

# A multi-stakeholder Campaign to Save the Baltic Sea



## Background

Zennström Philanthropies is a private family foundation funded by the prominent Swedish entrepreneur Niklas Zennström. Its focus is on improving the environment, both internationally and with a specific interest in the Baltic Sea. After several years of funding a number of NGOs working on addressing the environmental issues currently facing the Baltic Sea, the foundation has decided to embark upon a multi-stakeholder public campaign around the Baltic Sea in the lead up to the HELCOM ministerial meeting in October. The objective of the campaign is to create the political space for politicians across the region to implement the policies needed to address the issues of overfishing, biological diversity and eutrophication in the Baltic Sea. Additionally, the campaign seeks to engage new stakeholders in around the issue of cleaning up the Baltic Sea in order to ensure the long-term commitment of all parties to the Baltic Sea's environmental health.

For too long the environmental problems facing the Baltic Sea have been viewed as something someone else is taking care of. However, the issues facing the Baltic impact everyone in the region from fishermen rapidly running out of fish, to people unable to walk on the beaches next to their summer homes due to algal blooms and to people employed in the tourism industry who will see their income and livelihoods diminish as the sea becomes more and more polluted and people choose to vacation elsewhere. In addition, there is a unique opportunity for the countries of the Baltic to capitalise on their reputation for environmental stewardship and clean tech development which could lead to new jobs and new revenue as technologies are developed that could be exported to other similarly polluted bodies of water. This campaign will work across stakeholders and countries to try and find common ground and identify policies and actions which can both address the environmental challenges the Baltic Sea faces as well as can provide economic and quality of life benefits.

## Campaign Pillars

The Race for the Baltic campaign is built around three key pillars: Revive, Recover and Restore.

**Revive:** revive the biological diversity of the Baltic Sea through the designation of 30% of the Baltic as Marine protected areas and ensure their effective management. Doing so will allow fish stocks to recover and thus have a long term positive impact on the fishing industry. Additionally, the creation of marine protected areas will open up new opportunities for tourism and recreation.

**Recover:** recover the natural wealth of fish stocks in the Baltic Sea to ensure long-term sustainability. This will require that scientific advice is followed when fishing limits are set and that we reduce the amount of agricultural run off flowing into the Baltic Sea. This will provide both for the long term sustainability of the fishing industry but also allow the region to have a sustainable access to a key food source so important in the regional diet and culture.

**Restore:** restore the water quality of the Baltic Sea through a reduction of nutrients and pollutants flowing into it. A key factor is to ensure that rules for agriculture around the Baltic Sea adheres to strict limitations of nutrient surplus per hectare to limit the nutrient run-off. Restoring the Baltic Sea's health will provide a number of benefits from recreation and tourism to a more environmentally sustainable agricultural sector no longer reliant on the heavy use of expensive fertilisers to the development of water cleaning technologies.

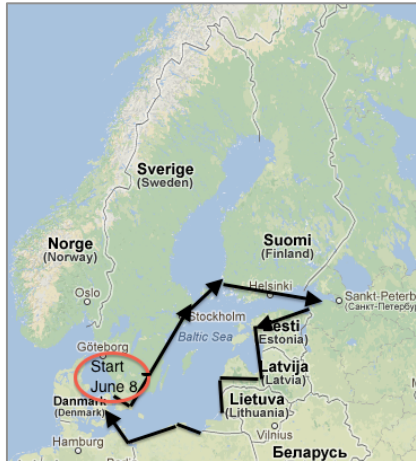
### **Campaign Activities**

- A series of business roundtables across the region to explore the opportunities for growth, innovation and jobs arising from investments in a sustainable Baltic Sea
- A signature campaign aimed at collecting over 1 million signatures to be presented at the HELCOM meeting proving the collective will of the people of the Baltic for real action on addressing the environmental state of the Baltic
- A public awareness campaign consisting of social media, print, TV, websites
- A bicycle campaign that will have riders from the region riding through all nine countries of the Baltic, with a series of public events to raise awareness of the issue and highlight some of the work being done to address the problems facing the Baltic
- A series of policy meetings with key ministers, politicians and decision makers to identify opportunities for cleaning up the Baltic Sea and providing sustainable growth
- An "I Care About the Baltic" photography exhibition created by people from across the Baltic to explain why they are personally connected to the Sea

### **More info: Race for the Baltic Bicycle campaign – Summer 2013**

A core team of volunteer cyclists will travel across the Baltic Region's 9 countries, starting on World Ocean Day, June 8, 2013 in Malmö, Sweden and will end the campaign in Copenhagen, Denmark by the end of August.

The campaign will be supported by various events including large-scale events in the major cities, visits with local fisherman as well as engaging the public with activities. A strong digital media campaign will be administered, with the goal of collecting 1 million signatures to present at the HELCOM meeting in October. There will be an opportunity for the general public to bike along the coast during the period and link it to the campaign.



## Summary

The Baltic Sea has long been a source of food, recreation and economic development for the countries that border it. However, the Sea is under threat and facing an uncertain future as it now holds the dubious distinction of the most polluted sea in all of Europe. The Race for the Baltic Campaign will work to bring together all the stakeholders affected by the degradation of the Baltic Sea, and by doing so create a coalition of leadership made up of NGOs, businesses, concerned citizens and forward thinking politicians who are determined to see this situation reversed and environmental health restored. If those challenges are met, once again the Baltic Sea could be a source of jobs, food and recreation for the people living there. The time to act is running out and we are truly in a race to save the Baltic not only for ourselves but for future generations to come.