EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION
PRIORITY AREA 'SAFE'

Copenhagen, 6 January 2014

9th Meeting of the international Steering Committee, held on 13 November 2013 in Vilnius

Final minutes

The meeting took place in the premises of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania in Vilnius. The meeting was jointly chaired by the Priority Area Coordinators Mr Bjarke W. Bøtcher (Danish Maritime Authority) and Mr Tommi Arola (Finnish Transport Safety Agency).

1) Welcome remarks

Mr Bjarke Bøtcher opened the meeting on behalf of the Priority Area Coordinators and positively noted the participation of most Member States and Flagship Projects, which was a sign of interest and support from the Member States. He noted that it would be useful to have other countries, such as Norway and Russia, to join the cooperation.

Mr Bøtcher noted that this was the first Steering Committee meeting held outside Denmark or Finland and thanked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania for hosting the meeting. Noted that should other participants be interested in hosting a meeting, they were encouraged to contact the Priority Area Coordinators.

Ms Laura Šerėnienė, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania also welcomed participants to Vilnius and noted the importance of having the Steering Committee meetings in different Member States in order to boost the knowledge and interest of authorities in the respective countries.

Mr Bøtcher pointed the fact that the Steering Committee consists of representatives from various institutions ranging from the political to the practical level and has done so since 2010. He noted that this heterogeneous composition was considered a strength, because often people do not meet across these levels. Mr Bøtcher also recalled that the Steering

Committee was created to support the Priority Area Coordinators in their decision making and noted that group has always been able to take decisions by consensus.

The participants briefly presented themselves.

2) Approval of the agenda and confirmation of the approval of the minutes of the Steering Committee meeting held on 13-14 May 2013

The draft agenda was approved as presented. The Final Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting held in Helsinki on 13-14 May 2013 were approved as presented.

3) EUSBSR Annual Forum 2013

Mr Bøtcher briefed the Steering Committee about the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2013, which was held on 11-12 November 2013 in Vilnius. The event was attended by the Priority Area Coordinators who had a joint stand together with the Priority Area on Clean Shipping. Representatives from the Flagship Projects *"Minimising the risk of transportation of dangerous goods by sea (MIMIC)"* and *"Baltic Maritime Science Park"* attended the Forum and helped man the stand, where they had the opportunity to present their project to various stakeholders. The stand was well visited and was also visited by the President of Lithuania accompanied by the European Commissioner for Regional and Urban Policy who took great interest in the activities of the Priority Area. Mr Bøtcher also informed that the Priority Area Coordinators had undertaken a workshop entitled *"Can clean and safe shipping make money?"*. During this workshop it was discussed how the Priority Area can assist the maritime sector in initiating projects and methodologies that can contribute to safe shipping. Mr Bøtcher noted that the next EUSBSR Annual Forum will be held in Turku, Finland already in June 2014.

Mr Izolda Bulvinaite, DG Mare informed that a summery and conclusions from the Annual Forum and the workshop on blue growth would be made and sent to the Priority Area Coordinators for further dissemination.

Mr Jean Marc Venineaux, DG Regio reminded that the Member States needed to take more responsibility for the implementation of the EUSBSR nationally. Mr Venineaux recalled the Commissioner for Regional and Urban Policy's message at the Annual Forum about the line ministries in the member states had to take greater consideration of the strategy and allocate time and resources for its implementation. Mr Venineaux noted that the strategy is a collective action by the Baltic Sea states and that national line ministries must identify clear counterparts in the other countries. The idea behind is that by acting together, the states will achieve more than by acting alone. It is also one of the reasons why each Priority Area needs to have a Steering Committee similar to the one of the Priority Area on Maritime Safety and Security, because it can serve as a tool for coordinating actions.

Mr Bøtcher thanked Mr Venineaux for his comments and the European Commission for taking an active role in the EUSBSR. Mr Bøtcher also reminded that the actual responsibility for the implementation of the EUSBSR lies with the Member States in the Baltic Sea region.

