Seminar “Connect the Baltic Sea Region with the Arctic Region - Ways forward to unlock the potential for sustainable development and to realise the ambitions of the EU Green”

30 September 2021 | online | 15:00 – 17:30 CET | EUSBSR Annual Forum

Organised by the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission

Moderation: Mr Nicolas Brookes, CPMR Executive Director

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15:00-15:10</th>
<th><strong>Introduction</strong>, Mr Tomas Mörtsell, Vice-President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Chair of the BSC Arctic Task Force, Region Västerbotten</th>
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</table>
| 15:10-15:50 | **A connected Arctic and Baltic Sea Region as driver for sustainable development and to realise the Green Deal**  
- Mr Jansson, Brand Manager for EnergyVaasa cluster, about the Nordic Battery Belt, as great opportunity for Nordic regions  
- Ms Leena Leskinen, Business manager at Finnish Forest Centre  
- Mr Esa Kokkonen, Director of the Baltic Institute of Finland, Policy Area Coordinator, EUSBSR, Policy Area Innovation  
Q/A |
| 15:45-16:30 | **Ensuring the conditions for connecting the Arctic and the Baltic while fostering sustainable development** |
| 15:45-16:30 | **Connecting Baltic Sea Region with the Arctic Region requires territorial accessibility and investments in infrastructure and transport**  
- Mr Jari Vilen, Ambassador, Barents and Northern Dimension, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland to present the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics  
- Mr Olav Jern, Senior advisor at Kvarken Council EGTC and former Chief Executive Officer of the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia  
- Mr Hans Dunder, project manager, Green Flyway about promoting sustainable aviation as way to connect regions  
Q/A |
| 16:30-17:20 | **Connecting Baltic Sea Region with Arctic Region requires multilevel cooperation**  
- Mr Anders Josefsson, Vice Chair of the City Executive Committee of Luleå City, Member of Union of Baltic Cities and Arctic Mayors Forum  
- Mr Tomas Norvoll, Chair of Nordland County, Chair of the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas network  
- Mr Olav Berstad, Senior adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials, Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)  
Q/A |
| 17:20-17:30 CET | **Concluding remarks**, Mr Michael Mann, Special Envoy for Arctic matters, European External Action Service |
In light of the revision of a new Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) and a new EU Arctic policy in 2021, this seminar will explore how the Baltic Sea interlinks with the European Arctic, how the two macro-regional territories can connect, complement and strengthen each other to unlock potential for sustainable development in these territories and contribute to achieve the Green Deal.

The implementation of the new EUSBSR Action Plan should consider the Arctic dimension, as the development of the Arctic in a sustainable way benefits the Baltic Sea Region and the European Union, and vice versa. Furthermore, the new EUSBSR Action Plan put emphasis on the importance of cooperation and coordination with the neighbouring non-EU countries of the Baltic Sea Region, including Iceland, Norway and Russia which are three Arctic states.

The seminar should also feed into the reflection on a new EU Arctic policy 2021, with the publication of an EU communication expected in October 2021. The new EU Arctic policy should consider the link with the Baltic Sea Region and how to connect the two macro-regional areas further, and help to foster the green transition of the BSR.

The seminar is also the opportunity to showcase existing examples, fostering green and sustainable development, at the gateway to the Arctic and on top of the Baltic Sea, with added value to the whole of Europe. The discussion will also focus on the need for stronger interregional cooperation, multilevel cooperation, as well as sufficient transport infrastructure to connect the Arctic with the Baltic and achieve the green transition in both areas.

Angle of debate: How can the Baltic Sea Region benefit from the sustainable development of the Arctic? What innovative growth potential in the European Arctic entitles stakeholders to invest in innovation, transport and digital infrastructure to connect the Baltic with the Arctic? These questions will be addressed from a local, national, macro-regional and EU perspectives.

The seminar is organised by the Arctic Task Force of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, chaired by Tomas Mörtsell, Region Västerbotten, Sweden.