

## **Common Commission meeting**

### **Schleswig-Holstein/Eastern Norway County Network (ENCN)**

**Hotel Refsnes Gods/Moss, 7 November 2012**

Draft minutes – final (29.11.12)

#### **Welcome and opening of the meeting**

Mr. Ole Haabeth, chairman of ENCN opened the meeting and welcomed especially the delegation from Schleswig-Holstein and the invited guests from the German Embassy in Oslo and Statnett.

Mr. Haabeth referred to the meeting with Minister Spoorendonk in Lilleström at the BSSSC AC and underlined the contribution she gave to the conference programme.

He also used the opportunity to welcome to Östfold County and to City of Moss. With a reference to the upcoming celebration of the Norwegian Constitution in 2014 Mr. Haabeth underlined the importance of the Moss Convention signed in August 1814. This will be celebrated together with the event in Kiel in January (Treaty of Kiel).

Mr Thorsten Augustin, Head of Department for Europe and Federal Affairs in the Ministry of Justice, Culture and European Affairs thanked for the invitation and forwarded the best wishes from Minister Spoorendonk. She apologised not being present in the meeting, but she had to be in Berlin for the European Minister's conference of the German Länder. Mr. Augustin underlined that European cooperation will be high on the agenda in Schleswig-Holstein. Minister Spoorendonk is enthusiastic about taking part in the next Common Commission meeting in the cooperation with ENCN.

After the welcoming words the participants presented themselves to each other. Then the agenda for the meeting was adopted without any remarks as well as the minutes from the last meeting at Sylt, Schleswig-Holstein on 5 May 2011.

#### **Topic 1 Energy**

Mr. Haabeth introduced the first topic on the agenda by underlining that transmission of energy to the consumers is of high importance for energy delivery and security in Europe. Therefore infrastructure to transport the energy has been on the Common Commission agenda the last two years. Mr. Larsen from Norwegian Statnett was invited to inform about the interconnection project Nord-Link.

Mr. Larsen gave a comprehensive presentation of the preparatory work to build a subsea cable for energy transport between South Norway and Germany and the background and effect of such a project. Statnett hope to start building in 2018. Mr. Larsen also underlined the speed of change regarding energy in Germany (Energiwende), and he also pointed out that the new organisation of the Schleswig-Holstein Government - with a Ministry for Energiwende, agriculture, environment and rural areas – is good for coordination of the issues relevant to the Nord-Link project.

The different challenges regarding energy production and supply in Norway and Germany were presented, and the idea of exchange of energy and interaction between Norway and Germany was highlighted. Mr. Larsen also pointed to the challenges when building a subsea cable – regarding conflict of interests in the sea space and also that around 500 landowners on both sides must approve the project. Long planning time and good processes are important and Mr. Larsen underlined that they were on a good track.

Mr. Augustin thanked for a very interesting presentation and stated that Schleswig-Holstein will work hard to get this in place (and that the Nord-Link project will be the one chosen). Mr. Augustin also stated that Schleswig-Holstein will play a major role in the German Energiwende – as a net producer of energy. They want to attract investors in energy production and infrastructure to the region. Also in Germany the discussion about the energy infrastructure is difficult as the citizens will not like to have the cables in their backyard.

Ms. Helgensen also thanked for a very good presentation and asked Mr. Larsen about the costs and also if this project will help stabilising the energy prices to the consumers in Norway and Germany. Mr. Larsen answered that the investments would be between 1,5 and 2 Billion Euros and that the project was regarded as a good business case in both countries. The consumer prices would become more stable with the new interconnection and the average price will most likely go down. Mr. Larsen also pointed to the fact that investments in more renewable energy in Norway will demand this type of infrastructure.

Ms. Knittler from the German Embassy in Oslo informed about the strong cooperation between Norway and Germany within the energy field and promised the full support to the work from the side of the Embassy.

Mr. Haabeth ended the session by thanking Mr. Larsen again on behalf of the whole group and handed over a small gift.

## **Topic 2 Future Interreg**

Mr. Haabeth opened this session by underlining that both Eastern Norway and Schleswig-Holstein take active part in the cooperation around the Baltic Sea and the

North Sea - and that the Interreg programmes constitutes an important instrument to facilitate cooperation around the two seas.

