

LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY 2020-2021

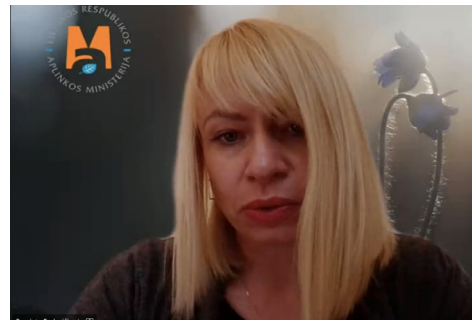
# SUSTAINABLE & PROSPEROUS REGION



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CLIMATE

## Sustainable & Green Transformations Conference

The conference “Sustainable & Green Transformations” was opened by **Vice-Minister of the Environment of Lithuania, Raminta Radavičienė**, and CBSS Director General Grzegorz Poznański. The conference brought in global, regional, and European perspectives, good practices from the private sector, young people’s efforts to make our region greener as well as scientific and research voices from the academia, outlining ways forward. The keynotes were delivered by United Nations Group of Scientists’ professor Jurgis Staniškis and the European Commission Director responsible for Circular Economy and Green Growth Kęstutis Sadauskas. The local level perspective was presented by Jørgen Kristiansen from Kristiansand in Norway, member of the Union of the Baltic Cities.



## Climate Change Dialogue 2020: Integrated Coastal Protection



The CBSS Baltic Sea Region Climate Policy Dialogue had its 10th roundtable meeting to take a closer look at the CASCADE project outputs on new and emerging climate risks with particular focus on integrated coastal protection. CASCADE project highlights that only five of the Baltic Sea Region countries have included flooding or extreme weather event related cascading effects for Critical Infrastructure in their National Risk Assessments.

Roundtable participants exchanged experiences on how coastal erosion issues are currently addressed in various Baltic Sea Region countries and emphasized the need for more cooperation among the relevant authorities to learn from best practices to increase resilience of coastal regions. To reduce the risk of flooding and coast erosion in the years to come, innovative, nature-based solutions are necessary and both spatial and investment planning must take into account long-term climate risk projections.

# Baltic Sea Sustainable Tourism Award

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the tourism industry hard. To stimulate sustainable recovery, most sustainable destination (Pärnu City, Estonia), service (Sinatur Hotel & Konferens, Denmark) and service provider (Aavameri Sea Kayaking, Finland) were honoured at the award ceremony during the 13th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum, online from Palanga, Lithuania. A high-level meeting of ministry representatives of tourism departments of the Baltic Sea States dedicated to tourism recovery measures also took place on the 13th of November as part of the Forum.

**“The principles of sustainable tourism are becoming increasingly relevant and the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled us to pay more attention to their value: we start to better understand nature, people and the region and so we create and offer tourism products more responsibly. I believe that truly the best ones were announced and awarded today, and the sustainable tourism competition initiated by Lithuania will gain momentum and be announced annually.”**

*Rimantas Sinkevičius  
Minister of the Economy and Innovation, Lithuania*

# International Youth Tourism Forum

The 2nd International Youth Forum ‘Quo Vadis Tourism? COVID-19 impact on the role of sustainability in tourism’, was held online on 7 May where young people, realising their stake in the tourism sector of the Region, discussed how to develop the Baltic Sea Region into an attractive sustainable travel location and what they can do to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as well as proposals on the topic for a new forward-looking ‘Vision of the Baltic Sea Region until 2030’ Vilnius Declaration.



# SUSTAINABLE MARITIME ECONOMY

## Electrifying Potential: Shore-Side Power Generation in the BSR

More than 130 participants registered for the Electrifying Potential conference organized by the Danish Maritime Authority in conjunction with the Danish Ministry of Environment and Food the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy, and EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Ship.

The conference gathered representatives from the EU Commission, governmental, local authorities and business representatives, who shared practical experiences of using shore-side power generation technology. Investment and power supply capacity challenges were highlighted.



