

BSSSC Board Meeting
Riga, 15 February 2008



FOR ADOPTION

Baltic Sea States
Subregional
Co-operation

Riga, 15 February 2008, 09.00 – 13.00

Meeting Venue: Premises of the LALRG (1 Maz Pils street, Riga, LV 1050)

Minutes from the BSSSC Board Meeting

Present: Asger Larsen (DK), Knud Andersen (DK), Inge Hyldebrandt (DK), Inger Linge (S), Janerik Majewski (S), Sören Berg (S), Mr Ingvar Thell (S), Risto Ervelä (FIN), Esko Lotvonen (FIN), Kirsi Stjernberg (FIN), Ms Liana Maximova (RUS), Arne Tilk (EST), Mr. Andris Jaunsleinis (LV), Ms. Ligita Zacesta (LV), Ms Zane Duze (LV), Inara Zariene (LT), Olgierd Geblewicz (PL), Pawel Bartoszewski (PL), Malgorzata Ludwiczek (PL), Stefan Herms (D), Stefan Musiolik (D), Marlene Rothe (D), Arne Ören (N), Christer Pursiainen (CBSS), David Hunt (B7), Tommy Eliasson (B7), Inge Brørs (Secretariat), Günther Schulz (Secretariat), Juri Tomiliov (Sekretariat)

Absent: Uno Aldegren (S), Romualdas Morkevicius (LT), Toomas Kivimägi (EST), Mr. Urmas Arumäe (EST), Vladislav Balsky (RUS), Alexandra Ehlers (D), Gerd Tarand (EST), Brunon Synak (PL)

- 1. Opening of the Board Meeting**
Mr Arne Ören, Chairman of BSSSC
Mr Andris Jaunsleinis, Chairman of Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments

Chairman of BSSSC warmly welcomed the new members of the Board – especially expressing his satisfaction with the fact that the Russian representative from Kaliningrad region, Ms Liana Maximova joined the BSSSC Board. He also welcomed the new member from B7, Mr Tommy Eliasson, and the new Board civil members: Ms Kirsi Stjernberg from Southwest Finland, Mr Sören Berg from Stockholm region and Mr Ingvar Tell from Region Skåne.

- 2. Adoption of the Minutes from the Board Meeting in Gdansk, 16 November 2008**
Minutes from the Board Meeting in Gdansk, 16 November 2008 were adopted

- 3. Adoption of the Agenda**
Agenda of the Board Meeting in Riga was Adopted

- 4. Annual Conference 2008**
Information from Kaunas Region – Ms Inara Zariene. **Ms Inara Zariene** informed that she would give more details about the Annual Conference at the Board Meeting in Saint Petersburg. The new hotel in Kaunas (Reval) will be opened in March 2008 and will have

enough space for 500 people. It has all facilities – inclusive interpretation. Organising committee is formed in the County of Kaunas. Hotel is centrally located – reservation is made for 400 participants. Pick up at the airport will be arranged. 4 February – meeting with Illeborg (CoR) in Brussels on organisational matters. Some other meetings to be implemented. Interpretation and other expenses to be covered.

Paper and draft programme for discussion. **Mr Inge Brørs** informed. Draft was earlier distributed. Organising of the conference includes 3 parts (Kaunas County Govt., BSSSC, CoR) + Interreg Programme Secretariat. Topic: Regional policy, incl work with the new European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. How can the sub-regions contribute? Proposal for main title: Shaping the future Baltic Sea Region. Other items to be concerned by subtitle. Suggestions from the Board members? Start on Thursday morning. 5 main sessions. Main session 2 – focus on the cohesion. Ms Danuta Hubner is contacted and asked to be the main speaker. Parallel sessions – Maritime Policy, Energy and Climate, Innovations. Friday morning – focus on Baltic Sea Strategy. Uffe Elleman-Jensen to be asked as a speaker? Comments from the Board members. Panel debate. Session 5: Reports and closing speeches. In addition to the sessions: exhibition. Projects, new ideas, etc. Invitation has to be sent out. 8 April – a meeting in the CoR – we should have a revised draft programme before that time.

