



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

Draft Minutes of the 48th NSC Executive Committee Meeting 13th of June 2008 at the Herning Conference Centre, Herning, Denmark.

NSC Executive Committee Participants:

President	Cllr. Gunn Marit Helgesen (Telemark)
Vice - President	Cllr. Sandy Cluness (Shetland)
Vice - President	Cllr. Rinske Krusinga (Province Noord -Holland)
Danish Representative	Cllr. Harry Jensen (Central Denmark Region)
Dutch Representative	not represented
English Representative	Cllr. Kevan Lim (East of England Regional Assembly)
French Representative	not represented
German Representative	not represented
Norwegian Representative	Cllr. Gisle Handeland (Hordaland)
Scottish Representative	not represented
Swedish Representative	Cllr. Annelie Stark (Region Västra Götaland)
Executive Secretary	Lars Haukvik
Assistant Executive Secretary	Vibeke Jakobsen

NSC Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Thematic Groups present:

Culture and Tourism	
Innovation and Education	
Sustainable Development	Cllr. John Lamb (EERA)
Marine Resources	Cllr. Harry Jensen (Central Denmark Region)
Transport	

NSC Thematic Group Advisers present:

Culture and Tourism	Geir Sør-Reime (Rogaland)
Innovation and Education	Erik Lindboe (Rogaland)
Sustainable Development	Yasa Ratnayeke (Aberdeen City)
Marine Resources	Ann Bell (Aberdeenshire)
Transport	Jon Halvard Eide (Vest-Agder)

Supporting politicians, officers and observers:

Cllr. Peter Argyle (Aberdeenshire)
Cllr. Peter Grant (Fife)
Cllr. Andreas Lervik (Østfold)



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Martin Brebner (Aberdeenshire)
Vivien Collie (Vivid Ideas and Solutions Ltd)
Runa Coxeter (North Denmark Region)
Hilde Donker (Noord Holland)
Norbert Holder (MLUR – Schleswig Holstein)
Twan Janssen (SNN)
Henrik M. Jensen (Region Midjylland)
Andrew Llanwarne (IDEAction)
Stefan Musiolik (Ministry of Justice, Employment and European)
Michael Nielsen (North Denmark Region)
Dominique Robertson (Fife)
Anja-Verena Schmid (Ministry of Justice, Employment and European)
Emma Sharp (EERA)
Sally Spence (Shetland)
Gordon Summers (Highlands)

Apologies:

Cllr. Leif Blomquist (Region Västra Götaland)
Cllr. Annika Carlsson (Region Halland)
Cllr. Kate Dean (Aberdeen City)
Cllr. Uwe Döring (Land Schleswig-Holstein)
Cllr. Anders Fasth (Region Västra Götaland)
Cllr. Martine Filleul (Region Nord-Pas de Calais)
Cllr. Sjoerd Galema (Province of Fryslan (SNN))
Cllr. Martin Kayenburg (Land Schleswig-Holstein)
Cllr. Jeannine Marquaille (Region Nord-Pas de Calais)
Cllr. Wendy Mawer (EERA)
Cllr. Lars Nordström (Region Västra Götaland)
Cllr. Henrik Ringbæk Madsen (Region Nordjylland)
Cllr. Anne Robertson (Aberdeenshire)
Cllr. Ole B. Sørensen (Region Nordjylland)
Cllr. Harry van Waveren (Province of Zeeland)
Cllr. Paul Weber (South Denmark Region)
Cllr. Thore Westermoen (Vest-Agder)
Cllr. Marten Wiersma (Land Schleswig-Holstein)



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Introduction

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (President, NSC), started the meeting by welcoming everyone. The Agenda for the meeting was approved.

1. Minutes of the 47th Executive Committee meeting, Hotel Scandic Europa, Gothenburg, Sweden, 4 April 2008.

Decision:

The Minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Election of NSC Office bearers

The Committee members were advised that Cllr. Andreas Lervik (Østfold) was leaving his position as Chair of the NSC Sustainable Development Group. He was thanked for all his work with the NSC and the Sustainable Development group.

Cllr John Lamb (East of England Regional Assembly) a former Vice Chair of the Sustainable Development Group was nominated, and elected to the position of Chair of the Sustainable Development Group.

The Sustainable Development Group now has a vacant position for a Vice Chair. The President asked potential candidates to put their names forward and encouraged members to promote this position in their home region.

Decision:

Cllr John Lamb (East of England Regional Assembly) was elected as Chair of the NSC Sustainable Development Group.

Candidates are now required for election to the position of Vice Chair of the NSC Sustainable Development Group.

