesses.

Benefits of communicating with stakeholders (adapted after Sundsteht 2004):

- Develop an understanding of each others' interests
- Encourages the sharing of experiences in managing the natural values under threat
- Builds trust and confidence
- Encourages a consensus approach to management
- Creates a sense of pride and 'ownership' for the site
- Creates new socio-economic opportunities and partnerships
- Ensures continuity

Benefits of communicating with NGOs (adapted after Sundsteht 2004):

- Access to scientific and management civil society groups expertise on nature
- Support through campaigns and raising awareness activities for the need and benefit of marine management
- Assistance through fund raising for nature conservation
- Assistance through implementation of conservation actions on the ground
- Feedback though their acting as the 'eyes and ears' of society
- Mobilise people through their membership

### Politicians and Members of Parliaments

They need to be aware of the marine environment, its management and obstacles. Communication can help to gain political support and to influence policies and decisions. Decisions are taken at the Parliamentary level by the EU, national, county or community Parliaments.

The influence of politicians can be a critical component in implementing management in an area. But politicians also are subject to the trends in public opinions. Their reactions also lead and initiate processes.

Benefits of communicating with policy-makers (adapted after Sundsteht 2004):

- Leads to better integration of all issues of marine management into other and government policies bodies
- Encourages a more coordinated approach to sea use policies within the region
- Highlights areas of mutual interest and helps in strategic planning.

### **Don't forget the people!**

Positive public opinion is a significant support for management activities and implementations, while negative publicity can destroy even the best processes.

Therefore, it is worthwhile thinking about ways to inform the public in order to raise awareness about the necessity to preserve and manage the marine environment, and make commitment to share and promote the measures that have to be taken. Essentially, raising awareness activities have four main goals (Sundsteht 2004):

- To raise awareness of the natural values of the area and the conservation issues at stake.
- To mobilise interest amongst different sectors of society and engage them in the project's activities so as to encourage their long term involvement in managing sites.
- To provide greater access to, and possibilities

for enjoyment of natural areas whilst protecting fragile habitats and species.

- To disseminate and exchange experiences on best practice management techniques with other projects and conservation bodies.

Benefits of communicating with the public (adapted after Sundsteht 2004):

- Addresses concerns over the loss of wildlife and nature.
- Raises the level of awareness of Europe's diverse natural heritage and the need to conserve it.
- Provides additional opportunities for learning, discovery, relaxation, recreation, health etc..
- Encourages responsible behaviour.
- Gives individuals a chance to get involved and make a contribution.

### **Lobbying politicians (from Burson-Marsteller 2005):**

- Use facts rather than emotions to advance your case.
- English is the favoured language of a majority of European politicians.
- Think politically: Identify the focus of political argument, the values and interests involved, and the potential basis for consensus.
- Be transparent: Today's political orthodoxy requires all interests to have the right to be heard – so don't be afraid to be totally open about who you represent, or surprised about others being heard too. The EU institutions are more transparent than most national administrations.
- Allies, partners and coalitions: Search for allies, and build coalitions whenever possible. Ad hoc and temporary issue specific coalitions can be just as influential as long standing partnerships.
- Recognise that "sound science", on its own, is a poor lobbying message: Support it with reference to the social and political choices that decision-makers must necessarily make.
- Understand the policy - process - strategy interconnection: In Brussels institutions and processes make a difference. Understand the relationship between process and policy outcome. And timing is always crucial, as is targeting the right people in the right way with appropriate briefing materials for the different type of audience (official or politician).
- Lobby the advisors, not just the decision-makers. Decision-makers look first to their staff for help.

### **The most effective ways to communicate messages are:**

- Meeting (face-to-face)
- Written briefing material
- Conference/Seminar/Workshop

## 5 DELIVERING RESULTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE BALTIC – EXAMPLES

In a number of cases, effective communication has been used successfully to deliver positive environmental and sustainable results. In presenting examples, we intend to provide models of how it is possible for users of this Guide to apply communications to their own local, national and transnational and pan-Baltic challenges.

The communication tools (see above) used in each example are outlined.

### 5.1 Communicating at larger scales

Large-scale stakeholder participation was carried out in a rezoning process of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Protected Area. The Marine Park authority developed a complex procedure with two phases of public participation. They were aware that they had to take great efforts in order to reach acceptance and compliance of stakeholders for the new management scheme (Ex. 1).

#### **Example 1**

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Representative Areas Programme (RAP).

#### **Background**

Although RAP is a site specific programme, because of the size of the reef it is comparable to the Baltic Sea.

