



Common Recommendations for Spatial Planning of the Coastal Zone in the Baltic Sea Region

Adopted 22 October 1996,

THE MINISTERS

responsible for Spatial Planning and Development from the participating countries in the „Committee for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region“.

BEARING IN MIND

the Resolution from the Third Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, Tallinn, 7-8 December 1994 in which the Ministers welcomed the report „Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010“ and approved the proposed common actions,

BEARING IN MIND PARTICULAR

action 4.3 in „Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010“ concerning elaboration of „guidelines for spatial planning in the coastal zone“,

BEING CONSCIOUS

that the coastal zone in the Baltic Sea Region has large potentials of cities, harbours, industries, infrastructure, valuable resources, natural and cultural heritage which can be used for economic and social development, that it is at the same time a vulnerable unique area which needs protection and that the natural processes in the coastal zone are dynamic and subject to transboundary human activities,

BEING ALSO CONSCIOUS

that the expected expansion of cities, tourism areas, transport and technical installations especially in the southern and eastern part of the Baltic Sea coastal zone has to be guided by regionally balanced sustainable development,

DRAWING ATTENTION TO

the fact that spatial planning has a crucial role to play in the coastal zone management as regards support of the economic and social development and co-operation along the coast, contribution to the co-ordination and integration within a regional context of sectoral measures and of national and local interest, and establishment of a multisectoral framework for land use to balance the needs of environmental protection and development,

REGARDING

coastal zone management as a broad social, economic and ecological approach with the aim to improve co-ordination and concertation of all planning and implementation activities that influence significantly the quality of the environment, economic and social opportunities and the cultural heritage in the coastal zone,



RECOGNIZING

the need to elaborate common guidelines for spatial planning and management in the coastal zone in order to ensure and guide the spatial development in this area,

BEING AWARE

that the coastal zone must be planned with careful balance between development and protection, meaning that the rules or legislation regarding the coastal zone at the same time must promote economic and social development and ensure the protection of nature, of areas for biological diversity, of landscape and cultural heritage and the accessibility and free movement of the public to and along the coast,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

the HELCOM Recommendation 15/1 on the protection of the coastal strip adopted 8 March 1994, the HELCOM Recommendation 15/5 on the system of coastal and marine Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA) adopted 10 March 1994, the HELCOM Recommendation 16/3 on the preservation of natural coastal dynamics adopted 15 March 1995, the UNCED resolutions from Rio de Janeiro 1992, especially Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, statements from "The World Coast 1993" conference, expressing urgent need for coastal states to develop and strengthen their capabilities for integrated coastal zone management plans and the Washington Declaration on Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, adopted 1 November 1995,

TAKING ALSO INTO ACCOUNT

the existing provisions and legal acts concerning spatial planning and protection of the coastal zone in all the participating countries/regions,

APPRECIATING

the measures already taken by several Baltic Sea countries in order to protect the coastal zone,

THE MINISTERS or their representatives,

RECOMMEND

the following objectives and planning procedures concerning spatial planning of the coastal zone to be included in national legislation or policies:

I. OBJECTIVES

a) actions in the coastal zone should promote sustainable development, ensure appropriate living conditions for the residents, and secure a dynamic balance of the coastline, the biological diversity and the cultural heritage,

b) the economic potential of the coastal zone should be maintained and developed, i.e. the development of cities, settlements, economic activities and infrastructure in the coastal zone should be economically, socially and ecologically sustainable,

