

	<p style="text-align: center;">CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS KONFERENSEN FÖR EUROPAS PERIFERA OCH MARITIMA REGIONER</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BALTIC SEA COMMISSION</b></p>
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**CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
1-2 November 2011**

**Venue:** Mecklenburg-Vorpommern EU Office, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, 80 Boulevard Saint-Michel, 1040 Brussels (BE)

## MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2011**

### Opening Session

A welcome speech was given by Dr Merten **BARNERT**, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern EU Office.

Mr Barnert wished the guests welcome to the M-V EU Office. He explained about the history of the office and also the current issues considering the situation in Europe from the point of view of Germany.

An opening speech was then given by Mr Erik **BERGKVIST**, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission.

In his speech, Mr Bergkvist concentrated on the current issues of the economical situation in Europe. He stressed that we are now living a very challenging and interesting time in “the European Project”

He stated that the world is changing rapidly. China has a very strong economical power and it will rule the world economy. Chinese businessmen are interested for example to help Saab to survive from bankruptcy. The western democracies will face new challenges from China which is not a democratic country, but an economic giant.

However, Mr Bergkvist believes that EU will survive the current crisis. There will be much better Europe after the crisis.

The agenda was then adopted. The minutes of the Baltic Sea Commission meeting held in Aarhus (DK) on 28 September 2011 were also unanimously adopted.

Regarding financial issues, an update on membership dues, the financial report and forecast budget for 2012 and the current financial situation of the BSC was presented by Mr Janne **TAMMINEN**. All documents were adopted unanimously.

### Session 1: Cohesion and Macro-Regions

The main issues to be addressed in this session included the on-going revision of the EUSBSR, under the perspective of the role of Regions from the Baltic Sea Area, the role and organisation of the BSC in the coming months and multi-level governance.

Mr Anders **LINDHOLM**'s (DG Regio) presentation concentrated on the current issues of the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region. In August, the European Commission adopted the EUSBSR Annual Report. Multi-level governance should improve the dialogue between national and regional levels. The big question will be considering forthcoming funding. That needs also bilateral negotiations between the Baltic Sea States. The target will be found from the four main pillars, environment, economy, energy and transport, safety and security.

Mr Lindholm also mentioned that we must also try to find a dialogue with Russia. The new macro-regional strategies will find the examples of practises from the EUSBSR and the Danube strategy.

Eleni **MARIANOU** asked how ready the Regions are for the forthcoming negotiations.

Mr **MIKKOLA** mentioned the Interreg programs as a very important instrument for Baltic Sea Regions.

**Mr Jussi YLI-LAHTI** (Finland's Permanent Representation to the EU) in his presentation, concentrated on cohesion and macro-regions. He stressed the importance of cross-border cooperation. He mentioned the northern dimension of the EU and cooperation with Norway and Iceland.

North of Europe will be a very important focus of development, especially for the natural resources in the Barents Sea. That requires investment for the logistical corridors. Russia has great economical potential, but it also has strong challenges in developing the social and political institutions.

Mr Bergkvist raised the question about the "new colonisation" in the north. Mr Kari **AALTO** explained that Northern Finland has been very active in the Barents Council. The raw materials are economically very interesting. That will be changing the future in the area and several new mines will be opened.

Better networks are needed, and it is very important to link Russia to the EU.

Ms Anne **BERG** reminded participants of the importance of oil industries in the Barents Area.

Mr Aalto reminded participants about the challenges of implementing the EUSBSR, especially for the small regions.

Mr Bernt **VEDIN** (Region Västerbotten) spoke about the current issues of multi-level governance. There has been several meetings and seminars about MLG. The BSC should have a stronger role in that issue and he proposed that the BSC should establish a multi-level governance working group and Mr Bergkvist supported the idea.

*The Executive Committee decided to establish a multi-level governance working group. Mr Bernt Vedin will chair the working group with Region Västerbotten as the coordinating Region.*

## **Session 2: Transport Issues**

The main issues to be addressed in this session were the current TEN-T issues.

Mr Mikkola stressed the importance of the north-south and east-west corridors in the TEN-T proposal. He thinks the results are rather good for Northern Europe.

Mr Bergkvist thinks the infrastructure for raw material transport is very important for the northern regions. In addition, Ms Berg mentioned the importance of the northern corridor.

The CPMR Transport Working Group will discuss these issues in its forthcoming meeting on the TEN-T review.

*The Executive Committee strongly supports the European Commission's proposal.*

## **Session 3: Maritime Issues**

The main issues to be addressed in this session were the update on links developed between the BSC and other organisations on the maritime dimension (Helcom, CBSS), the latest developments concerning maritime spatial planning and maritime safety and the role and organisation of the BSC in the coming months.

Mr Mikkola and Mr Damien **PERISSÉ** explained the current issues of the Maritime Issues Working Group, which will have its next meeting on 30 November 2011 in Helsinki. The issues on the agenda will be for example integrated Maritime Policy, maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, shipbuilding and maritime safety. Mr Mikkola stressed the importance of establishing cooperation with other Baltic Sea organisations. Mr Perissé mentioned that next important steps in MSP/ICZM will be taken in February 2012.

Mr Tamminen explained about the recent meetings with Baltic Sea organisations. A meeting with six Baltic Sea organisations took place on 25 October 2011 in Gdansk, in parallel with the Annual Summit of the EUSBSR. As a result of the meeting, the six organisations decided to draw up a joint paper and organise a common seminar next summer.

The Executive Secretary also participated as an invited speaker in the EGMP meeting organised by the CBSS in Berlin on 19 October 2011.

HELCOM has sent an invitation to participate on the "Heads of Delegations" meeting on 5-6 December 2011 in Helsinki. HELCOM has also asked if the CPMR BSC is interested to continue as an observer in 2012.

The BSSSC held its Annual Congress in Sczezin, Poland, on 5-7 October 2011. The BSC Executive Secretary participated on the Congress as an observer. The BSSSC will continue its cooperation with the CPMR BSC.

#### **Session 4: Fisheries**

The main issues to be addressed in this session were the link between the on-going reform of the CFP (Common Fisheries Policy), the CPMR policy position adopted in Aarhus and the Baltic Sea Area and the role and organisation of the BSC in the coming months.

Mr Giuseppe **SCIACCA**, Senior Policy Officer, responsible for the follow-up of the Common Fisheries Policy, concentrated in his presentation on the CFP and the CPMR's opinion that was adopted during the CPMR General Assembly. The CFP has a very complex legal framework.

Ms Marjatta **VEHKAOJA** asked about the size of vessels. Mr Sciacca mentioned the problems with that issue on the common markets. Mr Ole **KOLSTAD** mentioned selectivity in fishing, which is one of the most important issues in sustainable fisheries.

#### **Session 5: Any other business and forthcoming meetings**

Invitations to the next BSC General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings were discussed. The next meeting of the BSC Executive Committee will be held on 15-16 March 2012 in Umeå, Sweden, hosted by Region Västerbotten. The BSC General Assembly will be held on 24-25 May 2012 also in Umeå, Sweden, hosted by Region Västerbotten.

Mr Peder **BANG** (Region Midtjylland) told participants that there is no specific information available as yet on the Danish agenda for the forthcoming Presidency of EU. He explained that the agenda will probably be published at the very end of this year.

Mr Bang also suggested that the Executive Committee should establish a new working group for involving the member regions of the BSC.

*The proposal to create the working group was adopted.*

**Mr Bergkvist then closed the meeting.**