

27th NSC Annual Business Meeting, 13th June 2018, Fredrikstad

Draft agenda

13.00-13.20 Opening session

Welcome to Østfold *Cllr **Andreas Lervik**, NSC Vice President and Councillor Østfold*
Opening remarks *Cllr **Kerstin Brunnström**, NSC President*

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the 26th Annual Business Meeting June 2017 in Göttingen

13.20-14.00 Thematic Priorities

3. Managing maritime space *Cllr **Anders Fasth**, Chair of Marine Resources Group*
4. Cooperation agreement with KIMO *Mr **Magnus Engelbrektsson**, NSC Executive Secretary*
5. Increased accessibility and clean transport *Cllr **Preben Friis-Hauge**, Chair of Transport Group*
6. Tackling Climate Change *Cllr **Jimmy Gray**, Chair of Energy and Climate Change Group*
7. Attractive and sustainable communities *Cllr **Barney Crockett**, Chair of Smart Regions group*

14.00-15.30 Future of Europe, future of the North Sea

8. Brexit update *Cllr **Nienke Homan**, Chair of Brexit Task Force*
9. EU budget and programmes post 2020 *Mr **Gregg Jones**, Director, CPMR*
10. Interreg update *Mr **Christian Byrith**, Director Interreg North Sea secretariat*
11. North Sea Strategy post 2020 *Mr **Magnus Engelbrektsson**, NSC Executive Secretary*

15.30-16.00 Coffee

16.00-16.45 Internal affairs

12. Annual report 2017-2018 *Mr **Magnus Engelbrektsson**, NSC Executive Secretary*
13. Action plan 2018-2019 *Ms **Melissa Frödin**, NSC Assistant Executive Secretary*
14. Communication plan 2018-2019 *Ms **Irma Ganibegovic**, NSC Assistant Executive Secretary*
15. Finances *Mr **Magnus Engelbrektsson**, NSC Executive Secretary*
 - a. Accounts 2017
 - b. Auditor's report on accounts 2017
 - c. Statement of accounts per May 2018
 - d. Budget 2019
16. CPMR strategic plan *Mr **Gregg Jones**, Director, CPMR*
17. Election of President and one Vice President 2018-2020 *Chaired by **John Lamb**, NSC Vice President*
18. Confirmation of members and substitute members of NSC Executive Committee
19. Meeting plan 2018-2019

16.45-17.00 Closing session

20. Resolutions
 21. Final declaration
 22. Annual Business Meeting 2019
 23. AOB
- Concluding remarks *NSC President*



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

1. Approval of the agenda

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Approves the agenda for the meeting***



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

2. Approval of the minutes of the 26th Annual Business Meeting

Minutes of the 26th Annual Business Meeting 26th of June 2017 in Göttingen, Lower Saxony (DE), are enclosed.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Approves the minutes of the 26th Annual Business Meeting***



CPMR NORTH SEA
COMMISSION



CPMR
CRPM

26th NSC Annual Business Meeting

28th June 2017
Göttingen, Germany

Draft minutes

26th NSC Annual Business Meeting, 28th June 2017, Göttingen

13.00-13.30 Opening session

Welcome to Lower Saxony *Mr Stefan Wenzel, Minister for the Environment*

Opening speech: State of the North Sea Region *Cllr Kerstin Brunström, NSC President*

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the 25th Annual Business Meeting 17th of June 2016 in Vejle

13.30-14.30 Thematic Priorities

3. Managing maritime space *Cllr Anders Fasth, Chair of Marine Resources Group*
4. NorthSEE project *Mr Lodewijk Abspoel, Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment*
5. Increased accessibility and clean transport *Cllr Preben Friis-Hauge, Chair of Transport Group*
6. Tackling Climate Change *Cllr Jimmy Gray, Chair of Energy and Climate Change Group*
7. Attractive and sustainable communities *Cllr Barney Crockett, Chair of Smart Regions group*
8. Interreg projects relevant to NSR 2020 *Mr Christian Byrith, Director Interreg North Sea secretariat*

14.30-15.00 Coffee

15.00-16.30 Future of Europe, future of the North Sea

9. CPMR and the Future of Europe *Ms Eleni Marianou, Secretary General, CPMR*
10. Brexit and the North Sea *Mr Magnus Engelbrektsson, NSC Executive Secretary*
11. Blue growth in the North Sea *Ms Dora Barreira Ramos, European Commission/DG MARE*
12. North Seas Energy Cooperation
Discussion

16.40-18.10 Internal affairs

13. Annual report 2016-2017
14. Action plan 2017-2018 *Ms Melissa Frödin, NSC Assistant Executive Secretary*
15. Communication strategy and plan *Ms Irma Ganibegovic, NSC Assistant Executive Secretary*
16. New model for the NSC Secretariat *Mr Magnus Engelbrektsson, Executive Secretary*
17. Process for a North Sea Strategy post 2020 *Mr Magnus Engelbrektsson, Executive Secretary*
18. Finances *Mr Magnus Engelbrektsson, Executive Secretary*
 - a) Accounts 2016
 - b) Auditor's report on accounts 2016
 - c) Statement of accounts per May 2017
 - d) Budget 2018
19. Election of one Vice President 2017-2019
20. Confirmation of members and substitute members of NSC Executive Committee
21. Meeting plan 2017-2018

18.10-18.30 Closing session

22. Resolutions and policy positions
23. Final declaration
24. Annual Business Meeting 2018
25. AOB
Concluding remarks *Cllr Kerstin Brunström, NSC President*

Kerstin Brunnström, President of the North Sea Commission, welcomes the members of the North Sea Commission to the 26th Annual Business Meeting. A special welcome to the external guests and to those who are attending the ABM for the first time.

Mr Stefan Wenzel, Minister for the Environment, welcomes the North Sea Commission to Göttingen, Lower Saxony, Germany.

Attending - North Sea Commission Annual Business Meeting 28th June 2017, Göttingen (DE)		
Region	Councillor	Official
Aberdeen City Council	Barney Crockett (Chair SRG)	Laura Paterson
	John Reynolds	Stuart Bews
Aberdeenshire Council		Martin Brebner
Aust-Agder fylkeskommune	Gro Bråten	Lars Holmer Hoven
	Torunn Ostad	
	Inger Lise Aasen	
Buskerud fylkeskommune	Anders Wengen	Bård Øyen
		Trond Myrdal
Freie Hansestadt Bremen	Antje Grotheer	Torsten Raff
Highland Council	Jimmy Gray (Chair ECG)	
Hordaland fylkeskommune	Roald Kvamme	Kate Clarke
Land Niedersachsen	Stefan Wenzel	Franz-Josef Sickelmann
		Monika von Haaren
		Ingrid Möller
		Ingo Stürmer
		Daniel Schmidt
Land Schleswig-Holstein		Nikolaus Jansen
		Eileen von Elsner
Møre og Romsdal fylkeskommune	Jon Aasen	Birgit Aarønaes
	Erik Kursetgjerde	
Provincie Noord-Holland	Cees Loggen	Wim Stooker
		Paul Strijp
		Yolanda Schmal
Region Halland	Dag Hultefors	
Region Midtjylland		Henrik Michael Jensen
Region Nordjylland	Otto Kjaer Larsen (V. Chair SRG)	Karen Greve Somerset
	Arne Nielsen	
	Erik Harbo Larsen	
Region Syddanmark	Preben-Friis Hauge (Chair TG)	Kia Sofie Abildtrup
		Erik Ørskov

Region Västra Götaland/NSC pres./secr.	Kerstin Brunnström (President)	Magnus Engelbrektsson (ExSec)
		Melissa Frödin (A. ExSec)
		Irma Ganibegovic (A. ExSec)
Region Västra Götaland	Anders Fasth (Chair MRG)	Hans-Åke Persson
	Birgitta Adolfsson (V. Chair SRG)	
Region Örebro län	Erik Johansson	Fabian Ilgner
Rogaland fylkeskommune		Geir-Sør-Reime (Advisor SRG)
Samenwerkingsverband Noord-Nederland		Paulien Kooistra (Advisor ECCG)
Sogn og Fjordane fylkeskommune	Åshild Kjelsnes	Lena Söderholm
Sør-Trøndelag fylkeskommune	Karin Bjørkhaug	Leif Harald Hanssen
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	John Lamb (V. President)	
Telemark fylkeskommune	Tone Elisabeth Berge Hansen	Lars Haukvik
		Vibeke Jakobsen
Vest-Agder fylkeskommune	Tore Askildsen	Jon Halvard Eide (Advisor TG)
Vestfold fylkeskommune	Karl Einar Haslestad	Per Jørgen Olafsen
Østfold fylkeskommune	Andreas Lervik (V. President)	Kjersti Helene Garberg
Organisation	Name	
CPMR	Eleni Marianou	
European Commission/DG MARE	Dora Barreira-Ramos	
Interreg North Sea Programme	Christian Byrith	
Ministry for Infrastructure and environment (NL)	Lodewijk Abspoel	

1. Approval of the agenda

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the agenda of the meeting.

2. Approval of the minutes of the 25th Annual Business Meeting

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the minutes of the 25th Annual Business Meeting 2016

3. Managing maritime space

The Chair of the NSC Marine Resources Group, Cllr Anders Fasth, Västra Götaland (SE), gave a report on the developments in the area and on the work of the Marine Resources Group.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

4. NorthSEE project

Mr Lodewijk Abspoel from the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment in the Dutch government gave an update on the project.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

5. Increased accessibility and clean transport

The Chair of the NSC Transport Group, Cllr Preben Friis-Hauge, South Denmark (DK), gave a report on the developments in the area and on the work of the Transport Group.

Friis-Hauge informs that Cllr Peter Argyle has resigned as Vice Chair of the Transport Group, the Secretariat should therefore send out a call for a new Vice Chair of the Transport Group.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

6. Tackling climate change

The Chair of the NSC Energy and Climate Change Group, Cllr Jimmy Gray, Highland (UK), gave a report on the developments in the area and on the work of the Energy and Climate Change Group.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

7. Attractive and sustainable communities

The Chair of the NSC Smart Regions Group, Cllr Barney Crockett, Aberdeen City (UK), gave a report on the developments in the area and on the work of the Smart Regions Group.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

8. Interreg projects relevant to NSR 2020

The Director of the Interreg North Sea Joint Secretariat, Mr Christian Byrith, gave an update from the programme, with focus on ongoing projects of relevance for the priority areas in the North Sea Region 2020 strategy.

The Annual Business Meeting discussed the importance of promoting good examples and highlighting tangible results from the North Sea Commission.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

9. CPMR and the Future of Europe

Ms Eleni Marianou, CPMR Secretary General, gave a report on CPMR's work on the Future of Europe. Regions are encouraged to be active in the discussions on the Future of Europe.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

10. Brexit and the North Sea

Magnus Engelbrektsson, Executive Secretary, reported on the latest developments. The member regions are encouraged to participate in the NSC Brexit task force by attending the meetings and/or sending information and reports on Brexit to the NSC Secretariat.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

11. Blue growth in the North Sea

In April, the EU maritime ministers adopted a declaration on blue growth, reaffirming their political commitment to further grow EU's sustainable blue economy. Ms Dora Barreira Ramos, Policy Officer in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG Mare) gave a report on how the blue economy of the North Sea can be developed.

To foster jobs and growth in the North Sea we need strategic cooperation, and it is for the member states to decide the next step. Therefore, the regions are encouraged to influence national governments and for that the NSC has to agree on what kind of cooperation it wants. The European Commission/DG MARE will assist thereafter.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

12. North Seas Energy cooperation

Kerstin Brunnström gave a report from the North Seas energy forum, 23 March in Brussels.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the information.

13. Annual report 2016-2017

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the annual report 2016-2017.

14. Action plan 2017-2018

A draft action plan was presented by Melissa Frödin, Assistant Executive Secretary.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the action plan 2017-2018.

15. Communication strategy and plan

A draft communication strategy for 2017-2019, and a communication activity plan for 2017-2018 were presented by Irma Ganibegovic, Assistant Executive Secretary.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the communication strategy 2017-2019.
2. The Annual Business Meeting approves the communication activity plan 2017-2018.

16. New model for the NSC Secretariat

A discussion on the new model for the NSC Secretariat arose. Cllr Cees Loggen, Noord-Holland, stressed the importance of a fallback option if there are no regions willing to host the secretariat 2018-2021. Cllr Loggen argued for the secretariat becoming part of the CPMR as the preferred fallback option. The Annual Business Meeting agreed that this could be an option if there are no regions willing to host the secretariat 2018-2021.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the new model for the NSC Secretariat.
2. The Annual Business Meeting asks the Executive Committee to call for a member region willing to host the Secretariat from June 2018 to December 2021 and conclude an agreement with that region.
3. The Annual Business Meeting dissolves the task force for a permanent secretariat.

17. Process for a North Sea Strategy post 2020

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting asks the Executive Committee to start the process to form a post 2020 strategy for the North Sea Region.

18. Finances

Magnus Engelbrektsson gave a presentation on the North Sea Commission's finances. It was proposed that the budget for 2018 has a deficit of 10,000 € to cover part of the support for the secretariat. The NSC has had an annual surplus the last couple of years and has 225,000 € in reserve.

Cllr Cees Loggen stressed the importance of not using the reserves for ordinary expenses, and opposed to the suggested budget for 2018. The Annual Business Meeting agreed to reduce the budget post for travel and accommodation with 10,000 €, in order to have a balanced budget.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting approves the accounts for 2016.
2. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the statement of accounts per 15 May 2017.
3. The Annual Business Meeting approves the budget for 2018, with the amendment of reducing the total expenses to 142,215 € making it a balanced budget.

19. Election of one Vice President 2017-2019

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting elects Cllr John Lamb for Vice President of the North Sea Commission for 2017-2019.

20. Confirmation of members and substitute members of NSC Executive Committee

	Representative	Substitute representative
Denmark	Preben Friis-Hauge, South Denmark	Otto Kjær Larsen, North Denmark
England	John Lamb, Southend-on-Sea	-
France		
Germany		
Norway	Marianne Chesak, Rogaland	Åshild Kjelsnes, Sogn og Fjordane
Scotland	Peter Argyle, Aberdeenshire	John Reynolds, Aberdeen City
Sweden	Dag Hultefors, Halland	Erik Johansson, Örebro
The Netherlands	Nienke Homan, North Netherlands	Cees Loggen, North Holland

Antje Grotheer informs that the German representatives will be elected after the elections.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting confirms the members and substitute members of the NSC Executive Committee for 2017-2018.