4) Activities of the Priority Area Coordinators since the last meeting

Mr Bøtcher informed the Steering Committee about the activities undertaken by the Priority Area Coordinators since the most recent meeting held in Helsinki on 13-14 May 2013. The Priority Area Coordinators had attended Flagship Project events and spent time on preparing and writing the PA Safe Biennial Report covering the activities of the Priority Area in the period 2011-2013. Mr Bøtcher also noted that the Priority Area Coordinators had paid attention to the upcoming EU financial perspective 2014-2020 and tried influencing the programming of funding programmes e.g. by noting the importance of funding for maritime safety and security issues and better opportunities for participation of private enterprises, as well as promoting and participating in the discussions on the new EUSBSR Seed Money Facility.

More information on the activities can be found in the documents from this meeting made available on the website.

5) Baltic Leadership Programme for PA Safe

Mr Bøtcher informed the participants about a leadership training programme in EU project making for PA Safe, which has been arranged in collaboration with the Swedish Institute. Mr Bøtcher noted that the course would consist of two modules: The first would take place in Stockholm 2-6 December 2013 and the second in Brussels and Lisbon 20-24 January 2014. The purpose of the course is to bring together individuals working with maritime safety and security in the Baltic Sea region to deepen knowledge on project making, improve cross-cultural understanding, reinforce professional skills and unite the participants in a hopefully lasting and active network. All the countries in the Baltic Sea region, including Norway and Russia would be participating with 1-3 representatives varying from mid- to senior level. In total some 25 participants will attend the leadership training programme. Mr Bøtcher also noted that the criteria for attending the course were set in collaboration with the donor, who also had assisted with the selection of participants.

Ms Kathrine Kalvenes, Swedish Coast Guard inquired if more leadership programmes would take place in the future.

Mr Niklas Da Silva, Swedish Transport Agency voiced his support for the initiative, but remarked that the invitation arrived with a short notice and the two modules collided with other events and meetings. Mr Da Silva also expressed a demand for another similar course.

Mr Bøtcher responded to the inquiries by acknowledging the short deadline for accepting the invitation, but noted that one of the requirements from the donor was to conduct the leadership programme in 2013 and the opportunity of conducting the course had been too good to refuse, even though the timing was tight. Moreover, Mr Bøtcher noted that no further courses for PA Safe were planned at the moment, but if the first was successfully completed the Priority Area Coordinators would consider arranging more training initiatives in the future.

Ms Julia Fredriksson, PA Secure noted that a similar leadership programme was organised for PA Secure representatives in 2012 and had been a success. She moreover noted that a similar course would be arranged in 2014 for a high level target group consisting of Directors and Deputy Director Generals for civil protection.

Mr Bøtcher remarked that conducting a leadership programme for the priority area on clean shipping was being considered.

Mr Venineaux expressed support for the initiative and would await the results of the leadership programme with excitement. He also noted that similar opportunities for capacity building were foreseen in the upcoming Baltic Sea Programme.

6) Questionnaire study for the Flagship Projects and the Steering Committee members

Mr Jouni Lappalainen, Finnish Transport Safety Agency recalled the Priority Area Coordinators´ questionnaire study on how to improve the Priority Area´s support for the Flagship Projects and the value of being member of the Priority Area´s Steering Committee. Mr Lappalainen noted that the survey only had a few respondents due to various reasons, but the quality of the received answers had in general been high. The respondents were overall satisfied with being a Flagship Project or a member of the Steering Committee. The questionnaire also showed that the respondents wanted more information on funding opportunities, on what the status of being a Flagship Project meant in practice as well as what kind of opportunities could be achieved by being a Flagship Project. Mr Lappalainen remarked that the results of the survey were still being analysed and would result in a report that will be distributed to the members of the Steering Committee.

Mr Arola hereafter invited the Steering Committee to discuss the results of the survey.

Ms Sally Clink, Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Council noted that the number of received surveys is high and invitations are often ignored. For this reason it could have been useful to advertise the survey at the former Steering Committee meeting. But she also acknowledged that no perfect recipe existed for getting high response rates.

Mr Da Silva noted that it was hard to comment on the results of the survey, since information on the results had not been distributed prior to the meeting. He pointed that it in general would be useful to have information similar to this disseminated before future Steering Committee meetings in order to get more fruitful discussions.

Mr Anders Brödje, Swedish Maritime Administration noted that reports and other dissemination material often disappeared when projects were finalized, because no database existed for this purpose. This was a problem because a lot of knowledge was lost and project makers used a lot of time on locating this information.

Mr Lappalainen confirmed that some respondents of the survey had expressed a wish for a

communication platform between projects.