Mr Knud Andersen: We should not have too many speakers, as it means less or no time for discussion. Environment issue is now taken good care of. We should probably focus on the Baltic Sea Region compared to the other regions in Europe and in the entire world, such as Chinese provinces, etc. Proposal: Competitive region as a subtitle. Mr Beazley to be asked as speaker in session 4. **Mr Esko Lotvonen:** would the BSR Strategy be supported by the conference? We should work harder for the BSR strategy. **Mr Stefan Herms:** Session 2 and 3. Session 2. Importance of good moderator (-s). Perhaps we could look at the foundations, NGOs, journalists, not only politicians and administrators. Session 3: Sustainable Energy: industry or researchers who could deliver a speech, not politicians. **Mr. Günther Schulz:** Baltic Sea Strategy. Commission will compose a paper, BSSSC contribution – what we have achieved within the Maritime policy, etc. BSSSC Board Group should form/compose this. **Ms Inger Linge:** Swedish FM Carl Bildt is very engaged in this question. Swedish Presidency. Agrees with Mr Knud Andersen – European Strategy in Global context is important. Baltic Sea Region in a broader perspective. CBSS have some information? **Mr David Hunt:** agrees with Mr Knud Andersen – it is necessary to give more time to people to speak. **Mr Stefan Musiolik:** Draft is very good. Subtitle: not just competitiveness, but also sustainability. Moderator is very important. More interactivity is needed. Debates should be also moderated/facilitated. Concerning topic of the session 2. Territorial cohesion should not be the main issue. Baltic Sea Strategy is more important; and cohesion is a part of it. We should have a third speaker from the Commission and Council. It could be a speaker from the EU Parliament. Alexander Stubb can be, for instance a third person – in addition to Ms Hubner and a Swedish Minister. Mr Musiolik suggests inviting Christian Ketels from the Harvard Business School and author of the State of the Region Reports as keynote speaker for session 1 (innovation). NGOs to be invited. Conference should be open for all actors, also NGOs, for instance Word Wild Fund. Regarding the INTERREG exhibition: should BSSSC try to make an award/prize to the best project? Friday – Mr Uffe Ellemann-Jensen is a very inspiring speaker. He was one of the founders of CBSS – and can talk about the CBSS reform. On Friday we would need something like that. It would be better not to have a report from the sessions in the end of the conference, but to integrate. **Mr Günther Schulz:** How can we get the participants into session 3 and 4 more actively? Groups should be interactive and discuss with each other. Another issue is Youth participation and how to integrate the Youth.

Ms Inge Hyldebrandt: New approach. Council of Europe – use its monitoring reports on what is going on in different countries. A strictly political approach. **Mr Stefan Herms:** technology transfer.

Mr Inge Brørs concluded: most of the discussion was about the parallel sessions. All opinions should be taken into consideration.

3 hours for the parallel sessions should give enough time to discuss things properly.

Moderators for all sessions would be a good idea. The question is whether we would have enough money to engage many moderators. It is very important to obtain good key speakers.

Mr Günther Schulz: Ms Danuta Hubner has a very busy schedule. It is probably not feasible to get her in person to the conference in Kaunas, but she might be videoconference-transmitted.

Mr Inge Brørs: The progress – we are open for inputs by e-mail. Concrete proposals about the name of the speakers. We have to approach speakers as soon as possible. We shall try to include the reports before session 5. The Board has agreed to a participant fee of 100 Euro.

Inputs are welcomed as soon as possible, and not later than 10 March.

5. **EU Consultation on Cohesion Policy**

- Report BSSSC contribution to the EU Consultation on Cohesion Policy – Mr Knud Andersen, Danish Regions, commented on the produced document. The first draft is sent – with specific ideas.

- Questions for debate (Page 17 in the Board papers).

Mr Esko Lotvonen: Transfer of know-how from region (-s) to region (-s) is important. The text of the document could be amended a bit, emphasising the importance of having a mechanism to secure the transfer of knowledge and competences. **Mr Knud Andersen:** agreed to a certain degree.

