

CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Policy

Terms of Reference

**Adopted by the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials
Copenhagen 2 June 2009**

1. The Rationale

The potential for growth in the Baltic Sea region's maritime economy can be better utilised and its marine ecosystems better protected when the coastal states cooperate in and strive to synchronize all sectors of maritime action.

In an integrated approach to maritime policy, sector policy fields, which were in the past mostly developed separately, shall be examined together for their mutual impacts. This allows a better and timely resolution of conflicting interests, the harnessing of synergies and the elimination of obstacles to development. The basis of such a policy is knowledge, i.e. a comprehensive understanding of maritime and marine principles, interactions and relationships as well as of the various stakeholder interests in the Baltic Sea region. Through the improvement of knowledge transfer between business, science and education, innovation shall be promoted in the Baltic Sea region and new employment shall be created. Such a policy will contribute to sustainability: The inclusion of marine protection issues aims at a balanced relationship between use and protection and thus secures the long-term utilisation of the Baltic Sea as an economic zone, transportation zone and living space.

2. Political Context

In its Green Paper on the future Maritime Policy (2006) and its Blue Book/Action Plan "An integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union" (2007), the European Commission has emphasised its intention to give priority to the development of maritime policy while, at the same time, signalling its interest that the European regions formulate their marine policy needs and demands. It can therefore be expected that existing maritime capacities and future regional efforts in the Baltic Sea region (e.g. in the areas of maritime economy, maritime traffic, marine research, marine protection) will be supported by the European Union maritime policy. The Russian Federation has already formulated its national maritime policy in the "Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation to the year 2020", adopted in 2001. The scope of this document is a global one, but it lays down some specific goals for the Baltic Sea and many aspects of the doctrine, e.g. shipping, research or fisheries, are of importance also for this region and will be very useful in a future CBSS dialogue on maritime policy for the Baltic Sea region.

Both the 16th (2007) and the 17th (2008) Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), to which representatives of regional and national parliaments of all Baltic Sea states belong, called on the CBSS to take concrete steps towards developing the Baltic Sea region into Europe's maritime model region. In this process, according to the resolution, concrete steps shall be taken on how to best make a competitive maritime industry compatible with the effective protection of the Baltic Sea marine ecosystem. The Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) has dedicated its yearly conference in 2006 to the topic of maritime policy. In its final declaration the sub-regions formulated the goal of further developing the Baltic Sea region into a European maritime best practice region and asked the CBSS to take up the conference's initiative and coordinate the realisation of this goal. In its resolutions from

September 2007 in Turku and September 2008 in Kaunas, the BSSSC has reaffirmed this request.

The Baltic Sea Action Plan of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), adopted in November 2007 at ministerial level in Krakow and based on the ecosystem and integrated policy approach, is an essential instrument to address environmental challenges of the Baltic Sea, thus contributing to an integrated maritime policy of the Baltic Sea region, sharing the same cross-sector approach, though with a more specific focus on aspects of protection.

Against this background, the CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Policy will operate with the following mandate:

3. Overall Aim of the Group

- Improvement of the Baltic Sea region's international competitiveness. The region already has a competitive advantage due to its comparatively high degree of integration in comparison to other sea regions, which is worth expanding and utilising.
- Positioning of the Baltic Sea region as a European model region for maritime best practice and for a balanced co-existence of a successful maritime economy and adequate protection of the marine ecosystem.

4. Anticipated Tasks

- Compile an inventory of regional stakeholders – whose interests need to be taken into consideration – and of existing regional structures and networks of maritime cooperation – who could contribute to future CBSS activities in maritime policy.
- Develop a virtual communication platform on maritime policy in the Baltic Sea region, presenting model integrative projects and programmes, naming examples of good governance and strengthening the exchange of technical information in the region.
- Initiate a maritime economy cluster in the Baltic Sea region to combine regional interests, strengthen their visibility and enable a regional maritime policy dialogue between business and political decision-makers.
- Initiate a network for marine science, research and development in the Baltic Sea region, which seeks to increase know-how for the participants through the exchange of knowledge and experience, and can serve as a contact point for dialogue with political decision-makers. Such a network may be expanded into a virtual research association at a later date.
- Propose and accompany cross-sector pilot projects in maritime policy within the framework of transnational cooperation in the Baltic Sea region (Baltic Sea Region Programme, INTERREG IV B, which allows for participation of Russian, Belarus and Norwegian partners).

- Examine and propose measures to raise awareness of model maritime projects and products, e.g. through awards and/or certification (labels).
- Consider and propose regional maritime public relations campaigns for the promotion of collective maritime consciousness and shared Baltic Sea identity, e.g. on the annual European Maritime Day (20 May) and/or the annual Baltic Sea Days in St. Petersburg (mid March).
- Undertake, when and where feasible, other measures conducive to the overall aims, while avoiding overlapping and taking advantage of other ongoing projects in the Baltic Sea Region.

5. Membership

Participation is open to representatives from relevant ministries or equivalent government agencies in all CBSS member states and from the European Commission. Other organisations and initiatives from around the Baltic Sea with a substantial maritime policy interest, such as BSPC, HELCOM, VASAB, BSSSC, CPMR-BSC, UBC, B7 Network, the Baltic Sea Programme (INTERREG IV B) Monitoring Committee, BCCA, Baltic Ports Organisation, Baltic Development Forum and Baltic Sea Forum, will be invited as guests. Representatives of CBSS Observer States will be invited as guests if they so request. Sector players and stakeholders in the different maritime sectors may be invited as guests on an ad-hoc basis. The CBSS Secretariat will be present at the meetings.

6. Organisation

The Chairmanship of the Group will rotate according to the CBSS Presidency. Meetings will commence in September 2009 and will initially take place three times a year. The Group may change the frequency of meetings after the first year. Decisions are taken by consensus. The working language is English. The Group reports to the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

7. Timeframe

The mandate of the Group is valid for three years, starting from its first meeting. The Group may request a prolongation from the CSO.

8. Resources

Travel costs for meetings will be covered by the participants themselves. Costs for holding meetings will be borne by the host country. Staff support from the CBSS Secretariat will be limited to technical support and the attendance at meetings. The Group will explore possibilities for external funding when considering projects.

9. Evaluation

The Group will provide a mid-term report on the expected outcomes of the group's work (with particular reference to the tasks under point 4) and, at the end of its initial mandate period, a self-assessment to relevant ministries and the CSO. A consultant may be invited for a supplementary external assessment if member finances permit.