



Draft Baseline version – 28 June 2012

*Amendment proposals to the BSPC Secretariat **no later than 20 August 12:00***

Conference Resolution

Adopted by the 21st Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

The participants, elected legislators from the Baltic Sea States*, assembling in St Petersburg, Russian Federation, 26-28 August 2012,

discussing co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region, environmental health and energy cooperation, a safe and healthy Baltic Sea, and health, social welfare and economic development,

A. stressing that parliamentary cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) shall contribute to democratic, transparent and inclusive political processes, as well as to practical and positive results in people's everyday life;

B. commending the close, pragmatic and productive interaction between the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and BSPC, including a far-reaching synchronization of political priorities and a continuous exchange at all levels;

call on the governments in the Baltic Sea Region, the CBSS and the EU,

Regarding Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region,

1. to acknowledge the need for a connection and complementarity between the North-West Russia Socio-Economic Development Strategy by the Russian Federation and other overall policies of the Baltic Sea Region, such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Northern Dimension;

2. to provide continued support to the Northern Dimension policy and its further diversification into new operational branches, and to ensure that the priorities and modalities of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region are aligned with the Northern Dimension, in order to involve all stakeholders in the Region on an equal footing, to avoid overlapping, and to ensure equal access to EU funds for all stakeholders;

3. to provide stable and long-term resources to CBSS and its various working bodies, and to continue to support an ongoing dialogue with BSPC on political priorities as well as operational activities;
4. to provide sufficient resources for the full implementation of the SEBA project (Modernization Partnership for the South Eastern Baltic Area), aiming at enhancing cooperation in fields such as youth, public-private partnership, sustainable development and tourism;
5. to encourage a deliberate division of labour between stakeholders in the Region, aiming at strengthening their comparative advantages, synchronizing their priorities, and complementing each other's competencies; cooperative initiatives such as the "*Maritime Joint Event*" in 2011 and 2012 should be promoted as a role model for other subject areas;
6. to promote the traditions of tolerance as a means of counteracting radical and extremist trends, and to strengthen the human rights throughout the entire Baltic Sea Region and its neighbourhood;
7. to dismantle administrative and physical obstacles, such as visa restrictions, for the unimpeded movement of people, enterprises and capital throughout the Region;

Regarding Environmental Health and Energy Cooperation,

8. to ratify, for those states that have not already done so, the Espoo Convention (the EU Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context);
9. to fully implement all commitments under the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, adopted by the Governments of the Baltic Sea Region in Krakow in 2007, aimed at restoring a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea by 2021;
10. to carry out work, within the overall framework of rehabilitation of the Baltic Sea ecosystem, to halt the discharge of sewage into the drainage basin of the Baltic Sea, including the modernization of sewage facilities;
11. to contribute to the introduction of best agricultural practices and technologies in animal waste conversion and poultry farming;
12. to make sustained efforts to promote and develop green growth, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and to adopt nationally adapted binding targets for energy efficiency;
13. to support BASREC (Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation) and implement the commitments for 2012-2015 made by the BASREC Ministerial Meeting 14-15 May 2012, in order to develop common regional energy planning goals and to integrate energy markets and energy infrastructure;
14. to promote education, research and development on green growth and energy efficiency, and to take action to disseminate information, exchange best practices and raise awareness of the gains and ways of saving energy;

15. to provide political incentives and innovative financial schemes to initiate pilot projects and investments in energy efficiency measures;

16. to promote green public procurement (GPP) at all levels of public administration, ensuring that GPP standards provide a level playing field for businesses and do not lead to competitive disadvantages for small and medium-sized enterprises;

17. to enhance information exchange on the planning and construction of nuclear power plants in the Baltic Sea Region, as well as on procedures for storage, transport and processing of spent fuel;

Regarding Maritime Safety and Security,

18. to expand information exchange, joint planning and dissemination of best practices between maritime authorities in order to manage the growing vessel traffic in the Baltic Sea;

19. to develop real-time maritime surveillance information and e-navigation technologies in order to improve vessel traffic management and augment the joint preparedness against accidents;

20. to strengthen the competitiveness of clean shipping in the Baltic Sea Region by using appropriate targeted incentives;

21. to promote research and innovation in order to develop competencies in the areas of shipping safety, energy efficiency, emission reductions, alternative propulsion technologies and renewable energies in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in the global competition;

22. to establish a joint oil protection fund, financed by the Baltic Sea ports, to finance the handling of oil spills;

23. to support the implementation of the tripartite project "The Gulf of Finland Year 2014", with the purpose of consolidating joint research and conservation efforts of Finland, Estonia and Russia in order to strengthen the maritime ecosystems of the Baltic Sea;

Regarding Health, Labour Market and Economic Development,

24. to raise the profile of health and social well-being on the regional cooperation agenda and to support the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being, in order to pursue persistent efforts for improving health and social well-being and for combating the obstacles to sustainable economic growth posed by the ageing society, high burden of non-communicable diseases and antimicrobial resistance;

25. to develop a medium- to long-term strategy equipped with powerful measures to tackle youth unemployment, and to ensure that existing programmes with this aim are better coordinated; *the aim should be to offer each young person a job, an*

apprenticeship, additional continuing education or a combination of employment and vocational training after a maximum of four months of unemployment. Working life must not begin with a longer period of unemployment.

26. to encourage an intensified cooperation between schools and businesses at local level, in order to develop initiatives for facilitating the transition from school to working life for young people;

27. to further develop measures to foster education, vocational training, skills development and life-long learning, with the aim of meeting the demand for skilled workers and creating new employment opportunities, and launch initiatives to improve the prospects of long-term employment to unqualified and unemployed young people;

28. to recognize vocational training achieved in one BSR country as valid for authorization to work in that field in all BSR countries, and to develop the quality of vocational training in the region according to best practices, research results and society's future needs;

29. to remove obstacles to the mobility of labour and enterprises – such as different tax and social insurance systems and labour legislation – by actively supporting cooperation between the border regions and between the existing cross border information centres;

30. to support and encourage the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) as a platform for exchange of experience and communication between the key labour market actors in the BSR, including helping the BSLF in promoting social dialogue, tripartite structures and cooperation as crucial elements of sustainable economic growth and social development;

31. to promote cooperation on modernization and innovation with a focus on cluster growth and, in the long term, on the establishment of regional partnerships particularly on environment and sustainable development;

32. to create a public-private partnership (PPP) network aimed at developing a "Baltic PPP" as a sustainable growth platform with a regional direct investment funds and active educational involvement;

33. to support the development of sustainable tourism on land and at sea, including the improvement of mobility and accessibility by other means that motorized private transports, and a strict regulation of the use of conservation areas;

Furthermore the Conference Decides to

34. adopt the BSPC Work Programme for 2012-2013;

35. grant Observer status to **Skåne Regional County Council**;

36. welcome with gratitude the kind offer of the Parliament of Estonia to host the 22nd Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Pärnu on 25-27 August 2013.