**“Shore-side power is a solution that can give an immediate positive impact on the local communities around our ports in the Baltic Sea Region.”**

*Lea Wermelin  
Minister for Environment,  
Denmark*

## Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy Mandate Extended to 2024

The final meeting of the CBSS Expert group on Sustainable Maritime Economy (EGSME) under the Lithuanian chairmanship took place on 9 June in an extended format.

The essential part of the meeting was dedicated to the important updates from strategic partners: HELCOM, EU DG Mare and VASAB, sharing with their latest strategic visions that will serve as a framework for the sector in the whole Baltic Sea Region.

The Norwegian presidency's priorities for the EGSME in 2021-2022 will be based on the White paper on the Norwegian maritime policy Greener and smarter – tomorrow's maritime industry, launched in December 2020, which highlights green shipping and digitalization, and thus continues on the same line of priorities of previous presidencies. In that regard, discussions on policies as well as industrial initiatives on green shipping and digitalization will take place.

# Baltic Sea Marinas

Guest harbour associations from the Baltic Sea Region and partners of the “Baltic Sustainable Boating” project, financed by the Swedish Institute, gathered for the first meeting in a series of webinars in March to exchange views on a guest harbour overview, produced by the Swedish Union of Guest harbours.

Among the issues, the need for common definition for “guest harbours” and regional differences were discussed. Opportunities for dialogue within the international/regional dimension and further development of the overview was suggested. To that end, a Baltic Sea Region Guest Harbour Guide will be elaborated by the project, as well as a plan of measures for the creation of a common quality mark for the region’s guest harbours



# LABOUR

## Sustainable Working Life Project

The European Social Fund (ESF) funded Sustainable Working Life project held four digital workshops in October and April and released a policy brief series, incorporating the ESF horizontal principles, based on the results. The workshops were attended by a total of 57 participants working with labour market issues and dealt with the topics of mobility, entrepreneurship, age management and lifelong learning for those aged 55+, with keynotes delivered by renowned researchers in the area from Poland, Finland, the Netherlands and Norway.

Through the Swedish Institute funded component of the project, two hybrid conferences were also held in St. Petersburg and a webinar was co-organised with Max Planck/Population Europe in June 2021.

The first hybrid event on the topic of “Remote work as a new reality” was held in the framework of the Baltic Sea Labour Forum annual round table. The event gathered expert speakers and participants from Russia (in-person) and 35 registered online participants from other BSR countries. The second event was a hybrid conference on Lifelong Learning, also held in St. Petersburg where prominent speakers from the region addressed the in-person and online participants.

# SCIENCE

## Baltic Sea Science Award

On the 16th of June the Baltic Sea Science 2021 Award Ceremony was taking place as part of the online Baltic Science Network final conference. The award was presented to three young scientists for their excellence in promoting the Council of the Baltic Sea States' Science, Research & Innovation Agenda through their research projects. Eleven research projects from around the Baltic Sea Region were submitted. The international award selection committee consisting of academia, public authorities and international organisations evaluated the projects according to selection criteria covering the aspects of regional coverage, sustainability and compliance with science, research and innovation strategies.

The committee selected the following three scientists and projects as winners of the Baltic Sea Science Award 2021:

**Evaldas Makrickas** from the Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania and his research on “Assessment and Spatial Planning for Peatland Conservation and Restoration: Europe’s Trans-Border Neman River Basin as a Case Study in Life Science “

**Marta Skorek** from the University of Gdańsk, Poland and her research on “Discourse shapes marine space: Representations of the macro-regional governance of the Baltic Sea and their social-ecological implications”

**Jordi Hintzen** from University of Southern Denmark and his research on “Actin methylation by histidine methyltransferase SETD3: mechanism, scope and inhibition”

## Baltic Science Network Final Conference

The Baltic Science Network project ended on 31 July 2021. On 16 June 2021 over a hundred high-ranking representatives from science, politics and civil society gathered online to exchange ideas about the opportunities and potentials of scientific cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, and to discuss main outcomes and the way forward for the Baltic Science Network. In this context, a new vision was presented, which should guide the course to enhanced competitiveness and excellence of the Baltic Sea science region and contribute to the realisation of the European Research Area. The “BSN Vision 2030 Future of science and research cooperation in the BSR” document was endorsed at the conference.

