

FORUM DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE 10th BALTIC SEA TOURISM

The participants of the 10th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum (BSTF) „The Future of the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum.”, convened in Turku, Finland, from 2 to 3 November 2017,

- appreciating the organisation of the 10th BSTF, an special anniversary for the Baltic Sea Region, and thereby reinforcing the importance of that forum,
- thanking ‘Visit Turku’ and the City of Turku, the Regional Council of Southwest Finland, Visit Finland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland for hosting the forum in Turku,
- welcoming the report ‘Towards an implementation strategy for the sustainable Blue Growth Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region’, which collates the results of a systematic stakeholder dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region. The report was elaborated by s.Pro for the European Commission (DG MARE) and describes the BSTF as a ‘well-established annual conference’ and ‘aims at becoming a BSR-wide exchange platform for the public’,
- welcoming the ‘Final Report of BSPC Working Group on Sustainable Tourism’, which was published August 2017. Basis is the 25th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference resolution which focused on sustainable tourism. It supports the activities of policy area tourism and stress on more coherent and cooperation-based approaches to sustainable tourism development in the Baltic Sea Region,
- welcoming the UNWTO’s “2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development”, in the frame of the Global Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals,

call on the governments of the Baltic Sea Region countries, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the European Union, tourism organisations, networks, NGOs, private entities and other tourism stakeholders,

regarding the future of the Baltic Sea Tourism

- declaring that the future of the Baltic Sea Tourism needs a sustainable concept concerning trends on traveling and digitalisation which has been worked out at 10th forum and should be further developed,
- to use and thereby strengthen existing networks to communicate and help bundling innovative project ideas in order to make the best possible use of the EUSBSR seed money facility to promote tourism-related projects, initiate flagships and thus transnational tourism offers in the Baltic Sea Region,
- to identify and ensure a solid financing basis for projects and processes after 2020,
- to enhance DMOs to play a stronger role in the BSR Tourism development,
- **to be continued after the 10th BSTF**

regarding transnational tourism cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region,

1. to further develop the transnational cooperation in projects and processes in sustainable tourism to establish the Baltic Sea Region as an attractive destination,
2. to encourage the activities of the Baltic Sea Tourism Center,
3. to promote the participation of stakeholders from non-EU countries to ensure integration of all countries from the Baltic Sea Region,

regarding the future of Baltic Sea Tourism Forum

to further establish the forum as a high quality communication platform in the Baltic Sea Region

- by putting the forum on a long-term financing basis (funding, fees etc.)
- by intensifying the cooperation between stakeholders, especial in the private sector
- by identifying trends in traveling and digitalisation and adopting them to increase the acknowledge of the BSR as an attractive tourism destination
- by identifying good practices of sustainable transnational cooperation

The participants welcome the next, the 11th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum in Riga (Latvia) in autumn 2018 which will be organised by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia.

Turku, 3 November 2017