

**Minutes from the Board meeting
in Tallinn, Estonia, 21 November 2008**



Baltic Sea States
Subregional
Co-operation

BSSSC Board Meeting

Tallinn, Estonia, 21 November 2008, 09.00 – 13.00

Meeting Venue: World Trade Centre, Tallinn, Narva Str.11 D, 7th floor

Present: BSSSC Chairman Arne Øren (N), Mr Oddvar Skaiaa (N), Ms Alexandra Ehlers (DE), Mr Gerd Tarand (EE), Ms Inara Zariene (LT), Mr Asger Larsen (DK), Ms Marlene Rothe (DE), Mr Stefan Musiolik (DE), Ms Ülle Erman (EE), Mr Toivo Riimaa (EE), Ms Anette Prilow (DK), Ms Krystyna Wroblwska (PL), Mr Esko Lotvonen (FI), Mr Risto Ervelä (FI), Mr Sören Berg (S), Ms Anja Gargulla (DE), Ms Birgit Küstner (DE), Mr Stefan Herms (DE), Mr Lars Friedrichsen (DE), Mr Kjetil Lundemoen (N), Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek (PL), Mr Michael Rex (DK), Mr Kristian Primdal (DK), Mr Knud Andersen (DK), Ms Inge Hyldebrandt (DK), Mr Inge Brørs (N), Ms Ann-Irene Sæternes (N), Ms Greta Juul (N), Mr Günther Schulz (DE), Mr Juri Tomilov (N).

1. Opening of the Board Meeting

Mr. Arne Ören welcomed to the last meeting in 2008 – and the last one under the Norwegian Chairmanship. A special welcome went to the new Norwegian Board member Mr Kjetil Lundemoen (from the County of Oppland), who would represent Eastern Norway County Network in the BSSSC Board from 2009.

The Estonian host, Mr Toivo Riimaa welcomed all Board members to Tallinn and gave a brief introduction about Tallinn and Estonia

2. Adoption of the Minutes from the Board Meeting in Kaunas, 17 September 2008

The Board adopted the Minutes from the Board Meeting in Kaunas, 17 September 2008.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Board adopted the agenda.

4. Annual Conferences:

Summary from the Annual Conference 2008 – Kaunas Region

Ms Inara Zariene gave a brief report about the BSSSC Annual Conference in Kaunas. The feedback received has been positive, but some financial contribution from CoR is still missing. Mr Ören underlined that the conference was a great success!

Mr Knud Andersen informed about the meeting with CoR on financing of the BSSSC Annual Conference. Unfortunately, CoR had forgotten to inform about their procedures

concerning CoR contribution, but most of the problems seem to be solved.

Mr Stefan Musiolik asked if the Summary paper from the Maritime session had been sent to the European Commission. Ms Ann Irene Sæternes informed that the paper has been sent to EC and it is also available on the BSSSC website.

Mr Ören informed about thank you letters from the European Commission and the Baltic Sea Region Programme.

Annual Conference 2009 – Sealand Region (DK)

Mr Michael Rex informed about the next BSSSC Annual Conference in Denmark and welcomed the Board to Ringsted. The work with the next annual conference has already started.

Mr Kristian Primdal informed about the preparation work. Please find enclosed the presentation from Region Sealand.

Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek asked about the youth involvement at the next annual conference. The representatives of the youth stressed the importance of cooperation between the WGYP and the conference organising committee.

Ms Krystyna Wroblewska reminded about the upcoming election and possible changes in the European Commission (with regard to having Commissioner Hübner as speaker). She also asked if other youth BSR organisations could be invited to the conference.

The Board thanked for the information and comments.

5. Baltic Sea Strategy (EU Commission – input from the BSR organisations)

Due to some technical problems with saving the paper the BSSSC Secretariat used a written procedure for approval of the BSR Strategy document, composed by the Danish Regions after the Board meeting in Kaunas. Now there is an updated paper to discuss and decide upon. Some concrete project proposals are also on the table – “Flagship projects” from BSSSC to the Action plan of the strategy.

Mr Knud Andersen informed that changes with regard to the Maritime Policy and other essentials (as required from Schleswig-Holstein) unfortunately weren't possible because of the advanced process of coordination with the other organisations and the COM. The Maritime Policy projects will be used as a flagship.

The other BSR organisations have been asked to suggest 2-3 flagships. There will be a meeting in Brussels next week where the flagship projects will be agreed and governance further discussed.

It is important to secure the regional and local level as a part of the strategy. Mr. Andersen suggested establishing a Baltic Sea Forum for governance and implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy.

