



Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010

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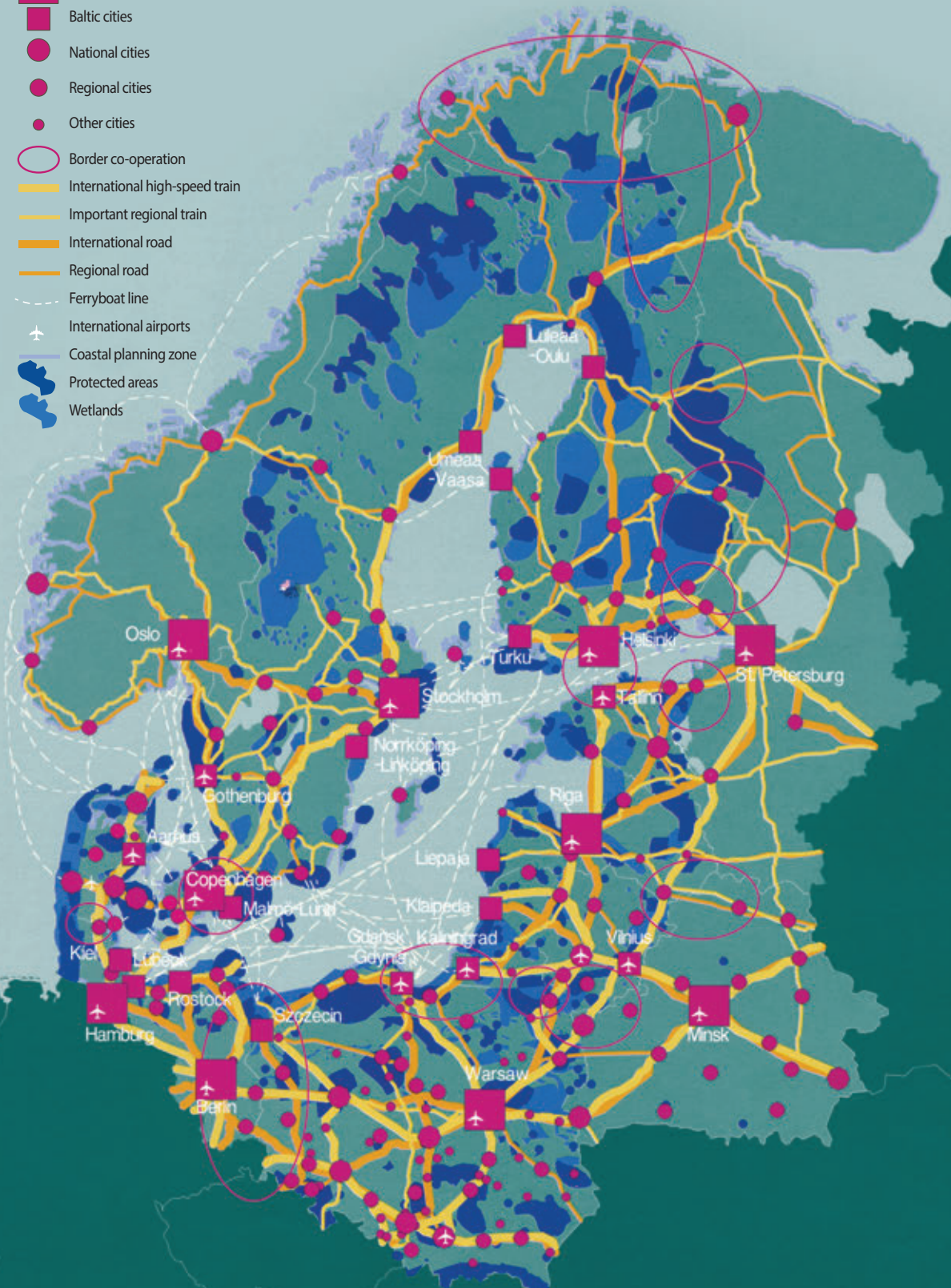
Towards a Framework for Spatial Development
in the Baltic Sea Region

VASAB is reissuing this document marking the 20th Anniversary since the VASAB ministers in Tallinn in 1994 adopted the first commonly agreed transnational vision of the Baltic Sea Region, which played a significant role for the spatial development of the whole Region.

COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED MAP VISION FOR THE BAL TIC SEA REGION 2010

- European cities
- Baltic cities
- National cities
- Regional cities
- Other cities

- Border co-operation
- International high-speed train
- Important regional train
- International road
- Regional road
- Ferryboat line
- International airports
- Coastal planning zone
- Protected areas
- Wetlands



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
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SUMMARY

RATIONALE	4
THE INITIATIVE	5
THE SYSTEM: SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE BSR	5
VISION FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION 2010	6
STRATEGIES AND FIRST COMMON ACTIONS	9

FOUNDATIONS

THE CHALLENGES	12
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VISION

1. BASIC VALUES AND OVERALL GOALS	15
2. VISION 2010	18
2.1 THE PEARLS: AN URBAN NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE	18
2.2 THE STRINGS: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE LINKS BETWEEN CITIES	20
2.3 THE PATCHES: AREAS SUPPORTING DYNAMISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE	27
2.4 THE SYSTEM: COMPREHENSIVE SPATIAL PLANNING IN FUNCTION	30

INTRODUCTION

This report describes goals for spatial development in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), strategies how to achieve these, and first common actions to start implementation. It is the result of common work of a Group of Focal Points (GFP) representing ministries responsible for spatial planning of the participating countries/regions. Though it is recognized that spatial and economic development are independent, this report concentrates on spatial aspects.

It is the common desire that the **Baltic Sea Region 2010** shall be a region with

a diversity of mutual relations in trade, transport, culture and education;

a strong identity enabling the BSR to play an important role within Europe and the world;

a diversity of individual sub-regions, developing on the basis of their respective strengths and potentials;

a fame for the reconciliation between development and respect of the environment;

a planning philosophy based on the principles of transparency, reliability, participation and subsidiarity.

The purpose of this report is to establish a common platform and framework of reference for development measures having an impact on spatial structures of the BSR. This may help to strengthen the spatial dimension in sectoral programs at national and international level in order to promote spatial cohesion around the Baltic Sea.

The report serves to strengthen spatial policies in all parts of the BSR.

It provides local authorities with a reference for their own developmental efforts. The "vision and strategies" are not meant to restrict local initiative. On the contrary, it is highly desirable that such initiative shall be strengthened. Overall visions may help to identify local development

potentials and preferences from national and international points of view. It is intended, that local authorities shall have the opportunity to apply for participation in proposed pilot projects.

The BSR is unique for its multitude and variety of co-operation and consultation initiatives, bodies and programs. Many of these initiatives have only emerged recently, when the political division of Europe was overcome. Now spatial cohesion must be a priority issue on the international agenda. The numerous initiatives may benefit from common principles and visions for spatial development. But equally, the materialisation of spatial visions depends on concerted actions. Therefore, the dialogue with other institutions was an important element during report preparation. Such concertation must continue. Also, our knowledge of factors shaping the future of the BSR needs to be improved in various fields. Therefore, in the course of time, strategies and action programs need to be updated. The first proposed common actions shall contribute to this process.

Following an opening ministerial conference in August 1992, interim results of common work were discussed at the second Ministerial Conference in Gdansk (December 1993). This report has been prepared for the third Ministerial Conference to be held in Tallinn, Estonia, in December 1994.

Repeated meetings of the GFP proved valuable in creating a common understanding of planning problems and approaches. The mutual learning process was among the benefits of the common work.

Each Focal Point has been responsible for contribution of the required information. Some data are not yet complete and compatible. Particularly for the Russian part many data are missing.

Group of Focal Points

Sirkka Hautojärvi, Chairperson

November 1994

RATIONALE

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) represents a total population of more than 100 million, producing a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approx. USD 1000 billion (1991). Historically, this powerful region was characterized by a high degree of spatial cohesion.

This **cohesion needs to be enhanced** after decades of political division. Social cohesion suffers from unprecedented discrepancies in living standards. But still there is a feeling of belonging together, which is reflected by a remarkable number of co-operation initiatives emerging since the collapse of the iron curtain.

