BSC
BALTIC SEA CHALLENCE
01
2009
POINT SOURCE LOADING

Join the Baltic Sea Challenge!

THE BALTIC SEA CHALLENGE STARTED IN FINLAND IN THE SUMMER OF 2007. IT WAS A TOKEN OF CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BALTIC SEA BY THE MAYORS OF HELSINKI AND TURKU. ITS OBJECTIVE WAS TO ADD MOMENTUM TO CONCRETE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE STATE OF THESE WATERS.

While making their own commitment, the Mayors, **Jussi Pajunen** (Helsinki) and **Mikko Pukkinen** (Turku), knew that besides cities' own commitments a wide co-operation with other actors is necessary. Therefore a Challenge Campaign was started with the aim to commit also other organisations to Baltic Sea friendly choices.

It does not cost anything to join the Campaign other than your time and effort. To join you need to evaluate what voluntary measures, big or small, your organisation could implement for the better condition of the Sea. Write these measures down as your Action Plan. Then start turning your plan into reality!

The Baltic Sea Challenge is an easy and flexible model to work with but it allows us to reach for a significant impact. The Campaign rests on the firm belief that together, acting locally and regionally, integrating water protection measures and sustainable development into all decision-making, we can improve the water quality of our Sea. As representatives of various organisations, it is now time for us to take matters into our own hands and make a difference.

This newsletter is produced to bring you information of the Challenge and to invite you to join! The Action Plan of the Cities of Turku and Helsinki is written around eight themes. In this first newsletter we discuss the first theme, point source loading. It is an important and current theme entangled strongly with alterations connected to the climate change. We look forwards to receiving your ideas on how to reduce the burden to the Sea!

With best regards from the shores of the Baltic Sea,

Olli-Pekka Mäki
City of Turku

Pekka Kansanen
City of Helsinki

Photo: Olli-Pekka Mäki

Point Source Loading and Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE IS ESTIMATED TO INCREASE THE OCCURANCES OF EXTREME WEATHER. IT IS ALSO PREDICTED THAT IT WILL INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF RAINFALL ESPECIALLY DURING WINTERTIME IN SCANDINAVIA. THE RISK OF FLOODING IN CITIES WILL THUS GROW.

Cities, factories and other organisations have a massive impact on point source loading. The storm water run-off from roads and industrial areas that enters ditches or streams may contain hazardous substances to such an extent that there is a need to study the quality of the storm water and clarify the need for its treatment. The management of storm water can be advanced for example by preparing a handling plan, which specifies the main principles and procedures for managing storm water and details for implementation of the plan.

Not only the quality but also the quantity of storm water causes problems and increases loading to the sea. Especially scattered run-off from cultivated fields will increase point source loading. During flooding, sewage water in waste water treatment plants or in sewer pipelines has to be discharged as an overflow to the sea without decent handling solely because of the huge amount of excess water in sewer system. The amount of these overflow waters can be reduced by upgrading networks, thereby also reducing network overflows entering the sea. It is especially important to renovate old combined sewers.

Renovations are expensive and the economical situation in municipalities may delay their realisation. Fortunately, despite the problems, many cities and towns have started to prepare for these possible threats connected to climate change.

Olli-Pekka Mäki
Environmental Planner, City of Turku

HOW CAN CITIES HANDLE POINT SOURCE LOADING?

The Helsinki City Storm Water Handling Strategy

The Storm Water Handling Strategy of the City of Helsinki promotes comprehensive management of storm waters and preparedness to climate change, and aims at decreased risks and harmful effects of the strom water to the City and its inhabitants. The Strategy was prepared by the city departments in cross-sectoral co-operation, and it was confirmed by the City Council in October 2008.

Storm waters should primarily be handled in the point of their origin. If that is not possible, they are discharged in a rainwater sewer to public areas that have delaying and slowing down systems before being discharged to waterways. If slowing of flows cannot be carried out, the storm waters are discharged in rainwater sewers straight to recipient waters. Finally, if there is no rainwater sewerage, the storm waters are discharged in combined sewerage to the waste water treatment plant. This causes process problems at the plant or passing the plant because of overflowing, and discharging the water straight to waterways.

