

EU ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The European Union (the EU) is one of the main environmental actors investing into technology and innovation within the scope of waste management with both public and private institutions. Waste management is one of the main aspects of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) Programme. However, at the national level, waste management strategies are still under development in several countries. As environmental aspects are particularly important to ensure the sustainability of the economy. Furthermore, environmental aspects are critically important for the sustainability of the economy. The main example of this is that the EU decided to focus on waste prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling, energy generation from the waste in respect to Directive 2008/98/EC more than landfill which was previous method in waste management. The European Commission defines the waste as a material to be discarded. In 2014, the EU announced the highest amount of waste in the history of the EU as 2053 million tone waste since the establishment.

Key words: EU environmental strategy; waste management; Baltic Sea Region sustainability; efficiency; international engagement.

ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ СТРАТЕГИЯ ЕС ДЛЯ РЕГИОНА БАЛТИЙСКОГО МОРЯ В КОНТЕКСТЕ УСТОЙЧИВОГО РАЗВИТИЯ

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Европейский Союз (ЕС) является одним из основных экологических субъектов, инвестирующих в технологии и инновации в сфере управления отходами, как в государственных, так и в частных учреждениях. Управление отходами – один из основных аспектов Программы региона Балтийского моря (РБМ). Однако на национальном уровне стратегии управления отходами все еще находятся в стадии разработки в нескольких странах. Поскольку экологические аспекты особенно важны для обеспечения устойчивости экономики. Кроме того, экологические аспекты критически важны для устойчивости экономики. Основным примером этого является то, что ЕС решил сосредоточиться на предотвращении образования отходов, подготовке к повторному использованию, переработке, выработке энергии из отходов в соответствии с Директивой 2008/98/ЕС, а не на захоронении мусора, которое было предыдущим методом управления отходами. Европейская комиссия определяет отходы как материал, подлежащий утилизации. В 2014 году ЕС объявил

о самом большом количестве отходов в истории ЕС – 2053 миллиона тонн отходов с момента основания.

Ключевые слова: экологическая стратегия ЕС; управление отходами; устойчивость региона Балтийского моря; эффективность; международное участие.

Sustainable Development (SD) has become a political buzzword since the 1992 Rio Conference on the Environment, organized by United Nations. The best-known definition of SD: development that meets the needs of present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Wastes can directly be generated from either production or consumption. In some cases, wastes are biologically or chemically processed by the environment. The significant point, however, is that the interconnections between environment and economy are far more direct and, arguably, more important in the developing world than they are in developed world. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to take action to end poverty, to protect the planet and to ensure that all people enjoy the peace and the prosperity by 2030.

The 17 SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. As the lead UN development agency, UNDP is well-placed to help implement the Goals in 170 countries and territories. EU and Baltic Sea Region may achieve the SDGs through integrated solutions. The Baltic Sea Region does not have well-established geographical boundaries. It is used in practice of cross-border cooperation. According to the definition of the European Commission, the area covered by the EUSBSR is mainly the basin of the Baltic Sea, including also the hinterlands.

European integration is based primarily on internationalization of production, intensification of trade and interweaving of capital. The European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region calls for development of such areas as: the environment (for example, solving the problem of waste generation); economy (in particular, encouraging the implementation of innovative technologies in small and medium-sized enterprises); energy and transport (improving transport links including); safety (for example, improving the response to accidents).

European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region formulated in three main documents: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region; Action Plan; Europe's Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

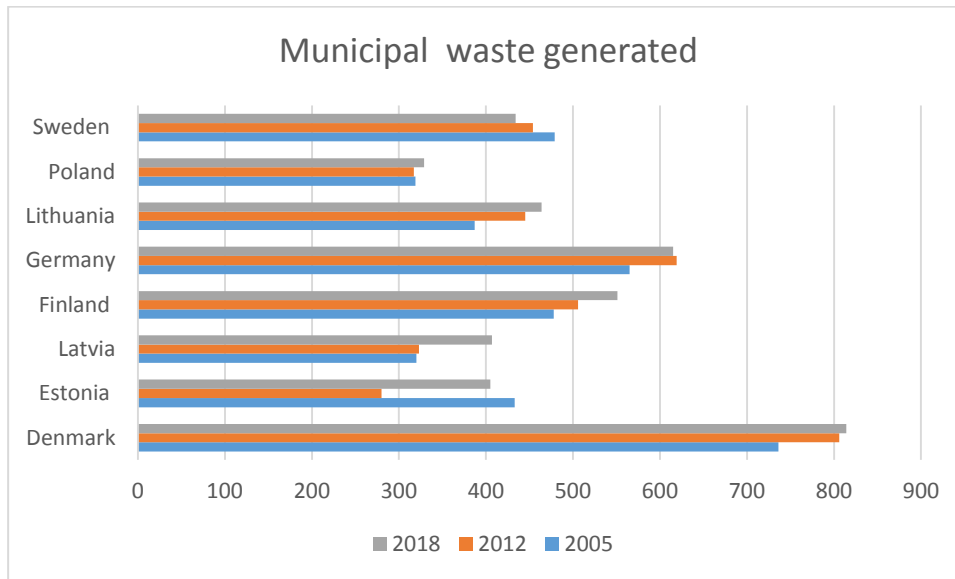
The adoption of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region by the European Council in 2009 marked an important step towards the further integration of the macro-region. «The European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) is the first Macro-Regional Strategy in Europe. The Strategy was approved by the European Council in 2009 following a communication and an action plan from the

European Commission. The Commission publishes regular reports on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region». [5].

