

**Minutes of the 37th Executive Committee Meeting on 15th October 2004,
Ardoe House Hotel, Aberdeenshire, Scotland**

NSC Executive Committee Participants:

President	Cllr. Gunn Marit Helgesen (Telemark)
Vice-President	Cllr. Audrey Findlay (Aberdeenshire) accompanied by Jim Knowles and Iain Gabriel (Aberdeenshire)
Danish Representative	Cllr. Harry Jensen (Ringkjøbing) accompanied by Karsten Bækgaard (Ringkjøbing)
Dutch Representative	Cllr. Peter Byman (SNN) accompanied by Toine Janssen (SNN)
English Representative France:	Cllr. Kevan Lim (Suffolk) Represented by Natalie Mandaron, (Nord-Pas de Calais)
German Representative	Not represented
Norwegian Representative	Cllr. Gisle Handeland (Hordaland)
Scottish Representative	Cllr. Kathleen Matheson (Highland)
Swedish Representative	Cllr. Roland Andersson (Västra Götaland) accompanied by Jörgen Niemann (Västra Götaland)
NSC Executive Secretary	Lars Haukvik
NSC Secretary	Dawn Syvertsen

NSC Vice-chairs of Thematic Groups present:

Environment Group: Cllr. Alison McInnes (Aberdeenshire)

CPMR

Pascal Gruselle

Observers:

Tommy Mostrup, (Ringkjøbing)
Henrik M. Jensen, (Viborg)
Bruce Manson, (Fife)

NSC Thematic Group Co-ordinators present:

Culture & Tourism	Geir Sør-Reime (Rogaland)
Economic Development	Vivien Collie, (Fife)
Education & Research	Ann Brown (Suffolk)
Environment	Per Hörberg (Västra Götaland)
Fisheries	Ann Bell (Aberdeenshire)
Transport & Communications	Jon Halvard Eide (Vest-Agder)

Apologies.

Cllr. Martine Filleul, Region Nord-Pas de Calais
Cllr. Jeannine Marquaille, Region Nord-Pas de Calais
Cllr. Björn Thümler, Niedersachsen
Cllr. Albrecht Harten, Niedersachsen
Cllr. Alec Thompson, Fife
Cllr. Tony Tomkinson, Norfolk
Programme Manager Lorraine George, Interreg Secretariat

The President started by welcoming everyone to the 37th Executive Committee and thanked Aydney Findlay and her staff for organising and hosting the meeting. Further the President welcomed France, represented by Natalie Mandaron, to their first meeting in the Executive Committee.

The Agenda for the meeting was approved

Natalie Mandoran made a short speech presenting her region and explaining the French political system.

1 MINUTES OF THE 36TH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Following comments was made to the Minutes from the 36th Executive Committee meeting.

Item 4 a

NSC has worked for moratorium about Sellafield since 1998 is only half true; NSC has worked against radioactive discharges, which now has been reduced by 90% omissions.

Item 4 b

There is a vacancy for a new vice chair of the Education & Research Group, not for a new chair.

Item 2a

Money we received from the CPMR – send a letter to the CPMR to persuade to them – anything to report from this?

The President has talked to Xavier Gizard about getting 20.000 Euros to conference in March 2005, At the CPMR General Assembly in Stavanger it was decided that the NSC was to receive 20.000 Euro in support of this conference.

The President also talked about a meeting this autumn/winter to discuss our situation and Xavier Gizard accepted this

No other comments.

2 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The former NSC Executive Secretary Henrik M. Jensen presented the finances of the NSC. The accounts in Viborg are now closed and the money will soon be sent over to Telemark. The Financial Statement is enclosed.

There is still a few unpaid bills regarding the General Assembly,

There is a need to look at the membership and unpaid membership fees

No other questions.

2b Membership update

No new members, Finnmark have been approved as member of CPMR.

There is a wish to have more members from the UK.

3 ELECTIONS

3a. Vice-President NSC

The General Assembly gave the Executive Committee the mandate to elect a new Vice-President. There are two nominations, but Roland Andersson withdraws his nomination at the meeting.

Peter Byman was elected as the new Vice-President.

(Netherlands needs to elect a new substitute member to the Executive Committee.)

