



Self-Evaluation Report of the Maritime Transport Cluster

Interreg IV B 2007-2013

Grant Agreement N°: 35-2-05-11

Project acronym: MTC

Project title: Maritime Transport Cluster

Funding scheme: Collaborative Project

Project start: 10 June 2011

Project duration: 18 Months

Work package no.: WP 1

Deliverable no/name.: MTC Self-Evaluation Report

Status/date of document: [~~Draft~~ / ~~Checked~~ / Final], 04th Dec. 2012

Lead contractor for this document: Hafen Hamburg Marketing e.V.
Hamburg, Germany

Project website: <http://www.maritimetransportcluster.eu>

Following project partners have been involved in the elaboration of this document:

Partner No.	Company acronym	Involved experts
1	HHM	Stefan Breitenbach, Sebastian Doderer, Adina Cailliaux
2	FDT	Kent Bentzen, Michael Stie-Laugesen
3	TUHH	Verena Flitsch, Jutta Wolff, Nico Herz
5	MOW	Pim Bonne
8	NCA	Thor Vartdal, Sabine Nicolaysen

Table of Content

Table of figures.....	4
Table of charts.....	4
Table of abbreviations	5
1. Setting up the Cluster Project	6
1.1. Basic Conditions for the 1 st Cluster Call within the NSRP 6 th Call for Applications.....	6
1.2. General Idea behind the Maritime Transport Cluster	7
1.3. Preparations before Placing an Application	8
1.3.1. Partnership, Involved Projects and Supporters	8
1.3.2. First Draft of a Communication Plan.....	13
1.4. Challenges during the Set-Up of the Cluster.....	16
2. During the Cluster Life-Time (Management Process and Organisation of the Cluster)	17
2.1. WP 1: Project Management.....	17
2.2. WP 2: Publicity & Communication	18
2.2.1. At the beginning.....	19
2.2.2. During the development process of the MTC Policy Paper (WP 3-5)	20
2.2.2.1. WP 3: Analysing & Consolidation (Project Level)	20
2.2.2.2. WP 4: Market Derived Perspectives (Business Level).....	21
2.2.3. WP 5: Policy Perspectives and Advice (Policy Level) and the Dissemination of the MTC Policy Paper (Final Result)	23
3. Finalising the Cluster.....	26
3.1. Overall Experiences with the Cluster Project.....	26
3.2. Suggested Improvements	27
4. Final Remarks	29
4.1. The MTC Policy Paper	29
4.2. Acknowledgements	29

Table of figures

Figure 1 - MTC Consortium	7
Figure 2 – Organisation of the Cluster	7
Figure 3 - NSRP Projects Covered through the Partnership.....	9
Figure 4 - Involved Projects in the MTC	9
Figure 5 - Identified Common Keywords to be Discussed and Refined with the Help of the MTC Network during the Cluster Life Time.	11
Figure 6 - Supporters of the Cluster and Disseminators of Results.....	12
Figure 7 - General Structure of MTC	17
Figure 8 - Publicity and Communication Interactions within the Maritime Transport Cluster.....	18
Figure 9 - Hot Topics - Project Analyses	20
Figure 10 - Hot Topics - Research Analyses.....	20
Figure 11 - The Market Derived Perspective (Results WP 4)	21
Figure 12 - Involved Business Organisations during the Business Consultation Process (Extract)	22
Figure 13 - Involved Associations during the Business Consultation Process	22
Figure 14 - Development Process of the Policy Paper	23
Figure 15 - Findings of the MTC Policy Paper	23

Table of charts

Table 1 - Partnership Structure	8
Table 2 - Overview of Approved Transport Related Projects within Interreg IV B NSRP 2007-2012... ..	10
Table 3 - Target groups, Engagement, Aims and Means to Reach Aims	13
Table 4 - Exemplary List of Events and Conferences of NSRP Projects (extract).....	14
Table 5 - Communication Strategy	15

Table of abbreviations

ECSA	European Community Shipowners' Association
EIA	European Intermodal Association
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESPO	European Sea Ports Organisation
EU	European Union
EP	European Parliament
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
IWW	Inland Waterway
LP	Lead Partner
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MTC	Maritime Transport Cluster
NCP	National Contact Point of the North Sea Region Programme
NSR	North Sea Region
NSRP	North Sea Region Programme
SRT	Steering Round Table(s)
SSS	Short Sea Shipping
WP	Work Package

1. Setting up the Cluster Project

1.1. Basic Conditions for the 1st Cluster Call within the NSRP 6th Call for Applications

According to the North Sea Region Programme (NSRP) Secretariat [...] “a cluster is to provide a structure and funding for partners in different projects within and across priorities to work together on common issues”.

Following an extract from the 6th call for applications (background, development guidance and FAQ) with more detailed background information:

“The aim of the project clustering initiative is to raise awareness about the good results being achieved in individual projects and ensure that these results are known and used as widely as possible in the North Sea Region. Projects are being asked to work together to achieve this aim for two main reasons. Firstly, many projects work on related themes targeting similar stakeholder groups – it is to be expected therefore that in many cases projects should be able to combine and develop their results to deliver a joint package of thematic proposals. Secondly, extending the impact of project activities requires that new stakeholders in regions outside the project partnership and at other levels (national, European etc.) are made aware of what has been done. In many cases, this visibility of results will be better achieved by clusters which can present a wide package of insights on a given theme rather than 46 individual project perspectives on more specialist issues.”

Following basic conditions were valid:

- Clusters should include as a minimum three countries and partners from three existing North Sea programme projects. Nevertheless, two aspects suggest that projects only meeting the minimum criteria may struggle:
 - Geographical coverage: Clusters should have a long-term impact on a major part of the programme area (in accordance with the criteria for strategic projects in section 3.5.5 of the Operational Programme). Where only three of the seven countries were involved, projects would have to develop a very convincing strategy for ensuring the relevance of their activities for other countries and the take up of results in these countries.
 - Project coverage: Generally speaking, there are more than three projects covering different aspects of each theme in the programme. While participation in a cluster is optional, it would certainly be a strength to include inputs from as many relevant projects as possible.
- Maximum eligible budget: € 750,000.
- Projects are funded 50% ERDF / Norwegian equivalent and 50% co-financing.
- Maximum duration for the cluster: 18 months.
- Project clusters are open to all beneficiaries, including the possibility to include new partners who are not yet involved in any project activities but who can make a clear contribution to the cluster, including possibly (in well-justified cases) partners from outside the programme area.
- Clusters must be led by a partner from an on-going project.
- Results of the participating projects are at the heart of the proposal – this is not about creating a completely new project.
- The aim of the clusters is to increase impact by increasing the visibility of project results.

1.2. General Idea behind the Maritime Transport Cluster

Within the NSRP several projects are generating very good results to overcome existing challenges. However, after the end of these projects some challenges remain which need to be solved in future. The projects made the first step and it is one task of a cluster to generate more visibility for the important results achieved, as well as for the remaining work which has to be done.

The MTC consortium consisted of eight core partners covering six countries in the North Sea Region (Figure 1).

- Port of Hamburg Marketing (Lead Partner)
- Association of Danish Transport and Logistics Centres
- Flemish Ministry of Mobility and Public Works
- Hamburg University of Technology
- Transport Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University
- NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
- Norwegian Coastal Administration
- Norwegian Mapping Authority, Hydrographic Service



Figure 1 - MTC Consortium

The Maritime Transport Cluster (MTC) was set up and applied directly the cluster idea to the maritime transport sector. Thus bridging obtained results from on-going Interreg IVB projects dealing with maritime transport issues and new business trends from the maritime industry as well as with EU transport policy development. The overall objective of MTC is to build a structure for interchanging latest knowledge and experiences concerning maritime transport in the context of the Interreg IVB NSRP. Furthermore the MTC project intends to develop the common voice of the Interreg IV B NSRP on maritime transport. By applying the cluster idea to the maritime transport sector the MTC project aims at the following:

- To establish an MTC network covering all NSR transport projects as a platform for discussions and exchange.
- To identify synergies between the NSR project results and to consolidate these into main programme outcomes on transport.
- To match the programme outcomes and discuss them with the business environment.
- To match programme outcomes and business trends and connect them to policy development.
- To compose a policy advice based on the NSR experiences to contribute to the discussions on future EU transport policy developments.

