

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

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Conference “Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013: new partnership opportunities for Russian and Belarusian regions”



On 16-17 April 2008 the conference “Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013: new partnership opportunities for Russian and Belarusian regions” will take place in St. Petersburg. Over 200 representatives from national, regional and local authorities, educational institutions, and NGO’s from Russia, Belarus, Norway, and the European Union are expected to get together.

The Tacis Neighbourhood Programme is almost finalised. The new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument will substitute the Neighbourhood initiative. Being an integrated element of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013, it will bring new opportunities of transnational cooperation for Russian and Belarusian partners with the European Union.

The Conference will offer the opportunity to take a closer look at 28 projects implemented under the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme. The results achieved will illustrate the added value of transnational cooperation to Russian and Belarusian regions. Alongside with this, participants will get acquainted with the new Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013.

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IX International Environmental Forum “Baltic Sea Day”



On 11-13 March the IX International Environmental Forum “Baltic Sea Day” will take place in St. Petersburg. The Forum will focus on discussing the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Action Plan “Towards a Healthy Baltic” with broad participation of national and international NPOs, international financial institutions, legislative and executive bodies of the Baltic Sea region. The organizers of the event expect a high-level representation on the part of HELCOM, the European Commission and the Baltic Sea states.

The Forum is held under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources, and is co-organized by the City of St. Petersburg, the Government of the Leningrad region, HELCOM Secretariat, the Ministries of Environment of Finland and Sweden, and others.

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Photo: www.helcom.ru

St. Petersburg – Saxony Cooperation



The Vice-governor of St. Petersburg Mikhail Oseevsky and the State Minister for Economic Affairs and Labour of Saxony Thomas Jurk signed an agreement on establishment of a Joint Russian-German Work Group. The Group will promote cooperation between German and Russian SMEs dealing with the emerging motor cluster in St. Petersburg. The cooperation areas stipulated in the agreement are machine building, motor industry, IT and industrial construction.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, March 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Photos: www.subcontract.ru



Finnish *Russia Office*

The Finnish innovation fund *Citra* and 15 Finnish enterprises have established a company called *Russia Office*, which will lobby their interests in Russia. The headquarters will be located in Helsinki. There are also plans to open up a representative office in St. Petersburg. *Russia Office* will be headed by the former ambassador of Finland to Russia, Rene Nyberg.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, February 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Photo: www.internations.org

Finnish-Russian Innovation Centre in St. Petersburg

February, 26, 2008 *Finnish-Russian Innovation Centre* has been officially opened by Mr. Mauri Pekkarinen, the Minister of Economic Affairs of Finland, and has started its work in St. Petersburg.

The main investors of the Centre are *Lappeenranta Innovation Group* and a global network of Finnish Innovation Centres *Finnode*, established by Ministry on Economic Development of Finland. Two-year project budget is EUR 1 million at least.

Finnish-Russian Innovation Centre's main objective is to promote international cooperation in the field of innovations by attracting partners and public funds in Russia and Finland. The Centre activities are focusing on innovations in ICT field, nanotechnologies, forest industry, transport, logistics, enterprises, researches, education etc.

The Centre will provide the services in particular on legal assistance to enter Russian and EU markets, consulting on intellectual property rights services, marketing researches.

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In the photo Igor Kuprienko



Finnish *Evli Bank Plc* Entering Russian Market



The Finnish investment bank *Evli Bank Plc* has entered the Russian market acquiring 49.9% shares of *Avanko* company, which has offices in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Earlier *Evli* was only presented in St. Petersburg by its subsidiary *Evli Property Investment*. According to Grigory Dudarev, director general of *Avanko* in Helsinki, together with *Evli* they will offer Russian companies underwriting of IPOs at OMX Nordic Exchange. This will concern bargains of USD 10-150 million.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, February 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Stockmann in St. Petersburg



In late 2009 the Finnish *Stockmann* Company is planning to open a trade and office centre in St. Petersburg. The total area will amount to 100 thousand sq. metres. The annual turnover of the centre is expected to reach EUR 360 million. Now the company has four brands: *Stockmann*, *Seppälä*, *Hobby Hall* and *Lindex*. *Stockmann* makes 70% of its sales in Finland, 15% in Russia, 12% in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, and 3% in Sweden and Norway.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, March 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Modern Technologies of Drinking Water Disinfection, Sludge Treatment and Utilization



On 13 March the international conference “Modern Technologies of Drinking Water Disinfection, Sludge Treatment and Utilization” will be held in St. Petersburg on the initiative of the St. Petersburg Committee for External Relations and the water company *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg*.

Directors of public utilities from big Russian cities, CIS countries and Eastern Europe are invited to the conference. Among the speakers are representatives of the German building contractor *BAMAG*,

French *OTV SA – Veolia Water Solutions & Technologies*, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The conference focuses on two environmental problems: good quality of water supply and utilization of sewage sludge.

The organizers hope that the conference will draw more attention to environmental problems and give an impetus to solving of these problems to ensure safe and sustainable development in other regions of the Russian Federation.

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