The Baltic Sea region must develop a strong identity. The Baltic Sea Region competes globally with other regions. It needs to develop its own profile and strengths. On this basis its contribution to a common Europe will gain in value and strength.

Investors and other actors need a reliable planning framework. Spatial policies can contribute to provide investors and other actors with better information on future spatial development.

The BSR shall become a masterpiece for sustainable, environmentally sound development. The region has kept valuable natural areas which are now threatened by rapid development. But many cities exhibit environmental degradation due to growing (road) traffic volumes, air and water pollution, required rehabilitation of the housing stock, inappropriate land use, inadequate waste disposal, etc. There is also severe environmental damage in other areas which needs remedy action. Hot spots shall be gradually eliminated to the benefit of the water quality of the Baltic Sea.

Short-term problems must not prevent from creating a longer-term perspective. The temptation to do "first things first" is overwhelming, but sustainable development will not be achieved unless long-term planning perspective is provided.

Co-operation helps to maintain peaceful development. Co-operation in all possible fields – including spatial planning – helps to build a basis of mutual trust and reliability.

The purpose of this document is to take a first step in the formulation of an overall spatial structure and a framework for the wide spectrum of sectoral cooperation initiatives. Such a framework can help to avoid scattered action and waste of resources. It responds to the acceleration pace of international integration, the threat of widening interregional gaps in living standards, changes in patterns of migration, of the role of cities, of trade and capital flows, growing tourism and – last but not least – to the need to improve the environment.

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR)

1. Denmark

 2. Norway

 3. Sweden

 4. Finland

 5. Russia
Murmansk oblast, Karelia, St. Petersburg, Leningrad oblast, Novgorod oblast, Pskov oblast, Kaliningrad oblast

 6. Estonia

 7. Latvia

 8. Lithuania

 9. Belarus

 10. Poland

 11. Germany
Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Berlin, Brandenburg
-

THE INITIATIVE

On 21 August 1992 representatives from national and regional ministries of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) responsible for environment protection and for spatial planning met in Karlskrona, Sweden. It was decided to jointly prepare a document on a **spatial development concept** "Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010".

Purpose:

support the **development of networks** for co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region

provide a practical forum for the **transfer of competence** to the countries in transition to democratic market economies

improve the level of information in the BSR countries on current trends and problems in other countries in the region

assess important infrastructure projects to receive international financial contributions

promote spatial planning in the participating countries and regions.

Principles:

Joint visions and strategies are **not a comprehensive "mega plan"** for the region. But they are hoped to be taken into account by the

authorities when drawing up their own spatial policies

Strategies and actions concentrate on **aspects of cross-national or Baltic interest**

Concertation on a broad scale was sought with other organizations and international initiatives.

Expected benefits:

the importance of the BSR in the international context becomes more apparent

the BSR will be further integrated spatially in the wider European territory

the region moves towards an environmentally sound, effective and balanced spatial structure, and development pattern

the region will be able to react effectively to changes and challenges having an impact on spatial structures

synergy effects will be achieved by integrating the spatial aspects of the numerous initiatives in the region and through harmonization of the spatial aspects of policies in the countries involved

the region will be prepared to participate in discussions concerning the spatial development of the European continent.

THE SYSTEM: SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE BSR

Spatial planning and implementation depend on persuasive powers which are influenced by the quality of planners' arguments and the willingness of sectoral institutions to accept these arguments. A lot still needs to be done to strengthen this concertation process based on wide dialogues.

Several countries rely on **framework planning** from the national level. Transition countries either

have no national development concepts or need to update those prepared under the communist rule (some of them have already started with this task, e.g. Poland, Lithuania, Estonia).

The application of strategic (preventive) **environment impact assessment (EIA)** for major sectoral projects/programmes is unsatisfactory in most countries. Regional impact

assessments of major projects are only practiced in exceptional cases.

Decentralisation in spatial planning is a key issue in all countries. In some transition countries it led to a wide gap between (not yet fully developed)

national (framework) planning and local planning. Planning legislation had to be widely reformed (new legislation has been approved in Poland and Latvia). There is the need for international scholarships, specific training courses, and upgrading of university courses.

VISION FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION 2010 VALUES AND OVERALL GOALS

Four basic values aiming at the improvement of the quality of life constitute the “heart” of the vision:

Development
Environmental sustainability
Freedom
Solidarity

Development:

The notion of development goes beyond economic prosperity of growth. Development includes social, cultural and other aspects. But economic prosperity is a pre-condition for many other elements of quality of life, and therefore plays a predominant role.

Environmental sustainability:

Development must not deprive future generations of their chances. Sustainability in this sense has not been achieved anywhere. But policy shall make it possible to come even closer to the objective.

Freedom:

Freedom implies the possibility to choose in accordance with individual/regional preferences – within the limitations defined by the respect for other people wishing the same. There is no freedom without participation. Subsidiarity is an important tool to allow participation. It also helps to improve the quality of decisions.

Solidarity:

Solidarity is the characteristic of a caring society sharing benefits from development. Linked to the principle of solidarity is that of self-reliance: prior to involvement of higher level spatial units, lower

level representatives are called to mobilise their own resources and capabilities.

VISION 2010

Visions describe the desired (and realistically achievable) future in spatial terms. The vision consists of 14 goals.

THE PEARLS: AN URBAN SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The urban network shall

promote spatial cohesion (reduce spatial discrepancies in living standards)

provide conditions for the efficient use of development potentials

be environment-friendly.

The vision 2010 includes 4 goals for the urban system:

1.
A competitive system of cities gains value by co-operating across the Baltic Sea and with Europe,
high-lighting a Baltic Ring of European Cities.

2.
The system of cities ensures spatial cohesion,
including a network of **Baltic Cities**,

national cities with national significance and importance similar to the network of “Baltic Cities”,

a number of **regional cities**. Their good functioning is crucial to the success of spatial policies. They

play a key role in the mobilization of regional development potential and in promoting spatial economic and social cohesion within the countries.

3.

Links between urban areas and rural hinterland support regional economic and environmental balance

Improved links between urban centres and rural hinterlands shall allow all subregions to participate in the development process.

4.

Cities offer an attractive urban environment for inhabitants and investment

The green infrastructure of cities shall be preserved and restored, urban sprawl should be avoided. Green connections between urban areas and open landscapes shall be promoted. Urban development shall be linked with public transport systems, the location of new developments shall be concentrated where traffic demand – especially by motor vehicles – will be minimized. Recycling of urban land for development (i.e. the re-use of existing building plots where previous activities have ceased) shall be given preferences against expansion of built-up areas. Reserve areas for future generations shall be set aside. Urban waste volumes shall be minimized with a growing degree of waste recycling, and remaining disposals shall not be harmful to groundwater and soils.

THE STRINGS: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE LINKS BETWEEN CITIES

The mobility network shall

provide conditions for the efficient use of development potentials

promote the integration within the BSR and the integration of the BSR as a part of Europe

promote the use of environment-friendly transport modes and energy supply systems

improve the accessibility of services and job opportunities

promote spatial cohesion (reduce spatial discrepancies in living standards).

The vision 2010 comprises the following 3 goals for the mobility network:

5.

The BSR mobility network facilitates environment-friendly transport

The development of the mobility network shall be **linked with the planned urban network** to promote environment-friendly sea and railway transport.

Railway operation systems and the institutional set-up of the transport sector shall allow a maximum of market orientation in order to mobilise the potentials of environment-friendly transport modes.

Combined transport and intermodal cooperation shall be enhanced with a view to promoting sea (and inland waterways) instead of land transport, railways instead of road transport, wherever feasible.

Care shall be taken that new **major infrastructure projects** minimize negative effects on the environment and maximize regional dynamization.

6.

The mobility network provides conditions for effective integration within the BSR and with the world

Effective border-crossing shall provide conditions for the economic feasibility of physical infrastructure improvements.

Sea transport shall be supported through the promotion of the ring of “Baltic cities” with good links to their hinterlands. The potential for improvement of **inland waterways** seems to be limited, but should be studied in more detail (particularly in Poland).

