



Draft Minutes for the 20th North Sea Commission Annual Business Meeting 21st June 2011 at the Provincial Court, Bruges, Belgium

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (Telemark fylkeskommune) President of the North Sea Commission (NSC) welcomed everyone and thanked the Province of West Flanders for hosting the Annual Conference and General Assembly in 2011. She offered an apology from Hideo Kojimoto who was not able to attend.

20th North Sea Commission Annual Business Meeting - Agenda

Decision:

- 1. The agenda was adopted unanimously.*

1. Annual Reports

- President's Report**

The President said that she had been elected seven years ago, and it is a great privilege to continue to work with everyone. When people speak with one voice, she said, it demonstrates that a difference can be made.

The President said that the North Sea 2020 document is very important, and gives priorities identifying synergies for the whole region, always with the European agenda in mind.

She thanked Cllr Rinske Krusinga, who was attending her last meeting, for her dedication, commitment and hard work, and also for her personal attitude and friendship.

Gunn Marit also paid tribute to Cllr Sandy Cluness, who will retire from politics next year, and was not up for re-election this year. She said that she hopes to see him as a member of the NSC in the future.

She thanked politicians, and thematic groups, for their support, and highlighted the need for active involvement of politicians in the thematic groups, and the need to encourage all regions to appoint political members to the thematic groups.

The President referred to the crucial work of the group advisers and politicians, and thanked them for their commitment.

The Thematic Group annual reports, she said, are available on the website, and she encouraged members to read them. She went on to highlight a number of successful group activities.

The President said that North Sea Region (NSR) 2020 had involved all of the thematic groups, and all had been very active. There had also been involvement from the Committee of the Regions (CoR), politicians, officers, stakeholders, and all people interested in the North Sea Region.

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The NSR 2020 paper, she said, had been made for the conference in close co-operation with a number of other parties, and it would contribute to smart, green and inclusive work for Europe.

It set out a common strategy for the North Sea Region, and the action plan for implementation can assist in facilitating such an approach.

The strategy is to ensure that the North Sea Region remains, and further develops, as a sustainable and attractive region, active for growth in Europe. The strategy, said the President, is a potential pilot for a different kind of macro-region strategy in Europe, and it points to existing co-operation which can inspire future actions and activities.

The process has identified five strategic areas: managing maritime space, increasing accessibility, tackling climate change, effective and sustainable liveable communities, and promoting innovation and excellence.

Gunn Marit referred to major world changes, and implications for the future, the importance of the North Sea Strategy, and the recipe for success.

- **Report from CPMR, by General Secretary Eleni Marianou**

Ms Marianou gave a presentation on the economic and political context of what CPMR is doing (Note: a copy of the presentation is available on the NSC website).

The topics covered were the European project (economic and political contexts), the Impact on CPMR Activities, the CPMR's response, the EU Budget, Cohesion, Maritime Policy, Accessibility, Timing Under a Gloomy Context, Macro Regions, and Primary Nodes of TEN-T Networks.

Ms Marianou spoke about the OECD economic outlook report, economic governance, the Euro, the current crisis situation, and the need for global leadership and perspective. She also referred to the impact on CPMR activities, and a growing need to demonstrate value.

The CPMR response, she said, is to break apart the notion that territory matters, and that territorial diversity is a strength and not a threat. It will bring added value to what CPMR does, and will explain the role of regions by being close to citizens.

Everyone should try to see that the European project remains something with a human face which brings value to citizens. We should focus on natural assets, and on what is important and matters to the membership. She talked about territorial cohesion, and how an integrated maritime policy impacts on the coastal areas the CPMR represents.

Accessibility, transport connectivity and internet accessibility are important because of the peripherality involved. Other important policy areas are CAP, rural issues, and climate change, and how they impact on the membership areas. The drivers will be the EU 2020 Strategy, the EU budget, and EU governance.

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Eleni talked about the EU Budget, the Cohesion Policy, the 2020 targets, the Macro-regional approach (and the need to demonstrate the benefits of this approach), Maritime Policy (how to make it happen), Accessibility (TEN-T Network proposals), and the timing for key decisions.