With this programme a new zoning plan for the marine protected area was started. It was implemented with phases of community and public involvement.

#### **Communication tools**

- Engagement of ‘extension officers’ for communication with user groups
- Internet portal with maps
- Meetings (600, at 90 locations)
- Information events e.g. staff visited every major town
- 2 official community participation phases
- Distribution of 76.000 maps
- Information material e.g. 90.000 brochures, more than 2.100 CDs
- 2.000 media items via television, radio and print
- Set up of a free-call number

#### **Results**

- 31.500 submissions
- 73.000 hits on the website
- 6.000 phone calls to the free call number

#### **Further information**

[http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp\\_site/management/zoning/index.html](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/management/zoning/index.html)

## 5.2 Communicating with (other) authorities

Coordination between different authorities endorses the management and implementation. Ideally joint efforts are taken in order to adapt and adjust area management to international policies, national programmes etc.

In almost every country there exists a hierarchical and complicated system of administrations. Competences are not clear or shared between different institutions. Therefore it is important to clarify the situation and develop cooperation between the responsible authorities.

Communication between authorities is needed, especially when different competences and responsibilities are concerned regarding the management of an area. The UK has an interesting model of authorities working together for the management of marine sites (Ex. 2).

### **Example 2**

#### **UK Multi-stakeholder management approach**

In the UK management and advisory groups with a multi-stakeholder approach are established for Marine Protected Areas, where the different authorities (= stakeholders) share their responsibilities. They establish a management group for each site with representatives from the authorities and communities involved and develop management schemes for each site and agree on a strategy that clarifies responsibilities. They also develop measures, monitoring activities and an implementation plan.

Source: Natural England

### 5.3 Communicate with commercial users

Commercial users are the ones that hold a lot of information about their working environment and are usually affected the most, when it comes to reduction of impact on nature conservation objectives. In order to get hold on their knowledge and establish a constructive cooperation for the protection of a natural value, early communication is of utmost importance.

The following example from Spain shows how NGOs started to share and explain scientific research on the status of cetaceans with local stakeholder groups. By doing this, they could convince the stakeholders that they were not against using the marine resources, but trying to find the best adequate measures and regulations in order to reduce negative impact on the species (Ex. 3).

#### **Example 3**

#### **LIFE-Project ‘Sharing scientific information on Cetaceans in Spanish waters’**

**Project Lead:** Spanish Cetacean Society (NGO)

#### **Background**

The Spanish Cetacean Society carried out a survey to identify all stakeholder groups in the region whose livelihoods depended on the sea. They developed a communication strategy specifically targeted at the different groups in order to find the best ways to reach their target audiences, one of them were commercial fishermen.

#### **Desired Outcomes**

- Raise awareness of marine conservation issues
- Inform them of the latest scientific developments

#### **Communication tools**

- Regular repeated shipping tours to selected ports and bays with three vessels kitted with information material on the marine environment and survey equipment
- Well-publicised programme of events, talks, monitoring activities and excursions

#### **Results**

- The tours created a constructive and informed climate for more formal discussions on development of conservation orientated management plans
- Stakeholders recognised the transparency of the process and the serious scientific work carried out by the NGO before advocating measures that may affect their livelihoods

## 5.4 Communicating with recreational users

Recreational users are special clients and a very diverse group. They can be tourists, people organised in clubs and non-organised individualists. The high degree of individualism in recreation activities makes it very difficult to communicate with them and involve them in any kind of management process.

The example from the Greifswalder Bodden Project lead by WWF Germany shows two aspects: the cooperation with organised recreational users and nature conservation agencies and the achievement of voluntary agreements for the management of an MPA (Ex. 4).

### Example 4

#### Voluntary agreements with recreational stakeholders in the Greifswald Lagoon, Germany

##### Background

The Greifswald Lagoon is subject to various nature conservation categories. It is designated as SPA (EU Bird Directive), as SAC (EU Habitat Directive), partly as Biosphere Reserve and includes 14 national protected areas. But despite that no management plan existed until recently. WWF took the initiative to start a voluntary process for management with anglers and water sports enthusiasts.

##### Process

WWF facilitated several round table discussions and negotiations with users and agencies separately. Data and results from both sides were visualised in maps and put on the table. Conflicts were jointly identified and solutions developed.

##### Results

It took 18 months with two full time staff to achieve one framework agreement and four detailed agreements signed by the authorities and stakeholders.

