



# VASAB ACHIEVEMENTS AND MAIN EVENTS

**1992**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Ministerial Conference, Karlskrona, Sweden – A starting point for drafting the first spatial development concept for the Region, a Group of Focal Points set up, secretariat function provided by the Baltic Institute of Karlskrona  
**Görel Thurdin, Sweden, 1992:** “We should be able to show the world the fabulous potential the Baltic Sea space represents.”

**1993**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Conference for Spatial Planning and Development, Gdansk, Poland – Interim Report “Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Area”

**Jan Kuligowski, Poland:** “The Second Ministerial Conference in Gdańsk, which assessed results of the Group work, gave its blessing and guidelines for the final stretch. It is funny, but the strongest impression from that Conference, was my fascination by the performance of two ladies, who were Ministers from Sweden and Finland. I was impressed by their intellectual skills, competence in the subject of the conference, clear prioritisation, and eventually by their social, rhetorical and language skills. We had very few politicians of that calibre, not speaking about ladies-politicians, and I was honestly jealous and kept asking my Nordic friends: How do you manage to grow such stars?”

**1994**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development, Tallinn, Estonia – Report “Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010. Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the BSR”, the Committee on Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region appointed and common interim secretariat established in Sweden

**1996**

Secretariat transferred to Gdansk

The 4<sup>th</sup> Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development, Stockholm, Sweden – Report “From Vision to Action”, support for launching regional Agenda 21, Common Recommendations for Spatial Planning of the Coastal Zone in the Baltic Sea Region

**Wilfried Görmar, Germany:** “The most significant memory is the huge number of dedicated people with so different professional backgrounds, life stories and personalities met during my VASAB work both inside the VASAB Committee and outside it, as well in the framework of activities linked to VASAB issues. I also remember many controversial discussions, but always with the objective to find the most appropriate approaches, strategies and even wording. If it comes to suitable approaches – one sentence has probably determined our discussions more than any other: VASAB should always try to find the “right flight altitude”, which means that VASAB should not work in a too detailed, too local, too specific way, at the same time should avoid a too broad, too global or too general approach. I started my VASAB work in 1996 in Jurmala, Latvia as a member of a Working group with the aim to elaborate “Common Recommendations for Spatial Planning of the Coastal Zone in the BSR”. The recommendations as such were adopted at the VASAB Ministerial Conference in 1996. It was an exciting joint work of officials and scientists of different countries around the Baltic Sea and it is interesting to see what has been developed on the basis of that work. To some extent it paved the way or was a first step towards maritime spatial planning, which is on today’s agenda.”

Baltic 21 activities commenced

**1997**

**Ulla Koski, Finland:** “My first memories about VASAB are from the late 90’s. My first impression was that it was something really new and unique. There had been a lot of organizations cooperating in different sectors in the Baltic Sea Region, but there was no cooperation on spatial issues, and VASAB was a pioneer in that field. VASAB has created a new kind of comprehensive understanding of the long-term future of the Baltic Sea Region. The first Vision paper in 1994 was some kind of revolution in this area, because at that time there were no comprehensive vision papers of this region. Still, in my opinion, the most important role of VASAB in the future is to increase the understanding of the importance of comprehensive planning.”

Project “USUN – Urban Systems and Urban Networking in the BSR”

**1999**

Project “MATROS – Maritime Transportation System in the Baltic Sea Region from a Spatial Development Perspective”

**2001**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development in Wismar, Germany – Action Programme for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region “VASAB 2010 Plus”

Project “BaltCoast – Recommendations on the role of spatial planning in Integrated Coastal Zone Management”

**2002**

**2004**

Project “COMMIN” – Promoting Spatial Development by Creating Common Mindscapes

**2005**

Project “BALANCE” – Baltic Sea Management – Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Ecosystem through Spatial Planning

The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development, Gdansk, Poland – Policy Document “Connecting Potentials”

Project “PlanCoast”

VASAB Annual Conference “Future of our Baltic Europe territory”, Warsaw, Poland

**2006**

**2007**

Secretariat transferred to Riga  
 Project “East West Window”

VASAB Annual Conference “Baltic Sea Region Spatial Development Policies in European Context: Avenues to the Long Term Perspective”, Riga, Latvia

**Bernhard Heinrichs, Germany:** “During my involvement in VASAB work from 1993 till 2008 the emphasis of VASAB changed significantly from the more conceptual work of VASAB 2010 to influencing the process of the EU INTERREG programme and supporting specific flagship projects. But one activity has been on-going: the exchange of spatial planning experience among the members of the VASAB CSPD. I gained a lot from this exchange.”