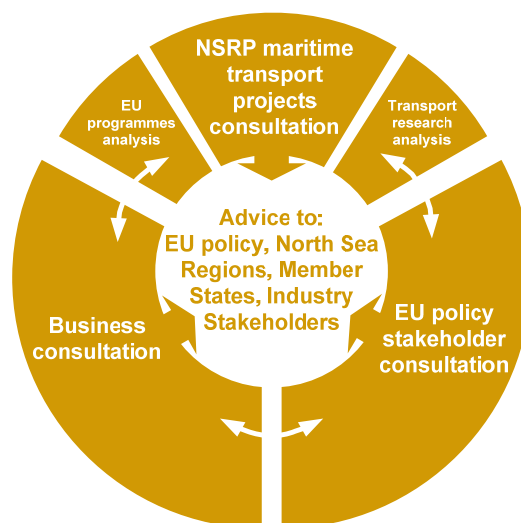


Figure 2 – Organisation of the Cluster

1.3. Preparations before Placing an Application

One of the most important steps before placing an application is to form and fix a strong and reliable partnership covering all aspects, tasks and aims promised in the application to be fulfilled during the cluster life time.

At the same time it was important to do some preparatory work to further develop the application by clarifying which NSRP projects should be included in the analyses tasks of the cluster.

Finally it is useful to undertake a first analyse before placing the application in respect of the chosen NSRP projects' aims and (expected) results which are planned to be the basis of further cluster work.

How the Maritime Transport Cluster executed these tasks is explained in the following subchapters.

1.3.1. Partnership, Involved Projects and Supporters

The partnership depends largely upon the aims and planned procedure of the cluster. Our aim to create more visibility of the project outcomes by developing a policy advice which bridges the gap between project results, maritime research, business sector and policy level required a balanced partnership out of the existing NSRP project (Lead) partners, research, maritime industry and European policy level.

At the same time the overall maximum budget of € 750,000 for a total duration of 18 months restricts the total number of core partners if a continuous contribution by all partners during the cluster life time is wished. We decide to build up the partnership with the following organisations (compare Table 1).

NSR Country	Organisation	(Lead) Partner of NSRP project	Field of business activity	Possible tasks in the cluster
DE	Port of Hamburg Marketing, reg. Association	Cruise Gateway (LP), StratMoS	Port Marketing / maritime industry	Market perspective (strong worldwide network), policy perspective
DK	Association of Danish Transport and Logistics Centres	StratMoS	Multimodal and hinterland transport	Market perspective, policy perspective
BE	Flemish Ministry of Mobility and Public Works	StratMoS	National Authority (Ministry)	policy perspective (very much experienced in European politics/policies)
DE	Hamburg University of Technology	StratMoS	University	Research perspective
UK	Transport Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University	Northern Maritime University (LP), Dryport, StratMoS	University	Research perspective, policy perspective
NL	NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research	North Sea Ballast Water (LP)	National Oceanographic Institution (Research a& Education)	Research perspective, market perspective
NO	Norwegian Coastal Administration	StratMoS	National Authority (maritime sector)	Market perspective, policy perspective
NO	Norwegian Mapping Authority	Bringing Land and Sea Together (LP)	National Authority (maritime sector)	Market perspective, policy perspective

Table 1 - Partnership Structure

The core partnership covered six of seven NSR countries and at the same time six running NSRP projects in the area of maritime transport (out of 14 at this time). Additionally the project had a well-balanced structure concerning partners' area of activity representing the research, policy (local, regional) and industry level.

Not all existing projects could be included in the core partnership; however all lead partners were contacted and briefly informed about the MTC plans in order to get them involved as supporters.



Figure 3 - NSRP Projects Covered through the Partnership

A question which should be answered as well is the scope of the cluster beside the core partnership:

- Which priorities should be covered by the cluster?
- Which projects are of importance and identification of the lead partners?



Figure 4 - Involved Projects in the MTC

Do an investigation which projects might be of benefit for the overall scope of the cluster (this can be also beyond the priority your cluster is active in) and do additionally a short compilation of the expected results of the projects which might be of value for the cluster.

Project name	Project description	Lead Beneficiary	Transport Mode		
			Sea	IWW	Multi-modal
Ballast Water Opportunity	Facilitating the ratification of the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC)	Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ), The Netherlands	X		
BLAST	Improve Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Planning and maritime safety by contributing to harmonising terrestrial and sea geographical data	Norwegian Hydrographic Service, Norway	X	X	
Clean North Sea Shipping	Emission and greenhouse gas reduction from ships , using studies to reveal the status of air quality in ports and surrounding areas. CNSS will create transparency on cost-efficient technology	Hordaland County Council, Norway	X		

	solutions and develop and improve the introduction of successful air quality programs.				
CRUISE GATEWAY	Developing the NSR as a cruise destination	Hafen Hamburg Marketing e.V., Germany	X		
Dryport	Develop effective Hinterland intermodal freight transport nodes	Västra Götalandsregionen Regionutvecklingssekretariatet, Sweden			X
E-Harbours	Create a lasting change towards sustainable energy logistics for NSR harbour cities	Municipality of Zaanstad, The Netherlands	X		X
Food Port	Develop the NSR as the best food cluster and hub in Europe for food products delivered via efficient and sustainable transport systems	Province of West Flanders, Belgium			X
iTransfer	Develop innovative, sustainable solutions to improve regional accessibility by water-based public transport in the NSR	Institute for Sustainability, UKc	X	X	
LO-PINOD	Enhance multi-modal accessibility and interconnectivity of ports of regional importance	Institute for Sustainability, UK	X		X
NMU	Common and lasting transnational network of universities that will directly address the needs of the maritime industry	Transport Research Institute, Napier University, UK	X		
NS Frits	A multi-lingual electronic communications and data capture system for the road freight sector to provide information to end users - drivers, transport managers.	People United Against Crime, UK			X
POYO – The Port is Yours	Focussing on maintenance processes in order to increase the efficiency in the production process of the ports in the North Sea Region	Albeda College, The Netherlands	X		
StratMoS	Promote and facilitate the shift of cargo from road to sea based inter-modal transport	Rogaland County Council, Norway	X	X	X
SUSCOD	Application of integrated coastal zone management through an innovative ICZM 'assistant' web tool	Province of North-Holland, The Netherlands	X	X	

Table 2 - Overview of Approved Transport Related Projects within Interreg IV B NSRP 2007-2012

A first attempt to identify common keywords to be discussed and refined with the help of the MTC network during the cluster was done early in the process. This provided a common platform for where to start the analyses after cluster's approval. Additionally this approach supported the consortium to start very fast with the cluster work.

	ICZM	Environ- ment	ICT	Industry network	Inter- modality	SC opti- mization	Accessi- bility	Passenger transport	Other Keywords
Ballast Water Opportunity		Ballast water							
BLAST	Decision support system		Harmonise sea & terrestrial data						
Clean North Sea Shipping		Emissions							
CRUISE GATEWAY		Emissions, Energy Use		Cruise Industry				Cruising	
Dryport					Hinterland transport				Dryports
E-Harbours		Energy use							
Food Port				Food Industry		Modal shift, masterplan hubs			
iTransfer		LNG ferry					Fjords, estuaries, rivers	Public ferry transport	
LO-PINOD					Inland connections		Regional ports		
NMU									Education
Ns Frits			Comm. & data capture system			Efficiency, safety, security			
POYO – The Port is Yours				Maintenance in ports					
StratMoS					MoS		Connect trans- port corridors		
SUSCOD	practice & test ICZM principles		Web-based ICZM assistant						
TIDE		Sediments, dredging, shores							Estuaries
Waterways for growth		Waterway regeneration		Business / pro- duct developm.					IWW

Figure 5 - Identified Common Keywords to be Discussed and Refined with the Help of the MTC Network during the Cluster Life Time.

