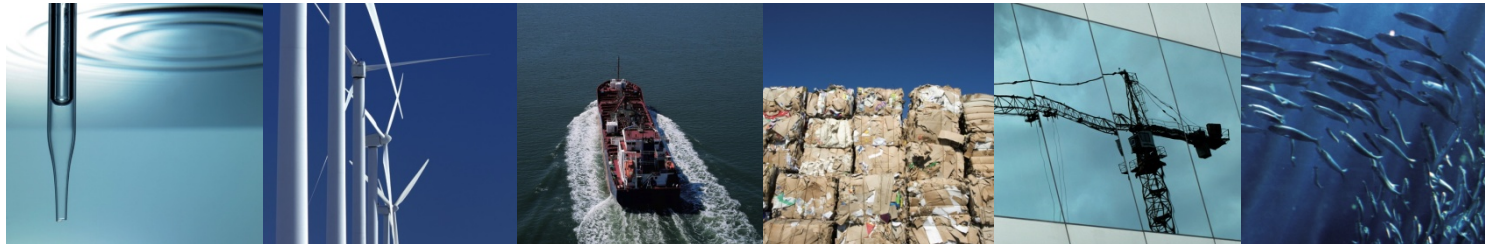




The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme



Malmö

13 January 2011

Matt Nichols



Clusters are not a tick box exercise:

- Must show ‘the ambition to result in significant change or improvement in the whole or large parts of the North Sea Region’



Conclusions of the ex-post evaluation of INTERREG III

- Programme objectives focused enough?
- Evidence of experimentation and innovation?
- Impacts beyond participating organisations?
- Links to other programmes and funds?
- ‘...project clusters...which addressed and tackled issues of transnational importance could lead to significant and lasting improvements in relation to a given situation’



Characteristics of strategic initiatives

- The geographical area or area of influence covered by the project encompasses a large part of the region
- Activities refer not to a single standing local or regional case but contribute to the prosperous development of a major part of the region
- Political support and backing at the national level of the member states involved, which take responsibility for the endorsement of the policy recommendations
- Has the potential to act as the preparation phase for a major cooperation project
- Will have a lasting impact



Cluster application – The Big Picture

- Don't just use the technical assessment criteria as a checklist: Make sure your application is also in line with these wider strategic statements



From pre-assessment to application: Project coverage

- **Demonstrate** that you have tried to involve all relevant projects (though not all will want or be able to be involved at present)
- Leave the door open for future involvement
- Two clusters on the same theme is a non-starter



From pre-assessment to application: Country coverage

- Clusters aiming at developing policy recommendations for the whole North Sea Region must represent the whole North Sea Region
- If you do not have partners from (almost) every country, **demonstrate** how these countries will be involved



From pre-assessment to application: Added value

- **Demonstrate** how cluster work develops the project activities already funded
- Make clear current status of activities and which projects they come from
- Explain difference between ‘business as usual’ and further development in the cluster
- Risk of duplication of funding will result in rejection



From pre-assessment to application: Activities and work packages

- Generally the weakest section of the pre-assessments (due to the limits of the form)
- But – all cluster applications will have to demonstrate a convincing set of steps to achieve their objectives
- And demonstrate value for money



From pre-assessment to application: Results

- Must be clearly formulated in the application
- Should be based on realistic hopes rather than ‘safe bets’
- Compare to ‘the ambition to result in significant change or improvement in the whole or large parts of the North Sea Region’



From pre-assessment to application: Target groups for results

- **European level** is important but do not neglect **other regions** outside the project partnerships and the **national level**
- EU lobbying unlikely to be successful without regional and national support and (preferably) demonstration
- Many issues do not require change at EU level