21. Meeting plan 2017-2018

Event	Date	Venue
NSC Brexit Task Force	6 September	Brussels
Marine Resources Group	26-27 September	Flekkefjord
Smart Regions Group	4-6 October	Aberdeen
Transport Group	5-6 October	Tönsberg
75 th ExCom	18 October (tbc)	Helsinki
CPMR General Assembly	18-20 October	Helsinki
76 th ExCom	March 2018 (date tbc)	Schleswig-Holstein
27 th Annual Business Meeting	June 2018 (date tbc)	Östfold

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting takes note of the meeting plan 2017-2018.

22. Resolutions and policy positions

- Resolution on **land/sea interaction** by the Marine Resources Group, was adopted without any amendments.
- Resolution on **shore power and the cruise industry** by Vest-Agder County Council, was adopted without any amendments.
- Policy position on the **Energy package “Clean energy for all Europeans”** by the Energy and Climate Change Group, was adopted with the following amendment from Land Niedersachsen:

Page 2, remove “...and the way that renewables interact with the overall supply and demand balance. There are numerous examples of where supply and demand is out of balance but from a social acceptance point of view, badly managed excess solar capacity has potential to undermine the reputation of all renewables. The example of Groningen where excessive solar production went unused and installations were switched on and off frequently damaged inverters and undermined the confidence of consumers investing as generators.”

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting adopts the resolution on land/sea interaction.
2. The Annual Business Meeting adopts the resolution on shore power and the cruise industry.

3. The Annual Business Meeting adopts the policy position on the Energy package “Clean energy for all Europeans” with the proposed amendment.

23. Final declaration

The final declaration, The Göttingen Declaration, was adopted with the following amendments:

1. Amendment by Land Niedersachsen, to add the following to paragraph 3, after the second sentence: *“The North Sea also gives heritage to unique nature and biological resources, e.g. the largest unbroken system of intertidal sand and mud flats in the world.”*
2. Amendment from the Transport Group, to add the following as a separate paragraph: *“9. Appreciates that several NSC member regions have benefited from funding from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) to important transport infrastructure projects. We do however believe that the configuration and implementation of the CEF is territorially biased to the detriment of peripheral regions, and we therefore request to raise the ceiling for funding to projects on the comprehensive network. Furthermore, the NSC is calling for the inclusion of links in North Jutland (DK) and between Oslo and Stockholm in the ScanMed corridor in conjunction with the current adjustment of CEF corridors (further specified in the contribution from the CPMR).”*

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting adopts the Final declaration with the two amendments.

24. Annual Business Meeting 2018

Vice President Andreas Lervik welcomes the Annual Business Meeting to Østfold County, Norway.

Decisions and conclusions

1. The Annual Business Meeting welcomes the invitation from Østfold to host the Annual Business Meeting 2018.
2. The Annual Business Meeting asks the Executive Committee to set a date for the Annual Business Meeting 2018 in coordination with the host region and the CPMR.

Concluding remarks by Kerstin Brunnström, NSC President, and a thank you to the members of the Annual Business Meeting for a productive meeting. A special thank you to Minister Wenzel and the officials of Lower Saxony for hosting the meeting. Brunnström declared the 26th Annual Business Meeting closed.



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

3. Managing maritime space

Managing maritime space is one of the priority areas of the North Sea Region 2020 Strategy. The Chair of the NSC Marine Resources Group, Cllr Anders Fasth, Västra Götaland (SE), will report on developments in the area.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***

4. Cooperation agreement with KIMO

The North Sea Commission has over the past year become increasingly involved in the issue of marine litter. The issue was raised at a meeting of the Marine Resources Group (MRG) in September 2017, and thanks to the initiative of NSC it has become a topic for the work of the CPMR, who will adopt a marine litter manifesto the upcoming Political Bureau meeting in June.

In order to learn more about the issue, and to develop the understanding of what can be done in transnational cooperation, the Marine Resources Group has invited representatives of KIMO to its past two meetings in Aalborg and Lelystad. KIMO is an environmental organisation for municipalities in the wider North Sea region, and it has been much involved in the plastics issue for several years. KIMO's Secretariat has asked for a formalised cooperation with the North Sea Commission

The Charter of the North Sea Commission (article 12) states that "The North Sea Commission shall seek to work in partnership with the other organisations or institutions whose aims are complementary to the objectives of the North Sea Commission. To this end the North Sea Commission and its Thematic Groups may enter into co-operation agreements with relevant local agencies, organisations or institutions".

After consultation with the NSC Presidency, the NSC secretariat has developed the enclosed draft agreement together with KIMO's secretariat. If approved by the NSC Annual Business Meeting and by KIMO's Annual Meeting in October, the agreement can enter into force and govern the relations between the two organisations.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Approves the draft agreement with KIMO***



CPMR
NORTH SEA
COMMISSION

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

KIMO International
8 North Ness
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0LZ
UK

(Hereinafter referred to as “KIMO”)

and

CPMR North Sea Commission
Region Västra Götaland
Box 1091
SE-405 23 Gothenburg
Sweden

(Hereinafter referred to as “NSC”)

in relation to their joint ambitions:

- to address the issues of plastics and other marine litter in the seas and on shores of the North Sea Region;
- to ensure that the seas and coastal waters of the North Sea Region are clean, healthy, safe, free from pollution and preserved for future generations.

Following a dialogue between the Secretariats of KIMO and NSC and with formal approval at the NSC Annual Business meeting on the 13th June 2018 and by the KIMO International Board on the 5th October 2018, it was agreed that the two organisations would cooperate and collaborate on achieving these joint ambitions and that this Memorandum of Understanding would be drawn up between the two organisations to reflect this agreement.



Scope of Agreement

This agreement has several objectives in relation to the management of maritime space and on topics where there is alignment of organisational values, and agreement in advance, NSC and KIMO will undertake the following collaborative activities -

- Exchange of information;
- Coordination of activities;
- Joint lobbying initiatives;
- Facilitation of project work;
- Mutual promotion via social media.

Duration of Agreement

The duration of the agreement is indefinite but each party has the right to withdraw from the agreement by giving the other three months notice of their intention to withdraw.

Costs

Each organisation will normally pay for its own costs related to the agreement. Any exception will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis through dialogue between the NSC and KIMO Secretariats.

Documentation

Each party undertakes to respect any sensitive or confidential information it may have access to whilst undertaking collaborative activity.



CPMR NORTH SEA
COMMISSION

Signatories

On behalf of CPMR North Sea Commission:

Signed: Date of Signing:

Full Name of Signatory (Print):

Position in Organisation (Print):

Signed by the above in the presence of the following witness:

Witness Signature: Date

Full Name of Witness (Print):

Occupation:

Address:

On behalf of KIMO International:

Signed: Date of Signing:

Full Name of Signatory (Print):

Position in Organisation (Print):

Signed by the above in the presence of the following witness:

Witness Signature: Date

Full Name of Witness (Print):

Occupation:

Address:

5. Increased accessibility and clean transport

Increased accessibility and clean transport is one of the priority areas of the North Sea Region 2020 Strategy. The Chair of the NSC Transport Group, Cllr Preben Friis-Hauge, South Denmark (DK), will report on developments in the area.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
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Fredrikstad**

6. Tackling climate change

Tackling climate change is one of the priority areas of the North Sea Region 2020 Strategy. The Chair of the NSC Energy and Climate Change Group, Cllr Jimmy Gray, Highland (UK), will report on developments in the area.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
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7. Attractive and sustainable communities

Attractive and sustainable communities is one of the priority areas of the North Sea Region 2020 Strategy. The Chair of the NSC Smart Regions Group, Cllr Barney Crockett, Aberdeen City (UK), will report on developments in the area.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***

8. Brexit update

In 2017, the North Sea Commission launched a Brexit Task Force to follow the negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU from a North Sea regional perspective.

The task force has met in Brussels several times. Member regions have shared their analysis of Brexit impact in their respective regions. A [Brexit impact report](#), based on papers from member regions and from other sources, was developed by the Secretariat in the autumn of 2017, and was updated in the spring of 2018.

The task force developed a [Brexit statement](#), adopted by the Executive Committee in November, and later published in a major Swedish newspaper. The statement called for new ways of cooperation in the North Sea region to mitigate the impact of Brexit.

NSC has contributed to CPMR's work on the issue. President Brunnström, Vice President Lervik, Cllr Antje Grotheer from Bremen, and Cllr Cees Loggen from Noord-Holland all gave speeches in CPMR's Brexit conference in Cardiff in November. Based on the outcome of this conference, CPMR President Cordeiro has met with EU's chief negotiator Mr Barnier.

Vice President Lamb represented the NSC as panel member in a Brexit conference in London in November. The President and the Executive Secretary have both given Brexit speeches on various occasions. But with less than one year to the British withdrawal in March 2019, most questions about the future relationship between the UK and the EU remain unclear.

Councillor Nienke Homan, Northern Netherlands, Chair of the Task Force, will give an update.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***

9. EU budget and programmes post 2020

In May 2019, the European Commission published a [draft Multi-Annual Financial Framework](#) for 2021-2027. The Commission has also published, or are about to publish, draft programmes for various policy areas.

Gregg Jones, CPMR Director of Finance and EU programmes, will give an overview of the European Commission proposals.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
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10. Interreg update

The Director of the Interreg North Sea Joint Secretariat, Mr Christian Byrith, will give an update from the [North Sea Region Programme 2014-2020](#).

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***

11. North Sea Strategy Post-2020

The Annual Business Meeting in Göttingen in 2017 asked the Executive Committee to start the process to form a post 2020 strategy for the North Sea Region.

The Executive Committee has discussed the matter at its meetings in November 2017 and March 2018, adopted a timeline for the strategy process and launched a mapping and evaluation exercise. The result of this mapping and evaluation can be seen in the attached paper, which also includes questions for the ABM to discuss. The questions relate mainly to the *format* and *framework* of the strategy. The major discussion on the *contents* will be at next year's ABM, although there will be opportunities to feed in ideas already at this year's North Sea conference, in upcoming meetings of the thematic groups and in workshops over the coming year.

The Executive Committee identified the need for a task force to draft the strategy. For the ownership it would be preferable to do the work "in-house" by secretariat, advisors and representatives for member regions, and not by an external consultant. It is therefore suggested that the strategy task force consists of the secretariat, the thematic group advisors, and officers from member regions, so that each country is represented.

The Executive Committee could act as a steering group for the process, and would then in addition to its ordinary meetings in autumn and spring hold an extra meeting in January with the strategy in focus.

ExCom also decided to propose a budget for the strategy process to be financed from the free reserves. This will be discussed further in the Finances point of today's agenda.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Discusses format and framework for the post-2020 strategy**
- 2. Sets up a task force for the strategy process, coordinated by the Secretariat**
- 3. Appoints the Executive Committee as steering group for the strategy process**



North Sea Region post 2020 Strategy

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, the North Sea Commission (NSC) adopted the North Sea Region 2020 strategy. This followed a couple of years of lobbying for an EU strategy for the NSR, in line with other macro-regional strategies in Europe (Baltic, Danube, etc). Due to poor interest in a macro-regional strategy from the EU member states in the North Sea basin, the NSC decided to create its own strategy, identifying challenges and opportunities in the region, and defining priority areas for the NSC, inspired by the Europe 2020 strategy. [A revised version of the strategy](#) was adopted in 2016.

At the Annual Business Meeting in 2017, it was decided to start preparations for a post 2020 North Sea Region strategy. The new strategy is planned to be adopted in 2020.

The **purpose of this paper** is to inspire the discussions at the ABM and North Sea conference 2018 about the scope and general framework for the next North Sea Region Strategy. These discussions will be part of the input to the drafting process that will follow over the next couple of years.

1. A new strategy for the North Sea Region

1.1. Scope and level of ambition

One of the reasons why the North Sea Commission (NSC) found it necessary to develop its own strategy was to compensate for the lack of a macro-regional strategy for the North Sea. Macro-regional strategies are EU policy instruments aiming to make better use of the available resources to tackle territorial development issues and to find common solutions to common challenges.

One of the merits of having a macro-regional strategy is that it involves all levels of governance, from high-level policy making to the operational level, in dealing with common challenges and opportunities specific for that region. Although the ambition of the NSC is to eventually establish a macro-regional strategy for the North Sea Region, there was also the need to get on with the work and provide a framework for cooperation between the organisations already active in the region.

The North Sea Region 2020 strategy aimed to help foster and develop an attractive and international area for citizens, businesses, and organisations and a better governed region, with improved cooperation and coordination between all levels of government and sectors. In doing so, the NSR 2020 supports the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and contributes to the goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for Europe. The strategy also aimed to provide a framework for greater policy integration and coherent development through coordination and cooperation in the North Sea Region.

Looking ahead, there is a need to determine what a new strategy should aim to achieve, who it should include and what the timeframe should be. Should it entail a bold vision for the future, for the NSC and its regions to strive towards? Or should it be more detailed with measurable targets?

It is also necessary to determine the geographical and thematic scope of the strategy. The NSR 2020 applied a broad definition in the sense that it included the whole North Sea Region and its communities. This was to keep the strategy flexible and relevant on specific themes. However, it could also be argued that a more precise scope would encourage stronger ownership of the strategy.

2. Member's opinions on the current strategy

A survey among politicians and officers of the member regions was made in April-May 2018. The results of the survey are presented in an attached document.

3. International and global context

3.1 The North Sea Region Strategy in an international context

The North Sea Region 2020 Strategy was developed to help address challenges and opportunities faced by regions around the North Sea and ensure the region's contribution to long-term strategies and goals, in particular the Europe 2020 Strategy. However, there is still no sign of a new European strategy for the post 2020 period. This raises the question of which European policy objectives will

be guiding the work of the Union and its member states in the next decade, and how the North Sea Region should relate to these to remain an engine for growth in Europe.

The North Sea region is a significant actor when it comes to the development of Europe, and it accounts for a large share of the European economy. The North Sea region is in many ways a frontrunner in strategic European growth sectors, such as the development of renewable energies and innovation. Many of the challenges in the region also correspond with the challenges faced on a pan-European level, e.g. climate change and how to sustainably reinforce physical interconnections.

A new strategy for the North Sea region aiming at providing a sustainable policy framework for better coordination of joint resources and territorial development should therefore take into account the overarching strategies and political priorities of the EU and the international community. Not only to ensure that the local and regional actors in the region can make use of the policy and budget instruments at EU level, but also to make certain that the North Sea region keeps contributing towards the achievement of European and global objectives.

