

# Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

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## Visit of Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg to Stockholm, Sweden



On 18-20 May Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg, pays an official visit to Stockholm. Chairmen of St.

Petersburg City Committees are also among the members of the delegation. One of

objectives of the visit is participation in the conference *St. Petersburg in XXI century – views on the development, culture, science and economics*. The meetings with Annika Billström, Mayor of Stockholm, Mats Hellström, Governor of the Stockholm County, Anders Björck, Governor of the Uppsala County, Leif Pagrotsky, Minister for Industry and Trade, Pär Nuder, Minister for Policy Coordination will be held. The meeting with Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria will take place on 18 May.

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## St. Petersburg 300 – the Cultural Megapolis of Russia within the International Tourist Sector



Photo: Fennoscandia center

The international conference *St. Petersburg 300 – the Cultural Megapolis of Russia within the International Tourist Sector* was held at the Herzen State Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg on 19-20 April 2004. The

Conference was aimed at summing up the results of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Petersburg and estimating St. Petersburg position within the international tourist sector. The conference was focused on discussing practical possibilities for St. Petersburg developing as an international tourist center.

The following organizations took part in the conference: the State Duma Committee on Economic Policy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, St. Petersburg Committee on Tourism and Resorts Development, St. Petersburg Committee on External Affairs, Administrative Department of the President of the Russian Federation, diplomatic corps of Hungary, the USA and Sweden, Interpreting and Translation Office of the EU Commission (on the photo: Noel Mul, director of the Office), Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly, law enforcement bodies of St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast, the Russian Union of Travel Industry, Peter the Great Museum of Antropology and Ethnography (Kunstkammer) of the Russian Academy of Science, the State Museum of History of Religion, Russian and international public organizations and travel agencies.

St. Petersburg position within the international tourist and economic sectors, legal and organizational issues of the travel industry and the role of cultural heritage in the age of globalization were discussed during the Conference. The participants also mentioned current problems and prospects for international cooperation, the ways of attracting investments in science and education through the development of tourism, St. Petersburg promotion in Russia and abroad, and also the problems of efficient marketing communications within the sector.

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## Results of the Baltic Sea Day

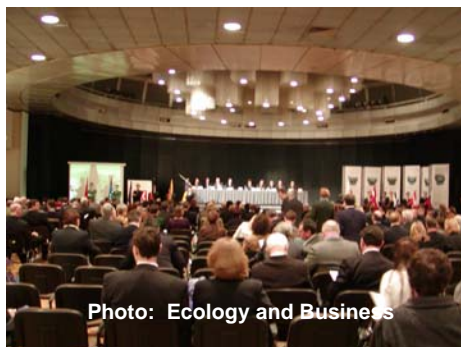


Photo: Ecology and Business

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Environmental Forum *The Baltic Sea Day* devoted to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Convention was held in St. Petersburg on 21-23 March 2004. The event was attended by over 450 persons, including 60 foreign

participants Russia, Sweden, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, the USA, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain.

The representatives of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation and other federal bodies of the Russian Federation, foreign governmental organizations, foreign and Russian research institutions, public organizations, as well as industrial enterprises of the Northwest Russia took part in the Forum.

Apart from celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Convention and discussing the changes in the geopolitical situation in Europe, plenary sessions were focused on the achievements in the environmental protection resulting from the thirty years of HELCOM activities. The role of HELCOM, its strategy within the new format of HELCOM Contracting Parties cooperation as well as the problems with regard to new tasks and priorities of HELCOM were also discussed at the Forum.

The World Wildlife Fund's Baltic Program *Conservation of the Baltic Sea values* started in 2004 was presented at the plenary session of the Forum.

The following issues were discussed during the Forum: Russian-Finnish-Estonian cooperation in the Gulf of Finland, raising public awareness of the potentially hazardous chemicals in the environment, ways of ensuring environmental safety of oil transportation in the Baltic Sea and clean production principles as well as the quality of water in the Gulf of Finland etc.

