



EUROPEAN  
REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
FUND

# Summary notes

from the workshop on Multi-level governance in the Baltic  
Sea Region (5<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, Online)

Authors: Kai Böhme, Andrea Morf, Julia Sandsten

22/11/2021

# Contents

Overall findings.....	3
Detailed findings .....	5
Setting up the governance structure .....	5
Stakeholder involvement.....	6
Solutions and implementation .....	7
Evaluation and learning .....	8
Appendix.....	10

## Overall findings

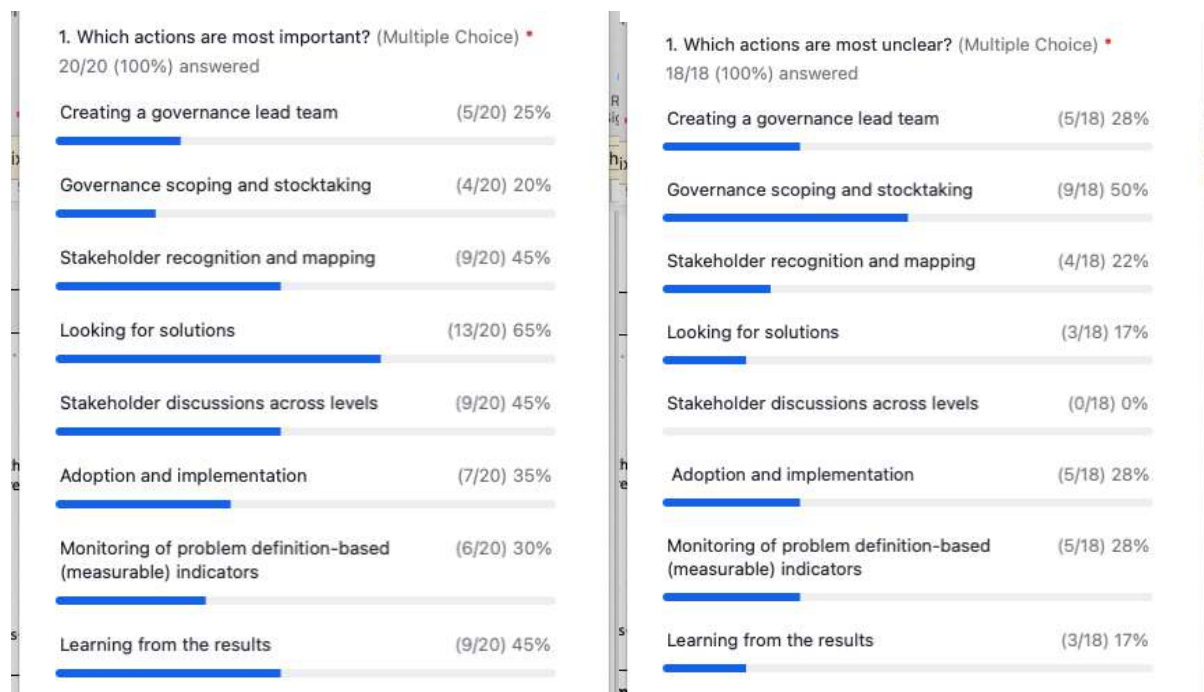
Overall, the draft Agenda is well received, and the work has been appreciated by the experts, project members and participants in the workshop on 05.11.2021. The reflections presented in this paper are rather straightforward and easy to accommodate in the further revision of the agenda document.

**Short and easy.** As often in these cases the comments point at a balance between (a) making the document as short and concise as possible, and (b) providing more details and guidance for all kinds of different issues and players addressed. Following the main purpose of the document, we suggest opting for a short and concise document, which is easy to understand and digest. Follow the KISS principle (keep it simple, stupid). In the introduction one possibly can say, that given the range of different issues and players to which this agenda applies, it is impossible to give detailed guidance. It is up to everybody who wants to use the agenda to 'translate' it into concrete steps and measures to be taken in the respective context. However, providing a *few* illustrations or examples with links to assist interpretation e.g. in separate boxes may be fine.

**Definition of multilevel governance.** The understanding of multilevel governance underlying the agenda could possibly be spelled out more clearly in a textbox. Key points are the importance of multilevel governance to handle complex tasks, the range of levels (down to neighbourhoods) and sectors to be involved, the need to be flexible and context-dependent, e.g. linked to the text where you outline the multilevel governance charter of the European Committee of the Regions.

**Strengthen explanation of some 'actions'.** Following the workshop it appears that some actions might benefit from a better presentation or explanation, as the participants considered them less relevant and more unclear (see screenshots from polling). These are in particular the actions 'governances scoping & stocktaking' and 'creating governance lead team'.

