



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

**50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
27 March 2009.**

NSC ISSUES.

1. Maritime Policy Pilot Project

Following discussion of the Maritime Policy Pilot Project at the last Executive Committee, further discussions have taken place with the INTERREG Secretariat and within the Marine Resources Group.

At a meeting between NSC representatives and the INTERREG Secretariat in Billund on 11 October, the basic project idea was discussed. It was suggested that the project could act as a co-ordinating 'umbrella' project for other projects in the North Sea region and give them a greater political dimension through the Executive Committee. It was also indicated by the INTERREG Secretariat that the Accessibility priority was relatively undersubscribed.

Following this meeting, Politicians from the NSC Marine Resources Group met in Hirtshals on 1 and 2 December. At this meeting, the 'umbrella' project idea was further explored. Anders Carlberg highlighted that MSP may be a suitable theme for the project as this is a tool in itself for co-ordinating activities. Given the current political context at European level for MSP, the group supported this idea. As requested by the Executive Committee, existing project ideas along this theme have been looked into. Most existing ideas have a narrower focus and are less strategic than the concept of a Maritime Policy pilot project. However, idea 2.081 from the INTERREG project ideas book entitled "[North Sea Coastal and Maritime Strategy](#)" focuses on MSP at a strategic level and may be worthy of further exploration.

A broad project outline was then discussed at the most recent Marine Resources Group meeting in Kiel on 23 and 24 January (updates following discussion in red):

Description

One of the key objectives of the common European Maritime Policy is to facilitate and encourage further development of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the EU. This can only be successfully achieved if a wide range of stakeholders work together to implement a policy which is sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of local communities and industries, yet is well co-ordinated across national boundaries. The project will bring together key public and private stakeholders at the local, national, European and international levels to advance the implementation of MSP in the North Sea Region.

There has already been much research into the benefits of MSP and best practice, as reflected in the European Commission's Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning (COM(2008)791 final). Recognising the principles set out in the Commission's Roadmap for MSP, the project would look at an integrated and holistic approach to MSP which takes account of the needs of coastal communities, industry and the environment. This project will look to move beyond studies and collation of best practice by aiding the development of Member States' MSP policies around the North Sea Region.



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting, 27 March 2009.

A strong partnership of policy makers from the local, regional, national and European levels and key stakeholder groups (e.g. NSRAC Spatial Planning Working Group) would be an important element of the project to ensure that MSP is implemented in a transparent way with strong stakeholder participation. In this way, the project would provide a forum to bring together users of the sea with policy makers and environmental organisations to develop an agreed way forward for MSP in the North Sea Region. There would be four stages to the project:

Stage 1 – Collation and analysis of existing project results/studies, possible results and current status of MSP in North Sea Region countries

Stage 2 – On the basis of the status report

i) Define common sectors and interests that could be included in MSP for the North Sea Region, eg:

- energy
- fisheries
- aquaculture
- shipping
- marine protected areas (MPA)
- security and military interests
- maritime surveillance systems
- etc

ii) Organise workshops on proven MSP instruments and methods with experts, stakeholders and public officials

Stage 3 - Development of a co-ordinated action plan focusing on:

- i) Definition of principles for MSP
- ii) Defining common objectives for MSP
- iii) Input of quality-assured recommendations of MSP in the North Sea Region
- iv) Support implementation of MSP in the North Sea Region

Central Aim

To assist in the implementation of Action 3.2 – Maritime Spatial Planning and integrated coastal zone management - of the European Commission's Common Maritime Policy in the North Sea Area.

Envisaged Output

The envisaged output of the project would be the implementation of a jointly-agreed, common approach to Maritime Spatial Planning in all Member States of the North Sea Region.

Representatives from the INTERREG Secretariat were present and provided constructive feedback. The strengths of the idea at present are:



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting, 27 March 2009.

- Public and private partners from all levels of governance;
- A focus on key European policies;
- Building on other projects.

Areas which need more work include:

- A lack of named partners;
- The final outcomes of the project;
- Details of material investments (i.e. infrastructure).

The Marine Resources Group then discussed the idea and highlighted a lack of tools to co-ordinate MSP; co-ordination of national MSP policies (both with each other and EU legislation); and a bottom-up approach as areas which the project could focus on. These comments reflected those of stakeholders at the MSP kick-off seminar in Brussels. The lack of a forum to co-ordinate MSP policies and involve stakeholders may present an opportunity to organisations such as the NSC, given its geographical coverage of a regional sea. It was agreed that additional resources and a lead partner would be needed to drive forward the project and identify suitable partners. Region Västra Götaland indicated that they may be interested in leading the project, but political and resource support would need to be obtained in their region.