She encouraged the NSC to use the 2020 Strategy as an opportunity. The CPMR has good contacts with all departments of the Commission and she encouraged the NSC to make use of this.

Cllr Oddvar Skaiaa (Aust Agder fylkeskommune) pointed out that what happens in southern Europe also affects the North Sea and Norway. He referred to issues such as climate change, rural development, energy, and influencing the White Paper on transport. He said that the good work being done in these areas in the North Sea Commission and CPMR must be kept up.

Eleni advised that energy, climate change and transport are still at the heart of CPMR activities, with a number of themed working groups.

- **Annual Reports from the Thematic Groups**

Before the annual reports were considered, Cllr Peter Grant (Fife Council) said that last year, and the year before, there had been talk of closer co-operation with the Baltic Sea. This, however, was not seen in the annual reports, and he wondered why not much has happened. Cllr Grant asked if this co-operation should be pursued, or should there be a concentration in work plans on the North Sea only.

A number of contributions were made from the group representatives in response to this question. It was stated that several connections exist, for example the Culture and Tourism group had involved the Baltic Sea in a conference, and the Transport Group is working with the Baltic Sea Commission, and has a lot of common positions including strengthening maritime transport. There had also been work through the Marine Resources Group with CPMR. Other groups reported less contact, but it was emphasised by them, and by Gunn Marit, that there has recently been a major focus on the North Sea 2020 Strategy. They were all keen to keep this contact going.

- a. Culture and Tourism Group Report**

No additional comment

- b. Innovation and Education Group Report**

No additional comment

- c. Marine Resources Group Report**

Cllr Anders Fasth (Region Västra Götaland) said that he wanted to add some information to Page 10 of the report, in relation to the North Sea Clean Shipping Project. He said that he had attended the first Clean Shipping assembly, which had been very successful. It is a good project, and a good example of how work can be done. The website address to follow this project is www.cnss.no

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d. Sustainable Development Group Report

No additional comment

e. Transport Group Report

No additional comment

- **Reports from co-operating organisations**

- a. Report from the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme, by Project Development and Communications Unit Manager Carsten Westerholt**

A report was given on behalf of Head of Secretariat Christian Byrith by Carsten Westerholt, of the North Sea Region Programme Secretariat. He said that it had been a busy year, and the latest Steering Committee meeting had just been held.

There were now 50 projects running, involving 850 organisations, and the first three cluster projects had been approved. The Programme had been looking for thematic projects, for instance in energy, transport, and maritime resources.

Carsten said that the clusters would promote outcomes nationally, and towards Brussels, and this would make the outcomes much more visible and understandable to the outside world. Delegates will have a chance to meet people from these projects at the conference.

He said that projects are becoming more policy orientated, and are now delivering results. The Clean North Sea Shipping Project, for example, had been taking the energy topic very much into account.

Carsten also said that the Programme is becoming more international, with projects making links to the USA, Russia, and Australia. There had also been a presentation to an international audience at the World Expo in Shanghai. The city of Shanghai had taken over a North Sea best practice example by using taxis for a car sharing scheme.

He added that the North Sea 2020 discussions provided very good timing for Interreg discussions and the NSC should be congratulated on its work on this. Carsten also said that the North Sea Programme is one of thirteen transnational programmes, all which will be gathering together for the first time for a conference in Poland in September.

Carsten thanked the NSC for its co-operation over the past year. This had been very important for the Programme.

In response Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) thanked the Interreg Secretariat for the good relationship and co-operation that exists, and said that she was very pleased with participation in the joint programme in Bruges.



