

Publications on Water Resources: No 16

Environmental protection, natural resource management and sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region

**Report prepared for Sida under the Lake Victoria Initiative
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SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION AGENCY

Department for Natural Resources
and the Environment

Publications on Water Resources

This series covers issues on water resources from a development cooperation perspective. Sida's Department for Natural Resources and the Environment believes that the publications will be of interest to those involved in this field of work.

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Foreword

In 1997 Sida decided to investigate the potential for a more concentrated effort from Sweden to support development in the Lake Victoria Basin in East Africa. The initiative, which commonly is referred to as the Lake Victoria Initiative, is now being developed in partnership between Sida and the East African Co-operation, EAC.

The initiative builds on the assumption that the experiences from the successful Baltic Sea co-operation could be used. If this proves true Sweden, and hopefully also other Nordic and Baltic Sea countries, would have special possibilities to lend assistance to a similar process in the Lake Victoria Basin. The co-operation is assumed to focus on addressing the escalating environmental problems and promoting sustainable development in the region.

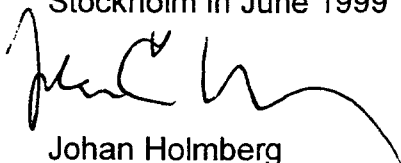
In early June 1999 Sida, in collaboration with the EAC Secretariat and with the help of Stockholm International Water Institute, SIWI, arranged a high level visit from East Africa to the Baltic Sea region. During one week 15 high officials from East Africa, including nine Permanent Secretaries, toured the Baltic Sea region to get to know the content of the co-operation, the legal frameworks, the institutions, the networks and the experiences made.

In order to facilitate the discussions during the visit and its follow-up Sida commissioned Mr Bertil Hägerhäll of Ardena Miljö AB to document the experiences and lessons learnt from the 25 years of international co-operation in the Baltic Sea region.

It is our belief and hope that the experiences made in the Baltic Sea co-operation would be of interest not only in the Lake Victoria context, but also for the co-operation on other shared water bodies. It is against this background we have decided to make the report available to a wider audience.

We are grateful to Mr Hägerhäll for assisting us in this matter and for producing a solid and interesting report in a very short period of time.

Stockholm in June 1999



Johan Holmberg
Director, Department for Natural Resources and the Environment.

Environmental protection, natural
resource management and sustainable
development in the Baltic Sea Region

Environmental protection, natural resource management and sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region

Experience and lessons learned from 25 years of international co-operation

The state of the environment in the Baltic Sea

The deterioration of the coastal and marine environment of the Baltic Sea has been of concern since the late 1960's when the negative effects of DDT and its derivatives, PCBs (chlorinated biphenyls) and mercury on seals, sea birds, and fish were first discovered. There is a general agreement that the most urgent environmental and natural resources issues in the Baltic Sea today are:

Eutrophication: Increased inputs of phosphorus and nitrogen result in prolonged and intense algal blooms (including toxic blue-green algae) in the open waters and proliferation of benthic algae in the coastal zone. Oxygen deficiency and finally formation of hydrogen sulphide during decomposition of the biomass are main concerns in many areas. Major sources of nutrient inputs to the Baltic are agriculture, untreated or insufficiently treated sewage, some industry sectors and airborne deposition from energy production and transport.

Harmful, persistent substances: Concerns expressed about the effects of various harmful substances – heavy metals, halogenated hydrocarbons – on ecosystems and single species were one of the triggering factors leading to the establishment of an internationally binding agreement between the Baltic Sea countries with the objective to protect the Baltic marine environment. Since then, the production and use of DDT, PCBs, PCTs (polychlorinated terphenyls), mercury and several other substances have been banned or drastically reduced. This has resulted in a number of positive effects, e.g., that the reproductive success of the white-tailed eagle is back to normal and that the population is increasing. The trend for grey seals is also

promising although the seals are recovering from very low numbers. Despite these positive signs, the levels of some of these substances, for instance in herring from the Baltic Sea, are still several times higher than those found in adjacent sea areas. In addition, a number of new contaminants have been reported from the Baltic Sea which may create future environmental problems.

Oil pollution: Despite measures taken, several hundred oil spills are detected in the Baltic Sea every year. Most of these are illegal discharges of machine room waste from the operation of the ships. The increasing number of spills can be explained by increased shipping, increasing number of sub-standard ships trafficking the Baltic, insufficient systems for prosecuting offenders and outdated reception facilities for ship-generated waste in some countries. Another emerging risk is the increasing number of oil terminals being built in the region, implying significantly increased shipping of oil in the Baltic with associated threats of accidental as well as illegal discharges.

Insufficient management of living marine resources: Lack of proper, sustainable management of fish (particularly cod and salmon), marine mammals and waterfowl is a remaining problem. The “new” problem of intentional or unintentional introduction of alien or non-indigenous species is also getting increased attention in the region. It is generally believed that brackish-water areas are more susceptible to such introductions, and there is concern over the risks posed by, e.g., discharges of ballast water as a vector of introduction of species transported from other sea or river areas.

Unsustainable development patterns in the Baltic Sea Region: In the analysis presented as a back-

ground for the decision to develop a regional Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, it was clearly indicated that present development patterns in the region are not ecologically sustainable. This was shown to be the case for all the major sectors included (agriculture, energy, fisheries, forests, industry, tourism and transports). It was also recognized that sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region requires more than a single sector approach, but also that sustainable development can never be achieved anywhere unless each key sector is sustainable. Thus, these sectors and issues jointly have a key role to play in a process towards sustainable development in the region.

Twenty-five years of international co-operation on environmental protection and natural resource management

Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention):

In order to meet the concerns expressed about the degradation of the Baltic Sea environment, the countries around the Baltic decided to elaborate a legal regime that could provide a binding framework for international co-operation to reduce and prevent pollution of the coastal and marine environment. The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) was signed in 1974. It was the first international agreement which covered all sources of pollution of the marine environment – pollution from land-based sources and from ships, as well as airborne pollution. The implementation of the Convention is co-ordinated by the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission, HELCOM).

Since the signing of the first Convention in 1974, co-operation has continued to develop and gradually become more concrete, particularly since the political changes started in the region in the late 1980's. One of the first examples of these gradual changes was the adoption of a HELCOM Ministerial Declaration in 1988 in which the Ministers declared their firm determination to reduce the inputs of heavy metals, toxic and persistent organic compounds

and nutrients in the order of 50% by the year 1995.

Based on the experience gained, the need to adopt the international co-operative framework to meet the needs of coming decades, and the emerging political changes in the Baltic Sea Region, the 1974 Convention was substantially revised in the early 1990's.

The "new" 1992 Helsinki Convention, thus, incorporates a number of important changes in environmental perspectives and principles that have emerged and been widely accepted since the 1970's, such as the Polluters-Pays-Principle, the Precautionary Principle, and the use of best Environmental Practice and Best Available Technology. Other important features of the 1992 Convention are the widening of the geographical coverage of the Convention to include the internal waters of the Contracting Parties and inclusion of nature conservation. The countries commit themselves to take action within the whole drainage area to prevent and eliminate pollution of the sea.

In addition to the 1988 Ministerial Declaration, the work within HELCOM has been given further political support at a number of Ministerial meetings held at regular intervals. At present, HELCOM is undergoing a major restructuring of its organization and working methods. The final decision on these matter will be taken at a special HELCOM session in September 1999.

The Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (HELCOM JCP): Despite actions taken both nationally and internationally the environment of the Baltic Sea still gave rise to serious concern. Consequently, following a high-level political initiative by Poland and Sweden, a decision was taken by the first Baltic Meeting of Heads of Government in 1990 to develop a joint action programme. The Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (HELCOM JCP) was approved at Ministerial level in 1992. HELCOM provides the administrative framework for the implementation of the JCP. The costs for implementation of this 20 year programme (1993–2012) was originally estimated at 18 billion ECU.

The JCP provides an international framework for achieving the overall political vision to restore the ecological balance of the Baltic Sea. The objective is to implement a programme of complementary “preventive” and “curative” measures to be taken within the entire Baltic Sea drainage area to reach this goal.

A special feature of the JCP is that it, already from the start, has been a co-operative effort by the governments and a large number of other actors. Such actors include the International Financial Institutions (the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation, etc.), the European Union, a number of non-governmental environmental organizations, private sector organizations and research institutions. In addition, the Programme Implementation Task Force (HELCOM PITF) which co-ordinates the implementation of the JCP, has played an essential role in opening the work of HELCOM to a larger range of participants.

JCP comprises six components: 1) Policies, laws and regulations; 2) Institutional strengthening; 3) Investment activities to address point sources and non-point sources of pollution; 4) Management programmes for coastal lagoons and wetlands; 5) Applied research; 6) Public awareness and environmental education.

During the first phase of the programme, implementation work focused to a large extent on the 132 “environmental hot spots” (particularly difficult pollution sources) identified during the programme development. Out of these pollution sources, 47 were classified as priority hot spots and many of these were located in the countries with economies in transition (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the Russian Federation). A review made in 1998 of implementation progress showed that investments were underway at 56 locations and that technical assistance activities in support of project development and resource mobilisation were proceeding at 73 sites. At that time, 15 hot spots had been deleted from the list.

JCP was updated and further strengthened in 1998. Issues emphasized as being of particular importance in the further implementation of are:

- Preventive measures and integration of environmental concerns into policy, planning and management systems within all sectors and at all levels;
- Pollution issues related to large and complex industrial/urban areas including primary and secondary cities;
- Management of hazardous and solid waste;
- Control of non-point pollution from agriculture and rural areas and from transport;
- Applied research efforts to find practical solutions to immediate problems.

In addition, the following emerging issues were included in the updated JCP:

- Environmental management investments in small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Development of programmes for the management of transboundary lakes and rivers in the eastern parts of the region;
- Protection of specific areas of environmental importance so-called green spots;
- Problems associated with old industrial and former military sites.

Other intergovernmental fora: Other intergovernmental fora for co-operation on resource management (living resources, land use, etc.) in the Baltic Sea Region are:

- the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC, Gdansk Commission) for the implementation of the 1973 Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts (Gdansk Convention), and
- the Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB) Initiative set up in 1992 by the region’s ministers for spatial planning and development.

Also co-operation between the Nordic Council of Ministers (a forum for governmental co-operation between the Nordic countries) and governments in other countries around the Baltic has played an increasingly important role.

From environmental protection towards sustainable development – Baltic 21

The global Agenda 21, adopted at UNCED in 1992, is more indicative than operational, and several efforts have been made to translate the guiding principles and recommendations into concrete policies and actions. In many countries in the Baltic Sea Region ambitious efforts have been made to develop national as well as Local Agenda 21 plans and programmes.

Following mandates given by the meeting of Heads of Government of the Baltic Sea Region, and the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (CBSS) in 1996 to develop an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, the project was officially launched at meeting of the region's Environment Ministers.

The Baltic 21 was set up as an open, democratic and transparent process involving a broad range of actors, governments, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, non-governmental environmental organizations, local and regional network organizations and private sector organizations. To stimulate an open debate and dialogue throughout the region, all Baltic 21 documents (also in draft form) have been openly and easily accessible via the Baltic 21 web site.

The Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region was adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs within the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in June 1998. The time perspective for the implementation has been set at the year 2030. The major focus is on the environmental aspects of sustainable development, including health and spatial planning with emphasis on an integrated approach towards sustainable development, long-term aspects and regional co-operation. A crucial question has been: How can regional co-operation contribute to sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region?

Baltic 21 focuses on seven sectors of crucial importance to sustainable development in the region: Agriculture, Energy, Fisheries, Forests, Industry, Tourism and Transport. For each sector, goals and scenarios for sustainable development have been prepared, as well as sector

action programmes. The sector goals all address different aspects of the overall goal, and indicate how sectorial development should contribute towards achieving sustainable development in the region.

The Baltic 21 Action Programme is aimed at strengthening the basis for comprehensive regional co-operation and on building a solid foundation for the long-term transition towards sustainable development in the region. The emphasis is put on necessary structural changes and other non-technological initiatives, but a selected number of concrete investment projects are also included. The need to integrate sustainable development perspectives in sector policies is stressed as well as the need for further integration of economic, social and environmental aspects in sector planning. The implementation of the action programme is mainly the responsibility of the sectors. Most actions are proposed to be taken now, but their impact will be important in the long term, in particular for building the structures (e.g., a common energy market and common transport policies) needed for further joint actions.

The Baltic 21 work complements international, national and local initiatives, as well as work carried out within HELCOM, the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC) and Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB).

Networking, sub-regional and local co-operation and twinning, and non-governmental organizations

The political changes in the Baltic Sea region opened up for possibilities to re-establish old ties across the Baltic and opportunities for new ones to be developed. As a consequence, the last decade has seen the rapid proliferation of a wide range of networks and other initiatives across and around the Baltic at all levels and on a very broad spectrum of issues, including environment and sustainable development.

There are, *inter alia*, networks between cities, re-vitalization and deepening of existing twinning arrangements between cities, new twinning agreements between counties, cities and

municipalities (also at a very practical level, e.g., between sewage and water works), networks between national and local environmental NGOs and university networks. Some examples of networks and organizations that have been active particularly with regard to environment and sustainable development issues are presented in Annex 1.

Exchange and access to information have also been facilitated through the rapidly increasing use of modern information technology, including the launching of Internet-based information networks like BALLERINA and BALLAD.

Conclusions, experience and lessons learned

There is a rich tradition of successful regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region on a wide range of issues. This co-operation has developed and grown tremendously since the political changes in the region started in the late 1980's. As the Baltic Sea region is often regarded as a world model in this respect, not least in the environmental field, the experience gained, the lessons learned and the conclusions to be drawn could be of interest also to other transboundary water regions of the world. However, it must be emphasized that every region is unique and that local conditions must always be taken fully into account.

The Helsinki Convention(s) and its governing body HELCOM is an example of how an international legal system can be gradually and successfully transformed to:

- reflect political changes;
- ensure the necessary widening of the geographic scope of the agreement;
- include emerging principles and concepts in international environmental law (PPP, BAT);
- add new issues (nature protection and biodiversity conservation); and
- open a previously rigid and closed system to a wide range of actors.

The Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme is a good example of the process and elements needed to develop and implement an effective regional environ-

mental action programme.

The Baltic 21 provides yet another example of a process to broaden the international regional co-operation beyond "traditional" environmental protection and clean-up to include the whole range of concepts and issues related to sustainable development.

The Challenges

Regional conventions and action programmes for environmental protection and management have, since the 1970's, been developed in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, and for a number of reasons, the objectives of these agreements have in many, maybe even in most, cases not been reached. Current negative environmental trends have not been reversed and further degradation of the environment has not been prevented. Lack of political commitment, lack of resources, failing co-operation and co-ordination between various international organizations involved are often pointed at as some of the reasons.