After the meeting with the other organisations there will be a meeting with Colin Wolfe in DG Regio - a dialog to discuss and get feedback on the paper. After this meeting the paper and the flagship projects will be finalised.

The Maritime Policy project Clean Baltic Shipping should be one of the flagship projects.

Mr. Günther Schulz suggested that the Chairman handed over the paper in the meeting with Colin Wolf 11 December.

Ms Alexandra Ehlers informed that the youth perspective is missing so the youth is preparing their own paper. The paper from the youth will be sent to the Board in a written procedure. Ms Birgit Küstner informed that Hamburg is willing to produce a Flagship project on youth. The outcomes from the youth meeting in February in Hamburg will be included in the flagship project.

The Board also agreed that the paper from the youth would be adopted by the Board in a written procedure.

Mr Esko Lotvonen suggested that natural resources should be included into the paper.

Mr Ann Irene Sæternes suggested adding Norway and Russia on page 2 as the most important non-EU members.

Mr Knud Andersen thanked for the input. He informed that it would be difficult to come up with flagship projects after Wednesday during the week 48. The Flagship projects will be agreed on during the next week in Brussels in relation to this common paper.

The Board adopted the Baltic Sea Strategy paper – the common paper – and authorised Mr Knud Andersen, Danish regions, to complete the paper with the flagship proposals.

The Board thanked Mr Knud Andersen and the Danish regions for their work so far.

Mr Lotvonen was asked to prepare an input to the next Board meeting about natural resources – as part of the new Work plan of BSSSC.

6. Consultation on the EU Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion

A consultation on the Green Paper was launched on 6 October and the topic should be of concern for BSSSC. The Board agreed to prepare a paper as a contribution to the consultation from the regional level. Hamburg is willing to make a draft paper and take responsibility for the consultation. Mr Esko Lotvonen will contribute to the paper about the special concerns of the Northern territories of the BSR.

Decision: Hamburg takes responsibility to prepare a paper for the Board meeting in Hamburg in the beginning of February 2009.

7. Declaration of common interest with the CoR 2008 - 2010

The proposal for an updated declaration is sent to the CoR and to the other organisations for comments. Mr. Günther Schulz presented the paper (Declaration) and underlined that the cooperation has been developed, and we now suggest continuing the cooperation. New points - the Northern Dimension, the Baltic Sea Strategy and the other BSR organisations are included. Mr Esko Lotvonen suggested also including the Barents Secretariat under the ND point. The declaration is circulated to the other organisations and CoR, and will be signed 11 December 2008.

The Board decided to support the paper to be signed on 11 December 2008 in Brussels.

8. Draft Annual Report 2007 – 2008

Draft Annual Report was sent out before the meeting.

Comments, input and amendments to the draft should be forwarded to the BSSSC Secretariat within 14 days – at 5 December at the latest.

9. Follow-up of the Work Plan 2006 – 2008

Maritime Policy

Mr. Stefan Musiolik informed about the ongoing work in Maritime Policy. The Work Group on Maritime Policy has included other organisations/actors, such as B7 and also the Interreg project Baltic Master. It has been positive. The next meeting will be 5 February 2009 back to back to the BSS Stakeholder Conference in Rostock.

The WGMP will arrange a workshop at the next Annual conference in Sealand (Climate Protection in Shipping). Different stakeholders will be included in the group.

The Maritime Cluster Project has not started yet. There are ongoing discussions concerning the lead partnership and the project alignment.

Transport

Ms Ann Irene Sæternes informed that the TransBaltic transport project did not get funding from the Baltic Sea Region Programme. Region Skåne have confirmed that they would continue working with TransBaltic (as a flagship project). BSSSC has already given its support to the project, but should consider a new letter in February next year.

The BSSSC will support the project as a flagship project under the Baltic Sea Strategy.

“The Amber Coast Transport Initiative”

Mr Stefan Herms informed about the Amber Coast Transport Initiative. A project initiative, which doesn't deal with transport and infrastructure alone, but also has a political aspect.

The Board supported the project.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Energy – Joint Energy and Climate Platform of BSR Organisations

The last meeting of the Joint Energy and Climate platform was held in Copenhagen 22 October 2008 at the NCM Office. All 9 organisations except B7 were present. BaltMet network is asked to join the platform and has confirmed that they would take part.

Topics on the agenda:

The calendar of BSR energy and climate-related events 2008-2009

BASREC meeting in February next year – statement of the Joint Platform based on the BSPC WG Energy and Climate contribution

Presentation of the Danish Energy Scenario Report

BSR Joint Platform's role in EU Strategy – ideas for flagship projects

Possible statement and participation at COP - 14 in Poznan

Preparation of a workshop slot at the BDF Summit

The next meeting will be back to back with the BDF Summit on 2 December.