**Figure 0.1 Poll results on importance and clarity of actions**



Source: Zoom poll at workshop

**Avoid chronological receipts.** As multilevel governance processes need to be flexible and are heavily process dependent, the various actions and steps can come in different orders and might need to be repeated in different orders. This all depends on where a process starts. Therefore, any impression that the agenda presents chronological steps to be taken should be avoided. The suggested circular graph is a step away from the chronological.

**Tips and tricks.** To meet some of the demands for more detailed guidance, it could be considered to include some tips and tricks in the agenda – or follow up with a later document on tips and tricks on how to use it. In principle the tools section or the sections on 'lessons learned from Land-Sea-Act' could serve as a starting point for such a tips and tricks section, or the presentation of the case studies could be twisted in that direction (i.e. practical lessons learned).

**Skills and capacities.** Applying the agenda requires skills and capacities of the players who are supposed to initiate and lead such multilevel governance processes as well as of those participating. It might be worthwhile to mention the need for capacity building related to running multilevel governance processes somewhere in the agenda, or if possible even point out a few key skills and capacities needed.

**Communication plan.** For the agenda to become used and useful, the project team might want to develop a communication plan on how to spread the message, once the agenda has been finalised. Basically, the real work only starts once the document is published.

## Detailed findings

Besides these general points, there are also some more specific takeaways for the various sections of the agenda.

## Setting up the governance structure

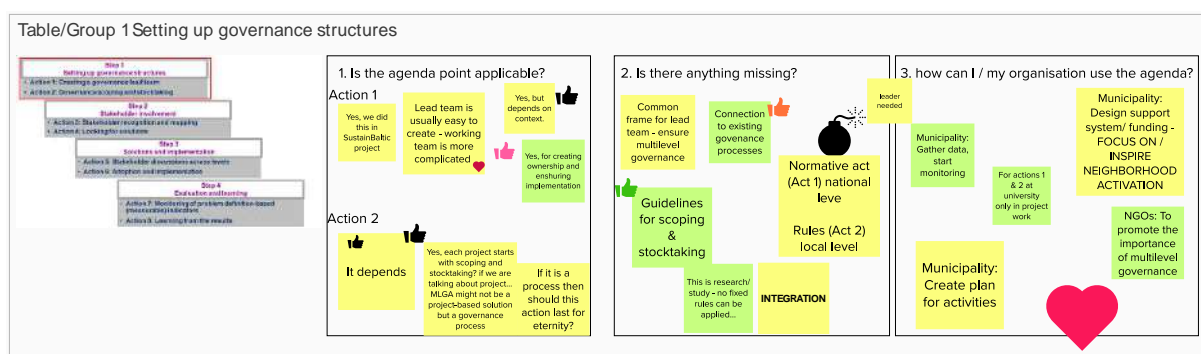
**Strengthened explanation.** It seems this part was the most difficult for participants to grasp. Therefore, maybe the text needs to be made easier to understand. This could include better explanations of what is meant as well as the cutting down on terms which are difficult to understand for 'outsiders' (e.g. 'governance scoping' or 'governance structure').

**Link to existing governance processes.** Multilevel governance structures should not be a parallel universe but clearly build on and link to existing governance processes and structures. Possibly this needs to be said more clearly in the introduction to this section (including the need for a common frame).

**Shared understanding.** The lead team needs to develop a shared understanding of the 'mission' and 'character' of the multilevel governance processes which can serve as

common framework for their work. It is important to allow time for this initial discussion, in parallel to further scoping.

**Figure 0.1 Mural table 1 – setting up the governance structure**



Source: Mural of breakout session at workshop (also see Appendix)

## Stakeholder involvement

**Action 3 & 5.** As commented earlier, we propose to gather actions '3 – stakeholder recognition and mapping' and '5 – stakeholder discussion across levels' in the part of the agenda

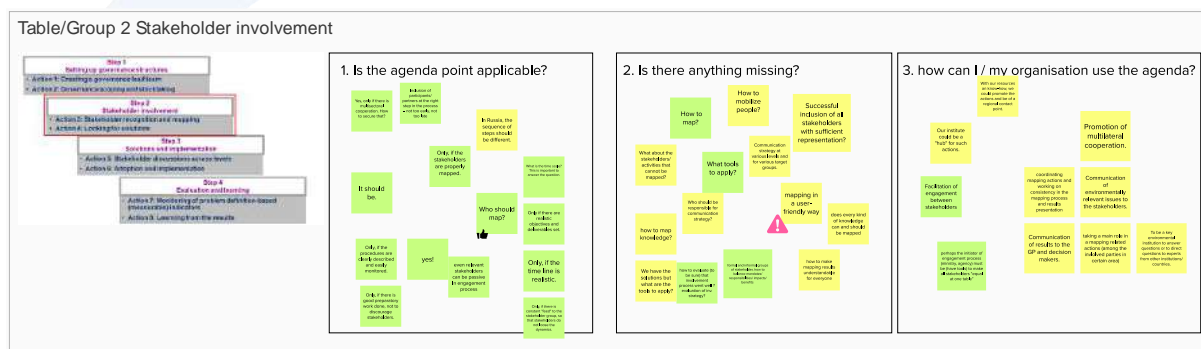
**Clarity on responsibilities.** The question of responsibilities and tasks might need to be made clearer in the text, e.g. who should do the stakeholder mapping. Furthermore, important points are realistic timelines and transparency.

