Maritime Strategy for Västra Götaland
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Maritime strategy for Västra Götaland – summary and objectives

Västra Götaland has a large and significant maritime sector that is very important to the region and the whole country as regards jobs and growth. The maritime sector is dependent on a living, healthy marine environment.

To develop the maritime sector further, a strategy is needed that brings together all players around a set of objectives and a vision of the direction that development will take. Region Västra Götaland has taken upon itself the task of drawing up a maritime strategy together with all the stakeholders concerned in the region, not least the maritime industry.

The strategy is based on a vision for the maritime sector in Västra Götaland inspired by the work being done by our neighbours: “A common course for Blue West: Västra Götaland shall be one of Europe’s leading maritime regions with solutions focused on innovation and environmentally compatible growth”.

The maritime partnership in Västra Götaland is the unifying platform for the maritime strategy in close collaboration with regional and municipal politicians.

Information and knowledge about the maritime strategy is disseminated continuously in Västra Götaland. The intention is that the objectives will lead to activities in the sectors, geographical areas and municipalities concerned. The strategy assumes that initiatives for collaborations and projects will be taken by, for example, local government associations, local authorities, professional associations, company clusters, networks of stakeholders, institutions of higher education and R&D institutes. Region Västra Götaland will monitor and stimulate this work.

A strategy must be a living document. We live in an ever-changing world and it is impossible to foresee everything that happens. Evaluation and revision of the maritime strategy and related strategic action are therefore important recurrent activities in driving development forward.
The strategy defines the issues and objectives for the development of the sector. These are:

1. Sustainable growth through prioritising shipping and logistics
   - Strengthen Västra Götaland and the Gothenburg region as a Nordic transportation and logistics centre and make it possible for the Port of Gothenburg to handle 100 million tons of freight a year
   - Eliminate bottlenecks for Swedish industry by developing intermodal transportation solutions that give efficient flows to and from Gothenburg and other west coast ports
   - Make the transportation infrastructure more efficient by investing in roads, railways, bridges, etc
   - Develop inland water transportation to and from Lake Vänern

2. Preserve marine biodiversity and the marine ecosystems’ status
   - Increase knowledge of the importance and benefits of marine biodiversity in the marine ecosystems in the North Sea, Swedish marine areas and in general
   - Expand research on new uses for marine biological resources, e.g. in the biotechnology field (blue biotechnology)
   - Support efforts to make resource utilisation in the maritime sector based on a practicable ecosystem approach

3. Monitor and analyse the condition of the marine environment and initiate improvement measures
   - Collaboration between researchers, authorities and other stakeholders in the region must be improved to ensure an up-to-date and relevant status of the marine environment
   - Observations that the condition of the sea is deteriorating must lead to collaboration on proposals for action
   - Stakeholders in the region must act together to draw up actionplans and regulatory frameworks for the marine environment
   - Cooperation with our neighbours around a common sea area – Skagerrak and Kattegatt – must be prioritised

4. Recruitment of new generations to the maritime sector
   - Invest in attractive, modern education in maritime professions
   - Recruit more women to the maritime sector
   - Recruit more young people with a non-Swedish background
   - Use new methods and media to increase interest in the maritime sector
   - Exchange best practice of recruitment campaigns between companies
   - Create a common transnational labour market in industries urgently in need of manpower
5. Exploit the potential for clean and safe maritime transport

- Develop and implement risk management systems for greater safety
- Establish Västra Götaland as a knowledge and research centre for environmentally compatible fuels for shipping
- Minimise emissions of sulphur and nitrogen oxides
- Use cleaner fuels in maritime transportation
- Reduce emissions of toxic substances such as toxic marine paint
- Introduce a credit-based trading system to reduce emissions of NOx and SOx below the IMO’s limit levels
- Make transportation to and from ports in Västra Götaland more efficient and reduce environmental disturbances
- Support the development of short sea shipping

6. Strengthen the development of maritime suppliers and the boating industry

- Build a platform for the marine technology industry, including the boating industry
- Create a marine technology cluster which is well established and internationally recognised
- Work to promote triple helix collaboration between marine technology companies, researchers and the public sector
- Increase the number of innovations, market share and stakeholders in the cluster

7. Sustainable fishery through stronger focus on quality, environmental objectives and cluster collaboration

- Improve coordination between the Common Fisheries Policy and other maritime policy areas
- Increase local and regional influence over fishery management by introducing co-management of coastal waters where this is possible and an efficient way to increase sustainability
- Support product development in fisheries, making innovative use of underutilised fish species
- Develop sustainable management, based on effective policy instruments with financial incentives
- Support the development of fishery management based on the ecosystem approach
- Develop high quality marine foods with an ecological profile
• Make sea foods traceable down to specific catch and/or production batch