The **project management** should be overtaken by the lead partner to save 3rd party costs which can be reinvested in the “daily” cluster work. Following aspects supports this approach:

- all participants of a cluster need to be experienced with NSRP projects (they have to be involved in at least one running project),
- only one reporting is stipulated (two are possible) and
- the total number of core partners is not as high as in “traditional” projects.

Port of Hamburg Marketing as Lead Partner made the experience that the project management of the partnership (containing eight organisations in total) was absolutely manageable.

After having built up the core partnership it was crucial to form a pool of important and valuable **supporters** and **multiplicators**. These stakeholders should be of assistance and support in creating added value and impact during the dissemination.

Our consortium choose on the one hand (**sector**) **organisations/associations** which play an important role in representing the maritime industry on a European level and having an overall perspective about the main future and present challenges of their members in the European Union. On the other hand our consortium worked together with regional (sector) organisations/associations on a country level to cover the diverse challenges of their domestic members (workshops with key participants of a regional sector can be another tool to cover regional aspects. However, regional support to get high level participants (business, regional-, local- policy level) to participate is needed). Both perspectives are not automatically the same! Supporters on both levels (European and regional) can be valuable to verify and/or enrich intermediate findings by their opinion and remarks. They can help to form a holistic market perspective and can provide contacts to further maritime business

stakeholders not covered by the core partnership and acquired supporters. Finally they help to have distinguished and accepted findings (as they provide you with their views formed by the input of their members) and can support you with the targeted dissemination of your final output by using their own networks as well. An important advice is to get letter of support from these important stakeholders and to involve them at an early stage. By keeping them informed and actively involved in producing the output, the supporters can identify themselves with the cluster and are even more actively supporting the dissemination phase.

To get a maximum attention on the results it is recommended to present/discuss them with high levelled policy-/business stakeholders at their local surrounding area. You avoid inconvenience like travel and time consumption and by avoiding it you increase the chance of their participation. The MTC consortium organised a debate in the European Parliament (EP) for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), the Commission and other important stakeholders. Especially for reaching the first target group an event in the EP is essential. An event in the EP can only be organised by getting the support of a MEP, who volunteers to host the meeting. High level **key actors** (in policy) can be of importance also in order to reach dissemination targets, e.g.:

- MEP to host an event in the European Parliament
- Transport Attachés in the EU
- Ministerial contact (e.g. in the transport field) to support dissemination activities, e.g. by moderating a conference session
- National Contact Points of the North Sea Region programme to support the dissemination on regional and/or local (policy) level; or by providing other contacts
- Staff of regional offices in Brussels like the Hanse-Office for the Federal State of Hamburg (experts for organising events in Brussels and who can provide the venue)

Not to forget the projects, which usually have a specialised partnership dealing with main problems they cover. Projects' consortiums covered by the cluster should play a role as well also when it comes to verification and/or enrichment of results as well as dissemination activities (e.g. by participating at their events).

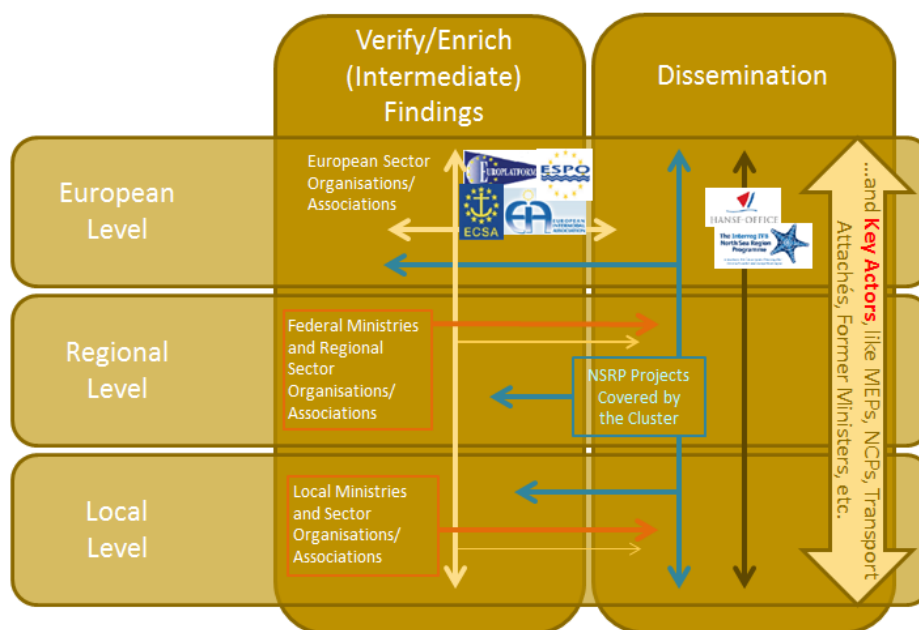


Figure 6 - Supporters of the Cluster and Disseminators of Results

1.3.2. First Draft of a Communication Plan

The dissemination plan is another helpful instrument to structure dissemination activities and at the same time to have a tool verifying the progress of publicity & communication activities.

The communication plan should define a) the target groups, b) the engagement of the groups, c) aims and d) means to reach the defined aims per target group (compare Table 3).

	Target Group	Engagement	Aims	Means to Reach Aims
Interreg IV B Network	MTC project partners	Commitment	Transnational co-operation and knowledge exchange	Website (internal co-operation tool), steering round tables, WP meetings
	Maritime transport related projects	Support, awareness, feedback	Input of project results & achievements, feedback of MTC findings (exchange)	Website, questionnaires, events, meetings, reports
	NSRP Secretariat		Fulfilling project aims in line with expectations of secretariat	Smooth communication between LP and cluster facilitator.
Business Level	Maritime transport related business sector	Support, awareness, understanding, feedback	Opinions & experiences of the business sector (expert knowledge). Get input for the development of policy advice. Feedback of MTC findings (exchange of MTC findings), by that raising awareness and influence overall development	Events, meetings, briefings, reports, MTC stakeholder online-platform
	Maritime transport sector organisations		Opinions & experiences. Get input for the development of policy advice. Feedback of MTC findings (exchange of MTC findings), by that raising awareness and influence overall development	
Policy Level	European Commission European Parliament – DG MOVE and DG REGIO Committee of the Regions (Open Days)	Awareness, understanding, consideration, Up-taking of results	Creating awareness of NSRP programme results on maritime transport. Consideration of MTC findings within their daily business. Achievement of a long term impact, e.g. for future paths of development for EU maritime transport sector, related future Interreg programme periods	Website (stakeholder forum), policy forums, events, meetings, brochure, policy advice
	North Sea Motorways of the Sea Task Force			
	National authorities			
	Local/regional authorities			
Media	Dedicated Maritime Transport Media	Awareness	Creating awareness, enabling leverage effects	Press releases

