



Working Group on
Heritage Co-operation

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Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea States Working Group "Coastal Culture and Maritime Heritage" Progressreport

Introduction

The coastal cultural landscape as well as the maritime heritage itself on sea and under sea level is judged as a main component for a Baltic sea identity. This means trade and traffic as well as traditions and building techniques. It means the use of land over centuries and the flow of material in and between countries. It means the Baltic Sea region as a geographically identified and well known area locally as well as by distant regions. The notion of a sea almost totally surrounded by land and thus constituting a cultural region.

(Working Group on Heritage Co-operation: Safeguarding and developing the common Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea Region. Report p. 8)

There has been a tradition of Nordic co-operation within the field "Coastal Culture and Maritime Heritage" within different programmes on governmental level, co-operation exists between regions, cities, institutions, organizations and on a personal level, and altogether a whole set of networks are in operation.

The Nordic co-operation has to a certain degree been extended to include Baltic Sea States, and a number of programmes have been established, also outside formal networks.

There are advantages to be derived from building on these networks and programmes to develop further co-operation in this field.

Mandate

The working group finds its mandate in the following documents:

Working group on Heritage Co-operation: Safeguarding and developing the common Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea Region. Gdansk 1999.

Declaration of Gdansk 20-21 September 1999.

Definition of the task

The working group has thus identified its task:

To describe challenges and opportunities within the field coastal culture and maritime heritage, to give a status of ongoing activities in each country, and to suggest, promote and start projects and actions for co-operation.

Workshops, meetings, seminars and exhibition will:

- Establish networks of experts

- Present and discuss challenges and opportunities on national level in each country
- Present ongoing and future projects with relevance to Baltic co-operation
- Propose actions by the Working Group

Results/milestones

Workshops

A first workshop was organised in Oslo 14-15 August 2000. Due to lack of representation from all countries involved a second workshop was arranged in Tallinn 9-10 November 2000. The workshops were financed by the participants.

Enclosed is a list of participants and presentations.

The workshops focused on:

- Challenges and opportunities in the documentation, preservation and presentation of coastal culture and maritime heritage in the different countries.
- Common features and differences
- National/regional measures implemented to promote the survival of this heritage
- Possible joint measures in a Baltic Sea perspective

Summaries from the presentations are available as a separate report.

The working group has in addition met in Tallinn 9-10 March 2001, and will meet in Gdansk in the autumn 2001.

Exhibition

Lighthouses are demanned. The resident lighthouse keeper is no longer necessary for lighting the lamps. There is nobody to look after and maintain the buildings and the technical equipment. Unless something is done, the result is decay and dereliction. Important cultural heritage will disappear. The Working Group plans to point to these challenges through a poster and internet exhibition "**Baltic Lights**".

Themes:

- Why the lighthouses were built - navigation
- The people - life at the lighthouse
- Technical development
- Demanning - the present situation
- Protection - selection
- Lighthouse examples - new uses

Seminar "Coastal Culture and Maritime Heritage"

To be organised at the Polish Maritime Museum in Gdansk, Poland spring 2002.

Goals of the seminar:

- To identify the main components of a Baltic Sea identity within the maritime heritage and the coastal culture heritage field
- To increase the awareness of this heritage
- To establish networks of experts
- To discuss and promote initiatives to secure and further develop this heritage

Further actions

Actions and activities as of the outcome of the Gdansk seminar

Challenges in fulfilling the task

Due to lack of financing in the activities of the working group and for projects, many of the countries who signed up for participation have not been able to take part.

Conclusion

Due to lack of resources in some member countries of the Working Group only a small network of experts has been established. The members of the group are connected to museums as well as national heritage boards. The Working Group sees the task as extremely wide, and in order to start co-operation there has been a need to narrow down actions to very concrete, smaller projects of relevance to all the countries involved.