

	<p>CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS KONFERENSEN FÖR EUROPAS PERIFERA OCH MARITIMA REGIONER</p> <p>BALTIC SEA COMMISSION</p>
	<p>6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 RENNES - F Tel. + 358 94 76 74 11 - Fax. + 358 947 67 43 20 Email: janne.tamminen@uudenmaanliitto.fi Web: www.balticseacommission.info</p>

APRIL 2011

CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

16 March 2011

Venue: Hietasaarenkatu 6, Vaasa (*Regional Council of Ostrobothnia*)

MINUTES

Opening session

Marjatta VEKKAOJA welcomed the participants. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Tapio VÄLINORO, Regional Mayor of Kymenlaakso (Finland) who had been one of the corner-stones of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission and one of its founding fathers in 1996, and who unexpectedly passed away on 10th March 2011.

Erik BERGKVIST opened the meeting. He stressed the importance of the solidarity dimension within the European project, beyond the details of current discussions on the future of EU policies. Cohesion Policy is a way to co-exist, and can be seen as a condition for the success of several EU initiatives, including in the field of economic growth. From this perspective, it is important to work with the Regions in a context of multi-level governance. These elements were put forward in a recent meeting with the Swedish Government, and are important at the level of the Baltic Sea Area.

The following points were stressed in the discussion before the adoption of the agenda:

- Minutes of Executive Committee meetings will be sent earlier and be more detailed;
- Agenda will be sent to Executive Committee Vice-Presidents before being distributed more widely and all information to Executive Committee members will be sent through the Executive Secretary;
- Additional information will be provided to Executive Committee members concerning the link between the BSC budget and membership fees;
- At this stage of the year, figures concerning the BSC budget for 2011 are estimative. Some expenses have been anticipated even if all actions to be undertaken cannot be precisely defined.

The budget was adopted and will be presented to the next BSC General Assembly. The agenda of the Executive Committee meeting was then adopted.

BSC Work Programme for 2011

Erik BERGKVIST presented key elements of the BSC work programme. The following points were stressed in the discussion:

- One way for the BSC to prioritise and further develop its action is to focus on links with the EUSBSR, and keep on defining a specific profile, in order to bring maximum added value to actions already implemented in the framework of the numerous other organisations existing at the level of the Baltic Sea.
- Specific processes will be set up in order to strengthen links and communication between the Executive Committee members and all BSC Member Regions in between meetings, and as well as for the validation of documents which will be presented at the next BSC General Assembly.
- The scope of the working group launched by Region Helsinki-Uusimaa has been focused on maritime issues;

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- Contacts with Russian regional bodies are on-going, following initial contacts that had been made at the initiative of Tapio VÄLINORO. Contact could also be made with BSC Regions or other organisations which are currently addressing the issue of links with Russia;
- The President will be a representative of the BSC in HELCOM.

The Executive Committee discussed its profile, strengths and added values, for example Maritime Policy. There was a discussion on a new working group focusing on these issues. It would also have a link to multi-level governance. Members of the group will notably include Erik Bergkvist, Janne Tamminen, and Damien Périssé and a representative from a southern Member Region.

Report and feedback from the meeting with the European Parliament Europe-Baltic Intergroup

In addition to the elements concerning his speech in front of the Europe-Baltic Intergroup of the European Parliament, and his meeting with Mr Tunne KELAM, Chair of this intergroup, Erik BERGKVIST indicated that interesting discussions on Cohesion Policy with DG Regio and on maritime issues, for instance on maritime spatial planning and maritime safety, with DG Mare took place.

EU Budget and Cohesion Policy

Erik BERGKVIST indicated that a position paper should be drawn up in view of the next BSC General Assembly. Damien PERISSE highlighted some issues in line with the political position adopted by the CPMR Political Bureau in its last meeting (Caen, February 2011) (please refer to the working documents and PowerPoint presentation available on the CPMR website). Janne TAMMINEN suggested that a draft document would be sent and discussed with members of the Executive Committee.

The following points were stressed in the discussion:

- The BSC position paper will be prepared and will build on the one adopted at the last meeting of the CPMR Political Bureau. It should focus on issues that are the most specific from the perspective of the Baltic Area, and make a link with the EUSBSR;
- A draft position paper will be sent to Executive Committee members by the BSC Executive Secretary as soon as possible.

Multi-Level Governance

Bernt VEDIN provided information concerning the latest developments of the Horizontal action of the EUSBSR on multi-level governance co-led by Region Västerbotten (Please refer to the working document). The CPMR was approached and accepted on principle to be an associated partner in this action.

Maritime Policy

Jaakko MIKKOLA presented information concerning the BSC working group launched by Region Helsinki-Uusimaa (please refer to the working document and PowerPoint presentation).

The following points were stressed in the discussion:

- Action foreseen within the BSC working group on maritime issues, including the preparation of a document for the next BSC General Assembly are already, and will continue to be, coordinated with action implemented at the level of the CPMR;
- Action need to be focused in order to match the capacity of involvement and specific needs of the Regions of the Baltic Sea Area, as the maritime field covers a broad range of issues;
- It will be indicated to Helcom that Erik BERGKVIST will henceforth be the representative of the BSC.

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Transport Policy

Wolf BORN presented information concerning the activities of the BSC working group on Transport (please see working document).

He also presented information concerning the tourism dimension of the EUSBSR strand "Maintain and reinforce attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in particular through education and youth, tourism, culture and health", which is co-led by Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

The following points were stressed in the discussion:

- Tourism is identified as an important issue for Regions of the BSC. Regular information concerning the tourism strand of the EUSBSR is therefore welcome;
- It however seems difficult to develop a proper BSC working group on tourism issues.

Preparation of the BSC General Assembly

Erik BERKGVIST provided information concerning on-going contacts and action for the preparation of the BSC General Assembly (please refer to the draft agenda of the BSC General Assembly) which will include supplementary elections for the election of Vice-President. The CPMR General Secretariat will provide support in order to prepare a specific working document addressing the links between Regions of the Baltic Sea Area and Russia.

Future meetings

Future meetings of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission

- 19-20 May 2011 European Maritime Day Conference 2011, Gdansk (PL)
- 26-27 May 2011 CPMR BSC General Assembly and 15th Anniversary, Stockholm (SE) - Helsinki (FI) ferry
- Executive Committee 24-25 August, Schwerin, Germany
- Executive Committee meeting 26-27 October (Umeå, Sweden) *TBC*