

BSSSC

ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008



BALTIC SEA STATES SUBREGIONAL CO-OPERATION



BSSSC Annual Report 2007-2008

Introduction and Overview	page 3
1. XVI BSSSC Annual Conference 2008	page 5
2. Baltic Sea Region Strategy	page 5
3. Sustainable Energy and Climate Change	page 7
4. Quality of Life and Public Health	page 8
5. Transport and Infrastructure	page 8
6. Maritime Policy	page 9
7. Youth Policy	page 10
8. Report from the BSSSC Brussels Antenna	page 12
9. Board Meetings and other events	page 13
10. New Chairmanship 2009-2010	page 15



The Norwegian Chairmanship of BSSSC is coming to an end. It has been two very interesting years for myself and for the members of the BSSSC Secretariat. Representing BSSSC and holding the torch high on behalf of the Baltic Sea Region has been a great pleasure.

Other organisations in the Board

After changing BSSSC's Terms of Reference last autumn, I'm happy that UBC (Union of Baltic Cities), BSC-CPMR (Baltic Sea Commission of the CPMR) and the B7 Islands are represented in our Board, as well as CBSS (Council of the Baltic Sea States) Secretariat as observer at our Board meetings.

Cooperation with Russian regions

Aiming at a more active involvement of the Russian regions in the work of BSSSC, I am happy that we succeeded to arrange a Board meeting in close cooperation with the Government of Saint Petersburg in May this year and get a representative of Kaliningrad Region into the BSSSC Board.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

In December 2007 the European Council agreed starting the work with an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). The decision has created a lot of new positive energy in the Baltic Sea Region and among the organisations. To my mind an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region can be the platform needed to bring

all good initiatives and efforts together in our region! To get from visions and good intentions to actions and concrete implementation! To use our strong points to meet the challenges ahead!

Joint Energy and Climate Platform

As a result of the Annual Conference 2007 in Turku we took an initiative to start consultations on Energy and Climate issues with major BSR organisations in October 2007. In February 2008 a Joint Energy and Climate Platform of BSR organisations was endorsed and today this platform consists of 9 major BSR organisations representing local, regional and national level and it has set up concrete goals for several activities.

BSSSC Annual Conference 2008

This year's annual conference in Kaunas focused on the future of the Baltic Sea Region – contributing to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In cooperation with the EU Commission DG Regio we carried out a Roundtable on Accessibility and Attractiveness as a part of our conference. More than 400 persons attended the event and to my mind this conference is one of the most successful conferences of BSSSC. It has been a pleasure to organize the Annual Conference in Kaunas again as well as to work together with CoR, EU Commission and the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013.

Youth in BSSSC

The BSSSC Youth Network has been very active over the past year. Youth participation is important for the work of BSSSC and young people of the Baltic Sea Region are important actors when it comes to shaping the future of our region. We will encourage them to take an active part in forming the future and as politicians we must listen to their thoughts and ideas and take them into account in our decision-making and in our strategies.

Promoting the interests of subregions

We have been active in promoting the interests of sub-regions in the BSR among others by contributing with political statements to the Blue Paper on Maritime Policy, the EU Green Paper on Adaption to Climate Change (together with BSC-CPMR), the Cohesion Policy post 2013 (together with BSC-CPMR) and to the consultation on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (together with 5 other organisations in the BSR). Thanks a lot to Schleswig-Holstein and the Danish Regions for taking on the coordination of these contributions.

Co-operation with CoR

The Declaration of common interest with the Committee of the Regions (CoR) has open up the possibility for BSSSC to take part in the Structural Dialog with the EU Commission, the CoR and European regional organisations. Three times BSSSC has been able to speak at these occasions, to intervene and ask questions to the Commissioner. A new Declaration will be signed 11 December 2008 – this time a joint Declaration with the other BSR organisations representing local and regional level (UBC, BSC-CPMR and B7) for 2008 – 2010. To my mind, it will strengthen the BSR voice in Brussels and show that we can and will work together for the benefit of the region.