Mr Stefan Herms: Simplification of administrative procedures is vital. There are some ridiculous procedures for the programmes and a try to convey this to the EU to simplify is needed. General opinion: a very good document. The conclusion: Simplifying the administrative procedures is very important. Proposal for a new sentence in the document:

One should create mechanism for transfer of knowledge form successful regions to another. The paper cannot be changed – it is sent already. Agreed on that BSSSC Secretariat should send the minutes to the Danish regions, Ms Inge Hyldebrandt, for updating of the document.

6. **Support to Baltic Sea Region Projects: Presentations of the 3 projects (see description of the presentations made below) and Conclusion on Support**

- **TransBaltic - project** under upcoming BSR Transnational Programme – Mr Mats Petersson, Region Skåne, introduced Mr Wiktor Szydarovski, who delivered a presentation on the project. Harmonisation of the efforts of Baltic Sea organisations, working with Transport. TransBaltic shall find partners from Latvia (with the support from the Latvian host of the Board Meeting). The Board concluded that the project will be supported by the BSSSC and that BSSSC would ask the TransBaltic to contribute to the Baltic Sea Region Strategy.
- **Awareness of Climate Change for Regions (ACCR)** – Mr Marko Mälly, Region of Päijät-Häme. The approach in this project is different: Tripartite discussion – involving the regional decision-makers. Clear investments. High-level political forum. The ACCR asked for a political support to the project and to appoint a representative to the High-level group. The Board supports the project. Person will be appointed to the High-level group.
- **Baltic Master II** – Mr Henrik Nilsson, Region Blekinge, Sweden. Project, which aims to increase maritime safety, starts in autumn/winter 2008. It builds on existing

partnership from BaMa I, includes regions and municipalities, national authorities, universities and research institutes, NGOs and private actors. Amongst expected results is implementation of "Measures for a safe and clean Baltic Sea" – Baltic Sea Master Action Plan. BSSSC Board gives support also to that project.

- **Mr Inge Brørs:** All 6 projects (listed and attached to the Board Meeting Agenda, including the 3 latter) are in line with the BSSSC Work Plan 2006-2008. Projects should be supported, but BSSSC also expects input from these projects to BSSSC's activities.
- It was agreed to give BSSSC support to all 6 Baltic Sea Region projects. Chairmanship and Secretariat are responsible for providing the projects with Letters of support.

7. Follow-up of Work Plan 2006 – 2008 – information

Maritime Policy

- Report from the Work Group on Maritime Policy – Land Schleswig-Holstein. **Mr Stefan Musiolik** informed: Participants up to now from Denmark, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Germany. Russian partners in the project are very important – meeting with Kaliningrad (on Agenda at the Government of Kaliningrad – immediate response from Ms Liana Maximova). First meeting on 3 March. Task from Schleswig-Holstein's view: Continuing the dialogue with the EU, organizing political support for BSR positions on maritime policy and promising INTERREG projects or political initiatives, e.g. ship-to-shore electricity supply all around the Baltic Sea or economic incentives – to achieve lower emissions. Environmentally differentiated harbour dues in all BSR ports to have fair conditions on competition. There is progress regarding the INTERREG project Baltic Maritime Cluster. France is also involved. Big French Maritime Cluster will be participating. Lead partner to be identified. Active involvement of CBSS in maritime policy is very important. Umbrella of the CBSS is crucial. Establishment of a Task Force on maritime policy is still the target. German Foreign ministry shall submit an argumentation paper on it to the CSO level of CBSS. Lack of involvement of national authorities to improve and change things was mentioned. BSSSC should ask for support from CBSS in this very important strategic project. **Mr Pursiainen** supported the idea of involving national authorities in the Master Baltic II and agreed that CBSS should play a more active role with regard to the Maritime Policy.

Baltic Intergroup meeting in the CoR, 7 February, 30 participants (totally), 19 participants from CoR. Next meeting shall take place in April. **Mr Risto Ervelä** added with regard to the Baltic Intergroup Meeting: endorsement. Acceptance of the Work Programme for the Group – EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. EU Maritime Policy. It was decided to establish relations with other BSR organisations. Interpretation of the meeting and some other technical issues were discussed.