3b Election chair of thematic groups

As a result of the discussions of the thematic meeting October 14th to make the NSC Charter updated regarding the following elections. Following changes was proposed for Article 4. (The new text in *italics* is to replace the underlined text);

Article 4: Organisation

The North Sea Commission will be organised through the institutions of:

- an annual General Assembly
- a President and two Vice-Presidents
- an Executive Committee
- an Executive Secretary
- Thematic Groups

A General Assembly of all Member Regions will be held once a year, or more frequently if required.

The General Assembly shall elect a President, two Vice-Presidents and an Executive Committee who, unless they cease to be elected regional representatives, shall hold office for 2 years. If a member of the Executive Committee ceases to hold office in mid-term, the substitute will act as full member of the Executive Committee until the next General Assembly, where a new member can be elected.

The President of the North Sea Commission will normally be the President/political leader of their respective authority and represent a regional authority that is a Member of CPMR.

The members of the Executive Committee will consist of the President, two Vice-Presidents and the national elected regional representatives from each member country of the North Sea Commission. The member countries so defined are Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, England and Scotland. Each member country shall appoint one representative and one substitute representative.

The Executive Committee, apart from the President and the Vice-Presidents, will comprise elected regional representatives from each member country represented on the North Sea Commission. The member countries so defined are Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, England and Scotland. Each member country shall appoint one representative and one or more substitute representatives.

The Executive Committee will meet 3 or more times a year.

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the General Assembly shall nominate an Executive Secretary who will be responsible for supporting the administration of the North Sea Commission.

A number of Thematic Groups will be established to progress key issues identified by the North Sea Commission. Each group will have a Co-ordinator, who is appointed by the NSC Executive Committee. The Co-ordinator is responsible for the daily running of the group and should provide a report on the activities of the group at every Executive Committee meeting and present the Annual Report to the General Assembly.

Each member of the Executive Committee may be a chair of a thematic group. However when a thematic group does not have a chair who is already a member of the Executive Committee a politician may be elected as chair of that thematic group and would subsequently become an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

The normal expectation would be that a vice chair or substitute would move into the chair when it is vacated. This would create a structure that would allow progression to become a chair.

Each Thematic Group will have a chairman, who is a member of the Executive Committee and another elected politician from a regional authority will be appointed vice-chairman.

The changes have to be approved at the General Assembly in June 2005.

The Executive Committee agreed to the principles of the text, this will be an issue at the next Executive Committee meeting, spring 2005.

As a principle the President and the two Vice-Presidents should not chair a thematic group.

Election for Chair Economic Development Group:

There were two candidates for this position; Rinske Kruisinga (Noord-Holland) and Kevan Lim (Suffolk).

Result of the election;

3 votes for Kevan Lim

6 votes for Rinske Kruisinga

Rinske Kruisinga was elected as Chair of Economic Development Group.

The Group has then an open position as vice chair.

Election for Chair Culture and Tourism Group:

There were two candidates for this position; Annelie Stark (VGR) and Jacques Suurmond (Zeeland).

Jacques Suurmond withdraws his nomination as chair and **Annelie Stark was elected as Chair of Culture and Tourism Group.**

Election for Chair Environment Group:

There was one candidate, and **Allison McInnes was elected as Chair of Environment Group.**

3c Election chair of thematic groups

Election for Vice-Chair Fisheries Group

There was one candidate, and **Anders Fasth (VGR) was elected as Vice-Chair.**

Election for Vice-Chair Environment Group

There was one candidate, and **Andreas Lervik (Østfold) was elected as Vice-Chair.**

Election for Vice-Chair Education and Research Group

No candidate

3d Election co-ordinators of the thematic groups

There were no candidates for the positions as co-ordinators for the Economic Development Group or for the Education and Research Group.

Vivien Collie has an agreement to continue as co-ordinator for the Economic Development Group until 31.1.2.2004. At the moment the Group has no co-ordinator from 01.01.2005.

Ann Brown retires from Suffolk March 2005; there is no co-ordinator for the Education and Research Group after her retirement.

There is a need to find a long-term solution for the co-ordinators. The Executive Committee doesn't want to lose the experience of the coordinators and NSC need to find a financial solution. All the members get the benefit of the work done by the coordinators. Contributions should come into a pot; also project work could finance this. There is a need to spread the costs to all the members; the NSC can't depend on individual regions to pay for the cost of a co-ordinator. There is also a need for active involvement by the other members of a group, members of the group can take some of the tasks of the coordinator.

A quick calculation made at the meeting by Jon Halvard Eide gives a rise of memberships fee with approx 4000 Euro for each member.