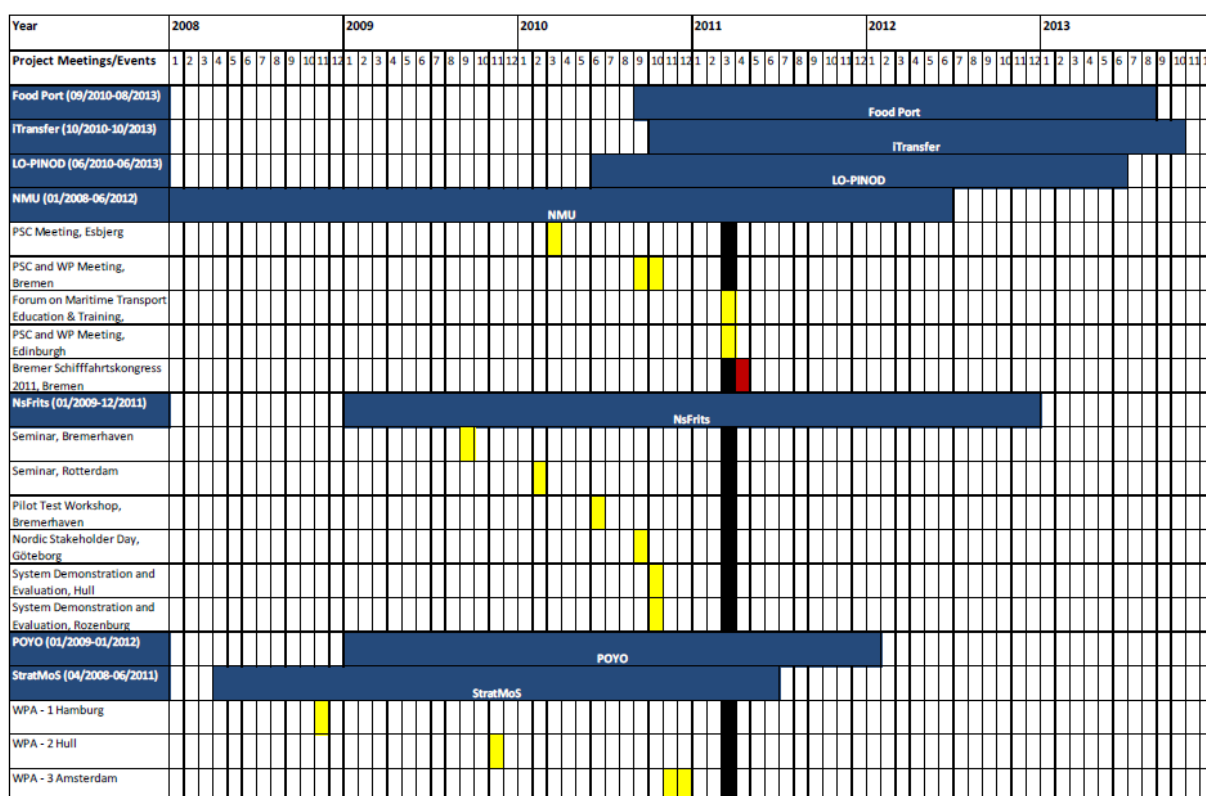
Table 3 - Target groups, Engagement, Aims and Means to Reach Aims

By subdividing the defined rough target groups into smaller units the communication plan facilitates the partners to identify key supporters (single persons/local organisations).

The next step will be to prepare a first communication strategy. A timeline showing at which dates which actions or processes need to be undertaken by the partners should be supplementary included in the communication plan (compare table 3).

The following listing gives an impression which events might be included in the communication strategy:

- Final/intermediate conferences of on-going NSRP projects covered by the cluster.
- Own workshops to cover domestic challenges on a regional level.
- Interesting events, where the results which will be achieved in the cluster might be forwarded to key decision makers on local, regional or European policy/industry level. Most effective is the participation via presentation slots, panel debates or by organising own workshops. The NSRP Secretariat can act sometimes as door-opener for bigger events, like e.g. the European Maritime Days or the Open-Days by organising panel debates or workshops for which the cluster might be invited.



[...]

Project name and duration	
Present month	
Conference	
Project Meeting	

Table 4 - Exemplary List of Events and Conferences of NSRP Projects (extract)

MTC Self-Evaluation Report

The communication strategy is set to offer interactive and tailor made target oriented communication. The key actors are all partners involved in the respective work packages along the cluster lifetime. The following mayor activities have been planned exemplary for the Maritime Transport Cluster (06/2010 - 12/2012):

WP	June 2011	July 2011	Aug. 2011	Sep. 2011	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011	Dec. 2011	Jan. 2012	Feb. 2012	Mar. 2012	Apr. 2012	Mai 2012	June 2012	July 2012	Aug. 2012	Sep. 2012	Oct. 2012	Nov. 2012	Dec. 2012
WP 1	SRT							SRT					SRT						
WP 2				Blast, StratMos conferences		NS Fritz Conference // The North Sea in Brussels					NS MoS Task Force	Presentation of core findings Mai: European Maritime Days June: NSRP Joint Annual Conference // NS MoS Task Force // North Sea Commission				Trans Baltic Final Conf.	Panel Debate Open Days	Presentation in the EP // Interferry Annual Conf. // Scottish Parlia-	
	Webpage (incl. stakeholder/business forum), press releases, update on activities to the Cluster Facilitator of the NSRP.																		
													Dissemination to regional and local (policy) level by MTC partners						
WP 3		Questionnaires to Interreg IV B Projects		September: Discussion of the WP 3 report: Dialogue with MTC Network (Projects)				WP 3 Report											
WP 4				January: WP 4 workshop in Bergen & Edinburgh (business cons.) Business consultation by meetings & online survey and 1:1 interviews						WP 4 Report									
WP 5										Stakeholder consultation (sector organisations) Focal point meeting in Helsingoer in April 2012 and North Sea Region MoS Task Force	Presentation of core findings for ESCA and ESPO and representatives of DGMOVE. End June: MTC Policy Paper Presentation of findings for EUROPLATFORMS members in July 2012				Local-/ Regional Ministries / Authorities	Local-/ Regional Ministries / Authorities	Focal Point Meeting and TEN-T Days in Brussels	Local-/ Regional Ministries / Authorities	
	Monitoring EU - Policy																		

SRT = Steering Round Table

Table 5 - Communication Strategy

After having defined the target groups, their engagement, aims and means to reach the aims, methods for how the communication will be executed as well as the different communication measures should be defined.

Finally the budget for communication activities, the responsibilities between the partners and a responsible partner for the evaluation need to be defined.

1.4. Challenges during the Set-Up of the Cluster

The Maritime Transport Cluster was the first cluster approved by the NSRP Secretariat. One of the biggest challenges during the set up was to convince NSRP projects Lead Partner (who were not directly involved in cluster's partnership) that the cluster is a valuable instrument they can use for their own project's benefit. There have been a lot of **uncertainties between the projects' LP what the cluster will do with their input** (results, etc.). Some of them were afraid that the cluster might blame the projects if their process was not in line with the planned schedule – this was never the case. The clarification of this misapprehension tightened a lot of personal meetings with the LPs to convince them about the sense and added value of the cluster to them and their project(s). The misunderstanding might be due to the fact that during "normal" project applications all applicants are in a kind of competition. Everyone would like to see their project being approved and tries to hide the project idea and approach to other.

In retrospect a **more intensive information policy to the LBs of the projects during the preparation phase** would have been of benefit to avoid misunderstandings and uncertainties. However, this was the first cluster call and a new way of building up a new cooperation instrument, this challenge is not expected to occur to the same extend in future calls. Nevertheless it is of benefit for the cluster and the co-operation to convince all LPs of NSRP projects that they can benefit from the cluster.

Costs which occur during the preparation- and application phase are **not eligible**. However the preparation of a cluster application is very demanding and causes a lot of efforts. The **motivation and acquiring process of key people and European sector organisations** requires a more or less final strategy and very clear schedule, objectives for their involvement and first indications of venues (especially dates). The key peoples agenda is booked for several month (1/2 -3/4 year) ahead. There is not much time in fine tuning activities and/or involvement of key actors during the cluster life time which is very limited (max. 18 months).

On the other hand the **very limited life time makes a difference in working together and pushing things forward**. Very focused approaches which have been prepared during the preparation phase allowing a maximum benefit and output of the cluster initiative. It is absolutely recommended to **start fast** after having got the approval with a first cluster steering meeting. During that partners should decide on the overall project schedule and tasks/actions each partner has to overtake and execute until the next meeting and per Milestone.

When involving Norwegian partners it is necessary to check via their national contact point if **Norwegian adequate funding** is still available.

2. During the Cluster Life-Time (Management Process and Organisation of the Cluster)

This chapter deals with the different work packages (WP), their content and the overall structure of the Cluster. The figure below illustrates the overall structure of the cluster, containing five WPs.