From pre-assessment to application: Links to other funds and programmes

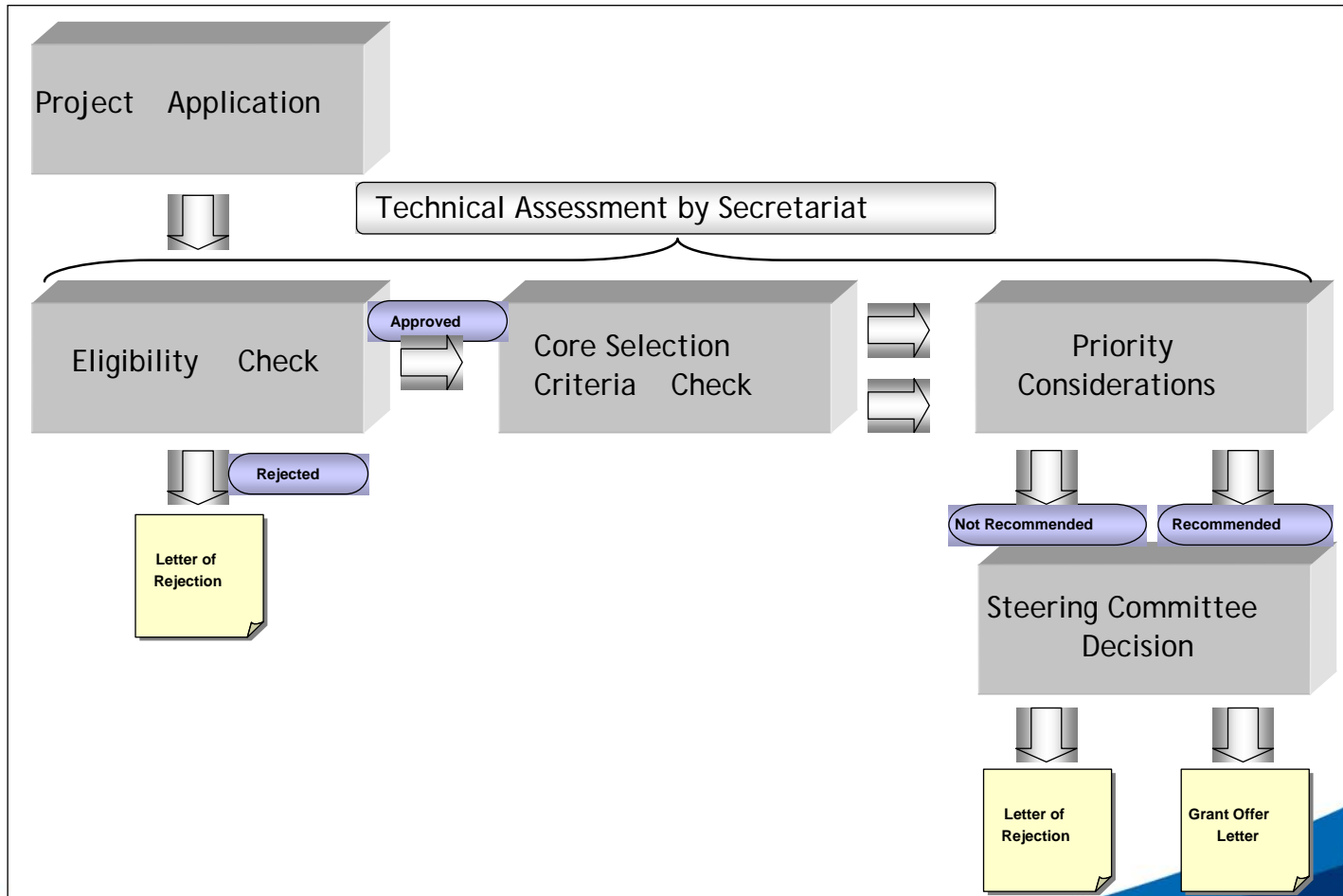
- Neighbouring transnational areas Baltic Sea and North West Europe
- Other EU programmes and European organisations
- Cluster funding represents an opportunity to investigate other actions
- Building contacts and presenting coordinated / integrated recommendations will put you way ahead in lobbying activities