**Multitude of stakeholders.** The considerable breadth of possible players to be involved or at least considered for the stakeholder mapping must be clear. This goes beyond the usual administrative levels and sectors. Depending on the issue at stake, it can involve citizens, neighbourhoods, local and regional hubs for specific topics etc.

**How to mobilise players.** Once the stakeholders have been mapped the question is how to address and mobilise them, especially if more long-term engagement is needed. Here some tips and tricks from the case study experience could be helpful.

**Reasons for and qualities of the process:** It should be clear why stakeholders are to be involved and what they can get out of it. It is also important to describe and define important process qualities, such as transparency and legitimacy and how it can be promoted.

**Figure 0.2 Mural table 2 – stakeholder involvement**



Source: Mural of breakout session at workshop (also see Appendix)

## Solutions and implementation

**Action 4 & 6.** As commented earlier, we propose to gather actions '4 – Looking for solutions' and '6 – adoption and implementation' in the part of the agenda

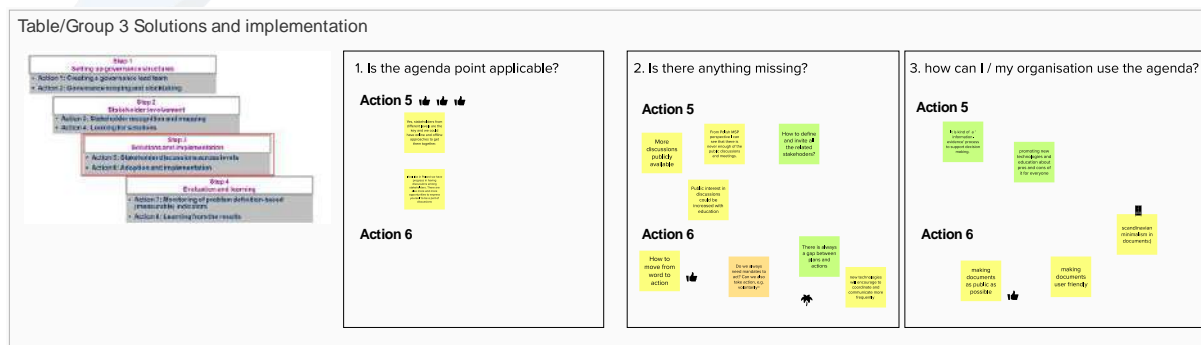
**Form word to action.** Moving from general discussions of possible solutions to implementation is often the most difficult tasks. If there are any lessons learned from the cases studies on how to facilitate this process, it would be a good text box on tips and tricks.

**Mandate questions.** Working in the public domain, the question is often about who has or gives the mandate to do what in rather flexible multilevel governance processes. While

all players certainly only can act within their 'room for manoeuvre', it might be worthwhile to encourage them to use that to every extent possible rather than waiting for order from a higher authority. Maybe this could be mentioned in the agenda.

**Communicative.** What applies to the agenda as such, does also apply to all documents produced in the context of a multilevel governance processes. They should be easily accessible, clear, short, concise and preferably publicly available. Maybe this could be mentioned in the agenda.

**Figure 0.3 Mural table 3 – solutions and implementation**



Source: Mural of breakout session at workshop (also see Appendix)

## Evaluation and learning

**Purpose of evaluation and learning.** It might be worthwhile to spell out more clearly the purpose of evaluations and learning in a policy cycle, i.e. to be able to reflect and improve the policy (in this case the multilevel governance process and what it shall achieve). This does not necessarily require an elaborated evaluation and monitoring systems as know from many EU programmes. Form follows function. Therefore, make clear what the function of the evaluation is and that learning from negative experience is often more valuable than learning from best practice. The need for interactive reflection and discussion across the involved levels should be emphasised here.