The major challenge for any regional agreement would then seem to lie in finding an effective system for translating the visions expressed in political statements into realistic, effective, concrete and implementable programmes and projects at the "field" level.

A shared vision

The importance of a shared vision as a basis for common action should be strongly emphasized. The development of a shared vision provides opportunities for a co-operative process towards a broad and common understanding and agreement on the issues at stake.

Unrealistic visions and goals might, on the other hand, in fact be dangerous as they may jeopardize the credibility of both the international organizations and the governments in the eyes of the general public and the media. The target or vision of a 50% reduction of the pollution load to the Baltic Sea to be reached by 1995, adopted at the 1988 HELCOM Environment Ministerial meeting, is one such example. It was a visionary goal which, if better analyzed beforehand, should have been dropped as being totally unrealistic from the outset.

However, if properly prepared, with realistic goals, a vision will provide a joint framework for identification and implementation of actions needed for successful environmental and resource management or for moving towards sustainable development. The HELCOM JCP and the Baltic 21 are examples of how a shared vision can be developed through broadly based participatory processes.

In order to have a solid foundation, the shared vision should be developed based on reliable and agreed information on the state of the environment and sustainable development in the region. In the case of the Baltic Sea Region, a joint marine environment monitoring programme has been in place for two decades under the auspices of HELCOM.

Efforts to provide reliable information about the pollution load to the Baltic Sea have however, proved to be much more complicated and problematic. This is particularly the case concerning the pollution load from diffuse sources, such as agriculture and transport.

Regional Action Programmes – essential principles and components

The JCP and the Baltic 21 both include action programmes to be implemented by a wide range of actors. These programmes are, however, of a somewhat different nature. While the JCP includes large investment components, the action programme of Baltic 21 focuses on the needs for long term structural and policy changes within the key sectors. Nevertheless, some general conclusion can be drawn from both processes and from the HELCOM work in general.

The drainage area approach

The environment of the Baltic Sea, as well as the environment and development trends at the regional level, are affected by all those human activities within all sectors of society that take place within the drainage area. To be effective, any regional action programme needs to deal with all these activities. Thus, a drainage area approach is an essential prerequisite. The gradual expansion of the geographic coverage of the Helsinki Convention, as well as the drainage

area coverage included from the outset in the JCP and the Baltic 21, are clear recognitions of the wide acceptance today of the need for a drainage area approach.

High level political commitment

Experience clearly shows that the success of regional programmes will largely depend on the level of continuous high-level political support. High-level meetings provide for reviews of progress made, allow for adjustments needed, and for giving further policy guidance on actions to be taken. Through the years, the work carried out within the frameworks of HELCOM, JCP and Baltic 21 has benefited greatly from such support. The Baltic Summits have all had issues related to environment and sustainable development as parts of their agendas. High-level political attention is also likely to attract better media coverage of the issues and events. This will be important for building public awareness, understanding and continued support for the programmes and actions needed.

Mechanisms and structures for decision-making, co-ordination and implementation

High-level structures – like Conferences of the Contracting Parties or Commissions – will also be needed to take legally binding decisions on, e.g., common emissions standards. Regional programmes tend to be complex by nature and involve a large number of actors. Thus, there will be a need for a “central” body to provide a forum for co-ordination, exchange of information and experience. The annual meetings of HELCOM and its subsidiary advisory Committees, the Programme Implementation Task Force and the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group are all examples of such structures.

Partnership and networking

The wide range of actions likely to be undertaken within any regional action programme will require that a large number of actors (stakeholders) from within and outside the region join forces and co-operate to achieve the long terms goals.

An important factor for achieving the positive results within the various co-operative pro-

grammes in the Baltic Sea Region has been the development of effective and diverse partnerships between governments, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, local governments, international financial institutions, bilateral donors, research institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private sector organizations. These partnerships have been essential in the development of strategies, identification and agreeing of priorities, development of concrete actions and for the implementation of a wide range of activities.

In the Baltic co-operation the “traditional” NGO activities – lobbying, information, public awareness and local field projects – have been expanded into new areas of responsibility. So far, the Baltic Sea Region is probably the only one where NGOs have been accepted as full working partners by the governments and the intergovernmental organizations even to the extent that the NGOs have taken on the role as Lead Parties for different components of regional action programmes.

Resource mobilization and co-financing

The broad spectrum of action likely to be undertaken will require resources to be raised from a large number of different sources. These will have to include national and local budgets, grants from bilateral donors, loans from banks and international financial institutions and investments by the private sector.

Resource mobilization within the framework of the JCP has been particularly successful concerning resources for rehabilitation, upgrading and/or construction of infrastructure for water and wastewater management in cities and municipalities in the countries in transition.

Co-financing has become an important mechanism for making JCP investments feasible. Loans from international financial institutions and private banks are combined with grants from donor countries and from the European Union, as well as with national and local financing, to create financial packages. In some cases, a number of smaller projects (e.g., a number of small to medium sized towns and local communities) have been compiled into

one project big enough to attract international financing.

Progress in addressing and mobilizing resources for Baltic environmental hotspots in the industrial sector has proceeded at a much slower rate. Issues difficult to resolve include ownership and liability, restrictions on restructuring of production, staffing levels, the development of legal and regulatory frameworks and not least development of funding mechanisms.

Integration

Efforts to integrate environmental concerns and responsibilities into overall development planning and sector policies have already proved to be a successful way to promote environmental objectives. In the Baltic Sea Region, integration of environmental priorities in development planning has been one of the major features of the JCP. The full involvement of the sectors has been an absolute prerequisite for the successful elaboration of Baltic 21.

Information, public awareness and support

The importance and need for information is obvious at all levels – from senior decision-makers to grass-roots and individuals. It is generally accepted that access to reliable information is essential for decision-making and that information on the work and achievements of the international co-operation needs to be widely disseminated, but much still remains to be done.

In the discussions on how to handle the information issues, the responsibility for information dissemination has, so far, often been given to the national governments. In practice, however, they have not taken their responsibility. As a result, the work of HELCOM is still largely unknown among the general public and the media in the region. The urgent need for information – contents, dissemination, access – and transparency is highlighted in the report on revision of HELCOM, in the updated JCP, and in Baltic 21.