Transnational cooperation: Publicity and communications

- Passive – They come to us
- Active – We go to them
- Cluster communication unlikely to be convincing without a strong active component
- **Demonstrate** that target audiences have been analysed and prioritised

The application procedure





Project Selection Criteria

Eligibility criteria

- Same as for full projects **and**:
- Lead Beneficiary must be a beneficiary of an existing project
- Maximum eligible budget €750.000 – 50% ERDF/Norwegian
- Minimum 3 North Sea projects and 3 countries
- Start date no later than October 2011
- Maximum run time 18 months



Project Selection Criteria

Core selection criteria

- Contribution to transnational regional development
- Contribution to the joint transnational strategy
- ~~■ Project matches the specific area of intervention~~
- Horizontal and/or vertical co-ordination and cooperation
- Relevant and viable partnership



Project Selection Criteria

Core selection criteria cont...

- ~~■ Delivery towards Gothenburg strategy and/or Lisbon agenda~~
- **Compliance with EU policy**
- Project will demonstrate added value and deliver tangible and measurable results
- Project will demonstrate value for money
- Information on core indicators complete.
- ~~■ Projects will comply with national and EU law and policy~~



Priority Considerations

- Description of problem to be tackled and the solution
- Concrete implementation of project results towards European policies
- ~~■ Involvement of public private partnerships and/or SMEs and leverage of extra investment.~~
- ~~■ Promoting innovation~~
- Transnational approach
- Transnational partnership
- Links to other programmes and projects
- Publication and communication strategy and public ownership



Cluster applications: Other practical issues

- Only two clusters under priority 2 (follow JTS advise closely)
- If you have Norwegian partners, you must talk to National Contact Point – Kate Clarke – because of funding limits
- Two activity reports. Possible with only one claim/control



Application Form – Sections

- Section A: Project Content and Time Line
- Section B: Financial Tables
- Section C: Indicators
- Section D: Environmental Indicators
- Section E: Appendices and Finalize
- Nothing added – we have tried to simplify and remove questions wherever possible
- All sections contain specific guidance for clusters



Section A Content – Things to consider

A1.5, 1.6 and 2.2 The partnership

- How many partners?
- Sub-partners? Must be located in the same country as a full partner: Advantage can share the same controller
- Partners independent of the ERDF grant: You can pay travel and accommodation costs for other organisations. NOT staff time or other costs
- NB Sub-contracting a partner from any project is very risky: You must run a free and open tender procedure
- Use 2.2 to **explain** informal partnership
- Tick box to confirm that LBs of all participating projects have been informed



Application From

Section A Content – Things to consider

A4.4 Description of Work Packages

- In addition to normal advice:
- Study carefully the new guidance in the cluster application
- **Relate activities, results, impacts and objectives**
- No separate communication strategy so pay particular attention to this work package



Application From **Section B Finances**

- Same as for full projects except that budget does not need to be split into periods



Application From

Section C & D Indicators – Things to consider

C – Project Indicators

- Compulsory Indicators – Set 0 target where not relevant
- Generic Indicators
- Priority Indicators – Establish new indicators if those supplied do not match cluster

D – Environmental Indicators – State positive, neutral, negative. Other information only needed for investments and/or pilots

Technical Support


- For any questions relating to technical problems, please use the Technical Support Form

Options

[Register](#) Register your personal information and become a user to access our services

[Login to your account](#) Start your connection to the user area.

Technical Support

 [Contact us](#) Send us a message with any feedback/suggestion or about any difficulty in using the system. If there is a problems with the Technical Support form please send an email describing the problems experienced to nsrp@apogee.gr

Name Subject

Organization Message

E-mail



Online cluster application

- System is new and still under development
- Please read final guidance carefully before completing – we will update with any last minute changes
- Good luck!



**The Interreg IVB
North Sea Region
Programme**



**Thanks for your interest
matt.nichols@northsearegion.eu**

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