



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

*SUMMARY: The Arctic Dimension – a new driver in
international regional cooperation*



Venue: University of Nordland, Bodø, Norway

19. March 2013



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SUMMARY: The Arctic Dimension – a new driver in international regional cooperation

19. March 2013, 35 participants gathered at the University of Nordland in Bodø, Norway to discuss the Arctic dimension in international regional cooperation. The seminar was organized by Nordland County Council and the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Affairs.

Rationale for the seminar:

The changes and the new challenges and opportunities in the Arctic have increased its importance as a driver for international regional cooperation in the north.

A smart, sustainable and inclusive development in the Arctic region is best maintained by promoting and funding adequate projects from national regional development programmes, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes and European Neighbourhood Programmes in cooperation with other possible funding institutions in the north.

The intention of the seminar was to focus on the increased significance of the Arctic and how the developments and changes in the Arctic Region also can strengthen and contribute to regional development and cooperation through the use of different European cooperation programmes. Further on the intention was to also address how financial institutions like NIB and EIB and the Northern Dimension policy could be involved in cooperation within the framework of these international development and cooperation programmes.

Introduction:

Dean Bjørn Olsen at Bodø Graduate School of Business opened the seminar by welcoming participants to a week filled with Arctic activities at the University of Nordland with the conference “The Arctic Dialogue” as the main activity. University of Nordland is recognized as the R&D institution in Norway with the most extensive cooperation with Russian institutions.

Jan Edøy, councillor at Mission of Norway to the EU gave the opening presentation by highlighting several discussion topics:

- The importance of Arctic for the people living in the Arctic
- The importance of Arctic for those living outside the Arctic



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

- Changes in the Arctic as opportunities for regional development
- The role of different European cooperation programmes
- How to create a common platform or arena for strengthening the role of the Arctic Dimension
- Acknowledgement for the need for strengthening cooperation among programmes
- How may we develop a think tank focusing on promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive activities to the benefit for the people living in the High North
- How can such a think tank work across and benefit all the programmes?

Edøy highlighted the fact that all national arctic strategies are developed after the European cooperation programmes in the high north (such as NPP, ENPI Kolarctic, ENPI Karelia, Nord). Edøy questioned how EU programmes and the Northern Dimension could complement each other but also on which platform this could take place. One suggestion from the Didriksen-Gaskell report (2012) “NPP – The missing link?” is to establish a think tank to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive activities to benefit stakeholders in this region. Further on Edøy questioned how this think tank should be developed so it may benefit all programmes

Overview of when Arctic strategies were launched:





NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

The old analysis and SWOTs which are identified in several programmes still seem to be valid, but an update with the inclusion of an arctic dimension is appropriate.

The European Commission, represented by Joanna Kiryllo gave a comprehensive orientation about EUs Arctic policy and state of play regarding future ENI CBC programmes. Kiryllo expressed that it was useful to gather several programmes to discuss common interests in the High North.

This expression was also presented by representatives from Kolarctic, Northern Periphery, Baltic Sea and Karelia. It was an overall conclusion that if we joined forces to exchange information but also for discussing shared challenges this could develop to concrete results.

Projects with an “Arctic touch” are visible in all programmes which attended the seminar. In the Baltic Sea Programme which might be considered as the programme with the longest distance to the Arctic; projects on transport, ICT and minerals were identified. Further on several projects in the Arctic have very strong links to the European Union; by its funding setup, partners involved or how they contribute to develop the European 2020 strategy.

There is still room for improvement especially concerning a better coordination between the programmes. And with the rapid environmental and climatic changes, Arctic related projects and programmes will play an even more important role in the future. This workshop and the initiative to bring together representatives from the different programmes were highly welcomed and appreciated by the participating representatives. From some representatives it was especially emphasized the need for better coordination and cooperation between the new Interreg programmes and the new ENI programmes.