**2008**

VASAB High Level Expert and Stakeholder Workshop on Maritime Spatial Planning Challenges in the Baltic Sea, Vilnius, Lithuania  
 The 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of BSR Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development, Vilnius, Lithuania – VASAB Long-Term Perspective for Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region  
 Project “BaltSeaPlan”  
 Project “New Bridges”

**2009**

VASAB Expert and Stakeholder Meeting on Demographic Trends and Labor Market Development, Kaunas, Lithuania

VASAB Expert Workshop on Urban-Rural Partnerships in the Baltic Sea Region, Minsk, Belarus

The joint HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group established

**2010**

Baltic Sea Broad-Scale MSP principles adopted  
 VASAB granted the status of the CBSS intergovernmental network  
 Project “Plan Bothnia”

VASAB Annual Conference: Integrated Approach to Spatial Development of Europe – Meaning of Territorial Cohesion, Warsaw, Poland

**2011**

**2012**

Project “PartiSEApate” – Multi-level Governance in MSP throughout the Baltic Sea Region

ESPON project “BSR-TeMo” – Territorial Monitoring for the Baltic Sea Region

Project EUSBSR TA-HAL – Technical Assistance to the EUSBSR Horizontal Action “Spatial Planning”

**2013**

Baltic Maritime Spatial Planning Forum – PartiSEApate conference, Riga, Latvia






















**Kristine Rasiņa, Latvia:** “VASAB is really an important bridge for getting people from all around the Baltic Sea region together. VASAB has very important role in coordinating MSP in the Baltic Sea Region, and now MSP is the most important thing for us. VASAB is not just a cooperation; it is the friendship between the countries around the Baltic Sea Region.”

**2014**

The 8<sup>th</sup> VASAB Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, Tallinn, Estonia

**Sirpa Pietikäinen, Finland:** “A new regional structure of the Baltic basin is emerging. New connections between cities and regions will be established across the national borders. Cities and towns will adopt new roles in the framework of the international division of labour.” (1992) I believe this quote is still valid, actually more valid than ever. The development of this regional structure has been slower than I had anticipated at the time. Successes of the division of labour are only gradually becoming visible. Improving connectivity in the region has often been faced by the lack of resources in too weak supranational structures. The development of the EU programs such as the TEN-T, the Energy Roadmap and the Rail Baltica are good examples of projects that should be pushed much more forcefully on the European Agenda.”

## VASAB CHAIRMANSHIPS

	02.1992–02.1994	<b>Mr Jan Kuligowski (PL)</b>		07.2002–06.2003	<b>Ms Ulla Koski (FI)</b>
	02.1994–12.1994	<b>Ms Sirka Hautojärvi (FI)</b>		07.2003–06.2004	<b>Mr Allan Gromov (EE)</b>
	01.1995–06.1995	<b>Mr Jacek Szlachta (PL)</b>		07.2004–12.2005	<b>Mr Zbigniew Rykowski (PL)</b>
	07.1995–06.1996	<b>Mr Bo Kjellen (SE)</b>		01.2006–06.2007	<b>Mr Olle Lundgren (SE)</b>
	07.1996–06.1997	<b>Ms Dzintra Upmace (LV)</b>		07.2007–06.2008	<b>Mr Edgars Zalāns/Mr Gunārs Anšiš (LV)</b>
	07.1997–06.1998	<b>Mr Niels Østergård (DK)</b>		07.2008–06.2009	<b>Mr Peter Pouplier (DK)</b>
	07.1998–06.1999	<b>Mr Aleksandras Gordevičius (LT)</b>		07.2009–06.2010	<b>Mr Aleksandras Gordevičius (LT)</b>
	07.1999–06.2000	<b>Mr Terje Lind (NO)</b>		07.2010–06.2011	<b>Mr Arve Skjerpen (NO)</b>
	07.2000–10.2001	<b>Mr Bernhard Heinrichs (DE)</b>		07.2011–06.2012	<b>Mr Wilfried Görmar (DE)</b>
	11.2001–06.2002	<b>Mr Sergey Narishkin (RU)</b>		07.2012–06.2013	<b>Ms Elena Chuguyevskaya (RU)</b>
				07.2013–06.2014	<b>Ms Ulla Koski (FI)</b>
				07.2014–	<b>Ms Martina Proosa (EE)</b>