

North Sea Commission Strategy – Contributing to the Europe 2020



North Sea Region 2020 and Europe 2020 Strategy

This strategy intends to provide a framework for policy integration and coherent development of the NSR. The strategy sets out to promote the performance in selected target areas and to tackle priorities for the development of the NSR. It aims to remove internal market bottlenecks and improve the business environment. It sets out priority actions in order to achieve Europe 2020 Strategy objectives and each of the priorities supports several of the Europe 2020 Strategy flagships as illustrated in Table IV.



Contribution of NSR 2020 to Europe 2020 Strategy Flagships

Priorities of NSR 2020	1 Managing Maritime Space	2 Increasing Accessibility and Clean Transport	3 Tackling Climate Change	4 Attractive and Sustainable Communities	5 Promoting Innovation and Excellence
Europe 2020 Strategy Flagships					
Innovation Union	•	•	•	•	•
Youth on the Move				•	•
A digital agenda for Europe		•			•
Resource efficient Europe	•	•	•	•	•
An industrial policy of the globalisation era	•	•	•	•	•
An agenda for new skills and jobs			•	•	•
European Platform against poverty				•	•

You find the complete NSR 2020 document on the NSC website; www.northsea.org

Executive Summary

Introduction

In June 2009 the North Sea Commission (NSC) decided to explore the feasibility of developing a strategy for the North Sea Region (NSR) supporting the implementation of Europe 2020 Strategy. Extensive consultations among the NSC members and stakeholders were carried out in 2010 and 2011.

The NSR 2020 strategy paper was adopted by NSC on 31 October 2011, and the paper will be submitted to the Danish EU Presidency, representatives of national governments, EU institutions and to relevant stakeholder groups.

The NSR has the potential to act as an engine for growth in Europe and as a centre of excellence for wider EU issues. There is furthermore a need and a potential for developing existing cooperation efforts, improving policy efficiency and value for public money.

The strategy will:

- Help the NSR to remain and improve the performance as a competitive, attractive and sustainable area of Europe – supporting the implementation of Europe 2020 Strategy
- More efficiently address common, trans-national challenges and exploit opportunities related to sustainable economic growth, climate, energy, accessibility and management of the maritime space.
- Ensure a better governed region through cross sectorial coordination and multi-level governance.
- Provide a potential pilot for different kind of macro-regional strategy than the EU strategies for the Baltic and Danube.

The strategy focuses on those issue areas where public sector intervention and collaborative action at the macro-regional scale would add value.

Purpose and Objectives

The main aim of the NSR 2020 is to provide arguments for and demonstrate the added value and benefits of having a strategy for the NSR by identifying challenges, opportunities and priority strategic areas, as well as suggesting concrete measures to be implemented.



Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility (costs, lack of access, focus on road) • Energy (safety, environment, investments) • Environment (pollution of ecosystem) • Risks and safety (flooding, exhaustion of natural resources, marine safety) • Socio-economic (demography, urban migration, declining sectors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport & trade links (short sea shipping, ports, transport and energy network) • Energy resources (renewable energy) • Environmental assets (natural resources, unique ecosystems, planning and protection) • Culture and human resources (education, exchange, mobility) • Innovation/economic development (innovation, knowledge sharing, green growth) • Marine resources sustainable managed

Priority Strategic Areas

From the challenges and opportunities listed in table 1, five priority strategic areas have been identified. Each comprises focus areas and distinct fields of action. Promotion of Innovation, Excellence and Sustainability will function as a

horizontal priority running through all identified areas. The priority areas are closely connected and interdependent: e.g., the development of the tourism industry is connected and depends on, e.g., developments under accessibility.



Illustration: www.colourbox.no

Table II, Response: Priority Strategic Areas

No	Priority	Focus Area
1	Managing Maritime Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritime spatial planning • Exploitation of marine resources • North Sea Stakeholder Forum
2	Increasing Accessibility and Clean Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote development of multimodal corridors • Optimise performance of multimodal logistics chains • Clean transport • Clean shipping
3	Tackling Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change adaptation • Low-carbon technologies and energy efficient/green technologies • Renewable energy and North Sea energy grid
4	Attractive and Sustainable Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitiveness of sectors and enterprises (tourism and maritime) • Demography • Development of skills and employability
5	Promoting Innovation, Excellence and Sustainability (a horizontal priority)	

Table III, Requirements for Implementation, Cooperation and Coordination

Action Plan	Principles	Cooperation	Coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a rolling action plan • Data gathering and analysis • Includes the timeline • Monitoring provisions • Targets for strategy and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding from existing EU (including Interreg) and public sources, • Using existing funds in a better way including PPP etc. • No new legislation • No new structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve current cooperation • Better coordination avoiding isolated and uncoordinated actions • Governance mechanisms should focus cross sectoral coordination and multilevel governance • NSR stakeholder forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At policy level (Europe 2020 Strategy etc.) • Introduce priority area coordinators to strengthen links (BSR and Danube strategies)

Implementation

In order to implement the strategy, it will be necessary to develop an **action plan** with specific actions and identification of funding needs, sources and bodies responsible for the implementation. The action plan will address the issue of the priorities and their ranking, some of the issues may be more

pertinent than others. The plan is a rolling plan where actions are replaced as they are completed. The action plan will include actions/projects which demonstrate direct and visible benefits for the people in the region, or have an impact on the macro-region (or a significant part of it).

Actions will in general promote sustainable development and cover several regions and countries, be coherent and mutually supportive, creating a win-win solution; and be realistic (technically feasible and with credible funding).