A "regional dimension" in Northern Dimension

BSSSC feels that it is indispensable to extend its cooperation beyond the framework of the EU and particularly include Russian partners. We carefully studied the new policy documents for the Northern Dimension (ND) and have been in contact with the Northern Dimension Steering Group, suggesting to create a kind of "Regional Dimension" to revitalize the cooperation with all neighbours around the Baltic Sea. BSSSC was tasked to carry out a survey among regional authorities in the ND area and compile it for the purpose of further discussion of such a regional pillar within the ND policy framework.

The respond has been good and BSSSC looks forward to presenting the results before the end of the year.

Supporting strategic projects

BSSSC Board supported five projects of strategic relevance in the first application round of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013. Three of the projects got adopted and will be followed by BSSSC during their implementation (Baltic Master II, Bioenergy Promotion and New Bridges). The two others will most likely try again for the second application round. I'm very happy that we have managed to develop BSSSC further also including more focus on practical cooperation measures for the benefit of the Baltic Sea Region.

New chair of BSSSC

On 1 January 2009 the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg will take over the BSSSC Chairmanship and Secretariat. I am convinced that Hamburg will lead BSSSC to new shores with success. I wish the new Chairman, Mr. Carsten Lüdemann, and his team all the best in this assignment.

Thank you

I want to use the opportunity to thank you all for contributing to the work of BSSSC in the two years of the Norwegian Chairmanship. It has been a great pleasure working with you! I wish you all the best for the future Baltic Sea Region cooperation, and don't forget: We are shaping the future Baltic Sea Region together! Using the opportunity that the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region offers – releasing new energy and activities! Baltic Sea Region cooperation will continue to be successful only if we trust each other.



Arne Ören
Chairman of BSSSC



1. XVI BSSSC Annual Conference 2008

The XVI BSSSC Annual Conference took place on 18-19 September in Kaunas, Lithuania, and was hosted by Kaunas Region. It was a memorable conference offering excellent speakers and interesting discussions. More than 400 delegates from regions as well as national authorities around the Baltic Sea and even beyond its frontiers gathered to discuss the future of the Baltic Sea Region. The main topic was EU's Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and sub-regional contributions to the development of this strategy document and its action plan.

The annual conference will be remembered for at least three main reasons:

First: An outstanding participation, which demonstrated a strong commitment of the regional and local levels of the Baltic Sea Area to take responsibility and push things ahead.

Second: With the Committee of the Regions (CoR) as co-organiser and especially with the DG Regional Policy of the EU Commission as organiser of the Roundtable on "How to make the Baltic Sea Region an Accessible and Attractive Place", the European Union's institutions have finally realised the indispen-

sable contribution that regions can provide for an EU Strategy, and

Third: the working sessions, the Roundtable and the Partner Search Café organized by the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Baltic Sea Programme 2008-2013 enriched the spectrum of proposals on how to strengthen the Baltic Sea Region and make the envisaged Baltic Sea Strategy work. With this contribution the XVI BSSSC Annual Conference lived up to its responsibility and successfully met its challenge.

2. Baltic Sea Region Strategy

The European Commission is preparing an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region on the request of the European Council. The aim of the Strategy is to coordinate the efforts of various actors in the region in order to promote a more balanced development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Strategy will aim at four main objectives:

1. to improve the environmental state of the Baltic Sea Region and especially of the sea;
2. to make the Baltic Sea Region a more prosperous place by supporting balanced economic development across the Region;
3. to make the Baltic Sea Region a more

accessible and attractive place for both its inhabitants, for competent labour force and for tourists;

4. to make the Baltic Sea Region a safer and more secure place.

The Commission will publish its first draft of the Strategy in December 2008 and present the final Strategy to the European Council in June 2009.



A Joint Position Paper

At the BSSSC's Board Meeting in May 2008, Knud Andersen (Danish Regions) was appointed as a rapporteur on the Baltic Sea Strategy for the BSSSC. A position paper on the strategy has been drafted, and five other Baltic Sea organisations have decided to co-sign. The organisations behind the position paper are BSSSC, Union of Baltic Cities, B7 Baltic Islands Network, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Euroregion Baltic and Baltic Development Forum.

The organisations have met several times both at administrative and political level in order to find common ground on the position paper.

