



# Newsletter

The Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation

May 2007

## Energy and Climate, our greatest common challenges

Dear colleagues and friends,



I think most of you won't disagree with me claiming that rapidly changing climate has become a major concern for all of us, no matter where we live. Weather is no longer a subject of a tedious conversa-

tion. On the contrary, weather and climate have become "hot topics". Particularly during the last winter Mother Nature has shown us that we all - living in Oslo, Tallinn, Kaunas or Hamburg - are directly affected by its whims and unpredictability. Global warming is already threatening many vital interests of human beings all over the world and the existence of the mankind itself. Glaciers and Arctic ice are melting far faster than before, causing rising of the global average sea levels. Over the coming decades the implications of global warming for the industrial economies, water supplies, agriculture, biological diversity and even geopolitics will be massive. The time of inactive observations is definitely over. The

statement of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) leaves no doubt that climate change cannot be avoided any longer. The question is how we can respond and adapt to the new reality. "In our daily lives we all respond urgently to dangers that are much less likely than climate change to affect the future of our children," said Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Strong and effective policies in place followed by actions are needed on all levels - global, national, regional, and local - the sooner, the better. Contribution from and co-operation between scientists, politicians, NGOs, entrepreneurs and individuals are the key words in this respect.

Having said that climate change is one of the greatest challenges that we face, we also realise that it is closely interrelated with another hot issue of today, the issue of energy, including its production, transportation, consumption and efficiency. The EU grasped the seriousness of the situation and launched the new EU Energy Policy last year, acknowledging the close relationship of the energy use and climate change, especially

through the increase of greenhouse gas emissions. At the Spring Council Meeting in Brussels in March this year the European heads of states and governments committed the EU to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from developed countries by 30% in 2020. And this is not the only commitment of the EU.

Both Energy (Energy Production and Efficiency) and Sustainable Development were selected as the key policy areas for the Work Plan of BSSSC in 2006-2008. Moreover, Sustainable Energy is chosen as the overall theme of the BSSSC Annual Conference in Turku, Finland, which will be organised in co-operation with the Regional Council of Southwest Finland in Turku 13-14 September this year. The conference Sustainable Energy - Contribution to meet the threats of Climate Change will focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources through the regional perspective and in relation to climate change.

I am convinced that being a political organisation for the regional authorities in one of the most industrially developed regions of Europe with more than 110 million inhabitants, it is our unequivocal responsibility to actively participate in the global debate on energy and climate-related issues, to be directly involved in policy-making processes for the future, identify and introduce the best practices from different corners of the Baltic Sea region and thus contribute to mitigation of climate change. Let's get off the fence!

**Arne Ören**  
BSSSC Chairman



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## WELCOME TO SOUTHWEST FINLAND AND BSSSC'S 15 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2007!

### Sustainable Energy – Contribution to meet the threats of Climate Change 13-14 September 2007, Turku, Finland

**BSSSC's annual conferences act as the main forum and yearly event of the organization, where both participating regions and other regional, national and international actors get a unique opportunity to raise issues of importance, exchange ideas, experiences and contribute to the policymaking processes.**



Turku Guest Marina

Varsinais.fi

This year BSSSC's Annual Conference, which will be 15th in a row, will take place in Turku, Finland, 13-14 September. The event will be hosted by the Regional Council of Southwest Finland.

The supply and use of energy in relation to climate change will be one of the major challenges in the decades to come. Predict-

ed and prioritised by many, this topic gained an adequate attention in Europe and at a global scale only recently. BSSSC decided last autumn to dedicate the 2007 Annual Conference to the topic of Sustainable Energy with a special focus on renewable energy sources, energy efficiency as well as relations to the climate change debate. BSSSC has invited EU's Commissioner for

Energy Andris Piebalgs as a main speaker at the conference.

The conference will among others include 4 parallel sessions on different aspects of sustainable energy – also presenting best practice projects and activities. The EU's Intelligent Energy Programme will also be represented.

***A partner search forum for the new Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013 will be carried out on Friday 14 September.***

We hope that the conference will be a good opportunity for regional actors and others to get together for interesting and fruitful discussions as well as to learn from good examples and lay grounds for future cooperation.

BSSSC promotes youth participation in all its activities and will also this year welcome youth representatives from all countries around the Baltic Sea Region to the Annual Conference in Turku. A special youth programme will be carried out before the official opening. The youth representatives will also be a part of the plenum and parallel sessions at the event. We encourage all national delegation to bring 5 young people (aged 18 – 25 years) to Turku.

