



RIIGIKOGU
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE



Attn:

Environment Committees of the Parliaments of countries of Baltic Sea region
Members of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference Climate and Energy
Working group

Tallinn, 17.11.2009

Dear Colleagues,

On 27th of October 2009, the Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu) adopted the Statement on Environmental Risks Related to the Gas Pipeline Planned in the Baltic Sea. The Statement is based on a review of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out for the development of the infrastructure by a panel of Estonian scientists and expresses concern about substantial uncertainties in environmental risk assessment which compromise the nature of generally recognised precautionary principle of the international environmental law. The Statement also calls on the parliaments of all countries to carry out parliamentary supervision over the assessment of environmental impact and issuing of permits related to the development.

The Statement also emphasises the need for further discussion of the environmental aspects on joint parliamentary and scientific public forums to review critically the knowledge on which the decisions are based and assure the validity of the precautionary principle in the decisions which have possibly very substantial impact on our common Baltic Sea. All valid conventions regarding the status of the Baltic Sea as particularly sensitive marine environment are based on the scientific evidence of ecological degradation in the area and thus all further activities must be considered the best available recent knowledge and heritage of the past.

I have, as a marine biologist, studied some specific aspects of the Baltic environment for 20 years and from the knowledge acquired in that work I am very concerned by the fact, that several aspects with potentially high and lethal influence on human health and marine environment are not considered in the environmental impact report with due attention and as a member of the parliament and a politician I feel the full responsibility in front of future generations and our common, unique and vulnerable Baltic Sea.

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My task today is to weigh the need for assembly of special forums on political and scientific levels to review the possible environmental risks in the light of modern scientific research, whereas cooperation with all the Baltic partner parliaments is vital to secure involvement of the competence and frame the agenda of the possible forum.

I would appreciate it very much if You could let me know whether the aspects of environmental security of the gas pipeline have been discussed in Your Parliament in the context of permitting the development in the Baltic Sea, and whether You find participation of your representatives in further review of the possible environmental risks of the gas pipe construction and operation feasible.

Hereby, please find for Your consideration reference links to the following three documents:

Statement of the Riigikogu (<http://www.riigikogu.ee/index.php?id=55291>),
Estonian position on the transboundary EIA

(<http://www.envir.ee/orb.aw/class=file/action=preview/id=1097582/Eesti+seisukoht.pdf>)

and Expert statement on the EIA report of the Nord Stream project.

<http://www.envir.ee/orb.aw/class=file/action=preview/id=1097581/LISA+18+Review+of+the+transboundary+EIA.pdf>

Looking forward to hearing from you,



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