Baltic Sea Subregional Meeting

So how do we take care of the Baltic Sea together?

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

Dorota Toryfter-Szumanska
Deputy Director of the EIA Department, General Directorate for Environmental Protection in Poland
Chair of the Working Group on EIA/SEA matters UNECE Espoo

28-29 May 2024, Rome - 1st Subregional Meeting on Environmental Assessments in a Transboundary Context - Mediterranean Sea
Our story

• 2005 – first meeting in Stockholm
• The Baltic Sea countries have met 13 times
• The last meeting organized online by Lithuania in May 2024
• The meetings are attended by representatives of 8 Baltic States: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, as well as Norway, Secretariat of the UNECE Espoo and European Commission
• The next meeting is planned in Poland in June 2025
Goals

- Exchange of expert knowledge in the field of marine environmental protection for the purposes of EIA/SEA
- Exchange of information on legal systems in Baltic States
- Unification of the approach to procedures within transboundary EIAs for investments and SEA in the Baltic Sea
- Facilitation of the EIA/SEA course of the proceedings
- Exchange of information on planned procedures
- Developing solutions to minimize potential cumulative impacts
Benefits

• We have the opportunity to get to know each other better
• We share the results of the latest research
• Our common knowledge speeds up proceedings
• We share common challenges in EIA/SEA implementation (as well as other legislation)
• We develop joint projects more easily
• We learn about each other's EIA systems operating in our countries

• Together, we try to take a broader look at the cumulative effects of our maritime investments
• Strengthening bilateral cooperation
Challenges

• Our relationships can be difficult
• We do not always agree in our views on how to solve various problems
• It is not easy to develop common solutions to protect our sea and at the same time reconcile the economic and political interests of many countries
• The difficult geopolitical situation constitutes an additional threat and is the source of our concern for the protection of the Baltic Sea environment
• We have built a platform for the exchange of information and expert knowledge
• We have created the "Baltic family of Espoo countries”
• We better understand how environmental protection systems work in other Baltic countries
• We make common arrangements and follow them
• We are not afraid to develop joint projects
Plans for the future

• Continuation of cooperation in the current formula and development of new initiatives
• Further joint work on minimizing cumulative impacts
• Development of common notification templates for maritime investments
• Increasing efforts for more binding arrangements
• Joint Declaration
Thank you for your attention!

I will be happy to answer your questions

Dorota Toryfter-Szumańska
Deputy Director of the EIA Department, General Directorate for Environmental Protection in Poland
Chair of the Working Group on EIA/SEA matters UNECE Espoo

May 2024, Rome