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FINNISH MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

20 December 2007

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STATEMENT ON THE INTERIM REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME REGARDING THE PROPOSED OFFSHORE GAS PIPELINE FROM RUSSIA TO GERMANY PASSING THROUGH FINLAND'S EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE

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Municipal Executive Board Item 265

Environmental Committee, 4 December 2007 Item 126

The Ministry of the Environment provides the Hamina Town and Virolahti Municipality with the opportunity to issue a statement on the interim report on the environmental impact assessment programme regarding the proposed offshore gas pipeline from Russia to Germany passing through Finland's exclusive economic zone. The purpose of the statement is to complement the assessment programme. Statements on the assessment programme have been issued by the Executive Board of Hamina Town and Virolahti Municipality earlier, on 12 December 2007 and 6 February 2007, respectively..

Nord Stream AG, a company contemplating an undersea gas pipeline across the Baltic Sea, has submitted more specific plans concerning the optional routes to be explored in the course of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. For this purpose, the company has prepared an interim report for comments by all the Baltic Rim states. At the same time, an opportunity is provided to give an opinion on the interim report, and the statements and opinions issued will be taken into account in the EIA process. The results of the assessment will be compiled into an EIA report that will subsequently be submitted for public review, notice of which will be given in due course. Nord Stream expects the assessment report to be completed in April 2008.

The interim report on the current status of the pipeline route is available at www.ymparisto.fi/kansainvalinenYVA.

In the EIA programme, Nord Stream proposed two options for closer evaluation:

- Option 0: the project is abandoned. No gas transmission system from Russia to Germany will be built.
- Option 1: A natural gas transmission system consisting of two parallel pipelines from Vyborg, Russia, to Greifswald, Germany, across the Baltic Sea in accordance with Nord Stream's project plan. The gas carrying capacity of the system is 55 billion cubic metres per year.

After examining the comments – particularly with regard to the route of the pipeline – Nord Stream decided to launch further studies on selected sections of the route.

Route section	Base route	Proposal	Status outcome
Russia – western part	North of Gogland	South of Gogland	To be determined
Gulf of Finland – middle part	Finnish EEZ	Further south in Gulf of Finland	Route remains in Finnish EEZ (optimized base route)
SE of Gotland	In between Natura 2000 and recommended shipping lane	Further away from Natura 2000 and thereby closer to shipping lane	To be determined
Around Bornholm	S of Bornholm	N of Bornholm and consequently new route in German EEZ	New route N of Bornholm and in German EEZ
German section	From S of Bornholm	From N of Bornholm passing in between planned wind parks and Natura 2000	New route in the German EEZ

Further plans to develop the Estonian route have been abandoned because Estonia has rejected the applications for permits. As a result, the planning area extends to Finland's exclusive economic zone. Aside from the work carried out on the route further south (C4) as defined in the conceptual engineering plan, efforts to develop the route passing through Finland's exclusive economic zone have been continued. Accordingly, Nord Stream has sought to optimize the route across the Finnish zone in order to substantially reduce the required intervention. The intervention required for this optimized route (C9) consists of the construction of rock berms. A maximum quantity of 0.1 million m³ of rocks is required for this purpose (per pipeline). The environmental impact of rock dumping affects an area with an average radius of 1 km. Significant adverse environmental impacts from rock dumping are not foreseen.

The Finnish authorities have, in the national negotiation process, commented on the fact that route (C4) proposed in the conceptual engineering plan runs in the Russian sector north of Gogland. The Finnish Ministry of the Environment has contacted the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources for the purpose of discussing this issue in greater detail. The final route around Gogland will be decided in bilateral talks. The goal is to determine an optimized route (C5) around Gogland in the Russian sector, but optimization is still underway. To this end, a 2-km wide corridor has been surveyed in detail in accordance with the projected route north of Gogland. The purpose of route optimization is to minimise intervention before and after the laying of the pipeline. In the Russian sector, there are several restrictions limiting the options, such as shipping lanes, quarrying in the seabed, shipwrecks, cables and the foreseen nature conservation area in Ingria.

Currently (October 2007) Nord Stream is carrying out an undersea geophysical survey in order to determine the new, optimized routes. It provides a description of the routes from Russia to Germany with a view of any munitions