Mr Linus Karlsson, Baltic Maritime Science Park remarked that this type of platform was a part of the Flagship Project "*To create a centre for knowledge and innovation in the field of maritime safety and security"* and invited the Steering Committee members to discuss the issue with the Baltic Maritime Science Park.

Mr Venineaux noted that the creation of a central database was hard to solve, since it was always a problem to decide where to place the database and to determine who should be responsible for the maintenance of it.

Mr Bøtcher noted that it would be unlikely to expect a central EU or EUSBSR project database. Instead this could be done at priority area level, such as at the Priority Area´s website, where it was already possible to find reports from the completed and some ongoing Flagship Projects. This was also in line with the defined roles and responsibilities of the Priority Area Coordinators, among which the task of conveying results and recommendations on ongoing and completed Flagship Projects to the policy level is placed.

Mr Bøtcher concluded that the Priority Area Coordinators would take note of the survey's findings and take the comments made by the Steering Committee members into consideration in their future work.

7) Status of ongoing Flagship Projects

Mr Bøtcher invited the ongoing Flagship Projects to present the progress of their projects, focussing on achievements and challenges experienced since the most recent Steering Committee meeting. Please refer to the distributed presentations for more detailed information on the projects and their progress.

- Speed up re-surveying of major shipping routes and ports

Mr Juha Korhonen, Finnish Transport Agency briefly presented the project and its progress, which aims to develop and implement the revised Baltic Sea Re-survey Scheme, based on national re-survey plans and covers the whole Baltic Sea area in a harmonised way. Mr Korhonen noted that the Re-survey Scheme had been presented at the recent HELCOM Ministerial meeting in

Copenhagen in October 2013. The meeting adopted the scheme with time schedule estimations for re-surveying areas used by navigation, and endorsed planned future actions.

- Develop a plan to reduce the number of accidents in fisheries

Ms Sally Clink, Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Council presented the progress of the project, with the objective of increasing awareness of safety practices, to standardise reporting on accidents and develop cooperation and exchange of information.

- Minimising the risk of transportation of dangerous goods by sea (MIMIC)

Ms Mia Välimäki, Kotka Maritime Research Centre briefly presented the progress of the MIMIC project and invited the participants to the project´s final conference on 20-21 November 2013 in Kotka, Finland.

- To create a centre for knowledge and innovation in the field of maritime safety and security

Mr Linus Karlsson, Baltic Maritime Science Park briefly presented the progress of the project, which aims at stimulating development, innovation and enterprises by matching stakeholders, strengthening initiatives and connecting strategic and research based projects with innovation businesses and partnerships.

- Development of Shipping Routes and e-Navigation in the Baltic Sea (MonaLisa)

Mr Anders Brödje, Swedish Maritime Administration presented the MonaLisa project and the newly started MonaLisa 2.0, which is partly a continuation of the original project.

- To Ensure Safe and Efficient Winter Navigation in the Baltic Sea (WINMOS)

Mr Brödje also presented the WINMOS project, which aims at improving safe, efficient and environmental performance of winter navigation in the Baltic Sea.

8) Potential new Flagship Projects

- Finalising the Motorways of the Sea – Survey the Baltic Sea (FAMOS)

Mr Benjamin Hell, Swedish Maritime Administration presented the FAMOS project, which has the aim of re-surveying the remaining HELCOM category I & II areas in the Baltic Sea. Mr Hell informed that besides Sweden; Finland, Estonia and Latvia had expressed interest in joining the project and was in dialog with a number of other countries. He furthermore noted that Denmark would be a very interesting partner to get on board in the project. Mr Hell noted that the presented project was Sweden's plan for finalising the resurvey, but participating countries were free to implement their own resurvey plan. Lastly Mr Hell informed that interested countries should contact the Swedish Maritime Authority before 30 November 2013, if they were interested in participating in the project.

9) EUSBSR Seed Money Facility

Mr Bøtcher briefed the Steering Committee members on the status of the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility and the PA Safe project applicants' prospects for receiving funding. Mr Bøtcher recalled the purpose of the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility was to make it easier to start up new projects. The Priority Area Coordinators had done a lot to advertise the initiative, which in general had gotten a lot of attention and resulted in an overwhelming interest.