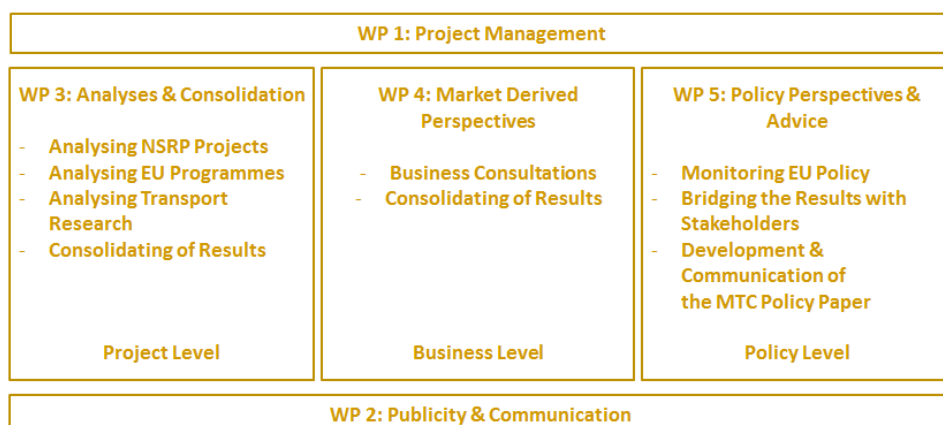


Figure 7 - General Structure of MTC

One of the most important WP was WP 2 “Publicity & Communication” which contains the dissemination of the cluster’s major output: the MTC Policy Paper “Maritime Transport and Future Policies, Perspectives of the North Sea Region” (www.maritimetransportcluster.eu). The target dissemination of this document constitutes the added value of the cluster to the projects involved. WP 3-5 stand for the development process of the MTC Policy Paper and the results achieved in these WPs are processed from one WP to the next one which results into the draft policy paper.

2.1. WP 1: Project Management

The core tasks of WP 1 are the project co-ordination and financial management, which contain amongst others the following main tasks:

- Developing a partnership agreement,
- Updating, improving and finalising the drafted communication plan (to be revised/updated during the whole life time of the cluster)
- Development of a logo as well as a corporate design and corresponding templates for minutes, reports, presentations, etc.
- Organising steering round tables (SRT) to check the cluster’s schedule. We decided to have three SRT because of the very tight schedule to fulfil.
- Setting up a homepage and maintaining it
- General co-ordination of all cluster activities
- Reporting and controlling (finance and activity)

The overall management was agreed to be overtaken by the LP. Even though it is not obligatory to assign a partnership agreement we decided to issue one. The whole management process has to be characterised by **setting milestones, strict deadlines and strict controlling**. This is due to the fact that cluster have a limited life time of maximum 18 months, resulting in tough schedules and limited possibilities to catch up work which should have been done according to the deadlines set.

It was decided to have three SRT (one at the start, one in the middle of the cluster life time and one some month before the cluster ends) to be able to steer the cluster within its very tight time frame in a

smooth way. The SRT consisted of all partners involved in MTC, so that a holistic co-operation between all partners was ensured.

Having the choice between one or two reporting periods (finance/activity) partners agreed on having two (one in the middle of the cluster lifetime and one at the end). While partners do not need to make use of the intermediate reporting the LP has to in case at least one partner does. One aspect which turned out to be a little crucial comes along with the preparation of the reporting. Before being in the position to submit a financial/activity report **partners have to nominate an auditor** (first level controller) by themselves. The auditor has to be approved by the respective authority in the partner's member state and the approved designation form (by the respective authority) has to be sent to the NSRP as well as to the LB. Even though all cluster partners should be aware of the procedure it occurred that the process was not as fast as assumed. Thus it is recommended to start the process directly after the official start of the cluster to have all documents in time.

Finally the **online monitoring system of the NSRP Secretariat is not proper adapted to cluster projects**. Clusters sometimes do not run at the same times as “traditional” projects and do not have the same reporting periods. This causes problems if it comes to sending out reporting requests to the partners. For example reporting possibilities are not in time on the system or reporting documents from the system didn't show the right dates etc. It is recommended always to have a pre-check several weeks before starting a reporting to proof that all necessary basic conditions are in line and available in the online monitoring system.

2.2. WP 2: Publicity & Communication

A central role was assigned to WP 2 “Publicity & Communication” during the cluster projects life time. The WPs 3, 4 and 5 contained aspects of publicity and communication or at least delivered input to tasks executed in WP2 as illustrated in the figure below.

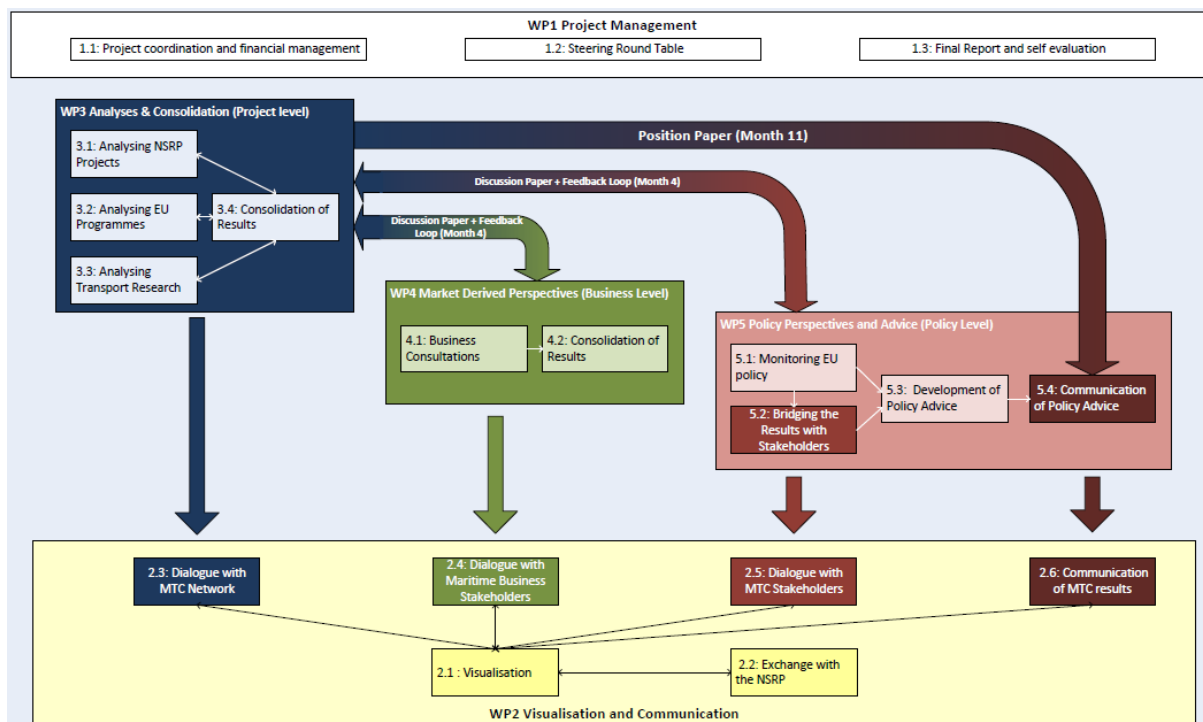


Figure 8 - Publicity and Communication Interactions within the Maritime Transport Cluster

The following sections will highlight our experiences and challenges with publicity and communication tasks related to the WPs and cluster's lifetime circle.

2.2.1. At the beginning

Keep in close contact to the NSRP Secretariat (**cluster facilitator**); invite him to all meetings and add him to the mailing list. It was of great benefit for the cluster to have a neutral observer for many reasons: Firstly the observer role created additional confidence amongst the LBs of the projects. Secondly his advice and opinion were of value for the decisions which had to be taken during the SRT and during the lifetime of the project. Finally the network and the reputation of the NSRP Secretariat allowed active participation at events under their umbrella which could hardly be organised by the cluster itself (e.g. panel debate at the Open Days).

A focus should be put on developing the **corporate design** of the cluster (homepage, templates for power point presentations, reports, official letters, posters, roll-up displays etc.). This design should be used during the whole lifetime of the cluster and of course also used for all other dissemination materials.

Another major task which required more attention than expected was the **co-ordinated exchange of information between the cluster and the projects' LP**. Most of them were very interested in the clusters work. However, participations on LPs' internal project meetings to report about cluster's latest results/developments were not calculated. But it was absolutely necessary, especially in reference to the misunderstanding projects LPs' had according to the scope of the cluster (compare chapter 1.4). The co-ordination brought up very good possibilities for the cluster to join projects' workshops, events, and to include press-releases and articles in the projects' dissemination materials.

