NorVision

A Spatial Perspective for the North Sea Region
Draft

N o r V i s i o n

A SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE FOR THE NORTH SEA REGION

Draft

**Vision Working Group with representatives from spatial planning offices
from the participating countries and regions**

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PREFACE

N o r V i s i o n is an advisory document which is hoped to influence spatial planning in the North Sea Region. It is expected that projects to be developed under INTERREG III and beyond will include measures which conform to the vision and which seek to put it into practice.

This is not an official document. Before getting its final form, it will be intensively discussed with representatives from NSR regions, with Interreg IIC project leaders and with others.

In its analytical part the report presents a generalised picture of the region. It is inevitable that some local detail will be lost in that process.

NOTE

<u>Names</u> of regions are normally expressed according to the respective national wording, where they apply to the name of administrative units (example: Danish Sønderjylland). But where they express a geographic area, and a specific English word exists, the latter has been used (example: the Danish area of 'Jutland').

Abbreviations

BSR	Baltic Sea Region
CADSES	Central European, Danubian and Southeast European Space
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
Lo-Lo	Lift-on-lift-off (cargo loaded onto vessels or unloaded from vessels is lifted traditionally by cranes – as opposed to Ro-Ro)
LP	Lead Partner
m	Million
NSC	North Sea Commission
NSR	North Sea Region
NWMA	Northwest Metropolitan Area
OP	Operational Programme
OSPAR	Oslo-Paris (OSPAR) Convention among all North Sea States on the protection of the North Sea (1992)
Ro-Ro	Roll-on-roll-off (vehicles roll on their own wheels onto vessels)
SME	Small and medium sized enterprise
TEN	Trans-European Transport Network
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment
VASAB	Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea
VISION PLANET	Vision Planning Network, the spatial vision project for the CADSES area

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SUMMARY

1. Why a Vision?

The purpose of *N OR V ISION* is to:

- Identify potentials for gaining added value through transnational co-operation;
- Provide an input to a new Interreg programme (III) to come;
- Serve as a reference for regional planners as regards overall spatial policies;
- Promote cross-sector co-ordination.

The **vision** describes the direction which future changes in spatial structures should take. **Strategies** identify feasible ways how to bring about these spatial changes. Visions and strategies provide the framework for **action** proposals.

N OR V ISION contributes to the operationalisation of the European Spatial Development Perspective (**ESDP**). It is an advisory document which is hoped to influence spatial planning in the NSR.

2. European context

N OR V ISION has been prepared within the EU Programme InterregIIC promoting transnational co-operation in spatial planning. The North Sea Region (NSR) is one of the regions for which such programme has been set up.

The NSR includes local authority areas from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the U.K, which border, or are close to, the North Sea.

The Operational Programme (OP-InterregIIC) for the NSR has defined priority areas for transnational co-operation projects. The spatial vision and strategy for the NSR is one of these projects, binding other more specific projects together.

3. Process, consultation

This document has been prepared by a Vision Working Group (VWG) of officials from national and local governments from each participating country. Denmark took responsibilities of lead partner. The North Sea Secretariat was closely involved. An external consultant has moderated the joint work and drafted the reports. Further discussion with main stakeholders is launched now to gather comments, new and more concrete action proposals. The VWG **welcomes suggestions from all interested parties**.

4. Report Structure

The report, after explaining the **project background** (chap. I), starts with the presentation of the **vision** or, more specifically, a set of vision statements referring to the NSR as a whole, to urban regions, and to rural areas (chap. II). These statements are specified in terms of more operational spatial development **aims**.

Visions and aims are discussed considering

- **Basic values** governing the way how our societies are organised and, hence, to be reflected in spatial development principles (chap. II.2);
- Future **challenges** as a result of **spatial structures and trends** observed in the NSR (chap. III), as well as **global changes** in the social, political, economical and technological environment (chap. IV.) affecting the NSR.

It is then discussed which **strategies** would be promising in achieving the stated spatial development aims (chap. V.). Here, use is made of experience with various EU-sponsored and national programmes, and in particular with ongoing InterregIIC projects.

Finally, action **recommendations** are presented (chap. VI.5 "Visions into projects"). These are directed to the various stakeholders (chap. VI.2) and concentrate at priority themes for sustainable development (chap VI.3 and VI.4) which emerged from preceding chapters.

From basic values through visions and aims to strategies and action recommendations
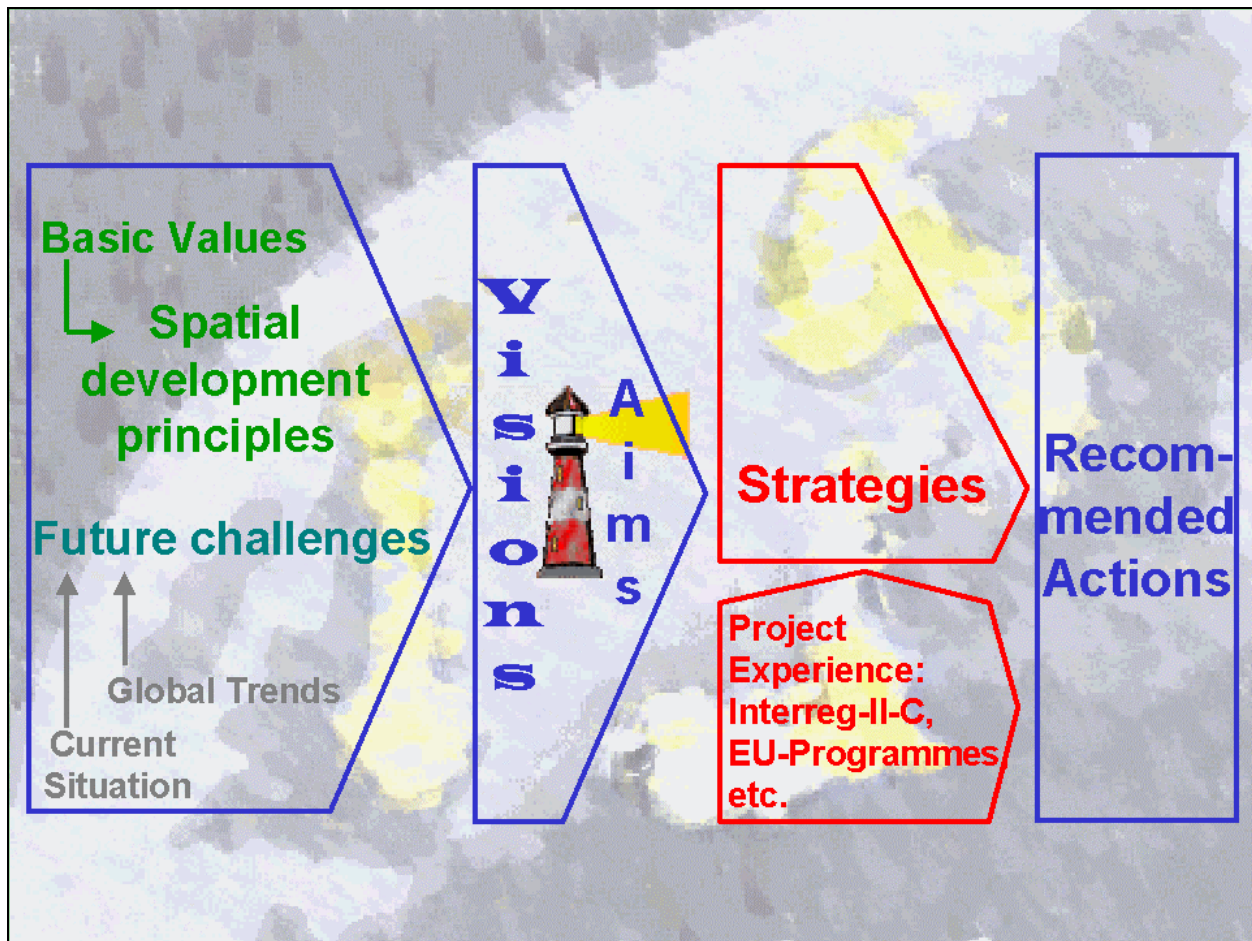
5. The Vision

Spatial development policy aims at 'spatial quality'. Visions specify the attributes of **spatial quality**. They do not describe a final situation, but a wanted direction. Spatial vision statements reflect basic values which govern the way how our societies are organised.

Basic values and spatial principles

Basic value	Spatial development principles
Freedom, democracy	Spatial planning processes based on: participation, subsidiarity, cooperation
Equality, justice, solidarity	Spatial balance, economic and social cohesion, competitiveness, sustainability
Diversity	Identity, subsidiarity, sustainability, competitiveness, cultural and architectural heritage
Welfare	Development orientation, market efficiency, initiative-responsive, flexibility,
Nature and cultural landscapes	Ecologically oriented spatial planning integrating and safeguarding natural assets

Spatial vision for the NSR: Ten Statements
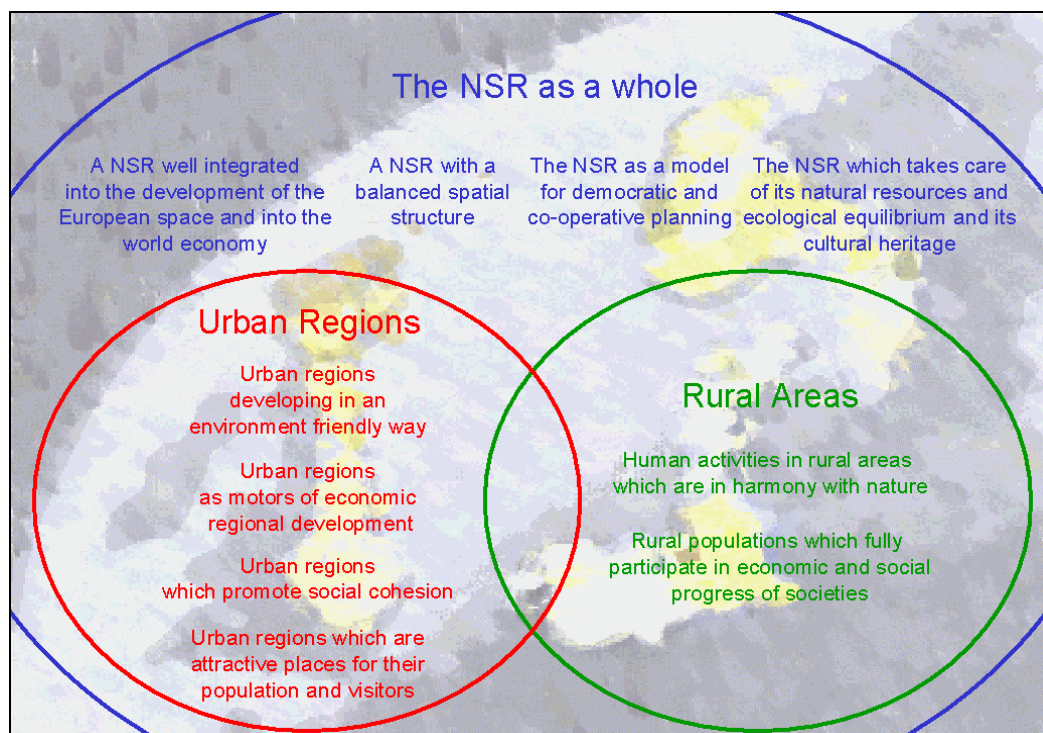
6. Spatial development aims

When translating visions into strategies, it seemed convenient to first identify the main **aims** for future spatial policies. Strategies are then discussed at the level of these **aims.**

6.1 The NSR as a whole

VISION STATEMENT 1
A NSR well integrated into the Development of the European Space and into the World Economy

Main **aims** are:

➢ High-quality access to knowledge allow all parts of the NSR to join knowledge-based developments.

➢ High-quality transport infrastructure and services link the NSR with other regions.

➢ Good internal transport links within the NSR ensure that all parts of the region share the benefits from external integration.

➢ Co-operation across regions and countries enhances the effectiveness of spatial policies.

➢ The NSR's common interests are effectively brought forward vis-à-vis national and international bodies.

VISION STATEMENT 2
A NSR with a balanced spatial structure

Main **aims**:

➢ Reasonable accessibility for populations in all parts of the NSR to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information is ensured.

➢ Cross-sector co-ordination at all levels helps to make sector policies instrumental (in addition to sector objectives) for spatial policies.

➢ Large single or multi-sector projects are located and designed so as to support wider spatial development objectives.

VISION STATEMENT 3
The NSR - a Model for Democratic and Co-operative Planning

Main **aims**:

➢ Improved communication between the elected and the electorate minimises barriers.

➢ Improved tools for effective participation applied.

➢ Transnational consultation on plans having transnational impacts is practised.

VISION STATEMENT 4
The NSR, which takes care of its Natural Resources and Ecological Equilibrium and its Cultural Heritage

Main **aims** are:

➢ Planning systems are directed towards sustainability.

➢ Management of ecological, natural and cultural heritage in non-officially protected areas is effective.

➢ Natural resources are restored and developed in a sustainable way.

➢ Environment friendly forms of energy production are more widely used.

➢ Spatial policy tools contribute to the protection of the North Sea ecology.

6.2   Urban Regions

VISION STATEMENT 5
Urban Regions in the NSR Developing in an Environment Friendly Way

Main **aims** are:

➢ Disadvantages caused by vehicular traffic is reduced.

➢ Land consumption for urban expansion is limited.

➢ Land use pressure on valuable areas is minimised, seeking other ways to satisfy new housing, recreational and business area demand.

VISION STATEMENT 6
Urban Regions as Motors of Economic Regional Development

Main **aims** are:

➢ Urban regions are strengthened by networking.

➢ Good accessibility to and within urban regions supports regional economic development.

➢ Regional centres, including intermediate cities and towns, make effective use of their potential for new economic activities.

VISION STATEMENT 7
Urban Regions which Promote Social Integration

Main **aim** is:

➢ Integrated urban development is sensitive to social diversity and inclusion.

VISION STATEMENT 8
Urban Regions which are Attractive Places for their Populations and Visitors

Main **aims** are:

➢ Urban structures respond increasingly to the needs of quality of life.

➢ Urban regeneration is widely practised.

➢ Buildings and ensembles provide diversity and have an attractive design.

➢ Urban development management has been introduced.

6.3   Rural Areas

VISION STATEMENT 9
Human Activities which are in Harmony with Nature

Main **aims** are:

➢ Human activities are harmonised with strategies for protection of the environment.

➢ Environment friendly forms of tourism have been widely introduced.

VISION STATEMENT 10
Rural Populations participate fully in Economic and Social Progress

Main **aims** are:

➢ Service functions in rural areas are supported.

➢ Rural economies have been promoted.

➢ Information technology and innovation support the development of peripheral, non-agglomeration, regions.

7.   Strategies and their foundations

Proposed strategies take the following into consideration:

a) Current spatial structures and trends in the NSR and its individual subregions (chapter III);

b) Future challenges due to global trends in the social, political, economic and technological environment for development of the region (chapter IV.);

c) Experience and concepts of ongoing InterregIIC projects in the NSR as well as of other EU-sponsored programmes (e.g. URBAN, LEADER), and of selected national programmes.

7.1   Spatial structures and trends

The North Sea has shaped spatial development in its coastal areas, with port cities, fishery harbours, shipbuilding industries, later then of oil and other raw material processing industries, and, more recently, growing economic significance of logistic services and tourist industry.

The North Sea provides a cheap means of transport, is a source of substantial resources, has significant impact on the climate, offers wide potential for coastal tourism, is rich in bio-diversity, and is increasingly the object of common environmental concern.

Notwithstanding these joint interests, the NSR is more characterised by integration into the *wider* Europe where internal and external cohesion run together. The NSR is an area of easy communication, with little language barriers and closeness of cultures and traditions.

The North Sea and its adjoining coastal regions contain some of the richest wildlife habitats in the world. Many North Sea areas receive protection as conservation sites of national or international importance.

Major threats are the rising sea level, sea pollution, erosion and urban encroachment of coastal areas, decline of traditional maritime or port-induced sectors.

The NSR's **urban system** comprises numerous regional centres, while main national agglomerations and decision centres are outside the NSR.

The NSR comprises different types of **rural areas** requiring different development approaches:

a) *Areas which are important for wildlife, landscape, recreation, water supply.*

They need to be maintained in their natural quality. Infrastructure links to urban centres shall guarantee accessibility for recreation purposes without harming their natural values.

b) *Predominantly agricultural areas, close to urban concentrations (frequently intensive, including advanced green-house, agricultural production).*

Key features are intensive commuting and financial interdependencies with cities. They need integrated development, with urban and rural authorities working together.

c) *Areas, also dominated by agriculture, distant (sometimes very) from major urban centres beyond reasonable commuting distances, but with secondary cities having the potential to develop rural-urban entities similar to those of the preceding category.*

They need differentiated approaches to strengthen urban centres by new types of economic activities, in order to provide their populations with the possibility to maintain residence instead of migrating to major urban centres elsewhere.

d) *Sparsely populated areas dominated by, often extensive, agriculture and/ or forestry, with smaller urban centres, far from major towns.*

They require measures to sustain a reasonable level of public and private services supplies, and adequate infrastructure links to major urban centres.

A worrying trend for rural areas is the concentration of services in larger cities, withdrawing functions and services from smaller towns.

Large unspoilt **nature areas** exist in Scotland, Norway and Sweden. The remainder of the NSR is predominantly a cultural landscape shaped by human needs. Many NSR areas are important stepping stones for bird migration.

Most coastal areas of the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the southern part of Norway, as well as interior lands in the UK, Sweden and Norway have a high concentration of tourist facilities. Tourism has become an important sector for income generation.

Many of the EU's largest **ports** at the North Sea coasts and rivers are *not* within the NSR. Universal ports *within* the NSR (Hamburg, Bremen/ Bremerhaven, Felixstowe, Tees and Hartlepool, Tyne, Göteborg and Oslo) function as transhipment points between land and maritime transport.

In spite of apparent congested **transport corridors**, among the TEN 'priority projects' identified by the EU Commission only few run through NSR area. More attention must be paid to the improvement of port hinterland links.

The NSR possesses major energy production resources, both renewable and non-renewable. Mineral

oil and gas fields (mostly off-shore) and corresponding pipeline and terminal infrastructures have been developed particularly in UK, Norwegian and Dutch parts of the North Sea.

Alternative **energy** sources such as wind power are common in the coastal areas. Norway's electricity supply is predominantly based on hydro-power.

7.2   Future challenges

Future challenges originate from global trends in the social, political, economic and technological environment for development of the region (chapter IV.):

➤ *globalisation and economic growth,*

which increase interregional interdependencies and transport volumes;

➤ *advances in the information technology*

which accelerate the economic restructuring process and change the rules for interregional competitiveness;

➤ *transition to a knowledge society*

which reduces the transport cost disadvantage of peripheral regions, but increases the importance of high education and information - communication levels for interregional competitiveness;

➤ *mobile society*

with ever-increasing traffic volumes creating conflicts between individual and society's strategies towards quality of life – but also with the potential to improve accessibility to services, education, culture;

➤ *changing life-styles*

which tend to increase the demand for 'urban' land uses in valuable natural and cultural landscapes; they call for more differentiated spatial development, and require sharpened attention to maintain social cohesion;

➤   *progress towards equality among sexes*

which demands new perspectives in all sectors, time-flexible jobs at short distance, and good public transport links from residences;

➤ *environmental degradation*

which calls for longer-term, cross-sector concepts towards quality of life and for the efficient supra--regional management of disasters for the environment;

➤ *growing conflicts between short- and long-term objectives*

which stress the concept of sustainability in planning processes;

➤ *changing relationship government – individuals or groups of individuals*

calling for more participation of the affected and bottom-up approaches in planning processes, without losing track of integrative considerations.

