COASTAL HIKING (supported by Interreg Estonia-Latvia)

The goal of the project is to provide a sustainable tourism product highlighting cultural and natural heritage along the coastline of the Baltic Sea, overall improving the general image of the coastal areas in both countries and providing wider range of travel opportunities at the coast of the Baltic Sea.

(It also benefits the country’s economy and it helps the local entrepreneurs and small businesses to grow and develop. Especially the visitors who travel for several days and choose to use the accommodations and other service providers benefit and improve the lives of locals. For the entrepreneurs it offers new possibilities and a new target group on which to concentrate on.)

The project contributes to the implementation of the EUSBSR policy area "Tourism - Reinforcing cohesiveness of the macro-region through tourism" and the achievement of the EUSBSR objective «Connect the region».

Contribution was assessed by taking into account following aspects:

- Project creating a high-quality tourism route, which connects the region and giving jobs. It is known that tourism business is one of the most important job providers in the rural areas and definitely some jobs will be created also as a result of this project as the route needs maintenance and the tourists served.
- The route is part of the E9 the European Coastal Path, along the coast of the Baltic Sea in its South-East part. This European Coastal Path runs from Cabo de São Vicente in Portugal to Narva-Jõesuu in Estonia (North-East of Estonia). More information under the link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E9_European_long_distance_path

There is a quite complete coverage of the involved and reached stakeholders - 27 local municipalities, 10 national public authorities such as Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development of Latvia, the Estonian and Latvian Tourist Boards, the state authorities as well as the nature protection authorities. 10 different NGO’s and 150 existing and eventual tourist service providers.

Hiking route is already very popular among local hikers, there is a big community support (events coming up in autumn 2019).
ESTLAT Harbours (supported by Interreg Estonia-Latvia)

The project supports creation of a network of small harbours on the western coast of Latvia and in the Gulf of Riga and the purpose is to establish similar service standards in all harbours. The harbours should be within one day sailing distance from one another. With the help of the project, small harbours are improving sailing infrastructure and building network to promote East Baltic as sailing destination.

The project contributes to the implementation of the EUSBSR policy area "Tourism - Reinforcing cohesiveness of the macro-region through tourism" and the achievement of the EUSBSR objective «Connect the region»

In this way the East Coast harbours could become a part of the maritime tourism route of the Baltic Sea.

Altogether 20 harbours from Estonia and Latvia are involved in the project.

Network building does not limits only with the harbors in Latvia and in Estonia. It should also provide the pre-defined and easy to access routes to/from main target markets (Rostock – Tallinn; St. Peterburg - Helsinki - Klaipeda and give way-points to reach our regions in a safe, well-marked and correctly described way on the sea map.)
Idea for linking and including results of these projects in macroregional plans:

They cover and further boost socio-economic development of coastal areas of the Baltic Sea Region:
1) Completeness of the South – East part of the E9 for hiking (more than 1200km marked and complete route developed)
2) East Baltic Coast better prepared for sailing and connected to international maritime routes.
3) Improvement of the image of the East Coast (the other side of the Baltic Sea, if to look from the Scandinavia for example).

In general Eastern coast of the Baltic Sea is now better connected to the BSR in terms of quality tourism offers – especially for hikers and sailors. Thus supporting and providing better grounds for sustainable tourism cooperation in the BSR. Untouched nature is a capital of the whole BSR.

Both are high quality tourism products and can be promoted via Balticsea.travel and BALTIC SEA TOURISM CENTER information channels. Coastal hiking, for example, is rather democratic, as it is easily accessible for everyone and can be used by everyone without any restrictions. There are hiking routes that are a lot promoted, but the coast of the Baltic Sea has all good qualities as well (now developed into tourism product) to attract local and international hikers. E9 – can be promoted as a whole (especially part covering BSR coasts).

Local and regional stakeholders of the BSR should be aware of such a new opportunities, that make the BSR more competitive and in the future BSR can be promoted as a common destination.

BSR development plans (e.g. Action plan of the EUSBRS) must take into account these developments and existence of these high quality tourism products and developed network of harbours.