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Culture and Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region

8 findings, a number of opportunities, and a way forward...

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Culture and Sustainable Development

in the Baltic Sea Region

***8 findings,
a number of opportunities
and a way forward...***

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List of acronyms

BERAS	Baltic Ecological Recycling Agriculture and Society
BSR	Baltic Sea Region
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
COP	Conference of Parties (e.g. COP 15: The 15 th Conference of Parties - to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC))
COST	European Cooperation in Science and Technology
DIT	Do-It-Together
DIY	Do-It-Yourself
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EU	European Union
EUNIC	European Union National Institutes for Culture
EUSBSR	European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
FORMAS	The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
MARIN	Media Art Research Interdisciplinary Network
NCM	Nordic Council of Ministers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RIXC	Centre for new media culture in Riga
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Introduction

The 1987 report from the World Commission on Environment and Development – better known as the Brundtland Report – aimed at uniting countries under the United Nations to pursue sustainable development. The report stipulates three kinds of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. Over the past 25 years these three pillars of sustainability have significantly changed the way development is pursued – not least in the Baltic Sea Region.

In the past 10-15 years, *culture* has been a candidate for inclusion as the fourth pillar of sustainability – with some success. At recent COP meetings for example cultural aspects of sustainability have grown in importance. In 2010 the UNESCO partner United Cities and Local Governments declared culture “The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability”. This was followed in 2012 by the Rio+20 UN conference, which declared: *“We acknowledge the diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilisations contribute to the enrichment of humankind and the protection of the Earth’s life support system. We emphasize the importance of culture for sustainable development. We call for a holistic approach to sustainable development which will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature.”*

The logic is that by including culture in sustainability one achieves a more complete development model which – it is argued – better embraces the complexity of societies and highlights the importance of culture as a driver of societal change and development.

Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region is extensive – particularly with regard to the three traditional pillars of sustainability. In fact economic, social and environmental sustainability were cornerstones of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region when this was launched in 2009.

However, the first Action Plan associated with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region provided few opportunities for developing regional cooperation – including cultural dimensions of sustainable development – beyond what could be related to education and cooperation in the tourism sphere.

However, the recently updated Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region *does* emphasise the importance of culture to sustainable development, as part of a dedicated Priority Area for Culture and associated cooperation activities. The Nordic Council of Ministers is committed to taking responsibility for advancing regional cooperation under the Priority Area for Culture – including by leading the Flagship Project *“Baltic Sea Region cooperation with a focus on culture as a part of sustainable development”*.

This paper is a first effort under this flagship project. It is an attempt to map stakeholders and activities in the field of culture and sustainability. It is also a first effort to engage stakeholders in a new region-wide dialogue aiming at identifying opportunities for synergies in current efforts, and to propose practical steps for further cooperation in the field of culture and sustainability. The longer-term objective of the Nordic Council of Ministers is, to take the first steps – along with partners from around the Baltic Sea – towards systematically developing knowledge and capacities in the Baltic Sea Region on ways in which culture contributes, and

can contribute more, to sustainable development – whether be it economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable development.

The mapping and reporting by Cultura 21 Nordic and Innogate, a task commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers, took place between November 2012 and March 2013. The team is grateful for the high level of interest and valuable contributions provided by the many organisations and individuals involved. Any eventual omissions of important stakeholders, networks or projects are not intentional but a result of the limited time available to pursue the mapping. We are grateful for any suggestions for improving this overview.

Mapping and workshop

Culture is of great importance to economically, socially and environmentally *sustainable* development. Culture is important not least because culture is a bond that brings people of a community (town, city, country or region) together and because it provides a framework that shapes people's standards and behaviour. In so doing, culture impacts in multiple ways on development in most areas of society. For example culture impacts significantly on business opportunities, job creation, integration, health, education, technologies, and creativity – and in so doing culture impacts on sustainable development.

This overall role of culture seems to be generally accepted, in particular – and not surprisingly – among stakeholders in the cultural sector/sphere but also increasingly so also across sectors/spheres¹. The mapping and findings reported here aim to identify current actors, networks and existing relevant cooperation activities that address specific areas related to culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region, including key areas of interest for further cooperation.

Annex 1 provides a list of stakeholders, networks and projects included in the mapping. The mapping is based in part on web research and in part on interviews with representatives of the various culture-biased organisations, institutions and networks. The interviews, desk research and analysis aim to shed light on the following questions:

- Who are the main stakeholders and actors driving cooperation on culture in the BSR?
- What are their needs, opportunities, willingness and interest in contributing to a new agenda for cooperation on culture and sustainability as part of the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region?
- Do stakeholders already have ideas or ongoing project activities that can provide a point of departure for cooperation on culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region?
- How could such enhanced cooperation on culture and sustainability be organised, and, in the context of the Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, be structured and implemented?