7.3   Strategies

Proposed strategies reflect the basic values described above, current spatial trends and future challenges, as well as previous project experience. They are discussed in detail at the level of the above **aims** (chapter V.).

8.   Visions into Actions

NOR VISION is an advisory document which, it is hoped, will influence spatial planning in the NSR. It is expected that projects to be developed under INTERREG III will include measures which conform to the vision and which seek to put it into practice.

Based on the identification of key themes for sustainable development, the report suggests a number of issues for which co-operation projects might be initiated, including a continuation of projects within the current Interreg IIC programme.

8.1   Involvement of Stakeholders

The Vision addresses itself towards a range of stakeholders considered important for the implementation of the common vision:

- Regional and local authorities
- NSR Interreg bodies
- Ongoing Interreg IIC NSR projects
- Governmental and non-governmental national sector institutions
- National spatial planning institutions
- Transnational spatial planning institutions (e.g. DGXVI)
- Research institutions
- Other organisations

It is intended to discuss the vision document in a wide consultation process, with a view to specify problem/ potential statements, to refine proposed strategies, and to suggest further concrete action.

8.2   Key Themes

Key themes are identified for which then specific project proposals can be developed. Two types of key themes are distinguished:

Integrated planning and development themes: The analysis of NSR spatial structures, trends and future challenges, and the discussion on potential strategies has demonstrated the need for more integrated planning approaches in various fields. The following seem to be of high importance for the NSR, although the list is not exhaustive. Most of these themes are relevant for the NSR as a whole, for urban as well as rural regions. They lead back from a 'departmentalised' discussion under different vision statements, to a comprehensive sustainable development approach:

➢ Integrated town-hinterland and inter-city development,

➢ Controlled protection and use of valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes,

➢ Development of peripheral regions,

➢ Strengthening of rural urban centres,

➢ Promotion of sustainable mobility,

➢ Regional transport infrastructure development embedded into regional development promotion,

➢ Promotion of short-sea shipping,

➢ Planning with water,

➢ Integrated coastal zone management and planning.

Specific themes: In addition to, and as a further specification of these integrated themes, a number of themes as proposed as priorities for further action:

Key themes for the NSR as a whole
- Improve transport links to transnational networks
- Secure access to knowledge
- Identify joint interest of NSR regions
- Prepare differentiated development approaches for peripheral regions,
- Promote participation in public planning processes, with special commitment to the youth,

- Use new media as a tool to improve information and communication flows in public planning debates,
- Differentiated development of peripheral regions.

Key themes for urban regions in the NSR
- Support a polycentric development within the NSR,
- Port town development supporting short-sea shipping,
- Sustainable waste management and promotion of ecological cycles,
- Spatial growth containment,
- Urban regeneration,
- Promotion of social integration of minorities,
- Enhance urban attractiveness in urban structures and design,
- Promote cultural heritage.

Key themes for rural areas in the NSR
- Secure economic dynamics of rural areas so as not to force people to migrate to major urban centres,
- Strengthening of, and co-operation among, rural urban centres,
- Integration of ERDF measures with local economic promotion,
- Improving knowledge on the spatial impacts from EU programmes in rural areas,
- Use of IT to offset location disadvantages,
- Tourism promotion,
- Balance nature protection with economic development with regard to valuable natural and cultural heritage areas,
- Promote renewable energy production.

8.3   Visions into Projects

Visions become real through projects. A number of promising project approaches have been initiated within the framework of InterregIIC, some of which offer good potential for an extended continuation within a coming Interreg IIIB programme.

A wide range of possible projects have been identified by the VWG, classified into projects for joint action, and exchange of experience on good practise. It is hoped that these will be specified, new ideas and more concrete projects be suggested during the consultation process with the stakeholders.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.   The NSR in the European context

The European Commission, when preparing its report on European co-operation in planning for spatial development[1], defined European regions which are characterised by close internal linkages[2]. These regions, among which is the North Sea Region[3], were expected to offer particular potentials for joint promotion of principles for spatial development.

Map 1:   The North Sea Region
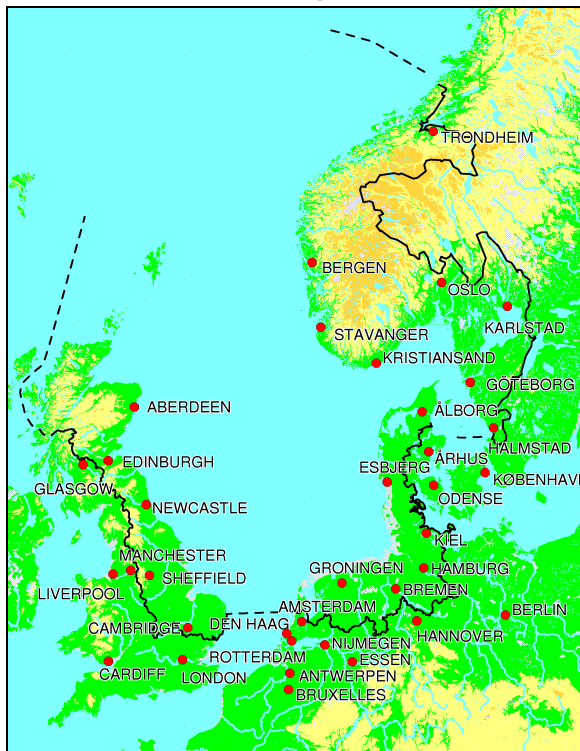
Source: Planco

The NSR as defined in its Operational Programme (OP)[4], includes local authority areas which border, or are close to, the North Sea and which therefore share common concerns. The NSR comprises sub-regions from six countries: south-western Norway, western Sweden, Danish Jutland (excluding its eastern parts with Århus, Denmark's second largest city), northern/

north-western Germany, northern Netherlands and northern and eastern U.K, including major parts of Scotland[5]

The NSR overlaps with other INTERREG II C regions[6]:

- In the east, the Baltic Sea Region includes NSR parts of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, the metropolitan area of Hamburg and the *Land* of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany,

- in the west, the North-West-European Metropolitan Area includes NSR parts of the UK and the Netherlands.

Map 2:   European Interreg II C Regions
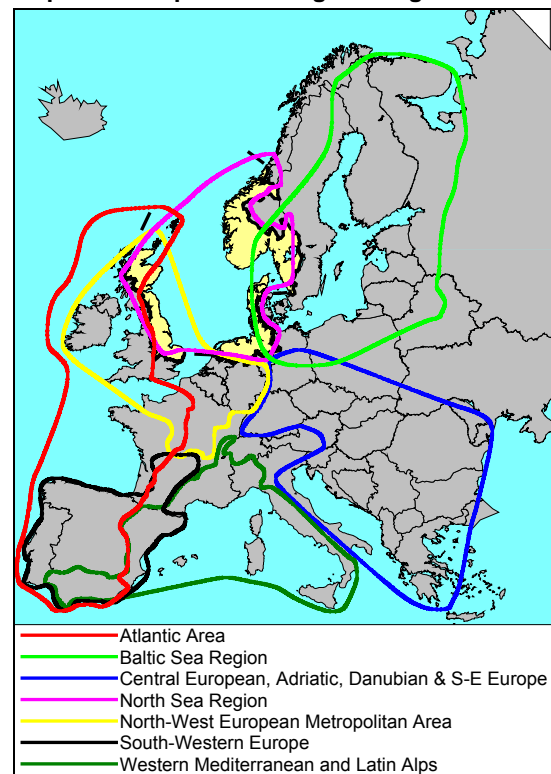
Source: DGXVI

Other Interreg II C regions are also preparing visions for spatial development:

- The Baltic Sea Region was the first to present such a vision (VASAB2010) in 1994[7]. It has since concentrated on its operationalisation through se-

lected projects, and has started to prepare for its update, with a focus on action programming;

- The Central European, Danubian and Southeast European Space (CADSES) was the second to follow the Baltic example in 1997 (VISION PLANET);

- The north-west Metropolitan Area (NWMA) has started common work on a spatial vision in 1998.

- In the course of the EU programme Northern Periphery a vision is currently developed.

2. Common interest and identity of the NSR

The North Sea - common denominator of the NSR: The North Sea has always provoked common interest around its shores: It provides a cheap means of transport, is a source of substantial resources (fishery, energy), has significant impact on the climate, offers wide potential for coastal tourism, is rich in biodiversity, and is increasingly the object of common environmental concern.[8]

North Sea and spatial development: The North Sea has shaped spatial development in its coastal areas, with the emergence of port cities, fishery harbours, shipbuilding industries, later then of oil and other raw material processing industries, and, more recently, growing economic significance of logistic services and tourist industry.

Several port cities in the NSR offer the potential of 'gateway cities' in accordance with the ESDP concept[9], to spread economic development beyond large metropolitan regions.

Conversely, land-side economic activities in the North Sea's hinterland – including catchment areas of rivers draining into the North Sea, contribute to the environmental pressure on the sea water.

Thus, the North Sea and its surrounding land masses, forming together the NSR, depend on each other. The North Sea Quality Status Report 1993[10] therefore rightly starts with a review of – mostly land-based – economic activities affecting the sea. But this has not yet been translated into a consistent spatial strategy considering both, sea water and land.

NSR identity and common interest: In spite of the common impact from and on the North Sea, the NSR is not commonly conceived as an area of particular

internal cohesion. (Therefore, the North Sea Commission, set up by more than 70 regions around the North Sea defines at its aim that the North Sea area becomes "... a Region in Europe with an own corporate identity ..."[11]). There seem to be several explanations to this:

- An overwhelming feature of the NSR is its long-established integration into the *wider* European space where internal and external cohesion run together.

- Regions are frequently looked upon as 'major urban and administrative centres, together with their hinterland'. This is not an adequate perspective for the NSR. Though the NSR includes important port cities and one national capital (Oslo, Norway), it is rather characterised by secondary cities (some of which with more than 1m inhabitants). The consequences are (a) a dependency on decisions taken elsewhere within the respective country or within the EC, (b) reliance on major transport hubs outside the region, and (c) a particular regional identity not only defined through urban centres.

With these characteristics, the NSR is a particularly promising area to demonstrate the ESDP concept for the "creation of several dynamic zones of global economic integration, well distributed throughout the EU territory".[12]

- The NSR does not always attract public attention (while the North *Sea* does so): It is not burdened with transition problems after the fall of the iron curtain, or with border or other potential conflicts. Instead, it is an element of stability combined with long-standing experience with structural change.

- The NSR comprises regions with diverse natural characteristics: from mountainous with relatively little agricultural potentials in the north, hilly and predominantly agricultural in middle latitudes and flat to wetlands in the south.

The NSR is an area of relatively easy communication, with few language barriers and closeness of cultures and traditions. It has become a knowledge centre for marine and off-shore technologies, coastal zone management (with its unique Wadden Sea), and more recently for electronics industries and services, for logistics and aircraft industry, to name just a few.

Major threats are the rising sea level (particularly affecting wetland areas in the Netherlands, Germany and Eastern England as well as the cities along rivers), the ongoing sea pollution from shipping,

urban and industrial wastes, as well as soil and groundwater pollution from intensive agriculture. Some coastal areas experience erosion and urban encroachment. Coastal economies suffer from the decline in traditional maritime or port-induced sectors (ship-building, fishery, raw material processing heavy industries).

The NSR includes <u>remote areas</u> (particularly in the northern part of Scotland and in Norway) not easily fitting into the EU's concept of peripherality: These are areas of unique natural and cultural heritage with no ambition to develop in similar ways as more densely populated areas, but with the need to ensure that their populations participate in overall economic and social progress. Regional air transport is sometimes the only means to maintain integration with distant regional and national centres.

North Sea Region: Common identity, potentials and threats		
Identity	**Opportunities – potentials**	**Threats**
■ North Sea climate leading to specific forms of development	■ major renewable and non-renew-able energy resources	■ rising sea level
■ traditional (diminishing) orienta-tion towards the maritime economy (shipping, ship-building and fishery)	■ favourable conditions for environ-ment friendly ship transport (shortsea shipping)	■ sea pollution (from river catch-ment in the hinterland, coastal urban activities, shipping and petrol oil production/ transport)
■ joint responsibility for a valuable "wet nature"	■ major tourist attractions	■ soil pollution from urban wastes, industry and agriculture
■ closeness of cultures and traditions across the North Sea	■ experience in multi-lingual co-operation – language barriers less strong than in other European areas	■ coastal erosion in some parts of the region
■ co-existence of remote areas having unique valuable char-acteristics, with urban centres and highly advanced economies	■ differentiated urban systems with no problems from mega-agglomerations	■ coastal zone encroachment by unsuitable development
■ no dominating mega-urban agglomeration within the NSR	■ advanced skills and research capacities, e.g. in marine and off-shore technologies, petrochemicals, electronics, coastal management	■ declining traditional sectors, e.g. fishery, ship-building, mining, heavy industry
■ strong identity of the regions	■ readiness for and experience in economic structural change	■ concentration of sea and air transport towards major hubs outside the NSR
■ traditional orientation towards areas outside the region	■ frequent air connections to main national hubs	■ social segregation within cities and towns
■ long-standing urban cultural tradition	■ re-orientation to the qualities of living in an urban environment	■ urban sprawl
■ valuable heritage of towns and cities	■ growing attention paid to urban design quality	■ deterioration of urban environment
	■ areas available for inward urban growth	■ decay of inner-city and old industrial areas
■ attractive cultural landscapes	■ reduced dependency of economic activities on physical distances	■ loss of traditional economic bases for employment
	■ improved education potentials in rural areas using new information technology	■ out-migration of most active population strata

3. Spatial–regional policy & planning

This report deals with spatial (development) policy. Different perceptions exist how to define spatial development policies.

Here, this term is understood to represent any deliberate interventions which seek to change spatial structures to achieve specified goals. Spatial structures are understood as the spatial distribution of activities and the linkages between these.

Spatial policies operate at EU, national, regional and local levels. They comprise (land use) planning and implementation (regional policy). It is increasingly recognised, that the setting of a corresponding regulatory framework can have a significant impact on spatial development, and thus is part of spatial policies.

- *spatial planning*

    = the planning that has implications on land use and (particularly: public) infrastructure development.

- *implementation*

    = measures to influence regional development directly (e.g. through budgetary allocations or through decisions on the location of public activities), or indirectly (influencing location decisions of other actors), using financial incentives, measures enhancing the attractiveness of chosen locations, or by bringing different stakeholders together.

    This is commonly referred to as *regional policy*, frequently narrowed down as regional *economic* policy. Economic promotion has, in the past, often been regarded as the top priority of development policy. There is an increasing awareness that *sustainable economic development cannot be separated from a sustainable environment, sustainable cultural heritage and sustainable social structures*. But though sustainability aspects are increasingly recognised as important, they often do not have the same status as economic ones.

- setting of a *regulatory framework*[13]

    This includes the vertical distribution of planning responsibilities, ways how 'lower levels' (regional, local) influence spatial policies at 'superior levels' (e.g. national) and vice versa, rules and procedures for inter-sector co-ordination at all levels, and methods to guarantee effective participation in the planning process of those affected by its results, or contributing to its implementation. Approaches of NSR countries in this regard are diverse, and provide a valuable basis for 'learning from each other'.

Sector policies are, willingly or not, an integral part of spatial policies, as they often influence spatial development. Spatial policies must seek the integration of spatially relevant sector policies.

4. Purpose – why a Vision?

Transnational co-operation of the Interreg IIC project *NORVISION* aims at the following:

- Identify potentials for gaining added value through transnational co-operation;

- Provide an input to the formulation of a new Interreg programme (III) to come;

- Serve as a reference and inspiration for regional planners as regards overall spatial policies that may have an impact on regional development,

- Promote cross-sector co-ordination (at international and national levels) by providing sector planners with an integrated view on future development of the NSR.

These purposes are fully met by those formulated by the North Sea Commission (NSC)[14]: to strengthen the debate on regional development for the whole area, to promote co-operation between local – regional – national authorities, with the private sector and with other institutions.

The *vision* describes the direction future changes in spatial structures should take, anticipating and responding to specific potentials and threats for this region.

Strategies identify feasible ways how to bring about these spatial changes.

Visions and strategies provide the framework for a more restricted view as regards **action**. Proposed action may include assistance from national and supranational authorities to regional and local actors to promote co-operation. They are discussed irrespective of assigned planning or implementation responsibilities – local, regional, national, transnational.

In its strategic and, more so, in its action part, *N o r V i s i o n* focuses on areas where transnational co-operation (particularly among regions and local authorities) promises an added value.

In this context it can provide an input to national spatial strategies insofar as they deal with transnational issues.

Vision, strategies and recommended actions respond to perceived problems and potentials. These are largely shaped by *global trends* in the social, political, economic and technological environment for development, many of them closely interrelated, namely:

➢ *globalisation and economic growth,*

   which increase interregional interdependencies and transport volumes;

➢ *advances in the information technology*

   which accelerate the economic restructuring process and change the rules for interregional competitiveness;

➢ *transition to a knowledge society*

   which reduces the transport cost disadvantage of peripheral regions, but increases the importance of high education and information - communication levels for interregional competitiveness;

➢ *mobile society*

   with ever-increasing traffic volumes creating conflicts between individual and society's strategies towards quality of life – but also with the potential to improve accessibility to services, education, culture;

➢ *changing life-styles*

   which tend to increase the demand for 'urban' land uses in valuable natural and cultural landscapes; they call for more differentiated spatial development, and require sharpened attention to maintain social cohesion;

➢ *progress towards equality among sexes*

   which demands new perspectives in all sectors (mainstreaming), time-flexible jobs at short distance, and good public transport links from residences;

➢ *environmental degradation*

   which calls for longer-term, cross-sector concepts towards quality of life and for efficient supra--regional management of environmental disasters;

➢ *growing conflicts between short- and long-term objectives*

   which stress the concept of sustainability in planning processes;

➢ *changing relationship government – individuals or groups of individuals*

   calling for more participation of the affected and bottom-up approaches in planning processes, without losing track of integrative considerations.

Spatial policy responses to these trends reflect, to some extent, similar considerations in other Interreg regions. But they are also specific, considering the particular identity, opportunities and threats in the NSR.

N o r V i s i o n contributes to the operationalisation of the European Spatial Development Perspective (**ESDP**). Discussions on this perspective went largely parallel to the elaboration of the vision. Though being based on similar principles, the vision focuses on NSR's spatial characteristics.

5. The Operational Programme of InterregIIC

Spatial planning under the EU programme of Interreg II C is a "cross-sector co-ordinating activity conducted in a transnational context to gain synergy from addressing issues in co-operation with the relevant decision makers affected by the outcome of the planning process."[15]

The OP-NSR developed to prepare the implementation of the Interreg II C programme has defined four central aims:

• *economic and social cohesion* (defined as decreasing spatial disparities)

• *sustainable development* for the region as a whole (balancing a high level of environmental protection and social and economic development),

• promoting a *spatial structure which looks to the future* (seeking solutions for fundamental problems of the region),

• enhancing *transnational co-operation* on spatial planning (developing co-operative spatial development measures).

