

## **The Estonian Presidency of The Council of The Baltic Sea States 2014-2015: Practicality, Efficiency And Cooperation**

- The Estonian Presidency places a focus on the practical implementation of the new guiding documents approved at the culmination of the Finnish Presidency – *Decision by the Council of the Baltic Sea States on a review of the CBSS long term priorities & Declaration of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on the implementation of the Vilnius Declaration – A Vision for the Baltic Sea Region by 2020*.
- Continues to ensure the work of the Council is efficient, impact-driven and result-based. The CBSS regular Foreign Ministers' Council Session, to be held during the Estonian Presidency in the spring of 2015, will be an important milestone for this endeavour.
- Proceeds with the Project Support Facility (PSF) commitments (2013-15). The Estonian Presidency will focus on the realisation of already adopted projects and outcomes.
- Works towards more coherence within the framework of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region - Estonia will lead the Strategy's National Contact Point (NCP) Network during the second half of 2014.
- Strives for a better division of labour and enhanced cooperation between the different Baltic Sea regional structures. The parallel Estonian chairmanships of HELCOM and VASAB, as well as the activities in the framework of the *Year of the Gulf of Finland 2014*, will contribute to the strengthening of overall coherence.
- Contributes to the regular meetings between the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Nordic Council of Ministers which builds on the already existing fruitful work of all four cooperation formats.
- Calibrates and streamlines the CBSS Secretariat's work in connection to the three new long term priorities, in relation to the current division of labour and cooperation between the different regional cooperation formats.

### **The Estonian Presidency: Working on the basis of the new CBSS long-term priorities**

#### **Regional Identity**

- Continuing cooperation with non-governmental initiatives, networks and organisations in the Baltic Sea region, including the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation and the Baltic Sea NGO Forum 2015.
- Concluding the review of the EuroFaculty concept and preparing decisions about future work in the field of higher education.
- Further strengthening of the Balticlab initiative in the third year of programming to encourage entrepreneurial and creative industry collaborations, through mentoring and sponsoring talent, which increases regional future-thinking, innovation and prosperity.
- Raising awareness and visibility about Baltic Sea cooperation, including supporting the *Night of the Ancient Lights* on August 30, 2014.

#### **Sustainable & Prosperous Region**

- Enhancing Baltic Sea maritime spatial planning, with a special focus on the VASAB Ministerial Conference in September 2014, Tallinn.
- Preparing for the CBSS Energy Ministers' Session 2015 in cooperation with BASREC.
- Cooperating with HELCOM to fulfil the resolutions adopted at its 2013 Copenhagen Ministers' meeting. Enhancing joint meetings of the working groups and other forms of cooperation.

- Completing the evaluation process of the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development – Baltic 21.
- Evaluating the work of the CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Policy, as well as the progress of the Baltic Sea Maritime Dialogue.
- Proceeding with activities related to the Climate Change Adaption Strategy for the Baltic Sea region.
- Implementing the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference resolution on Green Growth and Energy Efficiency.

## **Safe & Secure Region**

- Paying special attention to the CBSS Expert Group on Cooperation for Children at Risk's work on matters related to alternative care and children's rights, the handling of cross-national child protection cases and child-friendly justice standards.  
The meeting of the Ministers responsible for Children's Issues will take place in Estonia in May 2015.
- Focusing on the CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings' recommendations and guidelines to counter labour exploitation, and stressing self-regulation of private sector actors.  
A thematic conference will take place in Estonia in September 2014.
- Enhancing cooperation in the field of civil protection, paying particular attention to the prevention of fire accidents and macro-regional best practice. The Heads of Services will meet in Estonia in the spring 2015.
- Developing further cooperation mechanisms between authorities dealing with maritime and border security in the region. The Heads of the Border Services will meet in the autumn 2014, and in addition, a new Annual Threat Assessment will be compiled and a Maritime Security Exercise organised. Enhancing the work of the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation in conjunction with other partners, including FRONTEX as a key player, will be another focus.
- Starting the implementation of the decisions of the 16th Conference of the Prosecutors General of the Baltic Sea States
- Establishing a Strategy for the Baltic Sea Task Force in the fight against organised crime for the next mandate.