



Baltic Sea States
Subregional
Co-operation

BSSSC Board Meeting

12.03.2005

Szczecin, Poland

Minutes from the Board Meeting

Opening of the Board meeting

The chairman, Mr Uno Aldegren opens the Board meeting. He is delighted to welcome the present Board members and assistants. A special and warm thank to Marshall Meyer from West Pomerania for the excellent program and arrangements around the Board meeting.

The Chairman informs about the Americas Cup event that will take place in Malmö 26 August – 4 September 2005.

Marshall Meyer gives a presentation of the West Pomerania Region and welcomes all to the BSSSC Annual Conference that takes place in Szczecin 20-22 October 2005.

1 Adoption of the Minutes from the Board meeting in Hamburg, Jan. 2005

The Board adopts the minutes from the Board meeting in Hamburg, 29 January 2005, without Annex 1 objections.

2 Adoption of the Agenda

The Board adopts the Agenda.

3 BSSSC 13th Annual Conference in Szczecin 2005

Presentation of draft Programme

Annex 2

Ms Katarina Lewalska presents the preliminary program for the 13th Annual Conference. Proposed theme of the conference is the Lisbon Strategy. The Lisbon Strategy is often described as the world championship in competitiveness and growth aiming towards a more knowledge based society with a strong industrial base. The Board is pleased about the short opening session. Proposed additional speakers are the Polish minister for foreign affairs, a representative from the CBSS chairmanship, the mayor of St. Petersburg and an American or Mediterranean representative on the second day. The chairpersons of the Work Groups are invited to speak in the plenary session about the Lisbon Agenda from their Work Group perspectives. Participating regions should be given the possibility to present themselves at an exhibition. The Secretariat will take all suggestions into consideration when finalizing the program.

The Board thanks for the information.

4 BSSSC Work Plan 2005-2006

The top priorities

Annex 3

Mr Uno Aldegren informs about BSSSC taking part in a CBSS foreign ministers meeting late spring 2006 during the Icelandic chairmanship. There will be possibility to present one or at the most two subjects. The Board decides on 4.2, Territorial cohesion, transport infrastructure and environment, 4.3 Maritime Future and Maritime Safety to be top Prioritised and 4.6 Youth policy to be horizontal.

5 BSSSC Work Groups

5.1 Transport and Infrastructure

Mr Uno Aldegren informs about the Work Group on Transport and Infrastructure. The members will be presented at the Board meeting in Norway. The following countries still need to appoint members: Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Denmark and Russia. At the seminar on infrastructure in Norway there shall be a first report from the Work Group on the initial part containing a survey of the planning situation in the area: What work is being done on regional national level, what work is being done in the Pan Baltic organisations and in the macro-regions? The purpose of the survey is to identify common ground as well as points of conflict. On basis of the survey the WG and the board should analyse the possibilities, priorities and best strategies for joint actions in the Baltic Sea area.

5.2 Cohesion Policy

Mr Niels Boye presents the "Position Paper on the New Draft Regulations for the EU Structural Funds 2007-2013". Mr Knud Andersen presented it at the VASAB meeting in Warszawa and it met a great interest mainly from the national level. If adopted at today's meeting the Work Group wishes to disseminate the position to the media as well as to the EU-Commission and through the Board members to the governments of the Baltic Sea Countries. Further the Work Group plans a political debate on the future cohesion policy and the development in the Baltic Sea Region involving the stakeholders to be held in June in Brussels. The Board members are invited. The Work Group will take suggested changes emanating from today's discussion into consideration. The Work Group will adjust the Position Paper in order to ensure that it actually corresponds to the latest development.

Annex 4

The Board adopts the Position Paper and the proposal to make necessary preparations for the political debate in Brussels. The Position Paper will be signed after the next Work Group meeting.

