

## Nordic focus on EU's Baltic Sea Strategy

12.07.2010

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The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region cannot be achieved without active participation from regional partners. This was one of the conclusions of a meeting co-organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers in Brussels on 29 June.

The meeting, which brought together 200 representatives from the entire Baltic Sea Region, took place under the heading "Realising the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region through Nordic-European synergies in co-operation".

The seminar was organised in co-operation with the EU Commission and the Informal Baltic Sea Group, an association of regional representations from the Baltic Sea Area.

"The Nordic Council of Ministers will continue to place a very high priority on an action plan for the Baltic Sea strategy. We will contribute at all levels to implement the new strategy and ensure that it remains high on the political agenda", said the General Secretary of the Nordic Council of Ministers, Haldór Ásgrímsson, at the meeting.

Haldór Ásgrímsson also stressed that the Council of Ministers, with 16 Nordic institutions and local offices in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Northwest Russia, has a unique network which can effectively build on the implementation of the Baltic Sea strategy.

The Chairman of the European Parliament's Baltic Europe Intergroup, Tunne Kelam from Estonia, also attended as well as the Director General, European Commission DG Regional Policy, Dirk Ahner.

The EU Commission emphasised that much had been achieved with the development of a framework for the strategy and action plan, and that now, in co-operation with a number of stakeholders in the Baltic Sea region, the implementation of many co-operation projects is now underway.

In addition, Ivar Kristensen, Managing Director, Nordic Innovation Centre and Ole Damsgaard, Director, Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, presented examples of how Nordic co-operation programmes may be beneficial for both Nordic and European players.

ScanBalt BioRegion - an ambitious biotech and health collaboration - presented another example of how projects originally initiated in the Nordic countries have over time been further developed and expanded in various EU co-operation programmes.

The conclusion of the meeting was that there is a need to continue dialogue and co-operation - across projects in the action plan and across organisations, whether they are Nordic or European.

Quelle: Nordic Council

Redaktion: 12.07.2010 von DLR PT

Länder / Organisationen: EU, Dänemark, Finnland, Island, Norwegen, Schweden

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