

**Proposed dissertation theme for the Doctoral degree Studies (2018-2022) in
Ecology and Environmental Science at Klaipėda University**

Title	Research based harmonization of terrestrial and maritime spatial plans empowering the scientifically sound sea and land integration
Brief description of the topic	<p>When carrying out maritime spatial planning (MSP), it is important to consider the dynamics between land and sea, and to ensure that spatial planning is conducted in an integrated manner across maritime and terrestrial areas. This is in the interests of both environmental protection of coastal areas and the effective development of maritime and coastal economies. It is a requirement of the ‘MSP Directive’ to take land-sea interactions into account when preparing maritime spatial plans.</p> <p>There are a number of possible ways of addressing land-sea interaction (LSI) in MSP. These include building on the experience of integrated coastal management (ICM), harmonising terrestrial and maritime spatial plans, and carrying out spatial planning at a scale that crosses the land-sea border. Where practice has already developed within Member States, different approaches are being taken, reflecting those nations’ geographies and institutional and planning frameworks. Other Member States are now considering how best to deal with LSI in their MSP processes. All Member States could benefit from understanding the options that are available and considering how to develop their practice further.</p> <p>The thesis aims to assess on-going approaches of MSP authorities when understanding involved dynamics and secondly, find institutional mechanisms that are most suited to addressing LSI within their governance context. Based on on-going projects like BalticRIM, approaches will be tested related to the socio-economic interactions of the sector of maritime cultural heritage (MCH, underwater and coastal cultural heritage) and its integration into the plans of the Member States. Another question is whether sectors like nature protection or tourism can benefit from an integrated management of MCH and how this aspect can support the LSI of national maritime spatial plans. Furthermore, the current MSP processes in Romania and Bulgaria will be analysed and supported (by official trainings in the frame of the MSP Platform) to show how LSI arrangements are evolving, at which scale and which challenges the process may face. As a result the thesis will provide ways how LSI can be addressed at a variety of scales and which interactions between socio-economic activities may result of LSI dynamics. Possibly first findings of how current evaluation models can include LSI will be presented.</p>
Requirements for a candidate	<p>Advanced degree in landscape planning, integrated coastal zone management, natural resource management and law; at least 5 years of working experience in MSP, ICZM and maritime policy development with regional inter-governmental organisations and national governments; experience in participatory development of maritime spatial plans; experience in the management of data and information related to MSP; experience working with a wide range of stakeholders; oral and written English communication skills</p>
Existing research experience	<p>10 years of ICZM and MSP research experience. International Interreg projects on the addressed topic: SDI-4-SEB; POWER; ECODUMP; BALTSEAPLAN; SUMBARINER; Currently on going BSR programme project: BALTICRIM (2017-2019) National LT MSP development (2013-2015);</p>
Existing research infrastructure and support	<p>Research sources available via the infrastructure and network provided by SUMBARINER NETWORK; Access to libraries of the Humboldt-University (Germany) as well as the University of Applied Sciences (HNEE, Eberswalde, Germany); Financial support: BSR programme project “BalticRIM”</p>
Potential supervisor	<p>Nerijus Blažauskas</p>