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Minutes

from the 7th Steering Committee (SC) meeting at Kaliningrad State University in Kaliningrad, September 23-24, 2004

Participants:

SC members: Håkan Brynielsson, Niels-Chresten Andersen, Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski, P-G Lindencrona and Marcin Lyjak (substitute for Ms Krystyna Wroblewska).

Seagull Interreg secretariat: Rolf A Karlson, Lars Öhrman, Carolina Gunnarsson, Eva-Lisa Ahnström, Ulf Andersson and Erik Ciardi.

Seagull Russian Component: Elena Butorova (substitute for Mr Viktor Koshelev), Andrey Moshkov, Olga Grigoreva, Gennadij Fedorov, Ylyya Domijorova, Alexey Golubitski, Boris Chubarenko, Inga Igoshina, Artem Shibin, Boris Tregubov, Timur Gareev and Pavel Elizarov.

1. The SC chairman, Mr Brynielsson welcomed all participants. Several persons involved in the Seagull Russian Component project attended the meeting, which was held at the Kaliningrad State University.
Mr Demkowicz-Dobrazanski has been approved as a new member of the SC, representing the Association of Polish Communes of ERB. Mr Zdanov is new SC member after Mr Oleg Shlyk, representing the Russian members of ERB.
2. The agenda was approved with some minor changes in the timetable.
3. The minutes from the SC meeting in Gdansk were approved. The place of the next meeting was decided to be Gdansk.
4. **Reports:**
Mr Karlson reported briefly about the 4th Progress report to Rostock, and the WP leaders about the current situation of each WP:

WPI: The draft strategy is fairly good anchored. Until now it has been developed and reshaped. A first draft of the JTDP will be presented in November or latest December. The rest of the project period will deal with anchoring and developing of the JTDP.



WP2: The final report from WP2 will be detailed with conclusions and proposals for the JTDP. Ms Gunnarsson plan to visit all regions to get input to the JTDP. A conference is going to take place in Sweden in the beginning of 2005. Cooperation with other pilot areas has not been carried through as planned in the application.

WP3: Ms Ahnström informed that seminars have been carried through in Kaliningrad and Elblag. Results from all seminars and other implemented work in WP3 are presented on website www.eurobalt.org/seagull-wp3. The final WP seminar is going to take place in Ronneby, Sweden, November 19.

WP5: The working group is missing participation from Latvia and Lithuania. At the last meeting it was discussed how to disseminate and spread the reports. In Sweden all reports will be sent out to the municipalities. A map has been produced to promote the new website. The new website is now launched.

Seagull Latvia: Mr Karlson, Ms Ahnström and Ms Gunnarsson have been experts in the project that is now finished and reported to the Phare authorities in Riga.

Seagull RC: Ms Butorova informed that Mr Shlyk is no longer member of the Steering Committee. The head of department of economic development at the Regional Administration, Mr Zdanov, will replace Mr Shlyk.

Mr Moshkov informed that some 300 persons from local authorities, NGOs and universities have up to date participated in seminars, workshops and the work of the different Seagull RC WPs. Reports of WP 2-4 are prepared and available in English. The first project report is now sent to Brussels.

WP2 has carried through several expert seminars and expert analyses have been produced on how the EU Water Frame Directive can be implemented in the Kaliningrad Oblast – an important issue for the region as all surrounding neighbours are implementing the WFD.

WP3: There are some clusters in the Kaliningrad Region. One of them concerns furniture, another food industry. A pharmaceutical cluster could be developed. Russian companies are also considered to be competitive in for example design. A main conclusion from the work is that new established clusters in the Oblast are not so innovative.

WP4: The municipality of Ozersk is the main focus of interest within WP4. In August this year a preliminary report was written by an expert. A joint transregional seminar is planned for October. A seminar has been held with local companies – few participants but fruitful discussions. Support is given from Kaliningrad Regional Administration. A union of businessmen has been established in Ozersk. A strategy of Ozersk municipality has been developed with methods on how to work with rural development. ERB gives opportunities for rural business solutions. The Region of Kaliningrad will soon go through a municipal reform, which means that the strategy must be reshaped.

WP1: Mr Fedorov, responsible for WP1 in Seagull RC, informed that a gender report has been produced. Another report with democracy as main theme is under preparation.

Poland: Mr Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed that a Phare-project has been approved, though with reduced grants from EU. Money is given to organise and implement the ERB/Seagull conference in December.

Lithuania: Mr Karlson informed that the Lithuanian Seagull project has been rejected due to slightly too high audit costs. Klaipeda County has still the possibility to take part in the

Seagull activities since the County administration is the lead partner for Seagull RC. New regulation of Interreg makes it possible to use ERDF funding also for new member states.

Seagull II: Mr Demkowicz-Dobrzanski briefly informed about preparations of a new ERB project, a continuation of the Seagull project that aims at capacity building of the ERB bodies. A seed money application has been submitted to the Interreg secretariat.