5.3 Agenda 21

Mr Arne Ören is absent. Ms Ann Irene Sæternes informs about the “Report by the Ad hoc Group on launching a Baltic 21 Lighthouse Project”. At the Board meeting in Norway there will be report on the progress of the work within the Work Group. Ms Sæternes informs the Board about the possibility of joining the Baltic 21 Lighthouse Project. Mr Terje Petersen is contact person for the project. Annex ?

5.4 Northern Dimension

Thomas Pfannkuch, Vice Chairman of WG Northern Dimension, gave a brief report on current status of WG work:

1. As regards ND and ENPI no news occurred since last Board meeting in Hamburg. Still, WG ND intends to discuss and elaborate Draft BSSSC positions as soon as appropriate, i.a. with a view to the ND Ministerial meeting announced to be held in October 2005.
2. WG is currently negotiating with South Finland Alliance a joint meeting to discuss current ND-perceptions/-perspectives from the view of regional level in Finland (tentative date: May/June 2005). The same has been negotiated with Kaliningrad Region Administration, which unfortunately does not have any opportunity to host a WG meeting until end of 2005 (due to an overload of international work related to the Kaliningrad City anniversary); nevertheless, WG will discuss with Kaunas County whether a WG meeting could be arranged in Kaunas which representatives from Kaliningrad Region could be invited to attend (tentative date: September 2005). The Board will be kept informed as soon as further progress will be achieved.

5.5 Maritime Issues

Mr Günther Schulz is absent. Mr Stefan Musiolik informs about the Maritime Policy work of the European Commission “Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas”. Mr Musiolik stresses the holistic approach and proposes that BSSSC: Annex ?

1. Writes a letter to Commissioner Borg, welcoming the new initiative, identify BSSSC as one stakeholder and pointing out that BSSSC is prepared to contribute best practice from the Baltic Sea Region – Regional level
2. Preparation of a “position paper” on maritime policies, dedicated to special features of the Baltic Sea Region – especially “maritime safety”, where regions in the area have been particularly active lately. This position should be adopted by the Board meeting in Norway and then forwarded to Commissioner Borg and the task force.
3. Letter to CoR (Chairman DEVE Committee and CoR member Schleswig-Holstein, drafting the CoR initiative opinion on the maritime Policy that is planned to be adopted in the plenary session taking place this year in October, pointing out the necessity to pay special attention to best practice and developments in the Baltic Sea Region and to demand a hearing on these questions in the frame work of the initiative opinion.

The BSSSC Board adopts the Proposal.

6 Youth Affairs – future work

Mr Oddvar Skaiaa stresses the need to intensify the work within youth affairs and informs about the proposal how to proceed with the youth affairs. Ms Anna Golec presents the proposal:

Annex 5

- A BSSSC ad hoc Work Group on Youth Policy should be established.
- 12 members in the Work Group (one from each country, Russia appoints two) + one from the Council of the Baltic Sea States Work Group on youth affairs
- The members of the Work Group will be appointed for two years
- The Youth Network should have 11 representatives
- The members of the network should nominate a spokesperson who will take part in the BSSSC Board meetings
- The Youth Network should meet twice a year and will be involved in the work of BSSSC.
- Ms Anna Golec should become coordinator/secretary of the Work Group.

The BSSSC Board adopts the proposal and nominates Mr Oddvar Skaiaa to become chairman of the Work Group.

Ms Golec asks the Board and the Secretariat to find ways for the financing of the work. Mr Aldegren will discuss the financing with the Council of Nordic Ministers. The BSSSC Board members shall appoint members to the Work Group before 12 April 2005.

7 BSSSC and sister organisations in the Baltic Sea Region

7.1 BSSSC invites sister organisations 25 May 2005

Mr Uno Aldegren informs that the chairpersons of Baltic Development Forum, Union of the Baltic Cities, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Baltic Seven Islands and the head of the CBSS Secretariat are invited on 25 May to discuss the possibility of speaking with one voice towards the EU and Governments. At the annual conference 2006 the Boards of above-mentioned organisations will be invited to have a joint Board meeting.

