PRE-CPMR GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Venue: Room B, Finlandia Hall, Mannerheimintie 13, 00100 Helsinki

11.00: Start of proceedings

Opening Session

Jari Sainio, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission welcomed participants with an opening speech. He acknowledged 100 years of Finnish independence. The Finnish people have worked for 100 years to build their country and now it is time to put the emphasis on Finland’s strengths and set the course for future success. He explained the mission of the BSC is to be the voice of the Regions.

The Agenda for the meeting was adopted.

CPMR General Assembly

Jari Sainio introduced the CPMR General Assembly and explained how several members would participate in the Political Bureau meeting and explained the process for the amendments to the Final Declaration.

- Mr Sainio opened the floor for opinions and/or comments on each point of the CPMR Final Declaration.
  - Point 4: It was highlighted that all Finnish amendments were backed for all Finnish Regions. The language used was not as diplomatic as desired – it was felt diplomatic language should be used to strengthen collaboration so slight changes were made to the wording of the text. All regions agreed to the changes.
  - Point 6: EU added value is very high and should be stressed, therefore trans-national and interregional cooperation should also be included. The text was amended to reflect this. All regions agreed to the changes.
  - Point 11a and 11b: Region Helsinki-Uusimaa suggested a modification in the first part of the sentence as they felt that extremely strong language was used, so they put forward a proposed rewording. Skåne proposed removing the last part of the sentence altogether as it is a national issue not regional. Helsinki-Uusimaa supported Region Skåne and as the two modifications were to different parts of the text both modifications were accepted. All regions agreed to the changes.
  - Point 14: The original text was found to be rather strong so a suggestion was put forward to make it softer. All regions agreed to the changes.

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions

Minutes

19 October 2017
Point 17: It was felt that it was wrong to oppose without explaining why, so the text was modified to explain why. It was necessary to open an argumentation rather than just oppose. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 25/26: A new point was put forward for inclusion between points 25-26. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 26: Smart specialisation is a very important issue, therefore the text was modified to highlight that it adds clear value. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 27: Modification to the text was put forward, inspired by the text of last year’s General Assembly documents. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 45: A new point was put forward for inclusion after point 45. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 48: A new point was put forward for inclusion after point 48. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 49: Additional text was put forward for inclusion in point 49 to highlight the importance of agriculture. All regions agreed to the changes.

Points 54/55/56: It was originally suggested by the Finnish group that all three points (54,55,56) should be deleted. This was countered with a proposal to add new articles rather than modify the existing articles. It was decided to tackle each point individually. All regions agreed to this.

Point 54: It was suggested that the original text was too strong so a rewording was proposed. It was suggested that another sentence be added as a compromise. All regions agreed to the changes. The proposal for new text on point 54 from the BSC is:

Agrees that the TEN-T network is an essential part of EU-wide transport policy, however, is worried that improving regional accessibility remains a secondary concern in European Transport Policy, despite the fact that this is an objective assigned to it by the Treaty provisions and the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Calls for more involvement of regions in defining important transport corridors.

Point 55: a proposal was put forward to reword the text. All regions agreed to the changes.

Point 56: It was suggested that this point be withdrawn. All regions agreed to this.

Point 63: A new point was put forward for inclusion after point 63 in order to highlight transport. All regions agreed to the changes.

Mr Sainio then opened the floor for opinions and/or comments on each document of the CPMR General Assembly:

Cardiff Declaration on Brexit: After discussions with the Spanish Members, Region Skåne withdrew their suggested amendment.

Technical Paper on post-2020 Cohesion Policy: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern proposed a link between Cohesion Policy and semesters. They stressed that this will be discussed within the Cohesion Core Group as it is only a Technical Paper, but they wanted to highlight the problem. Asa Bjering suggested that they mention this fact of dissatisfaction with the general direction, during the Cohesion Session of the General Assembly.
Internal Issues

- Åsa BJERING, Executive Secretary of the Baltic Sea Commission explained that the minutes of the Baltic Sea Commission Executive Committee meeting held in Stockholm on 4 October 2017, are currently being finalised and will be available on the BSC website shortly.
- Financial Report was introduced by Åsa BJERING, who thanked Region Norrbotten for their support drawing up the accounts. It was expressed that the accounts were balanced, and the forecast budget was being followed. Ms Bjering explained that she was available if anyone had any further questions about the accounts.
- Membership issues were then addressed. Åsa BJERING confirmed that region Nordland was unfortunately leaving the CPMR and the BSC.
- BSC General Assembly: Jari NAHKANEN, Member of the Board, Region Oulu, invited the Baltic Sea Commission Member Regions to the 2018 BSC General Assembly, on 23 May.

Any other business

- Åsa Bjering explained that there is a calendar of events on the BSC website and events can be added directly into outlook.
- The next meeting will be the Maritime Working Group meeting (1 November 2017) which will be held back-to-back with the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum in Turku (November 2-3).
- Yesterday the Chair of the BSC Transport Working Group met with the Chair of the North Sea Commission Transport Working Group. There will be a joint meeting organised with the NSC looking at areas of joint interest for the BSC and NSC. The date will be set in the end of November and after that all members of the working group will be informed.
- There will be a new project with the Energy Working Group working as a bouncing board. The meeting date is still to be decided.
- The online events list will be update as soon as dates are confirmed.
- The next BSC Executive Committee meeting will be held in Brussels, on 17 January 2018.

Jaris Sainio thanked participants for their active contribution and wished them a successful General Assembly.

12.00: End of Proceedings