

Lead partner experience in managing a Central Baltic project – case Waterchain

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The aim of Waterchain project:

- Reduce the inflows of nutrients and hazardous substances (plastics, perfluoro compounds, pesticides, pharmaceuticals) ending up in the Baltic Sea.



Two main approaches

- ***Raising awareness*** of the effects of everyday actions on the Baltic Sea and introducing various means to reduce the chemical and nutrient load.
- Reducing the inflow of nutrients and hazardous substances by ***utilizing environmental technology.***



Pilot watersheds utilized

- Pilot areas in each partner country; Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Åland
 - Raising awareness
 - Utilizing environmental technology
- <http://waterchain.eu/pilot-watersheds/>



The results

- Compiled in the web based toolkit available at <http://waterchain.eu/>
- Tools for ordinary consumers, decision makers, farmers, waterworks, wastewater treatment plants, event organizers
- Problems in the Baltic Sea
- What can I do?
- Best practices
- Available in English, Estonian, Finnish, Latvian and Swedish



Nine partners, four countries, different working cultures

Finland



Estonia



Latvia



Sweden



Åland



Various organization types:

- Universities (FI, EE, LV, SE)
 - Research centre (EE)
 - Foundation based research units (FI, LV)
 - Waterworks (AX)
- Experienced in international project work



Divided roles and tasks between partners

Various organization types

- Universities
- Research centre
- Found.based res.units
- Waterworks

... and specialities

- Nutrients
- Hazardous substances
- Removal technologies
- Analysing samples
- Modelling
- Transfer of scientific knowledge to practical actions
- Communication

Lead partner project manager was not an expert in all of the specialities!

How to manage roles and tasks?

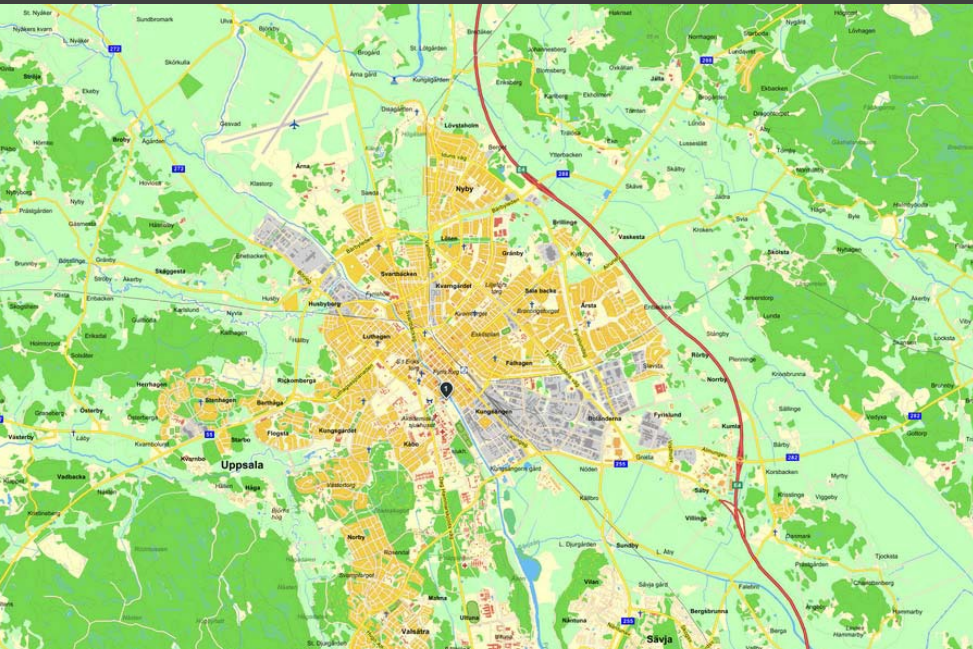
- With Waterchain project consortium we started preparations about one year before the submission of project proposal
 - Emails, discussions, face-to-face meetings with partners
 - To make the solid basis for the project work
- Clear project plan with deliverables and timelines, specified tasks for each organization, updated with further details during project time
 - Table format
 - Used as a poster in workspace to follow up the progression
 - What, who, when?


How to manage roles and tasks?

- To follow up the progress, monthly meetings either as teleconference or face-to-face
 - Face-to-face meetings 4-6 times per year; connected to steering group meetings (twice a year)
 - The role of project managers in each organization as local leaders
 - Reporting progress in each organization since previous meeting as well as common discussions on how to achieve the next goals
 - All organizations present



Visits to pilot areas
-
learning best practices & motivating to work



A group of people is gathered at night, looking towards a large, multi-story stone building. The building is illuminated with warm, golden lights, highlighting its texture and several dark, rectangular openings. In the foreground, a wooden railing runs across the frame, with a glowing lantern placed on it. A person in a dark jacket is seen from behind, holding up a smartphone to take a photo of the building. Other people are visible in the background, some wearing winter clothing like hoodies and beanies. The overall atmosphere is one of a social gathering or event.