The Cluster study: The study, carried out by Baltic Business Research Institute in Kalmar, will be useful for the framework and contents of the JTDP. The report will be available at the website later this autumn. Other helpful publications that were mentioned at the SC meeting are the “Cluster Green book” and a Cluster Manual, both published by NUTEK (Swedish National Development Agency).

Pre-study of Cruising Tourism: The study, now presented as a draft, has been carried out by the Centre for Regional and Tourism Research on Bornholm. It has been a pilot study with few conclusions. The Seagull project management is discussing with the authors if it is possible to draw more conclusions from the studied material

ERB Baltic Sea maps: A survey has been carried out by Region Blekinge, as a part of the region’s in kind contribution to the Seagull project, about different use, claims, protection areas, etc. of the Baltic Sea. The results in form of a written report and a Map Book are drafted and will be printed later this autumn. Not least the maps are interesting as an input to the JTDP.

Maritime safety: A new Interreg III B project is planned with focus on maritime safety. Region Blekinge is leading the preparations.

The status of other project reports was briefly reported. Five reports have been printed so far. Some more reports are planned; the next one is the WP4 report of rural areas in ERB. Mr Fedorov reported that the proposals in the gender report have given much input to the work with gender issues in the Kaliningrad Region’s development strategy.

5. Synopsis of the ERB strategy/JTDP

Mr Öhrman presented some general observations and introduced to a discussion. The uniqueness of ERB is not the geographical area in itself, but the decision by the leading politicians in the member regions to develop a long term and close cooperation. The ERB cooperation shall give added value to the member regions and their citizens and should not deal with issues that the member regions manage to handle by themselves.

The draft ERB strategy focuses on EU and its policies: sustainability, cohesion, polycentrism, etc. It should relate to EU in definitions, and focus on an EU perspective. The cooperation will attract EU funding for different activities and investment proposals.

Sustainable economic growth has several dimensions and an expert seminar of how to define “sustainability” is planned for October. Cohesion is central for EU policies in order to achieve better and more equal living conditions in the union’s different regions. Polycentrism means that EU does not accept concentration to large metropolitan areas – on the contrary, development opportunities must be directed to other areas.

ERB should in this perspective be seen as a possible front runner in EU – that is one of the leading ideas behind the draft ERB strategy.

In the draft strategy the Kaliningrad Region has its own area of interest and has an important role even if focus is on EU policies and the strategy has a strong EU perspective. Relations between EU, ERB and Kaliningrad Region are central.

After long discussions the SC decided that the further JTDP work should build on the 5 strategic areas earlier presented in the draft strategy. The focus should be on business development; not on the more limited private business development.

It was also underlined by the SC that the JTDP must be concrete with distinct proposals of further actions and other cooperation activities. This is a must in order to get approval and commitment from the politicians within ERB.

6. Regional dissemination and anchoring plans during milestone 5 and 6

The popular version of the strategy was discussed. It should be supplemented with concrete ideas. It must be translated into all ERB languages.

Anchoring plans:

Bornholm: Mr Andersen informed that a working group is formed with directors of two departments of the Bornholm Regional Municipality administration and the other Danish partners of the Seagull project. A meeting is planned with the partners during October. Political input to the JTDP will be discussed and formulated during November and serve as input to the ERB/Seagull conference in December.

Kalmar County: The work with the JTDP is parallel in time with that of the next revision of the Regional Development Programme for Kalmar County. Mr Brynielsson presented a plan for anchoring activities in the county including meetings and discussions with the Board of the Regional Council, all boards of the 12 municipalities of the county, organisations for the private sector, representatives of the Academia, etc.

Blekinge County: Mr Lindencrona said that Region Blekinge is planning activities similar to those planned in Kalmar County.

Kaliningrad Region: WP5 of the Seagull RC works on this issue and will present a proposal. Seminars and a Web conference are planned.

The Polish regions: Will start anchoring activities in the beginning of next year through two regional committees: one for strategic issues and the other one for regional development. The committees will in different contexts present and discuss the Seagull project and the ERB strategy/JTDP together with the results of the South Baltic Arc project. The Warmia-Masurian region is involved. New relations with media have been established and will be used. Politicians will be provided with information on ERB and its activities.

Kronoberg County: For Kronoberg anchoring at an early stage is important. Many information activities are already carried through. The reactions are positive so far. Further activities are planned as in the other Swedish regions.

7. ERB/Seagull conference

Mr Karlson briefly informed the SC of the ongoing preparations of the ERB/Seagull conference December 2-3. It will take place in Gdansk.

8. BSSSC conference in Malmö, October 21-23

The Seagull project management will participate at the conference and at its exhibition area with Seagull information material – roll ups, maps and project reports.

9. Next SC meeting takes place 3rd of November in Gdansk.

10. The meeting asked Ms Butorova to forward warm greetings to Mr Koshelev with heartily wishes of a fast recovery from his illness.