Projected international transport corridors shall be planned in such a way that **regional benefits** will be taken into due account and environmental impacts are considered in time. Major **missing links** shall be eliminated (e.g. a fixed link across the Öresund and across the Fehmarn Belt, links

between Finland and Russian Karelia/Murmansk, a new bridge across the lower Elbe river).

Public commuter systems shall operate in and around major cities (particularly cities marked as European or Baltic city regions). Long-distance road transport shall be minimized through improved port, sea transport and railway services.

A functioning system of **regional communication lines** shall support regional development and minimize travel needs. "Information expressways" shall bind the BSR regions together and link them with Western Europe and other continents.

Countries in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe shall be linked to the North Sea **oil and gas sources** via new sea port installations (e.g. Lithuanian Butinge and Latvian Liepaja, linked to the Lithuanian refinery Mazeikiai) and/or new gas pipelines (Norwegian gas via Sweden or British gas via Denmark). The Nordic, Eastern and Western **electricity networks** shall be linked together to form one common energy grid.

7. Energy production relies increasingly on renewable and environment-friendly sources of energy

In view of the greenhouse effect, efforts shall be made to biologically bind carbon dioxide. Spatial planning for areas suitable for bioenergy production and for **local energy systems** can support a sustainable energy supply.

For the location of new **power plants** or the extension, or rehabilitation of the existing ones, international concertation shall be sought and Environment Impact Assessment shall be prepared according to the Espoo Convention.

THE PATCHES: AREAS SUPPORTING DYNAMISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Concerning specific types of areas, the vision 2010 sets up 4 goals for the future:

8. Cross-border co-operation contributes significantly to spatial economic and social cohesion

Border areas will be instrumental to the interchange among nations, including trade, labour markets, communal utility services, transport services, cultural and educational co-operation.

9. Islands function as a touristic core in the BSR

Islands are the geographic centre of the BSR. They have a tradition of being nodes of transport, trade and communication within the BSR and beyond. Their touristic attraction in many respects is unique in Europe. They can also contribute to cross-Baltic cultural and educational co-operation. They already are and shall even intensify their role as spearheads in the search for ways to reconcile environment protection with local development.

10. The coastal zone is planned with careful balance between development and protection

The HELCOM Recommendation 15/1, adopted by the Ministers of the Environment of the Baltic Sea States on 8 March 1994, concerning the protection of the coastal strip, is an important step forward. Corresponding national/regional planning guidelines shall be worked out, and a common decision on the application of these shall be sought.

11. A Baltic Network of nature areas is designated and protected

The aim is to preserve and to improve natural and cultural resources throughout the BSR, to reduce environmental pollution, to secure environmental capacities of European significance, and to achieve environmentally sound use of space. Areas still close to nature shall be linked up. They shall form ecologically effective networks extending up to and into densely populated industrial regions.

THE SYSTEM: COMPREHENSIVE SPATIAL PLANNING IN FUNCTION

The "system" serves to bring about coordination of programmes and plans and to promote their implementation.

Vision 2010 includes 3 goals:

12. Spatial planning contributes to harmonization and spatial cohesion across borders

There shall be institutionalised systems to harmonise national spatial concepts among neighbouring countries. National plans shall pay specific attention to the international perspective. They shall seek harmony with concepts mutually agreed for the wider Baltic Sea Region and for Europe as a whole.

13. Spatial planning is based on the principles of subsidiarity, participation and transparency

Urban, regional and national planning decisions shall be taken at the lowest possible level

(subsidiarity). Private and public investors shall be able to base their decisions on highly **transparent** regional and urban development policies. Plans and implementation programmes shall be the result of **participative** procedures where potentially affected groups, individuals or companies are actively involved in the planning process.

14. Spatial planning contributes to the co-ordination of sectoral and regional planning

The BSR countries shall dispose of indicative (framework) national spatial concepts which are periodically updated. Spatial development in the BSR shall be monitored jointly at regular intervals to enable decisions on required new actions.

National spatial planning systems shall include at least three different planning levels: national, regional and local (municipal). There shall be systems to evaluate and to control local development plans for their consistency with regional concepts (particularly in the fields of transport and energy infrastructure, nature protection, recreation and tourism).

STRATEGIES AND FIRST COMMON ACTIONS

Strategies describe the concept to make visions come true. Many actions to be taken within these strategies will be under the responsibility of individual countries. In the following paragraphs those actions, which are of common interest, will be addressed.

I. OVERALL STRATEGY

The strategy has three main issues:

1. promote concrete actions in line with the vision
2. promote the marketing of the Baltic Sea Region
3. continue the project of "Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010" (VASAB 2010) in concertation with other institutions

First common actions:

- 1.1 arrange regular meetings of ministers responsible for spatial planning to elaborate the Vision and Strategies and update the action programme**
- 1.2 make proposals for selected pilot projects**
- 1.3 make financial arrangements required for the action programme**
- 1.4 design a marketing effort for the BSR at the international level**
- 1.5 elaborate a research programme**
- 1.6 encourage the inter-networking of spatial research institutes**
- 1.7 establish a VASAB secretariat**

2. THE PEARLS: AN URBAN NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The vision embraces a competitive system of cities with international importance, a network of “European” and “Baltic Cities” ensuring spatial cohesion, and an attractive and sustainable urban environment.

First common actions:

- 2.1 organise a joint conference among the “European” and “Baltic Cities” for common marketing and cooperation**
- 2.2 launch a research programme on weaknesses and potentials of the urban network in the BSR**

3. THE STRINGS: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE LINKS BETWEEN CITIES

The vision includes a transportation system which facilitates environment-friendly mobility, a mobility network that provides conditions for effective spatial integration, and an increasing use of renewable and environment-friendly source of energy.

First common actions:

- 3.1 identify possible locations of multimodal transport centres (together with the Conference of Baltic Ministers of Transport)**
- 3.2 identify further needs to improve port hinterland infrastructure (together with the Conference of Baltic Ministers of Transport)**
- 3.3 promote a pilot project on potentials to strengthen spatial cohesion through new forms of telecommunication**

4. THE PATCHES: AREAS SUPPORTING DYNAMISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The vision envisages that cross-border co-operation contributes to spatial economic and social cohesion; islands function as a touristic core in the Baltic Sea Region; development of coastal zones will be guided by spatial planning

and formation of a Baltic Network of cultural and nature areas.

First common actions:

- 4.1 assess potentials for further cross-border co-operation**
- 4.2 encourage pilot projects for cross-border co-operation with spatial planning component**
- 4.3 elaborate guidelines for spatial planning in the coastal zone**
- 4.4 elaborate a harmonized concept for the development and protection of valuable natural and cultural landscapes in a BSR network**

5. THE SYSTEM: COMPREHENSIVE SPATIAL PLANNING IN FUNCTION

The vision is that spatial planning in the BSR will have a common framework of reference with proper planning instruments in each country; that it will be based on the principles of subsidiarity, participation and transparency; and that it contributes to the harmonization of sectoral planning and planning on regional level.