Eight Areas of Action

- The position paper has 8 areas of actions, which are connected to the four objectives determined by the Commission. The areas of action are:
 - Energy and climate
 - Nature and environment
 - Physical infrastructure
 - Knowledge based infrastructure and a

- borderless region within R&D
- Economic and sustainable growth
- Human resources
- Intercultural dialogue and identity building
- Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region

The position paper stresses the importance of coordinated actions for the Baltic Sea Strategy across state borders and improved cooperation between local, regional and state authorities as well as political institutions and the civil society (vertical integration). An improved coordination between sector policies such as business, education, labour market as well as infrastructure (horizontal integration) is also necessary.

A plan for implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy is another important element, as there is a need to specify the roles and responsibilities of the different actors in the region and thus make the strategy effective and relevant.

Involvement of the neighbouring states is necessary, as they play an important role in the development of the region and therefore should be included in the process.

Meetings with the Commission

The position paper was presented to the Commission at a meeting on 23 September 2008 and was well received. A second meeting, where the Baltic Sea organisations can present proposals for flagship projects as well as proposals on the implementation of the Strategy to the Commission, was agreed. This meeting will take place at the end of November, but the work with the Baltic Sea Strategy will continue throughout next year.



3. Sustainable Energy and Climate Change

The future energy needs in connection with the serious climate situation continue to be one of the major challenges for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), and call for intensified co-operation. Following the decision of the Board and the Annual Conference Resolution (Turku, Finland, 2007), BSSSC initiated a consultation process with other BSR organisations working with Energy and Climate issues, which resulted in establishing a Joint Platform on Energy and Climate in the BSR in February 2008.

By endorsing the concept of this joint platform the BSR organisations agreed to convey a clear "Regional Energy and Climate message" to national and intergovernmental authorities, to support ongoing and future regional projects aiming to achieve a sound energy and climate future for the BSR and to raise public awareness of energy and climate challenges in the BSR.

By October 2008 the BSR organisations involved in the Joint Platform on Energy and Climate had had 3 meetings, setting up priorities and

envisaging actions to be taken. Inter alia, the BSR organisations agreed to contribute to the Energy and Climate Situation Analysis for the BSR to be conducted by the BDF, the BDF's 2008 Summit in Malmö and Copenhagen and to the EU's BSR Strategy with regard to Energy and Climate (Sustainable Development) issues. The BSR organisations have also sent a Letter of Support to BASREC in relation to the BASREC's upcoming Ministerial Meeting. The continuous information exchange between the BSR organisations has been going on since the first meeting in October 2007.

The BSSSC Board gave its political support to two BSR projects dealing with Climate and Energy issues: Bio-Energy Promotion project, established by Baltic 21 and ACCR (Awareness of Climate Change in regions), applying for funds from the Baltic Sea Region Programme (2007-2013) at its meeting in Riga, February 2008.

In close co-operation with other BSR organisations BSSSC shall continue its commitment in the framework of the Joint

Energy and Climate Platform, contributing to environmentally sound Baltic Sea Region.

4. Quality of Life and Public Health

After obtaining a partner status in the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) in August 2007, BSSSC has strived to contribute to a bigger awareness about NDPHS, its activities and possibilities of funding through NDPHS' Project Pipeline, by information dissemination amongst the BSSSC subregions and by trying to involve regional partners in the work of NDPHS' Expert Groups (EG). BSSSC has also invited the NDPHS to address its issues of importance by using its Newsletter and participating in the BSSSC Annual Conference in Kaunas.

In 2007-2008 representatives of BSSSC (Secretariat and subregions) attended NDPHS' Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR) meetings in Kaliningrad, Oslo, Brussels and Bad Neuenahr and the partnership's annual conference (PAC) in Vilnius.

BSSSC has actively worked with involvement of regional partners – representatives of the BSSSC subregions into the NDPHS's Expert Groups and initiating a WG on Public Health and Social Well-being. Thus an Østfold-based cross-national project HEPRO has been invited to participate in one of the NDPHS' Expert Groups, SIHLWA (EG on Social Inclusion, Healthy Lifestyles and Work Ability) and its representatives had meetings with this EG Coordinating Chair. This co-operation will hopefully continue in the future.