3.2 European priorities

The UK referendum in June 2016 resulted in a majority voting for leaving the EU. Brexit and other factors, such as a growing Euroscepticism in some member states, drove the Union and its members into a reflection process on the future of Europe.

The remaining 27 EU member states (EU27) met in Rome to celebrate the 60 year anniversary of the Union, and to reinforce their commitment to a stronger and more resilient European Union. The meeting concluded in a joint statement identifying four thematic priorities and a vision saying "In the ten years to come we want a Union that is safe and secure, prosperous, competitive, sustainable and socially responsible, and with the will and capacity of playing a key role in the world and of shaping globalisation. We want a Union where citizens have new opportunities for cultural and social development and economic growth."¹

The four priorities of the EU27 for the future of Europe are:

1. A safe and secure Europe
2. A prosperous and sustainable Europe
3. A social Europe
4. A stronger Europe on the global scene

These conclusions are a clear message from the heads of states in what they want EU27 to focus its efforts on in the coming decade.

3.2.1 The EU budget 2021-2027

In 2017 the European Commission published a white paper with five scenarios for the future of Europe. This was followed by five thematic reflection papers aimed at creating a broad debate on the future priorities and objectives for the EU. The European Commission held several dialogue meetings with many different stakeholders, the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament. With the input from these meetings, as well as the clear message from the EU27, the President of the European Commission laid out its vision of the future of Europe in a speech in

¹ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration/>

September 2017. This vision was a first outline of what was then to become the proposal for the next EU budget.

On 2 May 2018 the European Commission published its communication on the future multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2021-2027. The MFF is titled “**A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends**” and is divided in eight overarching budget lines:

1. Single market, Innovation & Digital
2. Cohesion & Values
3. Natural Resources & Environment
4. Migration & Border Control
5. Security & Defence
6. Neighbourhood & the World
7. European public administration
8. Instruments outside the MFF ceilings

All the European funds and programmes will be categorised under these different budget lines. It will therefore be these thematic areas that are guiding for the work of the EU. Although the budget has different headings, it includes the priorities identified and communicated by the EU27 in the Rome declaration.

3.3 Global objectives and agreements

Apart from the internal priorities of the European Union, there are several important global agreements that the EU and national governments in Europe have committed to. There seem to be two political agendas that will be especially important in the coming decade, namely the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (Agenda 2030) and the Paris Agreement on climate change. This is not only because the EU has indicated that all its investments and priorities should aim to fulfill Agenda 2030 and its 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. But also because national governments are developing action plans for implementation and more and more regions are integrating the objectives in their regional development strategies.

These are global agendas that need to engage every level of government around the world and the NSC should reflect on how the North Sea region can relate and contribute in the process.

3.3.1 Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals

The UN adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (Agenda 2030) in September 2015. It consists of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets which the international community has committed to achieving by 2030. The SDGs are a roadmap to end poverty in all its forms, promote prosperity, protect the planet; and ultimately to shift the world towards a more sustainable path².

In a communication from 2016, the European Commission stated its full commitment to the implementation of the Agenda 2030, in line with the principle of subsidiarity³. This means that the European Commission will work to fully integrate the SDGs in its policy framework and the next EU

² <https://cpmrblog.wordpress.com/2017/05/29/2030-agenda-sdgs-and-the-future-of-europe/>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication-next-steps-sustainable-europe-20161122_en.pdf

budget. In line with the subsidiarity principle, it is also widely recognised that the regional and local level have a crucial role in implementing the SDGs. Naturally, different regions will adopt different approaches in addressing the SDGs, and the NSC will have to discuss if and how a new strategy should integrate the SDGs.

3.3.2 The Paris Agreement on climate change

In December 2015 national governments agreed on the long-term goal to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C⁴. It is a global legally binding agreement that includes national climate action plans and a clear reporting system.

To meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement, all policy levels and sectors will have to contribute. Big impact sectors such as transport and energy will have to make the transition towards no and low emission solutions, and it will take many policy decisions to promote brave climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

The European Commission has announced its ambition for the EU to be a frontrunner in the work towards meeting the targets, which hopefully will become evident in the process of revising EU's long-term climate plan which will begin in 2018. Many regions, municipalities and other organisations are also making pledges to do their part by adopting ambitious regional objectives to limit their impact on the climate. The North Sea region will have to do its part, not least considering it is a pioneer in the field of renewable energy, but also to ensure sustainable development for the North Sea and the communities around it.

4. The North Sea Region

4.1. Other cooperation structures

In addition to the NSC, there are several other cooperation agreements and/or organisations involved in the development of the North Sea Region, some of them mentioned here, which should be taken into account in the development of our strategy:

[Interreg North Sea programme](#). Many projects in the 2014-2020 programme period can inspire our new North Sea Region strategy. If there will be a new programme for 2021-2027 it is important that we coordinate the strategy process with the development of the programme.

[OSPAR](#) is short for the Oslo and Paris Convention, an agreement between 15 countries and the EU. OSPAR monitors and take measures to improve the conditions of the marine environment in the North East Atlantic, including the North Sea. The CPMR is a registered observer to OSPAR, and we should use that observer status more actively.

⁴ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/timeline/>

[KIMO](#) is an environmental organisation of municipalities, mainly in the North Sea Region. Its activities are partly carried out through networks in each country, partly on transnational level. The NSC has recently established contact and is preparing a cooperation agreement.

The [North Seas Energy cooperation](#) is based on a political declaration signed in 2016 between ten countries in the North Sea and Irish Sea region with the aims to facilitate the cost-effective deployment of offshore renewable energy, in particular wind, and to promote interconnection between the countries in the region. This is in line with NSC's ambitions and we should follow and continue to feed into the cooperation.

[North Sea Advisory Council](#) is an association of fisheries organisations working towards integrated and sustainable management of North Sea fisheries.

4.2. Brexit impact

At the time of writing, we still do not know what kind of relation there will be after 2020 between the United Kingdom and the EU/EEA. Brexit is likely to have a negative impact on the economy in many parts of the North Sea Region, but the effects will depend very much on the general cooperation architecture, relations to the inner market and customs union, etc. For the NSC members, the possible future UK participation in EU cooperation programmes is of particular interest.

4.3. Prospects for a macro-regional strategy

EU member states in the North Sea Region have so far not been eager to create a macro-regional strategy for the North Sea like the ones for the Baltic or the Adriatic Sea. This may change as an effect of Brexit. Flanders has raised this issue with the Belgian government. We need to follow such discussions carefully since they may change the preconditions for our own strategy.

4.4. Competences of North Sea Commission member regions

There are considerable differences in competences, constitutional status and financial situation between regional authorities amongst the North Sea countries. There are councils with limited powers and small budgets, as well as state governments in federal structures. A strategy should therefore address the most important challenges and opportunities for transnational cooperation in the North Sea Region, even if they are not within the competences of every single member region.

5. Questions for discussion

Below you will find questions which are to be discussed at the Annual Business Meeting, 13 June 2018, as a guidance for the future work with the North Sea Region post 2020 Strategy:

- What is a reasonable timeframe? 2025 due to the many uncertainties surrounding us? 2027 to match the EU budget period? 2030 to match the global development agenda? 2050 to be bold and visionary? Other?
- What is a suitable format? Same as today with a small number of priority areas, each consisting of two or more key action areas, and each corresponding to a thematic working group? Shorter, less detailed strategy, leaving the details to be worked out in the annual action plans? More detailed and with specified goals?
- Should a strategy address North Sea regional challenges in general? Only those challenges that require transnational cooperation? Only those challenges that are within the competences of the regional level in two or more countries?
- Do we need more data as input for a new strategy? Would an update of 'North Sea in numbers' be sufficient in that case? Do we need other data, which was not included in 'North Sea in numbers'?



CPMR NORTH SEA
COMMISSION

The CPMR North Sea Commission

The CPMR North Sea Commission represents 32 regional authorities in Denmark, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland and Sweden. We have been working since 1989 to create partnerships between our members and to promote the interests of the North Sea Region in Europe, specifically in the fields of marine resources, accessibility and sustainable transport, energy and climate change and prosperous and sustainable communities.

We are part of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions, a leading regional interest organisation and think tank with 160 member regions across Europe.

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Attachment 1. Summary and analysis of member's opinions on the current strategy

Respondents

- 53 respondents (17 politicians, 36 civil servants) = about 1/3 of those who got the survey.
- 1.6 answers per member region (2 or more per member region from Norway, Denmark, Germany and Sweden; less than 1 per member region from NL).
- Mix of respondents with long and short NSC experience.
- 60 % of respondents have attended the Annual Business Meetings more than once and more than 70 % have attended thematic group meetings more than once. 19 % have never attended ABM and 21 % have never attended a group meeting.

Values of the North Sea Region 2020 Strategy

- Most important values of strategy: identifies challenges/opportunities of the NSR; provides guidelines and strategic direction for NSC work; raises awareness for North Sea issues.
- Fairly high scores also for: good basis for influencing European policy; good basis for developing projects; strengthens the visibility of NSR; supports and develops a North Sea identity
- Very few see 'facilitates the involvement of stakeholders in my region', 'good basis for influencing national policy' or 'makes it easier to communicate the benefits of NSC membership in my region' as the most important values

Scope and priorities of the strategy

- The scope of the strategy is considered adequate by most respondents. One comments that it is well in line with priorities of the CPMR and of the Interreg North Sea. Several respondents comment that the 'attractive and sustainable communities' priority is too broad. There could also be more focus within each of the areas, according to one comment. One respondent thinks that the strategy should have included more of the environmental challenges at sea and in coastal zones.
- Priority areas 'Managing maritime space', 'Increased Accessibility and Clean Transport' and 'Tackling Climate Change' reflect the main challenges for the NSR to a large or very large extent according to 70-80 per cent of respondents. Only 44 per cent say that about 'Attractive and Sustainable Communities'.

Key action areas

- Clean transport, energy efficiency, greenhouse gas reduction, climate change adaptation/mitigation, and sustainable exploitation of marine resources are the areas

considered by most respondents as relevant or very relevant, both for the respondent's own region and for the NSR in total.

- Marine spatial planning, and modal shift from road to rail and sea is considered highly relevant for the NSR but to less extent for the own region.
- Tourism sector development, maritime cluster promotion, North Sea grid, and access to TEN-T core network score moderately high.
- Cultural networks and policy coordination on demography and migration are considered less relevant.

Guiding principles

- Sustainability is the only one of the guiding principles that is considered integrated to a large or very large extent in the work (70 per cent of respondents). The scores are considerably lower for stakeholder involvement (36%), skills and R&D (28%), innovation and excellence (26%) and visibility (23%).
- One respondent comments: 'The NSC would have to mobilise more of the top universities & research institutions in the NSR to improve on the "excellence" dimension. The skills dimension should be strengthened in the Transport and Energy groups. We should as a general rule also work more systematically to foster stakeholder involvement through participation at group meetings, conferences, and through surveys and consultations.'

Future strategy

- When asked about other major challenges/opportunities that would be important to address in a future strategy, the highest rankings are for marine litter/plastics (81 %), circular economy (57 %) and digitisation/automation (49%).
- Another comment concerns the different levels of suggested areas. The move to a more sustainable society is important on a strategic level and would include several of the topics.
- One respondent mentions new global trade patterns and trade routes (North East passage, "New Silk Road") as challenges which may lead to major changes in conditions for the economy, trade and transport in the North Sea Region.
- Blue skills and rural/urban relations are also mentioned in the comments field.

Relation to Interreg and other EU programmes

- A majority believes that it is important both to align the strategy with priorities in EU's proposed long-term budget and programmes, and to lobby for NSR strategy priorities to be included in a possible future Interreg North Sea programme.
- 'Any NSC Strategy not linked to any forthcoming Interreg NSR programme post-2020 would not make any sense at all (and vice versa).'

- Another respondent stresses the need for flexibility and expresses that 'it is more a question of how the programme and the strategy can complement each other. They do not need to be totally aligned but need to be able to create room and offer opportunities'.

Brexit

- A vast majority of respondents think that the strategy has a role to address and mitigate the impact of Brexit, in particular as a framework for involving UK regions and stakeholders in North Sea cooperation.

National governments

- The strategy can contribute to the cooperation with national governments both by showing the benefits of strong North Sea cooperation, and by highlighting challenges and opportunities.
- Respondents in this section also mention 'highlighting the role of regions in transnational cooperation' and 'framework for involving national governments in selected sectors, such as the development of energy and transport networks'.

Stakeholder involvement

- Stakeholder involvement should be organized first of all through participation in group meetings and other events, secondly through consultations.
- A remark from one respondent is that member regions should align with relevant stakeholders in EU projects they are involved in, and use the thematic groups to promote contacts between stakeholder from different regions.