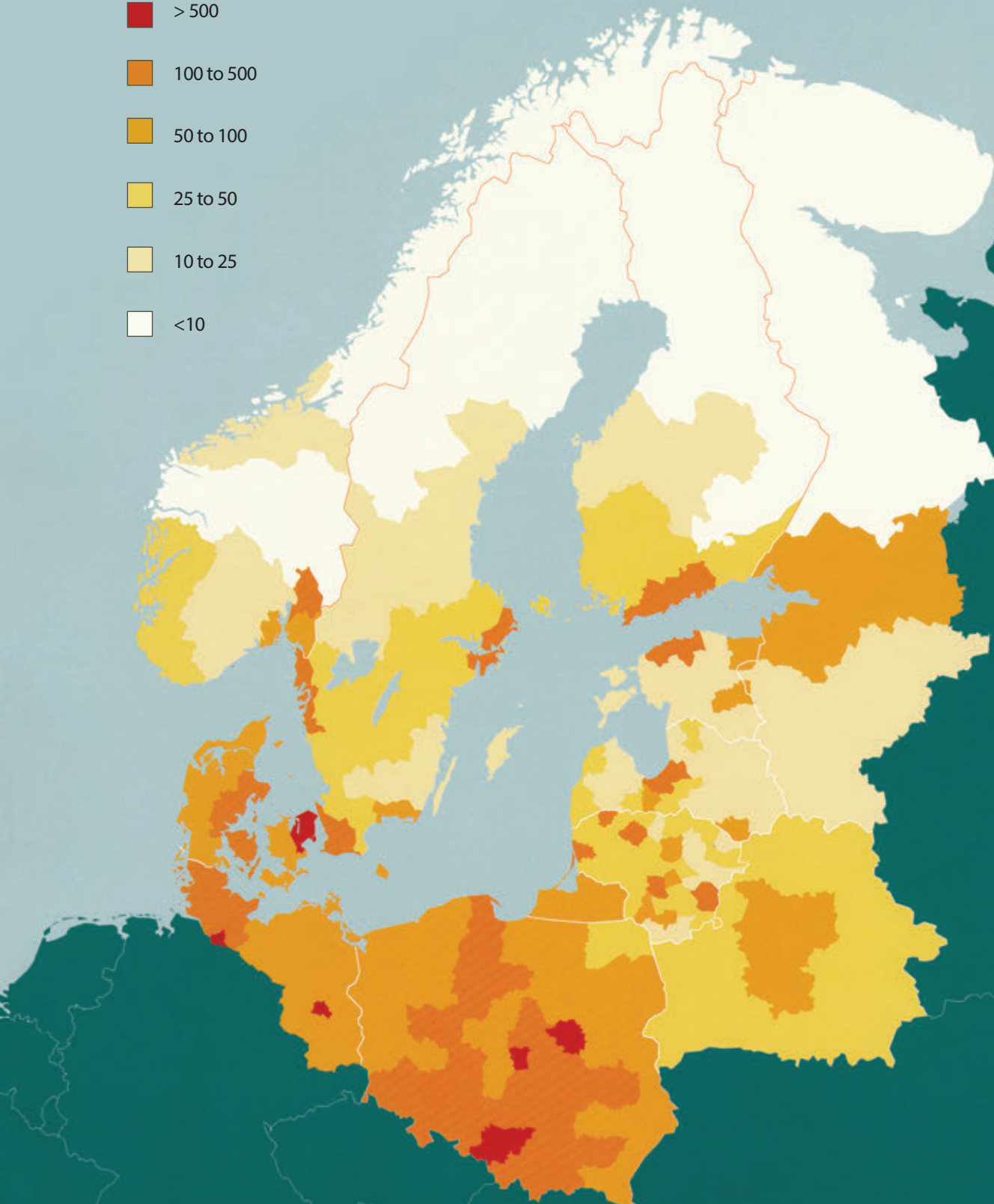
First common actions:

- 5.1 organise discussions with the EU on spatial development and planning policies**
- 5.2 prepare a synoptic review of spatial planning and implementation concepts in the BSR countries at national and regional levels**
- 5.3 encourage demonstration projects for the application of EIA at an early stage in the planning process**
- 5.4 enter a concerted dialogue with countries involved to design appropriate training and technical assistance concepts.**

POPULATION DENSITY IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Density
Inhabitants/km²

- > 500
- 100 to 500
- 50 to 100
- 25 to 50
- 10 to 25
- <10



THE CHALLENGES

Visions and strategies for spatial development in the BSR seek a response to a number of challenges.

International integration: Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway and Finland) are in the process of further integration with the European Union (EU). This will promote their trade relations with Western Europe, strengthening sub-regions with a favourable location towards the west. Transport links to the west receive additional attention. The EU social, economic, agricultural and regional policies will probably influence Nordic structures.

Nordic, western and transition countries have an interest to promote mutual links. Though formal integration within the framework of the EU will not be achieved for all countries within the next few years, functional integration in a number of fields can be intensified. Improved transport links for goods, persons and information will be needed. The growing concern about the environment is no longer a local or national affair only. This is also true for the region around the Baltic Sea.

Integration can be hampered by inadequate urban networks and infrastructure, growing border control, trade restrictions, etc. Spatial planning cannot avoid or remove all such barriers. But the challenge is: [how can spatial planning improve investors', traders' and producers' security in an economic environment already full of uncertainties?](#)

[Where and how can cross-border integration improve peoples' accessibility to services and allow service provision at low cost by taking advantage of economies of scale?](#)

Interregional discrepancies in living standards:

The BSR is an area of high differences in living standards and income. In the group of Nordic countries differences in average income per inhabitant are small. But when crossing the German-Polish border, the income level falls

sharply, and at the Polish-Belarus border there is a further drop. Belarus achieves only a small fraction of the German level. Between Finland and Russia, a similar discrepancy occurs when crossing only one border line. The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) are better off than Belarus or Russia, but a huge difference as compared to Poland or even Nordic and Western countries also exists. Such differences were unknown during Western European integration. With open borders, they may induce significant migration of capital and people.

Spatial qualities change rapidly. Main factors affecting locational decisions of modern knowledge-based industries concentrate not only on such aspects as urban cultural and environmental values, recreational opportunities, rapid and frequent transport connections, high-standard telecommunication systems, but also on cost and quality of labour.

Manufacturing industries look for new sources of supply or for new production sites. This causes fear of losing jobs and profits, which leads to efforts to maintain or even to increase trade barriers, and this in turn would restrict investors' search for new locations.

[How can spatial policies contribute to the improvement of spatial qualities, to the reduction of interregional discrepancies, and thus to a better social and economic cohesion?](#)

Changing pattern of migration: Interregional discrepancies in incomes, paired with a high degree of unemployment and insecurity in transition countries, led to fears of uncontrollable migration flows to the north and to the west. So far, these fears did not prove true, and this is only partly due to strict immigration control. But the threat is still felt. Only through accelerated economic development, improved economic and social security for people and investors will be possible to reduce spatial imbalances and to convince the most mobile strata of population to use their energy in their country.

How can spatial planning contribute to the creation of better conditions for economic development, and to the improvement of living conditions?

Environment rehabilitation, urban restructuring and functioning system of urban centres could be important elements for balanced economic growth and interregional cohesion.

The restructuring of eastern agriculture will, in many regions, be accompanied by a decrease of rural employment. People will seek new chances in the cities. It is imperative that medium-sized cities will be in the position – in which they are not in most parts of the east – to offer such chances. Strong migration to major cities would deplete rural areas of chances to get their share in public and private services supply, and high infrastructure loads in the major centres would go parallel to uneconomic infrastructure supply in other ones.

Which is the role of spatial planning in the promotion of an improved interregional economic and social cohesion?

Some countries of the BSR were rather successful in achieving a relatively balanced urban-rural development.

How can future spatial policies maintain this asset with the integration in the European Union?

Changing role of cities: In some countries, e.g. Belarus, new German Länder, urban systems were significantly modified during the socialist era through the creation of new “heavy industry centres”. This sometimes helped to achieve a more balanced urban settlement system. But these new centres are now particularly affected by the far-reaching economic structural changes, where large industries lose their former preponderance.

New economic structures favour medium-scale industries and service functions for consumers and for business (finance, consultancy, trade and marketing, maintenance and repair, information services, transport and procurement, etc.).

These growing sectors tend to concentrate on major cities, where communication facilities and transportation infrastructure are well developed and where a variety of supporting services can be found. Such processes are further strengthened by the increasing international orientation even of smaller enterprises, of public institutions, and of research institutes: in the BSR transition countries, only major cities normally offer adequate long-distance telecommunication and travel opportunities at present. Once such concentration has taken place, it is difficult to modify it.

What could be the contribution of improved infrastructure for secondary urban centres and of decentralisation of public institutions in redirecting the geography of economic development?

The formation of additional states with an increased length of national borders deprived some cities of their natural hinterland. Cities like Daugavpils in Latvia, Kaliningrad, Bialystok, Grodno, Brest and others can develop service functions towards areas of neighbouring countries.

What are the possibilities of such cities to maintain their former service function?