¹ Reference is made to global conferences on development under the UN, UCLG and other as mentioned earlier in this document.

The findings of the mapping, its implications and the opportunities arising presented below will be discussed at a stakeholder workshop on 29 April 2013 in Copenhagen. At the workshop, invited experts will provide further insights on culture and sustainability. When assembled, these inputs will, it is hoped, facilitate a discussion among stakeholders on the shaping of further cooperation efforts on culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region, including within the context of the Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

8 findings...

Our **first finding** – perhaps not surprisingly – is that the sphere of cultural collaboration and sustainability is complex, or rather there are a number of spheres. Thus the overview presented in this report is more of a snapshot than a full picture.

The Baltic Sea Region is very rich in networks and cooperation efforts – many of which build on and/or impact on culture and sustainable development. Take for example the “common Nordic identity” which due to history, geographical and cultural proximity acts as a lubricant for almost all kinds of cooperation. Or take environmental awareness, which has been – and still is – an important driver for many German partners’ engagement with colleagues in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea Region. Or the region’s common cultural heritage – evolved around and nurtured by the Baltic Sea – which catalyses regional cooperation on tourism. A good example of this is the CBSS Baltic 21 Lighthouse Project “AGORA 2.0”.

To provide a full overview of ongoing activities in the Baltic Sea Region which relate to the issue of culture and sustainable development would be a very extensive, and possibly needless exercise. No matter how detailed the research, we would never be able to provide a full picture of “who is doing what?”; “what is working?”; and in particular “what does that imply for the future of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region?” Only improved dialogue and closer cooperation can really illuminate the challenges and opportunities that culture(s) offer(s) for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.

We therefore encourage stakeholders to view the findings in our ‘light version’ as a point of departure for discussions which, when duly digested, will lead to concrete and feasible activities designed to enable culture to impact more strongly on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.

Is the BSR one region?

A particular aspect of the above-mentioned first findings relates to the character of the identity of the region. Relations within the BSR are not symmetric or evenly drawn. Some links in the region seem more profound than others: Examples are Nordic-Baltic; Nordic-Russian; German-Russian, and German-Polish links. Relations – and thereby co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region – are being driven forward thanks to these links. These relations and links impact on cooperation among the “Baltic-born” organisations, institutions and networks, many of which are encouraging cooperation on culture: the Union of Baltic Cities, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Baltic Sea States Subregional Committee are examples.

In terms of identity, the Baltic Sea Region is also asymmetrical. At any rate one can observe Nordic, Baltic (in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), German, Polish, and Russian (and Belarusian) identities.

We want here to emphasise these asymmetries, the reason being that one can often observe an ambition to *build a Baltic Sea identity*, particularly on the part of policy-makers.

Our **second finding** is to point to the feasibility of striving towards building *one* common identity around the Baltic Sea – to be connected by a sea which historically could be argued to have divided as much as connected. If the objective of “identity building” is branding, like the project ONE BSR implemented by Baltic Metropolises, there is a rationale. However, in terms of communication and cooperation *within* the Baltic Sea Region, efforts to unite around *one* common identity could prove to be exclusive rather than inclusive – or worse, counterproductive. For, which of the different identities should we unite around?

We will not go further into this issue of identity building here. We would simply emphasise the importance of recognising the regional differences. In fact, the differences and complementarities that we find may furnish the most important opportunities for integrating culture as a pillar for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.

Culture and Europe 2020

After *Smart* and *Inclusive*, *Sustainable* is the third word and key priority of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Possibly because the Europe 2020 Strategy is predominantly a *growth* strategy, rather than a *development* strategy, sustainability is communicated along the lines of the Brundtland Report rather than those expounded by e.g. the Union of Cities and Local Governments and cultural stakeholders such as Culture Action Europe; the Danish Cultural Institute; Pixelache and others. In other words, with culture as the 4th pillar of sustainability, including the notion of culture as an agent of transition or transformation, rather than “just” culture as a helper for societies to understand the need to adapt and mitigate.

