



BALTIC SEA COMMISSION GA

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ANNUAL REPORT

Speech by President Ms Christel Liljeström

Last year the Baltic Sea Commission produced an Annual Report that did receive a great welcome. We have been able to use it for information to our member regions and to inform other cooperation partners, CPMR, EU-bodies and media about what is going on. The report is a concrete way of advertising us on what the Baltic Sea Commission has achieved and will be focusing on.

This year when I present the annual report for June 2007 to June 2008, I am impressed about how much the Baltic Sea Commission has achieved. We can prove that our goal to bring back results to our member regions has come true.

From the Public Events I would highlight the High Level Seminar on impact Assessment of the new Baltic Sea Gas Pipeline that we held on Gotland in July 2007. The issue was controversial but we did our best to build up an interesting discussion and to provide information from both sides. 54 participants, local radio, SVT (Swedish television) and several notices in the press were the public outcome from the event. Including a continuing series of contacts from North Stream as well as other interested parties ever since.

Our Thematic Workgroups has done a really great job this year in accordance with the guidelines we decided on last General Assembly.

The restart of the Working Group for Transport is now chaired by Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. The workgroup have already established a good cooperation with the Transport workgroup of the North Sea Commission as well as with the Pan-Baltic Transport Strategy Project and the CPMR contact on transport issues.

The Energy Working Group had a joint seminar with the colleagues in the North Sea Commissions. They also have close contacts with CPMR and are tied in to the discussion in the Baltic Sea Region Organizations Common Energy and Climate Platform. This working group is chaired by the new region in Sweden, the Regional council of Västerbotten.

In Brussels we have the chair for our Fishery Working group, Mr. Nybacka from West Finland European Office. This working group is a really small one because the other member in the group is Mr. Gidemo from Gotland. But together they have participated in several different meetings and have put forward several important stands in these kinds of issues. They do also have an excellent contact with the CPMR as well as the NSC and contacts into the commission.

CPMR workgroups in Human Resources and the group about Innovation has both strong inputs and chairs from the Baltic Sea Commissions member regions. The Human Resource group held a much acclaimed workshop in Stockholm during the spring. The Innovation group is expected to present

their final report at the CPMR General Assembly in Aquitaine in the beginning of October.

Regarding to substance and important issues, the Baltic Sea Commission has had a strong impact delivering the answer to the Maritime Policy. Also the green paper on Climate Change did get an important input from us – as little had earlier been said about the Baltic Sea Region.

The Baltic Sea Commission has chosen to produce and delivered its green book input through the CPMR and in close cooperation with other organizations in order to reach a wide support and strength behind the words. From my point of view the regions has been more involved, during the past year, in answering different policy papers. And that is a good sign as we experience that both CPMR as well as other organizations are seriously, and increasingly, interested in our opinions. This we can see from a growing number of contacts and invitations to deliver speeches on the Baltic Sea point of view, as interpreted by the CPMRs Baltic Sea Commission.

The last point I would like to draw you attention to, is our Web sites. We have a domain of our own, we are taking the new logo and colors in to use and we will offer areas of shared workspace for thematic workgroups activities and joint paper writing among other things. The work needed for making this possible, has been done by our Executive Secretary Anne Ståhl Mousa. I am sure that this domain will make our work easier and make the accessibility better. It is of importance to facilitate the collaboration between the commission and the member regions.

So – with this presentation I will hand this Annual Report to the General Assembly.