Characteristics of the INTERREG II C programme for the NSR therefore are to

- be of transnational nature,

- involve regional and local authorities,

- contribute to economic and social cohesion and sustainable development,

- look to the future to solve fundamental problems of the region,

- provide value added to the NSR.

Under this perspective, the OP has defined priority areas (see box) where local and regional authorities as well as private institutions were called to propose projects for transnational co-operation in spatial planning.

The development of a spatial vision and strategy for the NSR is one of the projects contained in its OP, binding other more specific projects together.

Priority topics of the Operational Programme for Interreg II C in the North Sea Region*)	
Priority 1:	**Urban and Regional Systems**
Measure 1.1	The Development of the Relationship between Urban and Rural Areas
Measure 1.2	The Development of Towns and Cities
Measure 1.3	Urban Networks
Priority 2:	**Transport and Communications**
Measure 2.1	Improvement of North Sea links
Measure 2.2	Promotion of multi-modal Transport Centres
Measure 2.3	Information and Communication Technologies to Enhance More Regionally Balanced Development
Priority 3:	**Natural Resources and Cultural Heritage**
Measure 3.1	Promotion of Integrated Coastal Zone Management
Measure 3.2	Protection of Valuable Natural Areas and Wise Management of Natural Resources
Measure 3.3	Promotion of Cultural Tourism
*) approved by the European Commission in Dec. 1997 approved by the member countries in June 1997	

Other projects launched under the Interreg II C programme were expected to contribute to the spatial vision project by specifying problems and potentials, and by testing and evaluating different strategies and proposing concrete action.

These were used to the maximum possible extent, though many of them have not yet come to conclusions. But the experience gained through INTERREG II C is a useful background when recommending priorities for project proposals within a coming Interreg III and beyond.

6. Addressees of the Vision

Addressees of the NSR spatial vision-strategies-action programme are particularly:

- regional and local authorities,

- North Sea Region Interreg II C bodies,

- partners from other Interreg II C projects,

- national and transnational sector institutions (governmental and non-governmental),

- national as well as transnational spatial development authorities,

- and research institutions,

- any other organisations.

7. Organisation of the working process

The spatial vision for the North Sea Region vision has been proposed by a Vision Working Group (VWG) of officials from national and local government from each participating country.

Denmark took responsibility of lead partner, chairing meetings and representing the group towards the North Sea Secretariat and common work started in November 1998 and is expected to be finalised in July 2000. An external consultant has moderated the joint work and drafted the reports.

In the first phase basic values, challenges, current situation and trends of spatial development have been discussed and elaborated. The second phase dealt with the formulation of the vision, strategy and recommended action. After thorough revision of the draft reports the final draft vision document has been put together.

Further public discussion is launched now to gather comments and new ideas. The consultation phase will last until mid of 2000. The VWG welcomes suggestions from all interested parties.

The Interreg II C Secretariat closely follows project progress.

II. THE VISION

1. What does the vision stand for?

Spatial development policy has been defined for the purposes of this report as the generic term for targeted interventions into spatial structures (i.e. into the distribution of activities in space and the linkages between them). The purpose of such interventions is to achieve 'spatial quality'.

Visions specify the attributes of spatial quality. They provide a qualitative scale along which to assess the needs for, and the progress made through spatial policies.

Visions reflect an idea of what should be better or which unwanted trends should be avoided. Therefore, they depend on how present structures and expected future trends are evaluated: This will be discussed in chapter III.

Visions do not describe a final situation for a specific target year, nor do they map the envisioned spatial structure in the NSR. They describe a set of characteristics which, though maybe never fully achieved, indicate the wanted change in direction.

They are not to be misinterpreted as dreams: they may not have limiting effects on everyday planning business. But they are the foundations on which to build strategies and, further on, recommended actions. In this way they might fertilise a debate, which will influence spatial strategies and planning decisions in the North Sea Region .

2. Basic values reflected in the Vision

Spatial Visions reflect basic values which govern the way how our societies are organised. The countries around the North Sea – and beyond[16] -subscribe to a set of core values, namely:

- freedom (liberty) – democracy,
- equality – justice – solidarity,
- diversity /Identity,
- welfare, and
- nature and cultural landscapes.

These basic values are not changing over time. But they require repeated adjustment of planning systems and concepts in accordance with changed framework conditions.

Their significance for spatial policies may be summarised as follows:

♦ *Freedom, democracy*

These values shall be reflected in spatial planning and policy decision *processes*, through effective *participation* of those affected by, or contributing to, spatial development.

Democratic spatial policies shall respect the principle of *subsidiarity* with responsibilities being allocated at the lowest possible (as defined by conditions of effectiveness) level.

Participation and subsidiarity will not go without *co-operation* among different groups within the respective geographical-administrative planning area, with other areas, and between different area levels.

♦ *Equality, justice, solidarity*

These principles imply the non-discrimination between groups of the present society in spatial, social, ethnic, or any other terms, as well as between the present and future generations[17].

Solidarity is the acceptance of limiting own welfare in favour of other parts of present society or of future generations.

As regards spatial policies, the non-discrimination principle can be translated into the notion of *balance*. Balance implies similar levels of welfare-relevant opportunities, rather than identical (economic, social or cultural) structures.

Within the present generation, similar opportunities can be expressed by minimum levels of accessibility to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information. This is the spatial policy concept of 'economic and social *cohesion'* as opposed to disparity. Cohesion is not static, but includes interregional *competitiveness*, which by itself implies non-uniformity.

Inter-generational non-discrimination is the heart of the principle of *sustainability* = balance between the interests of present and future generations in economical, social, environmental terms.

Sometimes, the term "sustainability" is not limited to intergenerational balance, but refers also to balance between different groups of the *present* generation. But a clear distinction between these two equally important aspects is advisable.

♦ *Diversity / Identity*

This principle is opposed to uniformity, and thus is a somewhat corrective value to the principles of equality or cohesion. It expresses an appreciation of different regional/ local ways of approaching development issues, due to different cultural heritage and preferences. It promotes regional *identity*.

Diversity does not prevent from benefiting from knowledge and approaches available elsewhere. Acceptance of specific local spatial structures and problem solutions must be met by the recognition and consideration of impacts which local action may have on the solution of common problems or on the use of common opportunities. Therefore, cross-sector *cooperation* is essential.

Diversity is also a correlate to other principles discussed above: to subsidiarity - allowing locally adapted approaches; to sustainability - encompassing genetic exchange among diverse natural habitats; to welfare - preventing uniformity of cities or cultural landscapes; to competitiveness - activating (spatially differentiated) indigenous potentials.

Thus, ***diversity is a key criterion for spatial quality***.

♦ *Welfare*

The economic, health, cultural and social well-being of citizens is a basic criterion against which to evaluate 'good governance'.

Welfare is not a static concept to measure achievements against universal 'thresholds' for citizens' well-being. Instead, welfare requires progress in the sense

of changing towards the better, by responding to the challenge from new potentials and threats.

Spatial policies have to make their contribution to allow society to keep 'moving' and 'adapting', by providing conditions for other actors to move and to develop, and by identifying rules to be respected by these actors.

Experience shows that the application of the principle of *market competition* offers the best chances for achieving dynamic welfare development. But interventions are sometimes required because of market failures[18] due to inefficient pricing (insufficient competition or non-allocation of external costs) or due to policy objectives not considered by the market (particularly: income distribution, spatial distribution which may be economically effective but not promoting cohesion).

Spatial planning, instead of being only regulatory in character, needs increasingly to be considered as an intrinsic part of development in all its aspects.

♦ *Nature and Cultural Landscapes*

The relationship to nature plays an important role in the North Sea Region. It was coined for centuries by the large share of people, who lived on agriculture and fishing. This has led to the recognition of man's dependency on nature and the need for protection of nature as the basis of life. The availability of vast open spaces has inspired people to enjoy outdoor and water related activities and take pleasure from the beauty of nature. The North Sea itself is experienced through recreational activities like sailing or swimming. The natural beauty of the NSR has made it a popular tourist destination. Spatial policies need to fully integrate the demands of nature protection. The co-ordination with economic goals is necessary to work towards sustainable development.

Basic values and spatial principles

Basic value	Spatial development principles
Freedom, democracy	Spatial planning processes based on: participation, subsidiarity, cooperation
Equality, justice, solidarity	Spatial balance, economic and social cohesion, competitiveness, sustainability
Diversity	Identity, subsidiarity, sustainability, competitiveness, cultural and architectural heritage
Welfare	Development orientation, market efficiency, initiative-responsive, flexibility,
Nature and cultural landscapes	Ecologically oriented spatial planning integrating and safeguarding natural assets

3. The Vision: Ten statements

The proposed vision for the NSR has been expressed in ten statements, each of them describing a specific aspect of spatial quality.

Though there are some overlaps, they may be sub-divided for the purpose of easier discussion into three groups: *the NSR as a whole*, *urban regions* (comprising the functional entirety of urban areas, including cities' hinterland, irrespective of administrative borders)[19], and *rural areas*.

Ten statements of the spatial vision, grouped into these three spatial categories, are stated below.

They will subsequently be discussed in more detail and specified through a number of policy options. In many instances, these are similar or even identical to those discussed for ESDP. But having largely been developed independently from the ESDP process, they reflect priorities and circumstances in the NSR.

The NSR as a whole

A NSR well integrated into the development of the European space and into the world economy

A NSR with a balanced spatial structure

The NSR as a model for democratic and co-operative planning

The NSR which takes care of its natural resources and ecological equilibrium and its cultural heritage

Urban Regions

Urban regions developing in an environment friendly way

Urban regions as motors of economic regional development

Urban regions which promote social cohesion

Urban regions which are attractive places for their population and visitors

Rural Areas

Human activities in rural areas which are in harmony with nature

Rural populations which fully participate in economic and social progress of societies

3.1 The North Sea Region as a whole

The vision for the NSR as a whole comprises four major statements:

The implications are discussed below.

VISION STATEMENT 1
A NSR well integrated into the Development of the European Space and into the World Economy

The NSR is and always was strongly linked to other regions. Its highly developed port system as well as existing rail, road and air links provide a solid physical basis for interregional integration.

Nevertheless, transport links to other regions must be further improved, particularly in view of a tendency in macro-regional network concepts such as Trans-European Networks (TEN) to concentrate at major agglomerations and their interlinkages. This refers to road, rail, and air links to major sea and air transport hubs, as well as to relevant markets outside the NSR, such as:

- Randstad region (NL),
- Rhein-Ruhr region (D),
- Öresund region (Copenhagen/DK, Malmö/S),
- London region (UK).

Equally important are the links to other urban centres and to rural areas in neighbouring regions such as:

- Århus region in Denmark,
- Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow regions in the UK.

Beyond this 'classical' linking infrastructure, increasing attention must be paid to good access to *knowledge* world-wide.

Good external integration must go along with internal integration in order to allow all parts of the NSR to share the benefits from such integration.

Co-operation between the regions and their economic actors helps to make use of the economic potentials of the North Sea region and is the basis for a strong and competitive position within the world market. Co-operation among regions and nations in the field of spatial planning contributes to the effectiveness of common spatial policies.

Integration under conditions of interregional competition requires representation of the region's interests towards national as well as towards international institutions. The *lobbying* power of the NSR, and its regional and local authorities, must be strengthened. In order to enhance the effectiveness of spatial policies, the regions and countries must co-operate closely.

Besides the integration of the NSR regarding physical infrastructure the region's cultural heritage with its facets should be well integrated into the mosaic of European cultural.

The main **aims** to achieve the VISION STATEMENT 1 are summarised as follows:

➢ **High-quality access to knowledge allow all parts of the NSR to join knowledge-based developments.**

➢ **High-quality transport infrastructure and services link the NSR with other regions.**

➢ **Good internal transport links within the NSR ensure that all parts of the region share the benefits from external integration.**

➢ **Co-operation across regions and countries enhances the effectiveness of spatial policies.**

➢ **The NSR's common interests are effectively brought forward vis-à-vis national and international bodies.**

VISION STATEMENT 2
A NSR with a balanced spatial structure

The concept of 'balanced spatial structure' is widely used, though its operationalisation is difficult. This principle has been characterised here by:

- similar levels of welfare-relevant *opportunities* (rather than identical outcome),

- securing *competitiveness* of regions.
- balancing the interests of the present and those of future generations (*sustainability).*

It is commonly accepted that balance requires a polycentric system of metropolitan regions, of city clusters and city networks. For peripheral regions, with lacking conditions for such polycentric system, balance requires reasonable accessibility for their populations to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information. This in turn may be secured by rural urban centres offering a decent level of services and adequate accessibility to major urban centres elsewhere.

To achieve this vision is only to a minor extent in the hands of spatial planners, and still less in those of local and regional planners: Sector policies, frequently national and transnational, have a significant role to play.

The task of spatial planning then is to indicate directions how sector policies should contribute to spatial balance. Such cross-sector co-ordination is required at all levels, based on an assessment of sector policy impacts:

- at programme level (spatial impacts of ERDF, of TEN, of CAP, etc.),
- at single large-project level.

The latter have had critical impacts on spatial structures where such implications have not been considered comprehensively beforehand.

Balance as a concept is not restricted to regional or national borders. Co-operation among regions and local authorities across borders can improve the effectiveness of otherwise isolated initiatives and actions.

The main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 2 can be summarised as follows:

➢ **Reasonable accessibility for populations in all parts of the NSR to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information is ensured.**

➢ **Cross-sector co-ordination at all levels helps to make sector policies instrumental (in addition to sector objectives) for spatial policies.**

➢ **Large single or multi-sector projects (such as retail centres at the urban fringe, new industrial areas, logistical areas, urban**

expansion projects etc.) are located and designed so as to support wider spatial development objectives.

VISION STATEMENT 3
The NSR - a Model for Democratic and Co-operative Planning

In NSR countries considerable experience has been gained as regards widespread public participation and promotion of public-private partnership for spatial development. Though such experience is also shared with other regions, it is the ambition of the NSR to remain at the spearhead of this development.

A strengthened relationship between the elected and the electorate implies trust in the decision makers and transparency of procedures, so that people feel that their needs are well considered, and that they understand and accept decisions taken.

A further development of tools for effective participation of different target groups contributes to a people oriented and democratic planning. Since the diverse citizen groups have different abilities to express their attitudes, attention has to be paid that no one is excluded from development and social progress. Effective participation is therefore aimed at, involving different target groups in the planning, decision and implementation process: Planning shall take place with the people.

Many efforts have been undertaken in the different regions of the NSR so far. Exchange of experience on well functioning and target oriented approaches ensure a NSR-wide exemplary planning procedure.

An important aim is to enhance consultation processes for projects and plans which affect neighbouring countries – where necessary, beyond the space of Euroregions, and irrespective of the formal existence of such regions.

Such approaches help to ensure that common spatial policies are respected.

Main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 3:

➢ **Improved communication between the elected and the electorate minimises barriers.**

➢ **Improved tools for effective participation are applied.**

➢ **Transnational consultation on plans having transnational impacts is practised.**

VISION STATEMENT 4

The NSR, which takes care of its Natural Resources and Ecological Equilibrium and its Cultural Heritage

The ecological equilibrium is the basis for life on earth. It is permanently endangered by human action. Increasing knowledge is gained on the complexity and delicacy of ecological cycles.

The importance of environmental protection is commonly recognised. Valuable efforts have been made during the last few decades. But still, planning systems in all sectors need to be scrutinised under the sustainability principle.

Sustainability, in many cases, is not so much dependent on appropriate planning, but rather on good management. The rich heritage of the NSR, whether natural or cultural, needs effective management to safeguard the potentials for ecological and economic development in the regions.

Natural resources, in some parts of the NSR, have already been severely affected, and corresponding restoration are practised where feasible. A more intensive use of wind energy is attractive for the NSR as it uses a natural resource in abundance and saves non-renewable resources. The same applies to hydro-energy, which is already used intensively in some parts of the NSR.

When designing spatial policies for the NSR, and corresponding land-based activity patterns, particular attention must be attributed to the impacts on the North Sea itself. Here a close co-operation of the North Sea countries is extremely important since an effective protection can only be achieved through joint action. The catchment area of the North Sea is far larger than the Interreg-II-C co-operation area. Hence, a limitation to the InterregIIC area would not be adequate to address the issue of integrating economic and settlement activity development into a comprehensive protection strategy for the North Sea.

Summary of main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 4:

➢ **Planning systems are directed towards sustainability.**
➢ **Management of ecological, natural and cultural heritage in non-officially protected areas is effective.**
➢ **Natural resources are restored and developed in a sustainable way.**

➢ **Environment friendly forms energy production are more widely used.**
➢ **Spatial policy tools contribute to the protection of the North Sea ecology.**

Further aspects related to nature and environment friendly spatial policies are discussed under

VISION 5   Urban regions in the NSR developing in an environment friendly way; and

VISION 9   Human activities in rural areas which are in harmony.

3.2 Urban Regions

The vision for urban regions in the NSR may be summarised by four statements:

These are discussed below.

VISION STATEMENT 5

Urban Regions Developing in an Environment Friendly Way

Urban regions in the NSR are vital places for residential, business and other activities. Manifold activities and demands have negative effects on the environment. It is envisaged that such pressures will be minimised. Favourable environmental conditions shall be regarded as beneficial for the development of urban regions both for the residents as well as for the economy.

Traffic, especially road traffic, puts ever-growing strain on cities. In some places traffic volumes have already burst existing capacities. Besides the negative effects on air quality and - at a broader scale

- on global warming, the quality of life is impaired through noise, air pollution and road accidents.

Mobility management is needed to ease the pressure from traffic both, by better utilisation of existing infrastructure and by limiting the demand for vehicular traffic. A decent service supply and a change in awareness is necessary to shift demand from private to public transport. Adequate urban structures may support such shift, and more knowledge is required on feasible concepts and their potential impact.

Urban expansion often penetrates into valuable natural areas, destroying green structures. Ways to limit land consumption for urban expansion need to be found. Where expansion is unavoidable, land consumption shall be redirected so as to take away pressure on valuable natural and cultural landscapes. A balance between the demand for housing and business development and the protection of green space has to be sought.

Summary of main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 5:

➢ **Disadvantages caused by vehicular traffic are reduced.**

➢ **Land consumption for urban expansion is limited.**

➢ **Land use pressure on valuable areas is minimised, seeking other ways to satisfy new housing, recreational and business area demand.**

VISION STATEMENT 6
Urban Regions as Motors of Economic Regional Development

The key role urban regions are playing in regional development is not limited to metropolitan areas, but includes also secondary cities, as well as smaller rural centres. The latter will be discussed in the context of VISION 10 "Rural populations participate fully in economic and social progress of societies".

The contribution of spatial policies to the promotion of the urban regions' economic development role is based on networking within city clusters. The co-ordination of complementary services to make use of synergy effects within such city networks is vital for the competitiveness of the regions. They also form the basis for a broad service supply. Although the towns are competitors within the regional and global

economy they have various possibilities to co-operate for the benefit of both sides.

The accessibility of urban regions and their functional centres to passengers as well as freight is important for their economic development. This shall not be restricted to private cars, but include appropriate forms of public mass transport also in less densely populated areas. Freight traffic shall be supported by intermodal facilities on different regional levels.

