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## MINUTES

Presidium meeting of CPMR North Sea and Baltic Sea Commissions

Århus, Denmark 2009-01-24

### Participants:

Gunn Marit Helgesen, Christel Liljeström, Poul Müller, Anneli Stark, Wim Stoker  
Lars Haukvik, Peder Bang, Cecilia Lagerdahl, Marijn Lucas, Anne Ståhl Mousa

- 1) The agenda was adopted  
Followed by a round of presentation, including the naming of our favourite colour.
- 2) Minutes from the last meeting in Gothenburg  
The minutes were adopted without amendments.
- 3) Activity report from the presidents:
  - a) NSC
    - NSC is organised with one strategic committee group, one preparatory group and five workgroups. The organisation is to date working well. A positive development is that the amount of active politicians in the work groups has seen an increase. The WG have two-three meetings a year.
    - NSC is trying to be more projects oriented. To this end a recent positive development is the intensified cooperation between NSC and Interreg with shared projects. Interreg does also send officers to the NSC WGs.
    - Mr Richardsson was heading the maritime policy task force and as civil servant responsible for the writing of the green paper for the maritime policy
    - Regarding the very hot topic of territorial cohesion NSC have an ad hoc group for this.
    - The objective of NSCs work groups is to follow/support the topic and work of CPMR.
    - On "hot topics" Mr Kevan Lim have joined the CPMR intercommission group on energy.
    - At the up-coming NSC ExCom meeting in Kristiansand, Norway end of March, there will be a discussion on how the organisation shall handle the issue of the CAP. For one thing the idea is not to press the issue on any existing work group as they are working well along the lines that NSC like to work with a focus on the various topics. Also, the topic is delicate as there are different opinions on it within the organisation.
    - NSC will have, an open, conference on "life long learning" at the end of June.
    - Finally, the fisheries group is very active and work closely with the RAC.
  - b) BSC
    - BSC have earlier on decided not to discuss the CAP, however we will find two experts representing the various positions within our commission to the CPMR group.

- During the year one of our major internal questions have been the annual fee/finance of the commission and a study made by our vice presidents will be discussed at the GA in Visby.
  - During the year the main focus have been focused on the Baltic Sea Strategy where BSC have been very active. Early in the year BSC suggested, at an iBSG (informal Baltic Sea Group) that the major Baltic Sea Organisations have a joint answer to the Baltic Sea Strategy, which also included a list of, suggested flagship projects. In addition to this BSC have made an individual reply suggesting actions to be added to the strategy. BSC one of the organisers of the round table discussion on Baltic Sea Strategy and Environment held in Gdansk November 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - The work groups are working well. The Fishery group in particular close cooperation with NSC but this NSC cooperation does also apply for the transport- and energy group. We have also formed a group on tourism with Mrs Inger Harlevi of Gotland as chair.
  - President Liljeström cordially invite all to the GA of BSC in Visby May 10-12<sup>th</sup> 2009.
- 4) Evaluation of the joint General Assembly in Herning, Denmark, June 11-13<sup>th</sup> 2008
- The presidents for their excellent arrangements in Herning thanked Central Denmark Region and Mr Muller and not the least all personnel.
  - There was an agreement on that this was a positive experience worth a remake in the future, providing there are member regions willing to host this large scale event. The event showed that we as commissions do have a lot in common. Also it does send good signals to others, not the least CPMR.
  - There are many reasons to cooperation in order to have a strong voice within CPMR and towards EU as we prepare joint position papers. We do also benefit from adding our contacts to one another.
  - NSC also pointed out the importance Interreg and projects has to attract members and to promote NSC as a political organisation. This is a bit more difficult in the Baltic Sea region with its divers palette of organisations but something also to be striven towards for BSC.
- 5) Report on the secretary meeting in Marseille and the CODIR meeting in Rennes
- The Marseille meeting in December was a follow-up of a previous meeting where the CPMR secretaries under Jean Didier helped to analyse the result of the CPMR questionnaire on the CPMR future and the profile of the new General Secretary for the organisation. As the results of this just was presented at the political bureau in Århus (the day before) the only comment from the secretaries were:
    1. It is clear that CPMR like to cooperate with us
    2. The secretaries of the commissions have better contacts with one another today as a result of this joint meetings and they will continue with these secretary meetings in the future
    3. There is also closer contacts between Rennes and all secretaries today and this is one of the reasons behind us suggesting that CPMR abandon the praxis of appointing a special in-house contact for NSC/BSC but rather that we may call for the director responsible of the topic we wish to discuss at our meetings
    4. The organisation is standing on the threshold of becoming one family jointly – and balanced between north and south – to influence EU policy in our lobbying work