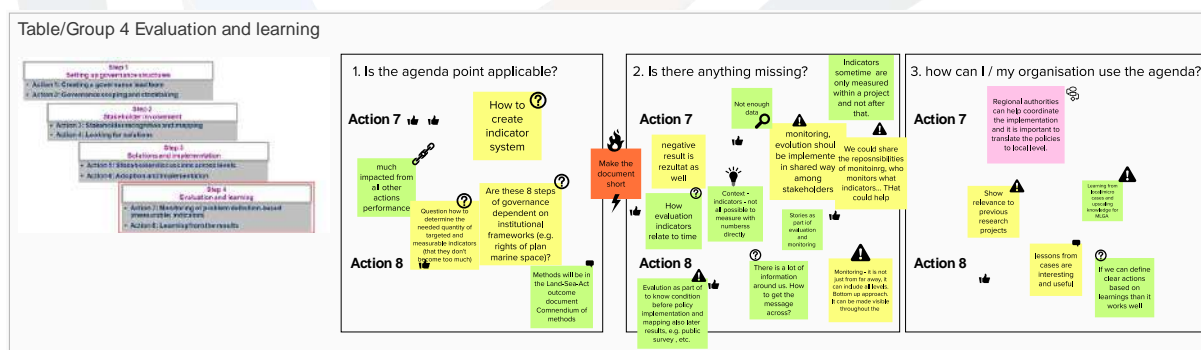


**Examples.** If there are any examples of evaluation and monitoring activities in the case studies, this could be worthwhile a textbox on tips and tricks, e.g. highlighting the indicators or methods used (as a possible example).

**Mission oriented approach.** In general, for evaluations and learning it might be worthwhile to consider 'mission-oriented approach' and 'impact path ways' as theoretical framework to avoid getting trapped in formalistic systems. Although it comes from a different context the report by Mariana Mazzucato on 'a problem-solving approach to fuel innovation-led growth'<sup>1</sup> could be interesting.

**Clarity on responsibilities.** The question of responsibilities and tasks might need to be made clearer in the text, e.g. who should do what when it comes to evaluations. Is the task of the governance lead team? Evaluation needs to be planned for from the beginning and to be able to reflect together on the results of evaluation (across boundaries/borders/levels) there is a need to develop a common system.

