

NGO Stockholm Declaration

Adopted at the second conference on
Sustainable Transport Solutions in the Baltic Sea Area
- focus on Maritime Transport
on 6 October 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden

Preamble:

The Baltic Sea is the world's second largest body of brackish water, with a unique mixture of marine, freshwater and brackish-water organisms. The Baltic Sea is particularly sensitive to environmental perturbation, because the turnover time for the water in this semi-enclosed sea is as long as 30 years. In the northwestern part of the Baltic Sea Area soils, forests, groundwater and surface water are especially sensitive to acid deposition.

Environmentally sound and sustainable maritime transport systems are a necessary basis for the development of the Baltic region. In the last decade maritime transport has been growing steadily, reflecting the intensified co-operation in the Baltic Sea region and a prospering economy. The trade and exchange of goods between eastern and western Europe is increasing tremendously. The large goods exchange within the Baltic region and between the region and the rest of Europe, which is at present largely based upon heavy lorries and a system of highways, means that the new openness and integration of East and West increases the risk of environmental damage. Increasing emissions of pollutants from sea, air and land contribute to air and water pollution and destruction of important areas for recreation and biodiversity.

The participants of this conference, representing environmental NGOs around the Baltic Sea,

International organisations

Coalition Clean Baltic
WWF Baltic Programme

National organisations

Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Stockholm regional branch
Green Federation, Poland
Friends of the Earth, Estonia
BUND Germany, working group for coastal and marine affairs
Ecodefense-Kaliningrad, Russia
Green World, Russia

advocate:

1. Basic transport issues

- introduce strategies to abate air pollution e.g. environmentally differentiated fairway and/or harbour dues in all Baltic Sea nations and seaports. Preferably this should be decided within EU, alternatively agreed upon by the states around the Baltic Sea;
- impose a ban on the sale and use of marine fuels having over 1.0 % sulphur content not later than 2005;
- impose a ban on environmentally harmful anti-fouling paints (e.g. Tri-Butyltin) not later than 2003;
- take measures to prevent alien species from entering the Baltic Sea by following the guidelines set out in the annex of IMO Resolution A.868(20) and introducing them into national legislation not later than 2005;

- apply Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) when planning new seaports to minimise the negative effects on land, including the consequences of traffic to and from the port, as well as on the marine environment, not later than 2004.

2. Illegal oil discharges

- introduce tougher national legislation to prosecute against and impose heavy fines on owners of vessels that illegally dump oil and oily water. Baltic countries should also co-ordinate and standardise their procedures for prosecution of offenders.
- implement the HELCOM "Baltic Strategy" for reducing discharges of waste from vessels, including establishment of reception facilities for oil in every port of the Baltic Sea and adoption of the "no-special-fee" system for handling wastes.

3. Precautionary safety measures

- phase out single-hull oil tankers not later than 2008;
- impose mandatory pilotage in Kadetrenden, "Route T" and "The Sound" not later than 2003;
- increase marine emergency capacities (fire-fighting, towing, lightering) not later than 2005;
- improve routeing, e.g. by shifting routes further seawards and by establishment of traffic separation schemes and a deep water route in the Gulf of Finland;
- establish land-based monitoring radar systems as soon as possible, but not later than 2003, supported by automatic identification system (AIS).

4. Dealing with accidents

- develop and implement an international emergency plan for all the Baltic Sea involving appropriate staff and vessels, co-ordinated by an international control centre, not later than 2005;
- establish a network of "ports of refuge" for ships in distress not later than 2005.

5. PSSA

- apply for Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) status for all the Baltic Sea at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) taking into account the HELCOM network of marine protected areas (Baltic Sea Protected Areas, BSPAs). This will e.g. enable introduction of routeing measures that minimise negative impacts of illegal oil discharges on environmentally sensitive areas and seabirds.

We believe that a PSSA status for the Baltic Sea would combine the measures proposed above with the urgent need to protect our marine environment. By following-up the work of HELCOM, IMO and EC we are hoping to contribute to this process.