



2004-01-21

Rolf A Karlson  
Erik Ciardi

## Minutes

from the 5<sup>th</sup> Seagull INTERREG Steering Committee (SC) meeting at Motel Nicava south of Liepaja, Latvia 2004-01-08—09

### Participants:

**SC members:** Mr Hakan Brynielsson (Chairman), Mr Niels Chresten Andersen, Mr P-G Lindencrona, Mr Normunds Niedols and Ms Roma Stubriené.

**Seagull INTERREG Secretariat:** Mr Rolf A Karlson, Ms Eva-Lisa Ahnström, Ms Carolina Gunnarsson, Mr Lars Öhrman and Mr Erik Ciardi.

**Others:** Ms Gunta Ceplevica and Mr Janis Jurgis, Kurzeme Regional Development Agency.

### 1. Opening of the meeting

The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all to the Nicava Motel.

A presentation of the participants was made, mainly for Mr Janis Jurgis who participated in a SC meeting for the first time. Mr Jurgis is working at the Kurzeme Regional Development Agency and is from now on responsible for WP 2 in the Phare Seagull-Latvia project.

### 2. Approval of the agenda

The draft agenda was approved. As decided at the SC meeting in August 2003, the main issue of this SC meeting is to discuss the long-term strategy for ERB.

### 3. Approval of minutes from the SC meeting in Klaipeda 2003-08-07

The minutes were – with some formal amendments – approved. The approved version is to be found on the ERB website.

### 4. Brief reports

- **Follow up of decisions made at the SC meeting in Klaipeda in August 2003**

Mr Karlson commented related to page 2 of the minutes from the Klaipeda meeting that the Lead partner now has received money for milestone 1 costs from the bank in Rostock.



The Seagull project is co-financed by the European Union  
Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B programme

Concerning the minutes, page 4, it was planned for implementing 9 WP 1 seminars in the member regions during autumn 2003. 7 of these 9 seminars have been carried out. The two missing ones – for Bornholm and the Kaliningrad region – will be implemented during January-February 2004. Mr Öhrman added that politicians did not take part in the seminars with one exception. Mostly experts and people from universities participated. In Blekinge though, the seminar was arranged within the framework of the political Commission of Baltic Sea Region issues.

Page 7 of the minutes: The SC recommended the ERB board to discuss twinning activities in the ERB region on its board meeting. This has been done and will be followed up at the board meeting in January 2004 in Klaipeda. A discussion regarding the definition of twinning is planned.

Page 10-11: Mr Karlson reminded of and Mr Brynielsson stressed the important process of anchoring the strategy and the coming JTDP in all ERB member regions' decision bodies.

- ***The Platform meeting in Roenne, August 2003***

A Platform meeting between the BSR Interreg III B projects Seagull, South Baltic Arc, SEBTrans Link and Baltic Gateway was held in Roenne. The meeting discussed how to co-operate between the projects and how to find funding for future investments. A follow-up meeting was held in Karlskrona in December 2003. A Baltic Gateway conference with input from the other “platform” projects will be arranged in late April 2004 with focus on the TEN-Tina issues. The Seagull project counts on input from the transport corridor projects to the ERB strategy and JTDP.

- ***Second and third project progress reports to Rostock. Economic status of the project. In kind contributions from the partners***

Rolf A Karlson commented the second project progress report to Rostock (Annexes 2-3 to the agenda). Concerning the third progress report (in February 2004; report template in Annex 4 to the agenda) the project management of the Seagull Interreg project needs more input concerning time and economic input from the connecting Seagull Phare/Tacis projects.

- ***Reports from the Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian SC members about implementation status of the approved Seagull Latvia, NCM and Seagull RC projects***

**Latvia:** The Latvian Phare Seagull project is already delayed in relation to the time schedule due to start up problems. A lot of administration, more than expected, has delayed the project. Contracting of experts takes a lot of time. Mr Jurgis is the new co-ordinator for WP Water Management in the Seagull-Latvia project and thereby also the head contact to the Water component – WP2 – of the Seagull Interreg project.