Follow-up of actions

To be credible, any regional action programme will also require an effective system to monitor and follow up that decisions taken and actions

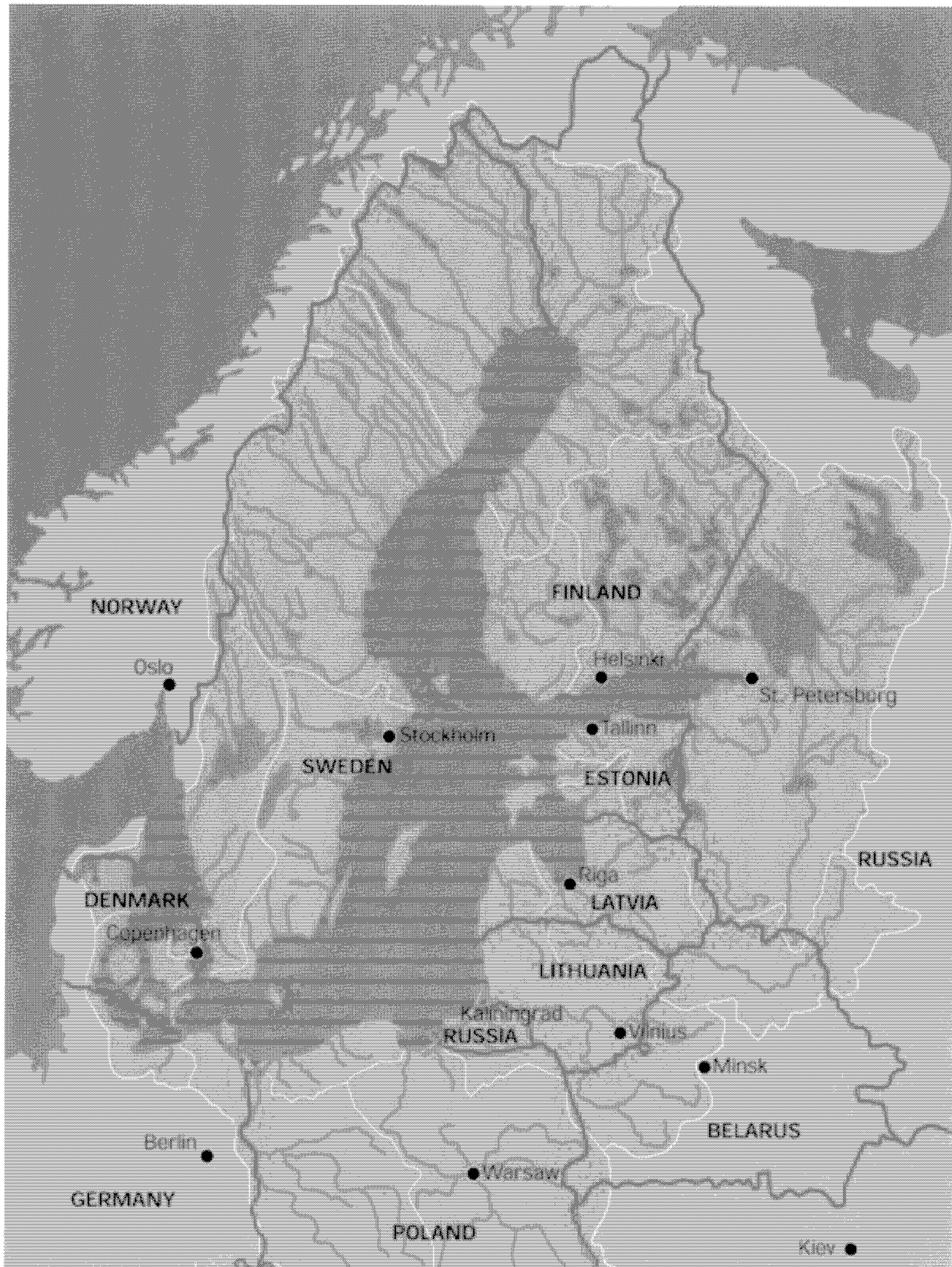
agreed upon have been properly implemented by relevant actors and that the actions taken have resulted in the environmental improvements desired.

One important step taken within HELCOM to allow for effective monitoring of the implementation at national level was taken when mandatory reporting on implementation of HELCOM Recommendations was introduced. However, the present assessment and reporting system within HELCOM is generally regarded as being too slow or insufficient. The most recent periodic assessment published in late 1996 covered the period 1989–1993. The problems concerning the pollution load compilations were touched upon above. As a consequence these compilations cannot, at present, provide the much needed solid basis for further action, provide estimates of future trends or be used for the development of alternative scenarios for policy formulation.

While the HELCOM joint environment monitoring system has been revised and modernized to include also monitoring of the state of the coastal waters, much remains to be done before

a reliable system for regularly compiling information on the pollution load to the Baltic Sea has been established. Such information is however, essential to ensure that actions are taken at the right place and that these actions are as cost effective as possible. This has been recognized and efforts have been made to improve the situation. At the 1998 HELCOM Ministerial meeting agreements were made to streamline and make more effective the systems for monitoring environmental performance and compliance. Steps to improve the situation are presently also being taken, *inter alia*, through a GEF financed project to strengthen the laboratory capacity in the countries in transition.

Systems of indicators will provide decision-makers and the public with easily understandable information about regional trends in environment and sustainable development. Such systems are presently being developed by a number of international organizations. Indicator systems are also elaborated nationally. In the Baltic Sea Region, development of indicator systems are presently going on within HELCOM, JCP, Baltic 21 and VASAB 2010.



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Intergovernmental co-operation

Baltic Summits

Baltic Heads of Government Meetings – Baltic Summits – have been held in 1990 (www.baltinfo.org/docs/declaration.htm), 1996 (www.baltinfo.org/docs/summit.htm) and 1998 (www.baltinfo.org/docs/summit98/presdec98.htm). These meetings have given strong momentum to the co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. The Declarations from the Summits provide overall political guidance to the co-operation.

In addition to being the first one, the 1990 Summit was special in the sense that high-level representatives from the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (at that time not yet fully independent but still formally parts of the Soviet Union) participated as especially invited guests. The 1990 Summit initiated the development of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme, JCP.

The Summit held in 1996 had a broader scope. Although environment was a high priority issue on the agenda, issues such as border control and customs, education and cultural exchange, and combatting of organized crime, were also dealt with. The outcome of the Summit was a number of decisions on how to further strengthen the Baltic co-operation on these issues, including further reduction of pollution, development of policies for sustainable fisheries and the elaboration of an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region.

The Heads of Governments have continued to meet, most recently in February 1998, to address important common topics, including the environment, in the Baltic Sea Region.

Council of the Baltic Sea States, CBSS

www.baltinfo.org

The CBSS was established in 1992. The Council, which has a permanent secretariat located at Stockholm, consists of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs from the nine countries around the Baltic Sea, Norway and Iceland, and a representative of the European Commission. The CBSS is responsible for the follow-up of the Baltic Summits.

The work programme of the CBSS is focused on the efforts to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination in the Baltic Sea Region. Six specific areas of co-operation have been identified:

- assistance for new democratic institutions;
- economic and technological assistance and co-operation;
- humanitarian matters and health;
- environment and energy;
- culture, education, tourism and information;
- transport and communication.

In 1996, CBSS adopted an Action Programme which serves as an additional guideline for CBSS activities. It consists of three components:

- Participation and Stable Political Development;
- Economic Integration and Prosperity;
- Baltic Sea Environment – A matter of solidarity (Implementation of the JCP; Transboundary Water Management; Waste and Chemicals; Oil Pollution; Atmospheric Deposition in the Baltic Sea; Agriculture: Call for Urgent Action; Protection of Marine Ecosystem: Pollution and Sustainable Fishing; Nature Conservation: Protecting Diversity).

Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, HELCOM
(Helsinki Commission)
www.helcom.fi

The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) was signed in 1974. It was the first international agreement of its kind which covered all sources of pollution of the marine environment, from land and from ships, and also airborne pollution. The Convention entered into force in 1980.

The implementation of the Convention is supervised by the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission, HELCOM). The Secretariat is located at Helsinki. HELCOM has also, through a special Programme Implementation Task Force (HELCOM PITF), the co-ordination responsibility for the implementation of the JCP.

