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☐ Input
☒ Information

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OpenRisk II

SUMMARY

The recently approved OpenRisk II project (2M EUR, implemented 11/2023 – 10/2026) led by the Finnish Transportation and Communication Agency (Traficom) aims to provide new, practical and user-centered risk management tools to support the competent authorities and their cooperation frameworks in preventing maritime accidents, minimizing their human and environmental consequences and improving the quality of overall maritime risk management in the Baltic Sea region and worldwide. The project consists of three main components:

The first component, on accident prevention, will be addressed by a Baltic adaptation of the AISyRISK (<https://aisyrisk.no/>), an AIS based maritime risk assessment modelling tool in use by authorities in Norway. A new AISyRISK module for incorporating ice navigation risk will also be developed for use in the Baltic Sea and the Arctic. The end users of this tool are maritime safety authorities.

The second component, on minimizing consequences, will be addressed by implementing a regional online service on vulnerability of the Baltic Sea marine ecosystem to maritime spills. The project will also ensure compatibility between the project solutions and other existing systems and frameworks and prepare for integrated regional systems. The end users of this tool are national maritime response authorities.

The third component, an overall risk management performance, will develop a novel tool that includes two interlinked functions: a) to evaluate the current risk management performance of the administration, and b) the quality of risk assessments. The end users of this tool are maritime authorities, as well as other transport authorities and relevant stakeholders.

Purpose of the document

This is an information document.

BACKGROUND

Annually, competent authorities in the Baltic Sea region and EU-wide spend considerable sums on measures to minimize the risks of maritime accidents and their negative environmental, welfare and economic consequences. In a national context the measures and related investments are commonly justified by carrying out Risk Assessments (RA), or targeted studies identifying risks of accidents, their

¹ Input document number, to be assigned by the Committee Secretary

² Leave open if uncertain

potential consequences, and recommended risk control measures. Different RA methodologies are available for this purpose.

Besides national work, the countries worldwide cooperate actively on maritime safety and spill response within regional seas, macroregional (e.g. European/EU) and global (e.g. IMO, IALA, IHO) organizations in search of synergies and cost efficiency. However, in contrast to national work, joint transboundary RAs are rare, one-off initiatives. Consequently, joint transboundary initiatives and efforts on maritime safety and spill response, e.g. in the Baltic Sea in Northern Europe, are currently mainly based on political compromises, informed by national RA studies, but not on a shared risk picture or best available data.

Even if political preferences play a role, a key reason for the low level of RAs use in the intergovernmental context is methodological. Traditional RA methods have been developed for small areas and are based on a large degree of manual expert work, making risk assessments of entire sea basins expensive and time consuming. Moreover, the cost of such large-scale assessments makes reliable replication, and risk monitoring over time, practically impossible.

The current low level of use of RA in intergovernmental work results in a lack of a shared risk picture for the Baltic Sea. This leads to blind spots, loss of focus and inefficiencies in joint work -and eventually higher than necessary risk of accidents and environmental damage in the region. The current geopolitical situation underlines the importance of systematic risk management and related tools also in the wider transport domain.

The OpenRisk II project aims to bridge these gaps by providing three essential tools: 1) A Baltic adaptation of the AISyRISK tool and ice navigation module, 2) A regional ecosystem vulnerability assessment for spills, and 3) a novel evaluation tool for assessing administration performance and risk. These tools empower the creation of a regularly updated transboundary maritime accident risk overview, serving as the foundation for transboundary policy and decision-making.

1.1 Partnership

The partnership of the OpenRisk II combines practical end-user experience, scientific excellence, and intergovernmental dialogue in risk analysis and management. This collective effort is designed to effectively realize the objectives of the project.

At the core of our partnership are two national maritime authorities: the Lead Partner, the Finnish Transport and Communication Agency (Traficom, Finland), and the Partner, the Norwegian Coastal Administration (Kystverket, Norway). These entities not only ensure practical utility but are also the intended end users of the project's deliverables. To ensure the longevity of the project's efforts, the project plan includes the direct involvement of stakeholders through e.g., courses and workshops.

Furthermore, our collaboration includes four Academic Partners, each contributing the best available expertise. Among them, we have leading research institutions specializing in winter navigation and safety, such as Aalto University (Finland) and the Technical University of Gdansk (Poland). Additionally, we have partners specializing in environmental sensitivity regarding spills and related decision support, especially in safeguarding threatened species through the practical use of oil booms—University of Tartu (Estonia) and University of Helsinki (Finland).

Our collaboration extends beyond individual partners to include intergovernmental transport cooperation frameworks. The Lead Partner, Traficom, also serves as the coordinator for both the PA Safe and PA Ship in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). Additionally, our partner, the Northern Dimension Partnership of Transportation and Logistics (NDPTL), represents a cooperation framework comprising transport ministries in the Baltic Sea region, ensuring our project maintains a live link to transboundary processes.

Incorporating associated organizations, our partnership encompasses ministries and national agencies from Estonia (Estonian Ministry of Climate and Estonian Transport Administration) and Sweden (Swedish Maritime Administration), each bearing responsibilities for navigation safety and spill response. We are also engaging the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) Secretariat in Latvia, leveraging their expertise in state-of-the-art workshop methodologies.

This diverse composition of project partners and associate organizations not only guarantees the production of high-quality outputs but also ensures the practical applicability of our work extends well beyond the conclusion of the project. Together, we collectively represent the target groups of OpenRisk II, and our combined competence and collaborative spirit will undoubtedly result in the development of tools, measures, and solutions necessary to successfully address the challenges we have identified.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is requested to:

- take note of the OpenRisk II project (co-founded by the EU Interreg Baltic Sea programme) 2023-2026 and its aims in general,
- take note that via the project, the project partnership is interested in engaging IALA and its members in a co-development exercise for new risk management tools serving worldwide, regional and national needs to ensure that the movements of vessels are safe, expeditious and cost-effective while protecting the environment.
- note that the OpenRisk II project Kickoff Conference will be organised 6-7 March 2024 in Helsinki University premises (Siltavuorenpenger 3 A, Helsinki, Finland) with aim to gather appropriate level of practical and theoretical expertise on risk assessments.
- Further note that the OpenRisk II project Kickoff Conference aims to gather end-user requirements and views for subsequent development work on the three components of the project. Active attendance will help to ensure that the project outputs will optimally serve the work of the maritime risk assessment community in the Baltic Sea region as well as EU-, and worldwide.