The Board thanks for the information.

7.2 Letter from the Assembly of European Regions inviting to partnership

BSSSC has received a letter from the Assembly of European Regions – AER - offering a partnership.

The Board decides to accept the invitation. Mr Uno Aldegren will represent BSSSC at the bureau of AER. The Board shall appoint a substitute political representative to the bureau of AER.

7.3 Letter from the Baltic Development Forum inviting to partnership

BSSSC has received a letter from Baltic Development Forum inviting to a close cooperation and giving BSSSC the status of strategic partner. Annex ?
The Board adopts the proposal.

10 Thanks to the out-going BSSSC Brussels antenna and presentation of the in-coming

Mr Günther Schulz the former Brussels Antenna is absent.

Ms Sofie Gardestedt, Director at the South Sweden European Office and BSSSC Brussels antenna presents herself and her work for South Sweden in Brussels. The antenna works on assignments from the Chairman and the secretariat. However, Ms Gardestedt wishes to have separate discussions with the chairpersons of the Work Groups in order to put the ambitions and projects of the working-groups in a European context, and proposes to thereafter make a short study for each working-group that can serve as a base for the antennas eyes and ears on behalf of BSSSC for the two years to come.

Ms Ann Irene Sæternes asks for a list of the regional offices in Brussels to be presented at the BSSSC web site.

Mr Niels Boye wishes to have information about EU-Commission's work on health care.

Mr Stefan Musiolik suggests that BSSSC together with the Baltic Informal Group in Brussels arranges a Baltic Week in Brussels when the Finnish presidency starts July 2006. The Board members will consider the idea until the Board meeting in Norway.

The Board thanks Mr Günther Schulz and welcomes Ms Sofie Gardestedt to the BSSSC family.

8 EU Commission Work Programme 2005

Ms Sofie Gardestedt informs about the work programme of the EU-Commission that has been distributed to the Board-members, but urges the Board to look beyond the present programme. In her opinion the BSSSC - being a network of politicians with an aim to influence the development of their common region in the Baltic Sea in a positive direction - should have another time-perspective in mind to be able to execute this influence by expressing their opinions at an early-stage in the planning-process of new directives and policies on the European level. That means looking at the next financial perspectives, from 2007-2013 and beyond. Ms Gardestedt therefore concentrates her intervention on presenting the current status of the negotiation on the next financial perspectives and different expected scenarios. She also describes the changing conditions for executing influence on the European level since the last ten years; where and how positions can be introduced; and how regions, in particular Baltic Sea regions through their Brussels-offices and political representatives can and are profiting from these possibilities. She proposes the BSSSC to look into such possibilities and offers to support ambitions of this kind.

9 BSSSC presence at Conferences and Seminars

Ms Katarina Lewalska informs about the Conference on the Democratic Role of the Regions on 24-25 February 2005 held in Riga, Latvia and organized by CPMR 24-25/2

Annex 7

Ms Åse Allberg informs about the Second Stakeholder meeting within the Baltic Sea Initiative hosted by BSSSC that took place in Malmö 24-25 February 2005. Mr Musiolik welcomes the close cooperation and wishes that BSSSC takes an active part in the cluster conference, 6-7 Juni 2005 in Szczecin or Gdansk to promote the work of creating a maritime cluster. Mr Stefan Musiolik also points out the possibility of attending a cluster conference in Middelfart, Denmark, 28-29 April 2005.

11 Any other business

Ms Ann Irene Sæternes points out the necessity of finding a region that is prepared to arrange the annual conference 2006. The Secretariat should contact the Finnish representatives of the BSSSC Board.

Ms Gunilla Carlsson points out the possibility to use the www.bsssc.com for news and information, and that it now exist information material to be used; one exhibition, fact sheets, powerpoints e t c. All is shown on the website.

Ms Ann Irene Sæternes informs about the program for the next Board meeting and wishes to have the registrations for the hotel and the opera before 1 April 2005.