In its Annual Conference Resolution (Kaunas, Lithuania, 2007), BSSSC confirmed its willingness to continue working for a healthier and more prosperous Baltic Sea Region by

- supporting regional projects financed through the Second Programme of European Community action in the field of Health (2008-2013)
- contributing to better awareness about

Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS), its activities and funding

- opportunities through its Project Pipeline by information dissemination;
- ensuring participation of BSSSC subregions in various Expert Groups of the NDPHS;
- taking further steps in establishing a BSSSC Working Group on Public Health and Social Well-being and contributing to the project implementation within NDPHS by using the capacity of subregions in the BSR as well as the future WG on Public Health;
- supporting BSSSC's WG on Youth Policy in its healthy lifestyle-rewarding activities and its representation in other BSR and European networks dealing with relevant topics.



5. Transport and Infrastructure

During 2007 much time has been spent within BSSSC on developing a draft project proposal regarding transport in the BSR. This project proposal involved actions on a transnational level to combat existing bottlenecks and constraints towards the development of a coherent and intelligent transport system in the BSR. From this proposal and the following discussions the TransBaltic project was eventually developed.

The observed transport development trends

within the BSR pose a challenge for the sustainable development of the Baltic Sea region, especially in the context of a fast growing trade exchange of the European Union with the Russian Federation, the Far East countries and – in the near future – with India. Fast growing volumes of containerised cargo put a pressure on the road network and call for well-thought actions to shift the long-haul traffic to rail and sea. These, in turn, require innovative measures to optimise the route planning and to increase infrastructural and human capacity in port and rail freight operations.

The overall project objective of the TransBaltic project is therefore to help to integrate Baltic Sea routes with inland roads and rail links into a coherent system through joint strategic actions and jointly implemented business concepts. Two of the projects goals aim to harmonise transport and regional development actions of the pan-Baltic organisations in effort to consolidate the position of the BSR as a global player and also to prepare large investments aimed at resolving the most burning interconnectivity and interoperability problems in the Pan-Baltic perspective.

Another important aim is to develop a vision and strategy for the integrated transport system in the Baltic Sea region, endorsed by the project partnership and the associated Pan-Baltic organisations. The project, of course, also aims to contribute to and support the implementation of the planned Baltic Sea Strategy and Action Plan.

Headed by Region Skåne, the TransBaltic project was the largest transport project supported by the BSSSC Board in 2008. The partnership of the project involved

twenty seven different regions, local authorities and organizations.

The TransBaltic project applied for funding from the Baltic Sea Region Programme in October 2008. Unfortunately funding for the project was not approved at this stage, but the work is in progress at Region Skåne to examine the opportunities of a possible renewed application with the Baltic Sea Region Programme in 2009.

6. Maritime Policy

The BSSSC Working Group on Maritime Policy (WGMP), established in Spring 2008 and chaired by Land Schleswig-Holstein/Germany, has by this time members from Denmark, Germany, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. The WGMP sees its task in bringing together the maritime players of the region, formulating a 'regional maritime voice' and initiating or giving support to maritime pilot projects. All this in order to contribute to the objective postulated by the Baltic Sea Region's Maritime Policy Conference in 2006: to develop the Baltic Sea Region into Europe's maritime best practice region by 2015. The group is open for new members and aims at cooperating with other Baltic Sea organisations.



Currently two projects are of prior importance. For their implementation it will be necessary to cooperate with other stakeholders of the region. These projects are:

The introduction of land-based power supply for ships in all relevant ports of the Baltic Sea region, aiming at reducing pollutant and carbon dioxide emissions of ships during their stay in ports. Basis are the INTERREG project New Hansa and the efforts of the public utility company Stadtwerke Lübeck which inaugurated in August 2008 a first standardized plant to supply ships with electricity from land in Lübeck.

The second one is an instrument to reduce pollutant emissions from shipping and a good example for an integrated maritime policy as well - are environmentally differentiated harbour dues. The WGMP supports the introduction of differentiated fees in the ports of the BSR which set incentives for the usage of low-sulphur fuels, for a voluntary ban of waste-water discharges, for the usage of land-based power supply and in general for environmentally friendly practice and technologies.

The BSSSC expects that the regional implementation of the European Maritime Policy in the BSR will be an essential part of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. Pilot projects as stated above should be fostered by the European Commission to exemplary illustrate the added value of an integrated maritime policy in the BSR and to support the development of Clean Port and Clean Ship concepts. This is also one of the results of the maritime session of the BSSSC Annual Conference 2008, which contributed to the EU Commission's consultation process on the planned EU Baltic Sea Strategy.