It was not only about work

Remember to have fun together (unofficial activities) and learn to know each other

Project work is all about communication

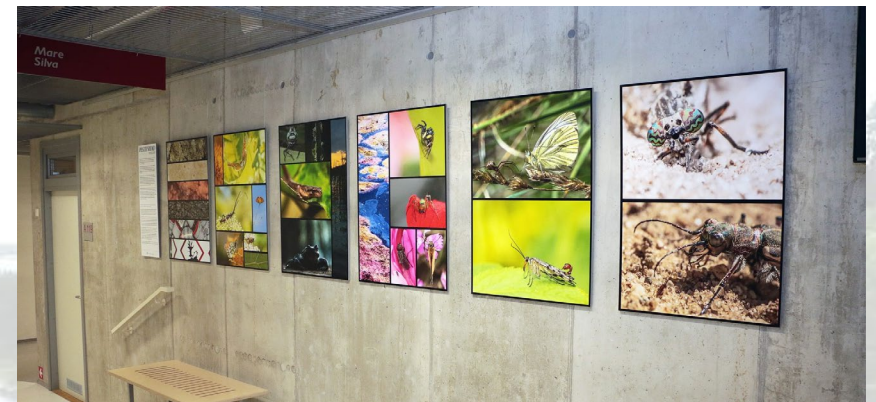
- Be clear, logical and timely in your communication
- Internal communication with project partners
 - Read the programme manual to get the main points
 - Share information, make sure that it is understood, follow up
 - Emails, phone calls, monthly meetings, GoogleDrive
 - Role of local project leaders!
 - Communication is vital for motivating partners to work for common goal
- Communication with representatives of CB and FLCs
 - Ask CB or FLCs, if something is not clear
 - All communication to CB through the lead partner so that you are aware of what is going on

It was not only a smooth pathway - Challenges

- One of the partners dropped out 2 weeks before submission of proposal
- One of the partners was about to drop out at the point of partnership agreement signing; 2 weeks active negotiation to solve the case
- Different working cultures (e.g. level of hierarchy) – open discussion to solve the challenges and misunderstanding
- The CB procedure of advance payment of 60% ERDF after submission of project report was used when started but was stopped after first project year
 - Financially really challenging for small organizations
 - No clear explanation why the procedure was changed

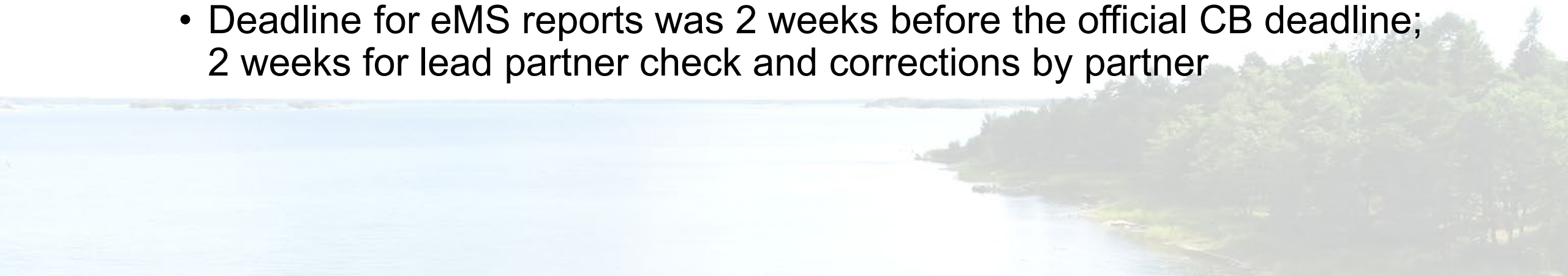
Communication to target groups

- Examples of Waterchain activities
 - Local workshops, e.g. Meremme tähden – For our sea's sake, Finland
 - My promise to the Baltic Sea (in social media and music festivals)
 - Pesticide exhibition, Estonia
 - Videos
 - Media articles; radio & tv interviews
 - Several scientific articles, 2 doctoral thesis
 - Website waterchain.eu



How to coordinate reporting?

- Deliverables; check points approximately once a month (project meetings)
 - Final version ready two weeks before the official dead-line; time for partners commenting and final modifications
- Simplified eMS reporting instructions to partners with further details in official guidance documents
 - Guidance discussed in project meeting
 - Deadline for eMS reports was 2 weeks before the official CB deadline; 2 weeks for lead partner check and corrections by partner



One project leads to another

- Several new projects started during and after Waterchain project utilizing Waterchain consortium
- Fruitful cross-border cooperation & complementary expertise in various fields, not only environmental topics





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I wish you every success and
the courage to achieve it!



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