Integration of the NSR strategy in the daily work in member regions

- There are several comments and suggestions in this field, many focusing on ownership and communication aspects:
 - 'By clear and including dialogue between the member regions and CPMR in the macro perspective and by engaged and well-connected representatives of the members'
 - 'Actions should be revisited at every Thematic Group meeting to reiterate work needing to be done'
 - 'Hard work in dissemination, publicity and also the content must be of high relevance'
 - 'Make contact to the "next generation" - use online tools, more PR work (e.g. use highlights of Interreg project results - link to EU Commission events (although Brussels is off the NSR - make a rule that travel to Brussels/events in Brussels are fully eligible - same as within NSR'
 - 'Needs to be a strategy developed not by a small group but by the executive on behalf of all members'

- 'It is important that member regions have ownership of the strategy, otherwise they are not going to use it back home'
- 'Show best practice from regions where the strategy is well-known and integrated'
- 'Firstly, a wide process in the startup phase where the regions are involved in forming the strategic strands. Secondly by active participation from the members in the groups. Clear understanding amongst group participants that the work they do delivers under the strategy'
- 'Involving regional parliaments which can discuss the topics and adopt resolutions'
- 'Good publicity work'
- 'Public relations, events, information of regional parliament'
- 'Sharing with member regions senior politicians'
- 'Present at relevant local events (conferences, mtgs, seminars, etc.)'
- 'Better communication in the regions'
- 'Make a common input for how to inform the medias. Politicians will follow up, then the public are informed'
- '1) By being quoted as a reference document in regional development strategies and related sectoral plans. 2) By being mentioned in cases & recommendations to political bodies. 3) Posting articles, reports and minutes from NSC meetings and events at the institutional homepages'
- 'By ensuring that it is relevant to the opportunities and challenges regions are facing'
- 'More information on NSR goals and activities and better connection with the regional organisation'

Additional comments from the survey

- More result focus needed
- Involvement of youth is important
- National ExCom members should align more closely with their respective national governments



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

12. Annual report 2017-2018

The annual report is enclosed. The Executive Secretary will briefly present the report.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

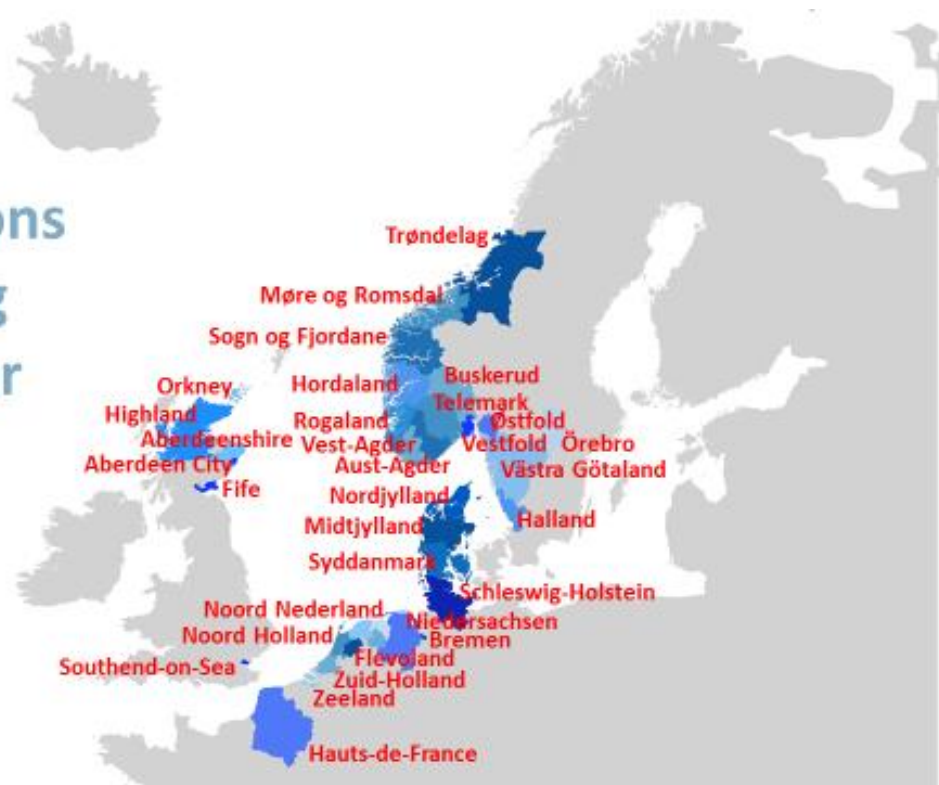
- 1. Approves the annual report 2017-2018***



CPMR North Sea Commission Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Approved by the NSC Annual Business Meeting
– 13 June 2018, Fredrikstad, Østfold, Norway

32 regions
working
together



The purpose of the CPMR North Sea Commission (NSC) annual report is to inform about activities since the last Annual Business Meeting. In this report you will find the following:

1. Introduction
2. Report from the NSC Action Plan 2017-2018
 - a. Managing maritime space
 - b. Increased accessibility and clean transport
 - c. Tackling climate change
 - d. Attractive and sustainable communities
3. Other activities

1. Introduction

At the 2017 NSC Annual Business Meeting (ABM) in Göttingen, Lower Saxony, **John Lamb**, Council Leader in Southend-on-Sea (UK), was re-elected as Vice President (2017-19). All thematic group chairs were re-elected. Councillors **Kerstin Brunström**, Västra Götaland (President) and **Andreas Lervik**, Østfold (Vice President) continued for the second year of their mandates.

The ABM adopted the [Göttingen declaration](#). Resolutions were adopted on [land-sea interaction](#) and on [on-shore power and the cruise industry](#).

The [action plan for 2017-2018](#) identified a number of activities under the NSC2020 key actions, on which we will report below.

The **Executive Committee** (ExCom) met briefly after the ABM in Göttingen, and twice more throughout the year. The autumn meeting was held in Cardiff in connection to CPMR's Brexit conference, and the spring meeting in Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein. In addition to reports from thematic groups and national representatives, the ExCom has had presentations by the CPMR, and by the Interreg North Sea programme, and visited the GEOMAR Ocean institute in Kiel. Members of the committee in 2017-18 were – in addition to the President and Vice Presidents – Councillors **Antje Grotheer** (Bremen, DE), **Nienke Homan** (Northern Netherlands/Groningen, NL), **Marianne Chesak** (Rogaland, NO), **Dag Hultefors** (Halland, SE), and **Peter Argyle** (Aberdeenshire, Scotland). **Preben Friis-Hauge** (South Denmark, DK) was a full member in 2017 and was replaced in 2018 by **Otto Kjær Larsen** (North Denmark, DK). Chairs of the thematic groups have attended the meetings.

The **President and Vice Presidents** have had phone meetings every 2-3 months. They have also attended several of the thematic group meetings.

Most of the NSC member regions are active in at least one of the thematic groups, the Executive Committee, and/or CPMR task forces. We have had the pleasure to welcome a new member, the Province of **Flevoland**, but were sorry to see **Shetland** Islands Council withdraw. The total number of member regions is 32. Our area also expanded in the far North, when the new **Trøndelag** county was formed through a merger of our member Sør-Trøndelag with its neighbour Nord-Trøndelag.

2. Report from the NSC Action Plan 2017-2018

The North Sea Region 2020 strategy is implemented through an Action Plan that is revised on a yearly basis and adopted by the ABM. The Action Plan consists of activities related to each of the four strategic priorities.

Managing maritime space

This section is a report on the key activities from the NSC action plan 2017-18 priority “Managing maritime space” and the Marine Resources Group (MRG).

- **Key action: Use maritime spatial planning as a tool to promote dialogue between different governmental levels and stakeholders**

The province of Noord Holland participates in the NorthSEE project on maritime spatial planning (MSP) on behalf of the NSC/MRG. The link between the MRG and the NorthSEE project has recently intensified because the newly appointed advisor is also the representative of the Province of Noord-Holland in the NorthSEE project.

MSP has been discussed in innovative and interactive ways during the last two MRG meetings which resulted in more awareness about the complex topic of MSP. A special MRG meeting was organized in April 2018 together with all the project partners of the NorthSEE project on the isle of Texel. The group participated in [the MSP Challenge 2050](#). It was a dedicated session on Ecology and included relevant stakeholders from several organizations, research institutions and regions. It was considered a strong tool for awareness raising.

A representative of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and the director for Maritime Affairs of the CPMR introduced the approved SEANSE project. This is a project in the framework of a DG Mare call on MSP in the North Sea. The MRG will remain in close contact with this project.

- **Key action: Ensure sustainable and innovative exploitation of marine resources**

Since the meeting in Flekkefjord September 2017, a new focus on marine litter has been prioritized. This resulted in a paper on marine litter and adoption of the amendment from the MRG during the General Assembly in Helsinki (19th - 20th of October 2017). The amendment to include Marine Litter was therefore adopted in [the final declaration of the CPMR](#).

During the subsequent MRG meetings, marine litter was discussed and the advisor worked in close contact with the CPMR to develop a resolution on marine litter. This resolution is included for approval at the Annual Business Meeting in June, Fredrikstad.

- **Key action: Establish a NSC position on Brexit to make sure regional interests are heard**

Brexit will have implications for the marine sector. The issue was discussed during the CPMR meeting on European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) post 2020 on 30th and 31st of January in Brussels. And a CPMR seminar on Brexit, Fisheries and the EMFF post 2020 was organized on the 20th of April 2018.

- **Key action: Ensure a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the future and livelihood in coastal communities**

A joint meeting with the Smart Regions thematic workgroup was organized on January 19th, 2018 in Aalborg. The focus was on Blue Growth Strategies based on marine bio resources. Several presentations were held including interactive discussions with members of both groups.

Other related activities

The MRG has been working closely with the CPMR giving input to the CPMR Maritime Agenda, adopted at the CPMR General Assembly in October 2017. The CPMR is doing a thorough work on maritime projects and

financing, fisheries and aquaculture, MSP etc. on the European level. The NSC attends meetings and contributes with input to questionnaires and reports.

Since the MRG raised the marine litter issue to a higher political level, the CPMR has organised two workshops on this issue. The first CPMR meeting on marine litter on the 31st of January in Brussels. The chair, vice-chair, advisor and a representative from the NSC secretariat participated in the meeting. The second workshop was organized on April 10th in Brussel. Knowledge and expertise from regions was collected, best practices shared and input provided for the preparatory work for a Manifesto on Marine Litter of the CPMR.

The advisor and the Secretary General of the NSC joined the high level SEARICA meeting on the 10th of May and the Ocean Plastic Lab which provided inspiration for the resolution on marine litter.

There has been contact with OSPAR, KIMO, Waddensee cooperation and North Sea Advisory Council about strengthening cooperation and exchanging knowledge. KIMO especially has been involved the last couple of months to work together on strengthening the coordinated approach on the marine litter issue. A request for further cooperation has resulted in a proposal for an observer status in the MRG to be discussed during the ABM in Fredrikstad.

The potential impacts of Brexit on fisheries, maritime spatial planning, and other related areas will remain important topics for the coming years.

The Marine Resources Group

Anders Fasth, Västra Götaland (SE) is the Chair of the Marine Resources Group. **Henk Staghouwer** from North Netherlands/Groningen (NL) and **Åshild Kjelsnes** from Sogn og Fjordane are the Vice Chairs. **Camilla Løvaas Stavnes**, Hordaland (NO), was the advisor until October 2017, when **Yolanda Schmal**, Province of Noord-Holland (NL), was appointed new advisor.

The group has met three times since the last ABM;

- September in Flekkefjord (NO)
- January 2018 in Aalborg (DK)
- April 2018 at the isle of Texel and Flevoland (NL)

12 regions from five countries have attended the group meetings. Strategic meetings were held in October 2017, December 2017 and March 2018 between Chair, Vice Chair, advisor and NSC secretariat to introduce the new advisor to the work and prepare the MRG meetings.

Increased accessibility and clean transport

This section is a report on the key activities from the NSC action plan 2017-2018 priority “Increased accessibility and clean transport” and Transport Group (TG).

- **Key action: Ensure good access to the TEN-T Core Network for peripheral and maritime regions through funding instruments (the CEF) and governance mechanisms (Core Network Corridor Forums)**

Group members have attended meetings of the TEN-T Scan-Med corridor forum together with representatives of member states, transport agencies and the European Commission. This has provided an opportunity to feed in to the third generation of the corridor work plan, as well as to address relevant concerns for the North Sea Region. Representatives of other member regions have attended meetings in the North Sea-Baltic corridor forum.

Representatives of the NSC Secretariat and group members attended the Connecting Europe conference in Tallinn on 21 – 22 September. The focus of the conference was to identify policy actions and financing solutions to invest in the transport sector with the perspective of the post-2020 EU financial framework.

The Adviser and representatives of NSC member regions from Drenthe, Groningen, Zuid-Holland, Northern Netherlands Alliance and Örebro took part in the TEN-T Days in Ljubljana on 25 – 27 April. The purpose of this event was to discuss smart, sustainable and safe mobility in the context of the trans-European transport network and investments in transport connectivity. We learned that the Scan-Med corridor is the corridor collecting most money from the CEF, and that most of that money goes to the North (DE, DK, SE and FI). All transport modes in the corridor are performing fairly well on the defined key performance indicators.

A main message from this event is that there is a huge funding gap for transport infrastructure under the TEN-T. There is thus a need to mobilize alternative funding sources in addition to EU and national grants, such as private and institutional (type pension and insurance fund, and even crowd-funding) capital. To attract private investments, transport infrastructure projects must be made more "bankable" and less risky. To succeed with this, it is also regarded as necessary to harmonize procedures for public procurement and planning permits related to environment and safety across borders.

Group members from North Denmark and the Agder Counties in Norway have drafted a resolution to the ABM in Fredrikstad calling on the Danish Government and the EU to extend the Scan-Med Corridor up to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals. The resolution is in line with established NSC positions.

The TG has decided to start the preparation of input and positions to the TEN-T revision post 2020.

- **Key action: Facilitate modal shift from road to rail and sea**

The TG has been monitoring relevant policy developments at the EU level and participated in discussions in the CPMR Transport group – including the progress of the Detailed Implementation Plan for Motorways of the Sea. Furthermore, members have exchanged information on relevant practices, measures and projects at group meetings.

- **Key action: Support measures and incentives to promote clean, efficient and inclusive transport, including clean shipping**

The two joint meetings with the NSC Energy and Climate Change group in Vestfold in October and in Groningen in February did both address issues related to alternative fuels (biofuels and Hydrogen) and clean energy in the transport sector. Group members from several countries presented their strategies and measures for decarbonizing the transport sector. The two groups will organize a joint event on alternative fuels and energy in the winter of 2019.

The TG has initiated a mapping of practices on clean shipping in the member regions. Preliminary results will be presented at the group meeting in Fredrikstad.

The Adviser and the NSC Secretariat has been in dialogue with the CPMR Secretariat on the follow-up of the 2017 ABM resolution on the need for international regulations on shore side power in the cruise industry. The main message from this resolution was also adopted as part of the final declaration from the CPMR General Assembly in Helsinki last October.

The TG has furthermore decided to start the process of updating the report on the use of alternative fuels in public transport and other transport services.

The Adviser presented the work on clean transport at a meeting of the CPMR transport group on 28 November. The Adviser and the NSC Secretariat also provided input to a speech by the NSC President at the CPMR Political Bureau in Patras on 8 March on the same subject.

Other related activities

Group members and the Adviser have attended two meetings in the CPMR Transport group. The Adviser has attended a meeting of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission (BSC). The BSC and NSC Transport groups organized a joint meeting in Stockholm on 5 – 6 April. The groups presented priorities and activities, and exchanged information on relevant practices and working methods. It was agreed to meet regularly in the future, and to consider organizing common events in Brussels.

The Transport Group

Preben Friis-Hauge, South Denmark, chairs the Transport Group, with **John Reynolds**, Aberdeen City (UK), and **Kåre Pettersen**, Vestfold (NO) as Vice Chairs. **Jon Halvard Eide**, Vest-Agder (NO) is the adviser.

The group has met twice since the ABM in 2017:

- October 2017 in Vestfold (NO)
- February 2018 in Groningen (NE)

These meetings marked a milestone as they were the first to be jointly organized with the NSC Energy and Climate Change group. The TG will organize a meeting ahead of the ABM in Fredrikstad on 13 June.