The Seagull Latvia project ends already June 27, 2004, but can possibly be prolonged maximum one month. The project works with Water management, Innovative environments and Rural Development (Seagull Interreg WP2, WP3 and WP4). WP1 input is expected from the Development agency, partly through

the NCM funding. It is not needed to apply for a new Phare project for a few seminars – such seminars can be funded in other ways.

Ms Gunnarsson thought it could be hard to develop work with a pilot area during the very short implementation period.

Mr Andersen proposed Latvia to apply for a new Seagull Latvia Phare project from autumn 2004. This proposal was strongly supported by the Swedish partners.

**Lithuania:** The Lithuanian Phare application was rejected due to a formal mistake; about the level of administration costs. The Lithuanian partner still has money from the Nordic Council of Ministries but needs more for rural pilot projects and regional seminars in Klaipeda. Also the Lithuanian partner should consider a new Phare application at the nearest possible occasion.

Mr Karlson would like to get a brief status report concerning the implementation of the NCM project for reporting of milestone 3 to the Rostock office.

**Russia:** The Seagull RC project starts now in January and it is important to coordinate activity plans between Seagull-DevERB and Seagull RC. On January 29 a kick-off Seagull RC conference is planned in Kaliningrad. There are a lot of administration and coordination needs due to different regulations between the Interreg, Phare and Tacis programmes.

- ***Report from the Polish SC members about the preparations of a new Seagull-Phare application***  
None of the Polish SC members participated in the meeting. Ms Wroblewska has though via e-mail informed Mr Karlson that a meeting is planned during January with all Polish partners. According to Ms Wroblewska's information the Phare procedures are extremely delayed. Mr Andersen proposed to check with the Polish partners if it is possible to make an application to the Phare deadline in late January 2004.
- ***Baltic Development Forum in Riga and the annual BSSSC meeting in St Petersburg, October 2003***  
Mr Karlson participated in the Baltic Development Forum in Riga in the beginning of October 2003. A summary of his report and reflections has been distributed through Seagull News (No 4, October 2003). The presidents of the three Baltic States have a strong focus on the transport corridors Via Baltica and Baltic Rail. We (ERB members) need to stress the importance of also East-West communications over the Baltic Sea.  
Mr Brynielsson underlined that we in a more planned way should invite representatives of the national level in our countries to Seagull SC and ERB board/council meetings to inform them about and discuss our development activities for the ERB region.  
The BSSSC meeting in St Petersburg was bad administrated from the Russian side. Mr Karlson and Mr Öhrman participated but did not get the planned opportunity to inform about the Seagull project.
- ***Status of project reports – printed reports and reports under production***  
Mr Karlson briefly commented the current situation and referred to Annex 5 to the agenda. One report (Democracy in ERB) is printed and will now be distributed to

the ERB members. Three more reports (two concerning water management issues and one about innovative environments) will be printed in the beginning of 2004. Another seven reports will be distributed in draft versions to seminar and workshop participants during spring 2004 as basic material for the different seminars and workshops. They will be printed later. The reports will successively be available in electronic form at the ERB website.

**5. The project implementation so far – general in connection to the application proposals. Implementation plan for Milestone 4. General comments and discussion about the project implementation status – coordination between the Seagull, INTERREG, PHARE, NCM and Tacis projects.**

Mr Karlson briefly commented the annexes describing the current implementation situation (Annex 6 to the agenda) and the plans according to the approved Seagull project application for milestone 4 (Annex 7). The responsible persons for the approved Phare and Tacis projects were asked to check the activity plans and react to Mr Karlson and Mr Ciardi for possible further needs of time coordination between the projects. Coordination of meetings and activities between the projects is now utterly important.