Further activities are planned to raise public awareness for maritime activities and perspectives, e.g. activities at the European Maritime Day every year to be celebrated 20 May.



7. Youth Policy

2008 was another year of intensive work for the BSSSC's Work Group on Youth Policy (WGYP), full of events and youth meetings that offered lots of opportunities for young people to come together and to exchange experiences and ideas. The activities resulted in a closer cooperation between youngsters from different corners of the Baltic Sea regions and therefore helped to strengthen a network with joined efforts in organising seminars and conferences. Trafficking, climate change, youth culture, youth participation, Baltic identity and sustainable lifestyle were the main discussion topics.

At the BSSSC Annual conference in Turku, September 2007 two representatives of the youth team at the BSSSC Board got full member status. They serve as an important link between politicians and youth; their voices draw the attention of the entire Board on youth policy.

Meeting in Oslo, Norway, 16-17 January 2008

More than 20 young people of the WGYP from Denmark, Norway, Germany, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia got together in Oslo for two days. Together with youth workers they discussed possible initiatives and projects pursued by young people themselves. The youth network debated its role within the youth cooperation of the Baltic Sea Region and exchanged ideas for the Work Plan. The participants also got the opportunity to learn

more about youth work in Norway.



BSSSC Youth Conference in Cesis, Latvia, 29 May – 1 June 2008

The BSSSC Youth Conference hosted by the region of Cesis in Latvia offered a platform for active and fruitful discussions between youngsters, discovering differences and similarities of views, attitudes and cultures. The main topics focused on three issues: Youth Voice through Youth Councils and NGO's, Youth and Culture, Youth and Risks.

The workshops stimulated hot tempered discussions and resulted in ideas of concrete projects that will be carried out within the BSSSC youth network hopefully.



BSSSC Youth Forum in Kaunas, Lithuania, 16-17 September 2008

About 70 young people from Denmark, Norway, Germany, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Russia met for two days within the framework of the BSSSC Annual Conference in Kaunas. In addition to an introduction into the youth policy of Lithuania done by the host, a presentation of the objectives of an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and fruitful discussions on issues such as sustainable lifestyle and Baltic identity, the chance was used to explore Kaunas by taking part in a field game prepared by young people from Kaunas.

The workshop "Creative approach to environmental issues" reflected on sustainable lifestyle and the future of the BSR. Aspects of a common Baltic identity were discussed. The youth forum in Kaunas was one of the most memorable experiences in the work of the group – participants from various regions of the Baltic Sea discovered the great variety of the region, its chances and challenges.

The BSSSC Resolution 2008

According to the BSSSC Resolution adopted at the Board Meeting in Kaunas the WGYP will concentrate its work on strengthening tolerance and intercultural dialogue among young people of the Baltic Sea Region. The WGYP stressed: "Cultural diversity and principles of tolerance are a guarantee of safeguarding, democratic societies acknowledging the right of every person to respect of his/her human dignity". BSSSC will support the creating of long-term and reliable mechanisms for effectively counteracting extremism on the grounds of interethnic, interfaith and intercultural relations as well as formation of tolerant awareness and behavior. Furthermore the group will continue its work on health related issues such as healthy lifestyle and sustainable development.



8. Report from the BSSSC Brussels Antenna

BSSSC continued its activities to ensure safeguard its growing presence and visibility at the EU level in taking part in numerous events of Baltic Sea Regions regional politics and in events about EU policy in general. The integration of the BSSSC Brussels Antenna in the Oslo Region European Office, which in turn is part of the North European regional networks in Brussels, was a considerable advantage.

The continuation of the contacts with the European Parliament and with the "Intergroup Baltic" under the Chairmanship of MEP Christopher Beasley as well as with the EU Commissions Units for External Relations, Regional Policy and Maritime Affairs, was of primary importance. In these ongoing contacts, talks and relations BSSSC stressed the necessity of strengthening the cooperation and, to a certain extent, the coordination of the activities of the various regional organizations in the Baltic Sea area. BSSSC underlined in these contacts that this form of 'concentration of engagement and resources' is one of the core objectives of our network and pointed to our specific efforts in this regard. These contacts contributed considerably to the appreciation of BSSSC as one of the indispensable regional organizations in the Baltic Sea Region. These fruitful exchanges lead to the fact that the BSSSC Annual Conference 2008 in Kaunas was chosen for the first of the four Round Tables to discuss with stakeholders of the region the European Baltic Sea Strategy.