Mr Bøtcher recalled that two calls had taken place. The first had taken place in the spring 2013 and the second in the autumn 2013. At the last Steering Committee meeting in Helsinki May 2013 two potential PA Safe seed money projects were discussed, namely the *Crisis Communication Network* project and the *CHEMARE* project. The Steering Committee found both projects interesting and their lead partners received a support letter from the Priority Area Coordinators. The two projects were, however, a few days late with their applications for the first call, why they postponed the submission until the second call. Mr Bøtcher noted that a third project entitled *GEOILWATCH* in the meantime had announced its interest in becoming a seed money project in PA Safe. As no Steering Committee meeting was held between the two calls for the Seed Money Facility, the project was presented to the Steering Committee members by email for approval by silent procedure. The silent procedure was not broken, for which reason the Priority Area Coordinators had granted *GEOILWATCH* a letter of support on the basis of a tacit consent from the Steering Committee.

Mr Siemon Smid from the Tallinn University of Technology was invited to present the *GEOILWATCH* project, but was unable to attend the meeting due to delayed flights.

Mr Bøtcher informed that the donor had indicated that two projects had a good opportunity for receiving funding and there was a fair chance for money for a third project. Mr Bøtcher noted that a decision was to be made in primo 2014 and the applicants would be informed shortly hereafter. Mr Bøtcher noted that the Priority Area Coordinators would follow the projects that were granted funding and regular updates on the progress of the seed money projects were expected.

Mr Bøtcher inquired the representatives from the European Commission if the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility was going to be continued. Mr Venineaux replied that the seed money facility would be granted more money and there probably would be more calls during 2014. But it depended on the European Parliament, which is responsible for granting money to the EUSBSR.

Mr Bøtcher noted that the Priority Area Coordinators have had a tight dialogue with the donor. This had enabled the donor to give better and more constructive feedback to the applicants. But it had also caused a significant workload for the Priority Area Coordinators, which was not a formal part of their defined tasks. Mr Bøtcher noted that the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility should take these lessons learned into consideration and facilitate a closer cooperation between the donor and the Priority Area Coordinators. This could prove beneficial for placing the funds in the right projects in future calls, as long as this was seen as natural task for the Priority Area Coordinators.

After the discussion of the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility, Mr Bøtcher gave the floor to Ms Kathrine Kalvenes, Swedish Coast Guard. She gave a brief update on the potential seed money project *Crisis Communications Network,* which has the purpose of establishing a network and a communications platform for the exchange of information between coast guards in the Baltic Sea. Ms Kalvenes also briefed the Steering Committee on the *DykSMART* project, which address the need to provide an overview of professional divers, their competences and diving equipment built on the lessons learned from the Costa Concordia cruise liner accident in Italy, in connection with which a large demand for diving competences appeared at a short notice.

Mr Bøtcher remarked that there was a fair chance for the *"Crisis Communication Network"* project to receive seed money funding. He also noted that the *DykSMART* project seemed promising and

once the Swedish part of the project got started, the project could revert to the Priority Area Coordinators for a discussion on how to engage other Baltic Sea countries in the project.

10) Funding opportunities for maritime safety and security related projects

Mr Bøtcher opened the item on the upcoming financial perspective and the ongoing negotiations on the regional EU funding programmes by noting that maritime issues would have a good opportunity to receive funding in the coming years. Mr Bøtcher had noticed a small change of focus in the maritime topic in the funding programmes, which now tend to focus more on clean shipping than safety issues. However, many aspects of clean shipping also entail improved safety.

Ms Bulvinaite confirmed Mr Bøtcher's observation that highlighted the maritime priorities in the next financial period very well. Ms Bulvinaite noted that the biggest amount of money will be available in the Structural and Investment Funds which consists of five funds. The first is the Regional Development Fund, which had the highest amount of funds available. The second is the Cohesion Fund aimed at reducing the poorest states economic and social shortfall. The third is the European Social Fund which e.g. improves mobility in land and sea based sectors. The fourth is the the European Agricultural and Development Fund and the fifth is the Maritime and Fisheries Fund, where the majority of the funding is, however, granted to fisheries.

Ms Bulvinaite noted that the initial idea was that the European Commission should manage the majority of funds. Changes were however made and the Member States were enabled to influence the programmes. But parts of the funds would still be managed at EU level to secure coherence. She encouraged the Member States to use the funds for cooperation and keeping maritime issues cross-cutting. Ms Bulvinaite also mentioned research programmes like the Horizon 2020 programme, where money will be available for maritime research.

