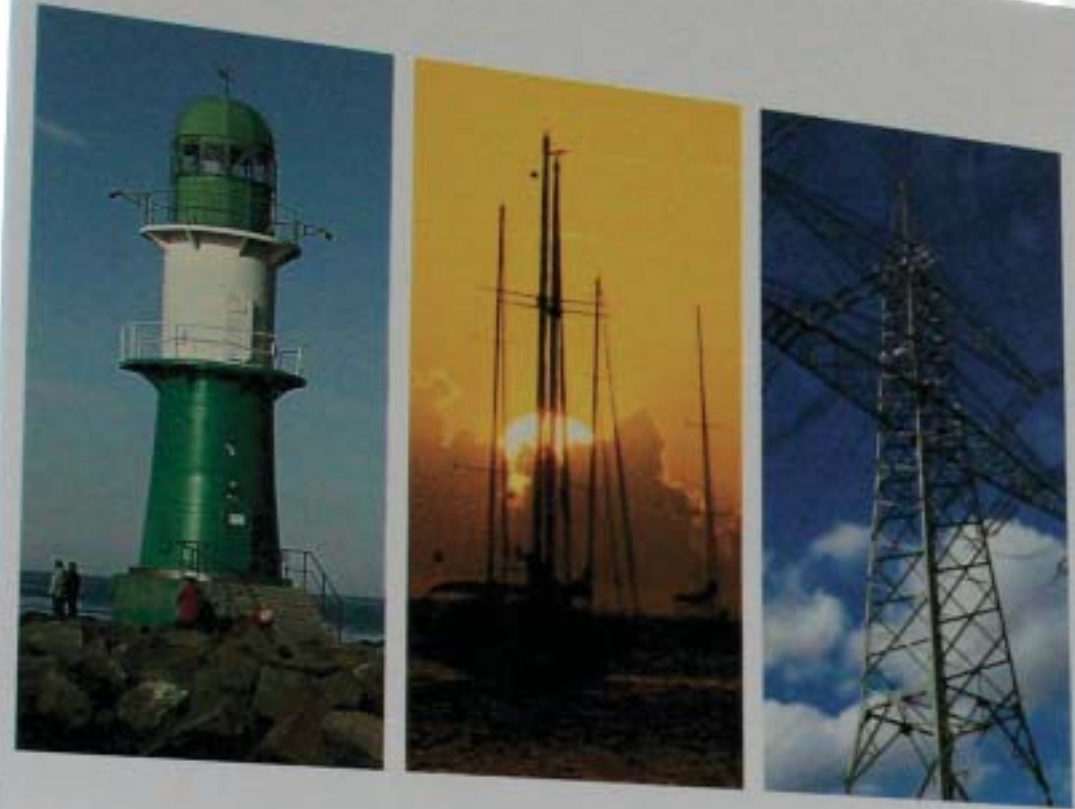
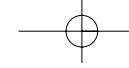


SETTING REGIONS IN MOTION
Baltic Sea INTERREG III B project conference
16. -17. May 2006, Malmö/Sweden





 
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Organisers



The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme is an EU programme and belongs to one of the three strands of the European Community Initiative INTERREG III.

The objective of BSR INTERREG III B is to strengthen competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region, its territorial cohesion and sustainability of its development by connecting potentials over the administrative borders. Eleven countries around the Baltic Sea have joined forces to deal with shared regional problems. BSR INTERREG III B helps regional partners form transnational partnerships in the Baltic Sea Region to work together on common projects. In these projects, regions from different countries address joint challenges in the field of infrastructure planning, environment, transport logistics and the development of cities and rural areas. The cooperating states are Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Norway, Belarus and Russia. 120 projects are the result of this initiative.

If you wish to know more about the Baltic Sea Programme and BSR co-operation please contact the Secretariat or visit our web site:

www.bsrinterreg.net



Region Skåne was established on January 1st, 1999 through the merger of the County Council of Kristianstad and the County Council of Malmö as well as the health and medical services of the City of Malmö.

Skåne is a county with Region Skåne acting as its co-ordinator in many important issues of regional development. Region Skåne works with trade and industry development, the environment, promotion of investment, town and infrastructure planning, public transport, culture, and health, medical and dental services.