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Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of 21st June 2011 unanimously adopted the Presidents Report and the Thematic Groups Annual Reports and continues to support the work of the NSC.*
- 2. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of 21st June 2011 unanimously adopted the other reports for information.*

2. North Sea Commission Thematic Group Work Plans 2011 - 2012

a. Culture and Tourism Group Work Plan

No additional comment

b. Innovation and Education Group Work Plan

No additional comment

c. Marine Resources Group Work Plan

No additional comment

d. Sustainable Development Group Work Plan

Belinda Miller (Aberdeenshire Council) referred to the issue of food security and the potential pressures on rural areas which bound on urban areas ('Rurban' areas). She asked if some work could be considered for a future Sustainable Development Work Plan on sustainable communities and food security.

Many of these areas have the best agricultural land, and will come under pressure for building new housing and industrial land. With food security issues there will also be fuel costs and climate change impacts, along with the potential conflict between producing a lot more food, as compared to quality food, which is what a lot of the North Sea economies are based on.

Cllr John Lamb (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council) said that the point is a good one, and that sustainability has to be the 'golden thread' through everything that is done. Where urban sprawl starts taking up valuable agricultural land, or other areas, there is a problem right throughout Europe. He said that he would be happy to see the topic included, and see work starting to move this forward.

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) also said that there is a wish from the General Assembly that the minutes should include a request for more sustainable development with regard to food security and sustainable communities. It should be put in the protocol, and this group should look into this issue within its work plan.

e. Transport Group Work Plan

No additional comment



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Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of 21st June 2011 unanimously adopted and supported the presented Thematic Group Work Plans.*
- 2. The Sustainable Development Group will consider how to include the issue of food security and its impact on 'Rurban' areas in its Work Plan.*

3. Elections of NSC Office Bearers

a. Election of Vice-President of the North Sea Commission

The Annual Business Meeting confirmed their acceptance of Cllr John Lamb as a candidate, and that Cllr Sandy Cluness is content to withdraw from the Vice-President elections.

For the election there was three candidates;

- Cllr John Lamb (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council)
- Cllr Ole B. Sørensen (Region Nordjylland)
- Cllr Annelie Stark (Region Västra Götaland)

The Annual Business Meeting representatives voted on three candidates.

The two new Vice Presidents are Cllr. John Lamb, and Cllr. Ole B. Sørensen

b. Members of the NSC Executive Committee

The new Danish Substitute Member is Cllr Preben Frils-Hauge (Region of Southern Denmark)

New English Member and Substitute Member are to be confirmed.

The Netherlands Member is Cllr Piet de Vey Mestdag (SNN/Groningen) and Substitute Member is Cllr Ben de Reu (Province of Zeeland)

The other members of the Executive Committee were unchanged.

Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 elects Cllr John Lamb and Cllr Ole B. Sørensen as Vice-Presidents for the North Sea Commission for the period 2011-2013.*
- 2. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 confirms the members of the Executive Committee for the period 2011-2013.*

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4. Finances

Accounts for 2010, Audit Report and Proposed Budget 2012

Lars Haukvik (NSC Executive Secretary) reported on the financial status of the NSC at 31.05.11 (enclosure 1) the accounts for 2010 (enclosure 2) and the Auditors report of 09.06.11 as a separate paper.

The accounts for 2010 show a surplus of 30,309 Euro, giving the NSC disposal of 215.002 Euro by 01.01.11. All members paid their membership fee in 2010.

The Executive Secretary foresees a deficit for 2011 due to extraordinary costs for making the North Sea Region 2020 document and the extra activities this causes.

Cllr Peter Grant (Fife Council) congratulated the Executive on the way the finances had been managed. He said in future, however, he would like to see a bit more information on some of the items of expenditure, for example the single biggest item – the Advisers' support costs.

He said that it is not always easy to see how the money actually contributes to the work, especially if the NSC is looking to continue to apply an inflation increase to subscriptions at the same as most public authorities don't have an inflation increase in income, especially in the UK.

Peter said that most local authorities are seeing significant reductions in funding and it should, therefore, be known what the money is being spent on. It is increasingly important to be able to tell other people in the member regions, and the media, about the value of these financial contributions.

Fife Council's subscription, for instance, would be about £3,000, but the money, time put in by officers, and travel costs are much bigger than the actual subscription. There can be a perception that we spend a lot of money on European activities – even if this perception is inaccurate. We need as much information as possible to be able to justify the expenditure.