That said – and **our third finding** – the Europe 2020 Strategy does provide a platform for launching initiatives that include a number of cultural aspects of sustainability, in particular when it comes to cross-cutting actions that are *both smart and inclusive and sustainable*. This link to the Europe 2020 Strategy is obviously important if an ambition to mainstream culture as the 4th pillar of sustainability is to be pursued. The Baltic Sea Region with its many cultural stakeholders, networks and organisations – the Baltic Sea Region being a pilot region for macro-regional cooperation within the EU – could possibly pioneer such mainstreaming.

The bottlenecks of transformation – cross-sectoral challenges

In an address to the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2012 Katriina Soini said: “*sector-based politics may very well be one of the greatest obstacles to sustainable development, as the*

understanding of sustainability varies across sectors. Might culture offer an angle to sustainable development that would integrate all sectors and sciences? I think the answer is yes.”

Among interviewees there is a strong consensus that the speed of social transformation is often slowed by policies mostly being sector-based and departmentalised; and that culture can play a vital role as an accelerator for transformation towards sustainable societies

Cultural stakeholders with their often bottom-up, participatory and inclusive working approaches can play an important role in de-bottlenecking problems associated with sector-based and departmentalised policy making. However – and **our fourth finding** – if culture is to impact more genuinely on sustainable development, cultural stakeholder must “open up” and engage not only with stakeholders in their own field/sphere but also with those beyond their home base and comfort zone among the like-minded. This view is expressed clearly by the umbrella organisation Culture Action Europe, but also appears in connection with the recent emergence of cultural festivals that reach out of culture and into other fields such as lifestyle, digital art, ecology, agriculture, etc. Future Perfect (Sweden) and Pixelache (Finland) are examples of this.

Perhaps we can learn something from the days of mainstreaming environment into (economic) development policies and programmes. For a long time in the 60's, 70's and 80's, environmentalists discussed mostly among themselves, i.e. in their own sphere, mainly confining themselves to addressing industry and agricultural stakeholders with a naming and shaming approach. Similarly, industry and agriculture viewed the environment mainly as a restraining factor. Few will argue that this “dialogue” yielded many results in terms of sustainable development. When in the 90s and onwards, environmental, industrial and agricultural stakeholders came together to find *common solutions* to their *different problems* (some wanted to reduce eutrophication and emissions, others wanted to spend less money on fertilisers or energy) the transformation towards sustainability began to accelerate. Today farmers, industry leaders, environmentalists and policy makers alike share a large number of objectives (for different reasons) on the green economy and sustainable development.

The bottlenecks related to mainstreaming culture into sustainable development are at least partly different from those related to environmental sustainability. However, there are parallels and lessons to be learned, not least in terms of enabling a dialogue across spheres and recognising that *different* stakeholders are triggered to engage in the *same* transformation for *different* reasons. These similarities and differences need to be acknowledged to unleash a more fundamental transformation – rather than the currently mostly fragmented attempts – to integrate culture as a pillar of sustainability. More on this – and a proposal – will be discussed as part of our eighth finding.

Challenges within the culture sphere

Our **fifth finding** is that there are – in the cultural sphere, too – a number of challenges in connection with attempts to engage culture as a driver for sustainability. The challenges are about finding ways to bridge the gaps – and create synergies – between cultural actors' approaches to culture, sustainability and stakeholder engagement and cooperation. Another

important challenge is that we also know too little about what works and what does not when it comes to enabling culture to impact more on sustainable development.

One can for example observe that stakeholders in the cultural sphere have different approaches to what culture and sustainability is and why they pursue it. Some are “pure” and emphasise classical forms of culture. Others are more hybrid and lay emphasis on creative industries as with “any other money-making machine”. Some emphasise sustainability as in the three pillars of the Brundtland Report – others on developing more sustainable value chains in textile design and production. When it comes to cultural engagement, some engage in response to top-down policy directions, others engage as a result of participatory processes at grassroots or project level, and yet others engage for profit or just to make a living.

Clearly some actions and cooperation processes are of a more fundamental/systemic importance. They facilitate, and illumine, the process through which culture adds to sustainability. Identifying, defining and engaging with these more fundamental cultural drivers for sustainability are tasks that remain to be done. In other words there is (still) a lack of knowledge, 'proof of concepts' and derived practices and tools to work with culture and sustainability.

If the culture and sustainability agenda is also to gain traction beyond international and national departments, agencies for culture, museums, art schools, NGOs, art and culture networks and creative industries proponents – in other words *beyond* its own sphere(s) – cultural stakeholders will need to make an effort to define and communicate more effectively ways in which culture in *particular* and *practically* translates into sustainable development. As key facilitators for cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, the European Union and the Nordic Council of Ministers can play a very important role in helping stakeholders undertake such joint efforts.

