

Uppsala, 11.09.2020

Coalition Clean Baltic – CCB welcomes the release from custody of our long-time colleague and environmental activist Irina Sukhy and expresses strong support and solidarity with the peaceful actions of Belarusian civil society organizations.

Iryna Sukhy, the co-founder of the NGO Ecohome was unjustifiably and unlawfully detained and convicted last Sunday, 6 September in Belarus. Regretfully, her situation became yet another and truly unprecedented case of blocking access to justice, following Iryna's strong stand and position on numerous environmental deficiencies in Belarus. Harassment of activists working in non-profit environmental organizations is totally unacceptable and CCB's protest against such measures is not linked to a political situation in a country but about the targeting of people that dedicate their lives to protecting our environment.

At the same time, we would like to remind that environmental protection in the Baltic Sea Region has always being the uniting element between the countries, irrespective of their political systems and ruling ideology, recognizing no borders.

We believe that violence and confrontation, leads only to further escalation of a conflict and splitting up the Belarusian society, and therefore call upon all parties for a dialogue to resolve the crisis.

We support the efforts of CCB's Belarusian members and partners in promoting such a dialogue through strengthened civil society engagement, public participation, awareness raising and capacity building.

**Coalition Clean Baltic is a network of 24 environmental NGOs from 11 Baltic Sea Region countries, striving to protect the environment and natural resources of the Baltic Sea for present and future generations.*

On behalf of the CCB

Aija Caune,
CCB Chairlady