

Dear project leaders,

Many years ago, ships navigated through seas and oceans by following the North Star!

In the VB period we have seen great examples from projects who have set a clear direction early on and have skilfully navigated their “ships” guided and unified by their unique “North Stars”.

For example, one project (PARTRIDGE) aimed to *Increase farmland biodiversity by 30%*. Another (BITS), aimed to *Implement Intelligent Transport Solutions to make cycling more attractive*.

Every time partners in these projects started a new activity, they asked themselves: Are we on track? Is this taking us in the right direction?

What is your North Star?

We are challenging you to reflect as a partnership and identify together the main 1-3 ways your project will make a difference in the North Sea Region!

By jointly identifying the 1-3 main impacts that you expect to realise by the end of your project (which could live on afterwards!), you can unite your partnership around your North Star(s) right from the get-go.

What's in it for you?

We believe that this exercise entails multiple benefits for the partnerships and your work.

You are undoubtedly busy setting up your project and its activities. Have you had the time, though, to pause, look each other in the eye, and ask yourselves: Are we all rowing in the same direction? We strongly encourage you to do that. Feedback from projects in the VB period tells us that this was not only necessary; they found it motivating and inspiring as well as a great opportunity for teambuilding.

Through this discussion, we also anticipate that you will come up with strong messages and taglines about your projects which will help your communication. In today's sea of projects, you need to find a way to stand out and be memorable. This can help you achieve that!

This can also help you be successful from the start. Bold and clear messages about your intended impacts will help you steer the project through any storm and attract the right audiences and stakeholders to support your ambitions from an early stage.

How is this to be done?

We strongly encourage you to take the following three actions:

- Use your next partnership meeting to identify together the main ways in which your project will make a difference in the North Sea Region, during the project or beyond. Come up with 1 to 3 main impacts (you don't need to reach three – one can be sufficient or even better, as long as you all aspire/subscribe to it).
- You will have the opportunity to share and further develop the outcomes of these discussions during a workshop for new projects on 12 June in Copenhagen. The workshop will focus on how to build durable project success and uptake. While more information will follow in due time, you can already plan for 1-2 representatives from your project to join the workshop.
- We have included an additional non-mandatory section in the progress report where you can share how you steer your project in the desired direction.

Questions?

In the meantime, you are welcome to approach us with questions. You are also welcome to share your ideas about this initiative with us. Please contact us via info@interregnorthsea.eu using Impact Challenge in the subject line.

Best wishes,

The Joint Secretariat