We cordially welcome you to Southwest Finland and hope to see you in Turku 13 – 14 September at the BSSSC's 15th Annual Conference!

#### **For registration:**

[http://congress.utu.fi/bsssc\\_regform.pdf](http://congress.utu.fi/bsssc_regform.pdf)

**The last day for registration: 31 July 2007**

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**BSSSC (for updated**

**programme information)**

**www.bsssc.com**

**Regional Council of Southwest Finland**

**www.varsinais-suomi.fi**

**City of Turku**

**www.turku.fi**



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## THE NEW EUROPEAN ENERGY POLICY



### The new focus

By 2006 the EU institutions realized that the conventional use of energy and its supply poses a major challenge for the future. The uncertainties of the energy prices, the continuing crisis in the

Middle East and the growing difficulties in the EU-Russia relations, the further insights into the factors of climate change and the unsatisfactory liberalization of the energy market in Europe propelled the issue at the forefront of concerns of European politicians. As an answer to all these challenges, the European Commission introduced a new European Energy policy last year, focusing on sustainable, secure and competitive energy supply for Europe.

### A complete new dimension of economic, environmental and research activities

This policy does not only try to diversify the European supply of energy from the outside sources. It also stimulates the intelligent and sustainable production and use of energy resources in Europe itself. It supports a leap forward of investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy and

technologies and tries to exploit the existing technological advantages, especially in the sectors of renewable energy technologies and efficient use of energy. Already now, the EU has a 60% share in the global wind energy market.

### A new stimulus for the EU's economy

The new European Energy policy is expected to become a major economic stimulus in the Union, opening long-term employment opportunities and making necessary changes easier to accept. At the same time it is acknowledged that many areas are far away from a rational use of energy, like European transport sector, the heating and cooling in private and public buildings or the production of energy in fossil fired power plants as well as the transport of energy. It also leaves to the EU member states how to organize their "energy mix" and refrains from an answer, to what degree nuclear energy should be included into this new approach.

### The EU has grasped the seriousness of the situation

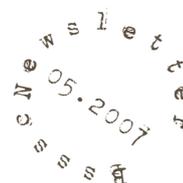
The new policy acknowledges the close relationship of the energy use and climate change, especially via the increase of green house gas emissions. The European heads of states at their Spring Council Meeting in

Brussels in March this year committed the Union to reduce green house gas emissions from developed countries by 30% in 2020, to increase energy efficiencies by 20% in 2020, to raise the share of renewable energy by 20% in 2020 and to increase the level of biofuels in transport fuel to 10% in 2020. This landmark commitment still has to be transformed into binding European policies and regulations, but it demonstrates already now that the EU has grasped the seriousness of the situation.

### Intelligent Energy Europe Programme

Projects by public and private actors in the energy sector at all levels in the Union are stimulated and supported with the "Intelligence Energy Europe Programme", aiming to encourage new secure, sustainable and competitive energy approaches especially at the local and regional level. The call for this year includes "foster energy policy at all levels" (Enabling policy), "market transformation", "changing behavior", and access to capital "and" training".

Günther Schulz  
BSSSC Brussels Antenna



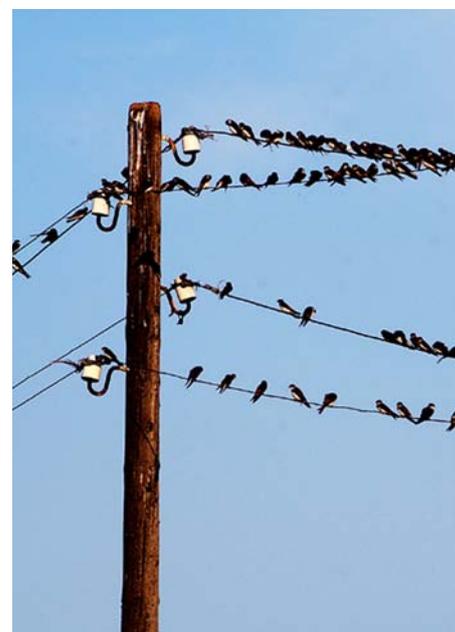
## Learn more about Climate Change and Energy

Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change. Summary for Policymakers. Download the report here: [www.ipcc.ch/SPM2feb07.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM2feb07.pdf) You may find the report in your language at: [www.ipcc.ch/languageportal/languageportal.htm](http://www.ipcc.ch/languageportal/languageportal.htm)  
Climate Change 2007: Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: [www.ipcc.ch/SPM6avr07.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM6avr07.pdf)  
More information about Climate change  
The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO): [www.wmo.int](http://www.wmo.int)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): [www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)

Myclimate. A unique web site that enables you to contribute to the mitigation of climate change immediately! Do you want to fly in a Climate neutral way? Calculate CO2 emissions? Find out how you can offset the impact of your emissions – when you travel by plane, car or ship. Buy Myclimate Ticket and render other myclimate services. Very impressive!  
[www.myclimate.org](http://www.myclimate.org)

Energy-related websites: Intelligence in science – with many other web-resources: [www.iscintelligence.com](http://www.iscintelligence.com)  
Intelligent Energy Programme - Europe: [http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/index_en.html)  
UN - Sustainable Development: [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/energy/enr.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/energy/enr.htm)  
Overriding issues on Sustainable Development – Major agreements: [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agreed.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agreed.htm)



Oleg Zykov, Photoline.ru

### BSSSC Youth Policy Work Group Meeting in Gdansk, Poland, 10-12 May

**BSSSC Youth Policy Work Group (WGY) discussed the issues of Trafficking in Human Beings and youth participation in the BSSSC Annual Conference in Turku at the meeting organised by Pomorskie Region in Gdansk on 10-12 May.**

The meeting gathered youth and youth workers from Norway, Germany, Sweden, Poland and Russia and brought up the problem of possibilities and means of combating trafficking in human beings. The participants stressed that trafficking destroys lives of many people, especially young women and affects many others. They strongly believe that a close regional cooperation can change the situation. Even though laws and penalty systems differ in the countries of the Baltic Sea Region, people in each country share common values. Trafficking is an abhorrent violation of human dignity. The youth representatives proposed many ideas of actions that can be taken by youth, i.e. information campaigns at schools, seminars, production and distribution of flyers, showing the film 'Lilja 4-ever' at youth meetings. The group members agreed on continuing discussion, further developing the topic and launching an interregional action. A Baltic Youth Task Force Against Trafficking was appointed.



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Annual Conference in Turku was another topic of the meeting. The youth agreed that use of energy and climate change greatly affect future life conditions of young people. The decisions that are being taken by politicians today create the world in which today's youth and their children will grow. Thus it is necessary to involve Baltic youth in decision-making processes and take youth voice into consideration by policymakers.

#### Other issues

Other presentations and lectures were also delivered during the meeting. Norwegian members reported on the Youth for Youth conference that took place in Lillehammer at the end of March. Over 60 youngsters from the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) spent five

days in Norway discussing various aspects of young people's life in the BSR. The group members from Kaliningrad Oblast introduced the youth policy in their region. A new EU Youth in Action Programme was introduced, showing different ways of financing WGY events under current planning. Students from Central Europe Integration Student Society from Gdansk University demonstrated their support to the opposition in Belarus and AEGEE Gdansk European Students Forum encouraged all to expand co-operation on European platform.

Young people also got an opportunity to get acquainted with the Hanseatic City of Gdansk and took part in the rich cultural life of local students. Irish and Scottish dance lesson given by the "Trebraruna" group from University of Gdansk was a truly memorable experience. The play "The shape of thing" performed by the Maybe Theatre Company from the same university adjourned the fruitful WGY meeting in Gdansk.



### Historic Signing

**- By signing the Declaration of Common Interests, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) has for the first time established an official relationship with an EU Institution,**

declared Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), Gerhard Stahl and Chairman of the BSSSC, Arne Øren after the historic signing in Brussels on 13 February. The Declaration was signed during Mr Ørens



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visit to Brussels 13-14 February, in connection with the official launching of the BSSSC Brussels Antenna. The Declaration was signed during Mr. Øren's visit to Brussels 13-14 February, in connection with the official launching of the BSSSC Brussels Antenna 2006- 2008.

- How important is this signing?

- It is very important for BSSSC to establish an official cooperation with an EU institution such as the Committee of the Regions. It invites the BSSSC to take part and support the activities of the CoR. It also gives BSSSC an opportunity to be updated on the EU engagement in the Baltic Sea Region in a much better way. The CoR, on the other hand, is committed to engagement together with BSSSC in the Baltic Sea area in the fields of common interest e.g. the development of

the Baltic Sea Region into a maritime model region, Mr Øren says.