The next steps are:

1) Define more specific outputs from the project. Based on the discussions in Kiel this could include one or more of the following:

- The establishment of a North Sea forum to co-ordinate MSP at the regional sea level and bring together key stakeholders
- A toolkit for MSP practitioners
- Co-ordinated and compatible data for MSP practitioners

2) Identify linkages with the North Sea Coastal and Maritime Strategy project idea and partners (including a lead partner).

3) Investigate whether or not NSC resources can be made available for the development of the project.

4) Use discussions at the Maritime Week event in Aberdeenshire to further develop and strengthen the project idea, with a view to submitting an application for the 5th INTERREG call in 2010 or pilot funding from the Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. For discussion and decision**
- 2. The Executive Committee agrees to pursue Maritime Spatial Planning as a theme for the pilot project and discusses the availability of resources to progress this further**



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

**50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
27 March 2009.**

2. Maritime Week Event, 18-19 May 2009.

Following the Executive Committee's endorsement of NSC participation in the Maritime Week Stakeholder event, a venue has been selected. The recently-refurbished four-star [Buchan Braes Hotel](#) is located in a small coastal town in Aberdeenshire with a strong maritime history. The East of Scotland European Consortium has also agreed to participate in the event and the European Commission Office in Scotland has requested funding to host an official dinner. Scotland Europa has also approached Aberdeenshire Council to request that the event be branded as a local 'Open Days' event, which will help to raise the profile of the NSC in Brussels and would assist in any future participation in the Open Days week. Further work on the agenda has been carried out in consultation with partners (confirmed speakers **in bold**):

Monday 18 May

Transport from Aberdeen Rail Station and Airport to venue

12:00 Lunch and Registration

Session 1 – The Strategic Dimension

13:00 **Welcome (Aberdeenshire Council/European Commission Office in Scotland)**

13:15 Keynote Speech (European Commission)

13:45 **The Scottish Marine Bill (Richard Lochhead, MSP)**

14:15 **Protection of the Marine Environment (Sebastian Unger, OSPAR)**

14:45 **European Parliament Perspective (Elspeth Attwooll, MEP)**

15:15 Panel Discussion

15:45 *Coffee Break*

Session 2 – Regional, National and Industry Case Studies

16:00 Welcome to Session 2 (ESEC Chair)

16:15 **Japanese Approach (Prof. Hideo Kojimoto)**

16:45 **Local Stakeholder Involvement (Rhona Fairgrieve, Scottish Coastal Forum)**

17:00 **Fisheries (Mike Park, Scottish White Fish Producers Association)**



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting, 27 March 2009.

- 17:15 Ports (European Stakeholder Organisation)
- 17:30 Clean Shipping (TBC)
- 17:45 Research and Clusters (TBC)
- 18:00 Panel Discussion and Conclusions
- 19:30 *Whisky tasting and Official Dinner to be hosted by European Commission*

Tuesday 19 May

Session 3 – Policy Implementation

- 09:00 Welcome (NSC Chair)
- 09:15 Implementation and Maritime Spatial Planning (European Commission)
- 09:45 The Baltic Sea Strategy (Baltic Sea Commission)
- 10:15 Financing Maritime Projects (INTERREG North Sea Region)
- 10:45 Thematic Workshops (inc. coffee break):
 - Spatial Planning
 - Governance and Democracy
 - Capitalising on Maritime Assets
- 12:15 The Way Forward through Stakeholder Participation (NSRAC)
- 12:45 Conclusions and Next Steps
- 13:00 *Lunch*

Study Tours

Tour 1 – Coastal Communities

- 14:00 Departure
- 14:15 Peterhead Port
- 14:45

Tour 2 – Governance

- Departure
- Aberdeen Airport



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

**50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
27 March 2009.**

15:15		Aberdeen Station/Harbour
15:30	Fraserburgh Lighthouse Museum	
16:15		Aberdeen Maritime Museum
16:45	Sandhaven Harbour	
17:45	Pennan	
18:30	Arrival at conference venue	Arrival at conference venue

Transport to airport and rail station provided on Wed 20 May at 09:00.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. For discussion and decision**
- 2. The Executive Committee notes the developments at the European level in the field of Maritime Spatial Planning and progress in the organisation of the Maritime Week event.**
- 3. The Secretariat is responsible to find a NSC representative to Chair session 3.**



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

**50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
27 March 2009.**

3. Recommendations for Open Days 09.

The paper below from Yasa Ratnayeke and Hilde Donker was sent all ExCom members, Chairs and Vice-Chairs and their supporting officers and the Advisers. All responses received agreed to the recommendations in this paper.