An implementation time schedule in a matrix form was also briefly commented, showing deadlines for input to the ERB strategy and JTDP from WP 2-4 and planned information and decision occasions for the ERB Board and Council concerning the strategy and JTDP.

The schedule was coordinated with the planned ERB conference in Poland in the end of May 2004. Mr Andersen though reported that this conference probably will be moved to September or October 2004 – a decision about the exact dates will be taken by the ERB Board on January 23.

The time schedule for the further Seagull implementation activities will be adjusted according to the dates of the ERB conference in Poland.

**6. Main issue for this SC meeting: A long-term strategy for ERB**

The main issue at the SC meeting in Nicava was to discuss the long-term strategy for ERB. Mr Öhrman had put together a strategy synopsis (Annex 8 to the agenda). The paper is mirroring the discussions at seven regional seminars: one in each of the three Swedish Counties and the two Polish regions and one each in Klaipeda County and Kurzeme planning region. Two seminars are still to be carried out – in the Kaliningrad Oblast and in the Bornholm Regional Municipality. They will be held as soon as possible during the beginning of 2004.

The discussion in the SC was very intensive and constructive during about 2 ½ hours. These minutes are only covering some of the main comments to the strategy synopsis.

Concerning the *Regional development programmes* of each ERB member region, Mr Öhrman reported that a mapping survey has been carried out in the regions where all regional development programmes/plans have been gone through and discussed concerning similarities and differences. A draft report is produced on these matters. The main conclusion in the report is that there are big differences in the nature and concept of the programmes. It is therefore not easy to reach a common understanding

of the concept of regional development programmes/plans. Therefore it is very important to discuss and agree on such a common concept in relation to the development of a long-term strategy for ERB.

The Latvian and Lithuanian development programmes are – not astonishing – more EU-funding-oriented than the Swedish and Danish ones. The programme of the Kaliningrad region is academic and theoretical. The programme of the County of Kalmar is very process oriented.

***The implemented regional seminars:*** Mainly experts have participated in the seminars, which have been organised by each member region. Each region has also been responsible for the selection of participants. At the seminar in Blekinge County though, many of the leading regional politicians participated.

The discussions have mainly circled around the input to the planned strategy and JTDP. The direction of the discussions is mirrored in the strategy synopsis. The synopsis should be seen as a central step pointing out the route for the further ERB cooperation.

***The ERB strategy*** and (later) the JTDP should be based on common understanding about two pillars:

- A. Methodology for the ERB development process.
- B. The main areas to concentrate on in the strategy and the JTDP.

Mr Öhrman underlined that six steps are described in the synopsis as a chain from a vision for the future ERB situation to concrete implementation activities. It is essential to comprehend that the strategy and the JTDP are not the same thing, but different steps in the chain mentioned.

Mr Brynielsson stressed the importance of involving the politicians in the further strategy work.

Mr Öhrman replied that the synopsis shall be presented for the ERB Board in January and for the Council in February.

Mr Andersen raised the question how ERB later should be able to implement the JTDP. He considered the ERB capacity to implement the JTDP as crucial for the future work of ERB. The organisation has so far showed weak progress in this matter.

Mr Karlson underlined that the most essential prerequisite for future implementation of the JTDP is anchoring of the proposals and commitment to implement them by the member regions' decision bodies. If such commitment is not achieved, very little will happen in reality. The present lack of a clear decision and communication order between the ERB decision bodies and the ones in the member regions is also an obstacle to implementation.

Since the commitment to take active part in the ERB activities is uneven between the ERB members, Mr Brynielsson wanted a “half time” report to be produced now about the state of art of implementation of the Seagull project – describing also positive and negative experiences so far. This report should be distributed to each member region and to the ERB bodies together with a letter to each President about what is expected and needed concerning commitment and input from each partner in order to make the outcome of the project successful.

Ms Ceplevica promised to initiate a discussion in the Kurzeme Development Council about the strategy.