In relation to the budget for this year Peter said that he did not want to propose that the recommendation from the Executive Committee is rejected, but he would like to suggest that if balances and disposals continue to increase over the next 12 months, there could be a year with no increase in fees (2013). The amount would be small, around £200 in the case of Fife, but it would help to send a message back home that there can be benefit from a build-up in income.

Cllr Wilfried Wengler (Schleswig-Holstein) suggested that there should be a freeze on 2011 level fees for three years.

Cllr Kate Dean (Aberdeen City Council) said that she would be concerned about a three year freeze, and would prefer the situation to be dealt with on a year by year basis. She said that not enough is known about exchange rates and other influences outwith the control of the NSC.

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Cllr Anne Robertson (Aberdeenshire Council) agreed with Kate, and said a three year freeze would be premature. The 2020 document work, she said, might have cost implications.

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) suggested that there should be discussion year by year, with a freeze for 2012.

Cllr Oddvar Skaiaa (Aust Agder fylkeskommune) said there would be financial challenges ahead in all regions. He suggested that in addition to a freeze for 2012, annual meetings should keep the same fees for the next two years. This would not lock it completely, but would send a strong message.

A vote was taken – and six members supported the idea of a freeze for two years.

The Executive Secretary informed that the revised budget for 2012 will be enclosed the minutes from the meeting.

Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 adopted the accounts for 2010 as presented in enclosure 2.*
- 2. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 adopted the Auditors report of 09.06.11*
- 3 It was decided unanimously that there should be no increase in fees for 2012, and that revised figures should be produced by the NSC Executive Secretary.*

5. Resolutions and Political Statements

a. Political statement on “CLIMATE ADAPTATION PRE-ASSESSMENT”

This statement had been adopted by the NSC Sustainable Development group and adopted by the NSC Executive Committee on 07.04.11.

The statement was adopted unanimously by the NSC Annual Business Meeting.

b. Resolution; “SELLAFIELD NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT IS AN UNPLEASANT NEIGHBOUR FOR THE NORTH SEA REGION” from Rogaland fylkeskommune.

Cllr Kate Dean (Aberdeen City Council) advised that concern was expressed at the Scottish members meeting. This was about the wording, and the fact that one nuclear processing plant has been singled out when there must be many others which are neighbours to the North Sea. She requested an alteration to the wording. She also enquired who the Resolution would be directed to – was it the UK Government - as there was unlikely to be any real chance of success.

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Cllr Peter Grant (Fife Council) wanted Sellafield to close, but realised that there was still a need for this function. He agreed, however, with the suggestion in the Resolution that the UK government, and Sellafield, have not been entirely upfront about what is happening.

He also pointed out that the Resolution talks about 'nuclear power stations', but Sellafield is not a nuclear power station. The Resolution is also concerned about the implications from the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear plant.

The problem at Sellafield is not to do with a natural disaster, but with the deliberate actions of a government or someone who is deliberately putting things into the sea all of the time that we don't like.

Whilst he strongly sympathised with the concerns included in the Resolution, he thought the wording is illogical, and the UK government will pay no attention to it. He suggested that the Resolution be used as a starting point, and that the NSC Executive Committee be asked to come up with a differently worded Resolution. This would record the NSC's concern about what the events in Japan might mean, and what the implications may be for nuclear safety. The NSC should also welcome the moves taken by central European governments to step back from the use of nuclear power, and use that as a basis to move forward.

Peter pointed out that power stations are still operating and producing nuclear waste. What is going to happen to it? Probably it is going to go to Sellafield to be processed. If not, how do we dispose of it?

The NSC should be aware of putting pressure on any state government to take out one part of the nuclear material cycle when we know that material will continue to be produced for many years to come. Closing Sellafield might give a much bigger problem for a much longer period. We need a global solution, as the impact is global. We should be looking for solutions to cover the whole planet.