The regional council is the highest decision-making body of Region Skåne, with 149 directly elected members. Political work is focused on creating good conditions and opportunities for Skåne to become an attractive region in which to work, establish businesses, study and live. Co-operation stretches beyond the boundaries of the region, particularly into Denmark and the countries around the Baltic Sea.

For more information please visit:

www.skane.se

Introduction: Setting regions in motion

Baltic Sea projects achieved tangible results, such as new regional development plans, new transport solutions. These results will contribute to accelerated growth and increase in competitiveness of the region. More than 2900 partners work together in 120 projects.

A new transnational programme will be launched in 2007 to intensify the cooperation among Baltic Sea countries. The successor of the present INTERREG III B programme will be sponsored by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Additional European resources will be dedicated to a more intensive cooperation between project partners from Russia and Belarus on the one hand and those from the European Union and Norway on the other.

These are the main messages of the two day project conference in Malmö on the 16th and 17th of May. The conference presented the results of the 120 transnational projects, that were initiated since the start of the Programme in 2001.

More than 450 participants from projects, programme's stakehol-

ders, pan-Baltic organisations, the European Commission and other INTERREG programmes met in Malmö. During two days participants were informed about the present and future of the Baltic Sea programme and had the opportunity to take a closer look at projects at the exhibition and during workshops. Representatives of all Member states from different levels were present and the conference brought together more than 17 nationalities.

The conference was organised jointly by the Baltic Sea INTERREG III B Joint Secretariat and Region Skåne.



Intensified cooperation with partners from outside the borders of the Baltic Sea region

The eleven countries around the Baltic Sea will intensify their cooperation with countries outside the borders of the Baltic Sea region in projects working for sustainable development.

Initiatives developed in cooperation with non-EU Member States in the Baltic Sea Region and countries outside the borders of this region have already become operational.



Baltic Sea INTERREG III B has proved to be an efficient tool for financing transnational projects

The plenary session gave an insight into the present state of the Baltic Sea INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme. Speakers representing national, regional and European stakeholders of the programme presented their views and shared experience.

The participants were welcomed by Mr Uno Aldegren, President of the Regional Executive Board of the Region Skåne (right). Mr Olle Lundgren, Swedish Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication opened the conference.

Ms Susanne Scherrer, Director of the Joint Secretariat, introduced the speakers and the programme for the session.



Uno Aldegren

President of the Regional Executive Board, Region Skåne



„We couldn't achieve our aims in terms of regional development if it wasn't for the financial means that INTERREG offers us.“

„Within the INTERREG programme we have carried out many projects in the Øresund area, a fruitful cooperation between Denmark and Sweden. We try to strengthen this cooperation by creating a shared labour market and cooperation between universities.“

Olle Lundgren

Swedish Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication



„INTERREG III B has been very important, but now it is time for implementing the results. The question is: who takes the responsibility to implement the results of the INTERREG work?“

Ann-Kerstin Myleus

European Commission DG Regional Policy, Acting Head of the Territorial Co-operation Unit



„In 2008 a financial review of the programme will take place. We will then have to show the programme is making a shift into the right direction: away from planning, focused on concrete projects with an impact on the community. The time is short, we have to start this shift today.“

Susanne Scherrer

Director of the Joint Secretariat



„Despite the economic, administrative, political and religious diversity in the Baltic Sea region, 120 transnational projects have been approved within the Baltic Sea INTERREG programme. Over 2900 project partners are now involved. This touches the lives of more than 100 million inhabitants throughout the region.“

Matti Lipsanen

Regional Council of Häme



„International cooperation is nothing mysterious: by using international programmes you can broaden your domestic market. It is normal that different international programmes overlap.“

An international project can work as a catalyst for development. Ideas from and cooperation with other countries can lead to profitable projects on the local and regional levels. For the future, it is important that regional and local actors keep playing roles in the projects.“

Gabrielle Kötschau

Director of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat



„Co-operation between the various institutions in the region is indispensable. We need everyone’s experience to achieve good, long lasting results. Moreover, we have to realise that every country in the Baltic Sea region has different assets and specific knowledge. The target of ‚motion‘ is a prosperous and stable Baltic Sea region, contributing to confidence and security in the whole of Europe. And this is and must be our common target. The CBSS is ready not only to set our region in motion, but to keep it in motion.“