The towns and cities in the NSR have a variety of local endogenous potentials. A thorough analysis and improved cross-sector co-ordination contribute to an efficient exploitation of these. Future orientated new economic activities making use of modern technologies shall be initiated to broaden the economic bases and supply job opportunities. Support to small and medium-sized enterprises helps to improve a balanced economic structure.

In the long run urban spatial planning shall put economic adaptability at an equal level as conservation of valuable historic as well as green structures and thus form an integrated approach.

Summary of main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 6:

➢ **Urban regions are strengthened by networking.**

➢ **Good accessibility to and within urban regions supports regional economic development.**

➢ **Regional centres, including intermediate cities and towns, make effective use of their potential for new economic activities.**

VISION STATEMENT 7
Urban Regions which Promote Social Integration

Urban regions in the North Sea Regions are places characterised by a colourful mixture of life styles. Every group of inhabitants has its specific demands and expectations towards their living environment. This also applies to fellow citizen from different cultures Urban development policies shall be designed so as to give room for social diversity and to integrate the wishes and demands into the development strategy. Furthermore, trends of social and cultural segregation need to be tackled.

The main **aim** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 7:

➢ **Integrated urban development is sensitive to social and cultural diversity and inclusion.**

VISION STATEMENT 8

Urban Regions which are Attractive Places for their Populations and Visitors

Good functionality of cities and urban regions is not sufficient to make these attractive for residents, business and visitors. Growing importance has to be assigned to attractive urban design with regard to urban structures, buildings and ensembles to offer a diversity of neighbourhoods according to different demand groups.

The impression of a lively quarter is conveyed when their inhabitants identify themselves with it and contribute through individual engagement to the attractiveness of their neighbourhood.

Old, derelict structures may be regenerated and transformed into valuable, integrated parts of the urban ensemble. Public open spaces shall function as meeting points for the residents as well as for visitors. Attention has to be paid to avoid gentrification in order not to expel people from their traditional neighbourhoods.

An urban structure which provides landmarks through unique buildings etc. and offers diversity through good architectural design is another bases for an attractive place to live in and to visit. A healthy mixture of utilisation in the centres is needed in order to keep the heart of the city lively after closing time and to establish social control.
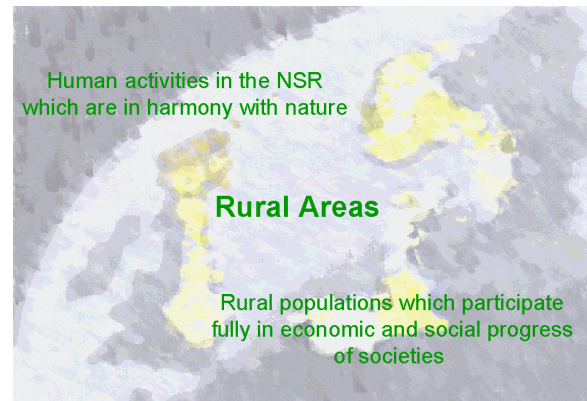
Cities have an increasing need for good management and marketing since the competition among them is harsh. The need to attract business development and to enhance the quality of public services for the benefit of the residents and potential investors makes it necessary to set up a marketing strategy.

Main **aims** to achieve VISION STATEMENT 8:

➢ **Urban structures respond increasingly to the needs of quality of life.**

➢ **Urban regeneration is widely practised.**

➢ **Buildings and ensembles provide diversity and have an attractive design.**

➢ **Urban development management has been introduced.**

3.3   Rural Areas

The vision for rural areas focuses on two main statements: development in harmony with nature (ecological sustainability), and development to improve the well-being of people:

Human activities in the NSR which are in harmony with nature

Rural Areas

Rural populations which participate fully in economic and social progress of societies

VISION STATEMENT 9

Human Activities which are in Harmony with Nature

Rural areas are vital for the ecological development and maintenance of green structures and links. They are important for the ecological balance and often form the last retreats for endangered species – and for people living in bigger towns looking for recreation.

Rural areas constitute the income basis for their population working in the agricultural sector, but the income from non-agricultural jobs is increasing. Activities in rural areas range from agriculture, mineral resource exploitation over housing, business and services including recreational and tourist activities. These activities need to be harmonised with demand of environmental protection.

Tourism is regarded as a major potential for generating growing incomes in rural areas, especially in coastal areas. But tourism is also a burden to the environment, due to people intruding into nature reserves, littering, generating traffic, etc. Environment friendly forms of tourism (not restricted to so-called ecological tourism) have to be promoted, since a clean environment is the major reason for visiting these areas. This is particularly difficult concerning mass tourism in coastal areas.

Summary of main **aims** to achieve Vision Statement 9:

➢ **Human activities are harmonised with strategies for protection of the environment.**

➢ **Environment friendly forms of tourism have been widely introduced.**

Vision Statement 10

Rural Populations participate fully in Economic and Social Progress

The basic idea of this vision is that rural populations shall have a chance to benefit from general economic and social progress without being forced to migrate to other regions as a reaction to lost access to adequate service, education, job and cultural facilities.

A decent provision of health, social and administrative and general supply services is essential for the vitality and attractiveness of rural towns and their surroundings. Special attention has to be paid to population groups that depend on a nearby service provision like young families, the elderly or non-car owners.

Job opportunities outside the agriculture sector are indispensable for the economic strength of rural areas. Support to SMEs can help to diversify rural labour market offering vocational training for the youth.

The use of information and communication technology can help to create new job opportunities and serves as an instrument to reduce accessibility disadvantages. Innovative businesses need to be supported.

Summary of main **aims** to achieve Vision Statement 10:

➢ **Service functions in rural areas are supported.**

➢ **Rural economies have been promoted.**

➢ **Information technology and innovation support the development of peripheral, non-agglomeration, regions.**

III. SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Purpose of the analysis, limitations

The purpose of the following analysis is to identify specific challenges for future spatial development policies in the NSR. It highlights spatial characteristics, potentials and problems of the North Sea Region, or of specific parts of that region. During its preparation, the authors ran into the same problem mentioned in the ESDP report (1999): A general deficiency as regards harmonised information to identify and to evaluate existing spatial structures, past or even future trends.

This applies particularly to the non-EU area of Norway which is frequently not included in analytical documents or data bases of the EU. But also for the EU area of the NSR in many aspects it was impossible to overcome the problem of information accessibility and comparability.

Furthermore, the following description presents a generalised picture of the NSR. Inevitably some local detail has been lost in that process. But it provides a basis to identify the challenges for spatial policies in the NSR.

2. The North Sea

About 300 km^3 of fresh water are discharged annually into the North Sea from rivers comprising a catchment of approximately 850,000 km². The size of this catchment area goes far beyond the Interreg definition of the NSR plus the NWMA[20].

The North Sea and its adjoining coastal regions contain some of the richest wildlife habitats in the world. It is also an area of intensive economic activities.

2.1 Economic importance

Main economic functions of the North Sea include shipping, fishing, aquaculture, offshore mining, tourism.

- *Shipping* (see also chapter 5)

The North Sea contains some of the busiest shipping routes in the world, with around 420,000 shipping movements per year within its limits. There is particularly heavy traffic through the traffic separation scheme in the Strait of Dover, with approximately 150 ships per day sailing in each direction, in addition to an average of 300 ferry crossings daily[21].

- *Fishing*[22]

Traditionally, fishing has been an important activity in all countries bordering the North Sea. Catch volumes reached their peak in the early seventies, starting to decline from 1975. Herring landings (major producer: Norway) started to recover in the late seventies, but never to reach again former peaks. No such recovery was noted for cod fish, or for fish used for production of fish meal and oil (major producer: Denmark). Fisheries are managed under a system of Total Allowable Catches (TAC) which are then divided into quotas. This system works along with a regime of technical measures such as restrictions on mesh shape and size, number of fishing days allowed at sea, and definition of areas where fishing is prohibited.

However coastal fishing is less regulated and more diverse. The local communities are highly dependent on coastal fishing both economically and socially.

- *Aquaculture*

Aquaculture is practised mainly in the Wadden Sea (mussel cultivation) and in northern parts of the North Sea (Orkney, Shetland, other parts of Scotland: oysters, scallops, mussels and salmon; Norway: mainly salmon). Mussel production in Sweden and Norway is of growing importance. This activity offers

further growth prospects. Progress has been made to reduce negative environmental effects especially with regard to the management of large fish farms (less use of pesticides and reduced overfeeding).

- *Oil and gas* (see also chapter 6 – energy)

The offshore oil and gas industry has become a major economic activity in the NSR since the late 1960s. The major oil developments to date have been in the northern parts of the North Sea in the U.K. and in Norway. Gas deposits are exploited mainly in the shallower southern regions of the North Sea (U.K., Netherlands, Denmark), as well as in Norway.

- *Offshore mining*

In the U.K., Denmark and the Netherlands, significant quantities of mineral aggregates are mined in the sea, to be used for construction industry, infill and beach nourishment. Demand for these materials is growing, to combat beach erosion and to offset increasing resistance to land-based extraction. In the Wadden Sea, up to 120,000 m^3 of shells are extracted annually for construction and other uses.

- *Pipelines and cable networks*

An extensive network of pipelines for gas and oil as well as cables for the distribution of electricity has been set up linking the North Sea countries.

- *Wind energy farming* (see also chapter 6 – energy)

An increasing number of wind mills is being placed in the coastal areas, particularly on the Danish, German and Dutch coast. This development is now being extended into shallow waters, particularly due to resistance to further mill sites on land.

- *Tourism* (see also chapter 7 – natural and cultural heritage – tourism)

Tourism and recreation on the North Sea coasts have been an important activity since the nineteenth century. This is a growth sector with considerable economic significance. In the Danish west coast of Jutland and in Sweden, for example, tourism has become economically more important than fishery. On the Dutch North Sea coast, 38m visitors have been recorded, 30m of which in the Wadden Sea area. For example in the U.K., East Anglia is a popular tourist areas.

2.2   Environmental issues

The NSR coastline encompasses a large variety of characteristics. In Norway and Scotland it is mountainous with deep fjords and rocky offshore islands. Sweden is unique with its archipelago of thousands of islands. Sandy beaches and dunes dominate from the strait of Dover over the Netherlands and Germany to the Danish west coast.

Natural diversity: The North Sea and its adjoining coastal regions such as sea cliffs, sand dunes, salt marshes, intertidal mudflats contain some of the richest wildlife habitats in the world. The open sea supports a large variety of marine birds. About 40% of the world grey seal population lives in the North Sea.[23] Furthermore, the NSR contains important inland lakes and wetlands. Larger restoration projects are carried out to restore bio-diversity, i.e. Lake Hornborgar/ Sweden.

The estuaries of south-east England, Scotland, Zeeland and the Wadden Sea[24], stretching from the Netherlands to Denmark, are of particular ecological and natural value[25] with an extraordinary variety of species. Their high biological productivity and high natural dynamic are striking characteristics. The Wadden Sea is the largest European wetland area. Its tidal flats form the largest unbroken stretch of mudflats in the world. It is a vital nursery area for North Sea fish and marine mammals. In 1997 almost 13,000 seals were counted. The Common Seal as well as the Harbour Porpoise can be regarded as indigenous Wadden Sea species. Their populations are affected by disturbance through human activities (e.g. tourism) and pollution.

Like other shallow coastal waters the Wadden Sea has a rich variety of bird species. It is an important area for moulting ducks and geese. The offshore zones are substantial feeding and roosting areas for sea ducks. Many of the species are highly susceptible to disturbance and pollution. Activities like recreation or agriculture can effect the populations. Furthermore, human fishing activities can reduce the food availability in such a way that species are endangered.

Threats: Demands to use the coastal areas for tourism, fishery, gas and oil exploration and exploitation, wind energy and dredging of estuaries to accommodate increasing sizes of ships, have effects on the water quality, sediments and marine habitats. The expected rise of the sea level is also going to change conditions.

For example some gas and oil production platforms are located in the sensitive Wadden Sea, where further exploration is subject to tight control. Production platforms are a source of sea pollution through overspill and chemicals used in the course of exploration and exploitation. Pipelines linking platforms with the mainland cross sensitive areas and require specific precaution.

The direct impact of fishing activities is the removal of fish and shellfish from the ecosystem, which amounts to 30-40% of the biomass of commercially exploited fish per year. Over 50% are caught using small mesh trawls. Bottom and beam trawls may affect the physical structure of the seabed. It becomes more vulnerable to storm erosion due to loosening the usually well compacted structure.

Shipping disasters, especially of tankers, cause severe environmental damage to fauna and flora of the North Sea. Beaches can be contaminated, many seabirds and seals killed. Apart from the environmental damage, the tourist industry is harmed, since its basis is a clean environment.

The rivers of the Wadden Sea catchment area discharge yearly 60 km^3 of contaminated water into the Wadden See. Hazardous substances include heavy metals, PCB, pesticides as well as nutrients. The North Sea current carries further polluting agents. Atmospheric depositions from the industrialised countries of north western Europe are another source of pollution.

International management effort: The economic activities associated with the North Sea have put considerable strain on its rich natural environment. Periodical international conferences on the protection of the North Sea resulted in 1992 in signing the Oslo-Paris (OSPAR) Convention, including the obligation accepted by all North Sea States and the European Commission to adopt the precautionary principle and the "polluter pays" principle in their work of protecting the marine environment.

A "North Sea Task Force" presented in 1993 a North Sea Quality Status Report. In 1995, at the 4th Trilateral Governmental Conference (of the Governments of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands) the Esbjerg Declaration was adopted which summarises agreed measures on the protection of the North Sea. This declaration addresses topics like protection of species and habitats, fisheries, reduction of nutrient input or prevention of pollution of ships and offshore facilities.[26]

Map 3: Habitats in the Wadden Sea Area
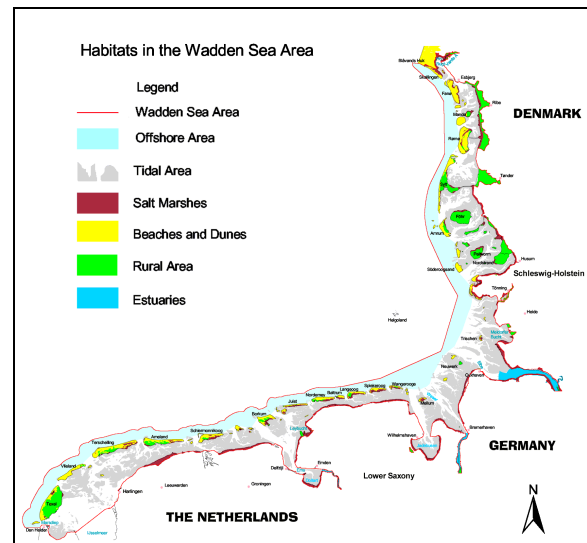
Source: Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan, Germany, 1997

At the Esbjerg Conference it was also decided to elaborate a management plan covering the Wadden Sea from Den Helder to Esbjerg in order to further substantiate the joint coherent protection. At the subsequent conference in 1994, the Leeuwarden Conference, the cornerstones of the Wadden Sea Plan were adopted. At the Eighth Trilateral Governmental Conference (October 22, 1997), the Stade Declaration containing the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan was adopted.

Over the last two decades the concentration of pollutants such as PCB and heavy metals decreased. Nitrogen compounds and phosphate concentrations could be reduced due to the use phosphate free detergents and efforts in water purification. Incineration on sea, dumping of industrial wastes and sewage sludge into sea have been phased out and regulated by 'Guidelines for the Management of Dredged Material' adopted by the Oslo Commission. Industrial waste pollution of rivers is being reduced. But still sewage effluents are discharged from coastal towns into the North Sea in quantities.

Many North Sea areas receive protection as conservation sites of national or international importance. A high proportion of biotopes of major conservation importance reported to the EU Co-ordination of Information on the Environment (CORINE) are coastal sites covered by statutory protection.

The Wadden Sea in particular has gained a comprehensive protection status. Due to a number of designations (EC Habitat Directive, EC Bird Directive) and conventions (Ramsar, UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves) on national as well as international level.

3. Urban system

The NSR comprises areas with quite different urban structures. A particular characteristic of the NSR is that linkages to national urban centres outside the NSR are in many cases, and always were, equally or even more intensive than linkages within the NSR.

The urban system is made up of numerous regional centres which are essential for the provision of consumer services. In the NSR there is only one national capital (Oslo, 461,000 inhabitants, Norway), while in other NSR countries capitals (national decision centres) are outside the NSR. The German part of the NSR comprises three capitals of Federal States (*Länder*): Bremen, Hamburg and Kiel, while in the UK Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, is in the NSR.

The NSR contains one major national urban agglomeration, the metropolitan area of Hamburg (Germany) with adjacent parts of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. In other countries major national centres are outside the NSR: Denmark - København, Århus; Netherlands - Randstad region with Rotterdam, Den Haag, Amsterdam; Sweden – Stockholm, Malmö (but Göteborg being the second largest national city within the NSR); UK: London.

Some NSR urban agglomerations extend into other Interreg regions (Trans Pennine/ England: NSR cities Leeds and Sheffield closely linked to Manchester-Liverpool outside the NSR; Leicester linked to Birmingham; Edinburgh (within the NSR) forming a city pair with Glasgow.

The NSR includes major international sea port cities (Germany: Hamburg, Bremen/ Bremerhaven, Wilhelmshaven; UK: Felixstowe, Hull; Sweden: Göteborg). Other NSR ports rely on transhipment via major intercontinental ports outside the NSR in the same country (England: e.g. Southampton; Netherlands: Rotterdam, Amsterdam; Denmark: København) or, to a large extent, in neighbouring countries

(Hamburg, Bremen/ Bremerhaven, Rotterdam, Antwerp).