**Figure 0.4 Mural table 4 – evaluation and learning**

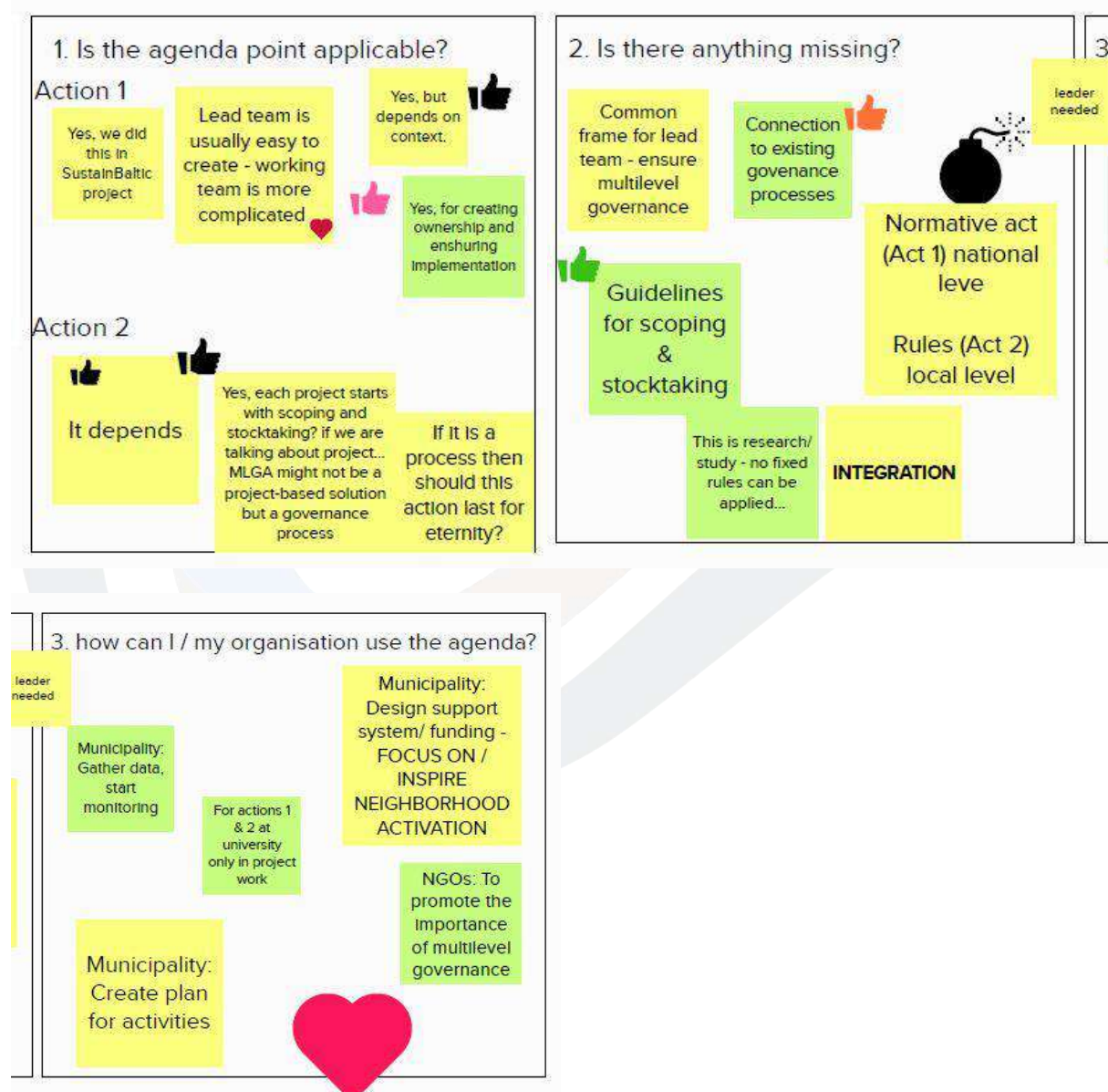


Source: Mural of breakout session at workshop (also see Appendix)

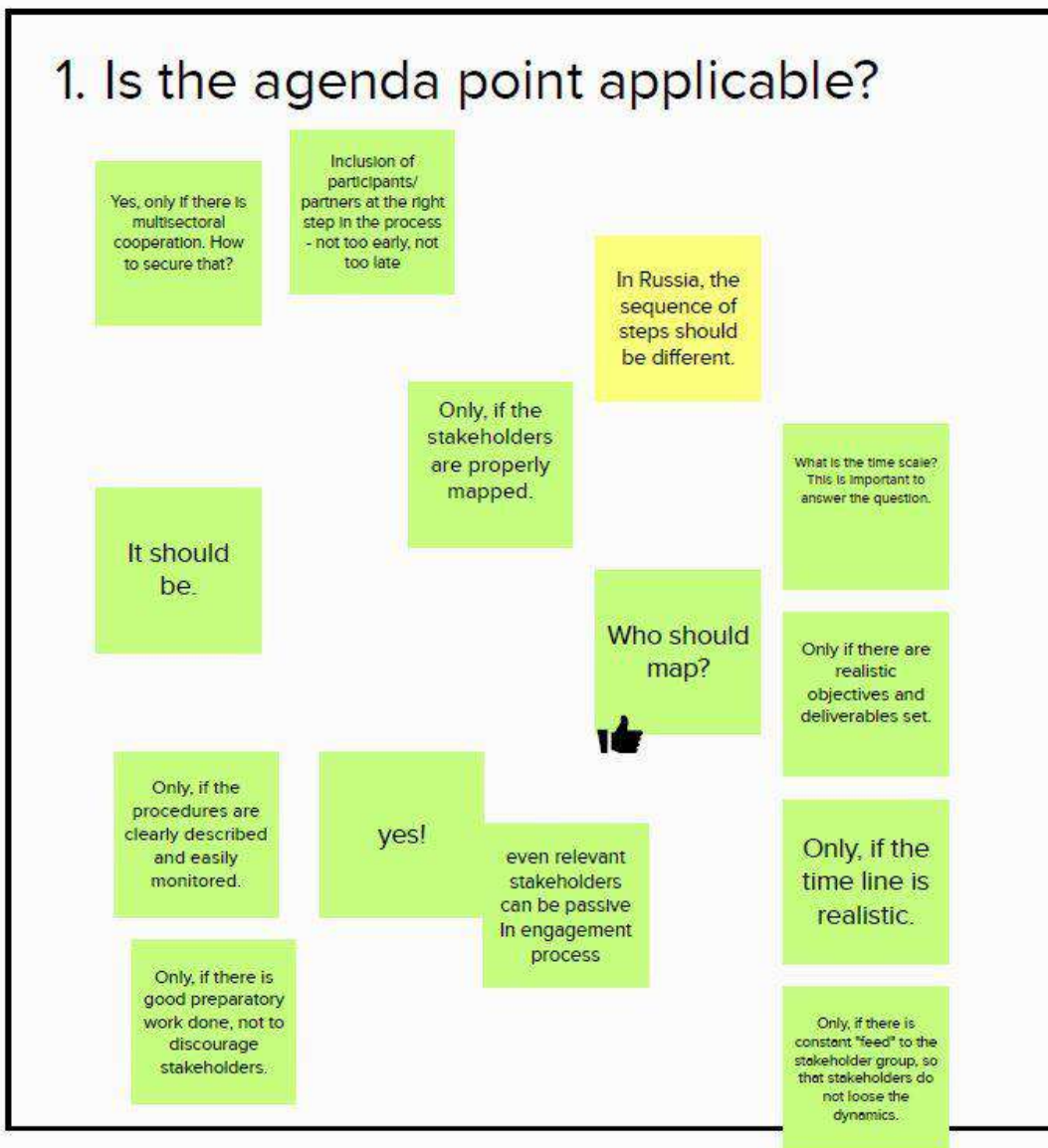
<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/mazzucato\\_report\\_2018.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/mazzucato_report_2018.pdf)