The disappearance of the iron curtain created new chances for the extension of urban hinterlands across borders. Not only bigger cities like St. Petersburg and Helsinki can develop service function towards areas of the neighbouring countries. The same applies to such cities as Szczecin (to supply part of poorly serviced Mecklenburg-Vorpommern hinterland) or Frankfurt/Oder to also serve Polish hinterland. How can spatial planning contribute to the materialisation of such potentials?

At the international level, leading city regions increasingly compete with each other for the location of major business or international organisations and for global events (conferences etc.).

Which are the conditions for the urban system of the BSR to be competitive?

Changing trade patterns: Traditional (large-scale) industrial enterprises in Central and Eastern Europe formed part of integrated industrial complexes. Outsourcing – looking for best suppliers wherever they exist in the world – was poorly developed. Within a market economy, industries will diversify their supply and sale markets. This calls for more versatile communication systems. Better linkages with Northern and Western Europe need to be developed, as transport growth is the highest there. Bulk transport becomes less important, individual consignments get smaller, stock volumes are reduced and transport quality and reliability become more important. Railway and sea transport – being environmentally preferable to road transport – can only maintain their position by becoming more versatile and reliable, too. This requires new forms of management and intermodal co-operation. The latter one must be supported by integrated multimodal transport policies.

The importance of different port cities undergoes rapid changes. With Ro-Ro vessels and container-carriers getting growing market shares, port cities lose employment opportunities in cargo handling activities, but may gain new opportunities in logistics and services.

[How are spatial structures affected and how can they support the desired development paths?](#)

Environmental degradation: The BSR comprises large areas of unique and unspoiled natural value due to long-standing environment protection or to backward agricultural practices. But it is also characterized by severe environmental damage through uncontrolled industrial pollution and careless disposal of urban and industrial waste.

[How can a balance be found between the restoration of polluted areas and waters, the protection of valuable areas, and short-term goals of economic development?](#)

A healthy environment, paired with a functioning system of urban centres, is important for economic development.

[How can spatial policies contribute to a balance between different demands, to the evaluation of land use conflicts, and the identification of the least environment-damaging land use assignments?](#)

Major cities are located along the Baltic coastline. By attracting marine and land transport producing domestic and industrial waste (solid and liquid) and extending built-up areas, they are in permanent conflict with coast and nature protection ambitions.

[Which rules are required for land use and waste management to minimize negative effects on nature and environment?](#)

With increasing motorization the competitive position of public passenger transport becomes more difficult. This trend will be accentuated by the preference for single-family instead of multi-storey housing.

[How can urban spatial planning maintain such urban structures, which allow high shares of public transport – now on the basis of free consumer decision, and not because of having no other choice?](#)

Growing tourism: Tourism in the BSR offers potential for extensive forms of tourism which are less dependent on seasons. Particularly attractive are coastal zones, islands and archipelagos. Tourism can be a potential for sustainable local and regional income generation, if developed with care minimizing negative impacts of natural and cultural values, while improving the supply of services. In the south-eastern part of the BSR, touristic infrastructure is poorly developed. In the northern part, which is environmentally sensitive to exploitation, tourism development needs special approaches.

[How can spatial planning support the use of tourism as a tool for cultural integration? Which is the role of spatial policies to achieve a balance that satisfies tourist demands, secures the environment, and allows the required variety of employment possibilities?](#)

VISION

Visions describe the desired (and realistically achievable) future (“Baltic 2010”) in spatial terms. They are expressed through spatial

structures which refer to the “pearls” (the urban network), the “strings” (mobility network), the “patches” (specific types of areas), and

planning processes as determined by “the system”.

Visions for spatial development are governed by basic values valid for all policy sectors of our society, and common to all countries around the Baltic Sea. Having defined these basic values, they will be translated into overall spatial goals, or principles from which the visions are to be derived.

I. BASIC VALUES AND OVERALL GOALS

Spatial development policies must integrate a broad spectrum of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies. Four basic values, all aiming at the improvement of the quality of life, constitute the “heart” of the vision:

Development
Environmental sustainability
Freedom
Solidarity

Development: The notion of development goes beyond economic prosperity or growth. Development includes social, cultural and other aspects. But economic prosperity is a pre-condition for many other elements of quality of life, and therefore plays a predominant role.

Development shall enhance **diversity**. Diversity reflects the respect for individual human beings, for nature, regions and cultural heritage. As individual and regional preferences are different, they must have the chance to develop different life styles, cultures and even economic activities. There is no high quality of life without diversity. Uniform solutions are to be avoided. The principle of diversity promotes regional and local identity, and it strengthens the flexibility of society as of nature.

Diversity is correlated with the principle of **integration**: no region should develop as a “closed shop” – not only for reasons of economic efficiency, but also to maintain a mutual enrichment among regions and nations.

Development:
Desirable spatial structures and processes must

create favourable conditions for the efficient use of the Baltic Sea Region’s resources and potential (in all fields such as economy, culture, arts, science)

reduce insecurity for investors and other actors

facilitate the development of a wide spectrum of activities in multiple forms at all spatial levels

help regions to develop on the basis of their specific strengths and potentials.

Environmental sustainability: Development must follow a way which does not deprive future generations of their chances. Resources must not be fully consumed by one or a few generations, nor must they be spoiled to become unusable. Nature and environment are to be kept so that future generations also have a chance to use and enjoy them under healthy conditions.

Sustainability in this sense has not been achieved anywhere. But policy shall make it possible to come ever closer to this objective. Sustainability also has a social and economic dimension. Development shall be promoted in such a way as to maintain social and regional coherence. This will be discussed under the value of solidarity and balance.

Environmental sustainability:

Desirable spatial structures and processes must shape an energy efficient settlement structure

avoid the defeat in land use competition of activities important for maintaining sustainability

promote the use of environment-friendly transport modes

protect valuable environmental and nature potentials, promote biological diversity.

Freedom: Freedom is the possibility to choose in accordance with individual preference – within the limitations defined by the respect for other people wishing the same. This includes two elements: the availability of such options, as required by people; their accessibility in physical and in economic terms. Such an objective will never be achieved everywhere for everybody. But it defines a direction where policies – including spatial policies – should go for:

There is no freedom without **participation**. People – or their representatives at the lowest possible level – must have the possibility to participate actively in the preparation of decision on development or environment protection measures.

Subsidiarity is an important tool to allow participation. It also helps to improve the quality of decisions, which shall be taken at the lowest possible level. This is in contrast to undifferentiated centralisation, where decisions are taken far from those being affected by them, and to

undifferentiated decentralisation, where decisions are taken without considering effects on the wider territory. In spatial terms, this means: what can be decided at the community level, needs no delegation to the municipal level; what can be decided at the municipal level, shall not be decided at the regional one; and what can be decided regionally, must not be decided at the national level.

Freedom:

Desirable spatial structures and processes must

create conditions for the efficient supply of services and employment opportunities in all regions

ensure an adequate physical accessibility of these

facilitate a planning process with a high degree of local/ regional participation

promote participation of people and businesses in the planning process.

Solidarity: Solidarity is the characteristic of a caring society, sharing benefits from development. More powerful people of regions (in economic, intellectual or political terms) must allow the weaker ones to have their fair share in development progress.

Solidarity:

Desirable spatial structures and processes must

enable compromises between conflicting land use demands to respect economic, social and environmental needs

reduce interregional discrepancies in living standards (promote spatial coherence)

establish a co-ordination system to balance local/ regional with supra-regional demands

promote development which is based on regional specific strengths and characteristics.

Conflicts between different demands are unavoidable. Spatial policies must seek compromises between competing or even conflicting demands. Such compromises must be based on the principle of a fair balance, where the spatial effect of no single demand can automatically overrule others.

Linked to the principle of solidarity is that of **self-reliance**: before higher level spatial units get involved, lower level representatives are called to mobilize their own resources and capabilities.

A key word for spatial policies is spatial balance:

Balance between:
decentralisation and concentration

economic development and environment
(sustainability)

conflicting land use demands

Decentralisation relates to many of the values discussed before. It is essential for the mobilisation of local potentials; it is a precondition for freedom and participation within a system of subsidiarity; it is required to achieve sustainability as well as a balance between economic development and protection of the environment.

