



**Present:**

Knud Andersen (DK), Magdalena Aniśko (PL), Anne Mette Bæk Jespersen (DK), Krzysztof Barczyk (PL), Marlis Erichsen (DK), Ülle Erman (EE), Olgierd Geblewicz (PL), Sebastian Gojdz (PL), Ivar Haug (NO), Stefan Herms (DE), Raimo Holster (FI), Tom Holthe (NO), David Hunt (DK), Ingrid Klemp (NO), Małgorzata Ludwiczek (PL), Hannele Luukkainen (FI), Pawel Maciejewski (PL), Jaakko Mikkola (FI), Stefan Musiolik (DE), Arne Øren (NO), Anette Prilow (DK), Kristian Primdal (DK), Marlene Rothe (DE), Ann Irene Saeternes (NO), Ossi Savolainen (FI), Oddvar Skaiaa (NO), Janne Tamminen (FI), Ingvar Thell (SE), Arne Tilk (EE), Thore Westermoen (NO), Esko Lotvonen (FI), Nadine Stüdemann (B7), Uwe Ahlers (B7), Sicco Rah (DE), Louis Hansen (DK), Sanita Skiltere (LV), Vladimir Svet (EE)

**Guests:**

Mr Wiktor Szydarowski (SE), Dr. Karolina Ertmańska (PL)

**1. Opening of the Board Meeting**

Chairman Geblewicz welcomed all members of the BSSSC and opened the meeting by welcoming the two newly appointed delegates to the Board: Mr Thore Westermoen - Deputy chairman of the Vest-Agder Region County Council, Norway and Mr Alexander Wendt - County Commissioner of the County Council of Blekinge, Sweden. Since Mr Wendt was not able to attend this meeting, Mr Westermoen was asked to introduce himself briefly.

Mr Stefan Herms informed that due to the illness of Ms Birgit Kuestner, Dr Sicco Rah will temporary replace her during the BSSSC meetings.

Mr Olgierd Geblewicz thanked all of the member regions for their contribution to the concept and the programme of the of the 19<sup>th</sup> BSSSC Annual Conference wishing everybody interesting and fruitful debates.

The Board adopted the meeting agenda and the minutes of the BSSSC Board meeting in Gdańsk on 18 May 2011.

Chairman Geblewicz reminded everyone that the 2011 BSSSC Resolution had been distributed among the Board members before the meeting. Mr Stefan Musiolik proposed an amendment to topic 26 of the document: apart from placing a notation concerning the cooperation between rural areas and cities in regards to the next programming period, he proposed also to mention the meta-region which in fact is included in the position paper on cohesion policy. He proposed to have a special focus on these meta

regions within the Interreg programmes. Mr Musiolik underlined the importance of this phrase in the context of future funding.

On request of Mr Geblewicz, Mr Musiolik developed the idea of meta-regions: these are larger than a single region and smaller than a macro-region, for example South Baltic, he explained. On 5 October the European Commission will present the regulations in this regards. And therefore it is of the highest importance to lobby for this concept – Mr Musiolik added. He also referred to last year's resolution approved in Tallinn which included the support of this concept.

Mr Stefan Herms fully supported this idea recalling the cooperation between the Hamburg area and the Danish regions. He underlined that the issue of financing on this level appears also certainly in other areas of the Baltic macro-region.

Mr Esko Lotvonen said that this concept of meta-region is also new. From the Finish point of view, it is important to already think about the Interreg V programmes.

Mr Musiolik just specified that it is not the matter of establishing a new programme and referred to the existing Baltic Sea Region Programme, saying that acceptance of the project requires the participation from a few regions from all over the BSR. Currently, theoretically it is possible to receive funding from the programme, but in practice it does not happen often. Therefore support of the concept of a meta-region will make the activities within the BSR Programme more effective – Mr Musiolik added and once again referred to the “BSSSC Statement on Cohesion Policy in the Multi Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020”, figure 13, where the concept is mentioned. Mentioning the meta-region when speaking about the BSR Programme should equal the chances of financing, for these type of projects along with the standard ones.

Mr Lotvonen proposed an amendment to paragraph 13: “Therefore within the macro-region programme, improvement of the funding possibilities for meta-regions (defined as functional units below the level of macro-regions) would offer new starting points.”