3. NSC Organisational Issues

3.1 Promoting the Success of the NSC

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (President, NSC), invited discussion on the two research reports that had recently been completed by Andrew Llanwarne (IDEAction) and Vivien Collie (Vivid Ideas and Solutions Ltd). These reports are available on the NSC webs ite:

- "Success of the NSC" Report
- Ideas for Improvement



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Cllr. Kevan Lim (EERA) thought that the reports are useful and link well with the current review of the CPMR. Changes in the CPMR would allow the NSC more opportunities for the future. He thought that the NSC should consider how to link these reports to the CPMR and use them to secure more resources directly to the NSC.

Twan Janssen (SNN) stated that the NSC would need firm statements and strategy for the CPMR General Assembly in order to achieve change. It is important that the CPMR enquiry links its future structure and funding to its future purpose.

Ann Bell (Adviser to the Marine Resources Group) said that the Advisers had met and are looking at how an inter-related project for the North Sea basin could be developed and secure extra funding.

Cllr. Sandy Cluness (Vice-President NSC) stated that although the NSC Thematic groups are functional and important, some groups are better than others. There is also an inter-relationship between the groups, but there are few opportunities to see how they integrate. He said that it is often difficult to get political involvement in the groups in terms of finding Chairs and Vice Chairs. The continual change of politicians can prevent a strategic and holistic approach to reports and decisions. He felt that there needed to be a professional, long term approach to the issues considered by the NSC. There is a need for an officer, in addition to administrative staff, to tie together the Thematic Groups.

Cllr. John Lamb (EERA) expressed the view that there is a need for a professional person to link the thematic groups, and the CPMR's support is required to do this.

Jon Halvard Eide (Adviser to the Transport Group) said that he thought there was a need for better integration between the Thematic Groups. It has previously been suggested in a NSC paper that the groups meet at the same time as the Executive Committee. This idea could be reconsidered.

Henrik M. Jensen (Region Midjylland) said that the Interreg Secretariat is seeking more political involvement in the new programme projects, and a real 'top down' approach to influencing policies. This offers a good opportunity to link the political work of the NSC with the new Interreg Programme. The Baltic Sea Programme is similar, which allows continued NSC-BSC co-operation.

Cllr. Sandy Cluness (Vice-President NSC) agreed, but stressed that in order to give direction and secure beneficial outcomes of projects, there is still a need for the NSC to have professional plans.

The President said that it is difficult to form an ideal organisation. It is most important, however, that the politicians get the chance to meet and discuss politics. The proposed discussion with the Interreg Secretariat should also be pursued and a meeting arranged to identify common issues. She agreed that there is a need for the NSC to influence the future of the CPMR, and the feedback from the recent political seminar should be used.



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Cllr. Gisle Handeland (Hordaland) suggested that the President and Secretariat should go through these reports and produce a list of proposals to help the NSC operate better and differently.

The President concluded that the reports would be looked at carefully, and the NSC Strategic Committee would report back with recommendations for action.

Action:

The NSC Strategic Committee will follow up on the 'Success of the NSC' and the 'Ideas for Improvement' research reports. The Strategic Committee will give their recommendations for action to the NSC Executive Committee.

A meeting should be arranged between NSC representatives and the Interreg North Sea Region Secretariat.

The political seminar conclusions should be fed back to the CPMR.

3.2 Follow up of the decisions made at the Annual Business Meeting 13 June 2008

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (President, NSC), asked the members who attended the meeting if all the NSC resolutions and statements should also be sent to other institutes and organisations.

The general consensus was that these resolutions and statements should be more widely distributed to member states, MEPs, the media and other relevant organisations. This would help demonstrate and promote the work of the NSC and gain support for its proposals.

Decision:

It was agreed that, in future, NSC resolutions would be sent to the CPMR, national politicians, European politicians and relevant stakeholders. All NSC members should also take responsibility for using the information in their local media. This could be shared via the website.

3.3 Participation in Maritime Week 2009

Lars Haukvik (NSC Executive Secretary) reported that the first European Maritime Day was launched in Brussels on 19-20 May 2008. European Maritime Day will now be held on the 20 May each year. It aims to promote the importance of the EU's maritime sectors, marine resources and coastal communities. The event was used by high level representatives from European institutions and national governments to set out their vision for implementing the EU's common Maritime Policy.



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The European Commission hoped to hold a number of stakeholder events for Maritime Week next year. The dates for 2009 are 18 -19 May. It is likely that the basic theme of Maritime Week will examine how to co-ordinate the activities of regions with each other, other levels of governance and other stakeholders.

Martin Brebner (Aberdeenshire) advised that Aberdeenshire Council has already agreed in principle to host an event next year in conjunction with the European Commission Office in Scotland. The event is likely to look at the barriers faced by local and regional authorities when implementing the Maritime Policy and co-ordinating related policies.

