

## Statement of the environmental workshop at the X. Baltic Sea NGO Forum

23.-25. April 2012, Berlin

The participants of the environmental workshop are concerned about the environmental situation in the Baltic Sea Region in various areas.

**The most urgent key problems** are pollution, eutrophication, inefficient use of energy, dependence on environmentally unfriendly carbon-based fuels, unsustainable economic development, safety hazards (e.g. nuclear power, chemical weapons), and threatened biodiversity. Another problem is the low commitment to environmental issues and international co-operation by decision-makers, citizens and the private sector, lack of multisectoral co-operation, and the lack of a common green strategy for the whole BSR.

**We are aware** of our task to make environmental information more accessible to citizens and politicians, to make the best practice and lessons from the local level more visible; to raise awareness about environmental issues and climate change in society through educational programs, empowering citizen to participate. However, closer co-operation and strengthening of dialog with the public sector is needed, e.g. in the form of public partnerships, and with the policy sector through more participation in decision-making and planning processes.

**We propose the following actions:**

- development of a common Baltic Sea Region green strategy in synergy with existing structures and programs for all Baltic Sea countries (EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Northern Dimension, HELCOM BS Action Plan), with broad NGO participation;
- participation of the Baltic Sea NGO Network in the process of the Macro-Regional Baltic Sea Climate Change Adaptation Strategy;
- establishment of a Baltic Sea Civil Society Foundation, which would be available for the smaller projects;
- establish continuing working groups using existing social networks and a project database;
- to commit to the process and outcomes of Rio+20;
- unifying approaches and methods for collecting and analyzing data.

**Russia's Presidency** in CBSS is a good opportunity to consolidate the efforts of all the Baltic Sea Region countries for protecting the environment and climate. In this respect, participating and taking quantitative emission reduction targets in the "Kyoto II" agreement by all countries, including those from the Baltic Sea Region, would be the major step.