



Present:

Mr Olgierd Geblewicz (PL), Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek (PL), Ms Birgit Küstner (DE), Ms Ann Irene Sæternes (N), Mr Ivar Haug (N), Tom E.B. Holthe (N), Mr Stefan Musiolik (DE), Ms Marlene Rothe (DE), Mr Toivo Riimaa (EE), Mr Arne Tilk (EE), Ms Ulle Erman (EE), Mr Louis Hansen (DK), Ms Anne Mette Bæk Jespersen (DK), Mr Knud Andersen (DK), Mr Uno Aldegren (S), Mr Esko Lotvonen (FI), Hannele Luukkainen (FI), Ms Liana Maximova (RU), Mr Paweł Maciejewski (PL), Ms Magdalena Aniśko (PL), Mr Sebastian Gojdz (PL), Mr Krzysztof Barczyk (PL), Ms Ingrid Klemp (N), Mr Wiesław Byczkowski (PL), Ms Krystyna Wróblewska (PL), Mr David Hunt (PL), Anette Prilow (DK)

Guests:

Ms Marta Plichta (PL), Janne Tamminen (FI)

1. Opening of the Board Meeting

On behalf of the host, the Pomorskie Region, Mr Wiesław Byczkowski, welcomed the BSSSC Board to Gdańsk, the capital city of the Pomorskie Region, which on those days was hosting the European Maritime Day 2011.

Mr Olgierd Geblewicz, BSSSC Chairman, welcomed the BSSSC Board and opened the meeting.

The Board adopted the meeting agenda and the minutes of the BSSSC Board meeting in Oslo on 16 March 2011.

2. Follow-up Work Plan 2011-2012

2.1 Cohesion policy

Mr Knud Andersen briefly reported on the recent developments in the area of cohesion policy.

At the beginning of June the position of the EU Commission is expected. Following that the consultation process among BSSSC member regions will commence and after that it will be decided whether the existing position paper will be revised or a new one will be created.

The results of these consultations will be presented at the 19th BSSSC Annual Conference, as was decided at the BSSSC Board meeting in Oslo, on 16 March 2011.

2.2 EU Baltic Sea Strategy

Ms Małgorzata Ludwiczek discussed the results of the questionnaire on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, which was sent to BSSSC member regions after the BSSSC Board meeting in Oslo. Ms Ludwiczek summarized the input from BSSSC members into the discussion paper and thanked all participating regions for their contribution and involvement.

Ms Ludwiczek proposed to send this questionnaire to other regions or organizations maybe to the B7 or Euroregion Baltic, to have as broad an input as possible from other stakeholders, as the BSSSC position paper will be taken into account during the Polish Presidency of the EU Council and also presented during the 19th BSSSC Annual Conference in October.

Mr Stefan Musiolik stressed that the paper is very informative and it should be sent to the European Commission as early as possible. The format of the paper should be changed from a discussion paper into a position or statement paper. Mr Musiolik remarked on the 3rd paragraph in the 1st Chapter and proposed to reformulate the existing statement: "A good point was to create new contact groups such as the Informal Baltic Sea Group (...)" into "A good point was to create new forms of cooperation such as a new contact group between DG Regio and the Informal Baltic Sea Group (...)".

Mr Andersen agreed to the proposal of Mr Musiolik that the paper should have the format of a BSSSC position paper and the BSSSC should endeavor to make the paper of a significant importance. Therefore, Mr Andersen proposed a procedure of working on the final version and advised that written remarks and comments regarding the existing discussion paper, should be submitted to BSSSC Secretariat within two weeks and afterward the final version of the paper should be sent to the EU Commission.

The BSSSC Board accepted the procedure proposed by Mr Andersen.

2.3 Maritime policy

Mr Stefan Musiolik reported briefly on the joint session of the three maritime working groups of BSSSC, CBSS and BSPC which will take place during the European Maritime Stakeholder Day on 20 May 2011. The seminar entitled "Common vision - linking efforts - strengthening visibility" will combine regional, national and parliamentary levels. Mr Musiolik presented the outline of the seminar and cordially invited BSSSC Board members to the session.

2.4 Climate policies and energy security

Ms Birgit Küstner informed the Board that since the last BSSSC Board meeting in Oslo there have been no new developments in this area.

2.5 Science and Education

Ms Birgit Küstner informed the Board that Hamburg remains in close contact with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the CBSS Secretariat because of the upcoming German presidency in the CBSS. Ms Küstner reported that Hamburg together with BSSSC is planning to organize a conference or a meeting under the umbrella of the German presidency of CBSS, in the framework of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy.

