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NSC WORK PLANS 2008 - 2009

Enclosed are the Work Plans for the Thematic Groups, these Work Plans was adopted at the Executive Committee meeting 4 April 2008.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of 13th June 2008 adopts the presented Thematic Groups Work Plans for 2008 - 2009.***



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Culture & Tourism Group Work Plan 2008-09 and Strategic Plan 2008-13.

The action plan 2008-09 is valid for the period between the NSC General Assemblies 2008 and 2009. The Strategic Plan is valid for the EU budget period 2007-13.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-13

The strategy of the Culture & Tourism Group is closely related to the EU agenda, and the strategies of CPMR and the North Sea Commission.

Our group represents the broad or overarching overview and analysis, and that this forms a strong platform for our future work. The role of culture and tourism in regional development as a key issue for us.

It is further important to define the roles of the political members, the officer members and of the observers within the group. Further, the need to prioritise and have a focus is stressed. The need to demonstrate value for money to the public is also underlined. Information to, and support for cultural actors is important. They need support both in the form of competence/assistance and financially.

The group should turn from being more or less re-active to being much more pro-active. We acknowledge that there is a raised political profile of the NSC, and that we should also raise the political profile of the C&T. We should try and influence the European agenda, and we should work closely with the CoR members from our regions, with our the processes as possible. Here we should also use our regional offices in Brussels as our ears. We also need better links between the Commission and the regions. Our group should co-operate closely with relevant bodies in Brussels and elsewhere.

1. The role of the Culture and Tourism Group within the NSC – we should focus on selected issues, and we should have clear objectives and priorities
2. The work should present added value to all member regions. It is also essential that group members provide a link back home to politicians and senior officials in their region.
3. We should act as a lobbying organisation in relation to the EU agenda and EU funds and we should keep an EU perspective in our work
4. We should report back to the group on all issues that are relevant for the members
5. Knowledge and competence building is vital to the group
6. We should maintain a regional development perspective

Our role is to strengthen the North Sea area, but also demonstrate how our region can address global issues in a good way; it should be a region of excellence in responding to global challenges. We must use the European networks also, and make them more accessible to all members. These networks are vital in relation to successful lobbying.



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The membership of the group should be strengthened also, and members must be more conscious of reporting results back home, and taking issues from home to the table of the group.

Therefore, our strategy has three legs:

1. The EU perspective
2. The regional development perspective – the North Sea Vision
3. The political perspective – politicians should be actively involved in the group

The EU perspective 2008-13

The most important issues for us during this period will be the shaping of the regional policy after 2013, including the future culture and tourism strategies of the EU after 2013. Together with the CPMR, we should ensure that there is an EU regional policy after 2013, and that this policy includes culture and tourism.

The regional perspective – the North Sea Vision

The North Sea should become a region of excellence for global issues, and the North Sea region should also become a region of demonstration for how regional co-operation can be developed in practice. For both these objectives, the Interreg North Sea is a good instrument. The NSC should develop an Interreg programme addressing these issues.

The political perspective

The strategy is a highly political one, and needs the support of politicians from all member regions of the NSC. The active participation of politicians within all thematic groups of the NSC should be encouraged.

2. WORK PLAN 2008-09

The action plans for NSC thematic groups must cover three levels:

1. Political priorities within culture and tourism
2. Concrete projects to follow up the strategic and political priorities and demonstrate how North Sea co-operation can contribute to achieving these priorities
3. Strategic priorities of the NSC Executive Committee

1. Political priorities of the culture and tourism group

The Culture and Tourism Group have decided on a set of political priorities. These have been linked to culture and tourism as important factors for regional development, and include monitoring of, and actions relating to the European agenda in these fields.

During 2008-09, the realization of the European Cultural Agenda and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders will have high priority also for us.



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It is also important to support all work to ensure that culture and creativity are incorporated into various EU funding schemes, in accordance with the European Cultural Agenda priorities.

The same applies to sustainable tourism development, where we will work closely with the CPMR Intercom group on sustainable tourism to follow up initiatives from the Commission. It is also important to continue the co-operation with the Committee of the Regions.

2. Concrete projects

The new funding programmes 2007-13 offers a number of opportunities for development projects that can demonstrate North Sea contributions on major global and European challenges like climate change, economic and social cohesion, regional integration and cross-border co-operation.