Tackling climate change

This section is a report on the key activities from the NSC action plan 2017-2018 priority “Tackling climate change” and the Energy and Climate Change Group (ECCG).

- **Key action: Facilitate climate change adaptation and mitigation through local, regional and national levels**

During the meeting in October in Vestfold, the latest version of the CPMR Taskforce drafts on the “Clean Energy Package for all” policy position and “Climate Change Adaptation” policy position was discussed. They were adopted at the CPMR meeting in Helsinki. The NSC position paper on the “Clean Energy Package for all”, which was prepared from February-June 2017, formed a basis for the CPMR policy position.

- **Key action: Facilitate for a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, low carbon emissions, innovation, green growth**

The ECCG had a joint meeting with the Transport Group in Vestfold, (NO), 5-6 October, with around 30 participants from member regions in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Scotland and Norway. The meeting marks a milestone as it was the first time the two groups organized a joint meeting.

The focus of this meeting was on decarbonizing transport, clean technologies, biofuels and bio-energy developments in the member regions with central questions on how to set the demand for biofuels, how to choose the right biofuels and how we can ensure biofuels are sustainable and payable (Regions of Hordaland, Østfold are preparing input for a meeting on biofuels/biogas in Västra Götaland (Q1 2019).

The group travelled with a hydrogen bus to Delfzijl and visited the AkzoNobel chloride factory to see the brand-new hydrogen facility fueling station. Presentations were given about the opportunities for off shore wind in combination with the development of a hydrogen economy in the Eemshaven, Groningen.

Another joint meeting of the ECCG and TG took place in Groningen, 22-23 February 2018, with around 42 participants from Norway, Denmark, Scotland, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. The groups focused on hydrogen, smart mobility and off shore wind.

- **Key action: Foster strong regional, national and European support for the development of the North Sea Grid**

During the fall a joint meeting with the Atlantic Arc Commission (AAC) on off shore wind was prepared, together with the province of Northern Holland and WindEurope. On the 29 November the group visited the Port of IJmuiden where the port and the port of Den Helder shared their experiences on different aspects of off shore wind deployment. The group visited the facility MHI Vestas and discussed how they realized off shore wind projects and what exactly could be the local, regional and societal benefits.

Sophie Jongeneel of the Province of Groningen and Ingo Stuermer of Lower Saxony presented the current status of off shore wind deployment in the German Bight (Dutch, German coastline) and possibilities for meshed grid developments.

The NSC interests in off shore wind cooperation in the North Sea were presented by President Kerstin Brunnström. Input for an Atlantic Arc Commission’s political declaration on off shore/marine renewable energies was discussed amongst the members of the AAC and NSC. Joelle Rekers of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs gave an update on the political cooperation off shore wind around the North Sea.

A template on energy transition was presented by Groningen. All regions were asked to make a factsheet for their own region in the upcoming months.

Other related activities

Several NSC members have joined CPMR’s Climate Taskforce that was launched in March 2017.

On 19 December 2017, a provisional **political agreement on new rules for improving the energy performance of buildings** was reached between negotiators from the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. The improvements agreed include measures to strengthen the energy performance of new buildings, to accelerate the rate of building renovation towards more energy efficient systems and tapping into the huge potential for efficiency gains in the building sector, the largest single energy consumer in Europe.

EU countries have agreed in January 2018 on a new **2030 Framework for climate and energy**, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030. These targets aim to help the EU achieve a more competitive, secure and sustainable energy system and to meet its long-term 2050 greenhouse gas reductions target.

The **Smart Specialisation Platform on Energy** (S3PEnergy) was launched by the European Commission. It facilitates partnerships between EU regions that plan investments in energy innovation and assists them to use funding more effectively. Five interregional partnerships that bring together sixty European regions have been created so far, in bio-energy, solar energy, renewable marine energy, smart grids and sustainable buildings.

The new **EU Energy Poverty Observatory** was launched on Monday 29 January. Roughly 9% of the EU population struggle to attain adequate warmth. Awareness of energy poverty is rising in Europe and has been identified as a policy priority by European Commission's in its '[Clean Energy for All Europeans](#)' package of initiatives. There the Commission proposed to establish a common definition and required Member States to monitor figures and report back to the Commission. This is part and parcel of the implementation of Principle 20 of the European [Pillar of Social Rights](#) and one of the enabling actions are being put in place to support a just and socially fair clean energy transition. A dedicated new [Observatory website](#) was launched.

The Energy and Climate Change Group

The Energy and Climate Change Group is chaired by **Jimmy Gray**, Highland (UK). Vice Chairs are **Tjisse Stelpstra**, North Netherlands/Drenthe (NL) and **Jon Olav Strand**, Aust-Agder (NO). **Paulien Kooistra** from North Netherlands/Drenthe is appointed advisor.

The group has met three times since the ABM in 2017:

- October 2017 a joint meeting with the NSC TG, Vestfold (NO)
- November 2017 a joint meeting with the NSC Atlantic Arc Commission, Noord-Holland (NE)
- February 2018 a joint meeting with NSC TG, Groningen (NE)

Attractive and sustainable communities

This section is a report on the key activities from the NSC action plan 2017-2018 priority “Attractive and sustainable communities” and the Smart Regions Group.

- **Key action: Promote knowledge transfer and cross-overs between different sectors in the North Sea Region**

The SRG is NSC’s newest working group after having merged the previous group Economic Development and Culture and Tourism during the ABM 2017. The group has chosen to focus on one priority at each of its meetings but giving attention to all priorities throughout the year. The group has recently decided to appoint Task Holders, region(s) responsible for continuous work on a specific priority.

- **Key action: Support the development of cultural heritage based tourism, nature, outdoor and health tourism in coastal areas**
- **Key action: Support the development of permanent networks for cultural actors**

The group started its work from January 2017 and has its first meeting in Aarhus, European Capital of Culture 2017 on 3 March 2017. This meeting discussed the future work of the merged group and was introduced to the broad variety of activities relating to the European Capital of Culture program of Aarhus.

- **Key action: Improve policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges**

The second meeting was held in Aberdeen City 1-3 November 2017. Here, the focus was on migrants, inclusion and the workforce. Several presentations from both the host region and several member regions were delivered, showing good examples of integration into society and the labour market of migrants. This workshop also sparked off a NSC engagement in the CPMR Task Force on Migration Management, and both a Vice-Chair and the Advisor have now participated in meetings of this task force.

- **Key action: Promote maritime clusters to continue to play an important role as provider of blue growth, jobs and innovation**

The last meeting of the group took place in Aalborg 18-19 January 2018. The second day was a joint seminar of the Marine Resources Group and the SRG on Blue Growth based on marine bio-resources. Several regional actors of the host region presented good examples of economic development based on marine bio-resources, and there was also a presentation on KIMO and its work to reduce and mitigate maritime litter.

- **Key action: Support the development of a more sustainable tourism sector**
- **Key action: Support the diversification of tourism offers in coastal areas as well as in cruise tourism**

During the first day of the joint meeting with the MRG, 18-19 January 2018, there were separate meetings of the two groups, and the SRG had a seminar on coastal tourism.

The Smart Regions Group

The Lord Provost of Aberdeen City, **Barney Crockett**, chairs the group. **Otto Kjær Larsen**, North Denmark, and **Birgitta Adolfsson**, Västra Götaland, are Vice-Chairs of the group, and **Geir Sør-Reime**, Rogaland (NO) is appointed as advisor.

The group has met two times since the ABM in 2017:

- November 2017 in Aberdeen (UK)
- January 2018 in Aalborg (DK)

3. Other activities

The NSC Brexit Task Force

In 2017, the North Sea Commission launched a Brexit Task Force, led by Cllr Nienke Homan, to follow the negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU from a North Sea regional perspective. The task force has met in Brussels in September, November and February. Member regions have shared their analysis of Brexit impact in their respective regions. A [Brexit impact report](#), based on papers from member regions and from other sources, was developed by the Secretariat in the autumn of 2017, and was updated in the spring of 2018.

The task force developed a [Brexit statement](#), adopted by the Executive Committee in November. The statement called for new ways of cooperation in the North Sea region to mitigate the impact of Brexit, and for the UK to continue its presence in European cooperation programmes. President Brunnström, Vice President Lervik, Cllr Antje Grotheer from Bremen, and Cllr Cees Loggen from Noord-Holland all gave speeches in CPMR's Brexit conference in Cardiff in November. Vice President Lamb represented the NSC in a Brexit conference in London in November.

The NSC Secretariat

The **Secretariat** is hosted by Västra Götaland (SE) and located in Gothenburg and Brussels. The secretariat consists of Executive Secretary **Magnus Engelbrektsson** and Assistant Executive Secretaries **Melissa Frödin** (Brussels) and **Irma Ganibegovic** (Gothenburg). The Secretariat has prepared the ABM, ExCom and Presidency meetings. At least one representative of the secretariat has attended every thematic group meeting, as well as CPMR's General Assembly (where it coordinated NSC input to the final declaration), Political Bureau, staff meetings, and task force meetings. The Secretariat has coordinated the Brexit Task Force. The secretariat is involved in CPMR's statutory meetings, directors' meetings and strategic discussions. The Executive Secretary participated as a panelist in a European Policy Centre seminar on North Sea energy issues in December 2017. The secretariat uses the website, newsletters and twitter to communicate with members and stakeholders.

The NSC Advisors

The thematic group advisors and the secretariat have met three times to prepare upcoming ExCom/ABM and discuss matters of common interest. Secretariat and advisors have also met with the Interreg North Sea secretariat and Østfold County Council to prepare for the ABM and annual conference.

The CPMR

The NSC President and other representatives of NSC member regions have been engaged in panels at the CPMR Political Bureau meetings and in CPMR's Brexit conference in Cardiff in November 2017. North Sea regions are active in CPMR's Climate task force, transport group and Cohesion task force NSC member regions met at the CPMR General Assembly in October, mainly to coordinate input to the Final Declaration. The North Sea Commission has also raised the issue of marine litter on the CPMR agenda.

Representatives of the CPMR secretariat have attended NSC Annual Business Meetings, ExCom meetings and thematic group meetings. In October 2017, the NSC and the Atlantic Arc Commission organized a joint study visit on offshore wind energy in Noord-Holland. The Transport Groups of the NSC and the Baltic Sea Commission had a joint meeting in Stockholm in April 2018. A CPMR seminar on the future of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and on Brexit was held in connection with the NSC Marine Resources Group meeting in Flevoland in April 2018, and the Chair of the MRG, Cllr Anders Fasth, took part in a conference panel. The NSC assists the Atlantic Arc Commission and the CPMR secretariat in the efforts to increase cooperation across the English Channel.

The Interreg North Sea Programme

The NSC secretariat has regular contact with the Interreg North Sea Programme secretariat. Preparations have been made jointly for the North Sea conference in Østfold. The programme secretariat is invited to ABM and ExCom meetings.

KIMO – Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation

Because of the strong interest from the NSC Marine Resources Group in marine litter, it was decided to invite KIMO, an environmental organisation for municipalities in the North Sea Region to meetings. A Memorandum of Understanding with KIMO is being prepared in order to strengthen the relation and make a joint effort on the marine litter issue.



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13. Action plan 2018-2019

A draft action plan is enclosed. It will be presented by Melissa Frödin, Assistant Executive Secretary. Thematic group advisors are available for comments on each priority area.

The plan was supported by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Kiel in March 2018.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Discusses and approves the action plan 2018-2019***

North Sea Commission Action Plan 2018-2019

NSR 2020 Priority: Managing Maritime Space			
Key action area	Objectives	Key activities	Timeline
Use maritime spatial planning (MSP) as a tool to promote dialogue between different governmental levels and stakeholders	Increase dialogue with relevant authorities on national level and regional level	Coordinate/contribute to NSC activities within the NorthSEE project	Continuous; it is a 3 year Interreg-project
	Ensure that relevant EU institutions and member states have good knowledge about the NSR and the NSC's priorities within the field.	Maintain contact with desk officers at DG Mare	Continuous
		Regular meetings and/or contact with relevant officials and stakeholders to keep them up to date with NSR developments.	2-3 times/year, when Advisors are in Brussels
Ensure sustainable and innovative exploitation of marine resources	Promote a NSC position on Brexit to make sure regional interests are heard	Actively follow Brexit's potential implication on the marine sector	Continuous
	Establish a NSC position on marine litter and plastics	Identify areas of cooperation with Member Regions, Waddensee cooperation and KIMO in field of marine litter and plastics	Q 4, 2018
	Establish a NSC position on the Future of EU Maritime and Fisheries Policy and Fund	Ensure relevant decision makers are informed about the NSC position	Continuous
Ensure a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the future and livelihood in coastal communities	Raise awareness about the importance of a skilled workforce	Boost exchange of experience between member regions regarding maritime skills, showcase good examples	Continuous

<p><i>(Cont.)</i></p> <p>Ensure a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the future and livelihood in coastal communities</p>	<p><i>(Cont.)</i></p> <p>Raise awareness about the importance of a skilled workforce</p>	<p>Contribute to the European Commission's blue careers initiative</p>	<p>Continuous</p>
		<p>Inform group members and other stakeholders in NSR about relevant EU calls.</p>	

NSR 2020 Priority: Increasing accessibility and clean transport			
Key action area	Objectives	Key activities	Timeline
Ensure good access to the TEN-T Core Network for peripheral and maritime regions through funding instruments (the CEF) and governance mechanisms (Core Network Corridor Forums)	The revised and post 2020 CEF regulation is more beneficial for the North Sea Region in terms of accessibility and framework conditions for maritime transport.	Follow up input to the revision of CEF-regulation through the CPMR. Start to prepare for the revision of the CEF post 2020	2018- Q2 2019
		Inform group members and other stakeholders in NSR about upcoming CEF calls and selected projects in the NSR.	Continuous
	More CEF transport projects with involvement of stakeholders in, and/or of benefits to NSC member regions are generated.	Discuss project ideas and exchange information about members' involvement at group meetings.	2-3 times/year at group meetings and other conferences
	More projects from the NSC member regions are included in the Core Network Corridors' project lists	Provide input and arguments at meetings of relevant Corridor Forums.	2-3 times/year, at Corridor Forum meetings
		Start preparing for the revision of the TEN-T Directive, deadline 2023.	Continuous
Facilitate modal shift from road to rail and sea	More funding and higher co-financing rates for MoS projects in the CEF	Follow the development of EUs Detailed implementation plan for MoS through the CPMR	Continuous
	More favourable conditions for participation in MoS projects under the CEF of actors from peripheral regions and 3 rd countries	Collect views and input from, and possibly meet with maritime and rail transport stakeholders in the NSR	Continuous, at least 2-3 meetings/year in relation to working group meetings.