The obligations and commitments laid down in the Helsinki Convention is implemented mainly through the adoption of HELCOM Recommendations. These set out in concrete terms limits for discharges and emissions, technical measures to be applied, and time tables for implementation, including reporting. The Contracting Parties are expected to implement the obligations of the Recommendations by integrating them into their respective national laws and regulations.

Since the signing of the first Convention in 1974, the co-operation has continued to develop and gradually become more concrete, particularly since the political changes started in the region in the late 1980's. One of the first and maybe best example of the gradual changes was the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration in 1988, which set the target of a 50 per cent reduction of the pollution load to be achieved by 1995 (www.helcom.fi/handbook/hbdecl.html).

Based on the experience gained, the need to adopt the international co-operative framework to meet the needs of coming decades, and the emerging political changes in the region, the 1974 Convention was substantially revised. The new 1992 Helsinki Convention incorporates a number of the important changes in environmental perspectives and principles that have emerged and been widely accepted since the 1970's. Examples of this are the Polluter-Pays-Principle, the Precautionary Principle, and the use of best Environmental Practice and Best Available Technology.

Key elements of the 1992 Helsinki Convention are:

- Expansion of the geographical coverage of the Convention to include the internal waters of the Contracting Parties. As a consequence, Parties must take measures in the whole drainage area to prevent and eliminate pollution of the sea;
- Incorporation of fundamental principles, including the Polluters–Pays–Principle, the Precautionary Principle and obligations to use Best Environmental Practice and Best Available Technology;
- Provisions concerning the carrying out of Environmental Impact Assessments for projects which can have transboundary effects;
- Prevention of pollution from ships and combatting of illegal and accidental discharges of oil and chemicals from shipping;
- Prevention of pollution from off-shore oil and gas exploration and exploitation;
- Prohibition of dumping and incineration of wastes at sea;
- Nature conservation and protection of biodiversity;
- Mandatory reporting on measures taken to implement the Conventions and recommendations adopted by HELCOM;
- Dissemination of information to the general public.

In addition to the 1988 Ministerial Declaration, the work within HELCOM has been given further political support. Ministerial meetings have been held in 1990, 1992, 1994 and 1998 (www.helcom.fi/handbook/hbdecl.html and www.helcom.fi/comm19.html).

At present, HELCOM is undergoing a major restructuring of its organization and working methods (www.helcom.fi/news/communiqu.html). The final decisions will be taken at a HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in September 1999.

Baltic 21 – An Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region

www.baltic21.ee

Following the mandates given by the Baltic Summit in 1996 and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to develop an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (Baltic 21), this project was officially launched in October 1996 at an Environment Ministers Meeting held in Sweden.

The Baltic 21 was adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs within the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in June 1998. The Baltic 21 Secretariat is co-located at Stockholm with the CBSS Secretariat.

The major focus of Baltic 21 is on the environmental aspects of sustainable development, including health and spatial planning, with emphasis on long-term aspects and regional co-operation. Baltic 21 is focused on seven sectors agreed to be of crucial importance to sustainable development in the region: Agriculture, Energy, Fisheries, Forests, Industry, Tourism and Transports. For each sector, goals and scenarios for sustainable development have been prepared, as well as sector action programmes including time frames, actors and proposed financing. The sector goals all address different aspects of the overall goal, and

indicate how sectorial development should contribute towards achieving sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region.

The Baltic 21 Action Programme is aimed at strengthening the basis for comprehensive regional co-operation and on building a solid foundation for the long-term transition towards sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. It consists of three parts:

- *Joint Actions* that involve two or more of the sectors or combine two or more proposals for action from the sectors;
- *Priority actions by the individual sectors*;
- *Actions for spatial planning*.

Baltic 21 complements international, national and local initiatives, as well as work carried out within HELCOM, IBSFC and VASAB (see below). HELCOM is, together with Poland, Lead Party for the Agricultural Sector, IBSFC for the Fishery Sector, and VASAB for the Spatial Planning Sector of Baltic 21.

International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission, IBSFC
(Gdansk Commission)
www.ibsfc.org

The IBSFC was established to provide an organizational structure for the implementation of the 1973 Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts (the Gdansk Convention).

In signing the Convention, the Contracting Parties recognized their shared responsibility for protecting the living marine resources of the Baltic Sea, as well as for making rational use of these resources. The Convention area includes all waters from the baselines. Thus, IBSFC does not have any competence for the management of inland water resources.

The Commission meets annually and provides Contracting Parties with recommendations to be implemented in their respective fishery zones during the year to come. These recommendations includes fishery quotas for various fish stocks, as well as technical regulatory measures such as fishing seasons, types of gear allowed to be used, etc. The IBSFC decision-making process aims at reaching consensus to make recommendations binding on all Contracting Parties and in all fishery zones in the Convention area.

Vision and Strategies around the Baltic 2010, VASAB
www.vasab.org.pl

The Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 – VASAB 2010 – initiative was launched in 1992 by the Baltic Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development. The VASAB secretariat is located at Gdansk in Poland.

A common vision of strategic spatial development of the Baltic Sea region was approved by a Ministerial Conference in 1994, based on the report *Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region 2010*. At a Ministerial meeting in 1996, an action plan, *From Vision to Action*, was adopted.

A number of goals guide the VASAB 2010 work:

- to support the development of networks for co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region;
- to provide a practical forum for the transfer of competence to the countries in transition to democratic market economies;
- to improve the level of information in countries in the region on current trends and problems in other countries of the region;
- to assess important infrastructure projects to receive international financial contribution;
- to promote spatial planning in the participating countries and regions.

Four basic values, for the improvement of the quality of life, constitute the heart of the vision:

- Development, going beyond economic prosperity and growth;
- Economic, social and environmental sustainability;
- Freedom, as it implies the possibility to choose in accordance with individual/regional preferences; and
- Solidarity, the characteristics of a caring society, sharing benefits of development.

Nordic Environment Finance Corporation, NEFCO

www.nefco.org

The Nordic Environment Finance Corporation, NEFCO, was founded by the Nordic countries in 1990. Its purpose is to facilitate the implementation of environmentally beneficial projects in the neighbouring region, with transboundary effects which also benefits the Nordic region. Projects should be financially viable and based on co-operation between local and Nordic enterprises. NEFCO co-operates closely with the bilateral environmental assistance programmes of the Nordic countries (see also below, Nordic Environmental Development Fund). NEFCO is co-located with the Nordic Investment Bank in Helsinki.

NEFCO is working on four major project categories:

- Modernization of industrial and energy production processes;
- Production of equipment for pollution abatement, improved energy efficiency etc.;
- Environmental services (waste management, recycling, water and waste water treatment); and
- Planning and consulting services.

In order to fulfil its tasks, NEFCO has adopted environmental guidelines, the objective of which are to ensure that NEFCO projects comply with appropriate international and local standards and the environmental requirements of the host country. The NEFCO guidelines includes provisions for Environmental Impact Assessments of projects.

Nordic Council of Ministers

www.norden.org/index_uk.html

The Nordic Council of Ministers, founded in 1971, is a forum for intergovernmental co-operation between the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). Close co-operation also with the Adjacent Areas – the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), North-West Russia, and the Arctic and Barents Regions, is now an integrated part of the Nordic and Baltic Sea co-operation.

The overriding objective of the work of the Council in the Adjacent Areas is to contribute to peace and stability in Europe through promotion of a democratic development, support of a transition to market economy, respect for human rights, and sustainable use of natural resources. Important areas of co-operation with countries and governments in the Adjacent Areas include environment, education, infrastructure, industry, social and health issues, as well as the development of the state governed by law (including the approximation to EU legislation), support to non-governmental organizations and other activities promoting democracy and participation.

