



Ostra Agatan 53 SE-753 22 Uppsala, Sweden
Phone: +46 18 71 11 55, Fax: +46 18 71 11 75; secretariat@ccb.se; www.ccb.se

To: Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister of Russia,
Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya 2, building 2.
Moscow 103274, Russia

Valeriy Serdyukov, Governor of Leningrad Oblast
Governor of Leningrad region, Russia
Fax: +7 812 271 5627

Copy to: Igor Maydanov, HELCOM chairman
Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of Russian Federation

Natalia Tretiakova
Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of Russian Federation

Leonid Korovin
Russian HELCOM secr, St Petersburg

Anne Christine Brusendorff, HELCOM secr, Helsinki, Finland

Concerning: *A Better location of the planned shipyard in Primorsk would save important natural and recreational values*

DEAR MR. PUTIN, DEAR MR. SERDJUKOV,

We, representatives of non-governmental international organization (NGO) "Coalition Clean Baltic" (CCB), appeal to the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation and the Governor of Leningrad Oblast to support the proposals of Russians NGOs and initiative group of Primorsk city to relocate the shipyard from the woodland park in Primorsk, which is part of a green area with significant nature conservation and recreational values, to the industrial area of the Primorsk.

Russia is planning for a big shipyard, a large industrial project, close to Primorsk city by the Gulf of Finland. The planned shipyard, in size 200 ha, would have a strong impact on many important natural and recreational values in this part of Karelian Isthmus. Only 2 km from this coastal area is the RAMSAR site "Birch islands" (decision of the Government №1050 from 13.09.1994), an important resting and feeding area for migrating bird species, e.g. whooper swan. Shipyard activities would have strong impact on coastal waters hundreds of meters outside the shoreline. The local biodiversity, e.g. bird species/Red Data list species, will be strongly affected.

The planned shipyard area would also totally change the surrounding environment of the historical church in Primorsk (Finnish construction in former "Koivistö"), which is a cultural object having high cultural values from the period when the Karelian Isthmus had a mixed Russian/Finnish population, with its own cultural approach. The church also has links to tsar Nikolaj the Second, who gave donations to the church.

Our proposal is that Regional Russian authorities in Leningrad Oblast reconsider the localization of the shipyard, to find a good balance between natural/recreational values and industrial interests.

We believe it is important for Russian decision-making institutions to have a dialogue with various interest groups in the Gulf of Finland region to find an optimal solution to satisfy both environmental and industrial demands, on the localization of a new shipyard, without threatening the industrial project as such. Strong efforts should be taken by Russian authorities to consult and discuss pros and cons for various alternative locations of the shipyard with stakeholders. A better localization of the new planned shipyard would preferably be in the already existing industrial area in South-East of Primorsk city, where the Primorsk Oil-terminal is situated (decision of the Government of Leningrad Region № 260 from 25.12.2003). The total environmental impact and disturbances on natural values would certainly be much less with such a localization.

Important reasons to select a location with less impact on the RAMSAR site values and regional recreational values:

- to minimize the environmental impact on the natural values the distance between the RAMSAR nature reserve area to the shipyard should be as long as possible;
- the planned shipyard area has valuable coastal pine forests and sandy beaches, which gives the area high recreational values both for regional and local visitors;
- a protection zone of 500-1000 m around the church, where the existing natural/cultural environment should be preserved. Such area should be set as a cultural/natural object in local spatial planning process.

Coalition Clean Baltic considers, that in order to secure nature protection values of the internationally important Ramsar site “Birch Islands”, the planned shipyard should be relocated from the planned site North-West of Primorsk, and preferably be located to the territory of the Primorsk industrial area (7 km to South-East).

Coalition Clean Baltic, as an International organization which unites 25 environmental organizations from all 11 Baltic countries supports the proposals of our member “Green World” and the initiative group of Primorsk city, concerning the relocation the planned shipyard and consider the issue of protection of the values of the nature reserve/RAMSAR site «Birch Islands», as an issue of international importance.

Coalition Clean Baltic

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Gunnar Noren
CCB Executive secretary
Oestra Agatan 53
SE 753 22 Uppsala
Sweden
Phone +46 18 71 11 70



Oleg Bodrov
Green World chairperson
P.O. Box 93/7 Sosnovy Bor
188544, Leningrad oblast,
Russia
Phone/fax +7 (81369)72991