Ms. Gunn Marit Helgesen highlighted some points from the side of ENCN to this topic. Ms. Helgesen underlined the importance of the Interreg instrument and stressed that it demonstrates added value for regions. She reflected the big discussions in EU concerning the long term budget for 2014 – 2020 and urged all to lobby for money to the future ETC objective (European Territorial Cooperation).

Further Ms. Helgesen mentioned the North Sea 2020 Strategy and the important work done by the NSC to identify joint areas of cooperation around the North Sea.

She informed about the focus areas that Norway proposed for the BSR programme 2014-2020

- Strengthening research, technological development and innovation (Increase Prosperity)
- Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (Save the sea)
- Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructure (Connect the region)
- Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy

as well as underlining the need for simplification and the wish from Norway to allow private partners to take part in projects and get money from the new Interreg programmes. Ms. Helgesen proposed to work together and use our influence and contacts to make sure that we get relevant and interesting Interreg programmes in the Baltic Sea and in the North Sea Regions and also to discuss how we can prepare ourselves to create joint projects to access the funds from 2014.

Mr. Augustin stated that Schleswig-Holstein and Germany had the same objectives as Norway. He also pointed to the fact that the national authorities around the North Sea did not support a macro regional strategy for the region. Also the last EU presidencies in North-Europe did not take up the idea. Mr. Augustin underlined that Minister Spoorendonk supports the cooperation in the North Sea as well as the Baltic Sea and the Interreg programmes – and that we have to work bottom-up to influence the processes. Mr. Augustin also reflected on the discussions in EU on the long term budget and the hope to get a breakthrough by end of 2012. There are two grouping of countries in the negotiations – “the friends of cohesion” and the “friends of better spending”. The German Länder are lobbying their national authorities to secure money for Interreg, and Schleswig-Holstein is active in the programme work. Mr. Augustin underlined that the new programmes must have regional flexibility and be relevant for regional cooperation (not too top-down oriented). Cultural cooperation, health and demographic change are issues of Schleswig-Holstein concern. These are not mentioned in the 11 options proposed by the EU-Commission. Also involvement of private partners is supported and Schleswig-Holstein will work to allow for project cooperation in smaller geographical areas of the BSR – like along

the axes from Malmö to Hamburg (String cooperation). For the North Sea programme energy and innovation are supported as basic issues. Mr. Augustin proposed three points for follow up:

- Identify joint project areas
- To focus on strategic cooperation projects
- Information and partner search

### **Topic 3 Transport and climate**

Moving towards a low carbon economy is an important vision for Europe – and for our regions. Mr. Haabeth pointed out that this topic might constitute a cooperation area that should be further investigated. To introduce the topic Mr. Jegstad was given the floor. Mr. Jegstad stated that the counties in Eastern Norwegian County Network aim at being in the forefront of the introduction of renewable energy for transport in Norway.

As an introduction he explained that emissions from transport are one of the two most important sources of direct green house gas emissions in the counties of ENCN, comparable only to that of emissions from heating of buildings. Mr. Jegstad underlined that the counties will never be able to reach their part of global or national emission reduction targets without addressing the transport sector. He also pointed out that the goal is to increase travelling by public transport and decrease use of private cars on the roads. Therefore substantial recourses are used to help increase the amount of people going by public transport, bicycle and by foot. But it also means that Easter Norway counties are active in transforming the existing vehicle fleet and introduce alternative climate friendly fuels, such as electricity, biogas, bio-fuel and hydrogen.

Mr. Jegstad informed about the state of art in Eastern Norway moving in a direction of a low carbon future in the transport sector by presenting some facts and figures. These show that Eastern Norway represents an attractive area for the use of zero emission cars. He also underlined the importance this topic has in relation to urban and rural development and as a part of planning for a sustainable future.

Mr. Jegstad ended his intervention by hoping for a good cooperation also on this topic in the years to come – as there would be lot to learn from each other. Within the framework of EU programs there might be options to involve relevant stakeholders from our regions to realize the potential we have in this field.