Signing of the Declaration on 13 February with several BSSSC Board members being present automatically invited BSSSC to participate in CoR events and it is now up to the BSSSC to suggest common activities in the Baltic Sea area.

Secretary General Gerhard Stahl accepted the invitation to participate in the next BSSSC Annual Conference in Turku, Finland, 13-14 September.

During his Brussels visit BSSSC Chairman Øren also participated in the CoR 68th Plenary Session (i.e. adoption of the CoR Opinion on the EU Maritime Policy).

**Read the Declaration of Common Interests at: [www.bsssc.com](http://www.bsssc.com) (News, Historic Signing)**

### Maritime Issues

**Head of the EU Commission Task Force Maritime Policy, John Richardson:-  
"BSSSC can help us influence the governments"**

It would be of great help if the regions in the Baltic Sea area could use every mean possible to support the EU maritime policy towards their national governments. The success of the EU initiative in these matters depends on the governments' support at the moment", John Richardson underlined during his meeting with BSSSC Chairman Arne Øren in Brussels in February.

During the BSSSC Chairman's discussion with the EU Commission Task Force Maritime Policy, the head of the Task Force, John Richardson, gave an overview of the assessment-process of the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy. He stressed the great interest and enthusiasm this initiative received at the regional level. "But I am afraid this positive reception is not reflected in the same way by governments of the EU member states. They are reticent welcoming the initiative in

general, but hesitate to accept any practical consequences or actions", Richardson said.

The Task Force intends to publish a Blue Paper as a follow-up of the assessment in October. Taking the intra-service consultation into consideration, the draft of the Blue Paper has to be ready before the summer break. The EU Commission President has asked the Task Force to come forward with a list of practical proposals.

John Richardson strongly urged the BSSSC to use every mean possible to articulate the support for the EU Maritime Policy towards the governments, because the success of the initiative depends on their support at the moment. "This is particular important to allocate necessary funding", he said.

As a second major issue he pointed to the necessity to incorporate the maritime policy into spatial planning procedures in each country at the national and/or regional level. BSSSC Chairman explained the example of Baltic Sea area, the commitment regions have already done in allocating funds to

maritime affairs in the framework of the structural funds programs. Richardson welcomed the initiative from BSSSC to send the presented paper on this matter to the Task Force to add it on their website. "It is very difficult to integrate the initiative maritime policy into existing EU policies due to the long-ranging planning process of the EU Commission and to convince other DGs without political pressure to incorporate maritime policy into existing policy structures", he explained.



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## BSSSC SEMINARS – TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

**It is a BSSSC tradition to arrange thematic seminars in conjunction with its board meetings. So far this year BSSSC has implemented two such events – a seminar on Trafficking in Human Beings in Kaunas, Lithuania and a seminar on Public Health at Gardermoen, Norway**

Trafficking in Human Beings is one of the criminal phenomenons that has grown most intensely in recent years because it is highly lucrative. It applies also to the Baltic Sea Region, where all elements of trafficking are represented, i.e. the countries where the victims of trafficking are being recruited, countries of transit and the countries of final destination.

The issue of Trafficking was included under the key priority area of Civil Security in the BSSSC Work Plan for 2006-2008. BSSSC decided to implement a seminar on Trafficking and consider the further activities related to this issue. At the seminar, which took place in Kaunas on 8 March, celebrated in many countries as the International Women's Day, BSSSC has sought to get answers to several questions, among others, "How the regional authorities in the BSR can contribute to prevent and combat trafficking and help its victims". To lighten upon the issue from many sides, BSSSC invited representatives of various organisations, who are already working with the issue, such as Nordic Council of Ministers (Carita Peltonen, Copenhagen), Nordic-Baltic Pilot Project (Unni Kiil, Norway), Lithuanian national and regional authorities and last, but not least, NGOs – represented by Klaipeda Social and Psychological Support Centre and Missing Person Families Support Centre and some others. It became obvious, that there are many actors who are already actively involved in different activities in relation to combating trafficking, and in order to avoid duplication, BSSSC Board agreed that awareness raising and preven-

tive work among young people would be an appropriate contribution from BSSSC. Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek, the coordinator of the Youth Policy Working Group in BSSSC confirmed that the group would be ready to include the issue in its work and report to the Board.