A topic which was brought up by some LPs of the projects is the **"closed-shop"** issue, dealing with the fact, that MTC's core partnership was formed by eight partners. The apprehension of them was that they will be used as delivering unit only and do not have any right to say in this matter. MTC partners tried to solve this issue by sending all final draft versions of reports for comments. By incorporating and consequently adhere their thoughts this issue was solved.

2.2.2. During the development process of the MTC Policy Paper (WP 3-5)

2.2.2.1. WP 3: Analysing & Consolidation (Project Level)

The analyses in this WP was conducted at project level encompassed with insights from relevant EU funding programmes and transport research across the NSR. By analysing the maritime transport sector from research, programme and project perspectives, it was aimed at creating a comprehensive basis that will link the Interreg projects with maritime industry trends and developments (WP 4) as well as with on-going transport policy developments in the EU (WP 5). All active 14 maritime related projects in the NSRP were included in the analyses on project level. In a nutshell the WP 3 report summarises insights and results concerning the three areas of investigation:

- consultation of the NSRP-projects related to maritime transport and its hinterland,
- analysis of relevant EU funding programmes related to maritime transport and its hinterland and
- analysis of relevant transport research related to maritime transport and its hinterland.



Figure 9 - Hot Topics - Project Analyses



Figure 10 - Hot Topics - Research Analyses

Challenges

The start of analysing the maritime transport sector on project level was linked with the direct involvement of the LP representing the identified NSRP projects. As already described in chapter 1.4 challenges were to overcome the **uncertainties between the projects' LP what the cluster will do with their input** and in retrospect the need of a **more intensive information policy to the LBs of the projects during the preparation phase** to avoid misunderstandings and uncertainties.

Even though the preferred partnership of a cluster was originally considered by the NSRP Secretariat without universities, it was absolutely necessary to have them involved in MTC. They have the tools and knowledge of inspecting an enormous amount of articles in order to filter actual hot topics and discussions. Furthermore they have access to academic conferences dealing with maritime themes and related future focal points of academic research, which provides a good indication about future challenges and needs. Besides that the viewpoint is of added value (to name some examples: strategy of cluster approach, developing of surveys, analyses) and they belong to maritime stakeholders as well, pushing forward innovations and new ideas of improving logistics.

NAPIER University and University of Technology was responsible for the research level. On the one hand journals, trade magazines and academic conferences were refereed. More than 4,000 articles were inspected and the main topics of present discussion themes in maritime transport were consolidated. On the other hand focus was put on one of the most important conferences organised by the International Association of Maritime Economists (IAME). IAME is an international forum for the exchange of research and information among those interested in maritime and maritime-related issues, with some 500 members worldwide representing almost all universities and research institutes

with an interest in maritime transport. The main emphasis for research papers is related to maritime economics, business, industry-analysis, regulation and policy.

The involvement of the projects via surveys demands a great care and precise controlling. **Setting of deadlines** is absolutely necessary to meet the tight overall schedule of the cluster. For a smooth fulfilment of the survey task it is necessary to remind actors about the deadline from time to time and to offer help and support to get a maximum amount of replies.

To be able to **keep stakeholders involved** in future tasks it is of importance to mirror the results achieved by their support and to inform them about future steps regularly. This strengthens the building-up of relations and by that strengthens their future involvement in cluster activities.

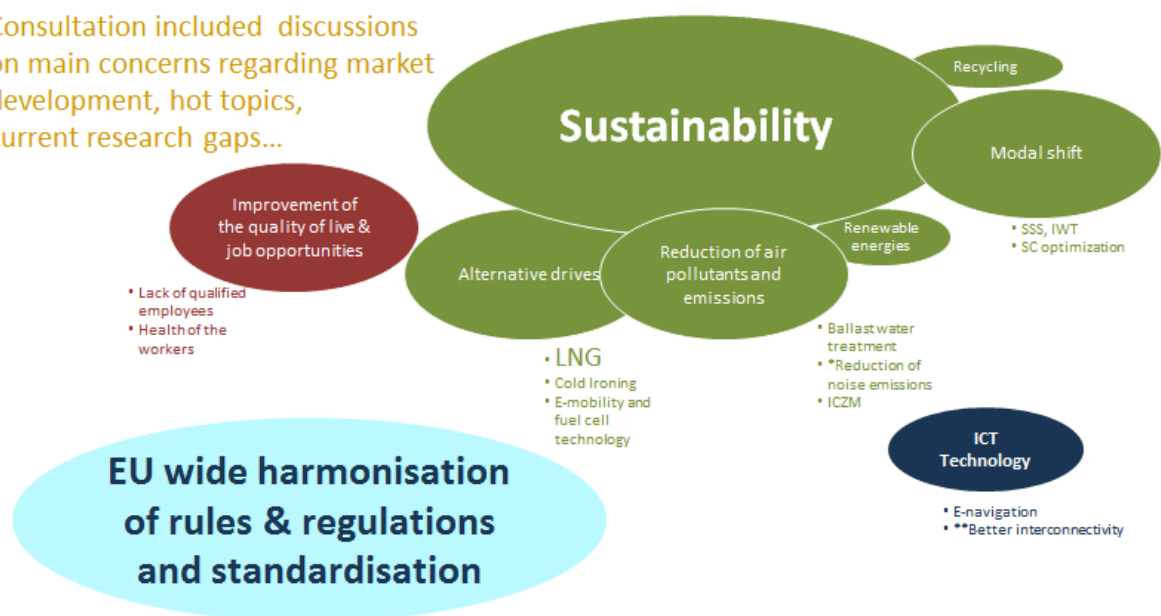
2.2.2.2. WP 4: Market Derived Perspectives (Business Level)

The objective of WP 4 was to gather and consolidate the experiences, expectations and knowledge out of the maritime business sector within the North Sea Region. The focus points were the identification of:

- Main concerns regarding market development,
- hot topics the maritime business sector is dealing with,
- current maritime transport research gaps and future needs to encounter them and
- specific suggestions concerning future priorities in terms of maritime transport policy within/for the North Sea Region Programme.

The analyses covered the landside and seaside perspective by involving main actors active in respective logistics businesses in maritime transport. The results of the process are summarised in the WP 4 report, which integrates the findings (market derived perspectives) and future market needs with the WP 3 results. Furthermore this report delivers the necessary input to WP 5 for further discussions with sector organisations which lead to the development of the policy advices.

Consultation included discussions on main concerns regarding market development, hot topics, current research gaps...



* Noise reduction measures (rail/road and under-water noise)

**[Earlier] data transfer from sea (terminal) side to hinterland enabling better interconnectivity/ mode choices.
Port community systems exist but there are difficulties to transfer data to inland systems.

Figure 11 - The Market Derived Perspective (Results WP 4)

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges was to involve high level managers working in the maritime industry and main market players. The focus on management level is reasoned by the fact that the involved stakeholders should cover the scope of European business and affairs (like policy developments) additionally to their “normal” day-to-day business to be able to deliver valuable input. Most of them can be motivated only by already existing long business relations via the cluster partners. Personal talks are indispensable and quite a long time should be planned for contacting, convincing and executing the research task. The business network of the cluster partners is essential in this point and should cover the whole North Sea Region.

Watisla, NorthSea Foundation, Eurogate, NYK Line, Port of Rotterdam, Port of Hamburg Marketing, Alfa Laval Benelux, Volvo Group, Dryport Fryslan, TCT Logistics, Port of Bergen, HHLA Intermodal, TFG Transfracht Intentaionale, DBR, HME, HHLA Container Terminals, China Shipping, CaTo Marine Ecosystems, Brunsbüttel Ports, DUSS, Carnival, North Sea Container Line, Bremen Ports, Hamburg Port Authority, Inland Port Network, Delphi, Kombiverkehr, MOL, Norwegian Coastal Administration, Bergen Tankers, Maritime Clean Tech West, Vaage Ship Management, P&O Ferries, Western Ferries, Forth Ports, T. Ward Shipping, Maritime Rescue Institute, Pantrak Transportation, K&N, Panalpina

Figure 12 - Involved Business Organisations during the Business Consultation Process (Extract)

It was easier to involve local- and regional- sector organisations and/or associations into the consultation process. Most of them have the function to lobby their members' viewpoints and as soon as they were convinced of the clusters aim and benefits, they provided a valuable support, either in mirroring their members' viewpoints or by supporting local/regional workshops with participation of their members. Additionally these organisations/associations are of important value to cross-check, validate and/or extend the opinions consolidated in a possible first phase of consolidated results.