Both the Cultural Programme 2007-13 and the new Interreg IV programmes are relevant for project funding, and members of the C&T group should help develop project ideas based on the strategic and political priorities of the NSC and relating to the thematic focus of our group

3. Strategic priorities of the NSC

The NSC Executive Committee decides on the strategic priorities of the NSC. These again also reflect the strategic priorities of the CPMR.

The ExCom has not yet set the strategic objectives for 2008-09.

However, the NSC General Assembly in June 2007 adopted a document entitled 'The important policy areas for NSC in the future'. This document outlines the strategic priorities of the NSC for the coming years.

The new strategic priorities are

1. Cooperation with the BSC
2. Sustainable development with a special focus on energy
3. Food
4. Innovation and Education
5. Cultural agenda and experiential tourism
6. Maritime polity

Concerning the thematic groups, this paper further states that

1. The thematic groups must continue to strengthen their internal and external networks, both for politicians and for officers
2. The thematic groups must investigate the possibilities for using projects/external funding as a tool for their work
3. The Executive Committee must then ensure the links between the groups, to avoid double work and to prioritise what to do
4. The thematic groups are responsible for the follow-up of the development of their issues and report to the Executive Committee when needed
5. Continue with cross-sectoral conferences in cooperation between the thematic groups.



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The Culture & Tourism Group's main responsibility is to assist the Executive Committee on these strategic priorities. The group will identify specific issues within these where the group can give input, and the group will also respond to requests from the Executive Committee for assistance and input in specific issues.

The culture and tourism group will relate to the strategic priorities as follows:

1. Cooperation with BSC

Currently, there is no links on culture and tourism between the NSC and the BSC. Our Chair, in her role as the coordinator for NSC-BSC relations, has expressed a desire to extend NSC-BSC cooperation to include culture and tourism. We can achieve this by using our contacts to encourage the formation of a culture and tourism group within the BSC.

Action: Encourage formation of BSC culture and tourism group

2. Sustainable development with a special focus on energy

The intended objective is to clarify the NSC position on the future energy policies, and the Sustainable Development group is responsible for this issue.

The culture and tourism group could probably give important input. The Green Paper on adaptation to climate change is a good example, where protective measures for the cultural heritage were totally missing from the paper. The issue of sustainable tourism is also a case where the work of our two groups overlaps, and where we can work together.

Action: Respond to initiatives from the Sustainable Development group.

3. Food

This priority is a follow-up of the food conference August 2006, and the theme covers a number of issues, several of which are also of great importance to the culture and tourism group (including local food, and traditional food). The Innovation and Education group is responsible for this issue.

Action:

4. Innovation and education

This priority focuses on the Lisbon strategy. The EU Commission Policy Strategy for 2009 clearly states that 'The Commission will continue to pursue its broad-based innovation strategy. And focus on unlocking the potential of creative industries'. The Innovation and Education group is the responsible group, but with the publication of the new Commission Communication on a Strategy for Culture, the Lisbon strategy has been extended to culture and creativity, and we should have a stronger involvement in this issue.

Action: Monitor and respond to the European discussion on the inclusion of culture and creativity in the Lisbon strategy.

5. Cultural agenda and experiential tourism

This priority reflects our two main work areas, and the issue is our main responsibility.

We must participate actively in the discussion leading up to the European Cultural Agenda, and also in the ongoing discussions relating to the role of cultural tourism and sustainable tourism.



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The Commission Communication on a Strategy for Culture lists three objectives for the agenda:

- Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue
- Promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs
- Promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations.

Our group should have a particular focus on the second objective, albeit not forgetting the two others.

Concerning cultural tourism, our groups should continue supporting the initiatives of the ECTN.

Action: Monitor and respond to the European discussions on these issues. Work together with ECTN.

6. Maritime policy

We have already made inputs in relation to the Green Paper, and this now needs to be followed up. Our main responsibility will be to see to that the strong emphasis on the importance of the maritime heritage for all Europeans is reflected in future policies and priorities.

Action: Monitor and respond to policy papers on maritime policy.