2.6 Youth

Mrs Ingrid Klemp informed the BSSSC Board about the results of the meeting of the Working Group on Youth Policy in Greiswald, on 31 March – 1 April 2011. The youth network decided to update the data of youth network representatives and the civil servants from the different regions in the BSSSC as it will be a step towards the easier nomination of youth representatives to the board, which are elected each year during the BSSSC annual conference. The WGYP decided that the new BSSSC youth network website will be established under the domain: www.bsssc.youth.org.

Mrs Klemp mentioned the film competition, which has been already launched and is aimed at youngsters between the ages of 15 and 30. The film should present the Baltic Sea Region as a good place for living, working and education. The winner of the competition will have an opportunity to share his impression about the Baltic Sea Region with other young people and regional politicians and will be invited to the Award Ceremony during the BSSSC annual conference which takes place on October 3-7th 2011 in Szczecin, Poland.

Mrs Ingrid Klemp reported about the youth event which will take place on 3 - 5 October under the topic of voluntary work and cohesion policy. During the working meeting in Greifswald youngsters agreed that the youth should have an evening, a dinner or a lunch during the time of the conference together with the politicians, so that they could have a chance to interact with them in less official way.

Ms Małgorzata Ludwiczek added information about the youth event and informed that on 4 October there is a planned cross-border study visit in Świnoujście, which is a good exemplification of the cohesion influence on the border region. Ms Ludwiczek asked the Board to promote the film competition in their regions and reported on the competition awards. Ms Ludwiczek invited the BSSSC Board members to sit on the jury of the film contest.

Ms Ann-Irene Saeterens proposed to invite Mr Oddvar Skaiia to the jury as he has been involved for very long time in youth affairs within the BSSSC.

2.7 Public Health and Quality of Life

As a result of the close cooperation with NDPHS Secretariat Ms Małgorzata Ludwiczek presented to the Board the list of NDPHS projects under development. On behalf of the NDPHS Secretariat Ms Ludwiczek asked the BSSSC Board members to distribute and promote the projects in their home regions.

2.8 Co-operation with Russia

Ms Birgit Küstner reported on the upcoming Baltic Sea Cooperation Forum and the 2nd informal Round Table in St. Petersburg, on 26-27 May 2011. The event is considered to be a significant step towards involving Russian partners in the implementation of the EU BSR. The European Commission will be represented there by the General Director of the DG Region Mr Dirk Ahner. Mr Stefan Herms will participate in the conference in the role of panelist and is expected to talk about St. Petersburg as an active partner in Baltic Sea cooperation and also about the role of

the regions in the implementation of the EUSBSR. Therefore, Ms Birgit Küstner asked the Board if Mr Herms may represent the position of the BSSSC during the forum. The BSSSC Board agreed to this proposal. During the informal round table on 27 May topics concerning further cooperation will be discussed. The BSSSC Board will hear a complete report on this event during the next BSSSC Board meeting in October.

2.9 Transport and Infrastructure

No new developments in this area.

3. Annual Conferences

3.1 Annual Conference 2011: Report from the Westpomeranian host

Ms Ludwiczek reported on the latest developments, mentioning the working pre-meeting with Danish colleagues and thanked them for the contribution. She informed that the registration for the conference will be open on 23 May, but before she wishes to once again go over the programme of the conference.

Mr Sefan Musiolik notified that regarding the title it is useful to stick to the regions. This will reflect the engagement of the regions and underline their specific role. He presented once again his proposal: "EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region and the Cohesion Policy - expectations and role of the regions in the Baltic sea area".

Then Ms Ludwiczek presented the programme, item after item. She mentioned that still some points are unknown and unconfirmed – the Secretariat still waits for the response from the Polish Ministry of Regional Development, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She said that it will be very difficult to approach the Minister because of the tight schedule of the Polish Presidency in the EU. She also informed about the plan of inviting the CBSS Chairman under the upcoming German presidency.

Ms Birgit Kuestner: informed that they are in touch with the specific department of the German Ministry so they are ready to help in approaching the future Chairman.

Ms Ludwiczek informed that one speaker for the debate on the Strategy is confirmed– Mr Knud Andersen and that the Secretariat have prepared invitations to the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions etc. and we are waiting for responses.

Ms Birgit Kuestner ensured that Hamburg can help to approach Mr Dirk Ahner, because they will meet soon at the conference in St. Petersburg.

Ann Irene: asked about the participation of the MEP in this session. Ms Ludwiczek informed that Ms Danuta Heuber cannot participate and if there are any other proposals, we are open.

