Global Environment Facility

Baltic Sea Regional Project

Helsinki Commission (HELCOM)
International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC)
International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

World Bank

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Baltic Sea Regional Project (BSRP)

is designed within the principles of the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) concept, focusing on land-based, coastal zone, and marine activities including activities for improving ecosystem health and productivity, social and economic development, and provision of ecosystem management tools for decision-makers to address transboundary issues for the Baltic Sea.

The most important aspects of the BSRP are its linkages between land-based activities, coastal zones and marine environments.

Cooperating Parties

With the support of the GEF, and the World Bank, Project activities will assist the recipient countries in implementing elements of the JCP, and support Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Russian Federation in meeting their obligations to the Helsinki Convention and other international agreements; and national policies and legislation.

The Project provides the basis for strengthening cooperation between the three international bodies:

- Helsinki Commission (HELCOM),
- International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC),
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES),

recipient country counterparts and other cooperating organizations:

- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO),
- World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF),
- Baltic21.

Preparation of the Project has been coordinated with the Rural Environmental Protection Project in Poland, and the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), which are both supported by GEF.

Baltic Sea Regional Project (BSRP)

- The long-term objective of BSRP is to introduce ecosystem-based assessments to strengthen the management of Baltic Sea coastal and marine environments through regional cooperation and targeted transboundary coastal, marine and watershed activities.

- To achieve this, the three international bodies and the cooperating countries in the region will utilize project-developed management tools for sustainable ecosystem management to contribute to the improvements in the social and economic benefits of the ecosystem for the coastal fishing and farming communities in the recipient countries.

- The aim is to reduce impacts from non-point sources of pollution and to increase sustainable biological production. The Project provides an environmental management framework for long-term restoration of the ecological balance of the Baltic Sea ecosystem through a series of preventive and curative actions to be undertaken in a phased manner in the region.

- The Project provides a regional focus, involving local communities and stakeholders; its biodiversity considerations focus on “prevention of damage to threatened waters.” As part of an integrated approach, Project activities will support linkages with activities of the cooperating countries, international financial institutions, European Union, bilateral donors and NGOs.

BSRP Components

The Project has four inter-related components:

- ***Component 1*, managed by ICES, aims to**
  (a) introduce ecosystem-based assessments and management for the Baltic Sea;
  (b) coordinate and integrate the regional monitoring and assessment capacity;
  (c) improve management practices to increase and sustain fishery yields and biological productivity of the Baltic Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (LME);
  (d) in the long-term, improve both the marine ecosystem and the economic benefits and standard of living of the fishing and coastal communities.

- ***Component 2,* managed by HELCOM in conjunction with the Swedish University of Agricultural *Justification of Project Design.* The Project represents a strategic choice to concentrate human and financial resources to strengthen regional management within the marine and agriculture sectors, using local skills and decision-making resources, to achieve sustainable ecosystem management over the medium and long term. It also includes measures to support coastal zone management, which is a critical link between land and marine environments.**

- ***Component 3,* managed by the Project Implementation Team supervised by the Baltic Sea steering Group, aims to support local and regional capacity building and institutional strengthening.**

- ***Component 4* includes the project management activities.**

Component 2 – Land And Coastal Management Activities

- **The Joint Comprehensive Baltic Sea Program highlighted the need to reduce the pollution loads originating from agricultural sector as an immediate priority.**

  Since 1992, a number of Swedish supported (Baltic Agricultural Run Off Action Program, BAAP) field-based demonstration activities, were undertaken in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russian Federation.

  The projects demonstrated that the efforts to reduce non-point source pollution from agricultural sector are feasible both from environmental and economic perspective.

- **The Component 2 of the BSRP consists of :**

(i) investments in capacity building and institutional strengthening,

(ii) on-farm environmental investments, e.g. construction of manure storages and small scale natural sewage treatment facilities, the wetland management actions for increased retention of nutrients, coastal zone improvements,

(iii) monitoring and assessment of non-point source pollution originating from agricultural farms and watersheds.

Component 2 Objectives.

The Component 2 aims to improve living conditions for the local rural population through sustainable use of natural resources in agricultural and coastal areas. The effective use of natural resources, primarily nutrients is important in agricultural production and also for the protection of the surface- and groundwater, to minimize the hazards of eutrophication and loss of biodiversity.

The Component aims to:

- **Increase the use of environmentally responsible agricultural practices in selected demonstration watersheds and river basins.**
- **Develop and test mechanisms for financing and evaluating environmental investments at farm level.**
- **Demonstrate methods for improved recycling and retention of nutrients**
- **Undertake demonstration activities in coastal areas linking the land-based measures to reduce non-point source pollution from agriculture with the activities in the sea.**
- **Strengthening the capacity of recipient countries to monitor the non-point source pollution from agriculture.**

Agri-environmental Demonstration Watersheds (ADW).

The ADWs are smaller than ASA sand have been selected using the BAAP demonstration project criteria. The ADWs are located within the ASAs. The demonstration watersheds comprise typical small agricultural watersheds (10-30 km2) suitable for demonstration and monitoring. The primary objective is to attract outside farmers to come to the ADW to learn and be stimulated by the demonstration activities shown there. The second objective is to establish conditions feasible for monitoring the environmental impact from agriculture.

River Basin Modules for Component 2:

- ***Estonia*** **- Area-based intervention to protect drinking water, Kasari River Basin/Matsalu Bay Area, Parnu River Basin/Gulf of Riga Area**
- ***Latvia/Lithuania*** **- Daugava River/Gulf of Riga, Lielupe River Basin/Gulf of Riga /Transboundary river**
- ***Lithuania/Kaliningrad Region*** **- Nemunas River Basin/KursiuLagoon Area/Transboundary river**
- ***Kaliningrad Region/Poland*** **- Vistula River Basin/Kaliningrad Lagoon/Vistula Lagoon Area**