



SEPA
Att. Inger Alness
106 48 Stockholm

Statement of opinion on supplementary documentation for Environmental Impact Assessment for Nord Stream Gas Pipeline in Baltic Sea. (Ref 121-7846-06)

The County Administrative Board of Gotland County has been afforded the opportunity of giving its opinions on supplementary documentation for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Nord Stream Gas Pipeline project through the Baltic Sea. The background is that the company has made a number of adjustments to the route it originally proposed within all countries (Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Germany). "Opinions should concern what should to be described in the Environmental Impact Assessment in terms of the impact on the environment within Swedish areas arising from the placement of the pipeline within the Russian, Finnish, Danish and/or German economic zones or territorial waters".

Background

Nord Stream AG plans to build a gas pipeline from Vyborg in Russia via the economic zones of Finland, Sweden and Denmark, reaching landfall at Geifswald [*sic*] in Germany. Permission for the construction of the pipeline is required in accordance with the legislation of each respective country, and in the course of testing in regard to this, an Environmental Impact Assessment must be drawn up in accordance with the regulations in place in each country. According to the Espoo Convention on environmental impact assessments in transboundary contexts, a country within which an activity is planned which may cause significant environmental impact in another country must inform the affected country concerned. This notification brings with it the opportunity to participate in the process of drawing up an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Opinions

The route as proposed now, to the north of Bornholm, means that the pipeline must be laid closer to the intensively trafficked shipping lane into and out of the Baltic Sea. The Environmental Impact Assessment must illuminate the risks this may bring in comparison with previous alternatives, both during the construction phase and the operational phase.

- What would happen if a major accident involving a vessel occurred close to the pipeline?
- What resistance will the pipeline have to impact from outside?
- How can safety in connection with an accident be guaranteed?

The County Administrative Board notes that in a number of areas, in connection with the laying of the pipeline, it will be necessary to stabilise the pipeline using dumped masses of material in order to prevent freely suspended spans of pipe across valleys in the sea floor. The Environmental Impact Assessment should contain a description of the monitoring that will be required for the pipeline, in particular in connection with these areas, because any settling of the bottom material might affect the stability of the pipeline. A leak from the pipeline could have devastating consequences.

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A thriving fishing industry operates in the area around Bornholm. The Environmental Impact Assessment must show the possible effects of the pipeline on this fishing industry.

- What are the risks that fishing equipment might catch on the pipeline and what liability does the company Nord Steam AG assume for this?
- What preparedness is there for accidents involving fishing boats in connection with the pipeline?

In other respects, the County Administrative Board refers to its statement “Opinions on documentation for Environmental Impact Assessment for Nord Stream Gas Pipeline” (ref. 539-7033-06).

Decisions on this case have been made by Christian Runeby, strategic manager, in the light of reports by Lars Vallin, Water and Fisheries.

Christian Runeby

(signed)
Lars
Vallin

Copies to:

County Administrative Board, Skåne County (email)

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County Administrative Board, Kalmar County (email)

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