Peter proposed an amendment that agreed with concerns in the original Resolution, but requested that the NSC Executive Committee advised on alternative wording that was not specific about one nuclear plant; and stated that if there are lessons to be learned from Japan all member states of the NSC and Europe learn these lessons.

Cllr Ellen Solheim, (Rogaland fylkeskommune) said that she was pleased to see the recommendation to adopt the Resolution, and was glad that people want to discuss the content.

She stressed her concern about the Sellafield plant as the sea is polluted and affects the Norwegian coastline, including her neighbourhood. She advised that the Norwegian radiation pollution authority has recently produced a report showing the consequences from pollution from Sellafield among other nuclear re-processing plants.

She reminded the ABM of the long term impact of Chernobyl. She was concerned about a statement from Mark Bassett from the British nuclear regulation authority that there have been a lot of small incidents from Sellafield. One recent incident was that part of the plant at Sellafield lost necessary cooling, and that could have been very dangerous for the

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whole North Sea if something happened. Sellafield is processing levels five times higher than 2009, that means there will be a lot more discharges of radiation substances.

Ellen said that the NSC should work to improve the environment in the region, and should tell the British government that it is time to reconsider Sellafield activities. It would be okay for the Executive Committee to look at the wording, but the name of Sellafield should not be taken out. It is the worst plant for the North Sea region.

Cllr Andreas Lervik, (Østfold fylkeskommune) agreed with the Scottish members comments and was pleased to hear the suggestion of the Resolution to go to the Executive Committee meeting before any voting on this subject. He asked, however, that the NSC did not forget to consider the impact of the La Hague nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in France. This is important too – and has been discussed by the CPMR in the past.

Christian Bruns (City of Bremen) said that he shared the concerns, but doubted whether it would be a good idea to decide on this Resolution. He said that just focussing on Sellafield means ignoring other and similar plants in Europe. Also - what is the effect of this Resolution - it had been suggested that the British government would ignore it?

Christian suggested that there should be a paragraph in the strategy paper about energy, and this should include a critical attitude to nuclear energy/plants in Europe, combined with a strong message about sustainable energy. This would be a constructive answer, a comment on nuclear energy, and would have a longer lasting political result. Bremen would be happy to draft this if it is agreed in principle.

Cllr John Lamb (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council) said that Sellafield cannot be “uninvented”. He said that everyone has concerns about energy, but what about nuclear weapons, ships and submarines? How will the waste be re-processed? The Resolution must address safety too. Previously waste was packaged and dumped in the oceans. It has to be neutralised.

John said that that the British government is already making a nuclear plan, and the NSC needs to influence it. What are other governments doing about their nuclear waste? There have been accidents in the past. The risk has to be literally zero. The nuclear plans of all governments should be addressed, and the Resolution should be broadened out. What is required is an influence on whole nuclear policies.

Cllr Wilfred Wengler, (Schleswig-Holstein Parliament), said that there is a need to take a wider view. Sellafield is only one plant, and there should be a strategy for the whole North Sea Region. The Resolution needs to be considered as part of the Strategy for the North Sea Region.

Cllr Tom-Christer Nilsen (Hordaland fylkeskommune) asked if members are more scared than they have to be. He agreed that the matter should be referred to the Executive Committee, and said that there are only two of these plants in Europe - at Sellafield and La Hague. Their old construction and location, he said, means that discharge into the sea is almost inevitable. Only by thinking about the nuclear problem in total do we have a chance to be heard (not if we condemn a special plant, which is just one of the plants in Europe). He would support thinking about including this in the strategy for the North Sea

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region, referring the Resolution to the NSC Executive Committee for re-wording, and to include all reprocessing plants in Europe (with specific reference to pollution in the sea).

Ellen agreed that La Hague should be included. She was pleased to hear the debate and would like something included in the Strategy too.

Cllr Anders Fasth (Region Västra Götaland) enjoyed the debate, but feels it is just the start of a bigger discussion. He supported the suggestion from Bremen.

It was decided unanimously that the Resolution should go to the Executive Committee for wider discussion and re-wording.