<p>Support measures and incentives to promote clean, efficient and inclusive transport, incl. Clean Shipping</p>	<p>Better policy frameworks, funding opportunities and technological development in support of clean efficient and inclusive transport solutions</p>	<p>Further develop the survey on the use of alternative fuels in public transport and other transport services among NSC members. Keep DG move up to date. Use survey as a basis for policy positions and project development</p>	<p>Finalise survey Q 2-4, 2018. Disseminate to DG move continuously.</p>
		<p>Disseminate information on relevant calls under CEF, Horizon 2020 and interreg and initiate/support/shadow projects</p>	<p>Continuous</p>
		<p>Organise a joint event with the NSC ECCG on alternative fuels and energy</p>	<p>Q1 2019</p>
		<p>Investigate the possibility of using Financial Instruments to promote/develop projects on the greening of transport</p>	<p>Continuous</p>

NSR 2020 Priority: Tackling climate change			
Key action area	Objectives	Key activities	Timeline
Facilitate climate change adaptation and mitigation through local, regional and national levels	Boost exchange of best practices within climate change and climate change adaptation	Distribute/communicate a brochure for the North Sea based on its best practices.	Continuous
		Develop and communicate factsheets within this brochure for participating regions	Continuous
		Give input to the CPMR's work in the area.	Continuous
	Play an active role in the implementation and governance of the Energy Union	Follow up on the implementation of the Winter package, focusing especially on the Governance Directive.	Continuous
Facilitate for a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	Monitor developments in the regions, stimulate exchange of best practices.	Exchange of best practices between regions in the group. Focus on reduction of emissions from industries	2-3 times/year Exchange of activities during working group meetings.
		Exchange of practices on production, use and (economic) development of alternative fuels like hydrogen, biofuels	2-3 times/year
		Inform group members and other stakeholders in NSR about relevant EU calls.	Continuous

<i>(Cont.)</i> Facilitate for a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	<i>(Cont.)</i> Monitor developments in the regions, stimulate exchange of best practices.	Organise an event with the transport group on alternative fuels and energy	Q1, 2019
		Develop factsheets on energy transition and best practices of the NSC regions	Q3, 2018
Promote energy efficiency as well as innovation and green growth in low-carbon technologies	Stimulate exchange of best practices	Monitor developments in the regions, exchange experiences and knowledge on specific themes/issues	2-3 times/ year Activities during working group meetings
Foster strong regional, national and European support for the development of the North Sea Grid	Visibility of NSC positions in relevant statements and documents.	Follow, take part in or contribute with written input to the working group meetings within the MS cooperation on energy around the NS	Continuous, MS WG meetings are expected approx. 2 times a year
	Promoting the role of regions in the work related to the MS political declaration off shore wind.		
	Establish the NSC and its member regions as an active partner in the energy cooperation around the North Sea.	Collect practices/experiences of regional cross border grids interconnections and provide as input to relevant forums.	Continuous

NSR 2020 Priority: Attractive and sustainable communities			
Key action area	Objectives	Key activities	Timeline
New EU policies and regulations relating to smart regions, attractive and sustainable communities	Participate in the European debate relating to new legislative proposals	Participate in public consultations Support CPMR lobbying activities Prepare position papers for the NSC ExCom	Continuous
Project development and participation	To use Interreg North Sea and other relevant programmes to develop projects related to the remit of the Smart Regions Group	Organise project courses at every meeting Use meetings to discuss project development	Continuous
Support the development of creative and sustainable economic diversification in North Sea communities	Raise awareness and increase capacities of regions to exploit digital economy opportunities and challenges with focus on ecommerce, collaborative economy/digital platforms, broadband connections and creative business development.	Arrange a workshop/seminar on this theme summer 2018, and follow up at meetings the results and discussions at this seminar	Q 3, 2018 and continuous
	Raise awareness of the circular economy with focus on waste management and industrial opportunities	Arrange a conference with other stakeholders on this theme autumn 2019	Q 2-3, 2019
	Exchange good practices on tourism development, focus on new types of offers, culinary tourism, activity tourism and health tourism	Continue work on creating a North Sea Seafood Route	Q 3 2018- Q 2 2019
		Re-launch and re-activate the North Sea Trail	Q 3 2018- Q 2 2019

Support the development of permanent networks for cultural actors	Ensure that culture (and tourism) issues are on the agenda of the Smart Regions Group	Establish a sub-group for culture and tourism within the Smart Regions Group	Q3, 2018
	Support youth networks in culture	Discuss an awareness campaign/project	Q3 – 4, 2018
		Initiate a North Sea Youth Congress/Parliament	Q3 – 4, 2018
		Ensure broad youth at the 2018 Cultural Summit on Mors	Q3, 2018
		Liaise with the BSSC to learn from their youth network activities, and organise a joint meeting of regional youth assemblies around the North Sea	2019
		Initiate with the other groups a campaign to raise the general awareness of the shared cultural and linguistic heritage and reality around the North Sea.	Continuous
Improve policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges	Exchange knowledge and experiences on the challenges of an ageing population, including the industrial opportunities ('silver economy')	Arrange a seminar on ageing, challenges and opportunities for the economy, the councils and the industries- combined with technical visits to selected businesses	Q 4, 2018
Promote Blue Growth to continue to play an important role as provider of blue growth, jobs and innovation.	Joint NSC seminar/conference on Maritime education and competence building	Prepare a 2019 conference on this theme together with the marine resources group and other relevant partners	2019

<p>Promote knowledge transfer and crossovers between different sectors in the North Sea Region</p>	<p>Increase knowledge among all member regions about each other's activities and practices in promoting smart development of blue and green growth, infrastructure, climate adaptation, sustainable tourism, inclusion and culture.</p>	<p>Presentations, exchanges and discussions at meetings, presentation of project ideas</p>	<p>Continuous</p>
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NSR 2020 Guiding principles

Innovation, excellence, sustainability, stakeholder involvement, skills and R&D and visibility are horizontal priorities and are therefore included in all the other priorities.

Strategic Issues			
Key action area	Objectives	Key activities	Timeline
Strategic cooperation in the North Sea Region	Promote regional interests in EU actions for the North Sea	Organise a North Sea stakeholder Conference together with the Interreg North Sea Programme	Q 2, 2019
	Mobilising EU institutions/MS in North Sea cooperation		
	Continue process for a revised NSR Strategy post 2020	See separate process description.	2018-2019
Interreg North Sea Post 2020	Ensure the continuation of Interreg B programmes post 2020	Follow the post 2020 cohesion policy process	Continuous
Use of ad hoc task forces	Ensure that interests of the North Sea Region are heard in the Brexit process	Maintain a Brexit task force	2-3 meetings/year
		Follow Brexit negotiations from a North Sea perspective	Continuous
		Prepare NSC positions and activities when appropriate	Continuous
Strengthen the NSC role within the CPMR	Promote the North Sea perspective in the work of the CPMR	Promote participation of NSC member regions in CPMR working groups and task forces	Continuous
		Speak for North Sea interests in the CPMR position papers	Continuous
		Promote NSC members as speakers in meetings of the CPMR governing bodies	Continuous

(Cont.) Strengthen the NSC role within the CPMR	Cont. Promote the North Sea perspective in the work of the CPMR	Participate in the strategic work of the CPMR Secretariat	Continuous
		Involve the CPMR representatives in the NSC ABM and Executive Committee	Continuous
Attract new members and keep the existing	Strengthen NSC legitimacy as a representative for the entire North Sea region	Build relations with stakeholders and national governments	Continuous
		Build relations with potential new members in the NSR, together with the CPMR	Continuous



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14. Communication plan 2018-2019

Please find enclosed a draft communication activity plan for 2018-2019. It will be presented by Irma Ganibegovic, Assistant Executive Secretary.

The plan was supported by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Kiel in March 2018.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Approves the communication activity plan 2018-2019***

NSC Communication Activity Plan 2018-2019

The Communication Activity Plan serves as a guide of activities necessary for the CPMR North Sea Commission (NSC) to implement to achieve the overall purpose and aim of the Communication Strategy 2017-2019¹. The activity plan is revised yearly, and the strategy is revised every other year.

The aim of the NSC's communication strategy is to support the implementation of the North Sea Region 2020 strategy and other policy documents. This will be achieved by:

- **Member involvement:** Ensure that member regions are informed of the work done by the organization and that they are involved in relevant events and consultations,
- **Keeping a close contact with European policy makers and relevant stakeholders:** Make sure that relevant decision and policy makers at all levels are informed about NSC official strategies and policy positions,
- **Promoting projects and project results:** Communicate involvement in the North Sea region projects and the results and output.

For 2018-2019 following activities will be carried out:

Communication activities 2018-2019	
Activities	Target group(s)
1. Update list with the member regions' contact information regularly	- Member regions
2. Update list with external stakeholders' contact information regularly	- Regional stakeholders - National stakeholders - EU institutions
3. Continuously update the webpage (www.cpmr-northsea.org) and the Twitter account with news about the NSC, thematic groups, policy positions, NSC documents (as NSR 2020 strategy) as well as other relevant information pertaining the North Sea region	- Member regions - Regional stakeholders - CPMR - Non-members regions - National decision makers - EU institutions

¹ More information about the aim of the NSC communication, target groups and communication tools can be found in the NSC Communication Strategy 2017-2019.

4. Send out a newsletter every two months, specifically after NSC executive committee meetings and the NSC annual business meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members regions - CPMR - Regional stakeholders
5. Keep member regions and regional stakeholders informed about the process of developing a post 2020 North Sea Region strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member regions - Regional stakeholders
6. Disseminate the brochure on added value of being a NSC member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member regions - Potential member regions
7. In cooperation with CPMR target non-member regions with information about the added value of being a NSC member and how to get involved in the NSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-member regions
8. Arrange and attend relevant meetings, events and workshops with stakeholders to inform about NSC activities, positions and good practice examples, e.g. European Maritime Day and European Commission events on energy cooperation and on blue growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional stakeholders - Non-member regions - National decision makers - EU institutions
9. Inform about NSC activities and policy positions in EU decision processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Brussels offices of members and non-members from the North Sea region
10. Continuously inform CPMR about NSC activities, policy positions and other relevant information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPMR
11. Monitor and spread information about relevant calls for project cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member regions - Regional stakeholders
12. Keep members of the European Parliament and the Committee of Regions from the North Sea region informed about NSC activities and policy positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Parliament - Committee of Regions

15. Finances

A table with the accounts for 2017, the accounts per 22 May 2018 and a budget proposal for 2019 is enclosed, together with an auditor's report for the accounts 2017.

The accounts for 2017 and the budget proposal for 2019 were approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Kiel in March 2018.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Approves the accounts for 2017***
- 2. Transfers the result for 2017, 42 196 EUR, to the reserves***
- 3. Takes note of the statement of accounts per 22 May 2018***
- 4. Approves the budget for 2019***
- 5. Disposes 50 000 EUR of the reserves for extraordinary costs related to the NSR post-2020 strategy to be used in the period 2018-2020***

	Budget 2017	Accounts 2017 (note 1)	Difference 2017	Budget 2018	Accounts per 23.5.2018	Budget proposal 2019 (note 2)
Membership subscription	133 850	138 883	5 033	142 215	95 376	137 561
TOTAL INCOME	133 850	138 883	5 033	142 215	95 376	137 561
Advisors' support	48 000	48 000	0	48 000	24 000	48 000
Secretariat support	0	0	0	48 000	0	48 000
Travel, accomodation	36 000	26 131	9 869	20 000	4 849	20 000
Joint annual conference	20 000	20 000	0	20 000	0	20 000
Thematic groups, meetings	5 000	806	4 194	5 000	935	1 000
Promotional expenditure	4 000	1 750	2 250	1 215	0	561
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	113 000	96 687	16 313	142 215	29 784	137 561
RESULT	20 850	42 196	21 346	0	65 592	0
RESERVES 1 January		225 433		267 629		
Annual result		42 196		0		
Post-2020 strategy development (note 3)				50 000		
RESERVES 31 December		267 629		217 629		
Tied up reserve		100 000		100 000		
Free reserve		167 629		117 629		

Remarks:

1) Fees from two new members, Lower Saxony and Flevoland, were not in the budget. No fee paid by Hauts-de-France.

2) Fees for 2019 are adjusted for 1.5 % inflation (average inflation in the euro area in December 2017). We do not calculate with a member fee from Hauts-de-France, who has not paid for 2016 or 2017. The proposed fees for 2019 are:

3 397 EUR for members with less than 500 000 inhabitants (up from 3 347)

5 095 EUR for members between 500 000 and 1 million inhabitants (up from 5 020)

6 792 EUR for members with more than 1 million inhabitants (up from 6 692)

3) To be used over three years 2018-2020 - not possible now to calculate distribution per year. The budget post will support:

- task force and steering group meetings
- update of North Sea in numbers or other background facts
- stakeholder meetings in each country
- communication of the strategy when it is adopted

Report on actual findings for CPMR North Sea Commission regarding the accounting for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017

We have performed the review procedures agreed upon, please see below, regarding the accounting for CPMR North Sea Commission for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017. We have performed our engagement according to the standard for related services applicable for review engagements according to special agreements. The purpose of our review procedures performed is only to simplify your work in assessing the accurateness of the expenses and is summarized as follows:

1. Verify that the financial records for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017 are true and fair – that the expenses are in accordance with actual expenses and that the expenses are specific and spent for CPMR North Sea Commission.
2. That the financial records are in compliance with the adopted budget for CPMR North Sea Commission for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017.

Our performed review procedures and findings:

1. We have verified the costs in CPMR North Sea Commission's income statement for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017, which has been reconciled with underlying invoices. In addition we have reviewed that expenses are related to CPMR North Sea Commission.
2. By reviewing the invoices and discussion with a representative for CPMR North Sea Commission we have verified that the expenses are in compliance with the budget, i.e. costs for joint annual conference expenses, promotional expenditure, travel, accommodation, thematic groups and meetings, advisor's support, telephone, Internet and administration and NSR 2020 audit expenses.

Since our above performed review is neither an audit according to ISA nor a review engagement according to ISRE other circumstances might had come to our attention and been reported to you.

