

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Nord Stream Investigates Route Optimisation**

#### **Additional studies to be launched**

Nord Stream has decided to launch additional studies to investigate areas where the route of the natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea can be further optimised in a reasonable way in order to minimise environmental impacts. This decision follows analysis of the statements received from the authorities and the public during the international consultation of the Baltic Sea region countries in accordance with the Espoo Convention. The purpose of the international consultations was to exchange information and identify additional environmental studies needs and possibilities for impact minimisation.

Further optimisation of the route will be explored in three areas: in the Gulf of Finland in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Estonia, further south of Gotland in the Swedish Exclusive Economic Zone, and near the island of Bornholm (Denmark).

The recommendation to study a more southern route in the Gulf of Finland came from the Finnish authorities based on the opinion that it could be more environmentally friendly.

Investigation of a pipeline route further south of Gotland was discussed at a consultation meeting with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Nord Stream will study and describe the route approximately 10 kilometres further south east of the Natura 2000 area Hoburgs Bank and the proposed Natura 2000 area Norra Midsjöbanken.

The route north of Bornholm was part of the preliminary studies in 1997-1999 and will be investigated further.

Nord Stream acknowledges concerns and recommendations of the Baltic Sea countries and is determined to make sure that the new pipeline meets high environmental standards. The Nord Stream decision to invest time, resources and money in further investigation of the route optimization, in addition to the comprehensive studies already made and planned, reconfirms Nord Stream's commitment to conservation of the Baltic Sea and minimization of all environmental impacts.

In order to build the necessary gas transport infrastructure and to meet the growing need for natural gas in Europe from 2010, Nord Stream appreciates the constructive cooperation of the Baltic Sea countries.

Applications for necessary permits to study the sea bed in the areas mentioned will be submitted to the respective authorities shortly.

All results of the studies will be part of the comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment report which Nord Stream will prepare and submit to the involved Baltic Sea countries in autumn 2007.

**Notes for editors:**

**Nord Stream** is a natural gas pipeline that will link Russia and the European Union via the Baltic Sea. By connecting the world's biggest gas reserves with the European gas pipeline network, Nord Stream will meet about 25% of the additional gas import needs of the European Union. The project will be an important contribution to long-term security of supply and a touchstone for the energy partnership between the European Union and Russia.

With a total length of about 1,200 kilometres, it is planned to be operational in 2010 with an initial transport capacity of some 27.5 billion cubic metres per annum. In the second phase, a parallel pipeline will increase the transport capacity to about 55 billion cubic metres per annum. The project recently started the permitting process in the Baltic Sea region countries, which among other things involves the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with international and national legislation.

**Nord Stream AG** is an international joint venture established with the purpose of planning, construction and subsequent operation of the new offshore gas pipeline. Gazprom holds a 51% interest in the joint venture, and Wintershall and E.ON Ruhrgas hold 24.5% each.

In March 2007, Nord Stream completed the first stage of the international consultation in accordance with the Espoo Convention which regulates EIA in a Trans-boundary context. Statements relating to the project were received from authorities, associations or private bodies from the countries in the Baltic Region.

The comments which have been received focus on key issues discussed in public hearings and meetings with authorities and organisations over the past months. The issues raised relate to the impacts on the sea bed, on commercial fisheries, and the impact of dumped and left munitions. These topics have already been investigated for several years by Nord Stream and its shareholders. The statements will be included in the supplementary and concluding work on the EIA to be submitted in the early autumn 2007. The integration of statements from the countries in this stage of the project preparation will ensure and facilitate an optimal decision making process.

For more information please visit: [www.nord-stream.com](http://www.nord-stream.com)

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