The Nordic Council of Ministers support environmental development in neighbouring countries through a special Nordic Environmental Development Fund (see also NEFCO) for "soft financing". Between 4.6 and 7 million USD will be allocated to projects in the Baltic States, Poland, and the Russian Federation in the time period 1999–2003.

The Council maintains information offices in Tallinn (Estonia), Riga (Latvia), Vilnius (Lithuania) and St. Petersburg (Russian Federation). These offices are contact points for exchange of services and ideas between the Nordic and Baltic states.

Co-operation between parliamentary assemblies

Parliamentary Conferences on Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area

This is a forum for co-operation on Baltic Sea Region issues between all parliamentary institutions on regional and national level and for discussions on major regional issues. Parliamentarians from all national and regional parliaments in the Baltic Sea Region participate, as well as representatives from the Baltic Assembly (a consultative and co-ordinating institution of co-operation between the parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), the Benelux Interparliamentary Council, the Council of Europe, the Interparliamentary Union, and the European Parliament.

Conferences have been held in 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995 and 1998 on different issues. The CBSS Presidency presents a report on its activities to the Conferences. Between sessions, a standing committee of five parliamentarians, assisted by the secretariat of the Nordic Council, is responsible for co-ordination of ongoing activities.

Nordic Council

www.norden.org/verksamhet_uk/nr/index.html

A forum established in 1952 for co-operation between parliamentarians in the Nordic countries, and between parliamentarians and governments in those countries. Besides its involvement in the Parliamentary Conferences on Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Nordic Council maintains close co-operation with the Baltic Assembly as well as with local politicians from the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and representatives of the Saami Parliaments of Norway, Sweden and Finland and representatives of the indigenous population of Russia.

The second joint conference of the Nordic Council and the Baltic Assembly was held in February 1999, addressing issues like The Northern Dimension, Security politics in the Baltic Sea Region, and Combatting of Organized Crime. About 200 Baltic and Nordic parliamentarians and ministers, including prime ministers, attended the conference. It was pointed out that the Nordic-Baltic parliamentary dialogue has a most important role to play in identifying new political challenges, and in fostering solidarity across the region.

A first Barents Parliamentary Conference was held in April 1999 to discuss the best way for democratically elected representatives to promote closer cross-border cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region (regional development and co-operation with Russia). The Conference was also attended by representatives of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, a representative from the EU Commission, in addition to observers from the Baltic Assembly, the Parliamentary Conference of the Baltic Sea Council, the Arctic Parliamentary Committee, the Westnordic Council and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Central issues discussed at the conference included co-operation between Northern Europe and the Russian Federation with particular emphasis on education, people-to-people contact, transport, health and social affairs, gender equality and the position of the indigenous population. The Nordic Council will also organize a conference for young politicians from the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in the year 2000.

Sub -regional co-operation

Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation, BSSSC

www.bsssc.com

See also *Baltic Sea Alliance*: www.balticsea.net/

BSSSC is the main political organisation for co-operation between the decentralized authorities (sub-regions) in the Baltic Sea Region.

BSSSC was established in 1993 with the objective to improve sub-regional co-operation in the region, and the BSSSC is open to all 162 sub-regions. At present more than 100 sub-regions participate in the annual BSSSC Conference.

The objectives of the BSSSC are to:

- promote co-operation among sub-regions around the Baltic Sea;
- formulate a coherent Baltic Sea policy on the regional level;

- to represent the interests of the sub-regions towards national governments, as well as towards European and international organizations.

The BSSSC has a permanent secretariat located in Copenhagen, Denmark. The BSSSC work is, *inter alia*, carried out in three working groups on:

- Institution Building and Human Relations (seeking to produce a catalogue of model projects which could serve as a source for inspiration and information);
- Economic Development and Cooperation (focusing on problems and bottlenecks for economic development, such as "legal and mental, not financial problems", lack of co-ordination of existing projects instead of creating new ones, lack of co-operation between existing Baltic organisations, cross-border problems, infrastructure/transport problems);
- Nature Protection and Environment (which has the implementation of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region as one of its priority tasks).

Co-operation between cities and local communities

Union of the Baltic Cities, UBC

www.ubc.net

See also Baltic Sea Alliance: www.balticsea.net/

UBC is a voluntary network organization open to all cities in the Baltic Sea Region and presently consisting of 86 cities from 10 countries in the region. Member cities range from small town to major cities. Each city, regardless of its size, has equal rights. The strategic aims of UBC is to

- promote Baltic Sea co-operation on both national and international level;
- be a major actor on the international level and a forum for Baltic Sea co-operation;
- seek and build connections to the rest of Europe and other continents of the world;
- promote stability and economic growth in the Baltic Sea Region;
- work for a good Baltic business environment on local, national and international level;
- offer the new generation development in the shared economic space, cherishing a tradition of non-restricted spiritual and cultural.
- promote projects in facilitating the intercultural co-operation and understanding in the Baltic Sea Region;
- promote co-operation between member cities and city officials regardless of politics;
- follow closely the developments of the European Union and prepare its Eastern member cities to smooth transition to EU membership.

The main goal of the UBC is to contribute to a democratic, social, economic, cultural and environmentally sound development in the Baltic Sea Region. It initiates and co-ordinates projects involving its members and promotes the exchange of know-how and experience by organizing courses, seminars, conferences, as well as publishing a newsletter. Much of the work of the Union is initiated through its Commissions on Business Cooperation, Communication, Culture, Education, Environment, Social and Health Affairs, Sport, Tourism, Transportation, and Urban Planning.

The UBC has observer status with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE). It acts as one of the Lead Parties for the implementation of the "Institutional Strengthening and Human Resources Development" component of the HELCOM JCP.

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, ICLEI

www.iclei.org/

ICLEI was founded in 1990 at the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future by representatives from cities and municipal associations from all over the world. Through its European office (in Germany), ICLEI provides support for local authorities in developing solutions to their environmental problems. It acts as an association of local authorities with members that include cities, towns, counties, municipal areas and regions. ICLEI is a network of city alliances and a co-ordinator of city campaigns.

In Europe, ICLEI acts as the international environmental agency for local authorities. In the Baltic Sea Region, ICLEI works with individual sub-regions and cities, but also as a joint organization representing these areas or cities in various intergovernmental fora. For example, until recently ICLEI was one of the Lead Parties for the implementation of the "Institutional Strengthening and Human Resources Development" component of the HELCOM JCP.

Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum

A co-operation network established between municipalities – including organizations like UBC and ICLEI – in 1997 to facilitate local implementation of Agenda 21 and to strengthen local Agenda 21 processes in the Baltic Sea Region. The Forum aims at providing a framework for capacity building (elaboration of knowledge and exchange of experience between Local Agenda 21 co-ordinators in different countries) related to participatory Local Agenda 21 activities within local authorities and communities in the Baltic Sea Region.

Co-operation in the educational sector

Baltic University Programme, BUP

www.balticuniv.uadm.uu.se

This network of more than 150 universities or other institutions for higher learning in the countries of the Baltic Sea Region is engaged in activities covering four major fields:

- Undergraduate teaching using modern communication technology, in particular satellite TV, on issues of common concern to the region;
- Co-operation with public and educational TV companies for broadcasting to the general public;
- Research co-operation on a regional basis mostly on environmental issues;
- Co-operation with municipal and regional administrations and schools.