Mariusz Kasprzyk

Chairman of the Steering Committee



„Old and new member states should try to learn from each others experience. The new member states can learn from the old member states how to work professionally, how to organise events and how to be punctual. Old member states should learn from the new member states: they are enthusiastic, they have fresh ideas, they love to organise special events, are less institutionalised and know the neighbouring countries very well. The one fact that the new member states know the Russian language makes the difference.“

Rob Engelsman

Northern Netherlands Assembly



„The Northern Netherlands are the intermediary between the INTERREG North Sea Region and the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region. Both regions are peripheral maritime regions, with a similar way of working.“



Open hearing of the draft Baltic Sea Programme 2007-2013

On the second day of the conference an interactive panel on the future of the transnational Baltic Sea Programme familiarised participants with the latest proposals of the preparation teams. Findings on new concepts for territorial development and ideas for pro-active implementation were presented. Pan-Baltic organizations and other interested parties commented on the draft Programme.



Increasing the potential of the region

The participating countries consider the achievements of their cooperation as a strong framework for a more intensive cooperation in the next period (2007-2013) of Baltic Sea Programme. In the forthcoming period the focus of the projects will be on the following four objectives:

- Fostering innovation across the Baltic Sea region;
- Improving the accessibility of the Baltic Sea region;
- Managing the Baltic Sea as a common resource;
- Promoting attractive and competitive cities and regions.

Organisations from the eleven participating countries have the opportunity to start a project together with partners from other countries to contribute to one of these four objectives. Preparation of investments and a more intensive cooperation with Russia and Belarus will also be prioritised.

Stakeholders and project partners were consulted about their wishes and needs for the future: more attention should be paid to intensified coordination with other EU programmes, to investing in human capital and knowledge based society and to practical guidance of future projects partners.



As the programme operates at the transnational level and promotes functionality of the Baltic Sea Region, its overarching strategic objective is: 'To strengthen competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region, its territorial cohesion and sustainability of its development by connecting potentials over the administrative borders'



Ms Ilze Kukute, State Secretary of the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments of Latvia chaired the discussion.



Mr Wiktor Szydarowski, Secretary to the Joint Programming Committee for the BSR Programme 2007-2013, monitored the discussion.



"In the 2007-2013 period we will need to show our competitiveness as a region"

(Mr Matti Lipsanen, Regional Council of Häme)



Katarina Borgh-Rahm

European Commission, DG External Relations



„In Russia and Belarus, support to the INTERREG programmes comes mainly from the grass-root level. It appears to be hard to get the national level involved. It is important to incorporate civil society organisations into the different projects.”

Wilfried Görmar

Chairman of the Drafting Team Contents



„A key element in the future projects of the next programme period has to be innovation. A problem that has to be tackled is the huge disparity of economic development between countries in the East and the West of the region. If we want to develop concept we need to bring all actors together.”

Harry Ekestam

Chairman of the Drafting Team Implementation



„The preparation of the new programme is progressing well. Two new taskforces were formed: one for strategic and one for implementation questions. The Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein will remain the managing authority on behalf of the participating countries. The joint programme secretariat will keep its location in Rostock/Germany. A branch office will be operated in a central Baltic location.”

Mr. Görmar stated that the richness of the outcomes of the running programme period surpasses the expectations. In many cases the outcomes go much further than mere planning. Many projects have already reached the implementation phase and in some cases investments by private partners have been made.

Workshops – insight into project results



The aims of the workshops were to examine the results and impacts of selected project themes. Workshops showed not only the success stories, but also failures and drew conclusions for the next programme period 2007-2013.



Challenges and risks



The Baltic Sea Region is facing new challenges both as a result of global changes and of processes of a more regional character. Projects address, for example, climate change, renewable energy sources, conversion of former military areas and civil protection.



Ms Mia Stavert facilitated the Workshop 1 "Challenges and risks":
"We've discussed if existing projects need to be co-funded also in future. With an abundance of new project ideas, the time might have come to fund new projects instead of those that are already institutionalised."

