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Minutes from the meeting of the Strategic Committee (SC) April 20th 2006 in Inverurie, Scotland.

Members present:

President Gunn Marit Helgesen
Vice-President Audrey Findlay
Responsible NSC-BSC Cooperation Cllr. Roland Andersson

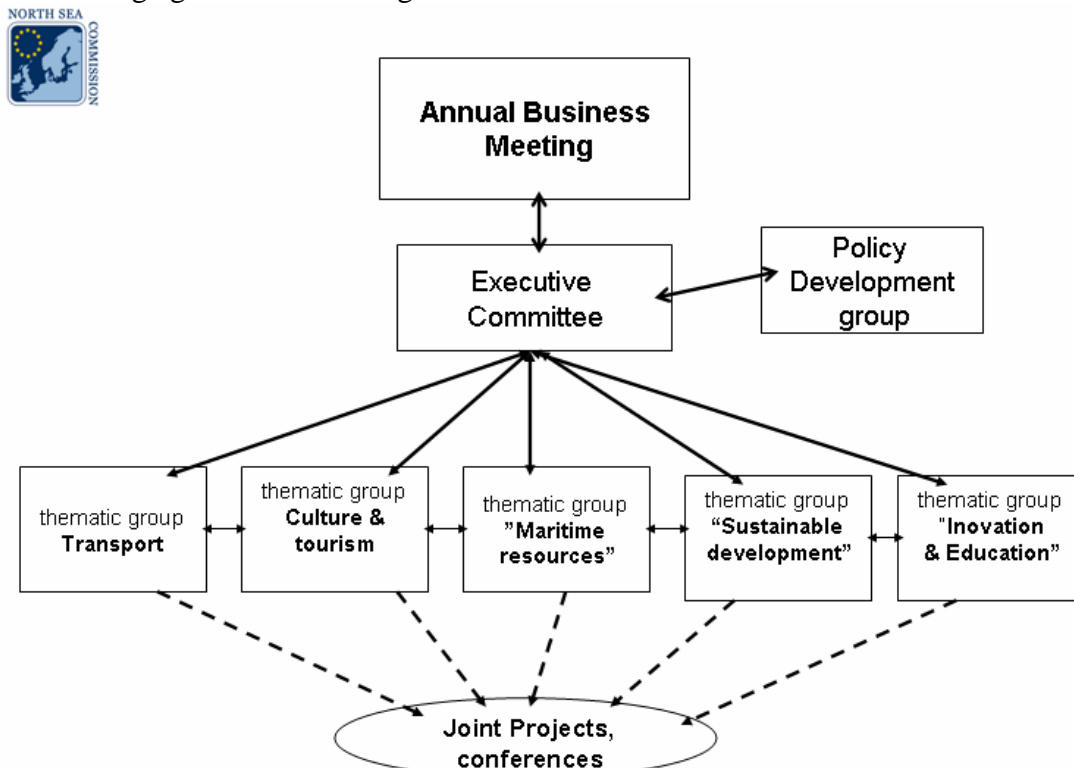
Supporting Officers present:

Jon Halvard Eide, Twan Janssen, Jörgen Niemann, James Knowles, Iain Gabriel, Martin Brebner, Lars Haukvik

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future NSC structure after the discussions of the Executive Committee meeting on March 2nd 2006. The two proposals from this meeting were sent to Chair and Vice-Chairs of all thematic groups and to the co-ordinators asking for their reactions. The Secretariat received 14 statements to the SC meeting.

For most active NSC members are the Thematic groups their first meeting point with NSC. The majority of the feedback received expressed a concern for reducing the possibilities for politicians and officers to involve themselves in NSC work. This was a view the majority of the participants of the meeting supported.

The meeting agreed on following model for further discussions:





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The meeting agreed on there is no need to change just for the sake of changing.

Today's structure needs an update, to be more on line with today's issues; therefore these changes;

- Fisheries to **Maritime resources** – in line to meet the challenges of new EU Maritime Policy (This group would still not be broad enough to address all the issues involved in the Maritime policy (i.e. environment, tourism, transport, economic development etc). Whether a Maritime Resources group is suitable to act, as a lead in this respect would have to be further discussed.)
- Environment to **Sustainable Development** – the SC wants to give a clearer sign for NSC to make a group responsible to follow up of the Gothenburg Agenda. (Sustainable development is and will always be much more than environment).
- Merge Education & Research and Economic Development to one group **Innovation and Education** - a more clear sign for a follow up of the Lisbon Agenda

NSC want's still to be a political organisation and the Policy Development Group (consisting of SC members and the Co-ordinators) needs to be proactive in raising political issues for the ExCom and the General Assembly. The Policy Development Group (PDG) is a partly new structure. By forming such a structure and at the same time maintaining the main features of the current thematic group structure, the NSC would be able to profit from the best features of both models. The Co-ordinators is supposed to be integrated in the work of the PDG as thematic advisors for the policy papers to be produced. In this way both in-depth knowledge, coherence and policy considerations will be built into the PDG

The ExCom needs to give the thematic groups clear guidance for their work and the thematic groups must continue their work to make clear work plans.

There is a wish to use the political and administrative expertise of all NSC members to continue develop NSC and to open for input from the members to raise important issues.

NSC must build on our strengths for continue initiate sharing of best practice and joint initiatives between the thematic groups.

Joint projects & conferences: NSC should consider to assign certain co-ordinators with a particular responsibility in this field according to their interests and competence.

On the background of this, it was suggested that the remits and roles of the re-named groups and the new Innovation and Education group should be further discussed as a part of the overall re-structuring discussion, with a view of ensuring active involvement of the NSC membership, as well as producing coherent policy positions across thematic boundaries.

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