Meetings 2008-09

End 2008: Meeting and conference in Zeeland on cultural agenda and sustainable tourism (the latter in cooperation with the sustainable development group)

Spring 2009: Meeting in Aberdeenshire

June 2009: Meeting in connection with AGM

Responsibilities:

1. Political priorities (EU agenda): Vice-Chair Lars Nordström
2. Concrete projects: Vice-Chair Wendy Mawer assisted by individual members of the C&T group and the advisor
3. Responding to strategic priorities and reporting back to Executive Committee: Chair Harry van Waveren, assisted by advisor



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Innovation & Education Group Work Plan 08 – 09

Introduction

The Innovations and Education Group (IEG) was formed in 2006 by bringing together the Economic Development and Education & Research groups.

The IEG is chaired by Councillor Ole B. Sørensen from Region North Denmark.

The two Vice Chairs are Councillor Stella Duneufjardin from Nord-pas de Calais, France, and Councillor Kate Dean from Aberdeen City Council. Mr Erik Lindboe, from Rogaland County Council in Norway is the advisor of the group.

We have developed a Mission Statement:

"To develop a strategy, shaped by engagement with our members which helps deliver innovative economic activity allied to and involving life long learning within the countries of the North Sea and which is socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable and which promotes health and well being."

From such a mission statement we have developed a work plan which places emphasis upon several areas of interest:

- * Linking innovation and education via a project which expresses this link.
- * Establish a North Sea Schools Sustainability Project
- * Establish and then maintain a model for co-operation with the Baltic Sea Commission
- * Food

On behalf of the group,

Councillor Ole B. Sørensen



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IEG Strategies	<i>Actions</i>	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Output
IEG's Strategic Group	Meetings to plan activities and actions	NSC IEG Strategic Group	Ongoing	IEG Chair, vice-chair, adviser and officers	Systematic Strategic IEG planning
IEG Members' Network	Send profile questionnaire to group members	Adviser	Ongoing	Adviser	A members' profile database on NSC website.
Market the IEG and the North Sea Commission	Publish news-letters, press releases etc	Strategic Group	2008	Strategic Group	Increase the knowledge of the NSC and the IEG
The Lisbon Strategy: (“Share best practice and Experience. Raise awareness of the importance of mobility in Europe (among professionals, and therefore aim to improve mobility of young people) Identify common challenges	Promote and encourage professional and social inclusion of young people	IEG vice-chair Cllr. Stella Duneufjardin, Nor-Pas de Calais, to follow this up.	Ongoing through 2008.....	To be determined - Sources of external funding may include: Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig, etc. Opportunities through Interreg to be investigated	Comparison among the regions of approaches to improving inclusion and employability of young people. Exchange of professionals Dissemination of findings
The North Sea Schools Sustainability Network	1- Involve schools in “Sustainability around the North Sea” 2- The school food project	Lead partner: Saxmundham Middle School, plus participating schools, and the IEG adviser. Application submitted to Comenius in Feb.2008,	Project period: October 2007 – June 2009. 2008 - 2010	IEG adviser / Partner schools	Exchange of best practice, climate research, seminars etc.
- The North Sea Screen Partnership	Shadow this proposed Interreg IVB program	Adviser	2008 – 2011	Members of the IEG / NSC	Knowledge transfer / best practise / network and cluster building.
Food	Follow up the NSC Food Event in Dundee, Scotland, 2006	Strategic group. Cooperation with other groups. Connect to Interreg- and school projects	2008 -	The IEG / thematic groups / group advisers	Focus on a variety subjects on Food,+ better food safety
Knowledge transfer / Best practise	Present the so-called “Scandinavian triangle model” – (a method for business development) to IEG members.	Adviser and The BTV region (Norway)	2008	IEG adviser, people from the BTV Region (Norway) and group members' time	Knowledge transfer re. business development schemes.



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Energy / Renewable energy	1) Shadow the "Passive House Project" in Sweden 2) The Energy co-ordinating group	IEG Adviser IEG chair / IEG adviser	2008	Adviser / Strategic Group IEG members	Proposed Interreg - project Meeting to be held with chairs and advisers
Increasing links with the other NSC Thematic Groups	Contact the thematic groups re. co-operation on projects, meetings, etc	Adviser	Ongoing	IEG, NSC Secretariat and other Thematic Groups.	Identify topics of mutual interest, develop joint meetings, projects, etc.
Co-operation with the Baltic Sea Commission	Develop the contact with the BSC. Joint meetings.	Adviser	Ongoing	Adviser	Identify areas of mutual interest.



