

**PROGRAMME OF THE FOURTH
HELCOM BALTIC SEA ACTION PLAN STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE 2009**

Time: Tuesday, 3 March 2009; starting at 09:30, until 17:30. Registration starts at 8:30.

Place: Marina Congress Center, Katajanokanlaituri 6, FI-00160 Helsinki, Finland

Theme: Building blocks for a cost-effective implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

Background

The major focus of this international Stakeholder Conference is on the implementation of the strategic HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to drastically reduce pollution to the marine environment and restore its good ecological status by 2021. Senior Government Officials, representatives of science and business communities, and various organizations from around the Baltic Sea are invited to participate and discuss political, economic and scientific pre-requisites for timely and successfully achieving a healthy Baltic Sea.

A good knowledge basis grounded on thematic assessments of the marine environment, the economic perspectives of protecting the marine environment and regional co-operation for taking cost-effective measures are of utmost importance for putting the Baltic Sea Action Plan into practice, and these are three essential building blocks for successfully implementing it. Therefore, the theme of the 2009 HELCOM Stakeholder Conference is "Building blocks for a cost-effective implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan".

HELCOM's plan is considered an initiative of the highest political importance in the region. The Baltic Sea, which can be called the motorway for growth and prosperity of the region, has enormous importance to all of us. The long term economic and social well-being of the 85 million people living in the catchment area of the Baltic Sea highly depends on the state of the marine environment and therefore, the implementation of the plan will not only restore a healthy environment but also will be a driving force for growth and employment.

HELCOM's plan has already been heralded as a forerunner for other regional seas. It is the first bold attempt by a regional marine protection commission to implement the innovative eco-system approach to obtain a good environmental status of the marine environment. The HELCOM plan has also been seen as instrumental in implementing obligations under other international legislative frameworks, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and EU Maritime Policy. The currently evolving the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is also expected to draw heavily from the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan in its environmental as well as safety and security pillars.

HELCOM has obligations to measure, monitor and assess what is happening in the Baltic marine environment and how pressures to the environment are evolving. HELCOM has made comprehensive thematic assessments covering inputs and their effects on the marine environment since the 1980s and these findings are the basis for identifying priorities for actions. Recently these obligations have been fulfilled by elaborating comprehensive thematic assessments, covering two of the four environmental priority areas of HELCOM's work, namely eutrophication and biodiversity. A thematic assessment on hazardous substances should be developed during 2009-2010 and one for maritime activities by 2010. Furthermore, HELCOM Contracting Parties should undertake to produce a holistic assessment of the status of and pressures to the Baltic Sea marine environment for the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting which will take place in 2010 in Moscow.

The success of the Baltic Sea Action Plan will largely depend on how all the coastal countries and involved stakeholders, including international financial organisations, can co-operate to achieve the goal of a healthy Baltic Sea environment. The overall state of the Baltic Sea can only be further improved through our combined efforts and integrated actions. And HELCOM has a very important role in ensuring that all combined efforts are effective.

Tentative Programme

9.30-9.45	Opening of the Conference	Mr. Igor Maydanov, Chairman of HELCOM
Opening plenary		
9.45-10.00	Baltic Sea marine environment and cooperation within HELCOM	Mr. Yuri Trutnev, Minister, Russian Federation
10.00-10.15	Regional cooperation in the Baltic region as a prerequisite to protect the Baltic Sea	Ms. Paula Lehtomäki, Minister of the Environment, Finland
10.15-10.30	HELCOM's work from a European perspective	Mr. Stavros Dimas, European Commission
New HELCOM biodiversity and eutrophication assessments setting a baseline for implementing the measures of the BSAP - Plenary		
10.30-11.00	HELCOM Integrated thematic assessment on biodiversity and nature conservation in the Baltic Sea	Ms. Ulla Li Zweifel, Dimedia
11.00-11.15	Comment from a fisheries sector representative	Ms. Sally Clink, Executive Secretary of Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Council (BS RAC)
11.15-11.30	Comment from an NGO	Ms. Saskia Richartz, Greenpeace
11.30-12.00	HELCOM Integrated thematic assessment on eutrophication of the Baltic Sea	Mr. Jesper H. Andersen, DHI Water·Environment·Health
12.00-12.15	Signs of decrease in nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea – first results of the Fifth Pollution Load compilation	Mr. Seppo Knuutila, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)
12.15-12.30	Comment from Baltic farmers	Mr. Markus Hoffman, Baltic Farmers Forum for Environment (BFFE)
12.30-12.45	Comment from an NGO	Ms. Maria Staniszewska, Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)
12.45-14.00	Lunch break	

Economic perspective of the protection of the Baltic Sea		
14.00-14.15	A "Baltic Sea Stern report"	Mr. Tore Söderqvist, Enveco
14.15-14.30	A reflection on IFI's work to protect the Baltic Sea	Ms. Solveig Nordström, NEFCO
14.30-14.45	How a private foundation can enhance the work to protect the Baltic Sea	Mr. Ilkka Herlin, Baltic Sea Action Group
14.45-15.00	Work towards emission trading to reduce airborne emissions from maritime shipping	Mr. Bertil Arvidsson, Swedish Shipowners Association
15.00-15.30	Coffee break	
Regional cooperation in strengthening the knowledge base for cost-efficient implementation of the BSAP		
15.30-15.50	BONUS programme and its contribution to the knowledge basis needed to implement the Baltic Sea Action Plan	Ms. Kaisa Kononen, BONUS Secretariat
15.50-16.10	The approach to set maximum allowable nutrient inputs and country-wise nutrient reduction requirements of the Baltic Sea Action Plan	Mr. Fred Wulff, Baltic Nest Institute
16.10-16.20	Sub-regional risk of spill of oil and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea (BRISK)	Mr. Peter Poulsen, Admiral Danish Fleet HQ
16.20-16.30	Control of hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea region (COHIBA)	Ms. Ansa Pilke, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)
16.30-17.30	Roundtable discussion and closing of the Conference	Convened by Mr. Igor Maydanov Mr. Peter Gammeltoft, Ms. Mikaela Grönqvist, Ms. Saskia Richartz, Ms. Christina Gestrin, Mr. Jari Luoto, Mr. Tore Söderqvist, Ms. Kaisa Kononen, Mr. Magnus Rystedt