



Document title	Summary of the XVIII International Environmental Forum «Baltic Sea Day»
Code	2-10
Category	INF
Agenda Item	2 - Next HELCOM Ministerial Meeting
Submission date	13.06.2017
Submitted by	Russia
Reference	

Background

XVIII International Environmental Forum «Baltic Sea Day» was held on the 22-23 of March 2017 in Saint-Petersburg, Russia. The overarching theme of the Forum in 2017 was “Cooperation and connectivity in the Baltic Sea region towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals”.

The forum was attended about 590 participants, among them about 60– foreign participants (EU, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Belarus). The high level of representation from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Environment of Finland, Ministry of Environment of Estonia, the HELCOM Secretariat, National agencies, INTERREG Programme, Leontiev Centre, scientific institutes, IFIs, NGOs and enterprises have been among participants of the Forum.

Eight different round tables have been arranged within the Forum. The main idea embracing all round tables was coordination of local and regional targets with Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, the Goal 14 “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”. The topics discussed at the round tables were: marine litter, sustainable agriculture, pollution of the Baltic Sea (with paying special attention to the HELCOM hot spot - toxic waste landfill “Krasnyi Bor”), biodiversity, damage caused by different human activities to the sea floor, infrastructural projects in the region including construction of the new gas pipeline “Nord Stream 2” and its potential environmental impact.

Specific high-level round table on cooperation and connectivity in the region was firstly organized in the frame of the Forum. The goal of the round table was to discuss coordination of environmental targets for global, regional and local environmental strategies and to elaborate suggestions to align the targets and coordinate a follow up of the progress in implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. The role of municipalities was pointed out in implementation of the BSAP and welcomed regional initiatives, such as Race for the Baltic, to engage local stakeholders into joint effort to reach its targets. In the discussion outcome it was agreed that such thematic discussion should be continued and developed in the frame of the next Forum 2018 which traditionally will be held in St Petersburg (Russia). Moreover taking into account applicability of the topic it’s going to be included into the program of XVI All-Russia Forum "Strategic Planning in the Regions and Cities of Russia: Implementation Tools and Resources" which will be carried out on 23-24 of October in St Petersburg.

Traditionally the Award ceremony for personal contributions to the development of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region from Non–governmental V.I. Vernadskiy Ecological Fund was organized in the framework of the Forum. This year 5 persons were awarded - Mr. Marti Poutanen from Finland, Mr. Gunnar Noren from Sweden, Mr. Rustam Sagitov, Mr. Vladislav Minin and Ms. Larisa Makarova from Russia.

The final resolutions (and also presentations) are available at web site www.helcom.ru in English and Russian.

The Forum was organized by State Company “Mineral” subordinated to the Committee for Nature Use, Environmental Protection and Ecological Safety of the Government of St Petersburg with support of the

Ministry of Natural resources and ecology of the Russian Federation, Government of St. Petersburg, HELCOM, Nord Stream 2, Coalition Clean Baltic and NEFCO. In accordance with the decision of the Ministry of Natural resources and ecology of the Russian Federation the State Company "Mineral" takes regional coordination of HELCOM related activities in Russia over.

The XIX International Environmental Forum «Baltic Sea Day» will be held in St. Petersburg in March 2018. The Forum will be of high significance, almost immediately following the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting scheduled in the beginning of March 2018. It will be a perfect opportunity to discuss implementation of the most recent HELCOM commitments. We anticipate the Forum programme to be intensive and informative while the atmosphere of the event to serve for open and friendly discussions. We cordially invite you to attend the Forum.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the summary of XVIII International Environmental Forum «Baltic Sea Day», information on the XVI All-Russia Forum "Strategic Planning in the Regions and Cities of Russia: Implementation Tools and Resources" and XIX International Environmental Forum «Baltic Sea Day».