Opportunities

Our sixth finding is that the mapping revealed **three particular opportunities** for cooperation in culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region. These areas are characterised by: i) a fairly strong consensus in terms of interest among stakeholders/interviewees, ii) a range of ongoing activities that can be used as levers, and iii) their being given priority as development drivers by a number of cities, regions, countries as well as the European Union (including the EUSBSR) and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

We therefore propose that efforts to engage culture as a stronger driver for sustainability should target the following joint interest and priority areas:

- **Urban development:** Within this area there are many networks based on sustainable development. In most cases however, the cultural dimensions and drivers are not very explicit. This provides opportunities. The challenge might be to identify the specific focus and ‘right’ partners and levers at cross-border level, whether the emphasis be on citizen engagement and DIY/DIT cultures; creative cities and urban development; and/or, for example, more climate change oriented activities that connect hard and

soft areas of knowledge, policies and technological capacities. Cities like Malmö, Copenhagen, Helsinki and Bergen are some of those showing strong interest in this field – together with the two upcoming European Capitals of Culture, Umeå and Riga. Today, most of this work is supported by city councils but carried out by non-professional communities of artists/creatives, such as givrum.nu in Copenhagen; Kultur21 in Malmö and Urban Forum in Umeå. Some actors manage to stabilise and professionalise, such as Piknik Frequency in Helsinki, Intercult or Botkyrka Konsthall in Stockholm or Tranzit in Kaliningrad. There remains, however, a lack of stability and longevity, as well as the aforementioned knowledge building and sharing of good practices.

- **Creative industries:** The Baltic Sea Region is fairly rich in different and complementary fields of creative industries. A number of them have developed a strong sustainability focus, such as design, architecture and fashion. Also more community-oriented fields such as social art, street-based art, and participatory art forms are rather well developed and have already found their logical place in the search for sustainable urban transitions. In particular, EUNIC and its national cultural institute members are active in this field – as are a number of cross-border networks among other cultural actors in the Baltic Sea Region. KreaNord, a network umbrella organisation, is also an important driver in this area.
- **Social and sustainable innovation,** as understood both as the social process of innovation (crowd sourcing, crowd funding, co-creation etc) and innovation with a social or sustainability-oriented purpose: Building on existing strongholds, BSR would seem to have good potential to spearhead social and sustainable innovation. Cultural practices related to these fields are growing. The Baltic Sea Region also has strong traditions of active citizenship and a growing mass of social and sustainable entrepreneurs. Some of these are culture-driven such as the Copenhagen-based *Future Pimps* or *The HUB*, with spaces and networks in a number of cities in the region. Many of these entrepreneurs and innovators grow out of education and research contexts. This indicates that there are a number of opportunities for cross-fertilisation, of finding smarter ways of producing, consuming and living at different levels, be it education or society at large, in order to realise sustainable innovations that advance business, health and social inclusion objectives.

When implementing cooperation activities under these three areas, the *Do-It-Yourself/Do-It-Together/Do-It-With-Others* approaches could be engaged. There are already good practices in terms of approaches in the Baltic Sea Region to urban development for sustainability and artistically based education and citizen engagement projects. Examples are the *School of Critical Engagement* in Bergen/Denver; the Århus-based but fully international *Kaospilots*; *Pixelversity* in Helsinki (and Tallinn, from 2013); initiatives by Design Schools; and even by the Summer School in Weimar initiated by the British Social Sculpture Research Unit). Other examples are efforts to increase the liveability of cities through Tactical Urbanism efforts and/or enabling experimentation on a small scale with the aim of engaging local communities and actors in development projects before scaling them up in size and/or complexity, an ambition broached in connection with the regeneration of neighbourhoods in Skt Kjelds, Copenhagen, HafenCity in Hamburg, and the cultural centre in Tallinn born out of

Tallinn2011. This approach has also spread to creative industries such as fashion, design, filmmaking and photography. Examples – just to mention a few – include: SurvivalKit arranged by the Danish Cultural Institute in Riga; a number of projects and exhibitions up to and during COP15 in Copenhagen; and the work of the Nordic Initiative for Sustainable and Ethical Fashion. The market development potential is strong assuming availability of educated and creative individuals – as present in the BSR – but requires the support of trade organisations, as reported for the DIY and fashion fields in the EDUFashion project in 2010. This approach is already being discovered by some cities in the Nordic part of the Baltic Sea Region and Germany such as Århus (nominated European Capital of Culture for 2017, pending decision in May 2013); in Berlin and Hamburg; or attempted integration in a meta-urban project like CultureFutures that forges links and promotes engagement in cities such as Poznan and St. Petersburg.