Decentralisation is particularly linked to the urban network. Regions shall dispose of urban centres with sufficiently developed functions to support economic development and to provide economic viability for services and infrastructure supply.

But this means at the same time **concentration**. Strengthening of regional urban centres shall be concentrated at selected cities, depending on the specific context of each country/region (e.g. population density, economic structure, distances and infrastructure network). A concentration is also necessary with respect

to major (international) urban centres to make them internationally competitive.

So the principle is: concentrate as far as necessary, decentralise as far as possible. This rule needs specific forms of translation.

The balance between **(economic) development and environment**, respectively between conflicting land use demands, are closely interconnected. While in the long run both goals will meet, there is a conflict between short-term economic progress and (long-term) environmental sustainability. The principle of decentralised concentration as opposed to scattered development contributes to reduce this conflict.

Urban land use shall be limited to well-defined urban areas expanding along established corridors. Touristic development shall give room for the protection of valuable areas. Industrial development shall be concentrated at the main international and regional centres to mobilize development forces and to keep other areas less disturbed; protection of valuable natural areas shall be concentrated at selected (and interlinked) areas to achieve a maximum of benefits. High-ranking infrastructure alignments need to concentrate at a few corridors to achieve economic viability and to minimize detrimental effects on the environment.

When differentiating **land use**, no single type of land use can be given a-priori preference - may it be industrial, urban, agricultural or nature. The proper balance between different land uses can only be established according to local and regional circumstances. Therefore, it is important to establish rules and regulations, which make sure that weaker types of land use (and particularly those relevant to environmental sustainability) are sufficiently taken into consideration. Conflicts cannot be avoided, but compromises can be sought, which would minimise negative effects.

2. VISION 2010

2.1 THE PEARLS:

AN URBAN NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The urban network shall, in accordance with the values a Baltic Ring of *European Cities*.

promote spatial cohesion (reduce spatial discrepancies in living standards)

These cities play an important role in international co-operation. They shall actively compete with similar urban centres in Western Europe and elsewhere.

provide conditions for the efficient use of development potentials

They shall be places of important international institutions of European significance, major trade fairs, scientific, trade and political congresses, multinational enterprises, etc.

be environment friendly

facilitate recycling.

European Cities: Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, St. Petersburg, Riga, Minsk, Warsaw, Berlin, Hamburg

In such a network:

cities co-operate with each other to use functional complementarities to the mutual benefit (city networks); **cities compete** with each other (at regional, national or international scale, depending on the city's function) for economic development; provide an attractive urban environment;

2. The system of cities ensures spatial cohesion

This includes

national territories are covered by a reasonably dense network of urban centres of different functions.

a Network of *Baltic Cities*.

Examples of inter-city co-operation are: Helsinki – Tampere corridor (Finland); Helsinki – Tallinn; the Öresund region (Copenhagen – Malmö); Trekantsbyen (Fredericia, Kolding, Vejle) in Denmark; Kymirivervalley (Kotka/Hamina – Kouvola/Kuusankoski) in Finland; Valmiera – Cēsis in Latvia, Gdansk – Gdynia – Sopot in Poland; Lithuanian Vilnius – Kaunas; Fyrstad (Uddevalla, Vänersborg, Trollhättan, Lysekil) or Sundsvall-Hämösand – Timrå in Sweden; Greifswald – Stralsund in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

These cities will play an important role in cross-Baltic integration.

Institutions of Baltic significance (specialised international institutions like financing institutions, associations – e.g. universities and research institutions dealing with Baltic issues, etc.) will be preferably located in these cities (or in the “ring of European cities”). Baltic events will be offered appropriate facilities there (hotels, convention and exhibition centres, etc.) Such specialized strengths allow them also to compete at the international level.

The vision 2010 consists of 4 goals:

I. A competitive system of cities gains value by co-operation across the Baltic Sea and with Europe

Particular emphasis will be given to the development of “Baltic Cities” along the Baltic Sea coastline. These cities benefit from cheap and environment-friendly sea transport and act as inter-linkages between ports and their hinterland.

The urban system comprises

National cities with national significance will complement the network of “Baltic Cities”. These national cities are located in the hinterland, and act as important

instruments for implementation of national spatial policies. Some “national” cities have also international functions. Depending of their successful efforts and interest, they have a potential to develop into “Baltic” cities.

A number of **regional cities** shall play a key role in the mobilisation of regional development potentials and in promoting spatial economic and social cohesion within the countries. Their good functioning is crucial to the success of spatial policies. Some of these cities, though being of a limited size, have also functions of Baltic importance.

Differences in the urban systems of individual countries require different strategies in the selection and promotion of regional cities.

3. Links between urban areas and rural hinterland support regional economic and environmental balance

Improved links between urban centres and rural hinterlands shall permit the interchange of goods and services at low time and transportation cost. This shall enable people to remain living in existing settlements. Urban hinterlands will develop their economic base and promote their role in providing recreation opportunities and bioenergy (where feasible). Particularly in sparsely populated areas, urban services supplies shall be promoted till the lowest functional level.

4. Cities offer an attractive urban environment for inhabitants and investment

The green infrastructure of cities will be preserved and restored where necessary. Urban sprawl shall be avoided. Green connections between urban areas and open landscapes shall be promoted. Urban spatial development will be linked with public transport systems, the location of new developments shall be concentrated where traffic demand – especially by motor vehicles – will be minimized. Recycling of urban land for development and reuse of existing building plots shall be given preference. Reserve areas for future generations shall be set aside, and waste recycling – including supporting activities in the urban hinterland – be promoted.

2.2 THE STRINGS: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE LINKS BETWEEN CITIES

The mobility network shall be developed with the aim to support the future urban network. Therefore, development of the mobility and energy infrastructure systems follows the same goals:

provide conditions for the efficient use of development potentials

promote the integration within the BSR and between the BSR and the whole Europe

promote the use of environment friendly transport modes and energy supply systems

improve the accessibility of services and job opportunities

promote spatial cohesion (reduce spatial discrepancies in living standards).

The vision 2010 comprises the following elements:

5. **The BSR mobility network facilitates environment-friendly transport**

The development of the mobility network shall be **linked with the planned urban network** to improve the potential for environment-friendly transport modes (particularly sea transport and railways).

Railway operation systems and the institutional set-up of the transport sector shall allow a maximum of market orientation to effectively mobilise the potentials of environment-friendly transport modes.

Ubiquitous telecommunication systems (not only available at the main urban centres) will

permit to substitute passenger by information transport.

The use of marine transport shall be supported through the promotion of the ring of "European" and "Baltic cities".

Public commuter systems shall operate in and around major cities (particularly cities marked as European or Baltic city regions).

Long-distance road transport shall be minimized through improved port, sea transport and railway services.

Combined transport and intermodal co-operation shall be enhanced with a view to promote sea (and inland waterways) instead of land transport, railways instead of road transport, wherever feasible.

Major road projects shall include city by-passes in order to avoid negative impacts on the urban environment. They will be linked to the intermodal transport centres referred to the above section on railways.

Care shall be taken to minimize negative environmental effects of new major infrastructure projects and maximise regional dynamisation.

6. **The mobility network provides conditions for effective integration within the BSR and with the world**

GENERAL

Easy border crossing shall be possible with little delay, this being a precondition for any effective investment programmes.

SEA TRANSPORT

There will be a network of ports along the Baltic coast with frequent shipping services and well-developed multi-modal links to the hinterland, including neighbouring countries. Ferryboat links across the Baltic Sea will be particularly strengthened in the south-eastern part. Including the ports of Saßnitz, Rostock, Szczecin/Swinoujscie, Gdansk/ Gdynia, Kaliningrad, Klaipeda, Riga, Tallinn and St. Petersburg, with a growing number of links across the Baltic Sea towards Nordic countries and Germany. Ferryboat links will be mostly for passengers and road vehicles. New railway ferryboat links, if economically viable, will also link Sweden (Ystad – Kalmar range) to Gdansk and Klaipeda. Existing ferryboat ports will extend their capacities in accordance with growing cross-Baltic traffic volumes.

