



## Joint Annual Conference and General Assembly 2010 – The North Sea Region 2020

# Background Paper

### Aim

The aim of the conference is to collect different expectations and to formulate key challenges stakeholders foresee in the development of the North Sea Region towards 2020. The outcomes will be presented as conclusions of the conference.

### About the theme of the conference

The theme of the conference is 'North Sea Region 2020'. The theme was chosen to reflect and react on a number of current discussions in the EU and the European Commission.

The recently launched EU 2020 strategy by the European Commission, its impacts on the North Sea Region and the possibilities and relevance of a North Sea Strategy, are key aspects to mention in this respect.

The theme was also chosen to reflect the ongoing work of the 39 projects of the Programme. They will be asked about their perspectives towards ongoing EU policy initiatives and how to generate long lasting results with a potential to impact on the North Sea Region and beyond.

The conference will have the potential to make concrete links between current work and initiatives with future perspectives.

### Clusters Café

In order to achieve the aim of the conference a participative approach has been chosen to include all stakeholders and to give room for interaction. It has been named the 'Clusters Café'.

A number of work shop sessions will be held. For the sessions five main themes have been chosen. Each theme will include two sub-themes. The sub-themes reflect the 39 projects of the Programme and the different themes the North Sea Commission is addressing.

The themes and sub-themes for the conference are:

Theme	Sub-Theme
Climate	Adaptive Measures Sustainable Energy
Culture & Tourism	Creative Industries Storytelling
Innovation	Entrepreneurship

	Public-Private Interaction
Maritime Management	Resource Management Safety (Coordination and Emergency)
Sustainable Communities	Connectivity Governance

The set up will lead to 10 different sessions. The North Sea Region Programme will invite its projects, linking to one or more of the themes to make short statements, one sentence each, in terms of their expectations and foreseeable challenges reflecting on their work.

Submitted statements will be displayed and used to initiate discussions in each of the sessions. Projects will be approached about this in May. In the following session the participants will be asked for their comments, which will be collected for an open discussion.

Finally each session will conclude on a number of expectations and challenges for the North Sea Region towards 2020. The main conclusions will be presented and discussed at the final plenary.

### **Exhibition**

The success of an exhibition at the Annual Conference relies heavily on relevant results from projects. Although some projects are well into implementation and have results and outcomes to display, most projects are not there yet.

For this reason it has been decided to arrange a limited exhibition in the lunch area, where projects will be invited to showcase their materials. Interested projects can use the registration form for the event to sign up for the exhibition.

### **Study tours**

The study tours will be organised for the afternoon of the second day of the conference by the North Sea Commission. The tours will be linked to the conference theme. The tours will be outlined and presented in a separate paper.

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