Ms Stubriené underlined the need of discussions in the decision bodies. A lot of documents are not demanded. Representatives of the Seagull management should participate in such meetings.

Mr Brynielsson proposed the project secretariat to put together a basic paper for such discussions in the regions.

The regions must be able to pronounce and acknowledge the added value for the own region of taking active part in the ERB cooperation. Mr Karlson and Mr Öhrman informed that the European Investment Bank has showed high interest for the JTDP as a platform for evaluating different investment proposals. Mr Öhrman underlined that ERB can not only rely on structural funds.

Ms Ceplevica told that Latvian politicians in the first hand are interested in implementation of concrete projects, for example in infrastructure.

Mr Andersen stressed that the JTDP is a tool and not a priority.

Mr Öhrman told he has not included infrastructure proposals in the strategy synopsis since such proposals will be discussed later in the process – in the JTDP and in further concrete project implementation activities.

Mr Jurgis said that he sees the strategy as a justification for investments in e.g. infrastructure. It is important to influence the national level to take into account the ERB strategy and JTDP

Mr Brynielsson and others stressed that a very important task now is to start discussions with the politicians about added values of the strategy and the JTDP to each ERB member region. It should be included concrete examples in the strategy and JTDP documents to make the anchoring in political bodies easier.

Mr Lindencrona raised an important question to the discussion. He missed the Baltic Sea water perspective in the strategy synopsis. The Baltic Sea is common for all ERB member regions as a transport area, a place for fishing, for recreation, for energy production, etc. The ERB can not rely on a development programme that is only dealing with the land areas of the region. Good management with the water resources and maritime safety are very essential prerequisites for sustainable growth of ERB.

Mr Öhrman confirmed that very few of the nine member regions' development programmes mention the Baltic Sea itself in the context of regional development.

Ms Gunnarsson stressed the importance of a Baltic Sea in ecological balance.

***It was decided*** that one of the prioritised areas in the strategy synopsis should be good management with water resources including maritime safety issues. It was further decided that the synopsis should be redrafted in line with the discussion and proposals put forward during the SC meeting.

A new draft should be presented to the ERB Board in January and to the Council in February.

A more detailed draft strategy should thereafter be developed and communicated with the SC members and the decision bodies in the ERB member regions before further, more concrete deliberations and decisions in the ERB decision bodies.

## **7. Presentation and discussion about a draft report on a Statistical Database for ERB and GIS for planning and development applications**

Mr Öhrman reported from the GIS and Statistics seminar carried out in Ronneby in December 2003. Also at this seminar full participation/commitment from all regions was not reached.

With reference to the draft report (Annex 9 to the agenda) Mr Öhrman informed that the aim of establishing a GIS-function in all regions is to get a tool for presenting and analyzing statistical data. Training of officials in using GIS is scheduled in the Seagull project. According to the survey made by Mr Roland Nilsson no investments in equipment and software are needed in the ERB member regions if the basic level of using GIS techniques is sufficient.

Concerning the statistical indicators presented in the draft report Mr Öhrman underlined that they are the realistic ones at this stage since they are based on available data and consequently not need expensive new data catching.

The draft report will be used as basic input to the coming GIS-statistics workshops. A final report will be printed later during the implementation period of the Seagull project.

Mr Lindencrona underlined the advantage of using maps to illustrate different ERB conditions, and gave some examples of that: administrative borders, infrastructure, traffic flows, pollution conditions, etc.

Mr Ciardi informed that the new website is planned to contain such information.

## **8. Status reports about the implementation situation in WP 2-5**

### ***WP 2 Water management:***

Ms Gunnarsson reminded that WP 2 is aiming at achieving two main results. The first is to suggest relevant input to the ERB strategy and JTDP, aiming at increasing the local and regional readiness to implement the EU Water Frame Directive. The second is to test communication activities in compliance with the EU Water Frame Directive in some pilot river basins within the ERB area

There are still considerable problems with commitment for the WP in the non EU countries. Kurzeme Planning Region and Kaliningrad Oblast now have funding, but they have started their activities much later than the Interreg partners. In Poland there are good contacts with experts but no funding. Up till now there has not been one single transnational meeting with all partners present.

