

THE BALTIC SEA MUST BE CLEAN, HEALTHY, AND PRODUCTIVE

FROM THE STATEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT ON THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Economic development of the Baltic Sea Region needs to take into account environmental responsibility. Precious heritage of the Baltic Sea ecosystem must be protected, preserved and, where practicable, restored. As a result, the sea must be clean, healthy and productive.

The participants in the Conference noted the importance of the existing mechanisms of co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and reconfirmed the role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as the overall political forum for intergovernmental co-operation and dialogue in the region.

The participants in the Conference stressed the key role of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, its governing body - the Commission on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea (HELCOM) - as a solid platform for cooperation in sanitation of the Baltic Sea and a driving force for the implementation of the ecosystem approach.

The participants in the Conference encouraged CBSS and HELCOM to continue to create synergies in order to implement effectively the Vision for the BSR by 2020 as described in the 2010 Vilnius Declaration.

The participants in the Conference took note of the CBSS Pilot Financial Initiative implemented through financial institutions – Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau KfW and State Corporation Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs (Vnesheconombank, VEB), as a new mecha-

nism with the aim to contribute to the environmental protection in the region.

The participants in the Conference noted the significant work on the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, within the four segments: eutrophication, biodiversity and nature conservation, hazardous substances and maritime activities.

The participants in the Conference acknowledged that improving energy efficiency and expanding the use of renewable and environmentally friendly energy sources offers great opportunities for environmental and climate protection across the BSR. They support cooperation in this regard.

The participants in the Conference noted the importance of public-private partnership, which involves the interaction among representatives of the countries, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, business and scientific communities, municipalities and cities to achieve good ecological status of the Baltic Sea by 2021.

The participants in the Conference welcomed the establishment of the Saint Petersburg Initiative as a regional network of business and scientific communities and non-governmental organizations, which will act as a mechanism for public-private practical interaction to promote cross-border cooperation, economically viable actions and projects for the benefit of the Baltic Sea Region environment.

St. Petersburg, April 5, 2013