



## **BSSSC Resolution**

### **Of the 17th Annual Conference of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) in Ringsted, Region Zealand, Denmark, 13 – 15 October 2009**

#### **BALTIC SEA STRATEGY:**

BSSSC welcomes the Baltic Sea Strategy of the European Union (EU). This strategy is the EU's first integrated framework for activities in a European macro-region. It responds to key issues for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) such as environmental sustainability, economic prosperity, attractiveness of the region and security.

The strategy will guide the future actions of the BSSSC regions in terms of:

- involvement in the implementation of this strategy
- taking on the responsibility for central flagship projects
- being a partner in flagship projects
- participating as a key stakeholder in the strategy
- other initiatives within its framework.

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE & COP15**

One of the cornerstones of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy is to make the region more environmentally sustainable. This includes the tasks of mitigating and adapting to climate change, which is one of the most important challenges that the world and hence the BSR is currently facing.

The forthcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009 (COP 15) provides a unique opportunity for the world to deal with the problems of climate change. BSSSC urges the UN conference to significantly increase its efforts to address the challenges of change in world climate.

Climate change must be addressed on an international as well as on a national, regional and local level. Regions, especially, are in a position to play a key role in devising and implementing mitigation and adaptation measures to diminish the risks of climate change. Regions are directly affected by climate change, but regional authorities are also close to the various sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, they possess a variety of approaches to curb those emissions.

As responsible authorities, BSSSC and its participating regions are responding by reviewing existing and launching new initiatives concerning mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change. These include, amongst others, renewable energy systems, energy-efficient public transport, climate-based innovation and regional climate planning with the objective of making the BSR a model region for activities related to climate change.

#### **BSSSC ACTIONS**

The BSSSC Conference in 2009 is sending a signal to the UN Climate Change Conference emphasizing that the regional authorities in the BSR are not only willing to take on their part of the challenge – they are already demonstrating commitment and action towards a climate friendly development.

Specific activities of BSSSC and its regions in the field of climate change comprise:

- The **BSSSC Working Group on Maritime Policy** aims at contributing to the development of the BSR as Europe's maritime best practice region by 2015. The Working Group developed the five-point action plan "Clean Baltic Shipping" whose components (onshore-power supply and environmentally differentiated harbour dues in the BSR ports, clean Baltic cruising, awarding of best practice and introduction of labels for Clean Baltic Shipping and Sustainable Port Management) have been included in the Action Plan of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy by the EU Commission.

- BSSSC encourages its participating regions to develop their own **regional climate strategies**. Many regions have already developed ambitious strategies, which may serve as role models.
- **Adaptation to climate** change calls for cooperation and integrated approaches in the BSR. Therefore, BSSSC participating regions actively support projects like plan Baltic or BaltCICA, which use scientific methods to discuss and develop adaptation measures with relevant planning authorities and stakeholders and which are regarded as implementations of suggestions put forward in the EU's strategy on adapting to climate change.
- BSSSC will actively **support TransBaltic** – appointed as a strategic project in the Baltic Sea Programme – in its aim to develop an integrated transport system in the BSR and as a part of this, to support green corridors and sustainable transport solutions.
- BSSSC will intensify its co-operation within the framework of the **Joint Platform on Energy and Climate**.
- BSSSC will actively **support HELCOM** and the implementation of the far reaching measures as described in the Baltic Sea Action Plan adopted by HELCOM.

BSSSC stresses:

- BSSSC urges the nation states as well as the European Union to step up their efforts at the highest political level to reach a success at the forthcoming **UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen** (COP 15). The post-Kyoto agreement has to be based on ambitious, transparent and binding reduction targets.
- As man-made climate warming is a global phenomenon with emissions having an impact independently of where they take place, BSSSC calls on the highly developed countries to **help developing countries** to access advanced environmentally friendly technology.
- BSSSC considers necessary that the UN climate conference in **Copenhagen agrees on binding targets** for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions also for the maritime traffic sector. BSSSC especially supports activities and initiatives meant to reduce carbon emissions in ports and shipping and requests stakeholders and policy-makers on the local, regional, national and BSR level to join forces and agree on harmonized solutions - particularly regarding onshore energy supply for ships at berth, environmentally differentiated harbour dues and sustainable waste/waste water management in the BSR ports. BSSSC requests the CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Policy to take over the lead for the implementation of the respective flagship projects of the Baltic Sea Strategy's Action Plan. BSSSC offers to the EU Commission and to the CBSS to take over the Co-Leadership for the implementation of these projects.
- BSSSC stresses the importance of **adaptation to climate change**. BSSSC encourages regions as well as their corresponding political and administrative organisations to plan ahead of time. In this context the regions of the Baltic Sea are facing the task of determining the regional specifics of climate change in terms of changing rainfall patterns, sea ice, sea level or salinity in the Baltic Sea. This has to be achieved in the form of a scientifically solid and rigorous analysis. The supply of relevant assessed knowledge must match the demands of decision makers from local to national levels, notably for the implementation of adaptation measures. For this purpose the establishment of sub-national "regional climate offices" could facilitate a problem-oriented two-way communication between climate scientists and stakeholders.
- BSSSC and its participating regions will **commit themselves to the implementation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy**, and urge the EU Commission to closely coordinate cooperate with BSSSC and its members in this endeavour. Additionally, BSSSC calls for the effective coordination and provision of EU funding resources for the projects within the EU Baltic Sea Strategy.
- BSSSC underlines the importance of **involving young people and youth organisations** at regional and local level in the implementation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. At the BSSSC YESS workshop (Youth Event on Sustainable Societies) a list of actions to promote a sustainable BSR was created.