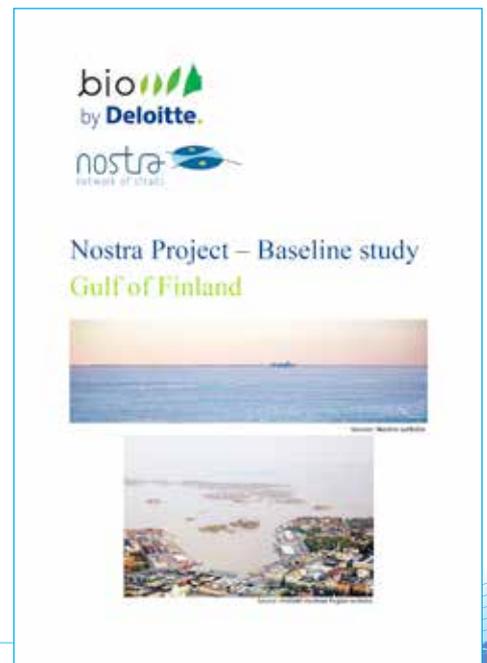
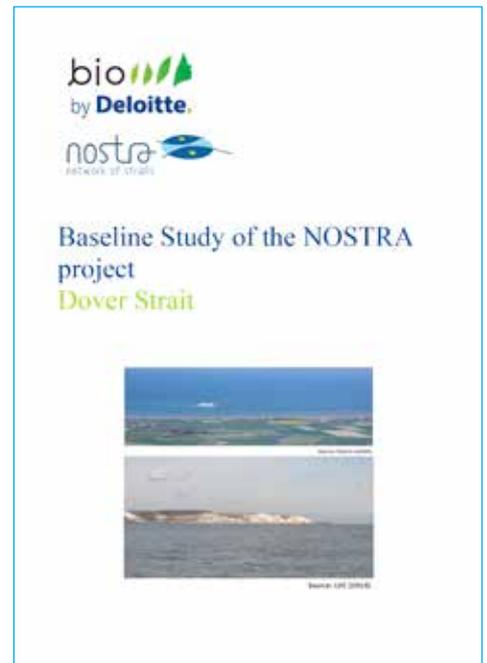




1. Reminder: key information about NOSTRA

NOSTRA is an INTERREG IVC project that aims at cooperation and exchange of experiences between partners from different European straits in order to implement more efficient and sustainable policies at the scale of a strait. The main objective of the project is the preservation of biodiversity and natural heritage.

There are 16 partners from 10 different countries and 8 different straits. The global budget for the project is EUR 2,36 millions, with EUR 1,79 millions of ERDF funding.



2. What has been done so far?

The first year of NOSTRA project; “See and learn”, involved visits to two straits that already work with joint governance tools: the strait of Kvarken in June 2012 and of the strait of Bonifacio in October. During the visits, the partners met local actors involved in the different issues faced by the straits (environment, transport...) to see how they are involved in their governance. These events enabled the partners to have a better idea of the governance tools which can be applied, ranging from the Kvarken Council to the International Marine Park in Bonifacio.

In 2013 “Analyse and study” focused on thematic workshops organized around the four subthemes of NOSTRA, in order to identify and analyse good practices for the sustainable development of straits:

- Workshop n°1, Dover Strait, Kent, January 2013: Seascape and Marine Spatial Planning
- Workshop n°2, Strait of Otranto, Lecce, April 2013: Tourism and Cultural Heritage
- Workshop n°3, Fehmarn Belt, June 2013: Maritime Safety and Green Traffic
- Workshop n°4, Gulf of Finland (Helsinki, Tallinn), October 2013 : Coast and Hinterland Economy

Information from these workshops was disseminated back to territorial meeting for each of the NOSTRA authorities, to allow wide analysis of the four good practices. This top-down and bottom-up approach worked well for the partnership.

A baseline study was also launched in 2012 to undertake an assessment of all 8 of the NOSTRA straits, in terms of biodiversity and socio – economic activity, these reports also examined state of what type of governance exists between authorities on each strait. Each report also made recommendations for future actions.

The consultants team BIO by Deloitte also produced a general report at the scale of the partnership.

At this scale, the study identified several drivers impacting on straits ecosystems and natural environments, in particular: tourism, transport and maritime security, and infrastructures. The study also highlighted the significance of biodiversity and natural environment in straits, often recognized at national or international levels through the designation of protected areas, with the presence of rare and endangered species and the existence of migratory routes for birds, marine mammals and fishes. The study distinguished two kinds of pressures on biodiversity:

- Pressures resulting from human activities such as pollution (due to intense maritime traffic and accidents or to land-based activities), eutrophication (due to the use of fertilizers in agriculture or to wastewaters) and invasive species (introduced by accident or intentionally, they threaten native species)
- Pressures such as climate change (one of the major threat: it impacts economic, social and environmental features of coastal zones)

The baseline study also highlighted EU policies relevant to these pressures and provided recommendations for the governance, knowledge sharing, and highlighted potential areas for future cooperation.

The full study (partnership and straits levels) can be downloaded here.