A major aim with this workshop is to adapt these missing links into the development of new programmes and policies. Russia expressed interest in cooperation where there are common interests. In the High North, especially infrastructure and transport are of great interest for Russia

Main conclusions:

1. The proposal from the Interreg Northern Periphery Programme document) “NPP – The missing link?” to set up a special ”think tank” consisting of experts on arctic issues and regional development from all the relevant countries was welcomed. Several representatives expressed the wish that the “think tank” should involve all the regional programmes in the High North and not only for the Northern Periphery Programme. The main task and function of the ”think tank” is to bring updated knowledge and understanding of the regional aspects in the Arctic that could be used for policy development and/or creating targeted projects. This could materialize in projects directly linked to the assessment made by the ”think tank” or as guidance for



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

project development under the programmes. Such a “think tank” should function as a platform promoting added value and coordination on Arctic issues relevant for all cooperation programmes and regional development stakeholders in the high north.

2. Programme Managers of the programmes with links to the High North should consider to meet on a more frequently basis for discussing issues of common interests
3. The participants agreed that these issues discussed at the workshop were of great importance and well-targeted for the development of new programmes for the coming programming period 2014-2020. Since the development of the new Interreg and ENI programmes have already started, some are already far away in the process and some have just started, there could be a need for a follow up meeting or workshop for the relevant programmes before the drafting process is finalized. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Norway, concluded that they would consider organizing such a follow up event before the summer.
4. A follow up seminar will be organized in Brussels September 24th. Please save the date. More details will follow later.

1 Appendix (Programme at Bodø seminar)



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

Appendix: 1 (Programme at Bodø seminar)

The Arctic Dimension – a new driver in international regional cooperation

Venue: University of Nordland, Bodø – Norway

Room A6 Christian Fredriksen

Monday 18th of March

20:00 Dinner at M/S Gamle Salten (*Torvgata 2*)

Tuesday 19th of March, University of Nordland

08:15 Transfer from Thon Hotel Nordlys and Radisson Hotel Bodø

08:30 Coffee and registration

Moderator: Eirik Fiva, Director at International Office, Nordland County Council

09:00 **Welcome**

Professor Bjørn Olsen, Dean at Bodø Graduate School of Business (University of Nordland)

09:10 **Northern Periphery and the Arctic – The missing link?**

Jan Edøy, Counsellor for regional and local affairs, Mission of Norway to the EU

09:30 **Arctic issues and European Territorial Cooperation and European Neighborhood programmes in the North – How they contribute to regional development**

Joanna Kiryllo, EU Commission / DG Regio

10:00 **PANEL 1:**



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Nordland
COUNTY COUNCIL

Programme presentations and panel discussion: Implementation of Arctic in the next programme period

NPP –Kirsti Mijnhijmer, CORE Writer NPP

Kolarctic ENPI CBC – Päivi Ekdahl, Programme Director

Karelia ENPI CBC – Marko Ruokangas, Programme Director

Baltic Sea – Kadri Jushkin, Chair MC

12:00 Lunch

13:00 Nordic cooperation and its Arctic dimension

Rasmus Ole Rasmussen, Senior Research Fellow, Nordregio

13:20 Russian Arctic Strategy and action plan for Northwest-Russia

Igor Kapyrin, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

13:40 Northern Dimension Partnerships: Transport and Logistic/Environment

Oddgeir Danielsen, Director, Jaakko Henttonen, Manager

14:20 NORA as an actor and arena for Arctic development

Lars Meling, advisor at NORA secretariat

14:40 PANEL 2: Regional and National views on Arctic as a driver for regional cooperation

Moderator: Jan Edøy, Counsellor for regional and local affairs, Mission of Norway to the EU

Greenland (Christian Wennecke), Norrbotten (Brynolf Tjärner), Scotland (Jim Millard), Norway (Arve Skjerpen), Finland (Harry Ekestam), European Commission, Russia (Igor Kapyrin)

16:00 Conclusions

Arve Skjerpen, director, Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

16:30 Transfer to airport/hotels