The purpose of our report is only according to the first paragraph above and only for your information. Our report shall not be used for any other purpose or be disclosed to other parties. Our report only concerns the procedures stated above and does not comprise any of CPMR North Sea Commission's financial statements as a whole.

Deloitte AB

Gothenburg 28 May 2018



Harald Jagner

Authorized public accountant



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

16. CPMR Strategic Plan

The CPMR is working on a new strategic plan in order to better prioritise and describe its activities. CPMR Director Gregg Jones will give a status report of the work.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the information***

17. Election of President and one Vice President 2018-2020

The President and one of the Vice Presidents of the North Sea Commission will be elected this year for the period from the ABM 2018 until the ABM 2020. The other Vice President was elected last year for 2017-2019.

The current position holders, Councillor Kerstin Brunnström, Region Västra Götaland (SE) as President, and Councillor Andreas Lervik, Østfold County Council (NO) as Vice President, have declared their will to stand for re-election. No other candidates have been announced.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Elects a President and one Vice President for 2018-2020***

Gothenburg 24th of April, 2018

North Sea Commission
c/o Region Västra Götaland
Box 1091
405 23 Göteborg
Sweden

Nomination to position of President for the North Sea Commission

For two years now, I have had the great honour and pleasure to be President of the North Sea Commission. It has been a busy and highly stimulating period, for me as for the work of the North Sea Commission. Several internal issues have been solved, and I find that the North Sea Commission has strengthened its position as an influential and respected voice and important partner in Europe. For this I want to thank the presidency, our thematic groups, all our members and the Secretariat for good cooperation.

However, there are several important tasks and challenges ahead of the North Sea Commission, such as the work on a new North Sea Strategy, the activities for dealing with Brexit and promotion of our interests in a changing European landscape. I feel great motivation and enthusiasm in front of this and would very much like to continue for another period. I am thus pleased to declare my candidacy for President of the North Sea Commission.

Yours Sincerely,



Kerstin Brunnström
Regional Councillor
Phone: +46 70 527 57 45
E-mail: kerstin.brunnstrom@vgregion.se



må 2018-03-19 12:16

Andreas M Lervik <andler@ostfoldfk.no>

SV: Elections at the NSC Annual Business Meeting and ExCom Meeting in June 2018: call for nomin

ill Magnus Engelbrektsson

i Du svarade på det här meddelandet 2018-03-19 13:28.

Hi Magnus,

I refer to your e-mail below. I confirm that I will re-stand as Vice President for another period.

Kind regards

Andreas Lervik

Mob: 934 34 698

18. Confirmation of members and substitute members of NSC Executive Committee

According to the NSC Charter

- The members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the President, two Vice Presidents and the national elected regional representatives from each member country of the North Sea Commission.
- Each member country shall nominate one representative and one substitute representative

The following national representatives and substitute representatives are currently serving in the Executive Committee. National delegations may decide to keep or change these nominations until the Annual Business Meeting.

	Representative	Substitute representative
Denmark	Otto Kjær Larsen, North Denmark	Preben Friis-Hauge, South Denmark
England	John Lamb, Southend-on-Sea	vacant
France	vacant	vacant
Germany	Antje Grotheer, Bremen	Sabine Sütterlin-Waack, Schleswig-Holstein
Norway	Marianne Chesak, Rogaland	Åshild Kjelsnes, Sogn og Fjordane
Scotland	Peter Argyle, Aberdeenshire	John Reynolds, Aberdeen City
Sweden	Dag Hultefors, Halland	Erik Johansson, Örebro
The Netherlands	Nienke Homan, Northern Netherlands	Michiel Rijsberman, Flevoland

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Confirms members and substitute members of NSC Executive Committee for 2017-2018**

19. Meeting plan 2018-2019

Event	Date	Venue
NSR Strategy Task Force	September (tbc)	tbc
Brexit Task Force	September-October (tbc)	tbc
Energy & Climate Change Group/ Marine Resources Group	2-3 October	Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
78 th ExCom	11 October	Brussels
CPMR General Assembly	17-19 October	Madeira (PT)
Transport Group	22-23 October	Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein
NSR Strategy Task Force	November	tbc
79 th ExCom (on NSR Strategy)	11 January 2019 (tbc)	Groningen
80 th ExCom	March-April 2019 (tbc)	tbc
27 th Annual Business Meeting	June 2019 (date tbc)	tbc

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Takes note of the meeting plan 2017-2018***

20. Resolutions

By the 25th of May, the following resolutions have been proposed (see attached):

- Resolution on **marine litter**, proposed by the Marine Resources Group
- Resolution on **extension of the Scan-Med Corridor to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals**, proposed by Region North Denmark, Aust-Agder and Vest-Agder County Councils
- Resolution on **strengthening the comprehensive transport network**, proposed by Northern Netherlands

Amendment proposals should be sent to the Secretariat no later than the 11th of June to be presented and voted at the ABM.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

1. *Discusses and decides on the resolution on marine litter*
2. *Discusses and decides on the resolution on extension of the Scan-Med Corridor to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals*
3. *Discusses and decides on the resolution on strengthening the comprehensive transport network*



Resolution on Marine Litter: Plastics

BACKGROUND:

The North Sea Commission's Marine Resources Group has initially identified marine litter as a priority issue during the General Assembly of the CPMR in Helsinki (19th - 20th of October 2017). It resulted in the adoption of the amendment on marine litter to the CPMR's [Final Declaration](#).

Consequently, CPMR organised the first meeting on marine litter on the 31st of January 2018 in Brussels as a follow up on the Marine Resources Group proposal. A second workshop was organised on April 10th. The goal is to develop both a CPMR Manifesto on marine litter as well as a dedicated resolution for the North Sea Region.

The purpose of this paper is to express our profound concern and raise awareness about the impacts of marine litter on the North Sea Region and to call for action.

1. Introduction

Every year more than 8 million tonnes of plastics end up in the oceans¹, making it the world's biggest landfill. Not a pretty picture and far from the ambition to free our oceans from plastics. The North Sea is a particularly complex and open ecosystem, providing a nursery for fish and migratory and wintering areas for many species of birds but it is also one of the most heavily used seas, supporting fishing, shipping, trade, energy, sand mining and recreation. And the fact is: the North Sea Region is dealing with a continuous rise of marine litter and plastics.

Plastic is an important and ever-present material in our economy and daily lives. It has multiple functions that help tackle a number of the challenges facing our society. Light and innovative materials in cars or planes save fuel and cut CO₂ emissions. High-performance insulation materials help us save on energy bills. In packaging, plastics help ensure food safety and reduce food waste. Combined with 3D printing, bio-compatible plastic materials can save human lives by enabling medical innovation. However, too often the way plastics are currently produced, used and discarded fails to capture the economic benefits of a more 'circular' approach and consequently, harms the environment. Therefore there is an urgent need to tackle the environmental problems by focusing on the production, use, consumption and reuse of plastics². It simply is too easy to use and waste plastics.

1.1. Marine Litter and plastics

Marine litter covers any solid material which has been deliberately discarded, or unintentionally lost on beaches and on shores or at sea, including materials transported into the marine environment from land by rivers, draining or sewage systems or winds. It includes any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material. Evidence show that Marine litter originates from different sea- and land-based sources and it consists of a wide range of materials, including plastic, metal, wood, rubber, glass and paper. It is a complex story.

Although the relative proportions of all these materials vary regionally, there is clear evidence that plastic litter is by far the most abundant type. In some locations plastics make up 90 % of marine litter of shorelines in the North Sea Region. A similar predominance of plastics is reported from sampling at the sea surface and on the seabed.

Most plastics are extremely durable materials and persist in the marine environment for a considerable period, possibly as much as hundreds of years. However, plastics also deteriorate and fragment in the environment as a consequence of exposure to sunlight (photo-degradation) in addition to physical and chemical deterioration. This breakdown of larger items results in numerous tiny plastic fragments, which, when smaller than 5mm are called secondary micro plastics.

¹ <https://plasticoceans.org/the-facts/>

² <https://www.ospar.org/documents?v=38018>

Other micro plastics that can be found in the marine environment are categorised as primary micro plastics due to the fact that they are produced either for direct use, such as for industrial abrasives or cosmetics or for indirect use, such as pre-production pellets.

Marine litter is certainly not only an aesthetic problem but incurs socioeconomic costs, threatens human health and safety and impacts marine organisms. It is broadly documented that entanglement in, or ingestion of, marine litter can have negative consequences on the physical condition of marine animals and even lead to death. Ingestion of micro plastics is also of concern as it may provide a pathway for transport of harmful chemicals into the food web. Additionally, marine litter is known to damage and degrade habitats (e.g. in terms of smothering) and to be a possible vector for the transfer of alien species.³

1.2. Current situation North Sea Region

The quantity of plastics ingested by marine wildlife mainly reflects the abundance of floating litter in their environment. [OSPAR](#) (OSPAR is the mechanism by which 15 Governments & the EU cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic) therefore monitors and assesses plastics in the stomachs of northern fulmars as one of its indicators of environmental quality. Fulmars are abundant and widespread seabirds known to regularly ingest litter, with nearly all individuals having at least some plastic in their stomachs. Although fulmars forage near the water surface, their stomachs may also contain items from deeper water or items that may be indirectly ingested through their prey.⁴

An average of 18,000 plastic particles are found on every square kilometer of the North Sea surface. Around 800 marine species are known to be negatively affected by contact with marine litter. The most obvious effects are ingestion of and entanglement in marine litter.

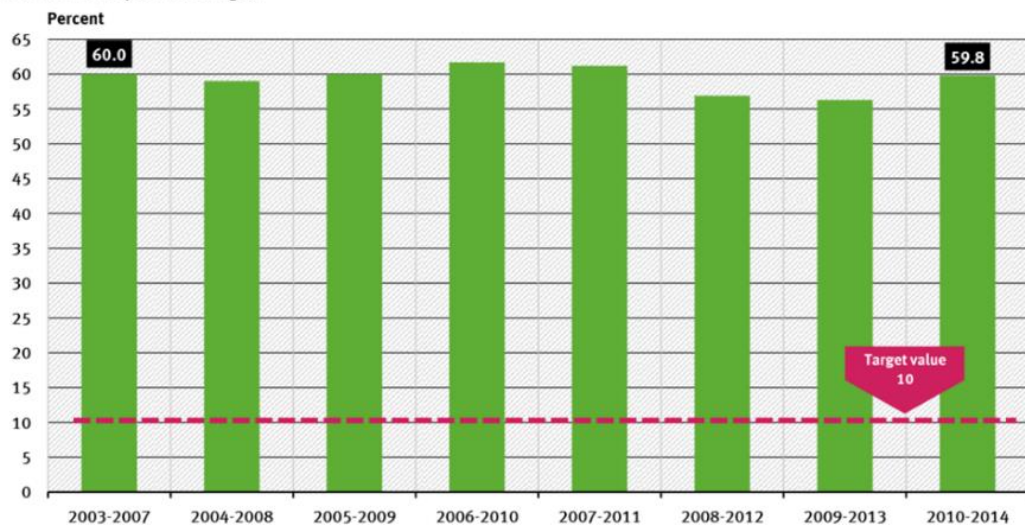
The majority of beached dead fulmars on Germany's North Sea coast has more than 0.1 g of plastic waste in their stomachs. In 2008 the Contracting Parties to OSPAR decided as one of its so-called Ecological Quality Objective (EcoQO) that the percentage of beached fulmars having more than 0.1 g of plastic in their stomachs should be 10 % at the maximum (see graph below).⁵

³ Regional Action Plan OSPAR: <https://www.ospar.org/documents?v=38018>

⁴ <https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/intermediate-assessment-2017/pressures-human-activities/marine-litter/plastic-particles-fulmar-stomachs-north-sea/>

⁵ <https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en/indicator-plastic-waste-in-the-north-sea#textpart-3>

Percentage of beached fulmars on the North Sea coasts of Germany with over 0.1 g of plastic in their stomachs (5 year average)



Source data until 2013: Research and Technology Centre, West Coast (2012), OSPAR Fulmar Litter EcoQO - Masse von Plastikmüllteilen in Eissturmvogelmägen (in German only); Source data of 2014: Report by the Research and Technology Centre, West Coast (FTZ), 09.02.2016

It is clear that marine litter results from human actions and behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional. It essentially is the result of poor waste management, inadequate infrastructure and lack of public knowledge about the potential consequences of inappropriate waste management (UNEP 2009).

Fortunately, awareness about this problem is increasing and the effects of marine litter are becoming more and more visible to the public eye. Many “beach clean-up” projects have been developed and organisations like [KIMO](http://www.kimointernational.org/) (KIMO is an international organisation of coastal municipalities with a shared concern for the state of the environment, which works to achieve cleaner, safer, sustainable seas) and OSPAR help local communities and regions in their approach to the Marine Litter problem.⁶ The European Commission has also (in January 2018) launched the first-ever Europe-wide plastics strategy.⁷ The ambition is that all plastic packaging on the EU market will be recyclable or reusable by 2030.⁸

Concluding

It is important to transform the way plastics are designed, produced, used and recycled. All actors at global, national, regional and local level have to join to enable a sustainable impact. For instance by supporting businesses in developing innovations because it is clear that companies play a key role in making this happen as well, with their strategies and investment decisions. So do consumers with their choices and behaviour. In short: we all have a shared responsibility and since the sources of marine litter are very diverse and the dynamics of the North Sea Region turn it into a transboundary issue, it requires collective action.

⁶ <http://www.kimointernational.org/> and <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/eiha>

⁷ [EU Strategy for Plastics](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip18_11)

⁸ <http://governmentgazette.eu/?p=7697>

RECOMMENDATION:

The North Sea Commission recommends:

- **The North Sea Commission expresses profound concerns and sees marine litter, particularly plastics, as an important priority to tackle across borders in order to maintain a sustainable North Sea Region marine environment, both at open sea, the shoreline and the sea bed.**
- **The North Sea Commission will support the preparation of the CPMR Manifesto on Marine Litter and Plastics .**

The NSC Marine Resources Group therefore wishes to draw the attention on the following:

- The key to addressing the issue of marine plastic pollution is the importance of cooperation beyond municipal and regional borders: international cooperation is necessary.
- Ensure awareness of the Marine Litter problem and the importance of funding to take actions to mitigate pollution and restore the health of the North Sea.
- Sharing examples of successful projects and best practices to members is needed to raise awareness (such as KIMO's [Fishing for Litter initiative](#) and many other initiatives).
- Synergies with cross-sectoral range of businesses and organisations should be explored which are instrumental to finding innovative ways to take action against plastic pollution.
- Encourage green procurement: offer alternatives to plastics and produce/use plastics which are designed to allow for greater durability, reuse and high-quality recycling.
- Identify measures of the [European Action Plan on plastics](#) to be implemented in each region, including ways to minimize the influx.
- Make better use of our observer status in OSPAR.