OPEN Days 2009 – research for participation NSC?

Yasa Ratnayeke, Aberdeenshire
Hilde Donker – Provincie Noord-Holland

Introduction

This year the kick off event of the OPEN Days 2009 was very well attended. The European Commission was obviously very happy with this fact. There is a lot of interest for this initiative from the EU regions.

Moreover the OD 2008 has been successful with more than 5000 participants. Visitors were even sleeping in Gent, Belgium.

The OD 2009 will be about
'Global challenges, regional solutions'

- Restoring growth
- Regions and climate change
- Territorial cooperation
- Achieving results, looking ahead: EU cohesion policy's evaluation and future prospects

Structure OD 2009

- Programme of 100 sessions over 3 days (seminars, workshops, debates); i.e. regional partners seminars, DG Regio seminars, CoR seminars, The Meeting Place, all partners: Open Days University
- Formal events combined with CoR plenary session, Official reception, EU Parliament conferences, Closing Session

Conditions to participate

- all regions must have a representation office in Brussels
- regions must be members of a regional partnership
- regions may not apply being part of more than one regional partnership
- 5-12 regions in one partnership, representing more than 4 countries
- partners headed by lead office and deputy office
- to have one joint venue in Brussels for at least 90 people
- partners being present at the organisers preparatory meetings
- each regional partnership organises 1 or 2 sessions, not more
- according to the typology seminar/workshop/debate and the thematic priorities
- not more than 4 speakers in one session
- each partner to organise a local event in their region, in October 2009

Timetable

March 13, deadline application all partners in regional partnership



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting, 27 March 2009.

April 3, results of selection procedure
May 8, 1st information meeting
July 10, 2nd information meeting

Conclusion

A very popular event

A lot of events and people in Brussels

A small fish in a big pond

A lot of bureaucracy before selection procedure

Even if we are successful in being selected, there is a lot of work to be done before the actual event. This will require commitment from members of the NSC to help out to make it a success.

Remark

A lot of meetings at the same time and therefore a difficult opportunity, for the NSC to make a difference.

General comment; in our opinion the NSC should organise something themselves in Brussels if the network is striving to more exposure in Brussels

Early March Aberdeenshire was asked by Scotland Europa if NSC could brand the Maritime Week event as a local 'Open Days' event. This would help Scotland Europa (they have to have a local event to participate), would give our event more publicity and could also help to raise the profile of the NSC (and address the issue of it being difficult to participate in the Brussels event).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1- ***For discussion and decision***
- 2- ***The Executive Committee is positive to deliver speakers from NSC to another regional partnership for a presentation. This will give some exposure during the OD. Check university possibilities?***
- 3- ***The Executive Committee agrees to organise a seminar with a specific NSC theme in cooperation with the CoR on a separate date in 2009. Experiences have shown that the CoR is willing to help out with rooms, equipment and translation.***
- 4- ***The Executive Committee agrees to organise a seminar in cooperation, together with the European Commission. Here the theme should be linked with themes from e.g. DG Mare.***
- 5- ***The Executive Committee agrees on having the Maritime Week event 18-19 May as a local Open Days event.***



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

Item 10

**50th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
27 March 2009.**

4. Cooperation with CoR and its Intergroup North Sea- English channel

It is getting more and more common that groups form geographically within the CoR. Cllr Annelie Stark, PES/SE was elected second vice chair of the CoR intergroup North Sea- English channel. The group has decided on agenda and work plan which comes as an appendix to this report. Also the minutes of the first meeting is included. The group will participate in Open days in 2009. Focus will be to try to focus on a North Sea strategy, closely linked to the Baltic Sea Strategy and present concrete good examples. The group will meet together with the CoR Intergroup Baltic Sea in April in alignment with the CoR plenary in Bremen which is responsible will prepare an event's catalogue. The group will also discuss the white paper on climate change which is due in June and maritime transport.

The group is of interest for NSC. It is important for NSC to get in contact with the group to inform them of our work and a possible cooperation with the group.

Documents from the CoR group are enclosed the agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. *For discussion and decision***
- 2. *The Executive Committee supports the establishment of a North Sea Regions Intergroup at the CoR and encourages NSC members to take part in the work of the group.***
- 3. *The Executive Committee asks Cllr. Annelie Stark to help NSC to meet the group to inform them of our work and possible cooperation.***