Besides these contacts, BSSSC continued its European commitment especially in three fields:

BSSSC worked for the acceptance of our suggestion to include a "Regional Dimension" in the framework of the Northern Dimension in talks and negotiations with the DG Relax of the EU Commission leading to the BSSSC initiated questionnaire. In these talks DG Relex underlined the necessity of including the CoR in this endeavor since the CoR is the institutional partner of the EU Commission when it comes to the regional dimension. At the same time, BSSSC started a discussion with the responsible unit in the CoR about how such a "Regional Dimension" could be realized in cooperation with CoR activities and especially with the planned agenda of the Relex Committee in 2009. There is great interest to introduce this initiative with a joint public event during next year.

BSSSC took actively part in the Brussels regional activities to start the discussion about the forthcoming EU Baltic Sea Strategy in the first part of 2008. The Baltic Sea regional offices in Brussels (mostly members of the so called "Informal Group") invited Brussels based stakeholders to participate in two seminars on this issue in April and June. BSSSC was represented in both events by Board members. In these early considerations about the European Baltic Sea Strategy, BSSSC undertook special efforts to stress the importance of maritime sector as a special feature of the Baltic Sea Region and the need for a particular effort to integrate the Russian regional partners in this strategy.

BSSSC intensified its cooperation with the CoR on the basis of a joint letter of common understanding. BSSSC was invited to participate in the "structured dialogs", the CoR organizes regularly with the EU Commission, and BSSSC took active part with speakers in three of these dialogues, one with Commissioner Benita



Ferrero-Waldner about the contribution of the regional level to external relations, one with Commissioner Vladimir Spitla about flexibility and the Danish model and one with representatives of Andris Piebals about sustainable energy. BSSSC was represented by the Chairman Arne Øren, Board member Knud Andersen and Minister Uwe Döring respectively. The development of cooperation with the CoR opened up the new possibility to organize the Annual Conference as a joint event with the CoR for the first time in BSSSC history.

9. Board meetings and Other Events

Representing the regions of 10 countries, the BSSSC Board continued its work and held five Board Meetings since the Annual Conference in Turku September 2007. The meetings took place in Gdansk (Poland), Riga (Latvia), Saint Petersburg (Russia), Kaunas (Lithuania) and Tallinn (Estonia). In addition to the meetings, the host regions organized seminars focusing on various issues related to the Baltic Sea Region.

14 – 15 November 2007, Gdansk, Poland

The host was the office of the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship, Gdansk, Poland. There was arranged a seminar on Eco-Energy in relation to the Board meeting, and the EU Blue Paper on Maritime Policy was discussed. The

Board adopted the updated Work Plan 2006-2008 and the revised Terms of Reference.

14-15 February 2008 in Riga, Latvia

The host of the seminar and the Board Meeting in Riga was the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG). The seminar was dedicated to the changes and reform processes in Latvian Local and Regional Administration. The Board discussed its support to Baltic Sea Region projects and agreed to give support to 6 projects.

22-23 May 2008 in St. Petersburg, Russia

The host for the seminar and the Board Meeting was the Saint Petersburg Government. The seminar focused on "Strengthening cooperation in the field of promoting mutual tolerance and intercultural dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region". The participants agreed on a common Declaration from the seminar.

17-19 September 2008 in Kaunas, Lithuania

The Board meeting and the BSSSC Annual Conference 2008 titled "Shaping the future Baltic Sea Region - Sub-regional contribution to the EU Baltic Sea Strategy" was hosted by the Kaunas County Governors Administration. A Roundtable "How to make the Baltic Sea Region an Accessible and Attractive place" was an important part of the conference. The conference consisted of plenary sessions, parallel sessions/roundtables, panel debate