Until the early 1970s, legislation on the treatment of waste belonged to the internal competence of states EEC members. In 1975, in order to bring different national practices closer together, the European Council adopted the so-called The Waste Framework Directive (the Waste Framework Directive – 75/442/EEC), which established general requirements and basic definitions (concepts and terms) in this area. In 2006 the Directive was republished and "codified" (brought to the text, canceling the previous versions), and today operates in its last revised 2008 under the designation Directive 2008/98 / EC. Directive 2008/98 / EC emphasized the topic of "hierarchy waste management" - a concept showing the sequence of the most preferred ways of activities, in ultimately reducing waste "At the end of the pipe", i.e. at the stage where they undergo burial, grinding, gasification and / or other "final operations". The end- of-pipe approach is a possibility to handle the pollution problem in an industrial plant is to take care of the waste in specially designed waste treatment facilities. Since this is done outside the actual manufacturing process it is referred to as an external measure.

Since 2001 the EU has been investing in environmental strategies in the context of sustainable development. One of the strategic priorities in achieving sustainable development goals for the EU and particularly for the Baltic Sea Region is a proper waste management. Waste management in the EU linked to the EU environmental objectives. The EU approach to waste management is to prioritize waste prevention, followed by recycling, waste recovery and incineration, and finally, only as a last resort, land filling. The waste hierarchy can be used most effectively as a guide to ensure that when developing a waste management policy or decision, an integrated approach is taken, where all options are considered. The majority of the Baltic Region countries being considerate as a part of the EU environmental strategy. According to a Eurostat report, municipal waste generation has been growing since 2005 in the Baltic Region countries.

Picture 1. Municipal waste generated in the Baltic countries in 2005-2018 years



Picture 1 shows municipal waste generation trend in 2005-2018 years in the Baltic Region countries expressed in kilograms per capita.

The long-term goal of the EU environmental strategy in terms of waste management is to achieve the zero-waste plant. The zero waste concept has been developed in practice by Zero Emissions Research in Austria. The last stage in the waste management hierarchy is to deposit the waste on a landfill. This alternative is a last resort and as expressed in EU environmental policy be phased out or reduced as much as possible.

Establishing an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable Europe is the main purpose of its strategy. The implementation of the strategy is conditioned by the current needs of the countries and the entire European Union. The EU has been targeting to reduce the amount of waste to promote a sustainable consumption. Nowadays the EU’s environmental sustainability perspective involves social and economic sustainability as well as environmental sustainability. The EU is mainly the pioneering model in terms of sustainability and environmental strategies.

EU programs have great importance and solid financial base for the Baltic Sea region. The world bank finances and advises on solid waste management projects, the objectives are: infrastructure; legal structures and institutions; financial sustainability; citizen engagement; social inclusion; climate change and the environment; health and safety; knowledge creation.

According “Declaration of the Ministers of Environment, Maritime Economy, Agriculture and Fisheries of Baltic Sea Member States and of the Commissioner for ‘Environment, Oceans and Fisheries’”, the Ministers of Environment, Maritime Economy, Agriculture, and Fisheries of the Baltic Sea Member States and the Member of the European Commission in charge of

‘Environment, Oceans and Fisheries’, stressing the importance of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (the Helsinki Convention) that involves all coastal countries and the EU.

In terms of environmental strategies, some of the EU countries especially Nordic countries bring out successful solutions. For example, Finland’s circular economy model is a very successful method. The model aims to recycle and utilize all materials. The model aims to create a totally renewable economy.

Improved waste management of our society may be seen as the highest level in the hierarchy of changes to protect the environment better. According to this perspective, the environmental and resource problem in society nowadays are caused by the present developing pattern in our society. This development is basically characterized by increased consumption, considerable centralization and specialization.

In conclusion, the EU and Baltic Sea Region sustainable development strategy is based on a better quality of life now and in the future. The unique characteristics of the Baltic Sea and the environmental load require a macro-regional approach to prevent deteriorations in the long term period of time. The principle of sustainable development can be achieved by composition of social, economic and environmental issues. No single EU environmental policy measure can achieve improved waste management practices on its own. An integrated waste management strategy requires a combination of measures, a joint effort of the countries. The contribution of the Baltic countries to the EU brings together approaches to every aspect of environmental integration in the waste treatment.

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