- 6) Follow-up on the CPMR Political Bureau in Århus, Denmark, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2998
- Mr Gizard declaration that he is a candidate to the post as secretary of Committee of Regions came as a surprise to all. There was an agreement that should Mr Gizard win this new position, decision in February, he ought to resign immediately – if not the President and, if necessary pushed by the vice presidents, should make him resign. All agreed that a good interim candidate would be Mr Hache.
  - The situation among the personnel in Rennes was also discussed. The meeting did not reach any common decision but hopefully things would stabilise as soon as it came out clear when Mr Gizard would resign and when a new secretary general has been found. – Transition periods does always put strain, particularly on the to en large rather newly recruited personnel, in times like this. Still, there is a clear work programme, just agreed by the political bureau, which should help keep the personnel at target.
  - Regarding the political bureau discussion/decision on the procedure of screening the candidates for the position as general secretary all agreed that the decisions landed well with the clarification of Mr Gizards roll as sound board for the presidents/their representatives on the election committee. The meeting expressed their hope that the new general secretary would be aiming for a prime location in Brussels.
  - Regarding the papers presented at the political bureau the meeting found them all very well prepared alas some presentations a bit too long. The PB had a tight agenda why for instance an important paper as the one on energy was cut far too short.
- 7) CPMR field of interest – where should we cooperate
- The group should a joint concern as to the need to strengthen the CPMR and the commissions work on the Maritime Policy within the Aquamarina group. There are two officers at DG Mare responsible for NSC and BSC. An idea was to invite them to our meeting. Also the two commissions could write the CPMR to express our joint concern on this issue including offering our support. NSC is planning an event on the thematic of Maritime Policy in May for which se may need to prepare together.
  - The Northern Dimension is a theme that tends to come and go in Brussels. This is a field that NSC and BSC ought to work close together to keep it on the agenda. The Northern Dimension ought to influence a series of topics on the present political agenda such as the Territorial Cohesion, not the least within the CPMR 158 group and its response to the green paper (were BSCs executive secretary was representing both commissions). Also the Northern Dimension has implications on the issue of energy.
  - The NSC is working on an ESPON project with Euromontana. The project is called territorial diversity and had its kick-off meeting in Brussels on February 16<sup>th</sup> NSC will help out with the dissemination of the results and to this end NSC will be organising a seminar on June 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - In the passed the commissions received valuable input from CPMRs antenna in Brussels. The secretaries have already asked for this to continue, and will make a new effort to obtain direct information from Mrs Thomas.

**Decision:** BSC & NSC should cooperate further on the topics of

- Maritime issues
- The work of 158 group/Northern Dimension
- To try to secure first hand input from CPMRs antenna in Brussels

- 8) Work group cooperation
- The overall feeling is that the work groups do work very well together. Today we do next

to completely mirror one another with the exception that BSC does not have a group on innovation and education but has put in the recourses in the CPMR intercommission group on Innovation.

- The BSC energy group did deliver their papers to the BSC GA in Herning and has since been planning for the next move. Most likely the WG will invite to a seminar during the GA days of the BSC.
- Mr Kevin Lim is now the NSC spokesman on energy issues. This is a very hot – and political – topic were the two commission could well act together.

9) The joint web project

- The secretaries of the two commissions made a presentation of the web that, though individual, should resemble one another and also share some of the information's.
- The webs are found under [www.northseacommission.info](http://www.northseacommission.info) and [www.balticseacommission.info](http://www.balticseacommission.info).
- Contacts have been made with other geographical commissions in the view of spreading this cooperation between more geographical commissions.

10) Future joint initiatives

- Regarding joint initiatives it was agreed that we need time to process, as we are different commissions.
- Should we able to have influence we need to stay ahead of CPMR/EU day-to-day topics. To work on long-term perspectives such as; how will the economic crises affect regions or how will global perspectives influence EU programs in the future?
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11) Possible joint resolutions etc. to the CPMR general assembly in Gothenburg

- The meeting **decided** to take stands in the terms “action lead the way” and NSC was asked to bring the question to Mr Lim if could draft a joint paper on the theme “sustainable energy – act now” that the commissions could take to the CPMR General Assembly in Gothenburg 30 September – 2 October, 2009, and that also could feed in to the UN meeting on climate later this year.

12) Any other business

- Västragötalands representatives **URGED** the participants to book their hotel rooms for the CPMR general assembly as soon as they received the invitation!
- If there will be time the presidents of NSC and BSC will have a hour long meeting in Odessa before the next CPMR political bureau.
- No date was set for the next meeting but there is an agreement that they should continue and that the meetings are best arranged back-to-back to CPMR events.

Lars Haukvik / Anne Ståhl Mousa