Sustainable Development

- Sustainable Energy – report from the coordination meeting with the other BSR organisations 6 February 2008 in Copenhagen. The paper (Summary report from the meeting was distributed prior to the Board meeting). **The Chairman** informed about the participants and outcomes of the meeting, amongst others, about the BDF Summit to take place in Copenhagen and Malmö and participation of the BSR organisations in the event and the production of the BDF Magazine on Energy and Environment. Mr Tomilov gave some additional information on the latter issue and encouraged the Board members to contact BDF, Ms Helena Zimmerdahl Torgerson

(hzt@bdforum.org) in order to obtain more information about publication of articles in the Magazine.

Quality of Life and Public Health

- Co-operation with NDPHS – paper for information was distributed before the meeting. **Mr Juri Tomilov** informed about the recent developments, in particular about the possible co-operation between one of the BSSSC participating sub-regions in Norway – the County of Østfold/HEPROFORUM and the NDPHS's EG SIHLWA (Expert Group on Social Inclusion, Healthy Lifestyles and Work Ability). The HEPROFORUM shall deliver a presentation on the Survey of HEPRO and its future plans at the SIHLWA's 5th Meeting in Oslo, 6 – 7 March. **Mr Stefan Herms** asked Mr Tomilov to elaborate on what the NDPHS is. Mr Tomilov replied that there are significant disparities in health and well-being within the Northern Dimension area and thus, one of the main priorities of the NDPHS is to enhance and promote healthy and social rewarding lifestyles. NDPHS has several expert groups, amongst others on HIV/AIDS, Prison Health, etc. and co-operates closely with the WHO. **Mr Christer Pursiainen** added: NDPHS has a web-base Pipeline in order to obtain financing for the projects. Norway has given 2 million Euros, Finland recently has given 1,5 million Euros. NDPHS' Focal point is located at the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm.
- **Mr Sören Berg, Stockholm:** The information about NDPHS seemed to be of interest to Stockholm region, and especially the efforts to prevent/combat STDs. Mr Berg would like to get more information about the issue and take it up back home in Sweden. Stockholm Län can be interested in working with the Public Health issues with other parts in BSSSC. **Mr Sören Berg** informed that he would come back with a proposal during March. Mr Chairman suggested this to be one of the items for the next Board Meeting in Saint Petersburg.

Youth Policy

- **Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek:** reported from the Youth planning conference in Oslo. She underlined that now the work is much easier with the support from the EU Youth Programme. CBSS working group on Youth was present at the conference.
- At the planning conference in Oslo:
The Youth have tried to create a concept for the Youth conference in Latvia, Cecis in the end of May. Youth at risk and Youth Culture, etc are the issues to be discussed at the conference in Cecis. Application to be submitted – for another portion of EU money. Generally, the WG Youth Policy is very satisfied with the activity level. Kaunas conference was also discussed in Oslo. There was some criticism about the Turku Conference – Youth should have had more time for discussions and active participation in the parallel sessions. Proposals for the Kaunas Conference: Vision for the future of the BSR: What Youth can do. If young people shall be involved, they need to start working and preparing for the event beforehand – because of the topics of the next Annual Conference. Young people should be more involved in the conference in Kaunas. **Ms Ludwiczek** thanked the host – Norway for hosting the meeting in Oslo.

8. Other issues

- Baltic Sea Strategy (EU Commission) **Mr Günther Schulz** suggested “a road map”, which will be presented at the Board Meeting in St. Petersburg and will be finalised after the BSSSC Annual Conference in Kaunas.
- **Northern Dimension (ND)** Next meeting of the Steering Group ND will be held in

Oslo, Norway on 28 February. BSSSC is invited to present the draft questionnaire for collecting information about the level of sub-regional cooperation in the ND area (a follow up on the BSSSC proposal for a regional window in ND policy framework). **Mr Günther Schulz** informed that the questionnaire would be sent after the decision of the Steering Group (SG) on how this will be done. BSSSC will volunteer to send the questionnaire and collect the data – on behalf of the SG. Steering Group ND should be invited to one of the BSSSC Board meetings to inform about its activities. Mr. Christer Pursiainen informed about the Northern Dimension Information system. Projects have to deal with North-West Russia. He encouraged all to visit the website and find the projects already submitted to the database. Mr David Hunt (B7) will send the list of the projects and financing.