3. October 2013 - Final workshop in the Gulf of Finland

The final workshop focused on sustainable economic development and took place in the Gulf of Finland, in both Helsinki and in Tallinn.

The Baltic Sea is one of the most polluted seas in the world, but governments acknowledged the problem long time ago and currently support several institutions focused on protecting the sea. There is a long tradition of joint history and co-operation between Baltic Sea states and the Gulf of Finland has the potential to become an important economic area at the global scale.

Participants were able to hear about a range of initiatives including "Gulf of Finland Year" and maritime safety and pollution initiatives.

4. 2014 - « Think and act »

2014 "Think and Act" is the final year of the NOSTRA project: two cross-cutting seminars have already been organized, in order to highlight the link between all the issues covered 2012 -13 and to help each of the authorities consider what might be the ideal governance model for their strait.

Two main outputs are planned:

- The good practices guide will gather the good practices presented by the partners in a single document. It will assist with the capitalisation on these practices and will be a reference document for the project. It is currently being finalised by the partners and the project leader and will be translated into all 8 languages within NOSTRA.

- The implementation plans are documents that will be written by each partner in order to transfer some good practices presented during the NOSTRA project in their own territory. The objective is for at least a part each plan to address cross-border issues. Each implementation plan will highlight good practices selected and how they might be transferred or adapted at the local level. It will also briefly outline the context of each strait; issues, initiatives, stakeholders and funding.

The work on the implementation plans is already well advanced: partners have identified the good practices that they want to focus on and are undertaking discussions with the partners responsible for these good practices.

A final flyer is being produced; it will be translated in all the partners' languages and used for the communication on results of the project.

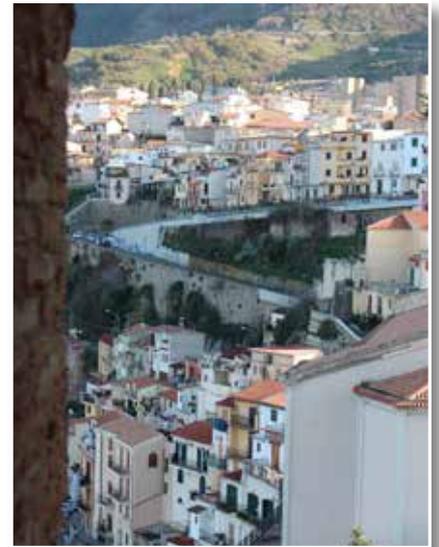


5. February 2014 - NOSTRA Seminar n°1 in Reggio Calabria: link between coast and hinterland

During this seminar hosted by the Province of Reggio Calabria, specific focus was made on the links between the coast and the hinterland. A general presentation of the Strait of Messina was made, followed by a focus on transport system, biodiversity and future scenarios of development.

The participants also attended a presentation of the baseline study results by the consultant team BIO Intelligent Service: a particular attention has been given to the methodology used for this study and to the synthesis of the results for each strait. An overview of the recommendations made by the consultant team was given, including recommendations at the scale of the partnership, of each strait (cross-border) and of each partner. It gave an interesting opportunity for the partners to comment the study and to react to the recommendations.

This first cross-cutting seminar was also an occasion for the partners to begin thinking about implementing some of the good practices presented in their own territories. Each partner selected the good practices they were most interested in for their implementation plans, in order that they could focus on the next steps of the project.





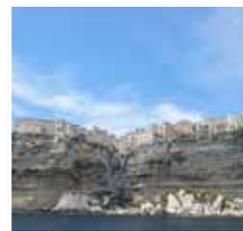
6. June 2014 – NOSTRA Seminar n°2 in Bonifacio: capitalisation of INTERREG cross-strait project

This second seminar, hosted by the Corsican Environment Office, involved working on the implementation plans for each strait and discussion of European funding opportunities to take the work forward.

Several presentations were made on the theme of biodiversity and natural environment in the Strait of Bonifacio, with a specific focus on the European projects (INTERREG, Life etc.) utilised over the last 20 years to help protect the strait's rich biodiversity.

In order to give an example of the use of several European funds within one project, a presentation of the Grand Site des Deux Caps (Two Caps Heritage Site) was made by Pas-de-Calais County Council. Pas-de-Calais County Council also presented the cluster Prime-C (financed by ERDF through INTERREG IVA 2 Seas programme), which includes NOSTRA project among other projects targeting Risk management and Engagement on the Coast. Finally, the Danube Delta National Institute (DDNI) made a presentation of the INTERREG IVC project Deltanet, which provides some useful parallels with the NOSTRA project.

This second cross-cutting seminar was also an opportunity for the partners to revisit the good practices and policy recommendations guide and to consider which good practices they would like to implement in their own strait. The seminar was also an opportunity for authorities around each strait to discuss and take forward their implementation plans.



7. Timetable for the 2nd semester of 2014

22-26 September 2014: last cross-cutting seminar, in Romania. Presentation of a draft implementation plan by each partner, discussion and finalisation of the implementation plans.

22 October 2014: final conference, in Brussels. Political representatives of the organisations involved in the project will be present.

23 October 2014: last steering committee, in Brussels.
More information on www.nostraproject.eu