and a partner search forum (Project Idea Café) for new projects within the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013. The conference included youth seminar with 70 participants taking place one day prior to the conference.	16-17.4 23.4 19.5	BSSSC Annual Conference Brussels BSR Programme Conference in St. Petersburg VASAB Annual Conference, Riga
20-21 November 2008 in Tallinn, Estonia The host of the BSSSC Board meeting was the Association of Estonian Cities. The seminar focused on an EU Baltic Sea Strategy.	29.5-2.6 3.6	Meeting with European Commission, DG Regio about the Roundtable in Kaunas, Brussels Youth Conference, Cesis
From the Annual Conference in Turku, Finland, in October 2007 to the end of 2008 BSSSC was represented at the following events:	5.6 9.6	Joint platform meeting on Energy and Climate, Stockholm UBC Board Meeting, Kuressaare Meeting with Hamburg and West-Pommeranian on Troika-Chair, Szczecin
2007		General Assembly BSC-CPMR, Herning
25.9	Baltic Intergroup in European Parliament, Brussels	11-13.6
28.9	6th Thematic Structured Dialog, Brussels	31.8-2.9
29.10	BSR organisation's meeting on Energy and Climate issues, Copenhagen	23-24.9 29.9
7-9.10	AER General Assembly Udine	
27.12	CBSS Annual Consultation meeting with BSR organizations	30.9
6-7.12	AER conference Energia, Montpellier	9.-10.10 22.10
2008		Stakeholder Conference on Baltic Sea Strategy, Stockholm AER Bureau Meeting, Paris Joint Platform on Energy and Climate meeting, Copenhagen AER General Assembly, Tampere
10.1	Meeting with BDF on Energy and Climate issues, Copenhagen	12.-14.11 26.-27.11
16-18.1	BSSSC Working Group on Youth Policy meeting Oslo	30.11-2.12
6.2	Joint Platform on Energy and Climate of BSR organisations meeting, Copenhagen	2.12
12.2	Meeting with the new BSSSC Chairmanship, Hamburg Germany	10-11.12
28.2	Steering Group ND Oslo, Norway	
12-14.2	Baltic Sea Day, St. Petersburg, Russia	
3.4	Meeting with CoR about the	
		BSSSC Annual Conference Brussels BSR Programme Conference in St. Petersburg VASAB Annual Conference, Riga Meeting with European Commission, DG Regio about the Roundtable in Kaunas, Brussels Youth Conference, Cesis Joint platform meeting on Energy and Climate, Stockholm UBC Board Meeting, Kuressaare Meeting with Hamburg and West-Pommeranian on Troika-Chair, Szczecin General Assembly BSC-CPMR, Herning BSPC Annual Conference, Gotland NDPHS CSR meeting, Bad Neuenahr Meeting about the Baltic Sea Strategy in the EU Commission, Brussels Stakeholder Conference on Baltic Sea Strategy, Stockholm AER Bureau Meeting, Paris Joint Platform on Energy and Climate meeting, Copenhagen AER General Assembly, Tampere Baltic Sea Region Conference, Tallinn BDF Summit, Copenhagen/ Malmö Joint Platform on Energy and Climate meeting, Copenhagen Signing of the Declaration of Common Interest (CoR, BSSSC, BSC, B7, UBC), Brussels



10. New Chairmanship 2009-2010

At the beginning of 2009 the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg takes over the chairmanship of BSSSC. The upcoming chairman is State Secretary Mr Carsten Lüdemann, Commissioner for Federal, European and International Affairs of Hamburg. The BSSSC Secretariat will be hosted by the Hamburg Senate Chancellery until 2010.

Hamburg has been working within the BSSSC network since its establishment in 1993 and has been represented in the BSSSC board from the start. In 2001 the strengthening of the Baltic Sea region was focused by the Senate of Hamburg. The Senate adopted and continued a Baltic Sea concept and promoted extensive co-operation with Baltic Sea institutions,

organizations and projects since then. As both a hub and an engine of Baltic trade, Hamburg has benefited from its good economic, cultural and political relations with cities, regions and states all around the Baltic Sea. Hamburg's strength in the Baltic Sea region is based on the city's worldwide relations, which have grown up over centuries. Hamburg wishes to contribute to BSSSC with its expertise as a metropolitan region, commercial hub and centre of creativity and learning in the Baltic Sea region. Hamburg intends to work within BSSSC to pursue further development of key issues such as Climate Change and Energy, Science and Education, Youth Policy, Public Health and Quality of Life and the Baltic Sea strategy of the EU.



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