



Conclusions of the Third Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development

Tallinn, December 8-9, 1994

General

1. The Ministers welcome the report "Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010" (VASAB 2010) as a spatial development perspective for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) and a useful basis for further strengthening and harmonisation of national and regional spatial planning policies.
2. The VASAB 2010 initiative acquires special importance since it combines into a harmonious whole the experience and development efforts of the West, Central and East European countries, constituting one area of communication between countries - members of the European Union and countries waiting for admission or expecting close relations with it.
3. VASAB 2010 is an essential element of a wider process of harmonisation of spatial development on a European scale, being a programme compatible with the efforts of the European Union, Central European initiative and the Barents Sea Council in this respect. The member states of the European Union are urged to take VASAB into due consideration when preparing its European Spatial development Perspective.

Approval

4. The Ministers stress the need for democratic spatial planning to promote sustainable development. Spatial planning shall contribute to spatial cohesion and rely on the principles of subsidiary, participation and transparency.
5. The proposed visions and goals for the future spatial structure of the BSR are an important frame of reference for the long term spatial development of the region. The visions for the urban system, the mobility network, the specific types of areas and the planning system point out a direction that can promote spatial cohesion around the Baltic sea and have an impact on spatial development at regional; national and international level.
6. The Ministers stress the importance to promote the visions by concrete actions, which will provide the first common steps to make the vision come true and lead to tangible results in the short term. The Ministers approve the proposed common actions as shown in Appendix 1 as such first steps, that should be further developed and pushed forward. Each country/region is invited to present concrete project proposals for mutual co-operation, with adequate financial contributions.
7. The Ministers emphasise the importance of sea transport and underline the need to develop their hinterland links.

Implementation

8. The Ministers will recommend to their national governments to take results of common work on spatial visions and strategies into consideration within their development guidelines, programs and projects. The Ministers also agree on the need of continuous co-

ordination between national and cross-Baltic spatial planning, which can imply adjustments and further elaboration of visions and strategies.

9. Projects shall be promoted through bilateral and multilateral partnerships between BSR countries and regions. Exchange of experience in spatial planning and policies field. Transfer of know how based on defined needs of countries.

10. Spatial research institutes in BSR shall co-operate closely with the European Spatial Observatory to be established by the European Union. Research in areas of common interest shall be promoted, such as the Baltic network of urban centres, criteria for development of valuable natural and cultural heritage areas, environment friendly cities and mobility systems.

Political framework and follow-up actions

11. For the co-ordination of common actions Ministers appoint a Committee consisting of members which represent national governments, with the possibility to integrate regional governments, particularly in the cases of Germany and Russia. This Committee on Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region (CSD/BSR) shall continue the work of the former GFP with circulating chairmanship, following the chairmanship of the CBSS. From January 1995 Poland will assume chairmanship. The Ministers responsible for spatial should provide the Committee political guidelines and monitor ongoing work.

12. The Ministers establish a common VASAB interim secretariat to support the CSD/BSR during 1995. The secretariat shall push forward the approved actions and assist in the preparation of BSR Ministers' annual meetings, organize the ongoing concertation process with other institutions, promote the concept of co-operation in BSR, propose and accompany research and pilot projects, identify new required common actions and organize the mutual information among BSR countries and regions. The interim secretariat will be located in Sweden. The secretariat shall be supported from BSR countries. Ministers noted with satisfaction that several countries expressed readiness to contribute to its financing. They welcome the Polish proposal to host the secretariat in 1996.

13. The chairman of the CSD/BSR, with the support from the secretariat and from CSD/BSR members, is asked to present results of common work to the European Union and to enter into a dialogue with the Union so and to promote VASAB 2010 implementation and further co-operation in the fields relevant to spatial planning. The Ministers welcome the intention of the EU Commission to support the implementation of the VASAB 2010 action programme, while improving the co-ordination among existing EU funds and programmes. The Ministers encourage the Commission to seek territorial impact in line with VASAB 2010.

14. The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) is asked to integrate the VASAB 2010 into its overall strategy. The VASAB 2010 should be continued in close co-operation with the existing Baltic initiatives like HELCOM, Union the Baltic Cities, Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association, the Baltic Sea Conference of Ministers for Transport and others. VASAB 2010 shall become a forum for harmonisation of spatial aspects of the Baltic programmes.

15. The CSD/BSR is asked to prepare proposals for the continuation of the VASAB' 2010 beyond 1995, with special emphasis on future institutional arrangements and co-operation with other regional organisations, and in particular the European Union, the Council of Europe and the CBSS.

16. The Ministers will consider such proposals and discuss other matters related to the VASAB 2010 at a next meeting in December 1995. Germany is asked to host this meeting.

17. The Ministers thank Sweden for the initiatives taken to forward VASAB 2010 co-operation and related initiatives.