# Appendix

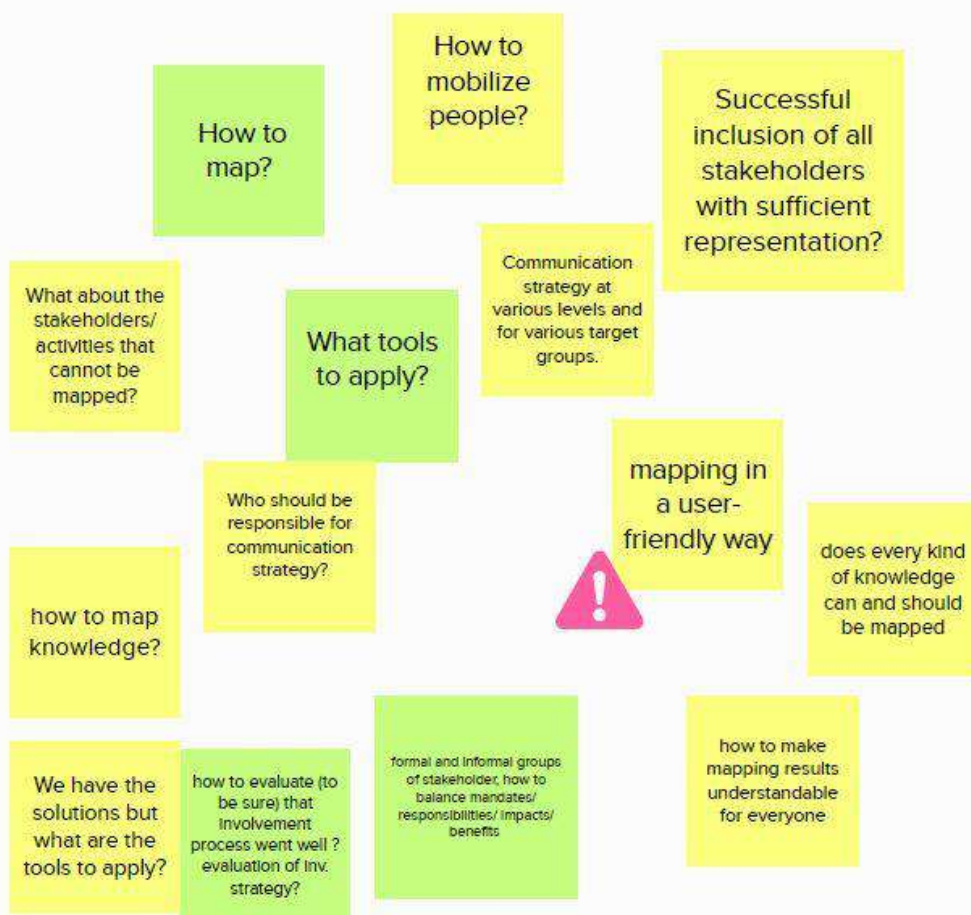
## Mural notes from Table/Group 1 Setting up governance structures



## Mural notes from Table/Group 2 Stakeholder involvement



## 2. Is there anything missing?



### 3. how can I / my organisation use the agenda?

With our resources  
an know-how, we  
could promote the  
actions and be of a  
regional contact  
point.

Our institute  
could be a  
"hub" for such  
actions.

Promotion of  
multilateral  
cooperation.

Facilitation of  
engagement  
between  
stakeholders

coordinating  
mapping actions and  
working on  
consistency in the  
mapping process  
and results  
presentation

Communication  
of  
environmentally  
relevant issues to  
the stakeholders.

perhaps the initiator of  
engagement process  
(ministry, agency) must  
be (have tools) to make  
all stakeholders "equal  
at one table"

Communication  
of results to the  
GP and decision  
makers.

taking a main role in  
a mapping related  
actions (among the  
involved parties in  
certain area)

To be a key  
environmental  
institution to answer  
questions or to direct  
questions to experts  
from other institutions/  
countries.