The NSR includes urban agglomerations of regional importance (at different scales), such as

- Newcastle (280,000 inhabitants) (England), Edinburgh (448,850), Aberdeen (217,260) and Dundee (150,250) (Scotland),

- Groningen (171,000), Leeuwarden (89,000), Zwolle (104,000), Enschede (148,000), Hengelo (79,000) (Netherlands),

- Bremen (548,100), Flensburg (86;100), Lübeck (215,400), Kiel (242,300), Oldenburg (153,300) and Osnabrück (166,800) (Germany),

- Esbjerg (70,220); Aalborg (114,000) (Denmark),

Map 4:   Existing Urban Settlements

Population in Cities
● 1.000.000
  500.000
  100.000

Spatial Vision for the
North Sea Region
Interreg IIc

As this map presents a generalised picture
of the region, some local detail may have been lost
Source: Eurostat
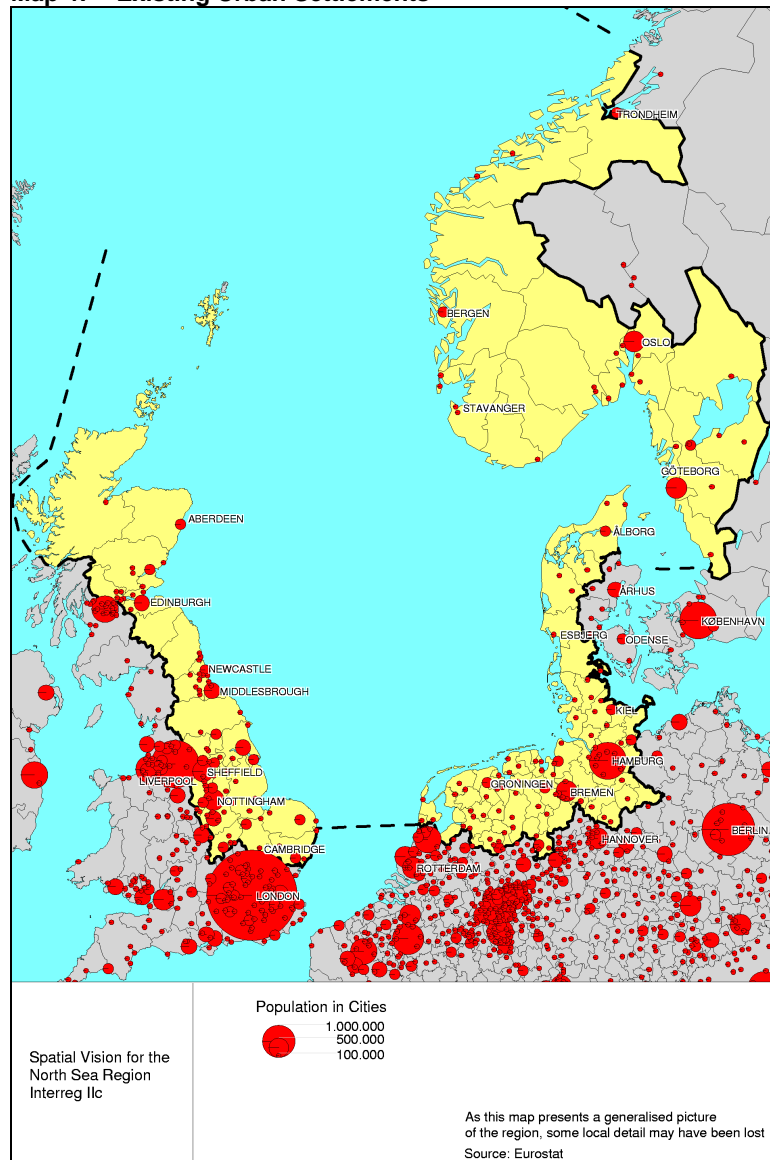
- Göteborg (464,000), Halmstad (84,000), Karlstad (80,000) (Sweden),

- Stavanger (190,000), Trondheim (138,000) and Bergen (213,000) (Norway).

In the <u>Netherlands and in Germany</u>, regional urban centres are densely distributed. But in national terms these NSR regions are sparsely populated. They have all undergone a process of reverting dependency of regional labour markets on agriculture and sea-oriented activities (port functions, fishery, ship-building).[27]

<u>Denmark</u> also has a dense network of small and medium sized towns. Aalborg with approx. 114,000 inhabitants is Denmark's largest NSR city, followed by Esbjerg.

The urban systems in <u>Sweden and Norway</u> are determined by few towns with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Major NSR cities are Göteborg, Sweden's second largest city, Fyrstad (153,000) Halmstadt, Karlstad and Oslo, Norway's capital, Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim.

The network of **small towns** is quite dense in major parts of the NSR. These towns can play an important role as engines of growth for regional economic development. They provide communities with identity that extends beyond their retail and commercial role.[28]

A number of small towns in the regions around the North Sea have traditionally been a focus for local trade and services across a large rural area. Increasing dis-economies of scale in service provision and the growth of better equipped and more modern facilities in larger centres now threaten their existing service base. Some rural service centres "contain functions that are now disproportionate for their population size (2,500 - 20,000 people) and are under threat of losing functions to larger centres. This is particularly the case with regards to retail, financial services and healthcare provision.

4.   Rural areas

4.1   Different types of rural areas

Rural areas are of diverse nature, some of them having a highly developed and successful agriculture with a positive impact on the wider economy. "Countryside-based activity is not in itself a hindrance to dynamic economic development and employment growth..., there are rural regions that have developed a relatively good competitive position in agriculture..." (ESDP).

The following major types may be distinguished:

e) Areas which are important for wildlife, landscape, recreation, water supply.

f) Predominantly agricultural areas, close to urban concentrations (frequently intensive, including advanced green-house, agricultural production).

g) Areas, also dominated by agriculture, distant (sometimes very) from major urban centres beyond reasonable commuting distances, but with secondary cities having the potential to develop rural-urban entities similar to those of the preceding category.

h) Sparsely populated areas dominated by, often extensive, agriculture and/ or forestry, with smaller urban centres, far from major towns.

These are briefly discussed below.

a) Areas which are important for wildlife, landscape, recreation, water supply.

These areas may be close to urban centres, but some of them (particularly in Norway, Sweden, and Scotland) also far. They need to be maintained or upgraded in their natural quality. Infrastructure links to urban centres shall guarantee accessibility for recreation purposes without harming their natural values.

This area type exists in all parts of the NSR. They are not limited to protected areas, but include also areas with extensive agriculture, forestry or fishery. The latter ones require area management systems which allow a human use harmonious with the preservation of natural qualities (see also chapter II.5).

b) *Predominantly agricultural areas* (frequently intensive, including advanced green-house production)*, close to urban concentrations.*

While agriculture is often flourishing in such areas, high productivity improvements may frequently be accompanied by reduced job supply (for example in Friesland/ NL) and, hence, the need for changed professional education.

These areas benefit from close markets for their produce and from urban job and services supply to rural commuters. They do not suffer from the traditional rural-urban income disparity. They serve for recreation of urban populations, often having great cultural and historical significance. They are characterised by intensive commuting and financial interdependencies with cities. They may play an important role to secure cities' water supply.

These areas depend largely on the economic prosperity of cities. They need to be included in integrated development policies (local urban and rural authorities working together for, e.g. public passenger transport, water supply, sewage and waste disposal, licensing of large retail stores, development of new business districts). Objectives are to promote rural-urban linkages while preventing urban sprawl and maintaining or restoring their recreational values.

This type of areas, often with strong demographic and economic growth, is found in various parts of the NSR around agglomerations such as Hamburg, Oslo, Edinburgh, in East Anglia and around Leicester-shire[29], as well as in the south-western parts of the Dutch NSR (having strong links to the agglomeration of the Randstad).

The spatial concentration of jobs leaves small towns encircling major cities reduced to the function of dormitory towns and losing their individual faces. For example, commuter towns in the Central Belt of Scotland report population increases which put strain on local infrastructure and community facilities[30]. Population dispersion and job concentration result in increasing traffic between residence and places of work. Congestion during rush hours becomes day-to-day routine, impairing life quality.

c) *Areas, also dominated by agriculture, (sometimes very) distant from major urban centres* beyond reasonable commuting distances, but with secondary cities having the *potential* to develop rural-urban entities similar to those of the preceding category.

These areas need differentiated approaches depending on local potentials. Objectives are to strengthen urban centres by developing new types of economic activities, frequently not related to agriculture or local consumer supplies, in order to provide their, frequently growing, populations with the possibility to maintain residence instead of migrating to major urban centres elsewhere.

This type of areas is found quite frequently in the NSR with its many secondary cities such as areas in the vicinity of, e.g., Groningen (NL), Emden, Flensburg, Osnabrück (D), Skövde (S), Stavanger (N), Esbjerg or Aalborg (DK), and Newcastle, Aberdeen or Dundee (UK).

d) *Areas dominated by agriculture (often extensive) and/ or forestry, with only small urban centres,* far from major towns.

They use to have insufficient employment potential to absorb populations not sustained by agricultural activities on the retreat or at least not expanding. Often they have great cultural and historical value.

This type of *peripheral* areas requires measures to sustain a reasonable level of public and private services supplies, and adequate infrastructure links to major urban centres (usually road, unless they are on major city-city railway links). For very distant locations (such as in parts of Norway and Scotland) also regional air links are required.

The economic potentials of these areas are limited, but may be developed in such fields as ecological farming and rural tourism.

Major parts of Norwegian, Swedish and Scottish NSR areas fall into this category. In other parts of the NSR, rural areas frequently fall somewhere between categories c) and d), being perceived by national planning documents as 'peripheral to the economic mainstream': In Germany they comprise north-western parts of Lower Saxony (coastal areas of Lower Saxony are regarded as "problematic concerning structural change"[31]) and northern Schleswig-Holstein (D)[32]. The Danish National Planning Report states development deficits in the northern and north-western parts of Jutland. Other Danish North Sea regions are also mainly rural areas with a large number of regional centres[33]. In England, Yorkshire shows similar characteristics.

General trends

Some of the rural urban centres experience above-average growth, for example in Germany (Cloppenburg, Lüneburg, Vechta, Emsland, Osnabrück, in the Netherlands (Flevoland). But there is no uniform trend. While a large share of Scottish towns faced an *increase* in population by over 50% over the past twenty years, others reported *losses* by more than ¼: Towns gaining population in Scotland are in many cases situated at the North Sea coast and in the Highlands, with a concentration around Aberdeen. In Norway and Sweden, too, population growth is concentrated along the coast, while inland communities are facing emigration, particularly of young people.

Map 5:   Urban population growth in Scotland 1971-1991

Source: The Scottish Office, Planning Advice Note 52, 1997

A worrying trend for rural areas in general, already referred to under "urban system" is the concentration of services in larger cities, withdrawing functions and services from smaller towns, particularly with regard to retail, financial services and healthcare provision. The loss of local shops and other facilities is symbolic for a loss in economic vitality and attractiveness. As a consequence, small towns become more reliant on

the bigger settlements. The loss of cultural activity further weakens the attractiveness of small towns.

Again, this trend of weakening small towns is not universal. On the contrary, there is a clear differentiation process, where both, strong growth and heavy decline, are observed.

Negative trends affect particularly rural areas with a decline of job opportunities in agriculture (sometimes in spite of growing production), accompanied by declining other economic activities. This is observed in some coastal rural zones in the U.K., in the NSR areas at both sides of the German-Dutch border, and in the triangle Hamburg – Bremen - Hannover (Germany). Rationalisation in forestry has led to the same effects in the Swedish areas of Dalsland and Värmland. More stable agriculture is found in the English hinterland, in coastal zones of Germany and Netherlands, and in most parts of the Danish NSR[34].

4.2   Population density

The North Sea region shows great differences in population densities ranging from sparsely populated areas such as Sogn/ Fjordane in Norway (6 inhabitants/ km²) or the Scottish Highlands (8 inh./ km²), to densely populated areas such as Hamburg (2250 inh./km²), or Kiel (2225 inh./km²).

Map 6:   Population density
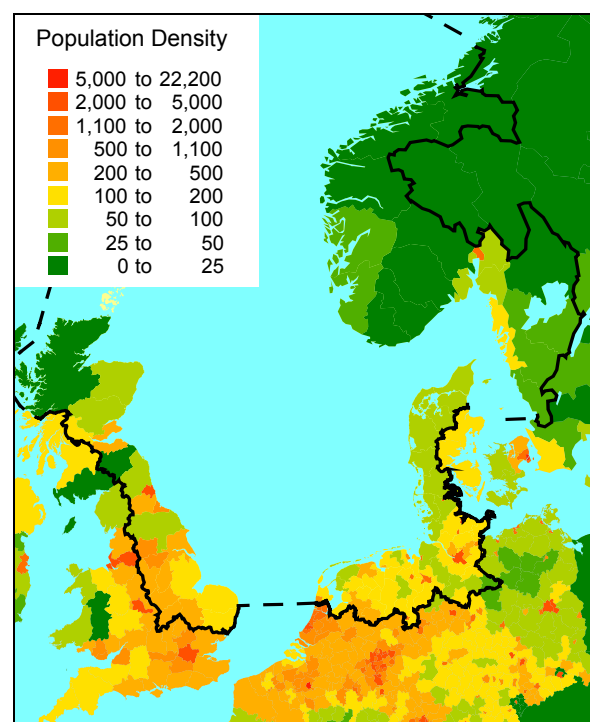
Source: PLANCO based on Eurostat

In 1993 the average population density of the North Sea region (including Norway) was 93 inhabitants/km², somewhat below the average density of the EU (116 inh./km²). Excluding Norway, population density (138 inh./km²) was above EU average. But considering the wide differences in population densities within the NSR, a more disaggregated view is required.

The UK regions of the North Sea programme are more sparsely populated than the UK average (151 resp. 241 inhabitants/km²). The same is true for the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark (NL: 180 versus 373; D: 185 versus 228; DK: 66 versus 120). Only in Norway and in Sweden is the population density of the North Sea regions above national averages (the latter including vast areas with extremely low density).

5. Nature areas, cultural heritage and tourism

Nature areas: Large unspoilt natural areas exist in Scotland, Norway and Sweden. Furthermore the Wadden Sea is a large transnational natural area. The remainder of the NSR is predominantly a cultural landscape shaped by human needs, including different old farming landscapes, especially in Scotland and in the Netherlands.

Many areas in the North Sea Region are important stepping stones for bird migration, especially along the entire coastline and in the coastal wetlands of the Netherlands and Germany as well as the inland wetlands of Sweden.

Cultural heritage: The North Sea Region has a rich and colourful cultural heritage important for the development of tourism. This heritage ranges from the Vikings to the history of Scottish and English Monarchs, shared Saxon links, Frisian culture in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, Hanseatic cities in Germany as well as links between fishing communities e.g. in UK and Sweden.

The cities of Edinburgh (Scotland), Lübeck (D), Bergen and Røros (N) as well as the rock carvings of Tannum (S) are classified as world heritage sites. Other valuable cultural heritage sites include religious buildings (UK and N), technical constructions (NL) and prehistoric relics (S).

Tourism: Most coastal areas of the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the southern part of Norway, as well as interior lands in the UK, Sweden and Norway are areas with high concentration of tourist facilities. Tourism ranges from bathing, sailing, windsurfing to hiking and cycling, as well as cultural city tourism and – in the cases of Sweden and Norway – cross-country and Alpine skiing as well as fishing. Accommodation forms include camping and caravanning, farm house apartments, holiday homes and holiday resorts with large hotel complexes.

Tourism has become an important sector for income generation in the North Sea Region with further growth potentials. In rural areas the renting out of holiday apartments on a semi-professional basis is appreciated as additional income.

In Norway tourism is highly concentrated in the Oslo-fjord – Skagerrak Region. In 1990 2.4m overnight stays were counted there. East Anglia is one of the most frequented tourist destination in the English NSR with about 19 million holiday guests a year.[35]

The archipelago of Western Sweden is a popular sailing area with many visitors from neighbouring North Sea regions.

The Wadden Sea is a major tourist destination, with main focus on the islands. 8-10 million annual visitors are estimated.[36] The total number of overnight stays in the Schleswig Holstein in 1996 was about 10m, in Lower Saxony about 13.5m, Denmark reported 6m, the Netherlands 12m. These figures do not include unregistered overnight stays. The total number of overnight stays in the Wadden Sea Region is estimated at 53m per year. Detailed data is often lacking and comparability due to different national statistical methods difficult.[37]

Each region has developed its own characteristics concerning accommodation facilities, e.g. Bed and Breakfast lodges in the UK, Dutch farm houses, German holiday centres or Danish summer houses. The quality of the facilities is generally good. Since not many are connected to the star system, a detailed comparison is difficult.[38] In the Netherlands one third of the visitors stayed in hotels, 20% preferred camp sites; in Lower Saxony 35% booked holiday apartments and 20% hotels. In Schleswig Holstein almost 40% stayed in apartments. In Denmark cottages are the most favourite accommodation with a share of 56%; camp sites were visited by 26%.

Pressure from tourism and planning issues: Almost 90% of the visitors come by car, which causes problems in the tourist centres. Some islands on the Dutch and German coast have prohibited the use of private cars with positive marketing impact, offering

public transport adapted to the local environment (horse carts, small-gauge railways), while other islands are suffering from a high influx of cars.

Coastal defence works are sometimes competing with tourism developments. The protection of sand dune areas requires the installation of specific foot paths, reducing the attraction to walk through the dunes. Increased sewage and solid waste produced by tourists requires heavy treatment investments.

Denmark has prohibited further development of summer houses in coastal areas. In Sweden new constructions along most of the coastline are prohibited by national legislation. Restrictions for new con-structions outside existing settlements are also strict in Germany and in the Netherlands. In Norway, Sweden and the U.K., local land use plans identify special areas designated for tourism and recreation.

Though tourism is a high growth sector, it is declining in some traditional coastal holiday resorts in the UK which need to be regenerated in view of changed tourist preferences. The same is noted for northern Jutland.[39]

Map 7:   Nature Potential Areas, World Heritage Sites According to UNESCO, and Main Tourism Areas
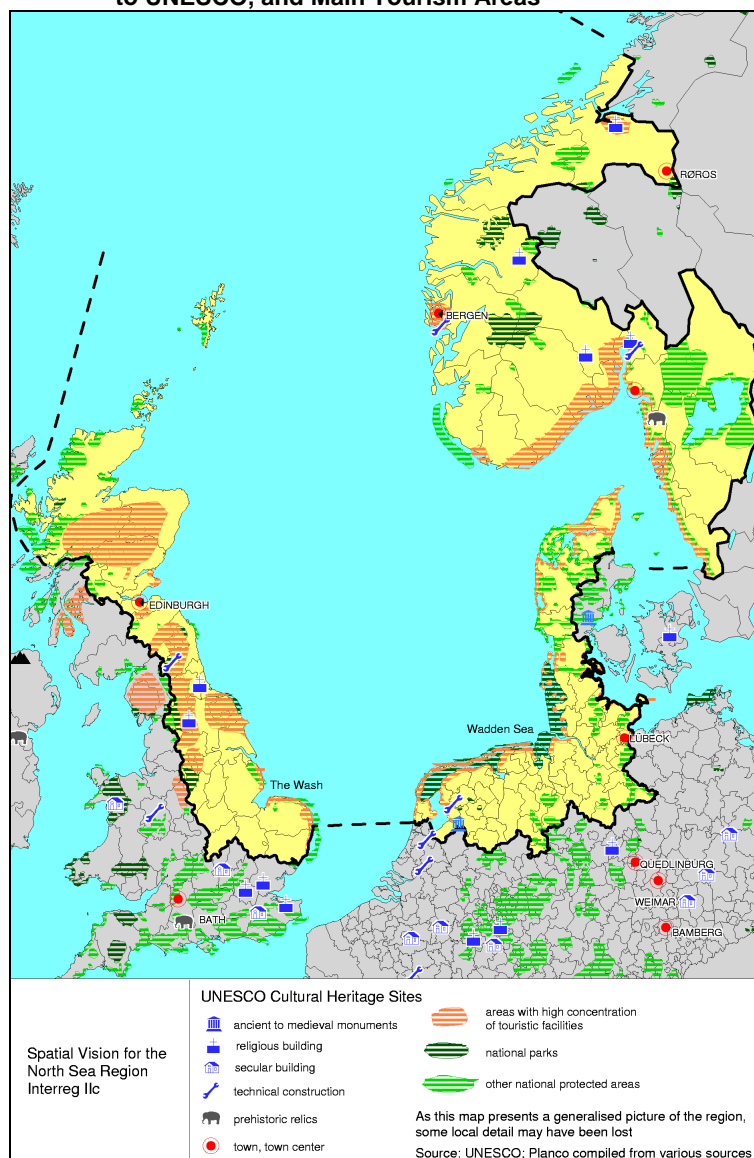
6. Transport Infrastructure and Traffic Flows

The transport infrastructure binding NSR regions together both, internally and with other regions, can be described by nodes and networks.