Courses related to environment and sustainable development has included "The Baltic Sea Environment", "Peoples of the Baltic" and "A Sustainable Baltic Region". The first two courses have been attended by more than 12,000 students around the Baltic Sea, and the third one had 2,000 students participating from 68 universities when it was first given in the spring of 1997. Courses are also offered on "Sustainable Water Management in the Baltic Sea Basin". The course demands previous knowledge within the fields of earth science, agronomy, forestry, or environmental engineering. The aim is to give the students a professional knowledge on the water resources in the Baltic region.

The Baltic University Programme, which is co-ordinated from Sweden, has 12 national centres in Belarus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Slovak Republic, Sweden and Ukraine. Today each centre has a premise with computer facilities that allow regional contacts through Internet, in particular with the conference system FirstClass, as well as TV (satellite dish) and video equipment. The centres have personnel available for everyday contacts to inform on BUP in its area and to administer the practical work such as distribution and promotion of course material, organizing national conferences for teachers and students, reporting on the courses (if possible through web sites), and manage applications for the BUP courses.

NOVABOVA

Co-operation network between universities (agricultural and veterinary sciences) in the Baltic Sea Region and the Nordic countries focusing on education and research on agriculture, forestry and veterinary issues. NOVA stands for Nordic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University, whereas BOVA stands for Baltic Forestry and Agricultural University.

Baltic Sea Project, BSP

www.b-s-p.org

The Baltic Sea Project (presently co-ordinated by Denmark) is an international network among schools for a better environment in the Baltic catchment area. BSP was the first regional project within the UNESCO Associated Schools Project to combine environmental education on a specific environmental issue, i.e. the Baltic Sea and intra-cultural learning. BSP objectives are to:

- increase the awareness of the students about the environmental problems in the Baltic Sea Area and to give them an understanding of the scientific, social and cultural aspects of the interdependence between man and nature;
- develop the ability of the students to study changes in the environment; and
- encourage students to participate in developing a sustainable future.

To obtain these objectives, the BSP works through:

- building of networks of schools, teachers and educational institutions in the drainage area;
- creating and developing educational approaches and joint programmes for environmental and international education; and
- organizing joint activities and events and by publishing the BSP Newsletter (twice a year), a Catalogue of School Activities and other forms of relevant information.

The educational approach is to achieve a balance between a holistic view and individual subject studies, to change the role of the student from passive recipient to active constructor, to change the role of the teacher from supervisor to guide in a learning process, to use networks to provide participants with opportunities to learn and pass along new ideas, and to use international co-operation as an inherent element of school work. More than 200 schools, mainly secondary schools, in all countries around the Baltic Sea are active in the BSP project. Schools have contacts through correspondence, exchanging exhibits and videos, visits, etc. During these visits the students usually study a local environmental problem together.

Baltic Sea Youth Forum

www.malardalsradet.se/bsyf/fram.html

The Baltic Sea Youth Forum (BSYF) is a project for upper-secondary schools and political representatives interested in democracy, environment and the future. It brings together teenagers and decision-makers to compare visions and agree on practical solutions. The objectives of the Baltic Sea Youth Forum are to:

- make young people work together to influence and vitalize environmental protection, conditions for education and jobs, European integration, culture and democracy and to promote that these activities show results in the participants' home regions;
- support the young people's commitment, creativity and power of initiative and to teach them methods and ways to influence decision-makers;
- make young people combine both national and international perspectives in their way of thinking and acting;
- make the countries around the Baltic Sea co-operate more closely.

In May 2000, the Council for the Stockholm-Mälars Region in Sweden will host a conference for youth (15–18 years old), teachers, and politicians. Over 200 participants are expected from the Baltic Sea Region.

Co-operation between non-governmental environmental organizations

Coalition Clean Baltic, CCB

www.lanet.lv/org/ccb/

With its 24 member organizations, together having over half a million members in all countries around the Baltic Sea, the drainage area approach, and the consistent work on grass-root level, the umbrella organization CCB is unique. It was the first Baltic-wide environmental NGO network and was established in response to a need for co-operation and co-ordination among environmental NGOs in the Baltic Sea Region.

CCB is active at the national and international policy levels as well as with concrete field projects. CCB activities also include comprehensive programmes in the fields of information, environmental education and other activities to raise public awareness. Priority activities are:

- promotion of ecological engineering to reduce load of nutrients in water;

- river watch – river basin management;
- protection of naturally spawning salmon;
- prevention of harmful installations and activities in the Baltic Sea Area;
- protection of Baltic archipelagos.

The overriding goal of CCB is the protection and improvement of the Baltic Sea environment and natural resources according to the CCB Baltic Sea Action Plan. That goal is to be achieved through

- creating public opinion internationally about the Baltic Sea issues and to support the work of its member organizations nationally;
- gathering and distributing, as well as producing, information about environmental problems in the Baltic Sea Area;
- gathering and distributing information about activities in the Baltic region of relevance to its member organizations (meetings, conferences, cooperation projects, etc.);
- giving organizational and financial support to those member organizations in need of such support;
- promoting project cooperation between groups;
- functioning as the joint contact and lobby organization for the member groups towards intergovernmental organizations concerned with the Baltic; and
- developing and presenting joint NGO proposals and demands to be put up to these intergovernmental organizations;

The CCB Action Plan for the Baltic Sea Area was developed as a joint member project and presented to the Baltic governments and the public in 1992. CCB has also elaborated an Eco Vision of an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, and takes part as an observer to Baltic 21.

Private sector co-operation

Baltic Sea Tourism Commission, BTC

www.balticsea.com/btc/andra.htm

The Baltic Sea Tourism Commission is an public/private non-profit organisation, created by the countries around the Baltic Sea and open for every organisation and company interested in the aims of the association and accepting its by-laws. The BTC acts as Lead Party for the Tourist Sector of Baltic 21.

The Commission was founded in 1983 on an initiative of the Lübeck Chamber of Commerce. The aim of BTC is to promote the natural and sustainable development of travel and tourism within and to the Baltic Sea region by

- creating awareness of the region's potential as a tourism destination, with the travel trade the media and with the consumer;
- providing comprehensive information and data on the region;
- networking and providing business-opportunities at annual travelmarts, etc;
- initiating and promoting projects;
- liaising with official and voluntary sources and organisations in order to achieve this.

The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA)

<http://www.ihk.de/kiel/bc/ca.htm>

See also *Baltic Sea Alliance*: www.balticsea.net/

The BCCA, founded in 1992, is an organization of altogether 52 Chambers of Commerce in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. It was established to "give the business community of the region a common voice for common concerns", and presently represents more than 400,000 companies belonging to all sectors of the northern and northeastern European market. It participates in and contributes to meetings of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, CBSS, and is a member of the Baltic Sea Alliance (see below). The Association launches initiatives that promote the development of infrastructure, transportation, communication systems, human resources and the environment.

The BCCA aims at

- offering services to the business community such as workshops, matchmaking events, providing support for participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, collecting and publishing data on trade barriers, initiating a Baltic Sea Partenariat and publish brochures on further subjects;
- supporting and assisting member CCIs by the exchange of staff and operating chambers' partnership programmes;
- being the advisor to politics in business related affairs.

Baltic Sea 2008

www.balticsea2008.org

The Baltic 2008 programme (presently in its final planning phase) was initiated in 1997 by business and industry under the umbrella of the International Chamber of Commerce, ICC.