## Mural notes from Table/Group 3 Solutions and implementation

# 1. Is the agenda point applicable?

## Action 5

Yes, stakeholders from different levels are the key and we could have online and offline approaches to get them together.

I feel like in Poland we have progress in having discussions among stakeholders. There are also more and more opportunities to express yourself to be a part of discussions.

## 2. Is there anything missing?

### Action 5

More  
discussions  
publicly  
available

From Polish MSP  
perspective I can  
see that there is  
never enough of the  
public discussions  
and meetings.

How to define  
and invite all  
the related  
stakeholders?

Public interest in  
discussions  
could be  
increased with  
education

### Action 6

How to  
move from  
word to  
action



Do we always  
need mandates to  
act? Can we also  
take action, e.g.  
voluntarily=

There is always  
a gap between  
plans and  
actions



new technologies  
will encourage to  
coordinate and  
communicate more  
frequently

### 3. how can I / my organisation use the agenda?

#### Action 5

It is kind of a 'information-evidence' process to support decision making.

promoting new technologies and education about pros and cons of it for everyone

#### Action 6

making documents as public as possible

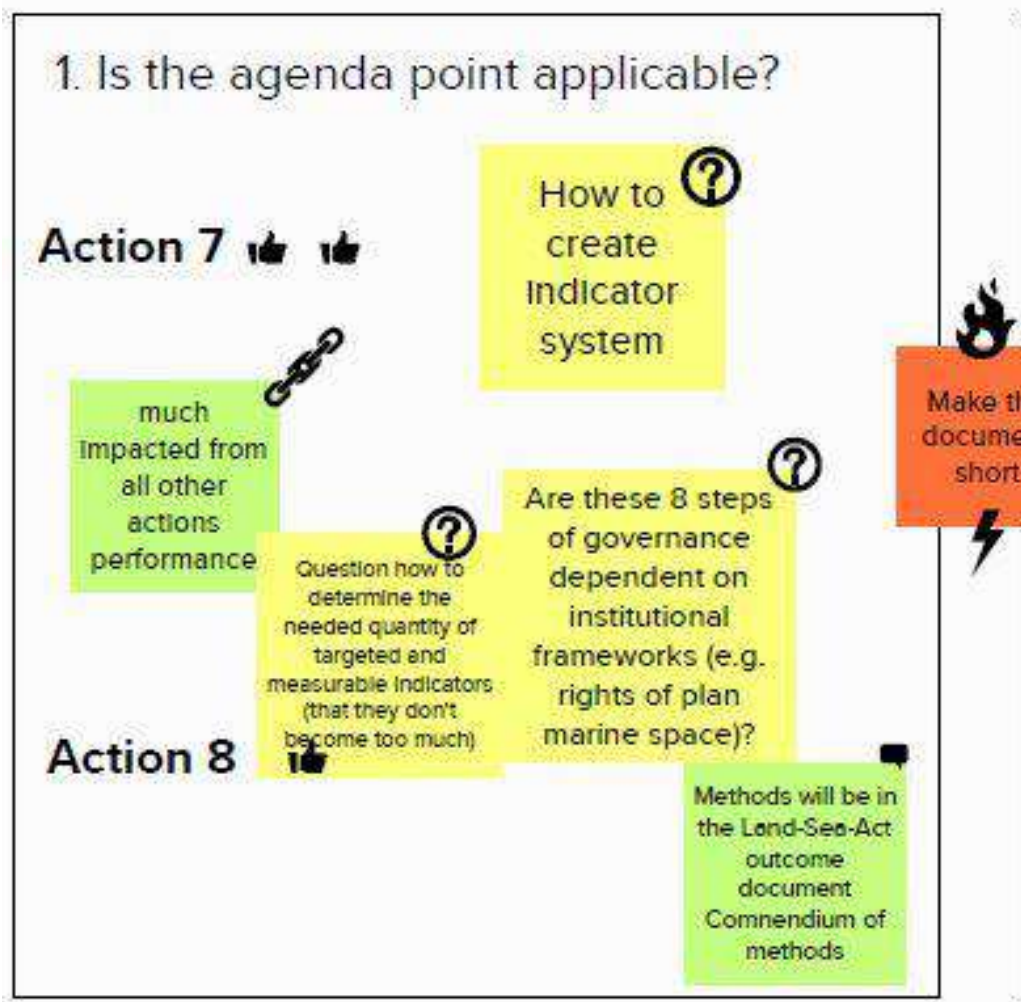


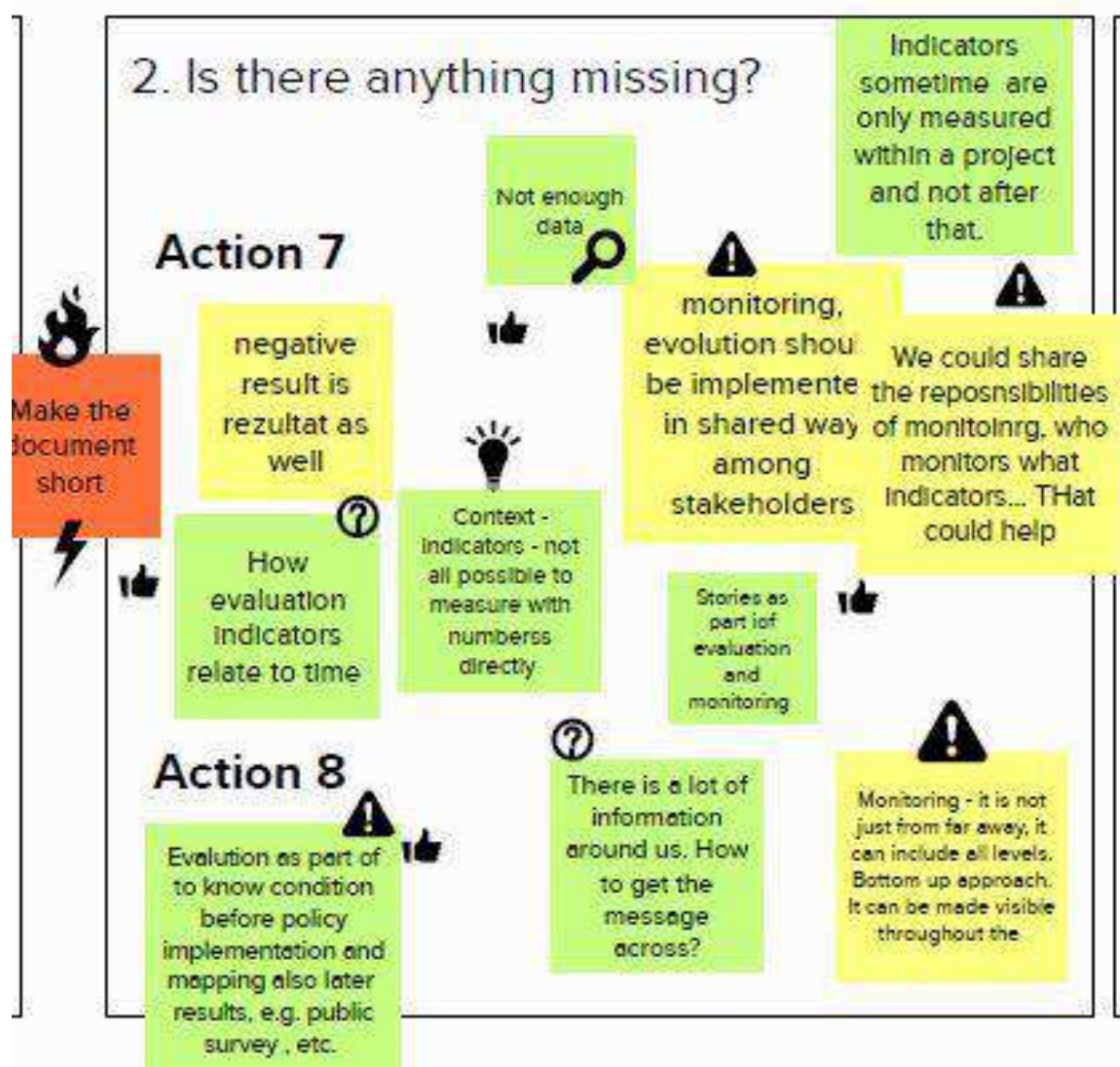
making documents user friendly

scandinavian minimalism in documents:)



## Mural notes from Table/Group 4 Evaluation and learning





### 3. how can I / my organisation use the agenda?

#### Action 7

Regional authorities can help coordinate the implementation and it is important to translate the policies to local level.



Show relevance to previous research projects.



Learning from local/micro cases and updating knowledge for MUSA



#### Action 8



lessons from cases are interesting and useful



If we can define clear actions based on learnings then it works well



Our project homepage: [www.land-sea.eu](http://www.land-sea.eu)

Look up and follow us on social media [#LandSeaAct](https://twitter.com/LandSeaAct)



GÖTEBORGS  
REGIONEN



Hamburg Institute  
of International  
Economics