A number of stakeholders interviewed also indicated a relatively high degree of interest in cooperation in the following areas:

- *Broader projects* focusing on sustainability/sustainable development through culture including awareness, learning and education activities such as the Norwegian Cities of the Future network, or collaboration between Danish and Russian cities on the development of local libraries in Kaliningrad with a view to supporting active citizenship and education.
- *Experimenting with forms of artistic practices* that explore issues of ‘ecologies’, sustainability, inclusion, or education – bringing together artist networks from within the region and beyond it.

Finally, a few stakeholders expressed an interest in (building on ongoing) cooperation on:

- *Greening of the arts and the creative industries* (with inspiration from the Dutch or British festival scene, FuturePerfect in Sweden, local cultural festivals in Denmark, and/or some of the events at Turku2011 and Pixelversity); *culture and sustainability as levers for non-urbanised regions* (with inspiration from places such as Bornholm, Nida or suburban areas like the Botkyrka Residency outside of Stockholm).
- *Projects focusing on the sea as the core of the region*. In this area the following projects could provide inspiration: 16 Places by the Danish Cultural Institute in Riga that tasks artists with developing a public understanding of designated spaces; M.A.R.I.N. in Finland that works at the interface between artistic methods and water management in the Baltic Sea; BERAS, which is a long-term collaboration on culture, lifestyle, agriculture, water quality in the Baltic region; and/or even the Metropolis project, including a number of Nordic cities.
- *Sustainability through community engagement and design* – to connect people, things, and sustainability in a strongly cultural approach (with inspiration from Pixelache, RIXC and the approaches of design schools such as the Royal Danish Academy and Design School, working with the concept of Culture Labs).

The complementarities

Urban and rural settlements, regions and countries in the Baltic Sea Region host an abundance of cultural assets and activities. Their current capacities and strongholds stem to a large degree from their endowments in the wider sense of the word, i.e. their location and hard and soft infrastructures; their concentration and diversity of cultural actors and institutions; and economic, social and environmental sustainability challenges and opportunities (including their portfolio of experiences, practices and solutions within the area of culture and sustainability).

Our **seventh finding** is that it is through the complementarities – rather than the similarities, perhaps – that partners from around the Baltic Sea Region will be able to make a new impact on sustainability through culture: complementarities in history, identities, spheres of society and approaches to sustainable development – and not least: the complementarities and thereby synergies in and among activities, networks and organisations in the Baltic Sea Region.

By improving links between the actors engaged in culture and sustainability efforts from across the Baltic Sea Region, there is every likelihood that they can support each other better by cross-fertilising ongoing efforts, and that the new connections between complementary actors will produce new awareness and new opportunities for culture's impact on sustainable development.

Pooling efforts and capacities could act as a catalyst for mainstreaming culture as the 4th pillar of sustainability, thereby accelerating further efforts in the field *per se*. In the longer term such increased cooperation on culture and sustainability would furthermore surely add to some form of *new* regional identity building – which in turn would further spiral cohesion and sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.

Put “simply” the task ahead seems in essence to be how to ignite a spiralling dynamic whereby culture and sustainability activities evolve and feed of each other – by engaging actors with their particular set of capacities and objectives, from across the cultural sector, across society and across the Baltic Sea.

Improved dialogue and showcase activities

Our **eighth finding** is that to put such development on track there is an urgent need for improved dialogue and in particular a dialogue that: A) patchworks the rich but currently rather fragmented state of activities and efforts within the area of culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region; and B) engage stakeholders at different levels from within and particularly *outside* the cultural sphere from around the region.

We do not suggest the establishment of complicated oversight bodies or committees but rather the commencement of a dialogue process that will: 1) address key issues and key drivers for enabling culture to contribute more to sustainable development; and 2) based on

current practices and activities around the Baltic Sea Region, identify opportunities for development and implementation of a small number of *showcase* activities that convincingly demonstrate the importance of culture for sustainable development – towards citizens and policy makers alike.

Referring to our sixth finding above, such key issues, key drivers and showcasing could target Urban Development, Creative Industries; and Social Innovation – and the importance for culture as a driver for sustainability in these areas.