## **2. Annual Conferences**

### **2.1 Annual Conference 2011: Report from the Westpomeranian host**

Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek briefly introduced the concept of the 19<sup>th</sup> BSSSC Annual Conference, thanked everyone once again for their contributions and gave some practical tips regarding transportation, localization of the meetings etc.

Ms Ann-Irene Saeternes asked about the room where the national delegations' meeting will be held.

## **2.2 Annual Conference 2012: Report from the Norwegian host**

Mr Tom Holthe gave an update on the progress of works connected with the 20th Annual Conference which will take place in Lillestrom, Norway.

Mr Herms proposed to include also the issue of agriculture, as it is the main contributor to water pollution – one of the issues which will be tackled during the upcoming conference.

Ms Saeternes gave a proposal for the “back-to-back concept” of the 20th BSSSC Annual Conference. The event shall be organized together with the BSR Programme. The details will be known after the meeting with the authorities of the programme, in November.

Ms Ingrid Klemp asked about the youth event which traditionally is organized before the main conference. Ms Saeternes informed that the youth representatives will arrive a day before, on 16 September.

Mr Musiolik concluded that the agenda and the idea of the 20th conference is very interesting and that it perfectly meets the needs of discussion on the proposed topics.

## **3. Follow-up Work Plan 2011-2012**

### **3.1 Cohesion policy**

Mr Knud Andersen informed about the results of the activities of the BSSSC working group on cohesion policy, which consists of representatives from: Finland, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Poland and Latvia. The group came to the conclusion that among others: the cohesion policy should cover all the BSR regions, not only the poor ones and should further involve competent local and regional authorities in the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Mr Andersen turned to the Board for approval or further discussion on this document.

Chairman Geblewicz reported a suggestion to point 17, devoted to the transport issue. He proposed to add a few sentences: “this initiative will be successful only under the condition that it will result in the territorial inter-connectivity for all regions. The EU should strengthen the creation of the transportation network which will diminish the differences in territorial accessibility of the regions. To reach this aim, existing natural green corridors will have to be used in greater degree and the excessive density of traffic in some areas shall be prevented.”

Chairman Geblewicz mentioned on this occasion the Green Corridors Conference, which took place in Szczecin at the end of September, in terms of an ongoing discussion about this issue in the Westpomeranian Region.

Knud Andersen pointed out that “either we are talking about green corridors or about the need for better communication”. The thing is to decide on one – he added.

Stefan Herms fully supported the proposal. He also pointed out the difference in perception on the connectivity – regions' accessibility and the green corridors.

Mr Wiktor Szydarowski representing TransBaltic said the proposal is strongly welcomed by many regions and stakeholders. He said that he understands the confusion regarding the last part and proposed to rephrase it to: “we need to more efficiently use the transport corridors and use the green policies” and further on “We also need to advocate for the better streamlining of the Connecting Europe Facility with the EU cohesion policy instruments to make the transport policy measures more responsive to the development specificity of individual territories”.

Knud Andersen also agreed on this proposal. It was decided that the changes will be applied during the coffee break.

### **3.2 EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

Ms Ludwiczek expressed her hope for fruitful discussion on the topic of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region during the conference, as it is one of the main topics. She mentioned that the 2011 BSSSC Resolution was based on the BSSSC position paper on the implementation of the Strategy (approved in Gdańsk), which was sent to the European Commission and the Ministry of Regional Development of the Republic of Poland which deals with the Strategy in the framework of the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union. The results of the conference will be presented during the Open Days and BDF Summit / II Annual Forum. She also informed the Board that the INVOLVE project has been rejected by the BSR Programme monitoring committee. The reason was that the project doesn't respond to the priorities of the programme.