Ms. Pagell stated that this topic is mainly handled by the cities and districts in Schleswig-Holstein (level below the Land). Therefore it will be necessary to investigate the topic further to find out if and how to cooperate. A question was raised

concerning the work of city of Kiel in this respect. The commission was informed about the work with public transport and the tramline discussions in Kiel. Also the car industry was mentioned and how to lobby for cleaner vehicles. Among others public sector as a purchaser could set criterions when investing. Ms. Pagell also informed that more electric cars are one of the elements in the Energiwende programme. Also infrastructure for bicycles was discussed. Kiel is very interested to invest more in this respect and look to Copenhagen for best practices. Kiel has ambitions to become the number one city in Germany for bicyclists. Mr. Jegstad also reflected on investments to make Akershus a better region for bicyclists – and the timeframe that will be needed to make a good enough system with today's allocation of money.

The commission members concluded the discussion by asking the coordinators on both sides to look into the topic and come up with a proposal on how to proceed.

#### **Topic 4 Culture**

Mr. Johansen gave an introduction to this topic in German language. He informed about the process in the case of UNESCO and the application to include the Viking heritage into the list. The application will be sent by end of January 2014 – not 2013 as earlier stated. Mr. Johansen also underlined the good cooperation within contemporary art and the success of the joint exhibition STEREO.NOT MONO that the commission members will visit after the meeting. Culture, democracy and young people's involvement were mentioned as key words for preparing the celebration in Kiel in January 2014 ("Kieler Frieden" 14.1.2014).

Mr. Augustin gave the commission a status report on the preparatory work for the celebration of the Kiel Treaty in January 2014. The Norwegian Ambassador to Germany, Mr. Svedman, met Minister Spoorendonk in September to discuss possible activities to mark this event. Schleswig-Holstein proposes to use this event as a window to promote our partnership. Possible activities to include in this project should be further elaborated together. Ms. Scheicher informed about the ideas from Schleswig-Holstein. She pointed out a project planned by the "Kieler Stadt- und Schifffahrtsmuseum" with an exhibition, a workshop for scientists and a publication. There is work going on to exhibit the historical documents in Kiel at the occasion of the celebration on 14 January 2014. A Nordic crafts exhibition in the Parliament together with Norwegian artists is another idea. Several other proposals within music and culture are on the table for discussion and further elaboration. Ms. Scheicher also mentioned another historical event in 2014: "Düppel 2014 - vom Schlachtfeld zum Brückenschlag"

– the 150 anniversary of the Düppel battle; celebrated in Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein.

Ms. Scheicher then gave the status on the other points in the joint action plan. She thanked ENCN for the opportunity for German partners to be involved in the “Lightspot” exhibition and she mentioned the work from Schleswig-Holstein side to show parts of the STEREO NOT MONO exhibition in Berlin in 2013. The 54. Nordic Filmdays in Lübeck was promoted as well as the Festival folkBaltica. The blockbuster “Kon-tiki” from Norway was the opening film in Lübeck. Ms. Scheicher informed about the delay of the startup of the youth and film project due to withdrawal of two of the six Norwegian participants. The project will now only start in the spring 2013! Mr. Odnnes pointed to the fact that there is a lot going on within the film industry and that the cooperation can be strengthened within this field. He also underlined the good progress within youth cooperation and especially mentioned the exchange project in September – where 8 young people from Buskerud and Oppland participated. From their feedback this seems to be very event.

Ms. Helgesen congratulated the partners with the work done within the cultural sector. She proposed that we should learn from this work and transfer the best practices to other areas of cooperation. We should challenge each other to develop more concrete projects in all fields of cooperation.

### **Adoption of the Action Program**

Mr. Haabeth went through the proposed action programme 2012/2013 point by point. There were no comments except to update the action programme on the cultural issues where new information was given and to include the new concrete information on youth exchange. It was underlined that the preparatory work for the celebration of the Kiel Treaty in January 2014 should start out as soon as possible. More concrete activities should be developed and given as joint input to the work done by the Norwegian Embassy in Berlin and others. The Action Program was adopted without any further remarks.

### **Closure of the meeting**

Mr Haabeth thanked all the participants for the input to the sessions and welcomed the concrete agreements.

Mr. Augustin thanked for the hospitality and the honest and open atmosphere of the meeting and he looks forward to welcome all to the next Common Commission meeting in Schleswig-Holstein in 2013.

**Enclosures**

- Participant list
- Updated Action program 2012/2013

All presentations are available on the web-pages of Eastern Norway County Network