The recommendations about inclusion in the Strategy energy section should be remembered for future debate too.

c. Resolution; “RESOLUTION ON MARITIME EMISSIONS” from Region Västra Götaland

Cllr Anders Fasth (Region Västra Götaland), said that there is a need to harmonise European regulations, and the Marine Resources Group would continue to work on this.

Jon Halvard Eide (NSC Transport Adviser) said that the matter is included in the North Sea 2020 document. He said that he supported the intention of the Resolution, but three bullet points need re-wording. The first bullet point should invite implementation ‘as from 2015’ (to allow the shipping industry time to adapt). The second bullet point should refer to ‘European’ rather than ‘EU’ citizens to take account of Norwegian involvement. The final bullet point should refer to ‘relevant Member States’ rather than ‘EU Member States’ to ensure Norway is included.

After discussion, and alteration to the bullet points, the Resolution was unanimously agreed.

Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 unanimously adopted the political statement “Climate Adaptation Pre-Assessment (CAPrA)”.*
- 2. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 agreed unanimously that the Resolution “Resolution on discharges from nuclear processing plants: Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant is an unpleasant neighbour for the North Sea Region” should go to the Executive Committee for wider discussion and re-wording.*
- 3. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 unanimously adopted the “Resolution on Maritime Emissions” with the agreed alteration to the bullet points.*

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6. NSC Organisational issues

a. Co-ordination of the NSR 2020 Strategy and the EU Commission Work Programme

Cllr Annelie Stark (Region Västra Götaland) spoke to a paper prepared by the Region Västra Götaland and Region Noord-Holland to improve the NSC's way of working so that it was more co-ordinated with the EU agenda.

She said that there should be further discussion in the Executive Committee about how the EU working programme would be included in North Sea Strategy and discussion. The NSC is a lobbying organisation, and there should be discussion at a European level, and with CPMR, to strengthen the North Sea and the regions around it. The NSC should be more pro-active and effective in the decision making process.

Agreement came from Cllr Rinske Kruisinga (Province Noord-Holland) who said that NSC needed to be an effective lobbying organisation, effective and transparent in the decision making process. The European Work Plan should be the leading document for lobbying activities. This had to be made early, and be persistent and consistent.

Transparency, she said, made it possible for all North Sea members to follow the process in time and content, and that makes the body effective. This can also result in everyone's involvement.

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) asked the meeting if the issue should be taken back to the Executive Committee, and this was agreed

Decision:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of 21st June 2011 agreed that the Executive Committee should discuss the recommendation that the North Sea Region 2020 strategy work be co-ordinated with the EU Commission Work Programme.***

7. North Sea Region 2020

Bettina Rafaelsen (COWI A/S) gave a presentation on the North Sea Region 2020 draft document for consultation, which had been put together with the help of Jon Halvard Eide (NSC Transport Adviser). She gave an outline of the process, intentions, challenges, opportunities, the five priorities, implementation, co-operation, co-ordination and the next stages. (Note: this presentation can be found on the NSC website).

Christian Bruns (City of Bremen) said that he was happy with the paper, which reflects previous discussions. He said that minor amendments are needed, but he will submit these as written comments. He also suggested that the paper should be dealt with on three levels:

1. It needed to be recognised that the aim of an EU Macro Regional Strategy had failed to materialise, and we are not in a position to get a decision from the

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European Council. The NSC had to be aware of its weak point in strategic discussions, that so far it had not been able to convince federal governments of the need and necessity for an North Sea Macro Regional Strategy. Not one government is in favour of this. This paper, however, can serve as a basis for further discussion with governments, and might be the basis for overcoming resistance.

2. Who should the paper be sent to (eg the European Commission, DG MARE, DG REGIO)? This paper will be useful for discussion with these representatives.
3. The NSC itself should adopt a “bottom-up” approach - with a mandate for local co-operation as regions and local authorities. The paper is very useful for this.

Cllr Annelie Stark (Region Västra Götaland) asked how the next steps should be organised, and highlighted the need to include bodies such as CPMR and the Committee of the Regions.