The basis for the calculation is; coordinator time is 33%, this equals approx 33.000 euros pr. Year, 198.000 euros pr. Year for 6 coordinators divided into 54 parts gives a result 3666 Euro.

(There are 42 paying members of NSC, some pay more because of the size of their region, this equals to 54 parts). In addition there is travel expenses.

4 INTERREG IIB NORTH SEA PROGRAMME

Apologies from The Programme Manager Lorraine George, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Her written report to the Executive Committee is enclosed these minutes.

Peter Byman reported from Committee of the Regions, his report is enclosed these minutes.

5 REPORT FROM CPMR

A report from Pascal Gruselle, his paper was sent out to the meeting.

Regarding the map of cooperation areas from CPMR the Executive Committee had these comments;

- Set aside money 20-25% for cross border cooperation between the cooperation areas.
- Miss the northern periphery dimension in the map. There is a need for overlap between the different programmes.

The President brings these comments to the CPMR and AEBR (Association of European Border Regions) jointly organised seminar on "European Territorial Cooperation after 2006: Proposals from the Regions" in Taormina (Sicily - I) on 21 & 22 October 2004.

6 REPORT FROM THE THEMATIC GROUPS

Fisheries Group

RAC meet in Copenhagen together with a representative from the EU commission. The RAC has their 1st General Assembly 4th November in Edinburgh. RAC thank the NSC for all support. Thanks to the NSC for setting up partnership.

The next meeting of the Group is in Shetland at the end of January 2005.

Environment Group

The group has more cooperation and joint meetings between the groups, i.e. next week joint conference with the Economic Development Group in Arendal next and the conference in Ringkjøping March 2005.

This year's conference and annual meeting, how can regions promote development of sustainable products? Over 50 participants registered. The work program of the Group is based on Porsgrunn challenge.

Group members have taken responsibility to follow different themes.

Per has the updated list of responsible persons and regions for the different themes.

6a OBSERVERSHIP AT CONSSO,

Background paper for discussion of air pollution from ships in harbours, Improved fuel quality, Energy from onshore facilities, and other options.

The Executive Committee supports the proposals made for this meeting.

Regarding the issue of a trading scheme for emissions from the Shipping industry, to sell their reductions to the land based industry, the Executive Committee delegate this issue to the Environment group to make the decision for the NSC.

Economic Development Group

The Group is organising meetings and networking, at a stage where we are seeing results building of these links. Links up with other groups and organisations.

A renewable energy seminar was held last week in Husum, Germany. This seminar is a result from the study tour last year. Took part in an international seminar with Interreg projects on bio energy projects. There is a big educational opportunity here as well. A political aspect from German colleague is to include Bio energy in the revision of the Norvision document.

The Group has drafted an action plan. The group has to discuss their plan more after the discussions yesterday. Joint working with the Sail project. Contact with small business Europe who wants to cooperate with the group.

Transport Group

Transport met in Aberdeenshire last week, info on different projects, discussed an action plan that gives the members concrete tasks within the group. The Group plans a conference on sustainable transport 31st May and 1st June in Kristiansand together with the NTN project. Try to make the conference political interesting.

The Seaplane resolution widely disseminated to whom it concern.

Suggestion of forming an Intergroup taskforce on ICT, as an ad-hoc/cooperation between the Transport, Education & Research and Economic Development Groups.

Working on a revised action plan to be submitted at the March meeting to Executive Committee. Assign concrete tasks to every member of the group. Rewrite the terms of reference to be more concrete and easier to communicate.

6b COMMENTS TO EU COMMISSION CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA, ARTICLE 12A UNDER TEN-T

The Executive Committee made this decision;

1. The last meeting of the NSC Transport group on 7 - 8 October decided to comment upon the EU Commission Consultation Document on Motorways of the Sea (MOS).
2. The Transport group recommends that the Executive Committee adopts this paper as a draft statement on the MOS consultation document, and that the Transport group on this basis is given a mandate to draft a more extensive NSC statement to be submitted to the EU Commission before 1 November.

3. It is furthermore recommended that the final statement be accompanied by a cover letter signed by the NSC President.
4. The Transport group is also suggesting to dispatch a politically lead NSC delegation to the EU Commission in order to present views and to discuss the MOS issue. It is regarded as natural that such a delegation is also including representatives from the Interreg IIIB project Northern Maritime Corridor - NMC, which comprises several NSC member regions.
5. Regarding §16 of the Consultation Document, the NSC support the comment made by the CPMR.