6.1 Nodes

Nodes include sea ports, air ports and land-side intermodal connection points.

Ports: Most of the EU's largest ports are on North Sea coasts and rivers, but are *not* within the NSR (such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Le Havre, London).

Universal ports *within* the NSR include Hamburg, Bremen/ Bremerhaven, Felixstowe, Tees and Hartlepool, Tyne, Göteborg and Oslo. They function as transhipment points between land and maritime transport, mainly with one leg of origins or destinations outside the NSR. Specialised ports such as Wilhelmshaven (Germany) or Bergen (Norway) serve as terminals for bulk import or export, while other smaller ports serve as feeder ports and for intra-North Sea shipments.

A large number of NSR ports have predominantly shortsea shipping functions: Norway: Oslo, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim, Frederikstad, Grenland, Haugesund, Sanefjord, Larvik, Haugesund, Egersund, Ålesund; Denmark: Hirtshals, Frederikshavn, Hanstholm, Esbjerg; Sweden: Göteborg, Brofjorden-Uddevalla, Strömstad; Lysekil, Germany: Cuxhaven, Brunsbüttel, Stade, Nordenham/ Brake, Emden; Netherlands: Harlingen, Delfzijl/ Eemshaven; England: Ipswich, Yarmouth, Boston, Grimsby-Immingham-Hull, Tees and Hartlepool, Sunderland, Blyth, Lowestoft, Forth, Dundee, Aberdeen, Peterhead, Cromarty Firth.[40]

The regional economic significance of port throughput volumes depends on the kind of freight handled, and the amount of services involved. While employment generation per ton is minimal for liquid or dry bulk (unless linked to local processing industries), it may be higher for Ro-Ro, and particularly for conventional or containerised general cargo.

Major freight ports in Germany, involving significant volumes of general cargo (now mostly containerised)

are Hamburg, Bremen and Bremerhaven. Hamburg has a throughput of 60 million tons and Bremen/ Bremerhaven of about 13 million tons each in 1993. More than 70% of the turnover are oriented towards origins and destinations outside the North Sea. [41]

The UK ports of Tees/ Hartlepool and Grimsby/ Immingham have a cargo throughput surpassing 40m tons each (1993). These ports are especially oriented towards internal North Sea maritime transport. Felixstowe handles about 20m tons of freight annually.

The only major NSR port in Sweden is Göteborg which recorded a throughput of 31 m tons. Göteborg is the only Scandinavian port with several trans-ocean lines. Udevalla harbour has a throughput of 2 m tons. In Norway, a major port (nearly exclusively liquid bulk) is Bergen with a throughput of 66 m tons, while Oslo reported 5.4 m tons.

Comparatively minor ports are located in the Netherlands (Delfzijl/ Eemshaven, about 3 million tons throughput, Harlingen 0,8m tons) and Denmark (Esbjerg, 3.7 m tons).

Inland waterway play an important role in the NSR, especially in the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden. In Sweden for example Göta Älv is an important inland waterway for the ports of Lake Vänern. Via canals Göteborg is connected to Stockholm.

Intermodal connection nodes link different transport modes by loading and unloading facilities and logistic services. Intermodal transport is a means to improve competitiveness of environment friendly railway and inland water or sea transport. It combines the advantages of rail and water (cost, capacity, safety and emissions) with those of the road (flexibility, speed and door-to-door delivery)[42].

Road-rail and sea vessel – road/ rail/ inland vessel intermodality are the most common types of intermodal transport in Europe. In the NSR, sea terminals play an important role in connecting the ports with their hinterland. Intermodality in the sea ports plays an important role in efforts to promote shortsea shipping as a substitute for road or rail transport. This market has not yet developed as desired.

In the UK main intermodal transport centres for sea are located at the ports of Felixstowe, Leith (Edinburgh), Blyth, Grimsby/ Immingham and Great Yarmouth. In the Dutch and German NSR sea terminals are located at the ports e.g. Harlingen, Delfzijl resp. Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg and Bremen/

Bremerhaven. There are also a number of intermodal road terminals.

In <u>Denmark</u> intermodal facilities in the NSR are located around Esbjerg and Aalborg. In Sweden, Göteborg is the main NSR intermodal centre. The railways have recently been adjusted to allow larger containers transporting paper rolls from the north of Sweden via Göteborg to Zeebrügge in Belgium. The major <u>Norwegian</u> ports have intermodal functions

These facilities are generally in good working order. Nevertheless these facilities require further development according to the needs of the modern transport industry. Still, the awareness of the advantages of intermodal transport needs reinforcement. For example, in Bremen only ten percent of local companies make use of its logistic centre, one of the first ones in Germany,

Airports: Main international airports in the NSR are Oslo and Hamburg. Other major national hubs connecting regional airports with the international air travel network are outside the NSR: København in Scandinavia, Amsterdam in the Netherlands, London in the UK, Frankfurt in Germany.

Airports in Trans-European Transport Network (outline plan)

NSR part	Inter-national	Comm. Connecting point	Regional points
U.K.		Aberdeen	Unst
		Edinburgh	Sumburgh
		Newcastle	Kirkwall
		Leeds	Wick
		East Midlands	Inverness
			Teesside
			Norwich
Netherlands			Eelde
			Twente
Germany	Hamburg	Bremen	Kiel
			Westerland
Denmark		Billund	Sonderborg
			Karup
			Thisted
			Aalborg
			Sindal
Sweden		Göteborg	
Norway	not included in the EU plan		

adopted by the European Parliament on 23-July-1996

Many of the medium sized airports operate international flights e.g. Stavanger/ Norway, Göteborg/ Sweden, Billund, Denmark, Bremen/ Germany/ Norwich/ UK. In peripheral NSR regions in Norway or Scotland small regional airports play an important role for the accessibility of the regions.

6.2 Transport Infrastructure Network

Railroads: The rail network in the North Sea Region is generally good in terms of inter-city connections. In the more peripheral areas, regional rail links have been closed down, where their financial viability is not secured (e.g. in the northern parts of German NSR). Then, road transport becomes the single mode of transport to ensure the accessibility of the regions.

In Norway the lines Oslo – Göteborg and Oslo – Grenland are proposed as future high speed railways. The EU Commission's TEN programme includes the establishment of high-speed railway lines as well as plans for conventional lines.

Road: The road network in the NSR is generally good. In the sparsely populated areas of Norway or Scotland road links ensure a basic accessibility. In the densely populated areas with a closely knit road networks like in Germany, England or the Netherlands, congested transport links occur, e.g. in the <u>UK</u> along the London-Manchester/ Leeds axis, in <u>Germany</u> along the Ruhr Area - Bremen - Hamburg axis and in the Netherlands along the Almere – Amsterdam axis.

Railway projects in the NSR according to the Community initiative for TEN (outline plan)

NSR part	High-speed	Conventional
U.K.	Edinburgh-Newcastle-(London)	
Netherlands		Groningen, Amsterd.
Germany		Lelystad/Emmeloord – Hengelo Enschede
	Münster-Bremen-Hamburg-Puttgar-den-(København)	
Denmark	Esbjerg – Fredericia – København	
	Padborg (Germany) - Århus – Aalborg	
Sweden	Malmö- Hälsing-borg- Göteborg-(Oslo)	
	Göteborg-Stockholm	
Norway	Not included in the EU plan	

adopted by the European Parliament on 23-July-1996

Map 8:   Major Nodes and transportation networks

Spatial Vision for the
North Sea Region
Interreg IIc

Intermodal Terminals

⬤ inland waterway
◆ rail/road
⬤ sea

+++ main railway axes
― roads
--- ferry lines
⚓ ports

As this map presents a generalised picture of the region,
some local detail may have been lost
Source: Planco; Eurostat

PLANCO Consulting GmbH   Draft Final   December, 1999
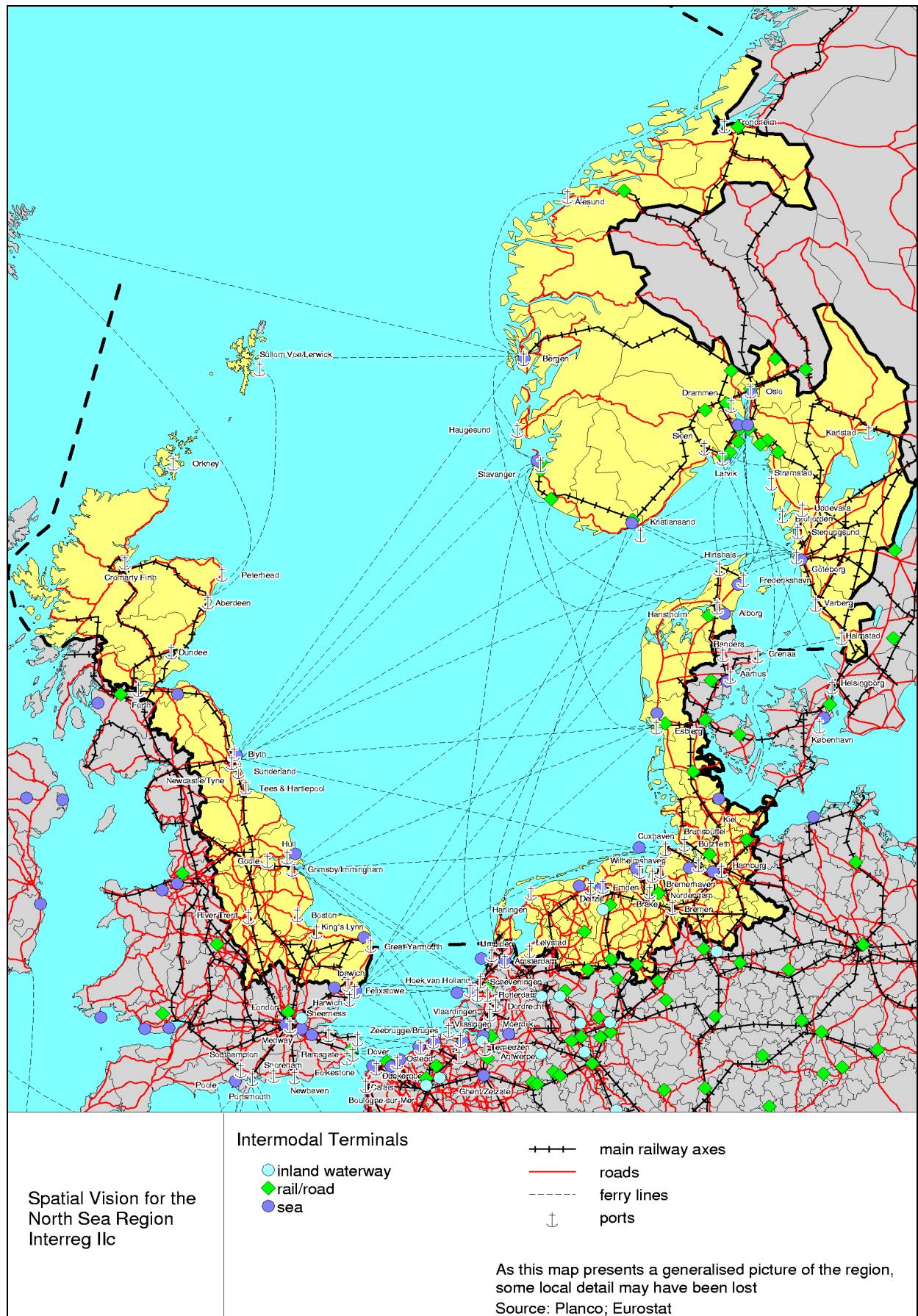
In Norway the main axis for the continent are "Scanlink" (Oslo – Göteborg) and "Nordic Link / Westlink" (Jutland - Southwest Norway). In addition the coastal highway Oslo – Kristiansand – Stavanger – Bergen – Trondheim – is of highest priority. Also in Sweden the finalisation of the upgrading of the road between Göteborg and Oslo is of highest priority.

The EU Commission's TEN programme includes the following road projects relevant for the NSR:

Road projects in the NSR according to the Community initiative for TEN outline plan

NSR part	North-South	West-East
U.K.	Edinburg-New-castle (Tyne) – Leeds - (London)	Edinburgh-Abington
	Perth – Aberdeen – Inverness	Newcastle-Carlisle
	Perth – Inverness (direct)	Leicester – Felixstowe
Netherlands		Hoogeveen – Meppen (Germany)
Germany	Missing sections of Emden-Rheine – Ruhr district	Western roundabout Hamburg (Lübeck-Elbe river- Hamburg/ Bremen Autobahn)
Denmark	Aalborg-Hirtshals	Esbjerg- Kolding- (København)
	Aalborg-Frederikshavn	
Sweden	Missing sections of Helsingborg – Göteborg – Oslo	Missing part of Göteborg-Stockholm
Norway	Scan link, Nordic Link (not incl. in EU plan)	

adopted by the European Parliament on 23-July-1996

In spite of apparent congested axes, among the TEN projects identified by the EU Commission as 'priority projects' only few run through NSR area. Another aspect requiring more attention is the improvement of port hinterland links, as these are a major factor affecting the potential for enhanced shortsea shipping.

Map 9:   Priority TEN measures relevant for NSR
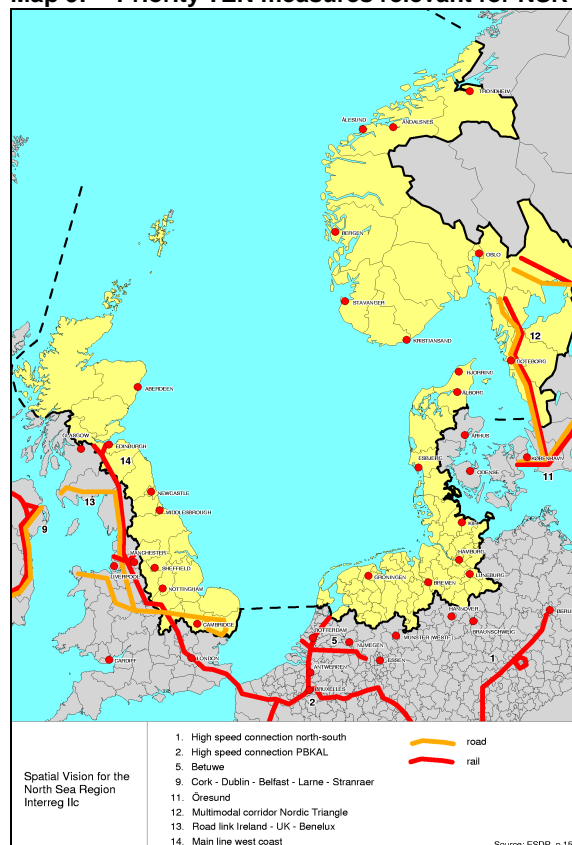
6.3   Linking Services

In the NSR, there is a dense network of ferry and other Ro-Ro links offering passenger and freight transport services. They support not only internal traffic within the NSR. They also link smaller feeder ports with inter-continental shipping services offered at major universal ports.

The ferries Frederikshavn - Göteborg (3.4m passengers, 1992) and Hirtshals – Kristiansand (1.0m passengers) are the most frequented lines in the NSR.

The ferry line between Kiel and Göteborg carried 0.8 million passengers in 1998. Ferry lines from Frederikshavn in Denmark to Larvik or Oslo in Norway carry about 0.7 and 0.5 million passengers annually. Cross-North-Sea lines are less frequented: Ferries Esbjerg-Newcastle, Newcastle-Göteborg and Hamburg-Newcastle reported about 22 thousand passengers per year each. (The port of Harwich in Southern England, located outside the NSR, accounts for 200 to 250 thousand passengers).

Short-distance ferry lines connecting Denmark, Sweden, Norway or the UK with the continent are much more frequented than those longer lines across the North Sea. Linkages between neighbouring countries around the North Sea are apparently much stronger than those linking directly NSR areas across the North Sea.

Bottlenecks in hinterland linking infrastructure to the ports due to congested road links put increasing strain on the ports of Hamburg and Bremen/ Bremerhaven.

6.4   Transport Flows

Sea

Main sea transport flows across the North Sea among the six NSR countries concentrate at Rotterdam - U.K. and - at a lower scale - Rotterdam - Norway. If Antwerp were included in this map, the overwhelming weight of Rhine ports would become even more prominent[43]. In spite of this, the still significant

transport flows from/to ports of the NSR highlight the importance of permanently improving the competitiveness of these ports, including their hinterland connections.

For bulk cargo (liquid and dry), there are also significant flows between Norway and ports within the NSR (mainly petrol oil and products). This includes Peterhead, Grimsby/ Immingham and German ports. Other link flows are relatively unimportant.

Non-bulk flows (container, Ro/Ro, general cargo) show a similar pattern, but here the concentration at Rotterdam is even more obvious.
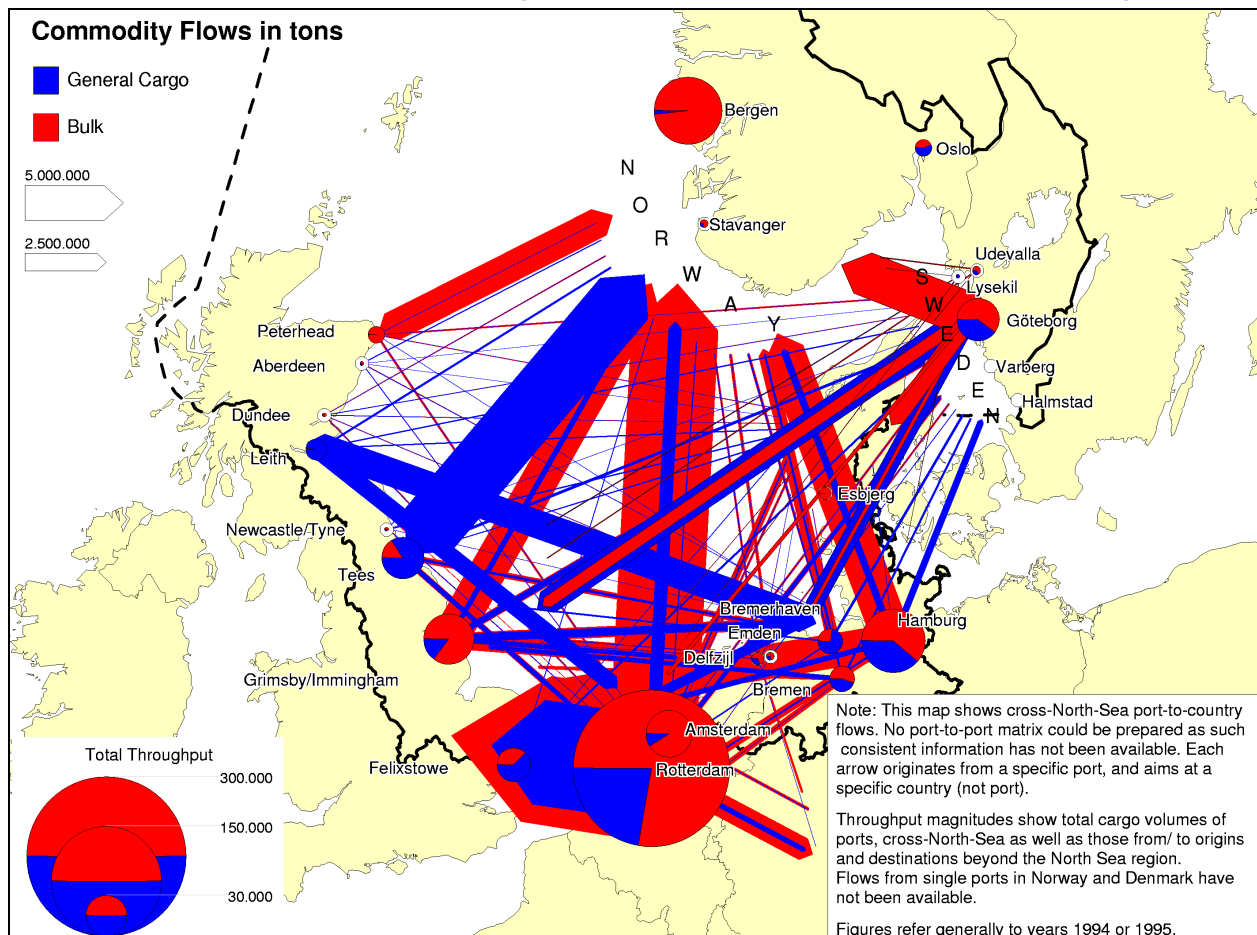
If only container cargo would be considered, then the relative weight of flows to/ from Hamburg and Bremen main ports for Sweden and Norway would be higher than for Rotterdam.