##### Communication tools

The process was accompanied by intensive press and dissemination work:

- Web-page
- 15.000 information brochures
- 48.000 detailed brochures with maps (12.000 for each area)
- 300 posters and information boards
- Journalist trips
- Press releases in local media

##### Monitoring:

Currently a yearly monitoring of the implementation of the agreement is being undertaken, involving the users, Rangers of the Biosphere Reserve and WWF staff, and as a speciality involving tourist into the monitoring. The results are discussed jointly at the end of each season.

##### Further information:

[www.wassersport-im-bodden.de](http://www.wassersport-im-bodden.de)

## 5.5 Communicate with the ‘general public’

Besides its surface, the marine environment is not visible same as the threats that impair it. Therefore many people are unaware of existing threats to the marine environment because in many cases they do not see the damage nor are they directly affected by it. There are several reasons for this: Threats, such as eutrophication, are not very obvious and some marine treasures, rare species or habitats are hardly known by the majority of people.

Furthermore only little or inappropriate action is taken to inform and educate people about marine issues. And thirdly, people are not aware about their possibilities they have to support and influence decisions of marine management.

People only support what they understand, so influencing target audience opinions through targeted communication can help achieving your goal of a better and more effective protection and management of natural values.

Education activities can be one strategy to achieve awareness. However, formal knowledge from schools does not necessarily lead to understanding or concern. The concept of environmental education as fostered in the frame of the UNESCO decade “Education for Sustainable Development” is more likely to get knowledge, motivation and the need to change behaviour across.

Engaging volunteers in conservation work is a useful method to raise awareness and understanding about the protection of species and habitats and furthermore, to get help in practical conservation work (Ex. 5).

### Example 5

#### Engaging volunteers in conservation work

##### Background

The beaches on Crete are important nesting sites for loggerhead turtles. NGOs faced the challenge to protect the nests from damage on a 40 km long beach.

##### Desired Outcomes

- Engage volunteers to help with the task
- Protect the nests from damage

##### Activities

Advertisements for volunteers across the EU

##### Results

- Over 200 people signed up and spent their summer helping turtle conservation work
- 600 presentations were given by the volunteers in different languages
- Over 250.000 people were reached (mainly tourists)



## 6 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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## About the BALANCE project:

This report is a product of the BSR INTERREG IIIB project "BALANCE".

The BALANCE project aims to provide a transnational marine management template based on zoning, which can assist stakeholders in planning and implementing effective management solutions for sustainable use and protection of our valuable marine landscapes and unique natural heritage. The template will be based on data sharing, mapping of marine landscapes and habitats, development of the blue corridor concept, information on key stakeholder interests and development of a cross-sectoral and transnational Baltic zoning approach. BALANCE thus provides a transnational solution to a transnational problem.

The BALANCE partnership is composed of the following institutions based in 10 countries: The Danish Forest and Nature Agency (Lead), The Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland, The National Environmental Research Institute, The Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, WWF Denmark, WWF Germany, Institute of Aquatic Ecology at University of Latvia, Estonian Marine Institute at University of Tartu, Coastal Research and Planning Institute at Klaipeda University, Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Service, The Finnish Environment Institute, The Geological Survey of Finland, WWF Finland, The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, The National Board of Fisheries – Department of Research and Development, The Geological Survey of Sweden, County Administrative Board of Stockholm, Department of Marine Ecology at Gothenburg University and WWF Sweden.

The following institutes contribute as consultants to the partnership: The Geological Survey of Norway, Norwegian Institute for Water Research, DHI Water and Environment, The Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences, The Sea Fisheries Institute, The Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute, Metria Miljöanalys and The Nature Conservancy.

The **BALANCE Report Series** included at the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2006:

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 1** "Delineation of the BALANCE Pilot Areas".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 2** "Development of a methodology for selection and assessment of a representative MPA network in the Baltic Sea – An interim strategy".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 3** "Feasibility of hyperspectral remote sensing for mapping benthic macroalgal cover in turbid coastal waters of the Baltic Sea".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 4** "Literature review of the "Blue Corridors" concept and its applicability to the Baltic Sea".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 5** "Evaluation of remote sensing methods as a tool to characterise shallow marine habitats".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 6** "BALANCE Cruise Report – The Archipelago Sea".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 7** "BALANCE Cruise Report – The Kattegat".

**BALANCE Interim Report No. 8** "BALANCE Stakeholder Communication Guide".

For more information please see [www.balance-eu.org](http://www.balance-eu.org) and <http://maps.sgu.se/Portal>