Culture and Tourism Group

The next meeting of the Group is in Lille, France in two weeks. The Group has had a good discussion with the Interreg secretariat to promote Culture projects, but there is a lack of partners. There is a proposal to make a subgroup for tourism; but the role of the NSC Culture and Tourism Group within the project is unsolved.

Proposes a subgroup to work on 2007-programme with DG Culture.

Interreg 4 issue in the work programme of the group and wants a subgroup on this.

Seminar on local food, try to link all the projects involved with local food as a common cultural heritage.

Meeting on libraries was cancelled.

Next spring seminar on impact of culture contribution to tourism and Tourism strategy in the Interreg.

Education and Research Group

A result from the Lifelong learning conference is the wish to engage more political interest of the group. There is a need for a wake up call on lifelong learning and the importance for our development. The theme for the conference; Lifelong Learning - From Strategy to Reality. The conference had 60 participants, 20 persons at the group meeting.

The Group meeting discussed results of conference, 4 areas for cooperation.

- Support small businesses on lifelong learning, supporting SME's, guidance and support for learners
- The role of the teacher, changing role of the teacher – from teaching to learning
- Funding (where is the money and what is available i.e. Socrates prog.)
- Use NSC website for dissemination, to keep the dialogue going

Next meeting in Brussels for taking the work further.

Wants to work together with the Renewable Energy Subgroup and the Environment group on making contacts in other countries look at sustainable school buildings good practices and concrete actions.

Research has not been looked at yet.

After the information from the co-ordinators the President wished to thank all of the co-ordinators for their excellent contributions to their groups and to the NSC. The NSC is dependent on the good cooperation between the co-ordinators and the Executive, to bring forward important North Sea issues for discussion.

7 Coastal zone management – a focus area of tomorrow

Update on the conference March 1st-3rd 2005

Update on the conference March 1st –3rd, 2005 in Ringkøping, Denmark.

The programme was presented and draft handed out by Tommy Mostrup, he also made a PowerPoint presentation. Conference is about “**The black spots of the North Sea**”. Both scientists and fishermen will be represented at the conference. Expect 100 participants.

Comments on the programme were:

- Wind energy is an important topic, is it possible to include this in the program?
- A three days conference may be too long, even if the regions should see this as a main fundament of what the NSC is about.
- Is it possible to have more interaction in the program?

Preparing and arranging such a big conference is a big job, a huge conference. The ambition is to have a politically interesting conference. Need the help of all the members of NSC, involvement and participation. Many are already interested of the conference. There is a need to get an output (i.e. statement, cooperation) from the conference.

8 14TH NSC GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ZEELAND 2005

The practical items have been sorted out. End of November the co-ordinators will meet in Zeeland to plan the study tours.

The theme of the conference is still not decided.

The North Sea Interreg Secretariat has their conference June 15th.
The NSC General Assembly is June 16th and 17th.

9 NORTH SEA COMMISSION, AN ORGANISATION FOR THE FUTURE

As a result of the paper presented by the Secretariat and the discussions of the thematic meeting October 14th the Executive Committee made these decisions:

1. Roland Andersson, Västra Götaland Region is given the responsibility to be Chairman of the Baltic Sea - North Sea Cooperation.
2. Peter Byman, SNN, is given the responsibility of cooperation between NSC and EU institutions and CoR.
3. A Strategic Committee is set up. Members of the Committee are the President, the Vice-Presidents.

4. Roland Andersson, as chair of NSC-BSC cooperation, is elected as member of the Strategic committee
5. Vice President Audrey Findlay is elected as Vice president for internal affairs and is the substitute for the President in CPMR.

10 DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

The Executive Committee meet before the conference in Ringkjøping, Denmark on February 28th and March 1st 2005.

11 AOB

The NSC website is under revision and will soon be presented. The main changes are:

- The logo will be updated and slightly changed.
- All papers and documents regarding NSC will be put on the website.
- The website will allow coordinators to put their own info and news on the site themselves.
- Events calendar placed on the front page, with links to the event.
- Registration to all NSC meetings will become available on the website.
- News (can choose to have it within the group and also on the front page)
- The Secretariat wants to use the website as the main NSC information channel.
- We want to show who is who in the NSC, the Coordinators, Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Executive Committee members was asked to please send the Secretariat a picture of themselves.

The President closed the meeting to again thank Aberdeenshire Council for the wonderful arrangement.

Dawn Syvertsen and Lars Haukvik
North Sea Commission
November 2004