Workshop 1



Workshop 2

Our Sea



Projects of the BSR INTERREG III B programme contribute to the safeguarding of the marine environment, and focus both on the Baltic Sea, and its catchment area. Subjects of joint cooperation are, for example, marine pollution caused by shipping and other sectors, integrated coastal zone management and management of data related to natural resources.



Mr Jacek Zaucha, VASAB 2010 Secretariat, guided discussions in Workshop 2 "Our Sea":
 "All participating projects have come up with new proposals. Planning still matters as a part of the process."



Connecting regions



The regions that make up the Baltic Sea area vary from a geographical and socio-economic point of view, but they are connected by a number of common challenges. The workshop discussed the development processes in macro-regions including actions taken to overcome obstacles for further development of these regions.



Mr Wiktor Szydarowski chaired Workshop 3: "Connecting regions".



Workshop 3



Workshop 4

How the Lisbon objectives are reflected in the present programme, lessons learned

SEA Trans-Link

compass



Selected projects contributing to the Lisbon objectives of improved competitiveness and growth gave an opportunity to look at their work from broader (European) perspective.



Mr Michael Koch-Larsen, Danish Regions, chairing Workshop 4, said:

"The workshop has shown that projects can achieve tangible results, such as the increase of jobs, growth and competitiveness."



What have we achieved so far and where are we going? – Discussion based on the findings of the mid-term evaluation

Evaluations are carried out in order to look back at the activities done and to look forehead to further development of the programme. Goals of the workshop were to present main findings of the Mid Term Evaluation and to find solutions for the bottlenecks in project implementation.



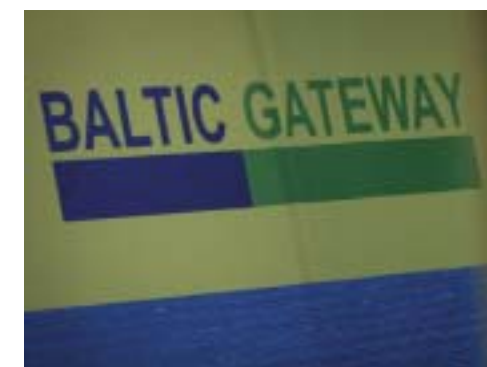
Mr Henning Steffen Christensen
PLS Ramboll Management A/S, facilitated the discussion in Workshop 5.

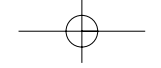


Workshop 5









Exhibition: the Programme Gulf



Exhibition: Projects filled up the place



During the two days, the whole conference area formed an open project forum with active project coordinators willing to answer

questions and projects stands with different info materials at every corner. INTERREG projects filled up the place!



Projects aim to solve the problems by working together

Nancy Holm

*Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation
Project: Baltic Sea Breeze*



„Public interest in marine pollution is increasing. People are aware of the pollution caused by sea traffic and they are willing to change their behaviour. Baltic Sea Breeze has noticed an increased demand for seminars and trainings by boat clubs and harbours in all countries surrounding the Baltic Sea. Also in Russia and the three Baltic States the interest in what to do against marine pollution has amazingly grown during the past year. This is noteworthy, since the rising awareness of environmental damages is a recent phenomenon in these countries.“

Andreas Schubert

*City of Rostock
Project: Wind Energy*



The structure of this project differs from many others: it is a non-hierarchic network association of small and medium-size enterprises working with wind energy. The objective is to make contacts between experts from countries with experience in wind energy, and those who do not have the experience yet. This method has proven to be successful over the last decade: “In former East Germany wind energy was completely unknown in 1990. Now expertise from there is really demanded by many other European countries“.

Bengt Gustafsson

*Blekinge Region
Project: Baltic Gateway*



The first aim of this project has been to develop the ports in the Baltic Sea Region to be globally competitive. The lead partner of this project (the Region of Blekinge in Sweden) describes ports as the ‘engines for local and regional growth’. Ports should become hubs for hinterland connections

Jan – Henrik Johansson

*Regional Council of Uusimaa
Project: Baltic Palette*



Baltic Palette is a good example of a project directed at spatial planning. Visions have been developed to different regional challenges in the fields of sustainable growth for big cities, infrastructure (the development of different transport corridors), IT, sustainable tourism and water management.

