

Cross border cooperation

on climate and energy in the Baltic Sea Region

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) was approved by the European Council in October 2009, following a Communication from the European Commission, and is the first comprehensive strategy, covering several EU policies, targeted at a 'macro-region'. The strategy lists 15 priority action areas of which priority area 5 concerns climate mitigation and adaptation and priority area 10 concerns energy. A new updated action plan is to be published in the start of 2013.

A seminar was held 10th October 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark, to explore the learning from climate and energy activities with the aim to solicit inspiration for the next strategy. The seminar was organised jointly by the Danish Nature Agency – who is Priority Area Coordinator for the priority area "Climate" – and the Danish Energy Agency – who, together with Latvia, are Priority Area Coordinators for the priority area "Energy" of the EUSBSR.

The objectives of the seminar were:

- to bring synergy to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) priority area 5 and 10,
- to build a common understanding of the potentials and challenges for collaboration,
- to establish a platform for exchange of good practices and knowledge in the field of energy and climate change adaptation at the municipal level , and
- to discuss and develop a number of recommendations for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Present at the seminar were municipalities, regional administrations, network associations, ministries, research institutions, embassies, and DG Regional Policy representing both climate and energy fields. Please see Annex 1 for participant list. Thus, the seminar may form the basis of future networking and joint activities within the various levels of administration in the Baltic Sea Region while also supporting collaboration on climate and energy within existing regional networks.

In addition to a presentation of the latest news from DG Regional Policy, by Catharina Sørensen, PhD., European Commission, DG Regional Policy, the experiences shared at the seminar included the following:

- BASREC study "Energy policy strategies of the Baltic Sea Region for the post-Kyoto period", Anders Kofoed-Wiuff, Partner, Ea Energy Analyses;
- BALREPA – Rotating Energy Planning Academy – A macro-regional approach to municipal energy planning and implementation, Arne Grove, Director, NCM Information Office Kaliningrad, Russia;
- Transparent energy planning and implementation – case Bornholm Municipality, Steen Colberg Jensen, Vice mayor of Bornholm, Denmark;
- Networking and cooperation as a means to further the realisation of the climate policy aims? – case Helsinki City; Tiia Yrjölä, Project coordinator, City of Helsinki Environmental Centre;
- The BaltCICA project process – case Kalundborg, Jørgen Madsen, Danish Board of Technology Foundation;

- Participatory approach dealing with floods – case Klaipeda, Vaiva Ramanauskienė, Project Manager, ECAT, Lithuania;
- Vision and preliminary results of the BaltAdapt project on elaborating an adaptation strategy at the Baltic Sea Region level, Ole Krarup Leth, Section leader, Department for Regional Oceanography, Danish Meteorological Institute;

Please see Annex 2 for the detailed program.

In brief the concluding recommendations of the seminar are as follows:

1. Strive for better coordination between climate and energy effort. Synergy is beneficial and should be reflected not only in projects but also in guidelines and legislative requirements.
2. Increase focus on engaging and maintain a close dialogue with the political level. Participatory approaches involving politicians, the general public, and key stakeholders require professionalism in processes.
3. Provide facilities/fora for dynamic and repeated training that follow suit to the latest developments.
4. Enhance the regional identity at all levels among other through increased visibility of value-added projects and the regional strategy. Gathering and sharing best practices also through commonly financed projects is one way to emphasize benefits for all levels. Story telling is key to crating relevance.
5. Bottom-up analyses of challenges and solutions should be used for informed top-down decision-making. Lack of accurate data and advanced models is, however, not a hindrance for sound strategic decision-making. In other words decision-makers do not have to wait.
6. The strategy has to operate with clear and measurable targets and indicators on CO₂ emissions to realise EU 2020 targets. Targets have to be made so they can be realised on national level (e.g. make them more binding).
7. Scenario analyses play an important role in visualising possibilities and making concrete recommendations not only in the long term but also for more immediate actions.

More detail on these six recommendations can be found in Annex 3 and 4.