### **3.3 Maritime policy**

Mr Musiolik informed the Board about the recent developments in the area of the maritime policy. He informed the board about the joint event of CBSS, BSPC and BSSSC working groups on the European Maritime Day on 20 May 2011 under the title “Common vision - linking efforts - strengthening visibility”. The intention of this collaboration was to contribute to development of the Baltic Sea Region in to Europe's maritime best practice region by 2015 which has been an objective of the BSSSC (since the Conference on Maritime Policy in September 2006). The meeting resulted with the agreement on continuation of the cooperation and the idea to organize once a year a common meeting of the BSR maritime working groups from different levels and to revive the “Clean Marine Award”, which could be delivered at the 2012 European Maritime Day in Gothenburg. Later on, Mr Musiolik gave an update concerning the Clean Baltic Sea Shipping Project. He informed that some of the members of the BSSSC Board (as a working group on maritime policy) are members of the political board of the Interreg

projects, which gives the opportunity to bring together these two levels. The 4<sup>th</sup> partner meeting will be held in Gdańsk at the end of October this year. On 24 October the political committee meeting of the project should be also held within the II Annual Forum on EUSBSR. Closing, he called for a list of the proposals of necessity, for improving the framework for Clean Shipping on the national, regional and political level.

Mr Ossi Savolainen informed that the CPMR has also established a group on maritime policy. He called for participation in the next meeting which will be held also within the II Annual Forum in Gdańsk.

Chairman Geblewicz proposed to discuss the issue of the BSSSC working groups in terms of making their work more efficient in the last point of the agenda.

[COFFEE BREAK]

After the coffee break the Board came back to point 17 of the BSSSC position paper on cohesion policy, the amendments reported by Mr Szydarowski were applied.

Mr David Hunt reported objections concerning the language. He proposed to split the last sentence.

Chairman Geblewicz asked for final approval of this document or further suggestions.

Mr Musiolik proposed to form a small group including Mr Szydarowski, Ms Ludwiczek and Mr Hunt to reformulate the sentence after the Board meeting.

### **3.4 Climate policies and energy security**

Mr Stefan Herms introduced the latest development in the area of climate policy and energy security. Firstly Mr Herms gave a brief report on the BALTEX / BSSSC conference (Hamburg, May 2011). The main goal of this event was to improve the practical cooperation between politics, science representatives and volunteers in the field of climate protection. Then he informed the board about the upcoming CBSS Baltic 21 Expert Group meeting (November 2011), where BSSSC will be represented by Hamburg, as the city of Hamburg holds the title of the European Green Capital 2011.

### **3.5 Science and education**

Mr Herms presented the report on science and education. He informed the board about the vast conference which will be held in Hamburg in the middle of 2012 devoted to the transition from a school career to vocational trainings. The aim of this event will be to collect the examples of the best practices in the Baltic Sea Region. He also mentioned the initiative undertaken by the German Ministry of Education and Research to establish the network of school partnership in the BSR. At this point he

indicated some difficulties which are the result of the number of smaller agreements using different regional funding sources.

Later on Mr Herms introduced the project called "Science Link" which establishes the link between Hamburg and Lund by fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the Baltic Sea Region. It's a good example when regions cluster together – he added.

### **3.6 Youth Policy**

Ms Ingrid Klomp presented a new youth representative to the BSSSC Board – Vladimir Svet from Estonia will replace Pawel Grządko for next 2 years – she said. Then she gave some brief information about the Youth Event which was combined with the Annual Conference. She informed the board, that together with Vladimir, she will take part in the workshop on the cohesion policy. Then she gave an introduction to the idea of a film contest for youth.

Mr Oddvar Skaiaa recalled the beginnings of his work as a chairman of the BSSSC working group of youth policy, bringing the evolution of the youngsters' engagement. He mentioned that the youth representatives are the future of this organization and the entire region.

Then Mr Skaiaa developed the concept of the film contest informing the board that the Secretariat for Youth of the Westpomeranian Region received 6 movies which fulfilled the criteria. The Jury, comprised of Oddvar Skaiaa – Chairman of The Working Group of Youth Policy, Olgierd Geblewicz – Chairman of the BSSSC, Marshal of the Westpomeranian Region, Ked Olszewski – visual artist, has awarded: Łucja Kassolik for the film entitled "The Baltic Sea" - I Prize: professional video editing software ADOBE PREMIERE PRO CS5.5 and the invitation to take part in the Youth Event and the BSSSC Annual Conference 2011. Second: Camilla Szymkiewicz for the film entitled "The Baltic Sea Region - exclusively yours" – II Prize: a Sony video camera and the invitation to take part in the Youth Event and the BSSSC Annual Conference 2011. Third: Sven Kõllamets for the film entitled "Tallinn - A Good Place for Living and Studying" – III Prize: iPod nano. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place movies were displayed during the meeting.

Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek took over the chair and presented the Youth Event which was organized by the Secretariat for Youth of the Westpomeranian Region together with the BSSSC youth. The youngsters met with Ms Alexandra Ehlers (who was a BSSSC Board Member), who expressed her gratitude for the BSSSC Board members for the active support of the young people within the network.

Ms Klomp gave a gift to Mr Skaiaa with compliments for the work he has done during this nearly 10 years of being head of the group. Chairman Geblewicz, on behalf of the BSSSC, also handed over a small present. In this event Chairman Geblewicz welcomed the new Chairman of the BSSSC WG on Youth Policy – Mr Louis Hansen from Denmark.

### **3.7 Public Health and quality of life**

Dr Dorota Ertmańska from the Pomeranian Medical University gave a presentation on Innovative Solutions in Public Health in Westpomerania.

Ms Ludwiczek mentioned the event called ScanBalt Academy, which was part of the project's conference, entitled "Towards a Balanced Regional Development and Smart Specialization in the Baltic Sea Region".

### **3.8 Co-operation with Russia**

Mr Stefan Herms reported on the topic of cooperation with Russia in three main points:

1. He mentioned the German Presidency in the CBSS and the launching of the initiative, which among other targets, aims to strengthen the cooperation with the south-east Baltic area. He also reminded the board that after Germany, Russia will take over the presidency of the Council. He pointed out that the issue of environmental protection is of the highest interest for the Russian side.
2. Then he informed the board about the round table organised in May this year together with the DG Regio and the authorities of St. Petersburg and Turku. The main topic of the talks was the impact of agriculture on water pollution, particularly in this area.
3. In closing Mr Herms presented the latest updates from the Project Amber Coast Logistics, which supports the coordinated development of multi-modal logistic centers and fosters the connection of remote areas in the southern and eastern Baltic Sea Region. The project's objective is to thereby improve cargo flows and accessibility in eastern European countries like Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine.

Mr Musiolik underlined the necessity of including the Russian population – pupils and teachers in the EU exchange programmes. He proposed to add the sentence; "the possibility to include Russian actors should be improved", in point 11 of the budget paper.

### **3.9 Northern Dimension**

Ms Ann Irene Saeternes gave a brief update on the topic of the Northern Dimension, underlining that it is her last report this year. She recalled a meeting with Mr Sebastian Gojdz from the BSSSC Brussels Antenna, in which it was agreed that the issue of regional approach in ND will be taken up again at the first Board meeting in 2012. From the four ND partnerships, which are the pillars of the initiative, Ms Saeternes pointed out that the issue of health will be reported regularly (as BSSSC is a member of the NDPHS), within the environmental partnership there are some points of interest for regions too. The transportation and cultural partnerships are still at an early stage. The cultural partnership NDPC has a

new action plan from June this year, which aims to create focal points for networks and projects and activities. She pointed out that there is no subregional level included in this initiative, only the Ministerial level. Maybe it is worth asking the partnership secretariat whether there is space for regions in the initiatives as well.

### **3.10 Transport and Infrastructure**

Mr Wiktor Szydarowski from the TransBaltic project gave a presentation on the project.

### **4. Baltic Sea Region Programme**

Ms Saeternes gave an update on the latest developments in the BSR Programme: the last two meetings were held in Schwerin in June and in Berlin in September. All together 15 projects were accepted. Currently 98% of the funds are committed – she added and informed that the INVOLVE project, which despite the fact that it was rejected, received positive comments.

She informed the board that all the money which was left, was transferred to the priority 4. A task force meeting will be held in November this year and it will propose what to do with these funds. There will be no room for new open calls, and one idea is to allocate this money to support horizontal actions of the EU Strategy for the BSR. She also informed the board that the discussion on how to start the new programming period will be a discussion point in the task force meeting. She will give some updated information at the next board meeting in Brussels.