Map 10: Sea transport flows of ports with significant transport volumes across the North Sea Region

Note: This map shows cross-North-Sea port-to-country flows. No port-to-port matrix could be prepared as such consistent information has not been available. Each arrow originates from a specific port, and aims at a specific country (not port).

Throughput magnitudes show total cargo volumes of ports, cross-North-Sea as well as those from/ to origins and destinations beyond the North Sea region. Flows from single ports in Norway and Denmark have not been available.

Figures refer generally to years 1994 or 1995.

Air

Most air links for the region are serviced via the non-NSR hubs of København, Frankfurt, Amsterdam and London. Direct connections within the region across the North Sea concentrate at Norway-U.K. (Stavanger-Aberdeen, Oslo-Leeds, Oslo-Newcastle), and from Oslo to various Continental destinations (mostly outside the NSR, except of Hamburg).
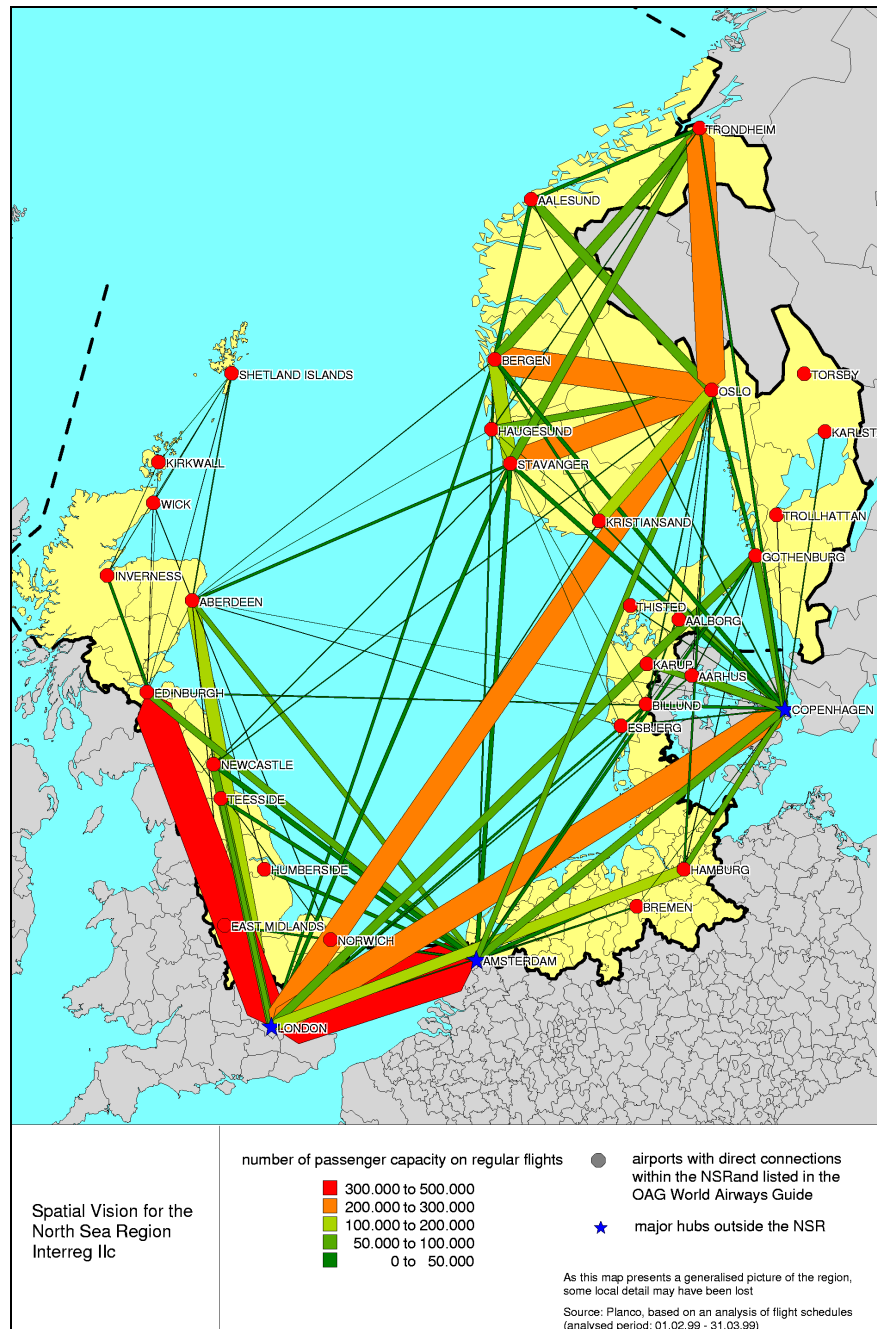
Major national hubs located outside the NSR are the busiest gateways concerning air-travel to locations in the North Sea Region. Major flows go to Hamburg, Edinburgh and Oslo.

Copenhagen has a dense network of destinations and functions as the main hub for Nordic countries. In terms of passenger throughput for destinations in the NSR, Oslo is the second largest airport, connecting primarily with other Norwegian airports. Large passenger volumes there are due to long travel distances which favours air-travel and the high amount of employees of oil companies travelling to the various oil rigs located on the Norwegian continental shelf.

Whereas regional air links are of vital importance for the UK and Norway they play only a limited role in Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany due to shorter distances or better railway services.

An analysis of main passenger flows, with the dominance of a few hubs, shows similar characteristics as observed for sea freight.

Map 11: Regular Air links within the North Sea Region (excl. charter flights)

number of passenger capacity on regular flights

- 300.000 to 500.000
- 200.000 to 300.000
- 100.000 to 200.000
- 50.000 to 100.000
- 0 to 50.000

⬤ airports with direct connections within the NSRand listed in the OAG World Airways Guide

★ major hubs outside the NSR

Spatial Vision for the North Sea Region Interreg IIc

As this map presents a generalised picture of the region, some local detail may have been lost

Source: Planco, based on an analysis of flight schedules (analysed period: 01.02.99 - 31.03.99)

7. Energy

The NSR possesses major energy production resources, both renewable and non-renewable. Mineral oil and gas fields (mostly off-shore) and corresponding pipeline and terminal infrastructures have been developed particularly in UK, Norwegian and Dutch parts of the North Sea.

Alternative energy sources such as wind power are very common in the coastal areas of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. In the UK and Sweden this source of energy is used to a lesser extent, but facilities are increasing. Norway operates only a few wind farms, due to the abundance of other energy sources: Its electricity supply is predominantly based on hydro-power, leaving surplus for export.

Energy production plays an important role in reducing the dependency of the region (beyond the NSR proper) from supplies from other producers. They form the basis for the NSR's high qualification in off-shore technologies under difficult natural conditions. They are the basis for employment in the NSR, involved in infrastructure development and maintenance and related supplies and services, and to some extent in further oil processing.
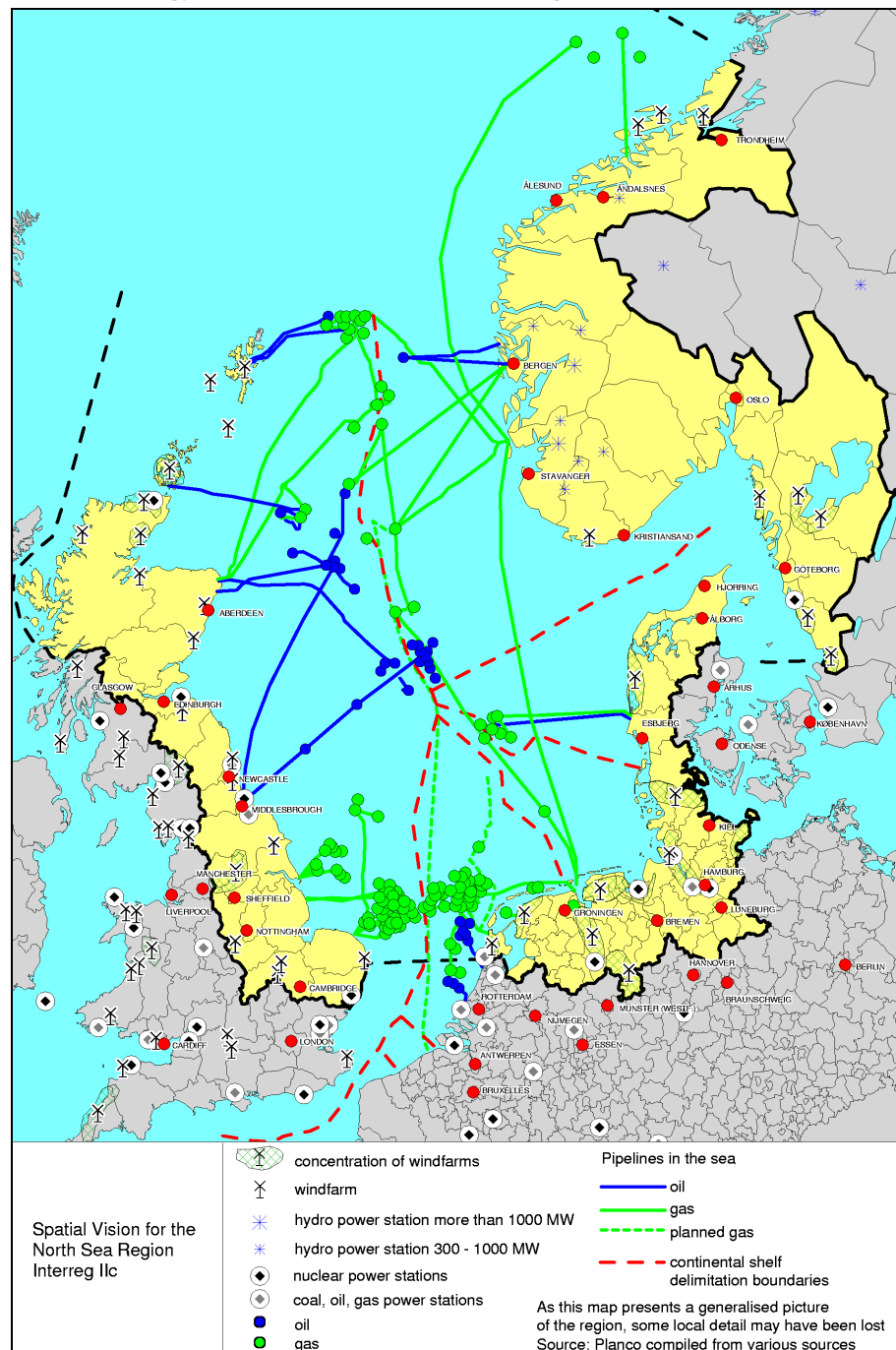
Pipelines generate little or no benefit to regions transited by them. The Interreg II C project "Benefits of Pipelines" attempts to identify possibilities to reverse this situation.

Bio-energy is used in many parts of the NSR. The

Interreg II C project "North Sea Bioenergy Network" intends to develop new method of integrated resource planning at the local level.

Oil production implies environmental risks from discharging contaminated water (drilling discharges, sewage effluents, cooling water) to the sea. Also overspill from pipelines increases due to the growing number and the ageing of oil rigs. This requires careful monitoring and precaution.

Map 12: Energy production in the North Sea Region

Spatial Vision for the
North Sea Region
Interreg IIc

- ▨ concentration of windfarms
- ⊁ windfarm
- ✳ hydro power station more than 1000 MW
- ✳ hydro power station 300 - 1000 MW
- ◆ nuclear power stations
- ◉ coal, oil, gas power stations
- ● oil
- ● gas

Pipelines in the sea
- —— oil
- —— gas
- - - - planned gas
- – – – continental shelf delimitation boundaries

As this map presents a generalised picture of the region, some local detail may have been lost
Source: Planco compiled from various sources

IV. FUTURE CHALLENGES

1. Approach

The previous chapter is has presented an overview of the NSR's spatial characteristics with a view to identifying particular challenges for future spatial policies in this region, namely those of common interest – calling for joint action or offering potentials for mutual exchange of experience due to the similarities of policy issues.

Being strongly integrated into the European space, the challenges in the NSR are in some cases not very different from those of other regions in Europe, nor will be the solution approaches.

The NSR places itself in the wider European context. It benefits from, and is being challenged by, global trends briefly mentioned in the introduction:

Global trends calling for spatial planning responses
➢ Globalisation and continued economic growth
➢ Advances in the Information Technology – transition to a knowledge society
➢ Mobile society
➢ Changing life-styles
➢ Progress towards equality between men and women
➢ Pressure on the natural and man-made environment – growing conflict among short- and long-term benefits
➢ Changing relationship government – individual

The following sections give an overview on the implications of these trends, in the light of observed structures, regarding spatial development in the NSR.

2. Globalisation and Continued Economic Growth

The globalisation process enhances interregional competition, as well as interregional linkages. It accelerates economic restructuring in regions involved in international trade. These changes affect spatial structures in many respects. They create new opportunities, and pose threats to those not accepting it.

Some of the major implications are shown in the box. Spatial and regional policies must find answers how to best benefit from these challenges.

Demands can be classified in accordance with the categories defined in the NSR Operational Programme, namely: changing rural-urban relationships and regional systems, development of towns and cities, inter-urban networks, transport and communications, nature and environment.

GLOBALISATION AND CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH **Challenges**
Growing interregional competition
• industries are increasingly mobile
• highly skilled labour follows employment
• reduced potential for individual regions to escape globalisation pressures with continued prosperity
• centralisation of development dynamics, but also: increasing pressure to maintain the economic strength of leading regions with growing interregional competition
• traditional tourism centres compete with destinations in other countries and regions
Intensification of interregional linkages
• growing spatial interdependencies
• increasing importance of information networks
• growing transport volumes
Accelerated economic restructuring
• job creation in service activities (telecom, transport, biotechnology, high-tech business, trade), job losses in industrial activities
• loss of economic activities in rural and coastal areas and in regions with a concentration of traditional industries
Spatial structural change
• threat of weaker regions lagging further behind - support for weaker regions does not usually change their position
• regional unemployment
• growing disparities rural-rural and urban-urban instead of the traditional disparity rural-urban
• loss of cultural identity
• trend to urban sprawl within the regions
• growing internal migration and immigration
• growing social and ethnic segregation in cities
Growing opportunities
• ... to benefit from urban-urban co-operation
• ... from enhanced interdependency between neighbouring European States

The differentiated urban system of the NSR offers favourable conditions to respond to the globalisation challenge.

A number of city regions have developed buoyant economies by expanding into growth sectors such as electronics (e.g. Central Scotland and Cambridge in the U.K., Hamburg in Germany), petrochemicals (e.g. Aberdeen/ U.K., Stavanger/ N), car manufacturing (e.g. Sunderland/ UK, Bremen/ D), high tech offshore engineering (e.g. Tyneside/ UK) and particularly the service sector (banking and other financial services – e.g. Edinburgh and Peterborough/ U.K., Hamburg/ D), education, logistics and trade, education, call centres and others. Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, Norwich and Leeds are some examples in the UK. There are numerous other examples in the NSR with cities building on their specific strengths. This restructuring process is continuing.

Only a few of the cities listed by the EU Commission as 'urban areas in difficulty'[44] lie within the NSR - Aalborg (DK) having a relatively high unemployment rate, and Nottingham (UK) displaying high rates of unemployment and of families receiving State benefits.

But many cities did and still do need to change their economic structures away from traditional industries (such as coal mining and heavy engineering, fishery and ship-building etc.). Aberdeen, Newcastle and Sheffield in the UK, Groningen (NL), Emden and Bremen in Germany, Esbjerg (DK), or Göteborg (Sweden), are some examples.

A major part of the NSR falls under support programmes from the EU Structural Funds, due to

- Development lagging behind – objective 1:
  northern Scotland and Flevoland in the Netherlands,

- Need for structural adjustment of industrialised regions – objective 2:
  major urban agglomerations in the UK, eastern parts of the Dutch NSR, northern DK, Swedish Fyrstad region, Bremen and Bremerhaven in Germany,

- Need for structural adjustment of rural areas - objective 5:
  major parts of the NSR rural areas.

A Norwegian support programme is developed in line with ESA regulations on state support. The programme aims at the compensation of disadvantages related to distance and cost due to low population density, small markets and low centrality. The delimitation of the national areas for regional support (NARS) is based on four dimensions: Labour market, population density and centrality, demography and income. The NARS contains approximately 26 % of the national population. The programme offers support to loans and investments to the least favoured areas. These areas are found in the NSR outside the Oslo fjord region and the major towns.

Unemployment: Unemployment rates and their changes differ widely among the countries involved. The sub-regions' development is predominantly governed by national trends. While unemployment rates increased significantly in Germany and Sweden, they decreased moderately in the Netherlands and in the U.K., and even sharply in Denmark.

Within the national NSR regions, the significance of the unemployment problem varies strongly. Sub-regions with above-(national) average, and those with below-average rates occur.

In Germany, there is a clear segmentation between cities (above average unemployment) and rural areas (below average). In Denmark, differences are less significant. In the Netherlands, regions in Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe have above-average unemployment, while other regions such as Alkmaar are better-off. In Sweden, interregional discrepancies within the NSR area are rather small, in contrast to the U.K., where some regions have extremely low unemployment rates (such as Borders, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire), while others are extremely high (Cleveland, Tyne and Wear, South Yorkshire). The unemployment level in Norway is generally low, although with regional variations. The highest levels are found in the old industrial regions of Østfold and Grenland, whereas the lowest are found in the north-western county of Sogn og Fjordane.

An analysis of relationships between the level of unemployment and its change during 1991-1997, expressed as differences to national averages reveals the following:

- "*strength*" combinations (-/+: below-average unemployment rates and better-than-average changes of that rate) exist for most German sub-regions (due to negative situation in eastern Germany), in Sweden (Eastern Västra Götaland, and Halland) and in Danish Sønderjyllands and Ribe Amt;

- "*weakness*" combinations (+/-: employment above average and trend worse than in the national average) exist for many sub-regions in the Netherlands (e.g. Groningen, Delfzijl, North Friesland),

<u>Sweden</u> (coastal areas of Västra Götaland) and in <u>British</u> sub-regions (such as Highlands, Five, Tay-side[45], Northumberland).