Maritime Rescue Institute (UK), Northern Lighthouse Board (UK), European Intermodal Association, Holland Shipbuilding Association (NL), Shipbuilders & Shiprepairers Association (UK), Maritime Cluster Norway, Bergen Region (N) Maritime Cluster North-Germany (GER), VDR- German Shipowners' Association (GER), Short Sea Promotion Centre (N & GER), SSS owners Association (N), CaTO Marine Ecosystems (NL), 'De Ruyter' Maritime Institute (NL), North Sea Foundation (NL)

Figure 13 - Involved Associations during the Business Consultation Process

In general workshops need to be prepared excellently (e.g. target invitations to key stakeholders who should participate, much focused workshops, pre-information to participants about content, expectations and the venue itself, good moderation, not too long). Through workshop already analysed intermediate findings can be assured and your findings on country specific challenges can be improved. Participants of the workshops should represent a wide part of the country's maritime sector.

A major challenge is to consolidate the diverse findings of a huge amount of stakeholders who of course would like to see their sometimes very differing opinions in the final results.

Like mentioned in the previous chapter 2.2.2.1 setting of deadlines, controlling as well as keeping stakeholders involved needs to be considered as important as well.

2.2.3. WP 5: Policy Perspectives and Advice (Policy Level) and the Dissemination of the MTC Policy Paper (Final Result)

The main objective of WP 5 was to bridge the results and outcomes of WP 3 and WP 4 and link them up to on-going policy developments within the European Union, by taking into account EU policy papers on transport and cohesion policy (e.g. White Paper, Europe 2020 strategy, CEF, Annual MoS review, ERDF regulation, NSR 2020). Additionally it was targeted to draw a first draft of the MTC Policy Paper containing concrete recommendations for the Members of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the countries in the North Sea Region (EU Member States and Norway), based on the activities and findings of WP 3-5. The MTC Policy Paper has been discussed with sector organisations at national and European levels.

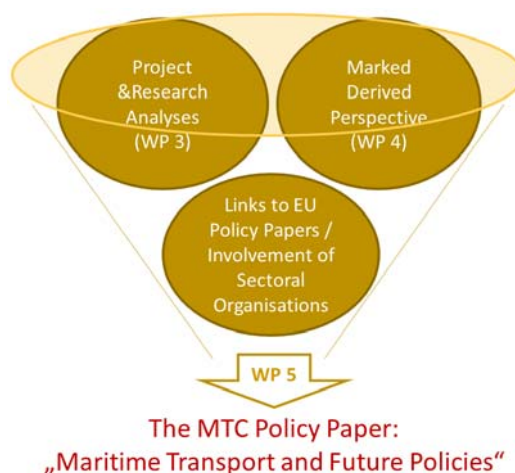


Figure 14 - Development Process of the Policy Paper

This WP contained the dissemination activities of cluster's major output as well: the MTC Policy Paper "Maritime Transport and Future Policies - Perspectives of the North Sea Region". The target dissemination of this document constitutes the added value of the cluster to the projects involved.

The MTC policy paper can be downloaded on the MTC website: www.maritimetransportcluster.eu



Figure 15 - Findings of the MTC Policy Paper

Challenges

We made early endeavours to involve European sector organisations/associations (like ESPO, ECSA, EUROPLATFORMS, MoS Task Force) in the communication strategy and in the whole cluster process as such by involving them directly in the development process of the MTC Policy Paper as already described in chapter 1.3.1.

A kind of door opener are personal relations to staff of these organisations/associations and memberships by partners of the cluster. Additionally it is of value to have members of the cluster consortium working in Brussels with direct relations to European Policy-makers. The network and experience is of enormous value in all processes like organising event, drafting a policy advice/paper etc.

Development of a High Quality Brochure

The major output of the Maritime Transport Cluster is consolidated in a high quality brochure which is used to inform the target groups about the findings of MTC. Our target group consisted of decision-makers, both politicians and actors in European and national administration, as precondition to fulfil the core objective of the cluster to have the policy advice taken up by the national and European level, hence bringing the NSRP outcomes on transport to a higher level.

A major challenge is to design and illustrate a brochure which has a visually modern and appealing design in order to encourage your target group to read it. In our case it had to be as short, essential and easy to read as possible to deliver profound results at the same time. The development process of the content fulfilling these aspects took a long time. The design was contracted and executed by a designing expert. Finally the contents was corrected by a native English speaker. If you don't have a such in the partnership you should consider commissioning one.

Dissemination of the Final Result (MTC Policy Paper)

The dissemination of the MTC Policy Paper was executed via a three level concept according to our overall approach, taking into account firstly the project perspective, secondly the business perspective and thirdly the policy perspective. All dissemination activities were flanked with press-releases in print and/or online media.

The project/NSRP perspective

The dissemination to the NSRP projects was undertaken by a workshop during the Joint Annual Conference 2012, emphasised to be the possibility to reach all projects at the same time. The event was co-organised by the North Sea Commission who has been informed accordingly. Additionally we informed projects on their request presenting our findings during their internal meetings like steering committees. Besides that we included all NSRP's LPs in mailings informing about the progress and final result and indicated the availability of the documents on cluster's homepage.

Participations at NSRP projects' events (final conferences, mid-term conferences) allowed a communication and dissemination for a diverse audience consisting of all above named levels. Some projects even linked to the cluster's homepage and/or put a press-release in their news section referring to the issuing of the MTC policy paper. By that a wider audience has been targeted.

The business perspective

During the business consultation a lot of valuable contacts have been established to companies and local-/regional organisations/associations. Besides getting their input we kept them steadily

informed about the main progresses of the cluster. Focused presentations on important events ensured the dissemination to the business sector as well (e.g. annual conferences of the maritime sector).

Additionally sector organisations/associations on all levels representing the business sector helped to inform about our results by distributing them through their own network or highlighting cluster's results at their homepage.

The policy perspective

A much more sensitive and challenging task is to transfer the results to the policy level. Targeted communication of the final result to policy stakeholders (local, regional, European) needs to be very well prepared.

It is recommended to start compiling the target groups for target-oriented invitations to your events early. Updated contact lists (especially to the political levels) are essential for future dissemination activities. National Contact Points can be of value and are happy to assist with contacts to local- and regional- levels. If your country has a representative office in Brussels they might be of help compiling or even providing actual contact lists. However, it is recommended to visit the websites of the European Parliament and the European Commission as well, where all members sorted by countries or committees are listed.

We decided to have an event directly in the European Parliament (EP). A lunch debate in the parliament is probable the most effective way to inform MEP and other political stakeholders like members of the European Commission, Transport Attachés, Intergroup "Seas and Coastal Areas" and members of European sector organisations/associations like ESPO, ECSA, and EIA.

After the event we send targeted mailings of MTC brochures together with a personalised letter to our target group, e.g. to all national transport ministries in the NSRP, to several units of DG MOVE, DG REGIO, to ESPO and ECSA. Additionally we had the possibility to drop mailings in the internal post boxes in the EP of the MEPs.

Besides that, all partners were asked to inform local- and regional- political stakeholders, about the cluster project findings (e.g. on transport policies, cohesion policies). An approach to do so is firstly to identify political decision makers as well as their staff and cross-check announced events where they are involved (e.g. by a speech, participating in a debate etc.). Or the other way round to identify events organised by ministries dealing with e.g. regional and/or European transport/cohesion policy and participate at these events. Network with the identified political decision makers at the event and sent follow-up emails to their hands.

General information about organising a lunch debate in the EP

The basic requirement for organising a lunch debate in the EP is a MEP who is interested in hosting an event. The best way to find a MEP hosting the event is to look for a national representative. An advice is to start contacting the selected MEP's as early as possible.

Plan to have the hosted event during plenary session days of the targeted committee(s). Otherwise most of the targeted MEPs might not be in Brussels.