The Baltic 2008 vision is to "restore the water quality of the Baltic Sea to that of the 1940's to make the Baltic Sea region a market place and a region of sustainable societies in co-operation". This is to be done by reducing particularly harmful emissions to the levels of the 1940's by the year 2008. The Baltic 2008 programme is aimed at restoring the water quality to a level that allows

- water transparency like the one prevailing in the 1940's;
- Baltic fish to be healthy enough to be eaten at home and in restaurants; and
- seals, the top consumers in the food web, to be healthier.

With regard to the role of business and industry, the Baltic 2008 programme is focused on stimulating these sectors – with their knowledge and experience of cost-efficient use of resources and their capacity to take urgent measures – to take a collective responsibility for more efficient action than that which could be achieved by other actors alone. In order to take this responsibility, however, business and industry need to improve their competence and know-how of collective environmental leadership (business, science and authorities).

International Network for Environmental Management, INEM

www.inem.org

INEM (founded in 1991 and with its main secretariat located at Hamburg), is a non-profit world federation of national associations for environmental management and sustainable development. INEM aims at helping companies improve their environmental and economic performance, i.e. to minimize the environmental impacts of industrial activities and to help business and industry reconcile the imperatives of development and environment.

INEM is an observer to HELCOM and one of the Lead Parties for the implementation of the "Institutional Strengthening and Human Resources Development" component of the HELCOM JCP.

INEM activities in the Baltic Sea Region include the 2nd Eco-Baltic Conference which was held in 1997. The conference was aimed at providing business and industry in the Baltic Sea Region with environmental management instruments needed for the improvement of their environmental performance and competitiveness in European and world markets. It was one of the first events in the region to focus on EMAS and ISO 14001.

The main task of INEM is the promotion, development, dissemination and application of principles and methods of environmental management. Special emphasis is placed on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as on developing countries and Central & Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States, and on partnerships among industry, local authorities and academic/research institutions.

INEM has developed a number of environmental management tools such as:

- EMAS tool kit for SMEs, which is a step-by-step guide to assist small companies in implementing environmental management systems;
- Eco-mapping. A visual, simple and practical tool to analyse and manage the environmental performance of small companies and trade industries;
- Environmental Good Housekeeping Guide for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises which includes a set of checklists and tools for identifying simple and practical common sense measures that can be taken to reduce costs, increase productivity and protect the environment.

Information networks

BALLAD

www.ballad.org/

An "Independent Forum for Networking in the Baltic Sea Region". The purpose of Ballad, which is published by the Baltic Institute (an independent foundation, located in Sweden, for the promotion of mutual co-operation and development of the riparian states of the Baltic Sea), is to promote integration and decentralized co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. The target group is "committed people from all parts of society, already involved or curious about issues concerning the Baltic Sea Region". Ballad is the place for the vast amount of networks

and cross-border initiatives now emerging. "With the help of Ballad you can easily find all the information and contacts you need".

The web site is intended to facilitate the search for information, lead you to the right network and the right contacts, and offer services to networks and network builders. One finds, *inter alia*, a calendar of events, news from the region (provided by newspapers and news agencies), a database of projects and possible sources of funding, a database of actors in the region, a discussion forum and a mailing list, facts and figures, links, and a web hotel hosting external web sites.

Baltic Sea Alliance

www.balticsea.net/

The Baltic Sea Alliance is an Internet-based, interactive platform for communication and co-operation between various local and national Baltic, European and international offices and organizations. The steering group and core information providers for the system are the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA), the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC), and the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC).

The main goal of the Alliance is to provide an information network for the daily use of its altogether hundreds of member offices (chambers, cities, local and regional authorities) around the region. However, other interested organizations and persons are of course also welcome to use the system in their practical work. All data in this system is strongly oriented to facilitate the daily work in different offices around the region:

- Giving and receiving information about different events and conferences in the region (Events Calendar);
- Searching partners for new projects and informing others about various activities (Project Forum);
- Possibility to list organisations for immediate and direct contacts (E-mail Engine);
- Possibility to discuss and debate on various initiatives and issues (BSA Talkback);
- Data storage of multiple presentation material, statistics, documents and speeches for common needs of presenting Baltic issues (Speaker's Corner);
- Links to different organisations and information sources;
- Search engines for general information search;
- Gallup function for a quick survey of opinions about different matters (Question of the Month).

BALLERINA

www.baltic-region.net

The overall aim of the BALLERINA initiative – a personal and organizational network, capacity building, and a common web site – is to contribute to the sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region environment, by improving the availability and accessibility of relevant Internet-based information for decision-making at all levels. The main objectives are to:

- bring more substantive and relevant information on environment, natural resources and sustainable development from and about the Baltic Sea Region to the Internet;

- make it easier for the increasing number of Internet-users to find Baltic Sea Region information on environment, natural resources and sustainable development by offering a user-friendly 'top-level' Baltic Sea Region web site;
- develop a voluntary personal and institutional network of partners working towards the overall aim of BALLERINA.

The BALLERINA web site was opened in April 1997 to provide comprehensive information about environment, natural resources and sustainable development in the transboundary Baltic Sea Region. Not only the state of the Baltic Sea itself is covered, but links are given also to information sources on environmental, natural resources and sustainable development issues in general in the entire region, including the role of actors and initiatives of relevance to the Baltic Sea Region ("who is doing what, how and why?").

The main purpose is to provide a useful gateway to online information published by information providers in the region, as well as to information published by sources outside the Baltic region (pan-European and global) on issues affecting the region. An additional purpose is to stimulate regional organizations, agencies, research institutes, etc. to have their information published online in a manner that makes it useful for a wide audience, or when major information gaps appeared to remain for a long time, produce complementary online information based on facts in already published books, reports, etc.

Previous publications on Water Resources:

1. Water and Security in Southern Africa
Leif Ohlsson, University of Gothenburg
3. Study of Water Resources in Zimbabwe
Åke Nilsson and Amanda Hammer
4. A Liquid More Valuable Than Gold
Pierre Frühling
5. Towards an Ecological Approach to Sanitation
Uno Winblad
6. A Gender Perspective in the Water Resources
Management Sector
Helen Thomas, Johanna Schalkwyk and Beth Woroniuk
7. Most Worthwhile Use of Water
Jan Lundqvist and Klas Sandström
8. The Mighty Mekong Mystery
Joakim Öjendal, Elin Torell
9. Ecological Alternatives in Sanitation
Jan-Olof Drangert, Jennifer Bew, Uno Winblad (Editors)
- 11:1 Lake Victoria Basin, National Resources under Environmental Stress,
Main Report
Ehlin Consulting
- 11:2 Lake Victoria Basin, National Resources under Environmental Stress,
Annexes
Ehlin Consulting
13. Urban Water Demand management in Southern Africa,
The Conservation Potential
Peter Macy, Sheldia Associates
14. Ecological Sanitation,
S Esrey, J Gough, D Rapaport, R Sawyer, M Simpson-hébert, J Vargas, U Winblad
15. Water Hyacinth, its control and utilization, A global Review
G Hill, M Cock, G Howard, CABI Bioscience and IUCN
16. Environmental protection, natural Resources management and sustainable development
in the Baltic Sea Region,
Bertil Hägerhäll, Ardena Miljö
17. Swedish Experiences from Transboundary Water Resources Management in Southern Africa,
Jakob Granit

