



Event: 3rd Policy Forum on Climate Change Adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region, 29 – 30 May 2013 in Tallinn, Estonia

Organizers: Estonian Ministry for the Environment and Council of the Baltic Sea States, CBSS, Baltic 21 Unit

BACKGROUND

The BSR countries are all threatened and concerned by climate change. It will influence precipitation amounts and patterns, lead to an increase in terrestrial and ocean temperatures and a rise in sea levels. The resulting changes will jeopardize the integrity of the ecosystem and increase risks caused by natural disasters. There are good experiences of adaptation in the region but they are somehow fragmented and do not acknowledge the fact that the Baltic Sea is a specific eco-region.

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) recognizes this problem by calling for a **BSR-wide climate change adaptation strategy**, which should provide a **political framework to strengthen cooperation and information sharing across the region in this field**. A macro-regional climate change Adaptation strategy shall help to create a coherent set of adaptation policies in the light of risks of climate change and options for adaptive actions from the transnational to the national and local level. Such an overarching framework, which is currently missing, would help to tackle what the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has identified as a major weakness: the “lack of transnational co-operation and joint planning in usage of Baltic Sea space and in minimising of risks caused by natural disasters”.

The EUSBSR Flagship Project Baltadapt, funded by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, was developed as a response to the abovementioned priority of the EUSBSR. The main aim of the project is to develop the BSR-wide Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. This macro-regional strategy focusses on the sea itself and its coastline. The project seeks to achieve the following results and outputs:

- **Action plan for the BSR Climate Change Adaptation Strategy:** Providing the operational basis for implementing the BSR-wide Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and influencing policies, programmes and regulations. Together with the action plan, recommendations on funding mechanisms for financing climate change adaptation initiatives shall be given.
- **Improved knowledge base:** A knowledge brokerage process between political decision makers and researchers leading to improved institutional capacity. The “Baltic Window” in the EU Clearinghouse shall be the hub for decision makers from the Baltic Sea Region.



Baltadapt brings together just the right partners to create a knowledge brokerage process in this field, develop a strategy and set a framework for its future implementation. The partner consortium under the leadership of the Danish Meteorological Institute brings together a mixture of national policy institutions tasked dealing with the topic of climate change, and a group of research institutions at the cutting edge of applied science in the region. The German Federal Environment Ministry and Federal Environment Agency, the Finnish Environment Institute as well as the Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat are fully fledged project partners. The Estonian partner in the project is the University of Tartu.

Important milestones on the way to these documents are the three so called *Policy Fora* for climate change adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region as well as a number of sectoral stakeholder workshops (with representatives from the tourism and the agriculture sector).

At the events, representatives from the countries' ministries, the European Commission and researchers as well as sector representatives gave the go-ahead to continue the work on the strategy.

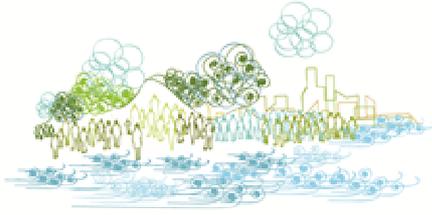
The draft Strategy document is now being further developed and taken into a consultation process with a variety of transnational organisations around the Baltic Sea Region dealing with climate change related issues.

THE POLICY FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN THE BSR

Policy Fora are carried out three times during the Baltadapt project implementation period (2010 – 2013) in order to supervise and comment on the development of the BSR Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and its Action Plan as a policy framework document for Climate Change Adaptation in the countries around the Baltic Sea Region. The main responsible actor for organizing and implementing the event is the Council of the Baltic Sea States, CBSS and its Unit for Environment & Sustainable Development, Baltic 21.

The Policy Forum is planned as a **regional multilevel governance event** that brings together high **policy makers** from all the Baltic Sea Region, the **European Commission** and representatives **from international and regional organizations** as well as **research institutions, sub-regional and city networks** with other stakeholders in this field.

The Policy Forum provides guidance and recommendations during the drafting process of Adaptation Strategy and its Action Plan. It **creates awareness** for policy makers in the BSR on an upcoming regional CCA-strategy and **ownership** for this strategy. Furthermore, **joint action and coherence in different activities** across the region concerning climate change adaptation will be fostered.



The Policy Forum is not another policy body or network but an open working process in which relevant stakeholders jointly discuss the content and implementation process of a draft climate change adaptation strategy and accompanying Action Plan for the whole Baltic Sea Region. It provides an exceptional multilevel-governance framework in which different stakeholders from different levels of society and governance and can discuss climate change adaptation in an integrative manner across sectors.

The first Policy Forum took place in April 2012 in Berlin, Germany. The 2nd Policy Forum was arranged 10 – 11 December 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden. Each of these meetings hosted between 72 and 82 participants, a majority of them followed the process throughout the whole year.

Policy Forum was opened by a high level key note speaker, either a world leading expert on climate change adaptation and/ or a regional actor sharing lessons learnt. Furthermore, the Forum provides inspiring input on climate change adaptation related topics, like mainstreaming, financing and planning across sectors like agriculture, biodiversity and civil security.

3RD POLICY FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN THE BSR

The 3rd Policy Forum on Climate Change Adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region will take place 29 – 30 May 2013 in Tallinn, Estonia. The event shall bring together participants from all Baltic Sea Region countries.

The event is organised by the Council of the Baltic Sea States, CBSS, in close cooperation with the Estonian Ministry of Environment.

At the 3rd Policy Forum interactive working sessions will focus on:

- Introduction and discussions on the final draft of the BSR Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and first draft of the accompanying Action Plan;
- Discussions on the coherence between the BSR Climate Adaptation Strategy and the EU respective strategy
- Financing adaptation measures
- Climate change adaptation and civil protection; follow-up workshop with EUSBSR PA Secure
- EU SBSR and the North-West Russia Development Strategy – mainstreaming climate change

Participants of this Policy Forum will be high level policy makers and representatives from relevant national ministries, the European Commission, international and regional organizations and academic institutions in the field of climate change and adaptation from across the Baltic Sea Region.



Participants of the Forum will be invited to give input to:

- The draft proposal for a climate change adaptation strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and its accompanying Action Plan.
- Concrete actions on how to ensure the implementation of the BSR Climate Change Adaptation Strategy by linking the EU-, and national/ sub-regional adaptation strategies and real actions.'

The meeting will suggest a follow-up process on how to further develop and negotiate the proposal on a climate change adaptation strategy for the BSR until it is ready for adoption by member states.

The project and organising partners have financial resources for the organisation and implementation of the overall event. However, there are very limited possibilities to finance travel and accommodation for key-note speakers, moderators and facilitators.