The participants of all counties round the Baltic Sea admitted the high practical value of HELCOM for sustainable development of the region. For this reason it was decided to continue the existing and initiate a number of new activities within the frames of both bilateral and multilateral cooperation of the BSR countries.

Considering the active participation of HELCOM in the Forum, it was also decided to establish permanent International Organizing Committee that would be responsible for annual arrangement of the International Forum *Baltic Sea Day* and, in particular, for the preparation of 2005 Forum in St. Petersburg.

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## Monitoring of biopollution in the Gulf of Finland

St. Petersburg Committee on Environmental Protection and Safety will finance the development of monitoring system of biological pollution of water ecosystems in the Gulf of Finland. The contract on monitoring works was signed with St. Petersburg Science center of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the beginning of April.

The Committee on Environmental Protection and Safety is responsible for arrangement, monitoring and maintenance of control systems. The work is to be carried out in the period of March – November 2004.



Photo: the Committee on Environmental Protection and Safety

The Center will conduct an investigation of the zones of special risks in the Gulf of

Finland basin for estimating foreign organisms circulation and choosing places for long-term monitoring.

The region of the Gulf is already inhabited by a number of foreign organisms that can have a negative influence on local maritime communities.

Regular monitoring of different organisms in the coastal zone and open water area in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland has been started in May 2004. Field researches including tests on organisms and sorting by type and amount will be conducted. Recommendations for the development of monitoring system of biopollution will be elaborated and cartographical layers and factual materials for the database and specialized geographical information system will be prepared on the basis of conducted study of the Gulf of Finland fauna and flora.

The research will become a platform for making decisions on control of foreign organisms and also a part of integrated water resources management system Ladoga – Neva – the Gulf of Finland.

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## Russian Fuel and Energy in Regional Perspective' 2004

The 4<sup>th</sup> International Forum *Russian Fuel and Energy in Regional Perspective' 2004* was held in St. Petersburg on 6-9 April. Ilya Klebanov, Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Northwest Federal District, Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg, and Alexey Miller, Head of the Board of directors of *Gasprom* company were among the members of the organizing committee of the Forum.



Photo: The Office of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation

According to the welcoming speech of Lubov Sovershaeva, Deputy Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation (on the photo), fuel and energy sector is one of the most important sectors of Russian economy. It accounts for over a quarter of Russia's total industrial production volume. The main objective of the Russian oil and gas industry is to attract investments to the sector.

As compared to Europe, five times more water and three times more energy per person is consumed in Russia. For heating 1 sq m in Russia five times more fuel is used than in Sweden. 30% of annual power consumption in Russia is spent on housing heating. The average losses of heating systems in Russia constitute 16-18%. It equals to the overuse of approximately 20-25 million tons of conventional fuel per year. For this reason the problem of energy saving is of high priority for the Northwest Russia. The programme on energy savings is currently being elaborated in the region.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference *Modern Power Industry as a Basis of Economic Development* was arranged within the frames of the Forum on 7-8 April. A number of seminars and workshops were held within the conference. In particular, the seminars *Perspectives for Unifying Power Systems of the EU, CIS and Baltic Countries and Creation of the Common European Power Market* and *Free Electricity Market in the EU and Russia: Results, Challenges and Perspectives* were held during the Forum. One of the themes, discussed during the seminars, was the further development of the fuel and energy sector in Russia.

Source: Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg. Materials are provided by the Office of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation, e-mail: [stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru](mailto:stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru)

## Russian-Swedish Divertissement

The presentation of the book *Russian-Swedish Divertissement* took place in ITAR-TASS Information Agency in St. Petersburg on 11 May. The book is written by Nikolay Vukolov, former special correspondent of ITAR-TASS in Sweden, and Renat Salavatov, world famous conductor, who worked at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. The book was published with the support of the Consulate General of Sweden in St. Petersburg and the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg. The narration is devoted to the cultural links between Sweden and Russia and, in particular, to those, who participated in setting up vocal and choreography schools in both countries, thus contributing to their mutual enrichment.

Source: Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, e-mail: [stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru](mailto:stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru)



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