The North Sea Commission (NSC) calls on the Danish Government and the EU to extend the Scan-Med Corridor up to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals

Draft resolution to the NSC Annual Business Meeting in Fredrikstad on 13 June 2018

The Jutland corridor runs from Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein through Jutland, with maritime links to Western Sweden and South Norway [see map below]. The corridor is very important for the transport of freight from Scandinavia to the European continent, and makes a vital contribution to boosting long-term competitiveness, sustainable growth and employment in Scandinavia and Northern Germany. Furthermore, the corridor has a network of Ro-Ro ferries, and is thus also important for passenger traffic.

The Danish part of the Jutland corridor is part of the TEN-T Core Network, but the stretch from Taulov up to ports of Hirtshals and Frederikshavn is not included in the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Core Network Corridor (Scan-Med). Experience shows that this situation serves to limit the visibility of the northern part of the Jutland corridor among transport users and the funding opportunities from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) instrument.

The NSC contribution to the adjustment of CEF corridors from June 2017 therefore called for the inclusion of rail and roads links from Taulov up to the ports of Hirtshals and Frederikshavn in the Scan-Med Corridor. This was also supported in the final declaration from the NSC Annual Business Meeting in Göttingen in June 2017.

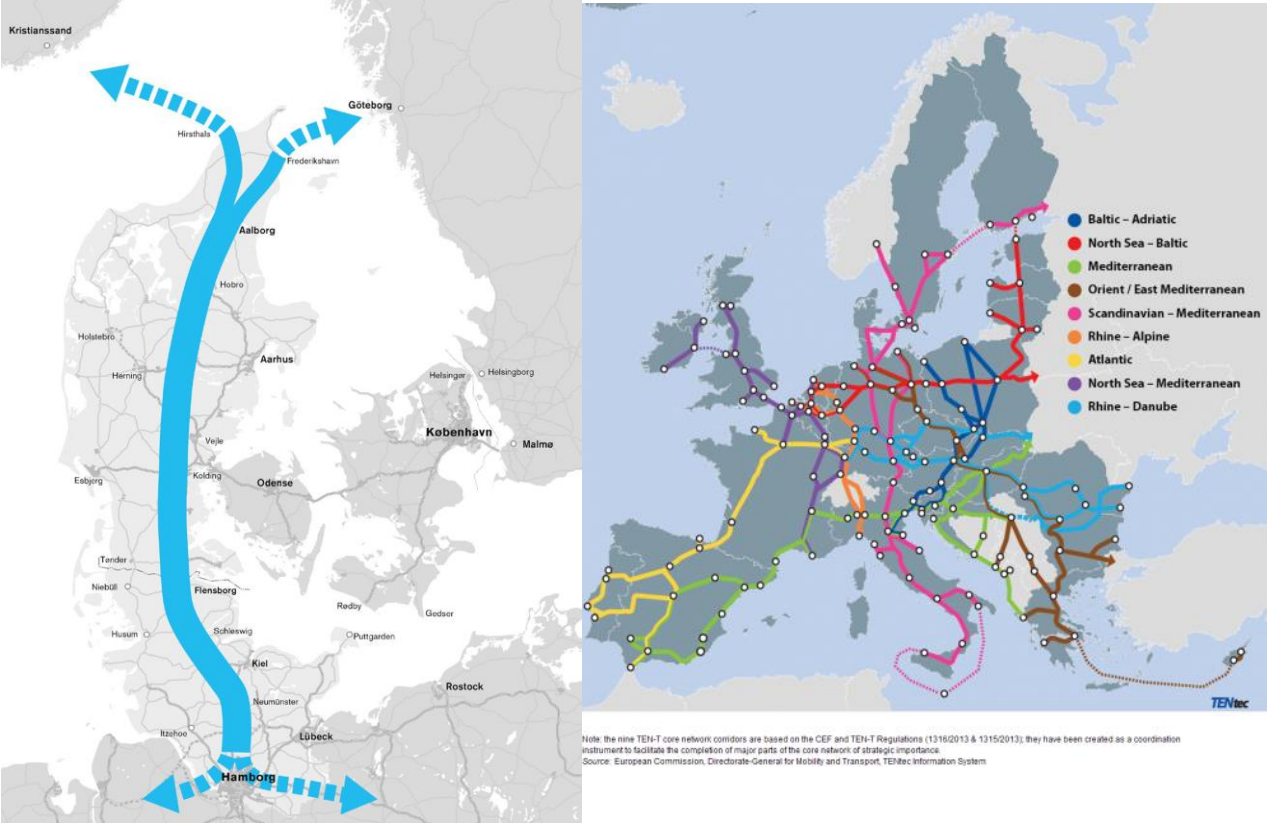
This call was also repeated in a letter from the Chairman of the North Denmark Region to the Danish Transport Minister from December 2017. The letter emphasised the importance of the Jutland corridor for the export-oriented industries, and as a link for transport from Scandinavia/North Atlantic to Europe. It also mentioned that the port of Aalborg has succeeded in launching rail freight services, and that Danish public funds have been granted to establish a rail freight terminal in the port of Hirtshals.

The NSC:

- 1. Calls on the Danish Government to submit a request to the European Commission to extend the Scan-Med corridor from the current "end point" in Taulov up to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals in the framework of the upcoming revision of the TEN-T/CEF regulations post 2020**
- 2. Also calls on the Norwegian Government to ensure that the rail and road links to the ports in South Norway are complying with TEN-T standards, and that the pace of infrastructure investments in this area matches the developments in the Danish side of the Jutland corridor.**

The NSC would like to highlight that the port of Frederikshavn is serving important connections to Gothenburg (SE) and Oslo, in particular by RoRo/ferries. The Port of Frederikshavn was in 2016 together with the Port of Gothenburg awarded funding from the Motorways of the Sea priority under the CEF – which indicates high priority as part of the maritime dimension of the core network. The Northern part of the Jutland corridor links up to the Swedish sections of the Scan-Med corridor, and contribute to a more integrated corridor in line with actual freight flows.

The port of Hirtshals have RoRo/ferry connections to the ports of Kristiansand and Larvik in Norway, and also represents an important link to third countries.



JOINT DECLARATION OF THE CPMR NORTH SEA COMMISSION

STRENGTHENING THE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT NETWORK IS CRUCIAL: SUFFICIENT EU FUNDING NEEDED IN THE MFF 2021-2027

The **Members of the CPMR North Sea Commission** support the Commission's mission to create efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure necessary to facilitate the further development of the EU Single Market and the reduction of greenhouse emissions. We underline the importance of the TEN-T policy, addressing key issues to increase sustainability and cohesion in European infrastructure and transport, and CEF Transport as the facilitator of this network.

Strengthening and further developing the Comprehensive Network is crucial to **decrease potential gaps in socio-economic development and increase cohesion and cross border cooperation between EU regions**. Additionally, simultaneous rollout of projects on the Core Network as well as the Comprehensive Network will **speed up the implementation of smart and green transport innovations**. EU funding for transport in the period 2014-2020 significantly prioritises projects on the Core Network over projects on the Comprehensive Network. We believe it is important that in the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2021-2027 sufficient budget will be made available to further upgrade the Comprehensive Network in order to facilitate the connections to and from the Core Network. Therefore, we advocate for an increase of funding for transport projects on the Comprehensive Network for the period of 2021-2027.

Acknowledging that:

1. A well-developed Comprehensive Network is fundamental for a well-functioning Core Network.

The Core Network corridors are currently handling the bulk of transport of goods and persons throughout Europe. From these corridors the transport is further handled to the hinterland via the Comprehensive Network. Insufficient efficiency levels of infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network, and thereby insufficient handling of goods, will lead to congestion and pollution of these thoroughfares which will certainly have its impact on the Core Network as well.

2. The Comprehensive Network offers the space for 'living labs' necessary for transport innovations.

The Comprehensive network offers ample opportunity for the piloting and implementation of sustainable and innovative transport solutions. These 'living labs' are crucial for enabling the development and scaling up of European innovations in the transport sector.

3. The Comprehensive Network contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Since transport is currently responsible for 23% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions it is essential that investments are made to promote low-emission mobility in order to be able to reduce transport emissions by 60% by 2050. The support for investments in smart and green innovative solutions and infrastructure for clean (alternative) fuels cannot be limited to regions that are part of the Core Network but should include the ones that are part of the Comprehensive Network as well.

4. The Comprehensive Network boosts socio-economic development all over Europe.

Supporting the numerous regional initiatives in the areas of the Comprehensive Network in the field of research, innovation and industry in the transport sector through CEF-T funding will result in a large contribution to the EU economic development and employment of the (border) regions.

WE, MEMBERS OF THE CPMR NORTH SEA COMMISSION, JOINTLY CALL UPON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL TO:

- ✓ **INCREASE THE EU BUDGET FOR TRANSPORT FUNDING FOR PROJECTS LOCATED ON THE COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK IN THE NEW MULTI-ANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK OF 2021-2027;**
- ✓ **CONTINUE PROVIDING GRANTS AS TOOL FOR FUNDING TRANSPORT PROJECTS ON THE TEN-T CORE AND COMPREHENSIVE NETWORKS;**
- ✓ **INVEST IN THE SCALING UP OF SUSTAINABLE AND DIGITAL TRANSPORT INNOVATIONS;**
- ✓ **INVEST IN CROSS BORDER CONNECTIONS SUPPORTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT;**
- ✓ **INVEST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE FUELS FOR TRANSPORT.**



**27th NSC Annual Business Meeting
13th June 2018
Fredrikstad**

21. Final declaration

Please find enclosed a draft final declaration. Amendment proposals should be sent to the Secretariat no later than 11th of June to be presented and voted at the ABM.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

- 1. Discusses and adopts the Final declaration***



Fredrikstad Declaration

Adopted by the CPMR North Sea Commission Annual Business Meeting
13 June – Fredrikstad, Norway

The regions of the CPMR North Sea Commission (NSC) met in Fredrikstad (Østfold, NO) on the 13th of June 2018 for the 27th NSC Annual Business Meeting. On behalf of its members, the North Sea Commission wishes to convey the following messages:

To ensure a strong North Sea cooperation in the Brexit era, the NSC:

1. **Calls for** stronger cooperation between the EU, national, regional and local authorities to balance the many interests in the North Sea. The North Sea is one of the busiest sea basins in the world, with activities related to shipping and ports, fishing, marine renewable energy, oil and gas and recreation. Yet the shallow waters and the coasts are vulnerable to oil spills, plastics and other pollution. Strong North Sea relations are more important than ever, and Brexit is a reason to increase cooperation.
2. **Stresses** the need for future frameworks between the UK and the EU/EEA to provide a scope for direct engagement of local authorities in the UK and regions in the EU27 and the EEA.
3. **Emphasises** the importance of continued UK participation in relevant EU programmes. The UK is one of the most active partners in EU's research programme, and the strong scientific links across the North Sea will suffer if the UK doesn't join the programme post 2020. Interreg North Sea and other European cooperation programmes provide valuable support to regional development and exchange in the North Sea area.

To ensure that marine litter becomes a priority for the EU and globally, the NSC:

4. **Expresses** profound concern about the amount of plastics ending up in the oceans every year. Marine litter, particularly plastics, is an important challenge to tackle across borders to maintain a sustainable North Sea Region marine environment, both at the open sea, the shoreline and the sea bed.
5. **Calls for** intensified international cooperation to more efficiently address the issue of marine plastic pollution in the North Sea. It is important to transform the way plastics are designed, produced, used and recycled. All actors at global, national, regional and local level must join forces to enable a sustainable impact.
6. **Urges** all levels of government in Europe and globally to ensure awareness of the marine litter problem, and the importance of funding actions to mitigate pollution and restore the health of our seas.

Concerning the future of Interreg, the NSC:

7. **Calls for** a strong and well-resourced budget for European Territorial Cooperation in the post-2020 period. In view of the far-reaching questions related to climate change, demographic change, digitisation and Europe's global competitiveness, the need for cooperation across Europe has never been stronger.
8. **Urges** the EU to preserve the maritime cross-border cooperation programmes. 23 EU member states and all North Sea states have a coastline, and several of them are almost entirely maritime. It is also of utmost importance to maintain a dedicated programme for the North Sea Region. Maritime regions face several specific challenges, which are often handled best in cooperation with their closest neighbours.
9. **Stresses** that regional authorities must remain at the core of European Territorial Cooperation, national and regional operational programmes, macro-regional and sea basin strategies. Cohesion policy is based on shared management, multilevel governance and the partnership principle. These features are even more important as regards cooperation programmes. The success of cooperation lies in a bottom up participation approach, the involvement of citizens and the ownership of the programmes by different actors across borders.

To reinforce connectivity and accessibility in the North Sea Region, the NSC:

10. **Calls on** the Danish Government and the EU to extend the Scan-Med corridor from the current "end point" in Taulov up to the ports of Frederikshavn and Hirtshals in the framework of the upcoming revision of the TEN-T/CEF regulations post 2020.

11. **Urges** the Norwegian Government to ensure that the rail and road links to the ports in South Norway comply with TEN-T standards, and that the pace of infrastructure investments in this area matches the developments on the Danish side of the Jutland corridor.
12. **Calls for** an increase of the CEF Transport budget for the Comprehensive network in the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027).
13. **Stresses** the importance of continuing providing grants as the main tool for funding transport projects on the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks.
14. **Encourages** the EU to invest in the scaling up of sustainable and digital transport innovations, cross border connections and the development of all types of alternative fuels for transport.

The CPMR North Sea Commission

The CPMR North Sea Commission represents 32 regional authorities in Denmark, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland and Sweden. We have been working since 1989 to create partnerships between our members and to promote the interests of the North Sea Region in Europe, specifically in the fields of marine resources, accessibility and sustainable transport, energy and climate change and prosperous and sustainable communities.

We are part of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions, a leading regional interest organisation and think tank with 160 member regions across Europe.

22. Annual Business Meeting 2019

Recommendation:

The Secretariat recommends that the Annual Business Meeting

1. *Welcomes the invitation from ... to host the Annual Business Meeting 2019*
2. *Asks the Executive Committee to set a date for the Annual Business Meeting 2019 in coordination with the host region, the CPMR, and with the Interreg North Sea programme in the case they are willing to co-organise a joint conference*