Cllr Tom-Christer Nilsen (Hordaland fylkeskommune) said that the Executive Committee must take the strategy forward, and it should be used to challenge national governments who said that a strategy is not needed.

Gordon Summers (The Highland Council) asked if the strategy is a maritime spatial planning one, or a regional development one? He said that the NSC needs to be clear about actions that will dictate the resources required, where the resources will come from, and what can be done if no new money is available.

Cllr John Lamb (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council) said that sustainability is an issue that needs to come through in the document. He said it is a horizontal theme that needs to be there in everything the NSC is saying and doing. It is a “golden thread” that doesn’t appear to be in the strategy. Maybe it just needs to be made stronger?

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) said that commitment from members is needed, and she asked that the paper be adopted by the members, and that the remarks be sent in by October 1st as part of the consultation process. The NSC Executive Committee would finalise the paper and draft the action plan, and decisions would have to be taken about who to address. The process, she said, had been useful for the NSC, and for the European Commission, and governments should be encouraged to use it.

Eleni Marianou (CPMR) said that the CPMR is willing to help and work with Christian Byrith (North Sea Region Programme) on this, but the process will take time and people should not be discouraged. It takes time for strategies between member states to bear fruit, and be accepted and understood. On the question of funding, she said that no new money is available, but existing funds can be co-ordinated, and there can be added value from them, and from joint working.



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Decision:

It was unanimously agreed that:

- 1. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 adopted the North Sea Region 2020 strategy paper as presented at the meeting to be sent out for consultation. The consultation period ends 1st October 2011.*
- 2. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 delegates to the Executive Committee to adopt the final version of the North Sea Region 2020 at their autumn meeting and to decide on the further process of the document.*
- 3. The NSC Annual Business Meeting of June 21st 2011 encourages the NSC Member regions to distribute the document to relevant stakeholders in their region for input to the document.*

8. Invitation to the 21st General Assembly 2012

Christian Bruns (City of Bremen) invited the NSC to hold their 21st General Assembly in Bremen and Bremerhaven in Germany on the 18-20th June 2012.

Decision:

- 1. It was agreed that the next General Assembly should be held in Bremen and Bremerhaven in Germany on the 18-20th June 2012.*

Cllr Gunn Marit Helgesen (NSC President) thanked members for their participation and stressed the benefits of working together. She thanked all those who had participated and contributed to the work of the NSC. She gave thanks to the Province of West Flanders as hosts of the 2011, and thanked Cllr Rinkse Kruisinga (Province Noord-Holland) and Cllr Sandy Cluness (Shetland Islands Council) for all their work as NSC Vice Presidents.

Note: All prepared papers for the meeting is available at www.northsea.org

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Enclosure 1

Budget for 2012, adjusted according to the decision made at the Annual Business Meeting 21 June 2011.

Membership fee for 2012:

The membership fee for the members in 2012 will be:

Membership fee <500.000 inhabitants = 3 294 Euro

Membership fee 500.000 - 1.000.000 inhabitants = 4 940 Euro

Membership fee >1.000.000 inhabitants= 6 586 Euro

NSC Budget for 2012

| | Budget 2011 | | Budget for 2012 |
|---|----------------|--|-----------------|
| | EURO | | EURO |
| INCOME: | | | |
| Membership subscription | 148 210 | | 142 294 |
| Coast Alive * | 1 250 | | 0 |
| | | | |
| INCOME TOTAL: | 149 460 | | 142 294 |
| | | | |
| EXPENDITURE: | | | |
| General Assembly Expenses | 27 000 | | 27 000 |
| Promotional Expenditure | 7 200 | | 3 000 |
| Travel, Accommodation, etc. | 29 260 | | 27 000 |
| Thematic Groups, meetings | 15 000 | | 15 000 |
| Advisers Support | 60 000 | | 60 000 |
| Telephone, administration, internet, etc | 11 000 | | 10 294 |
| | | | |
| EXPENDITURE TOTAL: | 149 460 | | 142 294 |