Planning and organising the event should be done in very close co-operation with the MEPs secretaries. The invitations should not be sent out too early, to avoid falling into oblivion. The invitation should be designed very well and max one page long. The presentation as well as the invitation should be designed in the corporate design.

Do not plan too long workshops or informational meetings with political stakeholders. They should be maximum 1½-2 hours long (incl. registration and final remarks). Present crucial points (results) only and explain briefly how these results have been generated to create confidence. Provide some input for a debate after your presentation.

It might be of value to acquire a high levelled moderator for the debate and include him or her into the programme of the invitation. This person is acting as additional attraction pole for other possible high levelled participants. For the MTC event the Lead Partner managed to get a former German Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Housing to host the event in the Parliament, At the same time he is a Maritime Ambassador of the EU.

Print and online media

Print and online media are good possibilities to flank all other dissemination activities. As briefly described in above paragraphs following possibilities can be put into consideration free of charge:

- Articles or press releases on websites of: the NSRP Secretariat, National Contact Points of the programme, partners' organisations, co-operation projects in the NSRP or other programme areas, co-operation stakeholders as well as associations/organisations supporting you
- Press releases in newsletters of above named stakeholders
- Articles in print media issued by above named stakeholders

The co-ordination of local-, regional- and EU wide penetration of stakeholders (especially on political level) is a challenge as well. It is advised to avoid double contacting of stakeholders by partners.

Like mentioned in the previous chapter 2.2.2.1 setting of deadlines, controlling as well keeping stakeholders involved should be considered as important.

3. Finalising the Cluster

3.1. Overall Experiences with the Cluster Project

The cluster approach is a valuable bottom-up approach to form maritime policy by providing a co-ordinated and comprehensive picture of the hot topics for maritime transport in the North Sea Region. By comprising analyses of all transport related projects within the Interreg IV B NSRP, maritime transport research and the results of consultations with the maritime industry in the North Sea Region a multitude of different stakeholders along the maritime transport sector were involved in the development process of the MTC Policy Paper. In short the process and the MTC Policy Paper offers an holistic perception and represents a common voice for stakeholders of the Interreg IV B NSRP on maritime transport by presenting concrete recommendations for the Members of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the countries in the North Sea Region (EU Member States and Norway). In this way the policy paper as main output of the cluster acts as an inspiration and contributes to discussions on future EU cohesion and transport policy developments.

In retro perspective we experienced two major issues: on the one hand that a deeper connection to research projects of other EU funding programmes might be of value to compare all present research on-goings and potential outcomes. On the other hand that involved project stakeholders were not yet familiar with cluster projects and the idea to connect and not to judge project proceedings.

Besides the two above challenges we see a lot of advantages the cluster approach offers:

- It can be a policy making process approach which is bottom-up-oriented by involving a wide range of stakeholders
- It is a suitable way of extracting the key findings/themes of different projects
- It can establish of an overview of different Interreg projects and research on-goings connected to a specific area (here maritime and hinterland transport) within the latest and/or future funding periods.
- It allows building a platform to exchange details from the inside of different projects and share the outcomes with a variety of involved partners to determine themes with a high future relevance and thereby increasing the visibility of projects and their outcomes.
- The three level approach (projects, programmes, policies) ensured an incorporation of a variety of aspects influencing policy making and lead to a final identification of common key themes

To sum up we strongly support the cluster initiative to be continued in future programmes. In our opinion clusters can be of enormous benefit for the projects, the NSRP and the European Union by delivering important and consolidated results to key stakeholders in the policy and business sector. Their characteristics of being maximum 18 month long should be kept as well. No question that this short lifetime is a challenge, but however it supports to closely work as much targeted and focused as possible together to reach the set aims in time. We would advise to keep the cluster facilitator installed. His neutrality is a supporting instrument which assured and convinced other Lead Beneficiaries to fully co-operate with the cluster. He was additionally of importance and benefit as advisor during our internal meetings. Finally he bridged a possible gap between project's and programme's information flows, being informed and included in all communication during the cluster lifetime.

3.2. Suggested Improvements

In retro perspective the chapter 3.1 leads to some possible **improvements for our cluster initiative**:

- One initial meeting with all involved project lead partners leading to the identification of key themes would create a starting point for trustful further data collection and analysis.
- Integration of collaboration with similar efforts in other EU funding programmes (e.g. the framework programme) to create synergies and obviate potential double work.
- Use of other or several further methods for group inquiries like for instance the "Delphi" or "World Café" method would help to generate even more structured and differentiated results.

In respect of the very tight schedule above suggested improvements need to be planned very well in advanced before starting the cluster to be able to fulfil the tasks within the lifetime.

The cluster had to overcome some challenges in the programme perspective as well, which leads to following **suggested improvements to the programme perspective (NSRP Secretariat)**.

- In the future early information of project representatives by high level representatives of the Secretariat about the cluster idea would ensure a high level of trust between project representatives and cluster project partners to answer also critical questions concerning drawbacks or potential failures of past and on-going projects

- In future Interreg periods the collaboration of cluster projects with “normal” projects could be improved by notifying desired contribution from the projects already in the call for proposals and by this reducing barrier in collaboration.
- The online monitoring system of the NSRP Secretariat is not properly adapted to cluster projects. Clusters sometimes do not run at the same times as “normal” projects and do not have the same reporting periods. This results in problems when it comes to sending out reporting requests to the partners. For example reporting possibilities are not in time on the system or reporting documents from the system didn’t show the right dates etc. It is recommended to solve this problem.
- A cluster needs to be prepared very accurate and carefully to be able to start activities as soon as the cluster is approved. Much more details have to be analysed and appointments agreed on compared to “normal” projects before sending in the application (compare chapter 1.4). The NSRP Secretariat should consider declaring preparation costs as being (partly) eligible costs. A possible declared maximum amount might be of enormous help and support to create a valuable cluster as well.

Finally the NSRP Secretariat might consider the three level concept for MTC’s overall approach (taking into account firstly the project perspective, secondly the business perspective and thirdly the policy perspective) potentially to be used as method/framework for similar cluster projects in other EU projects and/or programmes.

It was very helpful to have the same person in charge during the whole project lifetime as cluster facilitator/project manager from the NSRP Secretariat at adviser for the cluster. We would recommend keeping this approach in future for clusters as well as projects.

4. Final Remarks

4.1. The MTC Policy Paper

The MTC Policy Paper “Maritime Transport and Future Policies – Perspectives of the North Sea Region” is a compilation of results generated by the North Sea Region Programme project Maritime Transport Cluster in 2011/12. It comprises an analysis of all transport related projects within this programme, maritime transport research and the results of a consultation with the maritime industry in the North Sea Region.

In short, this paper offers a holistic perception and represents a common voice for stakeholders of the Interreg IV B North Sea Region Programme on maritime transport, enriched by the challenges, opportunities and experiences of the maritime industry.

The intention of this paper is to provide a coordinated and comprehensive picture of the hot topics for maritime transport in the North Sea Region and to present concrete recommendations for the Members of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the countries in the North Sea Region (EU Member States and Norway). In this way the paper is intended to act as an inspiration and to contribute to discussions on future EU cohesion and transport policy developments, thereby providing a common North Sea Region voice on these issues.

Ten main themes were identified and they bring together a wide range of important and sometimes differing perspectives from within the sector. Namely these themes are:

- A Leading Maritime Region
- Efficient Transport
- Smart Solutions
- Combining the Modes
- Infrastructure - the Solid Base
- Planning the North Sea Region
- Green Maritime Transport
- Research and Knowledge Management
- Working in the Transport Sector
- Maritime Business Perspectives

Download of the MTC Policy Paper: www.maritimetransportcluster.eu/sites/default/files/MTC-%20Policy%20Paper_0.pdf

Further information about the Maritime Transport Cluster: <http://www.maritimetransportcluster.eu>

4.2. Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the support of the NSRP Secretariat, especially for their help and guidance throughout the cluster work. Our thanks also for responses and contributions received from all named maritime transport related projects in the Interreg IV B NSRP, to interviewees, sector organisations and associations as well as any others who helped in the development the MTC Policy Paper “Maritime Transport and Future Policies – Perspectives of the North Sea Region”.