Then Ms Ludwiczek presented the key issues for discussion in workshop number one on territorial cohesion. Mr Esko Latvonen had a question about the title – spatial planning is very specific and narrow part of the territorial cohesion – he said. Mr Stefan Musiolik proposed VASAB and ESPON for this session.

Ms Birgit Kuestner pointed out some of the main points which are to be discussed in workshop no 2:

- Co-operation and competition between these areas
- Which fields of co-operation are important with a view to the cohesion policy? Knowledge transfer, cluster policy, tourism, transport, climate protection, environmental policies, measures in order to foster social inclusion? She drew also attention to the areas of culture, language and education?
- Which forms of cooperation and governance help bridge the gap between rural and urban areas? Which measures could be used?
- Which models of governance or partnerships should be envisaged? Loose networks, institutional solutions or other kinds of cooperation?

She expressed her hope for a vivid discussion, and then listed the proposed names.

Ms Ann Irene Saeternes commented on this mentioning the project called New Bridges, which is supported by the BSSSC. She suggested to present this project during the workshop and to include also the Union of Baltic Cities to it.

Workshop no 3: nothing has been done so far, but we are in touch. The projects; Stardust and Sustainable Business Hub will be included. She questioned if the Helsinki-Uusimaa Region had contacted the Skane Region in this particular matter.

Workshop no 4: together with BSSSC Working Group on Youth Policy. There was an internal meeting which should result with some more concrete solutions and ideas. The main Youth Even during the conference in October will be also devoted to the topic of volunteering.

Regarding session no 4 Ms Luwiczek underlined that the conclusions should not only sum up the workshops but to discuss the results. The same applies to session 5, which should give recommendations for the future instead of just summarizing. Mr Musiolik: as Schleswig-Holstein is the coordinator of this session, we tried to gather different actors from different Interreg fields. He listed the names of the proposed panelists.

Mr David Hunt questioned the level of involvement of those listed people in the development process? He also underlined the issue of the location of the B7 Islands – those which are situated on the north and those which are on the south of the BSR. This location causes difficulties in usage of both the South Baltic and BSR Programmes. Mr Musiolik: asked whether we should invite somebody – policy makers, from the European Commission?

Ms Marta Plichta: people invited to the discussion can present the present phase, not the future. In June the European Commission will release the first position paper, so it's a good place and time for this discussion. But it is worth involving different stakeholders in this debate. She underlined also the fact that different ministries in different countries are responsible for this matter. Focusing on territorial cohesion also narrows the subject of the Strategy.

Mr Musiolik asked about the conclusion.

Ms Marta Plichta said that in fact it is worth inviting somebody from the Commission and representatives from the countries, who deal with financing. Mr David Hunt agreed.

Ms Anette Prilow informed that the Danish Regions in session no 6 would like to focus on growth and prosperity related to the Strategy from 4 different angles: regional, business inviting representatives of the BDF, the innovation sector – Baltic Chamber of Commerce, and general, linked to the Europe 2020 – European Policy Centre.

Mr David Hunt questioned whether the speakers will be able to highlight the selection of the priorities which become flagship projects?

Ms Ludwiczek stressed that this is a political debate on the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region not a practical overview.

Ms Anette Prilow add that this practical overview has already been done , now we wish to present the EU Strategy for BSR from different angles. Especially in terms of the upcoming II Forum on Strategy.

Mr Hunt said that he meant from the political perspective, but finally he found this concept satisfying.

Ms Ludwiczek presented the concept of the Short Movie Competition for Youth

Ann Irene asked to change the “Oslo county” to “Oslo region“

Mr Musiolik rose the topic of the moderators. Ms Ludwiczek informed that the Secretariat is in touch with Mr Biss and Ms Richardson. We need to decide if we will take two, or decide on one. And added that the resolution will have to be written during the summer.

3.2 Annual Conference 2012: Report from the Norwegian host

Mr Tom Holthe informed the Board about the recent developments regarding the BSSSC Annual Conference in 2012. It will be organized together with the Baltic Sea Region Programme Conference – as it was agreed in Hamburg in January. There was a first meeting with the Joint Technical Secretariat in Rostock on 15 April. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development in Norway is responsible for the conference, so it has established a joint steering

group. Then Mr Holthe gave some practical information: the conferences will take place on 17/20 September 2012. The venue will be Thon Hotel Arena in Lilleström. The youth conference will start on 17th. He proposed a fee amounting to 125 EUR. There is also a proposal for a project exhibition, which will present the results of the BSR. After the summer break we shall start to discuss the possible topics for the 2012 conference.

