



## Climate from the Nordic-Baltic Perspective

Dear Ministers, excellences and colleagues,

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this important event. It is my conviction that a low emission economy is not only necessary but will be beneficial for all of us. By 2050 our aim, adopted by parliament is that Sweden should have no net emissions of greenhouse gases. The journey started about four decades ago after the oil crisis and we have four decades to fulfil it. We are half way both in time and in cutting emissions. Over the last four decades we have halved our emissions and at the same time doubled our GDP. To a large extent this decoupling has been achieved by introducing fiscal instruments such as carbon and energy taxes. The polluter pays principle and setting the right economic incentives by pricing carbon dioxide is a solid foundation for Swedish climate policy. During the afternoon you will hear more about the ongoing work in Sweden.

In order to achieve sustainability we need to enable people, markets and governments to make sustainable decisions. Planetary and social boundaries must be respected. International climate negotiations must succeed in 2015 and the foundation for this must be put in place already in Warsaw in November. The world needs a roadmap to 2015

and strong leadership. The EU should continue to take the lead by agreeing new climate targets for 2030 early in 2014.

For too long the commonly held view has been that climate policy, almost without exceptions, would prove socially uncomfortable and economically painful. However, we have not managed to fully take into account the benefits stemming from low carbon policies. Public health benefits has been and will continue to be enormous as a consequence of lowered emissions. We will get energy security benefits and support innovation and low carbon economy jobs. A recent study from the Swedish innovation agency shows that employment in the eco-innovation sector alone has increased by 15 percent since 2007. Energy efficiency provide multiple benefits for consumers, lowered costs of energy infrastructure etc. I can go on and on talking about the how well-designed policies can safeguard well-being and a more resilient, long-term economy.

However, it will not be easy, and there are tough decisions to be made. It will be particularly difficult to achieve a non-carbon vehicle fleet, phase out European fossil energy, and to curb the emissions from industrial processing. Intensified research and innovations is needed as we must be successful.

In order to substantiate the economic arguments for moving to a low carbon society, I have been pushing for a new international undertaking. After a period of preparation we

were able to launch The New Climate Economy initiative last month looking also at the upsides of development. The initiative has attracted great interest. Several countries and leading global institutes have joined the work that will be led by Philippe Calderon, Mexico's former President. I am convinced that this initiative will provide new arguments and hard facts on the benefits of ambitious climate action.

The world needs a positive vision to strive for - rather than only a bleak future to avoid. Nowhere is the notion about a brighter low carbon future more present than in the Nordic cooperation. With high ambitions, good environmental track records and high wellbeing our countries together make a change. Over the years the Nordic cooperation has initiated and positively changed several international environmental agreements. Both as the Swedish Minister for Environment and as the Chair for the environment sector of the Nordic Council of Ministers I would warmly welcome a more in depth Nordic-Baltic cooperation not least regarding climate. Our historic ties and geographic ties are strong as well as our often joint understanding of things, let us start with building on that.

Thank you!