

# BLUETOOTH NEWS

## THE NORDIC/BALTIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE UPDATE SEPTEMBER 24, 2004

The U.S. Department of State's Nordic/Baltic Regional Environmental Office publishes this newsletter for government officials (both U.S. and Nordic/Baltic), NGOs and other organizations working in the Nordic/Baltic region. The information provided in this newsletter is disseminated informally and should not be taken as an expression of United States government policy or policy-making intentions. For subscription information, please see the [end](#) of this email.

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### EUROPE AND UNEP FORGE CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIP

The European Commission and the United Nations Environmental Program signed a Memorandum of Understanding this week to formalize an agreement to strengthen their cooperation to fight global environmental threats more effectively. The agreement provides a framework for collaboration including regular senior- and expert- level meetings, strategic policy discussions and financial cooperation. The Commission plans to post a senior official at the UNEP headquarters to follow daily activities. Cooperation is planned on many issues including: sustainable production and consumption; capacity building in developing countries; supporting the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements; and providing global access to clean water, sanitation and sustainable energy. (ENS, 9/20/04)

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### EUROPEAN COMMISSION FUNDS 109 ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

The European Commission approved €76 million in funding for 109 environmental projects in 18 member states that will apply new technologies to tackle environmental problems including hazardous waste management, wastewater treatment, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and clean technologies. Projects in the Nordic/Baltic region include: four projects in Denmark on integrated environmental management, hazardous waste management and clean technologies in the potato starch industry; five projects in Finland on integrated environmental management, ground water protection, land-use development and sustainable tourism; in Latvia three projects on integrated environmental management, reduction of energy consumption and ecologically friendly ventilation system design; and five projects in Sweden on hazardous waste management, handling animal by-products, reduction of greenhouse gases and clean technologies in the pulp industry. The Commission also approved funding for 77 nature conservation projects to further the establishment of the EU's Natura 2000 network of areas that safeguard important wildlife habitats and threatened species. One project in Denmark will restore 11 of the most valuable grassland sites and

secure their long-term management. Another project in Estonia will work to safeguard a network of nesting sites for black storks and rare spotted eagles. (ENS, 9/19/04) <[back to top](#)>

### **NORWAY & RUSSIA SIGN SAFETY AGREEMENT**

Norway and Russia have signed a letter of intent about marine safety and protection against oil slicks in the northern regions. The countries have agreed, for the first time, to inform each other about all ships passing the Norwegian/Russian border. The reason for the new agreement is the explosive increase in Russian oil exports through the Barents Sea. A tanker-load a day is already being pumped from the floating terminal Belokamenka in the Murmansk fjord to tanks that prowl the Norwegian coast. A second floating terminal in the area is scheduled to be operative this winter. More than 130 people are involved in planning a huge exercise next year called the Barents Sea Rescue Exercise. During the celebration of the 10th anniversary of Barents co-operation in Kirkenes in 2003, the Norwegian Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, accepted responsibility for organizing Barents Rescue, which will take place off the coast of the Finnmark, 1–9 September 2005. “The planning is based to a great extent on experiences of an exercise in Sweden in 2001. Terror, mass evacuation at sea and oil pollution will be important elements in what will be the biggest and professionally most challenging exercise of its type so far,” said Ragnar Bøe, head of the Civil Defence Department at the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning. ([www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org), 9/7/04) <[back to top](#)>

### **OIL EXPORTS BY SEA SOAR**

Oil exports via key seaports rose by a quarter in January-August to 76,07 million tons (2,29 million barrels per day) from 60,56 million tons (1,83 million bpd) in the same period of 2003. Seaborne exports rose mainly due to the expansion of the key northern outlet of Primorsk on the Gulf of Finland. (<http://www.barentsobserver.com/180568>, 9/7/04) <[back to top](#)>

### **OIL SPILL SENSITIVITY ATLAS FOR GREENLAND**

The National Environmental Research Institute, NERI, in collaboration with several Danish and Greenlandic institutions, has developed a detailed oil spill sensitivity atlas regarding the environment and wildlife off South and West Greenland. The atlas has been prepared to provide oil spill response planners and responders with tools to identify resources at risk, establish protection priorities and identify appropriate response and clean-up strategies. The atlas enables oil companies and authorities to incorporate environmental considerations into exploration and contingency plans. The atlas is also useful for local authorities and others who need to know more about the environment and wildlife in the South and West Greenland coastal zone. To view the atlas, [click here](#) or visit [www.dmu.dk](http://www.dmu.dk). (Danish Environmental Newsletter, 9/04) <[back to top](#)>

### **POLLUTION ALL OVER NORDIC REGION**

Foam from fire extinguishers, chemicals used to treat surfaces, textiles, floor wax and electronic components all contain huge quantities of environmental pollution and they are found all over the Nordic Region, according to a studied funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The compounds contained in PFOS and PFOA chemicals take a long time to biodegrade – and action needs to be taken soon to prevent them from becoming an environmental problem, the joint Nordic study concludes. It was not previously believed that these chemicals affected human beings, but it has now been revealed that living organisms do

ingest them and that high concentrations are found in sea mammals like seals and whales. ([www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org), 9/6/04) <back to top>

### **STRICTER FISHERY CONTROL IN BALTIC**

The International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission decided to impose stricter controls on fishing and to draw up a plan for the revival of cod stocks in the eastern sector at its 13th session in Gdynia. Up to 40 percent of the catch in the Baltic is believed to be illegal and cod stocks will be in danger if this continues, the Commission announced. Cod quotas for the eastern sector were not set, however, because the distance between Russia and the EU and between various EU countries were too great, the Swedish Ministry of Agriculture reports. The important issue of cod fishing in both the east and the west of the Baltic is on the agenda for the December meeting of the EU Council of Fisheries, at which the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea will be recommending a moratorium on cod fishing in the eastern sector. The action plan to combat illegal fishing will include more or less the same measures as those used in the North Sea where reporting catches is compulsory. ([www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org), 9/13/04) <back to top>

### **COALITION CLEAN BALTIC WINS NORDIC COUNCIL PRIZE**

The Swedish-based Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) has won the DKK 350,000 Nordic Council Nature and Environment Prize 2004. The theme this year was protection of the Nordic marine environment. Environmental organizations from nine countries around the Baltic Sea created CCB in 1990 to facilitate cooperation in the region. CCB is a politically independent, non-profit-making body and now has 27 member organizations in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and Germany. One of its priorities is the promotion of sustainable fishing. The prize will be awarded during the Nordic Council Session in Stockholm, 1-3 November. [www.ccb.se](http://www.ccb.se) <back to top>

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

*September 30 – October 1:* [Scientific Symposium on Baltic Future](#), Stockholm, Sweden

*October 2 - 14:* [13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES \(Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora\)](#), Bangkok, Thailand

*October 6 – 7:* [Arctic Council Action Plan Steering Group Meeting](#), Helsinki, Finland

*October 21 – 23:* [12<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation \(BSSSC\) Annual Conference](#), Malmö, Sweden

*October 28 – 29:* [Towards Waste-Free Lifestyles](#), Turku, Finland

*October 28 – 30:* BUUF 10<sup>th</sup> Best Practices Seminar: Waste Management, Turku, Finland

*November 9 – 12:* [ACIA International Scientific Symposium: Climate Change in the Arctic](#), Reykjavik, Iceland

*November 17 – 25:* [3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress](#), Bangkok, Thailand

*November 22 – 23:* [Baltic Sea Region – Perspectives 2010](#), Brussels, Belgium

*November 24:* [Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting](#), Reykjavik, Iceland

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### **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER**

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