The Strategy aims to remove and prevent harmful flooding, maintain the level of the ground water, arrange local and regional dewatering, minimize the amount of harmful substances in storm waters and use storm water as a resource.

The Strategy contains an Action Plan, which consists of 15 actions to promote better storm water management. It promotes absorption of storm waters to the ground and utilization of natural flow-slowing systems in the planning processes. Consideration in building of public areas and construction of sewerage systems is very important. The Plan therefore contains actions also to promote co-operation within the City and with other actors.

The implementation of the Action Plan is followed by a storm water group consisting of representatives from various city departments. The group follows the development in storm water issues, organises training, takes care of internal and external communication and reports to the City Council.

Numerous trainings and events have been organised. A pilot project implements the Strategy in a chosen local plan. Some environmental permits now have requirements regarding storm waters. The evaluation of amount, quality and effects of storm waters in recipient waters is going to be carried out in 2010.

Paula Nurmi
Environmental Inspector,
City of Helsinki Environment Centre

Big Investments in the Turku Region

The Turku Municipal Waterworks Corporation is in charge of providing, purifying and selling water, delivering it to the consumers and onwards collecting waste water from the consumers to the treatment. The Corporation also takes care of the construction and management of storm water sewer system.

Until year 2009 the Corporation was also responsible for the waste water treatment. That was the turning point for the new Turku regional waste water treatment plant, owned by ten municipalities, to start its operation. The plant, which will process the wastewater for approximately 300,000 residents in Turku region, was a huge investment of more than 100 M€.

The Corporation reserves yearly 4-5 M€ for mapping repair needs, rebuilding and extending the sewerage systems. The extensions are mainly done in new districts of the City of Turku. In rebuilding and maintenance the Corporation focuses on diminishing overflows. This work is done by shooting the sewerage systematically to find out the most deteriorated parts and also by developing separate sewerage systems.

The Corporation's contribution to informing the citizens about the water management in the City, and about how to arrange real estate plumbing according to rules and regulations, is also significant. The mission is to do the best for the citizens as well as for the whole Baltic Sea.

Irina Nordman
Managing Director, Turku Municipal Waterworks Corporation

BALTIC SEA CHALLENGE PARTNERS

The Baltic Sea Challenge Team is growing. More than 700 actors have been challenged so far. Of those, about 160 have already accepted the Baltic Sea Challenge! These include cities, municipalities, NGO's, universities, schools, societies and companies, who all are committed to saving the Baltic Sea.

We are delighted to have been able to welcome international partners to our Challenge Team! For example the cities of **Elblag**, **Sopot** and **Slupsk** from Poland, **Jelgava, Riga, Liepaja** and **Jurmala** from Latvia, **Kronstadt** from Russia, **Nyköping**, **Trelleborg** and **Stockholm** from Sweden, **Panevezys** from Lithuania and **Tallinn** from Estonia, and for example the European Cruise Council, all share our concern and work towards a healthier Baltic Sea.

CITIES FOR A HEALTHIER BALTIC SEA - INTERNATIONAL PROJECT CO-OPERATION

The Baltic Sea Challenge Campaign operates in Finland with the support of the cities of Helsinki and Turku. In international cooperation larger resources are needed. Therefore some of the partners are now preparing a 3-year project to strengthen the Challenge co-operation around the Baltic Sea Region.

The Baltic Sea Challenge project aims at strengthening the commitment of the partners in water protection work. It provides knowledge, new skills and tools thus hoping to facilitate the introduction of water protection aspects to every-day functions, administration and decision-making processes. It also supports the formulation of water protection investment plans. The partners will have a manual of best practices to further the work within their local area.

CONTACT US!

Do you have questions? Please, do not hesitate to contact us with any inquiries or ideas you may have about the Challenge! We are looking forwards to welcoming you to the Team!

www.balticseachallenge.net

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