

Joint Baltic Sea Research and Development Programme (BONUS)

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The Council took note of a **presidency progress report** ([9423/10](#)) on a decision aimed at approving Community participation in a research project in the Baltic Sea ("BONUS-169 programme") undertaken by several EU countries.

BONUS-169 is a joint research programme undertaken by eight EU Baltic Sea Member States (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden) in support of sustainable development of the Baltic Sea region.

Its main objective is to provide an effective response to key challenges in the region in relation to environmental protection and sustainable development, tourism, aquaculture, food safety, maritime transport and socio-economic issues.

A first reading agreement with the European Parliament is expected to be confirmed after the vote at the EP plenary assembly in mid-June, thus allowing the EU to contribute up to **EUR 50 million** for the whole duration of the project.

BONUS-169, which is in line with the objectives of the European strategy for maritime research and the Union's strategy for the Baltic Sea region, is to be considered as a pilot case for other similar regional initiatives.