The opportunity exists for the NSC to promote itself as one of the organisers, and help place itself as a driver of the Maritime Policy in the North Sea. The event could also, perhaps, help in the process of lobbying for the development of a North Sea implementation strategy.

The NSC Executive agreed to participate in the event which will be hosted by Aberdeenshire Council.

Decision:

It was agreed that the NSC would participate in the event hosted by Aberdeenshire Council in 2009, and that this subject would be discussed in more detail at the next NSC Executive Committee meeting in October.

4. Next Meeting

Decision:

It was agreed that the next NSC Executive Committee meeting would be in Shetland, Scotland in October 2008 (date to be confirmed).

5. AOB

5.1 Baltic Sea Commission joint resolution

The Committee considered the invitation from the Baltic Sea Commission (BSC) for a joint resolution to support work within the TN-RIS group (a group within CPMR on innovation). It was felt, however, that the purpose and detail of the request are unclear. More time was required, therefore, to find out more about the objectives and requirements of this resolution.

Decision:

It was agreed that the President of the NSC would meet with the BSC representatives at the CPMR General Assembly. Depending on the information available she would then either approve in principle, or seek further clarification.



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5.2 NSC Ad Hoc Group on the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion

Cllr Sandy Cluness (Vice – President of the NSC), advised that he would be distributing questionnaires to seek advice on this issue from the NSC group chairs and vice chairs. (The Islands Commission of the CPMR is also looking at this issue). Once all this information has been gathered together it will be brought back to the next NSC Executive Committee.

Action:
Questionnaires to be distributed.

5.3 NSC Energy Group

Cllr. Kevan Lim (East of England Regional Assembly) advised that a complex series of proposals is currently going through the European Parliament. These will have an impact on Energy. These proposals are going through the Parliament very quickly, making the deadlines for responses very short. The Proposals include:

- Proposal for a Directive on the Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources.
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Geological Storage of Carbon Dioxide
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2003/87/EC so as to improve and extend the Greenhouse Gas Emission Allowance Trading System of the Community
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the effort of Member States to reduce their Greenhouse Gas Emissions to meet the Community's Greenhouse Gas emission reduction commitments up to 2020

The CPMR Energy group has made responses to these Proposals.

Under the Proposal for a Directive on the Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources, the CPMR Energy group has produced considerations on four specific points:

- Calculation of the share of energy from renewable sources
- Transfer of Guarantees of Origin (clarification is required to ensure that investment is encouraged in this sector)
- Access to the electricity grid (peripheral areas should not be disadvantaged)
- Biofuels (including concern about large amounts of farmland being used for the production of fuel rather than food, and that the production of second generation biofuels needs to be encouraged)

The CPMR's draft Policy Position Paper on all these proposals has been sent to the European Parliament. It has also been suggested to the Commission that the future



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Aberdeen Conference is used as a consultation event , and that the Commission should send a representative.

Decision:
The information was noted.

5.4 NSC Open Day in Brussels 2009

Cllr. Rinske Krusinga (Vice-President of the NSC) advised that there is still no detail of the theme for the Open Days in Brussels during October 2009.

Action:
Information is required on the 2009 theme.

5.5 NSC website request

Lars Haukvik (NSC Executive Secretary) advised that the NSC had recently been approached by a representative from an Interreg project asking if it would be possible to use the NSC website to disseminate the project information.

There was a consensus that this would be a good idea . It would provide the project with a cost effective web presence and provide the NSC with income for hosting the project information.

Decision:
It was agreed that the NSC would pursue this enquiry to host Interreg project information.

5.6 The Future of the CPMR Enquiry Process

Lars Haukvik (NSC Executive Secretary) advised the group that the CPMR enquiry process involved a paper and web-based questionnaire. He encouraged all members to respond to the questionnaire.

Action:
NSC Executive Committee members to respond t o CPMR questionnaire.

5.7 The NSC Carbon Footprint

Ann Bell (Adviser to the Marine Resources Group), said that the Thematic Group Advisers are considering the possibility of nominating one project that would benefit from all the carbon footprint compensation payments from NSC activities.



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Cllr. Kevan Lim (East of England Regional Assembly) voiced a note of caution. Sometimes companies use the carbon compensation schemes as an excuse to do nothing about changing their behaviour. Any efforts on this subject must be seen to be authentic.

Decision:

It was agreed that Ann Bell would report back to the NSC Executive Committee with a paper outlining a firm idea on how to progress this proposal.

6. Close of meeting

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (President, NSC), thanked Cllr. Andreas Lervik (Østfold) for all his work with the NSC. She thanked Region Midtjylland in Denmark for hosting the meeting.