Universal port functions will concentrate at the ports of Lübeck-Travemünde, Kiel, Copenhagen, Århus, Esbjerg, Helsingborg, Gothenburg, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Rostock, Szczecin-Swinoujscie, Gdansk, Kaliningrad, Klaipeda, Riga, Tallinn, St. Petersburg. These ports will develop into partners among themselves and for existing universal ports such as Hamburg (as the intercontinental main port).

Short-sea conventional shipping services, including feeder transport to the North Sea ports, will help to minimize land transport needs. Universal ports will therefore be complemented by a larger number of smaller ports. Coastal shipping will expand its share in total national and international transport.

Competition between ports shall be enhanced, but economically not viable port investments shall be avoided.

RAILWAYS

Improved railway transportation systems shall provide connections for long distances among "European" and "Baltic cities". This includes high-speed long-distance passenger trains along selected corridors, which interlink with the corresponding network for the Western Europe via Berlin and Hamburg. They will also be trunk lines for international cargo trains. Such network with improved travel speed and quality can only be implemented over a long period, and this process will not be completed until 2010.

Main universal and ferryboat ports shall be integrated with the railway network to facilitate rail transport to the hinterlands.

International high-speed railway lines shall be complemented by a system of regional trains where maximum speed is less important than

improved reliability and comfort (for countries in Central and Eastern Europe, in addition speed needs to be heavily improved). Such regional systems will be basically within national networks, but some of them will interlink across borders, e.g. Tallinn – St. Petersburg; Kaliningrad – Kaunas – Vilnius – Minsk; Berlin – Szczecin – Gdansk – Kaliningrad – Kaunas – Vilnius – Minsk.

Major **missing links** shall be eliminated. This refers to high-speed links (see above) for which partially new alignments must be built. A fixed link across the Öresund (motorway and railway) shall be built, the economic and ecological feasibility to establish a fixed link across the Fehmarn Belt shall be finally evaluated. Links between Finland and Russian Karelia/Murmansk shall be established. The lower Elbe River shall be crossed by a new railway bridge.

Main high-speed international railway lines 2010 and beyond

1. Hamburg – Rødby – Copenhagen – Malmö – Stockholm – Sundsvall;
with a branch Malmö – Gothenburg (– Oslo)
 2. Hamburg – Århus – Frederikshavn (– Oslo)
 3. Turku – Helsinki – St. Petersburg – Moscow
 4. Tallinn – Riga – Kaunas – Warsaw – Berlin – Hamburg
 5. St. Petersburg – Pskov – Daugavpils – Vilnius – Warsaw (to meet corridor no. 4 at Bialystok)
 6. Moscow – Minsk – Brest – Warsaw (to meet there corridor no. 4)
 7. Klaipeda – Siauliai – Vilnius – Minsk – Gomel (– Kiev)
 8. Kaliningrad – Kaunas – Vilnius (to meet corridor no. 7)
 9. Gdansk – Warsaw – Prague
 10. Szczecin/Swinoujscie – Poznan – Wrocław – Prague
 11. Dresden – Wrocław – Katowice – Krakow – Rzeszow – Kiev
-

RAILWAY NETWORK IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION 2010

- International high-speed lines
- Important interregional lines
- Other lines
- Ferryboat lines
- European cities
- Baltic cities
- National cities
- Regional cities
- Other cities



ROADS

The long-distance road network shall include, among others, the following alignments:

Via Baltica (Helsinki – Tallinn – Riga – Kaunas – Warsaw – Berlin)

Via Hanseatica (St. Petersburg – Tartu – Riga – Siauliai – Kaliningrad – Gdansk – Szczecin – Lübeck)

TEM (Trans-European Motorway; Oslo – Gothenburg – Karlskrona – Gdansk – Lodz – Katowice)

Szczecin – Wrocław – Prague

Turku – Helsinki – St. Petersburg – Moscow

Berlin – Warsaw – Minsk – Moscow

Hamburg – Copenhagen – Malmö – (with a fixed link across the Öresund with extensions towards Oslo resp. Stockholm)

Hamburg – Flensburg – Frederikshavn.

Other lines of importance for the BSR will complement these main lines as shown in the map.

Regions not directly served by main trans-regional infrastructure lines, particularly in eastern Latvia, north-eastern Lithuania, northern Belarus, shall be connected to these long distance links by regional ones of adequate quality, in order to support regional development.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT PROGRAMMES

The European Union, together with other national and international bodies, has established a programme for the development of international transport corridors. Main differences shown in this VASAB 2010 report are as follows:

VASAB 2010 considers some further port hinterland corridors to be improved before the year 2010 in order to support sea transport:

- Szczecin – Poznan – Wrocław – Prague
- Liepaja – Riga (– Vitebsk – Smolensk – Moscow)
- Ventspils – Riga
- Tallinn – Pskov (– Moscow)

additional coast-parallel corridors are included in VASAB 2010 to promote cross-Baltic (link Baltic and European cities along the coastline):

- additional segment Gdansk – Szczecin (and to Lübeck)
- Tallinn – St. Petersburg

the railway corridor Warsaw – Kaunas – Daugavpils – Pskov – St. Petersburg has no priority in the EU concept until the year 2010. This part of the vision may require more time to be implemented; the same applies for the road corridor; with the segment of Kaunas – Pskov.

INLAND WATERWAYS

Some projects are discussed in Poland (improvement of Warta, Odra, Wisła waterways, link to the Boug and further on to the Pripyat in Belarus) and in Finland (northwards from Kotka). Major improvement projects will be implemented for the German network, including the Odra-Havel canal. The Polish projects are to be seen in international context (channel Odra – Danube, transit route from Germany to Kaliningrad and Belarus). No decisions have been taken, and economic viability has not been established yet.

AIR TRANSPORT

European and Baltic cities shall be linked among each other by good air links. Remote and sparsely populated regions (e.g. Arctic region) will be linked to main urban centres by a system of regional flight connections. Poland intends to increase the number of international airports (including Gdansk, Szczecin and Suwalki).

The introduction of new cargo “hubs” is one possible option of using former military airports

ROAD NETWORK IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION 2010

- International roads
- Regional roads
- Other roads
- Ferryboat lines
- European cities
- Baltic cities
- National cities
- Regional cities
- Other cities



(e.g. Siauliai, Lithuania; Tartu, Estonia; Daugavpils, Latvia). This shall be promoted depending on the result of corresponding feasibility studies.

TELECOMMUNICATION

A functioning system of international and regional communication lines shall support regional development and minimise travel needs. "Information expressways" shall bind the BSR regions together and link them with Western Europe and other continents. They will be used not only for business purposes, but also in such areas as education, science and research, environmental protection and rationalisation of physical transport. The trans-European glass-fibre cable system (TEL) shall include all countries of the BSR.

PIPELINES

Northern and eastern countries shall be linked to the North Sea oil gas sources via new sea port installations (e.g. Lithuanian Butingė and Latvian Liepaja, linked to the Lithuanian refinery Mazeikiai) and/or new gas pipelines (particularly from Norwegian gas fields in the North Sea towards Poland and Finland or possibly British gas via Denmark). Thereby areas, which are presently supplied only from Russian gas sources, can diversify their supply.

ELECTRICITY NETWORK

The Nordic, eastern and western networks will be linked together to form one common energy grid. Transmission lines from Norway towards Hamburg (via the North Sea), to Denmark (via

Sweden), from eastern Denmark to Germany, from southern Sweden to Mecklenburg, and from Sweden via Åland Islands to Finland and Estonia, as well as the northern connections between Sweden, Finland and Norway shall establish the physical conditions for an extended electricity trade. This will help to take advantage of regional potentials for environment-friendly electricity production and of different peak and low demand periods in different countries.

7. Energy production relies increasingly on renewable and environment-friendly sources of energy

In view of the greenhouse effect, efforts shall be made to biologically bind carbon dioxide. An increased production of bioenergy can be pursued on low productivity areas with a high amount of nitrate leakage located in the proximity of cities. Spatial planning of areas suitable for bioenergy production, combined with integrated environmental and rural policies in these areas, can make a contribution to local energy systems, while at the same time promoting a sustainable energy system. Differences in national energy supply systems, population density and land use require different approaches.

