

PRESS RELEASE

First Shipwreck Parts Salvaged from Bay of Greifswald

Zug/Rügen, 15 July, 2009. Today, on 15 July, 2009, the employees of the Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania Office for Culture and Care of Monuments (LaKD M-V) started to salvage the remnants of a wreck in the Bay of Greifswald, Germany.

“The salvage is needed in order to create the necessary room for construction – a 60-metre-wide corridor – for the laying of the Nord Stream Pipeline, which is planned for the coming spring,” said Nord Stream Permitting Manager Jens Lange. “After intensive examination of different alternatives, the LaKD M-V, in close coordination with us, decided on exactly this approach.”

At the beginning of June, up to 7 research divers started the extensive preparatory work for the salvage. Bad weather, occasionally very strong currents and unfavourable underwater visibility put more of a strain on the schedule than planned. In the past few weeks, the find spot was cleared of stones and sediment and the wreck remnants were completely uncovered. Immediately after the clearing, each individual part was secured with sandbags against the strong current and waves. Subsequently, a survey system was installed underwater and the find spot was documented using drawings, as well as photo and video recording.

The work of recent weeks confirmed past assumptions. The remnants of the wreck are located in a find spot 9 metres long and 3 metres wide. They are aligned in an east-west direction. In 1715, the Swedish navy loaded the ship with ballast stones and sank it at the mouth of the bay. In the last 300 years, wind and waves took their toll. Large parts of the ship were washed away by the current, and the remaining wood is quite eroded in places. More than 50 individual parts were identified and are to be salvaged at the find spot. These are mostly frames and planks from the side of the hull, which are from 1.2 to 5 meters long, depending upon their type and condition. The parts are to be dismantled underwater and salvaged individually with the aid of the diver ship’s deck crane.

Even in optimum weather conditions, the salvage of the wreck parts will still take several working days. After the salvage, the individual parts will be brought ashore, secured, stored temporarily in the water nearby and duly documented and evaluated by LaKD M-V employees in a tent. Based on the results of this work, the LaKD M-V will then decide how to subsequently proceed with the wreck remnants.

Historical background of the shipwreck barrier

There are remnants of 20 historical shipwrecks south of the Mönchgut peninsula in the Bay of Greifswald. In 1715, the Swedish navy ballasted those ships, each about 15 metres long, positioning them to sink in water only 3 to 4 metres deep. Together, the ships formed a 980-metre defensive barrier which prevented enemy fleets from entering the bay. The remains of the wrecks were re-discovered in 1996 and were surveyed and charted in 2006 using a special scanner. The wreck planned for the salvage, at 9 metres long and 3 metres wide, is one of the smaller artefacts of the ship barrier. This concerns the remains of one of the ships in a staggered structure, a vessel built with overlapping planks.

For further information, please contact:

Steffen Ebert, Communications Manager Germany
Mobile: +49 1520 456 80 53
E-Mail: steffen.ebert@nord-stream.com

Notes to editors:

Nord Stream is a natural gas pipeline that will link Russia and the European Union via the Baltic Sea. The European Union's annual natural gas import needs in the year 2005 were approximately 314 billion cubic metres (bcm) and are projected to increase to 509 bcm by the year 2025. This means that by 2025, the EU's annual import needs will have increased by almost 200 bcm (Source: European Commission/DG-TREN, 2007). Nord Stream will meet about 25 per cent of this additional requirement by connecting the European gas pipeline network to the world's largest gas reserves. The project will be an important contribution to long-term security of supply and a milestone of the energy partnership between the European Union and Russia.

Nord Stream AG plans to have the first of two parallel pipelines operational in 2011. Each line is approximately 1,220 kilometres long, providing a transport capacity of some 27.5 bcm per year. Full capacity of about 55 bcm per year will be reached in the second phase, when the second line goes on stream.

Nord Stream AG is an international joint venture established for the planning, construction and subsequent operation of the new offshore gas pipeline across the Baltic Sea. OAO Gazprom holds a 51 per cent stake in the joint venture. BASF/Wintershall AG and E.ON Ruhrgas AG hold 20 per cent each, and N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie has a 9 per cent stake.