Hanseatic glamour



Mr Kjell-Arne Landgren, Chairman of Malmö City Council, hosted an impressive dinner at the Malmö Town Hall. Both, the wonderful historical setting as well as ear-catching classical music, performed by Malmö artists, created an inspiring atmosphere and a hospitable hanseatic feeling.



Ms Ilze Kukute, State Secretary of Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments of Latvia closed the evening by thanking the City of Malmö for a splendid dinner and an unforgettable evening.



Amber tree awards

The "Amber tree awards" were granted to three projects for their special achievements. The Joint Secretariat's director, Susanne Scherrer, linked the importance and characteristics of amber to the Baltic Sea to the high value and importance of the project results to the region. The "Amber tree awards" received:

- European Route of Brick Gothic for preserving and presenting architectural heritage of the past with modern IT technologies;
- SEAREG (ASTRA) for the search for new tools and approaches when facing a global change affecting the whole BSR;
- Barents 2010 for involvement of the Eastern Baltic Sea regions in true neighbourhood activities.



Representatives of the projects European Route of Brick Gothic, SEAREG (ASTRA) and Barents 2010 with awards.



Cooperation in-between



Non-official time of the conference such as coffee breaks and lunch time, as well the dinner at the Malmö Town Hall was used for informal meetings and networking.



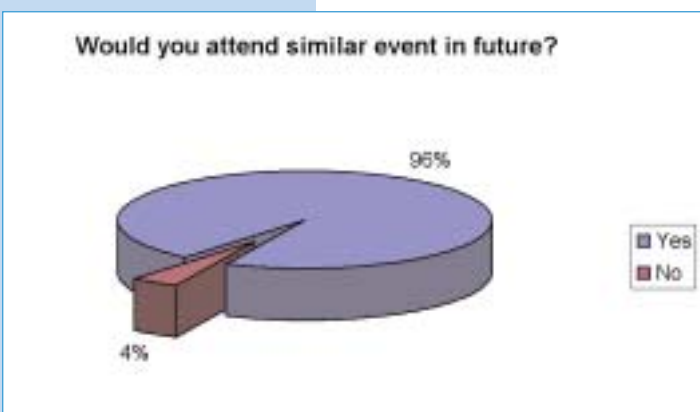
Feedback: the conference was just at the right time – before launching the new programme

A short feedback questionnaire with questions related to the conference was filled in by participants in order to evaluate this event.

The results of the questionnaire confirm that the conference was regarded as a successful and important event. The majority of participants (92%) were positive about the conference and 96% would attend a similar event also in the future.

Naturally, most people were interested in the discussion and the open hearing about the new programme 2007 - 2013. The other parts of the conference such as the plenary session, the project exhibition, the workshops and the evening programme were considered as useful and important for building networks, sharing experiences and finding future partners.

Participants regarded the conference as a well-organised event addressing different target groups. Balance was kept between presenting the achievements and results of the present programme 2000 - 2006 as well as sending key messages about the new programme 2007 - 2013.

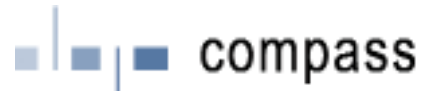
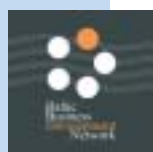
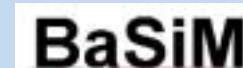
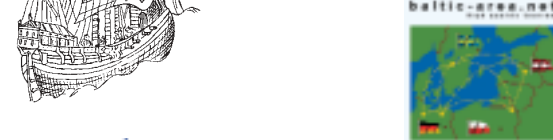
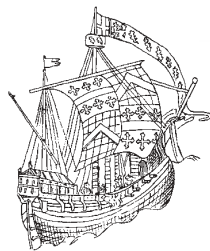


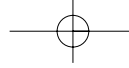
Thank you!

We would like to thank everyone who helped prepare and support the BSR INTERREG III B project conference a "Setting regions in motion", as well as all participants. Special thanks to the speakers, moderators of the workshops and to all involved projects.

Special thanks also to Region Skåne for successful cooperation, especially to Ms Sofie Qvarfordt.







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