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BSSSC Resolution, Kiel, 20 September 2006

In connection with the Conference of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC) in Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein, on 22 September 2006

Major Impacts on Regional Development in the Baltic Sea Region

The BSSSC Board agreed on this resolution

Regional democracy

The BSSSC

Highlights the necessity to create political and administrative structures that secure the influence of the citizens and their local and regional political bodies on the future development of the Baltic Sea Region.

European Maritime Policy

The BSSSC

supports the Final Declaration of the Baltic Sea Conference on “European Maritime Policy” (Kiel, 21 September 2006)

supports the integrated European policy approach as an instrument both to strengthen the competitiveness of the European Union as well as to ensure mutual economic development, social welfare and environmental protection in the Baltic Sea area with regard to the special conditions in this most northerly inland sea of Europe.

underlines the indisputable role the regions in Europe play in developing and implementing a European Maritime policy. They have to be pro-actively included in this process by national governments and European institutions.

welcomes the proposals to develop the Baltic Sea area as European maritime best practise region and asks the Baltic Sea states and pan-Baltic organisations to support the implementation of this concept.

asks in particular the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) to act on the initiative of the Conference in Kiel 21 September, summarized in the Final Declaration, and to provide incentives for the development of the Baltic Sea Region into a maritime best practise region

Regarding *Maritime Safety*, the BSSSC asks for

improved land-territorial response with clear tasks and responsibilities for the organisations involved

clear and functional divisions of responsibility between authorities and stakeholders on local, regional, national, EU and global levels

functional tools and methods for coastal management and spatial planning of marine areas to be used by local and regional authorities

more refined and realistic models for calculation of the direct and indirect socio-economic costs for the local communities related to maritime spills of hazardous agents

intensified and progressive work done by the Baltic Sea Nations to in reality implement the United Nations classification of the Baltic Sea as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area. Special consideration must be made to the fact that the Baltic Sea is the only European inland sea with ice problems and related harsh winter conditions

Transport infrastructure

The BSSSC

has noted

that when the national infrastructure plans have been implemented there will still be missing links and connections in the Baltic Sea Region.

that close cooperation between different Baltic sea organization and infrastructure projects is of utmost importance to get synergy effects and avoid double work.

that more projects should put greater emphasis on interconnecting the metropolitan regions and the connections between ports and their hinterlands with special attention to the development of intermodal transports.

that there is a big potential for development in the field of logistics to make transports more effective and sustainable.

that some of the new EU member states needs support of external capacity and recources for necessary investments in transport infrastructure.

the need that strategic projects in the Baltic Sea Region – among these the Fehmarn Belt fixed

link or the concept of Motorways of the Sea– should be implemented in due time.

welcomes

the report from the EU high-level group on extension of the major Transeuropean Network Transport (TEN-T) axes to the neighbouring countries and regions, including Motorways of the Sea that covers the whole Baltic Sea area.

recommends

that transport modes and corridors recommended by BSSSC on behalf of regional authorities should be considered in this context.

calls for

governments, national and regional pan-Baltic organisations and the European Union to prioritize cooperation between the European, national and regional level to develop a joint sustainable transport strategy and transport infrastructure for the entire Baltic Sea Region.

development of an intermodal transport systems in the Baltic Sea area with regional growth priorities and regional development perspectives. and to implement the TEN-T projects in the coastal regions of the Baltic Sea.

better involvement of the Baltic Sea regions in the national and European planning process for transport infrastructure investments

new methods for financing infrastructure investments. A mix of public funding, fees and private public partnerships should be considered.

Northern Dimension

The BSSSC

supports current efforts to adapt the concept of “Northern Dimension” to the geopolitical framework of the area, radically changed by the latest EU enlargement and including EU, Norway, Iceland and the Russian Federation in the cooperation

In particular BSSSC

highlights the need to include the capacities of regional authorities in the priorities of a future “policy framework document on Northern Dimension from 2007” to be adopted during the Finnish EU Presidency

welcomes the efforts to pay special attention to problems arising from the use of different financing instruments in regional and cross-border cooperation.

Youth

The active participation of young people in decisions and actions at the local and regional level is essential for a future democratic, inclusive and prosperous Baltic Sea Region.

The BSSSC

recommends that Youth issues should be in focus of European institutions as well as of different national, regional and local authorities.

encourages the mobility of young people in the Baltic Sea Region by promoting the Europass certificates for better cross-border transparency of diplomas and competences.

calls for an integrated trans-national youth policy in the BSR to secure involvement and good conditions for young people.

Baltic Sea Territorial Program

The BSSSC

welcomes the principle of partnership and solidarity as a vital element in the general outline of the EU Cohesion Policy.

underlines that the Trans-national Territorial Programme for the Baltic Sea Region 2007-2013 provides the regional level with a most important financial tool for cooperation between regions in the Baltic Sea countries.

finds the draft programme - put forward for public consultations by the Joint Programming Committee - as a good point of departure to foster sustainable regional economic and social development in the BSR.

underlines the need to continue the trans-national cooperation in the BSR as a neighbourhood programme involving Russian, Belarusian partners on equal basis. An ENPI component to support transnational cooperation within the Baltic Sea Region will be of outmost importance to facilitate contacts and cooperation with Russian and Belarusian neighbouring regions.

calls to the European Commission to facilitate cooperation between the Territorial Programme and the New Neighbourhood Programme. Participation from New Neighbourhood actors should be made possible in each project theme funded by the Territorial Program in the Baltic Sea Region.

Finland's presidency of the European Union

The BSSSC

Supports the priorities of Finland during its Presidency for the European Union 2006 and will highlight the following priorities as most important for the Baltic Sea Region

- The sustainable competitiveness of the Union developed with consideration to the European well-fare model
- The relations to Russia and the revitalization of the Northern dimension
- Fight against international crime, human trafficking and terrorism