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Marine Resources Group Work Plan 08-09

“The NSCMRG aims to maximise the Quality of life in and around Coastal Communities around the North Sea”

Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Staffing/resources	Output
Continue to improve relations between fishers and scientists relations	Continuing to take part in the work of the NSRAC	Advisor Chair or Vice Chairs	2008-2010	Advisor and Chair or Vice Chairs	<i>Ensure that NSC views and policies and taken account of by the NSRAC.</i>
Improve Stakeholder participation and stewardship	<p>Establish North Sea Commission Inshore Fisheries Forum</p> <p>Organise a Seminar in 2006 to discuss the formation of the Forum</p> <p>Search for funding</p> <p>VG & Shetland have to agree who will Chair and secretariat</p>	Co-ordinator – Vastra Gotaland Region & Shetland Islands Council	2008	Establishing secretariat - Chair for Forum	<i>Seminar was organised in May 2007 where it was agreed to take the report to the NSRAC Executive meeting in Vienna. This was also done with approval from the Seminar and the NSRAC, for establishment of an Inshore Fisheries.</i>
Political Learning Journey	Develop Links with Baltic Sea States	Chair. Vice Chairs politicians and Advisors of NSCMRG & NSCSDG			<i>Gain better understanding of common needs and interests. Develop economic, cultural links and share experience and best practice.</i>
Safety on, around and in the North Sea	<p>Organised a workshop in Stavanger, during the NSC Maritime Policy Conference, to highlight Fish Safe as a possible North Sea Maritime Policy Project.</p> <p>A new project will ensure that all fishermen working in the North Sea will access to this vital piece of safety equipment</p>	Advisor + NSC Maritime Policy Rapporteur	2008-2010	Travel costs	<i>NSCMRG has had several meeting with SFF Services, Oil & Gas sector and the EU Commission. We are now at the stage of prepare a note of interest for EFF funding and a further meeting to discuss Maritime Policy funding is arranged for the end of.</i>



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CPMR Fisheries INTERCOM GROUP	Support CPMR FIG Chair & Secretariat with future work. Work with CPMR, NSRAC, OSPAR to develop a plan to include Maritime Basins in the future EU Maritime Policy	Advisor, Shetland Islands Council, CPMR, NSC Secretariat	2008-2010	Co-ordinator, Shetland Islands Council, CPMR & NSC Secretariat	<i>Closer working between NSCFG – CPMR FIG to encourage more effective and efficient use of time and resources. NSCMRG met with COPMRFIG in Brussels in March 2007. Chair of CPMRDFIG is now also the Vice Chair of NSCMRG he also represents the CPMR/NSC on the Inter-RAC group.</i>
Ports Strategy	Organise a workshop for small fishing ports	Advisor & members	2008-2009		<i>Develop a coherent North Sea Sustainable Ports Strategy</i>
OSPAR observership	Arrange a meeting with OSPAR, CPMR, NSRAC and NSC to look at the future of Maritime Basins and the Regional Approach for EU Maritime Policy	NSC Secretariat and Advisor, NSC maritime Policy Rapporteur and CPMR Secretariat	2008	Time of staff from relevant NSC member regions	<i>Contributions to OSPAR policies and EU Maritime Policy</i>
NSC/BSC Co-operation	Organise a joint meeting to discuss Marine Spatial Planning e.g. Barent Sea Marine Plan.	Advisor, Chair, Members NSC, BSC members, NSRAC Spatial Planning Working group Chair.	2008	Time of relevant members	<i>Share best practice and experience.</i>

The main priorities of NSCMRG 2008-2010 work plan will be:

- All Users of the North Sea – working together to ensure safety and protect stocks and the environment
- Fisheries: Inshore Fisheries Network
- Fishing Ports – Waste treatment & management, portside electricity developing a sustainable future
- NSC/Baltic Sea Co-operation both political and technical
- North Sea /Baltic Marine Spatial Plans
- NSC/CMPR/OSPAR/NSRAC working group to discuss Maritime Basins plan



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Sustainable Development Group Work Plan 08 – 09

NORTH SEA COMMISSION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP shall assume the full responsibility for the promotion of Sustainable Development within the North Sea area.