The Board thanked for the information.

Quality of Life and Public Health

Report from NDPHS' CSR meeting. Mr Tomilov, BSSSC, who attended the meeting on behalf of BSSSC, informed about the last Committee of Senior Representatives Meeting (CSR14) of NDPHS, which took place in Bad Neuenahr, Germany, 23-24 September. One of the issues discussed at the CSR14 meeting was the external evaluation process that the Partnership has been going through recently. The partners seem to be optimistic about the future of the organisation, but wish a stronger local and regional contribution and participation in Partnership's activities.

Mr Sören Berg gave additional information about the project on antibiotics resistance in the

BSR, initiated by Stockholm and asked the Board to share and submit ideas on possible participation of other subregions in the project. Board members were asked to send e-mail to Mr Berg.

Mr Tomilov also added that the next NDPHS CSR meeting would be hosted by BSSSC through Pomorskie Voivodeship 15 April in Gdansk. Ms Wroblewska gave some additional information about the event.

Youth Policy

Ms Alexandra Ehlers reported about the youth work. The youth network has been invited by AER to join the conference in Wiesbaden. The topics are in line with the topics at the last BSSSC WGYM meeting.

The youth will prepare an own paper to the Baltic Sea Strategy. The content of the paper will be adopted by the Board.

Mr. Lars Friedrichsen informed about a youth conference in Hamburg 3-4 February that will provide an input to the upcoming EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea. A youth delegation is also invited to Rostock at the Stakeholder conference about the Baltic Sea Strategy 5-6 February.

BSSSC Chairman Arne Ören thanked Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek for a very good work with the WGYM under the Norwegian Chairmanship.

10. Work Plan 2009 – 2010

Paper for discussions has been sent out before the Board meeting. Mr Stefan Herms underlined that Hamburg needs the Board's contribution

Ms Birgit Küstner informed that the work plan 2009-2010 is a combination of the topics which already have been worked with the last years, the resolution from the Annual conference in Kaunas and some new topics

Hamburg will circulate a second draft and the WP 2009 – 2010 for comments and the final version will be adopted at the first Board Meeting in February.

Ms Ann Irene Sæternes reminded about importance of following up the BSR Energy and Climate Platform.

Ms Inge Hyllebrand thanked Hamburg for the excellent work and underlined the importance of answering the questions: Why? How shall we do it? Who will do what? When?

Ms Birgit Küstner, Hamburg asked for comments/contribution before 15 December.

11. Proposed dates for the Board meetings in 2009

2-3 February in Hamburg (D)

18 – 19 June in Skåne (S)

13 October in Sealand (DK)

3 - 4 December in Brussels (B)

The BSSSC Annual Conference 2008 will take place 13 – 15 October in Sealand Region in Denmark.

The Board meeting scheduled for June will be moved to May.

The Board approved the dates for the Board meetings in 2008 except for the June meeting. Hamburg will come up with a new proposal for a meeting end of May. *New proposed date 18-19 May.*

12. Other issues

Northern Dimension (ND) – Report based on the questionnaire by BSSSC Secretariat. Mr Juri Tomilov, BSSSC, shortly reported on the outcomes of the questionnaire, informing that 20 questionnaires have been completed and submitted to the BSSSC Secretariat. The results will be presented for the MFA of Norway/ND Steering Group by Ms Ann Irene Sæternes in the beginning of next year. In general, the engagement in the Northern Dimension area seems to have high priority.

Mr Herms thanked for the good work done by the BSSSC Secretariat and asked whether the Eastern Norway County Network can follow up this work to after the next ND Steering group meeting. He got a positive answer from Ms Sæternes.

Belarus – member regions/observers?

In June 2001 the BSSSC Board granted Belarusian regions observatory status in the Board. BSSSC has never had any representatives from Belarus at the Board meetings – but some Belorussian participants have taken part at the annual conferences. Representatives from Belarus again approached BSSSC with request to become members of the organisation in the end of October 2008. They have been informed about the existing decision and asked to provide BSSSC Board with a paper if they would like us to discuss the full membership. No such paper has been received till now. Mr. Ören asked the Board for their opinion on Belarusian regions – whether they should be granted an observer status or a full membership

The Board agreed to invite Belarus regions as observers.