- **Mr Günther Schulz** added with regard to Brussels conferences – such as Baltic Perspectives. 2008 Open days- two small meetings of the region representatives. Is there a need for a new Baltic Sea Perspectives conference – in the beginning of 2009 in relation to the Swedish Presidency? He suggested engaging BSSSC into the next conference Baltic Sea Perspectives. The Board agreed to engage the organisation in preparation for the conference. Baltic Metropolises and the office of the city of Tallinn in Brussels can be a possible lead Partner.
- New Chairmanship of the BSSSC – **The Chairman** informed about his talks with regard to this issue. The Board will be informed about the solution – hopefully in April.
- Annual Conference 2009 – with Denmark as a possible host? The answer will be given at the Board Meeting in Saint Petersburg in May.

9. Reports from meetings and events

- Annual Consultation meeting with the CBSS Special Participants and Strategic Partners. Paper was duly distributed. **Mr Pursiainen** informed about the CBSS Co-ordination meeting with Special Participants and Strategic Partners in December 2007. He further mentioned the revitalisation of CBSS under the Latvian Presidency with regard to structures and priorities. What the priorities will be – is to be decided. Next meeting shall take place in Riga next week. Areas: Environment, Energy, Innovation, Economy, Maritime Policy (under Economy or Environment). Mr Pursiainen will keep BSSSC updated.

Comments of the Board:

- CBSS should play a more active role in projects – as emphasised at the Special Participants and Strategic Partners meeting in December 2007. BSSSC Board supports this statement. **Land Schleswig-Holstein will prepare a position of BSSSC on the issue**, which should be conveyed before the CBSS Summit in June.
- Structured Dialogue – meeting with Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, responsible for External Relations and the Neighbourhood Policy. **Mr Arne Ören informed** about the genuine interest of the Commissioner to the BSSSC's activities and its work with involvement of Russian subregions. **Mr Günther Schulz:** BSSSC have been invited 3 times already and our dialogue with the EU institutions is progressing very positively.
- AER Energy Seminar, Montpellier. Exhibitions with parallel sessions. Chairman had 10 minutes at the concluding session. It was important to participate and show BSSSC's activities in the field of Energy as there were many parts/regions of Europe represented. We also participate in the AER Bureau meetings.

10. Coming events of importance for BSSSC

- Next Board meeting shall take place in Saint Petersburg, Russia 22-23 May 2008. **Mr Juri Tomilov** informed about some technical issues, and, inter alia, visa modalities

and encouraged the Board members who plan to attend the meeting to submit their passport information to him as soon as possible. The topic of the seminar in relation to the Board Meeting will be “The Tolerance Programme” – suggested by the Russian CSR in CBSS Mr Sverckhov and approved by the host of the Board Meeting in St. Petersburg, Committee for External Relations of Saint Petersburg Government. The document in PDF will be sent to the Board Members. The venue of the seminar and Board meeting will be Hotel Ambassadeur in Saint Petersburg. **Mr. Tomilov** also asked the Board members to convey their wishes for the trip to Saint Petersburg – other institutions and places to visit and have meetings with – in order to ask the host to assist with arranging it. **Mr Stefan Musiolik** informed about the Otto Schmidt Research Marine Institute – short presentation could be given during the seminar. BSSSC will ask the host about such presentation. Planning of the trip is important – and departure from Saint Petersburg on Friday, 23 May or Saturday, 24 May. Departure on Saturday – if the Cultural Programme (Friday afternoon) is desirable. Feedback from the Board members on this matter to be sent to juri.tomilov@akershus-fk.no

- Baltic Sea Day in St. Petersburg, Russia 11-13 March 2008.

Any other business

Mr Knud Andersen: Briefly informed about ongoing discussion on the European Charter on Regional Democracy.

The Chairman Arne Ören thanked the Board members for very interesting and good discussions and closed the meeting.