NSC – SDG Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources & Comments	Output	Results
Maritime Policy “Blue Book”	Identify Actions suitable for the group from the 29 actions in the Blue Book.	All Members	2008 /09	All Members	Once actions are identified the SDG should focus on methods of how it could work with the Aquamarina group established by the CPMR in the implementation of the selected actions.	
Renewable Energy/CPMR Energy Group	Shadow Build with Care – North Sea Programme Project Work with the Energy Co-ordinating Group of NSC	Chair, Vice Chairs and Adviser	Ongoing	SDG Members, Chair, Vice Chairs and adviser	NSP – Project and working with the Innovation and Education Group. Input to CPMR energy policies and statements.	Interreg Application will be submitted on the 17 th of March.



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Baltic Sea Commission cooperation	Work more closely with relevant groups from BSC		On-going		Joint NSC-BSC conference on Energy 2008	Joint Annual Conference organised for the 24 th and 25 th of April 2008.
Holistic Working	Working together with other Thematic Groups	Adviser	Ongoing	Chair, Vice Chairs and Adviser	Development of Joint Projects and Papers.	
Sustainable Green Public Procurement	Produce Paper	Chair, Vice Chairs and Adviser	2008	Chair, Vice Chairs, Adviser and Members	Resolution Paper to CPMR General Assembly 2008	



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Transport Group Work Plan 08 – 09

Work Plan for the NSC Transport group					
Key Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Outputs
1. Developing Intermodal transport corridors, incl. Motorways of the Seas (MoS) in the North Sea Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor process in EU Commission and in North Sea states with regard to MoS - Consider policy initiatives - Explore and promote relevant transport corridors in the North Sea Region 	Chair, Vice-Chair(s), Co-ordinator and selected group members:	ongoing	Working time of Chair, Vice-Chair(s), Co-ordinator and group members, possibly travel, accommodation and meeting costs, expenses to promotional material, possibly expenses to private consultants	Meetings Seminars Reports Proposals Projects (?)

Key Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Outputs
2. Develop ideas and proposals for transport projects under the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and further develop project ideas Facilitate project partnerships Provide input to project proposals & applications 	Co-ordinator and selected group members	ongoing, group meetings as milestones	Working time of Co-ordinator and group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Project ideas -Partner search submissions -Input to project applications -Project application submitted -Possibly approved projects



Key Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Outputs
3. Co-operation with the Baltic Sea Commission (BSC) on Transport issues	<p>-Identify and decide on relevant themes (MoS, air transport and sustainable transport) and forms of cooperation</p> <p>- Recurrent exchange of information on activities</p> <p>- Consider the organisation of meetings, seminars, study visits, drafting of joint resolutions to CPMR and EU, joint projects</p>	Chair, Vice-Chair(s), Co-ordinator and selected group members	2007 – 2008 and probably beyond	Working time, travel and accommodation expenses of involved group members	<p>-Meetings</p> <p>-Studies</p> <p>-Study tours</p> <p>-policy positions, resolutions</p> <p>- Seminar/conferences</p> <p>-Projects</p>

Key Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Outputs
4. Energy issues in the transport sector	<p>-Explore pre-conditions for introducing more sustainable fuels in the transport sector</p> <p>-Exchange information and good practice on sustainable fuels in the transport sector</p> <p>-Contribute to NSC work on energy</p>	Co-ordinator and selected group members	2007 – 2008 and probably beyond	Working time of Co-ordinator and involved group members, travel and accommodation expenses,	<p>-Thematic seminar in Aberdeenshire 24 May</p> <p>- Seminar report</p> <p>- Compilation of good practice</p> <p>- Policy recommendations and other contributions to NSC work on energy</p>



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Key Activity	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Outputs
5. Statistical mapping of key developments in transport sector	<p>-Investigate availability of relevant statistical material</p> <p>-Compile key figures on origin/destination and modal split for passenger and goods flows within the NSR</p> <p>-Periodic publishing of statistics & corresponding analysis</p>	Chair and selected group members from Västra Götaland Region and Groningen Sea Ports	Permanent, starting spring 2007	Working time of Chair and involved group members	<p>-Periodic statistics & analysis on key developments in transport sector</p> <p>-Reports to Executive Committee and relevant transport Projects and networks.</p>