To be operational we propose as a first step to enable a stakeholder dialogue over a 12-month period. The dialogue could be organised as illustrated in the figure below, i.e. with three workshops each addressing (different) key issues and drivers for culture and sustainability – followed by dedicated tracks to identify and discuss showcase activities that convincingly demonstrate the impact of culture on sustainable development.

Research; identification and showcasing of ‘proof of concepts’ and derived practices and tools to work with culture and sustainability could build knowledge about culture and sustainability – and fertilise workshop discussions.

The format, based on a string of workshops rather than a one-off conference, would allow stakeholder to build knowledge from where cooperation opportunities can emerge and to incubate new partnerships including with stakeholders from outside the cultural sphere.

Figure: *Improving dialogue on culture and sustainability in the BSR
- and translating challenges and opportunities into action*

To facilitate this, an initial group of 30 participants could be invited to Workshop 1. At Workshop 2 the same 30 participants would participate but this time they would be tasked with bringing with them a “non-cultural” stakeholder (be it a representative of social workers;

healthcare; reconstruction companies, industry associations, farmers/food associations, environment organisations, etc.). At Workshop 3 the same 60 stakeholders would participate – or an additional 30 ‘non-cultural’ stakeholders would be invited. The emphasis on engaging with the ‘non-cultural’ stakeholders reflects the importance of this dimension. If culture is to be mainstreamed as a pillar of sustainability this needs to be argued – and the value added established – particularly to stakeholders outside the cultural sphere (refer our fourth finding).

Furthermore, it is proposed that the workshops be held at different locations in the Baltic Sea Region (Kiel, Gdansk/Kaliningrad and Riga) thereby providing opportunities for on-site experience sharing and learning on good culture and sustainability practices in the Baltic Sea Region. Organising the workshops at the proposed different locations will also provide for synergies with other activities including: other projects under the Priority Area for Culture led by Germany and Poland; cooperation activities on culture and sustainability that also includes Russia; and activities associated with Riga European Capital of Culture 2014.

At the end of the 12-month dialogue process, a number of cooperation opportunities would have emerged and matured to a stage that would allow the various stakeholders, networks, projects, etc. to follow up with operational and practical activities.

In conclusion...

Looking through our findings above it is apparent that the largest obstacle for enabling culture to impact on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region seems to be a lack of knowledge: about culture-driven practises, tools and cooperation approaches for sustainable development. There are many actors that in different ways make an effort to impact on sustainable development through culture(s). However, their efforts remain fragmented – and knowledge of good (and bad) practices are not effectively collected and communicated. There is a need to link efforts more effectively through dialogue and cooperation , to facilitate exchanges of experience and mutual learning. There is also a need to assess current efforts if the key drivers for enabling culture to impact on sustainable development are to be better understood.

Therefore, as part of the 12-month dialogue process proposed above it could also be investigated if one of the existing institutions in the Baltic Sea Region could/should host a knowledge hub on culture and sustainability – a hub that would provide access to practices, tools and networks within (and beyond?) the Baltic Sea Region on culture and sustainability. And if so, should such a hub have one location or rather be made up of a number of competence nodes – say “Culture and Sustainability Smart Labs” at different locations around the Baltic Sea – linked through the main hub. The advantage of multiple decentralised competence nodes/labs could be that it would allow local actors to tap more easily into the knowledge resources available in their region and, and through the link to the main hub across the Baltic Sea Region. Both the main competence hub and decentralised labs/nodes could be hosted by existing organisations.

Annex 1: Extend of the mapping

The following organisations, institutions, networks and projects were included in the research – and for most interviews were implemented.

“Born Baltic” actors:

- Council of the Baltic Sea States
- Baltic Metropolises
- Ars Baltica
- Baltic Development Forum
- Baltic Sea States Subregional Committee
- Union of Baltic Cities

National and international cultural institutions/partnerships/network

- EUNIC
- Swedish Institute
- Danish Cultural Institute
- KreaNord
- FORMAS
- Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth
- The Baltic Sea Region Network on Education for Sustainable Development
- The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies

Independent foundations and organisations:

- Culture Action Europe
- European Cultural Foundation
- Union of Cities and Local Governments
- Intercult
- Pixelache Helsinki, Pixiversity, Piknik Frequency
- Heinrich Böll Stiftung
- RIXC
- Worldwatch Institute
- Tranzit Kaliningrad
- FuturePerfect

European institutions:

- EACEA – European Commission
- First Motion
- Northern Dimension Partnership for Culture

Projects:

- COST IS1017 – Investigating Cultural Identity
- Umeå2014 (European Capital of Culture)
- Riga2014 (European Capital of Culture)