Mr Venineaux noted that the negotiations on the funding programmes were not yet finalised, for which reason there was still room for improvements in the programmes. He stressed the importance of giving input to the programmes now, as they will apply for the next seven years. Mr Venineaux encouraged the Member States to locate where and who will manage the various programmes. He advised a systematic involvement in the programmes and remarked that often it would only require a talk with one person to influence and change the funding programmes.

Mr Bøtcher asked the Steering Committee members if the Priority Area Coordinators could be of more assistance to the Flagship Projects. He inquired if conducting a funding fair on maritime issues in 2014 was considered relevant. This idea was met positively by the participants.

Mr Sergej Makarov, Lithuanian State Border Guard Service inquired if there would be money available for maintaining surveillance systems in ports.

Ms Bulvinaite informed that next Maritime and Fisheries Fund would allocate money for maritime surveillance.

11) Future activities in the Priority Area

Mr Bøtcher informed the Steering Committee that the Priority Area Coordinators had some activities in the pipeline, in addition to those already described.

Mr Arola took the floor and briefly recapped the idea behind the "Group of Wisemen", which is to identify gaps and areas in which improved cooperation can increase maritime safety. Mr Arola emphasized that there was a need of doing post project work and get advise on how we can adjust the actions in the Priority Area. Mr Arola noted that no concrete proposal existed yet, but would be prepared and presented at the next Steering Committee meeting in the Spring 2014.

Mr Bøtcher turned to the issue of including Russia in the Priority Area. He informed that Russia had indicated a greater willingness to work together on topics addressed by the EUSBSR. On this background the European Commission had asked each Priority Area of the EUSBSR to submit a paper on which areas the Member States want to cooperate with Russia. Mr Bøtcher noted that the Finnish Priority Area Coordinators had prepared a proposal on possible areas for cooperation between PA Safe and Russia.

Mr Arola briefly presented the ideas on areas for cooperation. He noted that the area of safe winter navigation would be of interest, but also joint research and to facilitate practice based test beds for technological proof of concepts. Mr Arola invited the Steering Committee to present areas for cooperation with Russia.

Mr Bøtcher proposed to engage Russia more in e-Navigation, which was an area were Russia was already involved. Moreover, they had recently joined the Baltic Sea e-Navigation Forum. Mr Bøtcher also noted that the area of e-Navigation had a commercial angle, which was a common

key word for both EU and Russia.

Mr Makarov informed that Russia was involved in the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation, which also was closely linked to the EUSBSR. He had not experienced any resistance to work with the EUSBSR from Russia in this forum.

Ms Laura Meski, HELCOM noted that Russia was a part of the HELCOM and e.g. participated in meetings of the HELCOM Maritime group as well as the AIS group. These areas could therefore be used for cooperation with Russia.

Mr Bøtcher added that Russian officials had on several occasions been invited to attend the Steering Committee meeting. He remarked that Russia has the opportunity to participate according to the terms of reference, but is not in the position to block decisions made by the EU Member States. Regrettably, no Russian officials had yet attended a PA Safe Steering Committee meeting. Fortunately, a number of Russians partners were involved in the Priority Area´s Flagship Projects. It was noted that the current status was that Russia is somewhat involved on a practical level, but not on the policy level.

12) Any other business

Mr Da Silva noted that it had been difficult to provide input and comments during the meeting, as the Steering Committee members were not provided with background material prior to the meeting. Of this reason it would be beneficial if information on the progress of Flagship Projects and new initiatives could be distributed prior the meetings, so the Steering Committee members could prepare better.

Mr Bøtcher acknowledged the desirability of receiving information in advance, but recalled that this had been attempted before by tasking the Flagship Projects to provide written progress briefs in advance of meetings, which only a few projects managed to do. At the recent Steering Committee meeting in May 2013 it was discussed whether the Steering Committee members could get access to the progress reports submitted by Flagship Projects to their donors, and thereby could reuse already prepared materials. This would require agreements with each EU funding programmes, but could possibly be a way to overcome parts of this problem.

Mr Bøtcher concluded the meeting by thanking the Steering Committee members for their attendance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania for hosting the meeting.