4. Baltic Sea Region Programme:

Ms Ann Irene Saeternes presented 3 main points: she informed that the strategic evaluation of the programme has just been carried out, it was done by a Latvian consulting company. Now the draft of the final report is being discussed and in June this year the monitoring commission should adopt it. It includes also the topic of EUSBSR and a proposal concerning it for the next programming period and also analyses of the projects. She spoke about the lack of money in cooperation with Russia and the less active project partners from northern areas. Also as with other programmes, the involvement of public authorities – there was much more interest from national authorities, comparing to previous periods. Some of the points we could pick up on for discussion during the conference.

She informed that the 4th call in March is the last one within the programme. 58 projects applied, 5 are in the extension stage. Ms Saeternes underlined the big interest of Belarus. There will be a 2 stage decision process: the transport and environmental sector will be reviewed in June, priority 1 and 4 in September, including the project supported by BSSSC – Involve.

The last point of the report on BSR Programme was concerned with the so called cluster initiative which gathers similar projects that had been launched. The pilot is on energy issues particularly. It will be evaluated on the upcoming conference in 2012.

5. South Baltic Programme

Ms Parta Plichta – head of the JTS presented the South Baltic Programme.

6. Partner organizations

Mr Janne Tamminen gave a presentation about the CPMR - Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions.

7. Brussels Antenna

Mr Sebastian Gojdz informed the Board that recent weeks were devoted to discussion on the future of cohesion policy – the final report will be released in June. Some funds may be moved from structural funds to TNT. But the European Social Fund stays within the structural funds. He informed that the cohesion policy priorities will be adjusted to the priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy. He mentioned the revision of the Danube Strategy. Until 2013 there will be no new macro-regional Strategies. He reminded about the seminar which will be organized within the Open Days on October this year.

Mr David Hunt said that it is important that cohesion policy remains more than just an economic policy, that is not only to finance Europe 2020.

8. Reports from meetings and events

Ms Ludwiczek attended the 18th Meeting of the NDPHS Committee of Senior Representatives in Oslo. The event was devoted to the realization of the NDHPS Work Plan, where involvement in EUSBSR and using the Northern Dimension as a tool in cooperation with Russia was stressed many times. There were two projects presented during the meeting: the flagship project E-Health for Regions and the Scanbalt Health Region.

9. Coming events

Ms Ludwiczek presented the list of the upcoming events:

- 26 May Baltic Sea Co-operation Forum, St. Petersburg
- 26-27 May General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Stockholm
- 31 May BSSSC / BALTEX Conference - Adapting to Climate Change, Hamburg
- 28-30 August 20th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, Helsinki
- 15 June Informal Baltic Sea Group Summer Reception, Brussels
- 15/17 June 9th International Symposium TransNav 2011 on Marine Navigation and Safety of Sea Transportation, Gdańsk
- 23-24 June European Commission conference 'Regions for Economic Change - Fostering Smart and Sustainable Growth in Cities and Regions', Brussels
- 22/26 August Baltic Sea Science Congress 2011, St. Petersburg
- 28/30 August 20th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference - Green Growth for a Bluer Baltic Sea, Helsinki

23 September Seminar 'Safe Shipping on the Baltic Sea', Gdansk

5/7 October XIX BSSSC Annual Conference, Szczecin

On this occasion Mr Chairman mentioned the meeting with representatives of the BDF in Copenhagen on the 3rd of May concerning the contribution of the BSSSC conference to the programme of the BDF Summit 2011.

Ms Lianova: asked to add one event to the list: the VI Annual International Conference "Cross border cooperation: the Russian Federation, the European Union and Norway"

Ms Wroblewska added one more: "Future of Cohesion Policy" on 7-8 July under the Polish Presidency in EU. And four others, organized by 16 Polish regions on: transport, eastern partnership, Baltic sea Strategy and Cohesion Policy.

Mr Musiolik mentioned also the 20th Annual Conference of Ars Baltica connected with the cultural opening of German presidency in CBSS.

10. Any other business:

Mr Knud Andersen proposed to the Chairman taking into consideration the discussion about the future of the BSSSC. He mentioned the aims which accompanied founding the organization in 1993 and proposed to look for new areas of cooperation "new, big political goals". On this occasion he mentioned the paper prepared by the secretariat (position paper on EUSBSR) – which he rated very good. Then he turned once again to the Chairman, the ongoing presidency in BSSSC asking to open the discussion about the future direction of the organization on the next board, or later on this year in order to set new big goals for the future. He expressed his will to continue to work within the network.