HELCOM Youth Forum 2012 Resolution

„The Baltic Sea between Blue Growth and Green Limits“

adopted 12 December 2012

Rostock, Germany
33 young academics representing the Baltic Sea area took part in the HELCOM Youth Forum 2012, held 10-12 December 2012 in Rostock, Germany. In plenary sessions and interdisciplinary workshops the participants discussed the present status and the future development of the Baltic Sea Region as valuable ecosystem and promising economic space.

The HELCOM Youth Forum resolution “The Baltic Sea between Blue Growth and Green Limits” adopted 12 December 2012 summarizes the participants’ visions and concrete demands concerning the Baltic Sea. The resolution addresses decision-makers in the Baltic Sea Region and shall be presented at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2013 in Copenhagen.
Preamble

We the participants of the HELCOM Youth Forum 2012

Being aware of the unique value of the Baltic Sea on the one hand and its increasing economic development and use on the other;

Recalling the adoption of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan on 15 November 2007 in Krakow to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021 as well as the Moscow HELCOM Ministerial Declaration adopted on 20 May 2010;

Acknowledging the already notable achievements with regard to good ecological and environmental status of the Baltic Sea and thus contributing to achieving the goals of international and European obligations including those of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive;

Stressing that nonetheless none of the open basins of the Baltic Sea has an acceptable environmental status at present;

Being concerned about social challenges such as youth unemployment as a consequence of the ongoing global financial crisis and stressing the need for new business opportunities including all maritime sectors to stabilize the Baltic Sea Region economies;

Looking forward to the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in Copenhagen in October 2013 and welcome the opportunity to address with this resolution high level policy decision makers as well as stakeholders from green and economic sectors;

Do hereby adopt this HELCOM Youth Forum Resolution 2012:
Being convinced that only a **sustainable use of the Baltic Sea ecosystem** will enable future generations to make use of the Baltic Sea and to enjoy a healthy marine environment,

We **recommend** to

- Assess and communicate the monetary value of ecosystem goods and services provided by the Baltic Sea;
- Reduce eutrophication by improving agricultural management, creating buffer zones, restoring wetlands and include them into landscape planning;
- Promote fisheries management focusing on the maintenance of broad diversity (genetic, species, functional and habitat) to ensure the resilience of the ecosystem, the adaptability of species and reduce overfishing;
- Promote the development of innovative solutions to ballast water treatment (e.g., ballast-free shipping) in order to prevent spreading of invasive species;
- Improve the enforcement of environmental regulations by establishing an integrated coast guard system, higher sanctions for environmental violations and intensified controls;
- Introduce a follow-up instrument for the Baltic Sea Action Plan for the period after 2021 in order to ensure continuous improvement and maintenance of good ecological status.

**Aiming at** making the Baltic Sea Region a model region for new **maritime technologies and innovation**, we **recommend** to

- Investigate the potential of closed-loop maritime systems in response to the increasing sectoral specialization of maritime industries;
- Promote the use of multi-purpose carriers (e.g., tanker-bulk) in order to increase the efficiency of fleet utilization, prevent empty voyages and reduce the total number of vessels;
- Move energy intensive industries to production sites of offshore energy, if appropriate and in line with environmental demands, in order to avoid energy loss and reduce the dependence of grid connections;
- Establish integrated offshore sites comprising wind energy production, fish farms and aquaculture products processing facilities in order to increase the efficiency of maritime space use;
- Develop fossil fuel-free shipping powered by sails, solar panels, bio LNG (e.g., algae-based) and standardized renewable energy batteries in order to reduce shipping emissions and discharges;
- Develop corresponding infrastructure including shore-side electricity facilities generated from renewable sources and recharging stations for the ship batteries.
**Being convinced that maritime governance and cooperation** are prerequisites for a sound maritime economy that respects the need for protecting the marine environment and preserving natural resources,

We **recommend** to

- Make the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) binding in order to reach the goals set for 2021, reinforcing the efforts to apply the ecosystem approach;

- Establish a common maritime spatial plan based on the common interests such as nature conservation, fishery, shipping, renewables and exploration of natural resources for the whole Baltic Sea area;

- Ensure the fair distribution of benefits and burdens and equal representation and participation for all Baltic Sea States when implementing the common maritime spatial plan;

- Develop a more sustainable EU fishery policy in cooperation with the Russian Federation while promoting job opportunities for fishermen in new emerging industries.

We **further suggest** to

- Develop educational programs to raise awareness and appreciation of the Baltic Sea ecosystem (e.g., movies distributed to schools, scientists communicating to local stakeholders);

- Continue the HELCOM Youth Forum series in all Baltic Sea States.