### **5. Report from Brussels**

Mr Sebastian Gojdz informed the board that the BSSSC position paper on the EU Strategy for the BSSSC was handed to the Polish Permanent Representation to EU and the Polish Presidency in EU, and it will be taken into consideration during the revision process. He pointed out that the Declaration of Common Interest between BSSSC, the Committee of the Regions, the UBC and the B7 is valid only until the end of 2011. He informed the board that the secretariat of Ms Mercedess Bresso is willing to extend this declaration, but this has to be discussed later on with Mr Gerhard Stahl, as he was the signatory from the CoR side.

He proposed that it could be signed during the big event which is planned to be organized in May/June 2012 by the Committee in Brussels. He suggested to come back to this topic at next December's, BSSSC Board Meeting. Then he presented the concept of the seminar entitled "EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Regions – Future, Innovation & Transfer of Knowledge" which will be held on 30 November 2011, in Brussels. On this occasion he suggested to combine this event with the next BSSSC Board



meeting (1 December) and turned to the Board for the proposal of whether there will be the eventual participation of some special guests from EU bodies.

Last but not least, he proposed to organize a joint event of the Informal Baltic Sea Group and the BSSSC as a traditional summer reception, organized annually in June in Brussels. He asked the Board members which topics should be taken into consideration.

Chairman Geblewicz proposed to distribute, once again, this question via e-mail after the meeting.

## **6. Reports from meetings and events**

Ms Ludwiczek gave brief information about the 20th Conference of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference which was held in Helsinki at the end of September 2011. The BSSSC was represented by Chairman Geblewicz.

Then she informed the meeting of the BSSSC Troika (organized on the occasion of the BSPC conference). During the meeting with authorities of the Helsinki-Uusimaa, political goals and the technical matters were discussed.

Mr Musiolik mentioned the idea of Baltic identity, supported by the German presidency in the CBSS and informed the board that 3 main events will be organized within the chairmanship: the Baltic Sea States Summit in Mecklenburg Vorpommern in May 2012, an extraordinary Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting in February in Schleswig-Holstein and the Baltic Sea Days in Berlin, planned for 24-25 April. The aim is to bring together about 500-600 of the most important Baltic stakeholders to the capital of Germany. He suggested to organize the BSSSC Board meeting on this occasion (for example in the Representation of the Schleswig-Holstein land in Berlin). More details will be known after the meeting on 20 October – he added.

Chairman Geblewicz proposed to discuss this idea via e-mail. On this occasion, he opened the debate for the first meeting in 2012. Mr Lotvonen proposed 23-24 February and said that this proposal is left to the Board's consideration.

Mr Musiolik proposed to organize, once again, the joint meeting with the CBSS Senior Officials during the meeting in Berlin.

## **7. Coming events**

The list of the events was listed on the agenda.

## **8. Any other business**

Mr Tom Holthe informed the Board that since he is leaving politics, this will be his last board meeting and participation in BSSSC's activities. He passed a small souvenir to all the board members and thanked them for the time together, good meetings and cooperation. Chairman Geblewicz, on behalf of the Board also gave a small gift to Mr Holthe wishing him all the best for future.

Mr Oddvar Skaiaa also used this occasion to say goodbye to the Board. After 10 years of active participation in BSSSC he is leaving the organization.

Mr Knud Andersen came back to point 3 of the agenda. He proposed to distribute the document (after it is approved) to all political representatives of the Baltic Sea regions and countries and the major EU institutions. He asked the BSSSC Secretariat to prepare the list of potential recipients. Chariman Geblewicz suggested that since there is only one point in the paper left to be discussed, it should be done during the conference.

Mr Stefan Musiolik proposed to follow the document, as the new regulations concerning the cohesion policy will be published soon, in October this year. He suggested that the Working Group on Cohesion policy should continue its work and follow the changes in this area.

Closing the meeting, Chairman Geblewicz proposed to come back to the discussion on the working groups and the cooperation with other Baltic organisations at next BSSSC Board Meeting. The proposal concerns the review and summary of particular working groups by the end of this year in order to improve their work between the Board meetings. Chairman Geblewicz proposed to prepare the short information about the activities of the working groups in written form before each Board meeting. This will serve as a material for further discussion.

The Board approved the proposal.