• Increase cooperation and contacts between the fisherman/producer, marketplace and consumer

• Support the development of fishing tourism

• Develop logistics and technology for cultivating mussels and other shellfish

• Monitor development of aquaculture and apply practically in Västra Götaland, where environmental and technical preconditions exist

• Strengthen fish protection efforts

8. Improve knowledge of the sea, strengthen research and translate maritime opportunities into sustainable growth and development

• Work to attract a growing share of national maritime research funding to Västra Götaland

• Increase integration between education, research and innovation in the maritime area

• Work to ensure that Västra Götaland’s maritime research is recognised as a strong brand in Europe and that the region becomes a more attractive partner in R&D collaborations

• Work to make Västra Götaland one of the world’s leading R&D regions in climate and marine environment issues

• Establish a centre for maritime innovations with a special focus on the exchange of knowledge between industry, academia and the public sector in order to produce more internationally competitive maritime innovations.

• Work to increase the number of patents and published scientific articles based on maritime research in Västra Götaland

• Work to make Lighthouse the leading centre for research on shipping and logistics in Scandinavia with a growing share of EU funding

• Work to promote the formation of a national marine environment institute in Västra Götaland. Such an institute would among other things provide Swedish authorities, trade and industry, and international forums with quality assured knowledge about Sweden’s sea areas
9. Realise opportunities for offshore production of renewable energy

- Work to increase research relating to offshore production of renewable energy, primarily wave energy and wind power
- Investigate the consequences of energy installations for the marine environment
- Increase research into zoning of maritime areas with the objective of utilising maritime resources more efficiently
- Establish pilot plants for wave energy and wind power that can constitute best practice in international collaborations
- Prioritise collaboration with maritime regions and clusters that complement competence and business in Västra Götaland.

10. Measure the climate effects in the maritime and coastal environments

- Increase research into the effects of climate change in marine and aquatic environments
- Begin adapting maritime industries to a changed regional climate
- Increase regional, national and interregional collaboration in order to prepare coastal and riverside areas for higher sea and water levels
- The stakeholders concerned will begin collaborations in for example the municipalities around Lake Vänern, Lake Vättern and the Göta river and along the coast

11. Develop sustainable coastal tourism and the marine experience industry

- Preserve the quality of the marine environment, which is a prerequisite for the tourism industry
- Increase accessibility to the coast by public transport
- Use coastal zone planning as an instrument in the development of the maritime tourism industry
- Make use of Västra Götaland's unique maritime cultural heritage in the tourism industry
- Develop fishing tourism and increase cooperation between the maritime tourism industry and the basic maritime industries, e.g. coastal fisheries, by prioritising maritime gastronomy based on local seafood
• Develop activities to prolong the tourist season on the coast
• Market the coast and the sea towards new visitor groups
• Develop knowledge based and ecologically based maritime tourism
• Take advantage of the growth potential in Lake Vänern’s and other lakes’ attractive environment and develop boating tourism

12. Efficiency and collaboration in the boating industry
• Preserve and develop Västra Götaland’s leading position in boat manufacturing
• Create a well-functioning, internationally recognised boating cluster
• Work to establish triple helix cooperation in the boating sector
• Increase the number of innovations and stakeholders in the cluster and its market share
• Work to promote sustainable development of marinas and yachting harbours

13. Preserve and develop Västra Götaland’s maritime identity
• Strengthen protection of the west coast’s maritime environment and preserve the quality of the environment
• Work to preserve and increase public accessibility to riverside and coastal areas
• Preserve historical sites and objects in the sea and inland waters to link the present to maritime history
• Prioritise education about the sea, its importance and its challenges
• Increase knowledge about maritime history and its importance for Västra Götaland’s development
• Increase awareness of the connection between the historical environment and today’s maritime activities and the development of society as a whole
• Increase the amount of education about the significance and potential of the marine environment and the maritime sector
• Create maritime visitors’ centres for schoolchildren, the public and other visitors
• Draw up conservation plans for environments in the region’s archipelagos of historical importance
• Work to make it possible for more people to live in coastal communities all year round
• Use the experience gained from the East Indiaman Götheborg regarding how the maritime cultural heritage can be used as a platform for collaboration and development

*The Maritime strategy for Västra Götaland was approved by the Regional Council on February 19, 2008.*
Västra Götaland a truly maritime region

Västra Götaland is the centre of the nation’s maritime sector, with tens of thousands of people employed across several thousand companies within shipping, marine technology, boat production, the fishing industry and coastal tourism, among other areas.

The region also boasts a centre for research and education orientated towards the maritime industry. A number of development projects aimed at achieving environmentally sustainable shipping and other maritime industries, are currently in progress, featuring input from trade organisations, companies, research and development institutes and public sector stakeholders.
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