The Swedish side has carried out all planned meetings and draft reports as scheduled in the project application. But some of the reports cannot be finished until input is delivered from the non EU partners. If such input is not delivered latest in the end of

February this year, it will be hardly impossible to carry through some of the actions described in the Seagull project application.

WP2 and WP4 plan to compile a joint report on methods on how to mobilise citizens in e.g. water and rural development activities.

***WP3 Innovative Environments:***

Four seminars with presentations, group discussions, exhibitions and networking have been carried through with very good results even though the participation and number of participants have differed pretty much between the seminars. One important result is a decision to compile a toolbox for developing and strengthen Science Parks, similar Innovative centres and clusters within ERB.

WP3 ends in December 2004 but has already now created a network which hopefully will continue to function after the ending of the Seagull project. Ms Ahnström asked for more contacts in order to extend the network and make it stronger.

***WP4 Rural Development:***

Ms Månsson could not participate in the meeting. Mr Karlson briefly informed about the work situation in WP4. A draft report with empirical descriptions of the rural situation in the ERB member regions has been produced and several local and international seminars/workshops have been carried through. There are still language problems at some of the meetings. Lack of funding for the non EU partners is a problem as for the other work packages. But there is good commitment from many partners on the local level.

***WP5 Information and dissemination:***

Mr Andersson could not participate in the meeting. Mr Ciardi informed about the work in WP5. A draft structure of a new ERB website was presented (see Annex 10 to the agenda). Polish experts are now making a concrete proposal that is planned to be presented for the ERB Council in the end of February.

***The SC decided*** that the chairman and the project manager should write letters especially to the partners in Poland and Lithuania and inform them that better commitment now is necessary in all coming project activities (especially in WP 1, 2 and 4) in order to successfully finalize the Seagull project.

**9. Relations between the Seagull project and the ERB Board and Council activities in general. ERB working groups. The planned ERB conference in Poland.**

Mr Andersen briefly informed about actual activities in the ERB Board and Council related to the Seagull project. At the Board meeting in January the structure and working methods of the ERB Working Groups (WG) will be discussed. There are many connections between the planned WG: s and the Seagull WP: s. The ERB conference planned to be implemented in May this year will probably be delayed until September or October.

It was decided that the relations between the ERB WG: s and Seagull WP: s will be discussed at the next SC meeting in June.

**10. Seagull issues for the ERB Board meeting in Klaipeda January 23 and the Council meeting in Poland February 27.**

- Information from this SC meeting
- Interim report of the project implementation status
- Information about the strategy synopsis with emphasis on a discussion of important added values for each ERB member region of being engaged and committed in the ERB development as a whole.

**11. Next SC meeting in Baltijsk June 17-18. Ideas on main issues for the agenda.**

The next SC meeting should be concentrated on strategy and JTDP matters with emphasis on inputs from WP 2-4 to the strategy and JTDP.

**12. A.o.b**

Mr Brynielsson recommended that representatives of the National administrative level from the host country of the SC meetings should be invited to (parts of) the coming SC meetings.

Mr Öhrman briefly informed about the aims and planned results of the on-going cluster study within WP 1.

Mr Brynielsson summarized the meeting through underlining the decisions taken about

- A “half-time” progress report to be presented to all project partners during February.
- Letters to in the first hand the Polish and Lithuanian partners about the need of participation in and commitment to the Seagull project implementation.
- The need of information and discussions in the member regions’ decision bodies about the project – especially the strategy and the JTDP, and added values for each region of active participation in the ERB cooperation and the Seagull project.
- Redrafting of the strategy synopsis and presentation of it in the ERB Board and Council.