Public Health was the topic of the other seminar that took place in Norway 3 May. It gathered the members of the Board and representatives of various organisations working with the issue. Niels Kr. Rasmussen from The National Institute of Public Health, Denmark together with Arvid Wangberg, Østfold County Council elaborated on the ongoing activities and first results of the HEPRO Project, while Vestfold Youth Council's representatives, Yvonne Bjørnsgård and Magnus Sandtorv briefed on the EU acknowledged TARGET Health project. "Sugar War" was the topic of another interesting presentation delivered by Randi Wahlsten, adviser of the Hedmark County Council. "Sugar War" is a project, which aims at reducing the intake of sugar by children and youth in Hedmark County, using the terms that are easy to understand and activities, which are feasible to implement. Board members had an opportunity to address their questions to the speakers and discussed the topic at the end of the seminar. The issue of Public Health was also drafted at the Board meeting 4 May, where the Board asked Danish regions to lead a Work Group on Public Health and propose a tasks list for the group.



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**For more information and to download presentations, please visit [www.bsssc.com](http://www.bsssc.com) (news)**  
**Trafficking**  
[www.rosa-help.no](http://www.rosa-help.no)  
[www.kvindehandel.dk](http://www.kvindehandel.dk)  
[www.missing.lt](http://www.missing.lt)  
[www.prosentret.no](http://www.prosentret.no)

**Public Health**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_programme/programme\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_programme/programme_en.htm)  
[www.heproforum.net](http://www.heproforum.net)



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### BSSSC goes to Russia

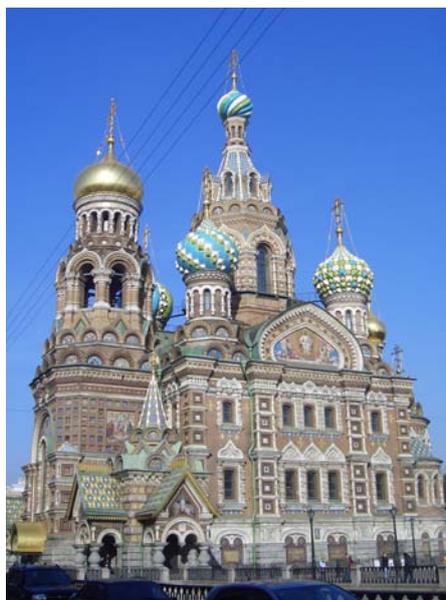
**"If the mountain won't come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain," a proverb says.**

Having this in mind and being aware of the fact that Russian regions' representatives have been absent in the BSSSC Board since the Annual Conference in 2003, BSSSC paid a visit to St. Petersburg, Russia, 21-23 March in connection with the Baltic Sea Day 2007.

The importance of strengthening cooperation with Russian sub-regions in BSR is clearly emphasised in the BSSSC Work Plan 2006-2008, saying that it is necessary to give special attention to attract the interest of and cooperate with Russian sub-regions by promoting the possibilities within BSR cooperation and BSSSC especially.

The BSSSC team, lead by the Chairman, Mr Arne Øren attended the plenary sessions and round tables of Environmental Forum Baltic Sea Day 22 – 23 March. The main theme of the event this year was "Baltic Sea Action Plan – Time for Action". It is obvious that the Baltic Sea is in need of international

attention and rapid measures to its complex problems and challenges. It was clearly illustrated by the impressive number of participants, around 400 in total, and the



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representation from research institutions, public authorities and NGOs.

During the visit to St. Petersburg BSSSC team also had a number of promising meetings with the representatives of Russian sub-regions (Leningrad, Kaliningrad, Novgorod, Pskov regions and St. Petersburg City), attending the meeting of Russian National Sub-Committee for Interreg III B Neighbourhood Program on 21 March. At the meeting the BSSSC and its Work Plan 2006-2008 was introduced and the Russian regions were encouraged to an active participation and co-operation with BSSSC.

A separate meeting with the Committee for External Affairs of St. Petersburg City Government took place the same day, which was adjourned with another meeting – with the President of Executive Committee of the North-West Association of the Russian Federation, Ms Yelena Khazova and the Acting deputy of the Plenipotentiary representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the North-West District, Mr Yevgeny Lukyanov. During these meetings it was agreed to make efforts to shape the co-operation and consider participation in the BSSSC.



Ruslan Aslanov Photoline.ru



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*Have a nice Summer!*