CBSS

Unfortunately Mr. Pursiainen was not able to attend the meeting in Tallinn, but in an e-mail he informed about two points:

1. The BSSSC Resolution from Kaunas is circulated among the CBSS/CSO. The point on “the task force on Maritime Policy” was supposed to be presented by the CSO Chair (Karsten Petersen from Denmark) and discussed in the meeting on 20 October. Mr. Pursiainen underline that it would have created some discussion! Due to lack of time the topic was postponed to the CSO meeting on 2 – 3 December. He will report on the result of this discussion at a later occasion.

2. Mr. Pursiainen also wanted to inform about the 4th Round table on Safety and Security in Helsinki 9 November – where CBSS is a cooperation partner. Information on the event and registration can be found on www.hel2.fi/bsrp/

The following topics will be on the agenda in this Round table:

- Crime prevention
- Crisis management and emergency response
- Maritime safety
- Safe and secure everyday life

Report from the BSSSC Brussels Antenna, Mr Günther Schulz

Mr. Schulz pointed on some important development in the EU policy for the next year (WP):

1. The Baltic Sea Strategy
2. Cohesion Policy
3. EU Budget – what’s in it from the regional perspective
4. Energy platform – influence of the EU policy
5. Arctic Policy (including Russia, Canada, Greenland)
6. Election in the EU – EP and new commission from Autumn 2009

Activities of the CoR:

2 further Structured dialogues in 2008

27 November 2008 – a Dialogue with the Commission about the WP 2009

9 December 2008 – a Dialogue with the DG Sanco about Health.

BSSSC decided to ask Ms Inge Linge to take part on behalf of BSSSC.
More dialogues in 2009

February 2009 - Prague Summit

Declaration for the Spring Council

Position on Cohesion Policy – BSSSC’s input to CoR

CoR White Book on Multilevel Governance

CONS Committee first meeting 9 December – input appreciated

Will be worked out during the year

Mission Statement of the CoR

CONS Committee first meeting 9 December – input appreciated

Should be available in April

RELEX Activities and the activities of Associations

Relax work/plan needs to be open

Creation of a forum with Associations should be welcomed

Reception in connection with handing over the Brussels Antenna 10 December 2008 in the Hansa Office.

The Board thanked for the provided information.

13. Reports from meetings and events

Stakeholder conference EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Stockholm (SE)

Chairman Arne Ören and Ann Irene Sæternes represented BSSSC at the meeting. Two persons from Sealand region also participated, representing BSSSC/Danish regions. Interesting debates on the four topics of the strategy took place. Very positive that BSSSC was recognised as an important actor in the BSR. Many positive comments on the AC in Kaunas and the Roundtable. Also info from the DG Relax about the questionnaire on regional cooperation carried out by BSSSC.

Board Meeting and General Assembly of AER, Tampere (FI)

Mr. Esko Lotvonen took part on behalf of BSSSC. Ms Michèle Sabban, Vice-President of the Ile-de-France region, was elected President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER).

EU Strategy - Roundtable on Environment, Gdansk (PL)

Ms Wroblewska took part on behalf of BSSSC. She also participated in the preparatory work. The Roundtable was successful.

The Board thanked for the information

14. Coming events of importance to BSSSC

- BSR Programme Conference 26 November, Tallinn (EST)
- BDF Summit 30 November – 2 December 2008 in Copenhagen (DK)/Malmö (S)
- Roundtable on Safety and Security, 9 December 2008 in Helsinki (FI)
- Handing over Brussels Antenna 10 December 2008, Brussels
- Signing the declaration with CoR 11 December 2008, Brussels

BSSSC is invited to the B7 Annual Conference in Saaremaa 3 December. Ms Ülle Erman (EE) will take part on behalf of BSSSC.

BSSSC is also invited to the Nordic Council's informal meeting on Trafficking 5 December in Copenhagen. Ms Alexandra Ehlers will check if she can take part.

15. Any other business

Mr Stefan Musiolik suggested to establish an Antenna for the Baltic Sea Region Programme, and suggested to ask Ms Ann Irene Sæternes.

The Board approved Ms Ann Irene Sæternes as the BSSSC Antenna on the Baltic Sea Region Programme.

Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek stressed the importance of early involvement of the Western Pomeranian region in the BSSSC Troika work - on political and administrative levels. Representatives of Hamburg replied that Polish involvement is very welcome – to secure the next Chairmanship of Poland after the expiry of the German.

16. Closing

BSSSC Chairman Arne Ören thanked the Board for the active engagement the last two years under the Norwegian Chairmanship and for the good cooperation and support.

Mr Stefan Herms thanked the outgoing Chairman and the Secretariat on behalf of the incoming chairmanship of Hamburg.