- c) conservation of the biological diversity, the cultural heritage and sustainable use of natural resources on landward and seaward sides of shoreline are considered a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth and development of the coastal zone,
- d) the coastal zone should be kept as unspoiled as possible from such construction and infrastructure, which may be expected to jeopardize natural and cultural resources and recreational interests,
- e) the land use and the scale of buildings and changes in the physical environment in the coastal zone should be adapted to the cultural heritage and the natural and physical conditions of the landscape, especially as regard to archipelagos, islands, spits and sandbanks,
- f) the cultural heritage, nature and landscape values in the coastal zone should be preserved through appropriate planning and management,
- g) the impact of land reforms on the landscape values in the coastal zone should be minimized,
- h) the recreational values and the natural beauty of the coastal zone should be safe-guarded and public access to the coast and along the coastline should be secured,
- i) the elaboration of comprehensive plans for urban areas, environmentally friendly technologies, transport systems and energy resources should be encouraged.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

On guidance for the process of spatial planning and management in the coastal zone:

- a) the coastal zone around the Baltic Sea shall be defined and applied according to the HELCOM Recommendations 15/1, which encourages to develop a planning zone of at least 3 kilometres landwards and a generally protected strip outside existing urban areas and existing settlements of at least 100 – 300 meters landwards and seawards from the mean water line,
- b) comprehensive plans aiming at supporting sustainable development in the coastal zone should be drafted at appropriate levels (national, regional, local) ensuring the participation of local authorities and the general public,
- c) planning for new activities concerning urban development, construction, infrastructure, vacation centres and leisure facilities in the coastal zone outside existing urban settlements should be based on a planning-related or functional justification for a coastal location,
- d) location of new building and constructions should be preferably take place inside, close to or behind existing settlements along the coastline and to maintain the natural landscape,



- e) new developments should not form a visual barrier along the coast, therefore green wedges or strips should be maintained or provided,
- f) any large construction, infrastructure project, land reclamation or other significant permanent change in the coastal nature and landscape should be preceded by either an appropriate regional or local land use plan or a special regional or local impact assessment covering both visual and environmental aspects,
- g) windmills should be located outside areas important for migratory birds and in such a way, that they minimize the impact on valuable landscapes,
- h) comprehensive and/or local land use plans should be elaborated especially in sensitive and/or congested areas,
- i) options should be kept open for improving the hinterland links to existing harbours and to allow future revitalization of existing harbour areas,
- j) discharge of untreated sewage in the coastal zone should be avoided and location of waste deposit areas should only be allowed following approved land-use plans and appropriate regulations such as regional and environmental impact assessments,
- k) areas of different natural values whether they are worthy of preservation or not should be incorporated into a green infrastructure in order to create a better concept for sustainable development of human settlements,
- l) vacation centres and leisure facilities should be located in accordance with local land use plans and coherent consideration arising from national or regional tourism policy taking into account the preservation of landscapes, nature, cultural heritage and the carrying capacity of the landscapes,
- m) coastal protection measures outside settlements should only be initiated, when they are considered necessary for preserving the natural coastline,
- n) environmentally friendly transport and energy systems should be encouraged and the problems caused by motoring in sensitive coastal areas should be given due attention,
- o) the cultural heritage and characteristics of the coastal settlements should be maintained and renewed and re-establishment of the historical settlements should be preferred to new building areas,

3. PLANNING PROCEDURES

- a) the Ministers take appropriate measures to ensure implementation of the recommendations for planning in the coastal zone around the Baltic Sea,



b) the implementation of recommendations for planning in the coastal zone is regarded as a national, regional and local issue according to the principle of subsidiarity and the division of responsibilities in the individual country,

c) regional impact assessments, including environmental impact assessment should be applied according to national legislation, and information for the general public should be provided at a very early stage of the planning process for any large project with significant impact on the spatial development and the environment,

d) development in the coastal zone should be subject to systematic monitoring, and information should be exchanged among the countries concerned,

e) each country is responsible for monitoring its own territory and for the exchange of information concerning installations which might have a transboundary effect (The Espoo Convention),

f) special areas should be designated, when appropriate, with the objective to conserve nature and to safeguard the marine and coastal biodiversity, such as the Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA),

FURTHERMORE the ministers recommend that the Committee for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region monitors the implementation and the results of the recommendations through demonstrations projects and reports to the next Ministerial Conference.