For the location of new power plants, or the extension or rehabilitation of existing ones, which may have negative effects on other countries, international concertation shall be sought and Environment Impact Assessment according to the Espoo Convention shall be prepared.

2.3 THE PATCHES: AREAS SUPPORTING DYNAMISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The following "specific types of areas" will be discussed here: border areas, islands, coastal zones, cultural landscapes and areas of significant natural value. The goal is to integrate these areas into the overall development process in accordance with their specific problems and potentials.

8. **Cross-Border co-operation contributes significantly to spatial economic and social cohesion**

Border areas will be instrumental to the interchange among nations, including trade, labour markets, municipal utility services, transport services, cultural and educational cooperation.

There is also an intensive cross-border co-operation between islands. Existing co-operations shall be maintained.

Potentials for new or more intensive co-operations shall be utilised.

9. **Islands function as a touristic core in the BSR**

Islands are the geographic centre of the BSR, and they have the tradition of being nodes of transport, trade and communication with the BSR and beyond. Future potentials are their touristic attraction, which in many respects is unique in Europe, and in promoting cross-Baltic cultural and educational co-operation. They already are and shall even intensify their role as spearheads in the search for ways to reconcile environmental protection with local development.

Tourism shall be geared to specific demand groups seeking high-quality, environment-conscious recreation embedded in a rich cultural heritage. Islands shall further develop economic structures, which can co-exist and complement touristic activities.

Due to their isolated location, islands offer particular opportunities to promote concepts relying on local initiative such as recycling communities, where agriculture and the urban sphere form a symbiotic relationship. Islands are a good case to further development of the principle of subsidiarity.

10. **The coastal zone is planned with careful balance between development and protection**

The HELCOM Recommendation, adopted by the Ministers of the Environment of the Baltic Sea States on 8 March 1994, concerning the protection of the coastal strip, is an important step forward. This recommendation states: "... Considering that ... coastal areas

are systems of great biological richness, variety and productivity

form the habitats of highly specialised and often endangered species of wild fauna and flora as well as large populations of breeding and migratory birds

are landscapes of great natural beauty

are highly important for public recreation

are a natural resource which is becoming more and more scarce..."

"... the signing state representatives recommend to their respective governments:

that the Contracting Parties take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection of the coastal strip

that a generally protected coastal strip therefore be established outside urban areas and existing

settlements, the width of which shall be determined by the nature and landscape values of the coast, extending at least 100 to 300 meters from the mean water line landwards and seawards

that in this protected coastal strip activities, which would permanently change the nature and landscape ... not be allowed except when proved overwhelmingly in the public interest...

intensive forestry and intensive farming including drainage be restricted

that exceptions can be made from the provisions in the point above by a land use plan approved and sanctioned by an appropriate authority that a zone of at least 3 kilometres landwards from the mean water line be established as a coastal planning zone where major building development and other major permanent changes in nature and landscape be preceded by an appropriate land use plan, including environmental impact assessment, approved at least on the regional level." (HELCOM Recommendation 15/1 of 8 March 1994).

On the basis of these principles, corresponding national/regional planning guidelines shall be worked out. Ministers of Spatial Planning shall seek a common decision on the application of such rules.

Programmes to reduce sea pollution through municipal or industrial waste water shall become effective, including the introduction of municipal waste water treatment plants and the control of industrial effluents. "Hot spots", as identified by the HELCOM, shall be reduced significantly.

Effective control systems to avoid sea pollution by ships shall be introduced (enforcement of safety regulations, prohibition of spillage, etc.).

11. A Baltic Network of nature and cultural areas is designated and protected

This includes valuable cultural landscapes, landscapes with a high proportion of valuable forests or wetland biotopes, with the integration of nature protection areas.

More information and harmonisation of concepts across the BSR and beyond is needed. The Nordic Council of Ministers intends to propose unified criteria. On this basis it would be possible to prepare a common BSR designation of valuable cultural landscapes and their respective proposed type of land use.

The aim is to preserve and to improve natural and cultural resources throughout the BSR, to reduce environmental pollution, to secure environmental capacities of European significance and to achieve an environmentally sound use of space. Areas still close to nature shall be linked up to form ecologically effective networks, extending up to and into densely populated industrial regions.

In line with these principles, Poland has proposed to extend its project "Green Lungs of Poland" to other countries (Belarus, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine) – thus forming the "Green Lungs of Europe". The original Polish project covers a region in the north-eastern zone of the country totalling about 15% of national territory. In principle all wetlands should be preserved, especially in those regions where most wetlands have disappeared, some shall be restored, firstly in Germany, Denmark and southern Sweden.

BORDER AREAS WITH SIGNIFICANT POTENTIALS FOR NEW OR MORE INTENSIVE CO-OPERATION 2010

- Border areas
- European cities
- Baltic cities
- National cities
- Regional cities
- Other cities



2.4 THE SYSTEM: COMPREHENSIVE SPATIAL PLANNING IN FUNCTION

The “system” serves to bring about programmes and plans and to promote their implementation. Beyond this purpose, the planning processes must respect the values previously discussed. This is reflected in the following visions.

12. Spatial planning contributes to harmonisation and spatial cohesion across borders

There shall be institutionalised systems to harmonise national spatial concepts with neighbouring countries. National plans shall pay specific attention to the international perspective in order to achieve harmony with concepts mutually agreed for the wider Baltic Sea Region and for Europe as a whole.

The BSR countries shall implement programmes to improve the competitiveness of backward regions (spatial cohesion). Criteria for selection of structural problems in regards of the regions will be set up by individual countries. But for the purpose of international support programmes, some uniform criteria shall be defined as well, taking into consideration such aspects as: low income levels, structural change problems, labour market situation, low population density in conjunction with a weak settlement structure, problems of accessibility in conjunction with weak transport services, environmental damage coupled with poor quality of life and out-migration trends. Sectoral programmes for selected spatial policy areas shall act in a concerted and consistently focused manner.

13. Spatial planning is based on the principles of subsidiarity, participation and transparency

Urban, regional, and national planning decisions shall be taken at the lowest possible level (subsidiarity). This is in accordance with the principles of freedom and democracy. It is also expected to improve the quality of decisions.

Private and public investors shall be able to base their decisions on highly transparent regional and urban development policies. Plans and implementation programmes shall be the result of participative procedures, where potentially affected groups, individuals or companies are actively involved in the planning process.

14. Spatial planning contributes to the co-ordination of sectoral and regional planning

This shall be based on adequate planning legislation as well as qualification of the responsible authorities and their staff.

The BSR countries shall dispose of indicative (framework) national spatial concepts, which are periodically updated (usually at least every 10-15 years). These concepts will be the basis for an improved spatial co-ordination of sectoral programmes. Spatial development in the BSR shall be monitored jointly at regular intervals to enable decisions on required new actions.

All countries shall possess a planning legislation, which follows similar standards (though these may be adapted to local conditions).

National spatial planning systems shall include three different planning levels: national, regional and local (municipal). The institutional structure depends – among other factors – on the size and population density of the respective country. So, additional levels may exist if appropriate.

There shall be systems to evaluate and to control local development plans for their consistency with regional concepts (particularly in the fields of transport and energy infrastructure, nature protection, recreation and tourism). Regional concepts shall be established taking local development ideas into consideration (simultaneous bottom-up-top-down or counter-current system). A similar system shall exist between national and regional planning.

Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010

Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region

The report was presented at the third Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development held on 7-8 December 1994 in Tallinn, Estonia.

This publication is based on the report printed in Denmark, November 1996, first edition, second issue. Selection of relevant parts of the report is made by VASAB Secretariat.

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Design: "DUE" LTD
Layout: "E FORMA" LTD

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Further information and distribution:

VASAB Secretariat
Elizabetes Street 19, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia
Telephone: +371 67350630
Fax: +371 67350626
E-mail address: info@vasab.org
Twitter: [@VASAB_org](https://twitter.com/VASAB_org)
www.vasab.org



Printed in Latvia on environmentally friendly
paper certified by FSC, September 2014

