

# Diving with state maritime resources in the Baltic Sea

→ *The project attempts to prepare divers for cooperation across the Baltic Sea Region in the case of accidents. The 2012 accident of Costa Concordia in Italy set the scene for improving emergency preparedness at sea. Few if any countries have the national capacity to take on a severe accident similar to the Costa Concordia. With coordination and common understanding of procedures, knowledge of general and specific diving competences and mapping of gaps, a solid and enduring search and rescue organization can be established in the Baltic Sea, making it a safer place to travel, live and work on.*

Priority area	Transport
Specific objective	Maritime safety
Project acronym	DiveSMART-Baltic
Lead Partner	Swedish Coast Guard, Sweden
Project partners	3 SE, 2 FI, 1 PL
Project budget*	Total EUR 2,8 MM
*preliminary figures before contract signature	



## Summary

Lessons learned from the 2012 accident of Costa Concordia in Italy transferred during a national conference organised by the Italian rescue divers made gaps in Swedish emergency preparedness apparent. The Swedish Coast Guard and the Swedish Armed Forces therefore created a national project that has successfully coordinated all professional Swedish divers and their equipment in order to increase the preparedness and efficiency when an incident occurs. The project attempts to do the same in order to prepare divers for cooperation across the Baltic Sea Region.

Incidents have occurred with regularity, and will do so in the future. The Baltic Sea has its history concerning the Jan Hewelius and the Estonia. Several incidents taking hundreds of lives have occurred elsewhere in the world mainly concerning passenger ferries. Maritime spatial planning has also put more people on the sea, which adds challenges to search and rescue of people in distress.

Large wind farms have been established in the Baltic Sea and attractive living areas in harbours with floating homes are continuously being built. These environments

are where accidents have and will happen and people have been trapped underwater in confined spaces. These situations demand a search and rescue diver response.

Another issue for consideration is that people in accidents on water often drown, but many people also die of exposure as the Baltic Sea is a cold sea. Materials, bail out equipment and quick and safe penetration into confined spaces with air can save time and also lives, if different rescue organisations are familiar with each other due to common training and development.

The DiveSMART Baltic project will therefore focus on

- Mapping competences and resources, and creating a database available for national rescue services around the Baltic.
- Creating mobilization strategies for divers and equipment.
- Creating common training and exercise opportunities
- Creating common guidelines/Standard Operational Procedures
- Performing research on rescue equipment/diving equipment/penetration techniques
- Creating exchanges between professional diving schools around the Baltic to develop excellence in training and education.

The project will benefit safety in the Baltic Region also outside the projects partnership by working with the majority of the professional divers (in total 2 500 individuals) and diving schools. The emergency services will be prepared with simple but relevant and updated information.