3. Information Technology and Knowledge Society

Among the factors determining on regions' competitiveness – economic structure, innovative power, regional accessibility, skills – knowledge and innovation are gaining importance. Hence, parallel to the improvement of education services, the strengthening of RTD (Research and Technological Development) is a major task for development promotion.

The traditional approach to further RTD has been to support large-scale research centres, which usually favours major urban agglomeration regions. Today, "policies to support and improve research, innovation, education and training, and so promote the innovation culture, are increasingly centred on the creation of networks ... to stimulate innovation in SMEs and to ensure the wide dissemination of research results."[46]

This trend is supported by the reduced cost of information transport and by the increasing weight of knowledge-based, 'footloose', economic activities in total employment.

The challenge is to use these trends in the promotion both, of advanced and of backward locations: Improving regional competitiveness through enhanced education, research, and information is different from traditional competition for industrial investments, not a win/lose matter, but can equally lead to win/win situations.

A further challenge is to avoid a dualisation of the society, by furthering the distance between the 'information *haves'* and the '*have-nots*'.

The new information technologies also provide for new possibilities to involve the society in planning processes.

Spatial policies shall make sure that disadvantaged locations get access to information and research networks – physically through appropriate infrastructure, and practically through required know-how.

At the same time, concepts for replacing personal travelling by information transport are ever increasing. In spite of limited success in the past, the breakthrough for this concept at a wider scale will very probably be achieved within the period covered by the spatial vision. Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that IT cannot provide a total substitute for person to person contact.

The countries around the North Sea are among those at the spearhead in the introduction of information technology in Europe. This does not only apply for the telecommunication systems available, but also to the advanced use of distant learning (particularly in countries with extremely low population densities as Sweden and Norway) and the formation of science and education networks.

Indicators for regional research and technology strength suggest that the NSR comprises both progressive and lagging-behind areas.

ADVANCES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – EMERGENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY
Challenges
Information technology
• reduced cost of information access in peripheral regions
• new opportunities for peripheral regions depending on equal access to IT networks
• new opportunities for the distribution of information on planning processes
Knowledge society
• reduced importance of traditional, and 'natural' location factors
• opportunities to strengthen towns and cities based on the improvement of education and knowledge provision services
• high threshold costs for IT investments to achieve effective support to peripheral regions
• growing importance of new 'economies of scale' with regard to science and education facilities – but not necessarily through spatial concentration, and instead through enhanced networking
• growing social imbalance within information society

"Innovation coefficient": This indicator states the number of patent applications per head of population.[47]

With the exception of the UK, the number of patent applications per million inhabitants in the North Sea Countries is above the European average of 92,3. The coefficient ranges between 78.9 (UK) and 208.9 in Sweden (1995)[48]. Whereas this figure increased in Denmark and Norway during 1989-1995, it dropped in Germany and Sweden. The situation in the Netherlands and the UK is rather stable.

Figures at regional levels show wide differences. In general, the NSR shows a positive development in patent applications per million inhabitants during the period of 1990 and 1995.[49]

In the *German* part of the NSR, the Hamburg agglomeration – within the NSR - has the highest rate, close to the German average. In Schleswig Holstein and north-western Germany patent applications are only about one third of the national average.

In the North Sea regions of the *Netherlands* the highest rate is found in province of North Holland, but still only ¾ of the national average. In other regions the number of patent applications is half of the national average.

In *Western Sweden* the rate is about the national average. There is no regional data available for *Denmark, Norway* and the *UK*.

Main centres for innovation in Norway, Denmark and Sweden are located in the capital regions (outside the NSR, except for Norway). They are also outside the NSR in Germany (south-western Germany), in the Netherlands (Randstad Region) and in England (south-eastern England). Most NSR regions lie outside the innovative centres of the respective countries.

Expenditure on research and development in relation to total GDP per head: In the European Community this ratio is 1.8%. Regional disparities are difficult to analyse, because the data is only available at different NUTS levels. The expenditure in Sweden is more than 2.55% of the total GDP; in Denmark it ranges at 1.55-2.05%. The same level is reported in the Netherlands and Lower Saxony, Germany.

In Schleswig Holstein the relative expenditure is lower (1.05-1.55% of GDP). Bremen spends more than 2.55%. In the North Sea Regions of the UK the picture is more diverse. East Anglia, the southernmost UK NSR region, has the highest level of expenditure (>2.55%). In the East Midlands expenditure is between 1.55 and 2.05%. The lowest level is reported in Yorkshire and Humberside (less than 1.05% of GDP). In the regions north of the latter 1.05-1.55% are spent on research and development. In the Norwegian regions the expenditure in percent of the total GDP is less than 1.05.

4. Mobile Society

The mobile society is characterised by increasing propensity to travel, from work commuting through business related to recreation trips. This increased propensity directs itself predominantly to vehicular travelling.

This trend is favoured by a number of mutually-supporting factors: growing car ownership rates, increasing leisure time, decreasing cost sensitivity due to growing income, below-average increase of variable cost of travelling, and above-average increase of public transport cost due to high labour cost intensity.

The main potentially counteracting factor stems from the chances of using the information technology discussed in the previous section.

MOBILE SOCIETY:
C h a l l e n g e s
• growing conflict between mobility demand and quality of life
• risk of segregation between mobile and less mobile population strata
• growing potential to reduce mobility demand through the use of information technologies
• growing potential for maintaining separated housing, working, education locations (rural residence/ urban employment; living and working or learning in different cities) through increased commuting

A major conflict lies in the fact that growing mobility tends to feed itself through growing spatial distances between residence and work, education etc. The idea of city networks to create wider labour markets and to improve social services provision may also result in unwanted travel generation.

The concept to promote commuting even over larger distances, as it is pursued for example in Germany or Sweden, in order to allow people to maintain rural residence in combination with urban employment or learning, may fuel a similar conflict.

Spatial planning is called to find ways which compromise these different objectives and which do not separate lesser mobile population groups – the poor, the aged, the disabled – from the more mobile majority.

It must be admitted that no ready-to-copy solution to these conflicting challenges has been found, specifically as regards rural areas where traditional public transport may sometimes prove economically not viable, as well as concerning inter-city business

travelling growing parallel to GDP and commuting going over ever-increasing distances.

The above trends and problems clearly affect the NSR. The NSR suffers from already heavily congested inter-city traffic infrastructure (London-Manchester/ Leeds axis in the U.K., Hamburg-Bremen-Ruhr area axis in Germany. Other, less densely populated, areas produce high per-capita travel demand.

Parallel to growing passenger traffic volumes, freight traffic, particularly on roads and across countries, is increasing rapidly. Shortsea shipping might become a viable alternative in specific cases, and this is a particular challenge for the NSR with its many sea ports. This requires integrated approaches that promote port hinterland links, co-operation among different actors in the transport chain, and reduction of modal-interchange cost levels. An Interreg II C project dealing with this issue[50] intends to develop Shortsea Shipping Promotion Centres and port co-operation. The issue of integrated cross-sector development is given only minor attention.

5. Changing Life Styles

A major trend in European societies is characterised by changing demand structures and growing demand differentiation, more attention paid to the quality of residential, working and other locations. Growing importance of the quality of spatial structures has become a main factor, after quantitative deficits of the post-war period were largely eliminated. Spatial quality implies improved architectural, urban, and landscape design as well as enhanced correspondence between individual demand groups' preferences and supplies. Differentiation of urban and rural development are becoming a primary issue, and responding to that requires increasingly local participation of different stake-holders.

This long-term, and not really new, trend has since some while changed industrial product development towards differentiation. Urban planning or development policies thinking in just broad demand categories are increasingly refused by the 'market'. The consequence may be unused urban areas, buildings and facilities at one place simultaneously with deficits at another place of the same region.

CHANGING LIFE STYLES
C h a l l e n g e s

Demand differentiation
- changing population structure (growing share of older sections, reduced household sizes, increasing share of one-person households; growing share of immigrants)
- housing demand moving towards changed locations
- increasing diversity of demand for dwellings and recreational environments from different population strata (age groups, household sizes, income groups, economic activity) with different life styles

Spatial quality further gaining importance
- growing importance of urban, housing and landscape design
- demand for urban environments increasingly specified (example: housing 'where the action is', or 'where the environment is attractive', but not: where 'no action – no attractive environment' are offered)

Spatial pressure
- growing tourism and recreation demand around and within cities
- migration from peripheral to larger cities, from old urban centres to the outskirts (sub-urbanisation)
- growing land-use pressure on valuable nature areas and landscapes
- growing mobility

This trend is primarily a result of higher average levels of income (though, sometimes, but not necessarily, at the expense of growing inequality of income distribution), and of improved knowledge on living conditions and ways of life elsewhere (due to more travelling and to improved information services).

An ongoing change of population structures adds to this, with growing shares of one-person households, of the elderly, and of those whose roots are not where they are living now.

As an effect of this trend, urban and regional spatial structures are put under constant pressure for re-engineering and upgrading. There is no spatial structure remaining optimal over time. Adaptability becomes a key word. Particular aspects are growing land use demands for tourism and recreation, for (lower-density) residential areas at changed locations.

One consequence of changing life-styles is just quantitative – growing land use demand. This trend is frequently further accentuated by growing population numbers in major cities: in their centres due to immigration from other regions and countries, and in their outskirts due to relocation within urban regions. Growing traffic volumes (particularly vehicular), growing threat to valuable nature and landscape areas are among the negative consequences to be tackled by spatial policies.

A second need is to respond to the demand for higher quality, including its differentiation according to different 'market segments'.

A third requirement is to counteract spatial segregation trends, often implicit to spatial differentiation.

These trends affect the NSR in many respects. The growing demand for recreation facilities causes problems for example in the Scandinavian countries, where the demand for summer cottages in coastal zones is expanding and became a relevant issue for spatial planning.

Sub-urbanisation trends are observed for example in the metropolitan area of Hamburg, in several U.K. cities, but also around other major cities within the NSR. The development of new towns (e.g. Almere and Lelystad in the Netherlands can also be observed. The peripheral towns have difficulties to maintain a healthy demographic structure. The younger population strata move to larger cities throughout the NSR. Commuting and traffic congestion become a dominant feature of the labour market.

6. Towards equality of men and women

The role of men and women experienced drastic changes during this century, and this trend has not yet come to an end. Increased employment participation of women is one of its major impacts, implying new demands for time-flexible jobs, and as a consequence, for day-care services and for maintaining or improving public transport services (for those families where both partners are gainfully employed, but possessing one car only).

TOWARDS EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN
Challenges
• Increasing demand for time-flexible employment opportunities • increasing need for day-care services • growing demand for public transport

Other challenges result from specific professional education demands, particularly for mothers seeking a re-entry into the labour market.

The trend towards equality of men and women has implications which range far beyond spatial policies, affecting almost any aspect of social life.

But appropriate spatial structures can support this trend by offering residential neighbourhoods combined with job opportunities and services. This demand is facilitated by the service society. Spatial structures also have an impact on the viability of public transport.

Some NSR countries like the Netherlands have tackled the issue of part time employment effectively. Nordic NSR countries have made particular progress in promoting women's equal rights, as reflected in high female economic participation rates and high provision of day-care services.

Nevertheless, specific spatial planning responses to this demand are not extensively discussed – in the NSR as well as in other EU regions.

7. Pressure on the environment – conflict among short and long-term benefits

Human life has influenced environmental conditions in many ways. Landscapes were changed according to the needs of agriculture, industrialisation, urbanisation and growing tourism. A growing area demand for residential and other uses including increasing mobility is satisfied at the expense of nature areas.

The "throw-away" attitude in economies with high material flows results in a depletion of natural resources and the generation of high quantities of industrial and domestic wastes. Despite efforts by the different countries to enhance recycling and waste avoidance, through levies and taxes, awareness programmes and regulations, the demand for landfill sites and other disposal facilities is still growing.

The depletion of limited natural resources such as non-urbanised areas, clean water and soils, minerals, and healthy breathing air is becoming relevant for sustainable economic development. A long term change is needed to replace fossil fuels by renewable energy sources.

In many cases the capability of remaining unspoilt nature areas has been exceeded to take over functions of those areas lost. Interactions between human society and the natural environment show increasing symptoms of vulnerability and natural hazards, with changes in climate and landscape.

Where the environment is losing its buffer function, pollution effects of urban and transport land use will be growing.

Among the increasing natural hazards are flooding frequency and severeness. The issue of flooding is closely linked to the most far-reaching consequence of human development neglecting environmental needs: the global climate change. Man made driving forces are energy use (burning of fossil fuels), agriculture, waste disposal (methane emission) and industrial activities (emission of greenhouse gases, energy consumption).

In more densely populated areas the fragmentation of habitats and protected zones prevents genetic inter-change, and reduces bio-diversity.

PRESSURE ON THE NATURAL AND MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT – GROWING CONFLICT AMONG SHORT- AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS

C h a l l e n g e s

Resource depletion
- Increasing pressure from urban and recreational land uses on nature areas
- Growing scarcity of unspoilt nature areas
- Fragmentation of habitats, reduced bio-diversity
- Reduced buffering capacity of remaining nature resources
- increasing natural hazards

Growing interdependencies nature – development
- Increasing interrelated trends of pollution (air, ground and surface water, soils, sea, noise) and urban/ transport land use with increasing flooding risk, climate change
- Growing relevance of sustainable development concepts versus short-term, one-dimensional, concepts
- Growing importance of nature and resources protection in harmony with economic promotion

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The quality of the urban environment is also affected. Many cities have set up environmental action plans. An example is the City of Århus in Denmark, where environmental plans focus on green corridors within the urban structure.[51]

Groundwater pollution

Exceedance of critical levels of nitrates infiltrated into groundwater is a problem in most NSR parts of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark[52], including the German bight, the Dutch Rhine estuary outside the NSR and the English bight; the bight of Edinburgh. Fair quality status has been recorded near Bergen, in the Oslo Fjord and at sampling points near Göteborg. Good quality status has been registered in the central North Sea.

Concerning phosphate concentration, the sampling points in Germany, Netherlands and England reported a bad quality status; in Scotland, Sweden and in the central North Sea conditions are classified 'fair', and in Norway 'poor'. The Netherlands, the UK and Germany are the major pollutants among the North Sea Countries.[53]

The ESDP addresses major environmental issues, which are relevant for the NSR, too:

- waste management
- climate change
- pollution of water,
- acidification of water courses and forests
- loss of bio-diversity,
- destruction of cultural landscapes and
- increasing pressures on the Union's urban heritage.[54]

Strategies to cope with these environmental issues need to be:

- *differentiated*, to take into account the complexity and diversity of the interrelationships to spatial topics,
- *far-sighted*, to consider the manifold *indirect* interaction between human activities and the environment,
- *multi-dimensional (cross-sector)*, to benefit from mutually supporting impacts of measures taken in different fields, and to reduce frequently observed counter-effects,
- *cross-regional*, to make use of complementarities, and to avoid mutual hindrance in the achievement of joint goals,
- *participative*, to involve all relevant stakeholders contributing to and affected by implementation measures.

For relevant issues requiring integrated approaches in the NSR see below chapter 9.

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8. Changing Relationship Government – Individual

There is a universal trend described by the principles of subsidiarity, participation and decentralisation. This trend favours the delegation of planning and implementation responsibilities to lower levels of public administration – from national to regional, from regional to municipal, from municipal to neighbourhood levels.

It also gives more weight to the participation of population groups in planning processes, involving them in the identification of appropriate solutions

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(bottom-up approaches) and in the selection among different alternatives.

Participation has been particularly helpful to promote the concept of sustainable development which is now increasingly becoming a generally accepted overall principle.

Participation of the private economic sector has proved useful to find cost-effective solutions to public tasks.

Participation and bottom-up approaches are not always the solution for conflicting interests. Thus, planning and development administrations have a higher responsibility to reconcile different, openly presented, interests, and to negotiate between the interest of individual groups and that of the community as a whole.

CHANGING RELATIONSHIP GOVERNMENT – INDIVIDUAL Challenges
• Increasing appreciation of bottom-up approaches
• Growing need to consider group interests without neglecting the overall interests of society
• Trend towards decentralisation of competencies
• Sustainability in mainstream policy formation

Participation has sometimes negative efficiency repercussions on planning processes. This is sometimes a cost justified by the associated benefits. But the discussion how to balance participation and efficiency has not come to an end yet.

Demands to spatial planning and policies can be grouped into two main categories: First demand is to organise planning processes in such a way that participation is effectively made possible. This includes the use for appropriate information media and techniques.

The second demand is to make sure that the common interest will not be lost in participative discussions, and that conflicting interests are justly settled.

Countries around the North Sea are certainly among those promoting decentralised planning and implementation below the national level. The role of municipalities is strong in all NSR countries, the regional level is about to be strengthened in Sweden and in the U.K.

Public participation is not a new concept in the North Sea Region; it is something that has been promoted over many years. Nevertheless, the process of achieving public participation to the benefit of society is ongoing, both in terms of organisation and the one improved information techniques to inform the public.

V. STRATEGIES

Having set up the spatial visions, analysed present spatial characteristics of the NSR, and assessed challenges resulting from future global trends, this section discusses strategies which may contribute to the envisioned development. In doing so, use is made of relevant experience existing in the different countries and regions. Attention is also being paid to approaches and experience in current InterregIIC projects and other transnational programmes.

1. Strategies for the NSR as a whole

VISION STATEMENT 1

A NSR well integrated into the Development of the European Space and into the World Economy

The main **aims** to achieve this vision had been described in section II as follows:

➢ High-quality access to knowledge allow all parts of the NSR to join knowledge-based developments.

➢ High-quality transport infrastructure and services link the NSR with other regions.

➢ Good internal transport links within the NSR ensure that all parts of the region share the benefits from external integration.

➢ Co-operation across regions and countries enhances the effectiveness of spatial policies.

➢ The NSR's common interests are effectively brought forward vis-à-vis national and international bodies.

The implications of these aims are discussed below.

| 1.1 | High-quality access to knowledge allows all parts of the NSR to join knowledge-based developments |

Knowledge has become a main factor deciding on regions' and cities' competitiveness. New communication technologies provide new chances for decentralised, even virtual, knowledge centres. This generates chances for non-metropolitan, secondary, cities in promoting their economies.

The good functioning of such network-type knowledge centres requires ubiquitous good access to IT 'highways', technically, in terms of user charges and of users' qualification.

Within the vision period, technical access will be almost universally available. But it is important, at the present stage, to take care that regions with good potentials, which many regions within the NSR do have, are fully included from the very beginning so that no adverse spatial structures will be cemented.

The wide-spread competence exploit the benefit of new information and communication technologies is crucial to the success of regional development promotion. New internet-based businesses can be created almost everywhere, given good-quality, low-price communication systems and qualified personnel.

The EU Commission has recognised the spatial relevance of knowledge centres and has therefore formulated in its framework for action "Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union"[55] a specific action "Support for European (!) knowledge centres". Such approach may easily be to the disadvantage of secondary cities. These must seek their own approaches based on inter-city networking.

The experience in network-type knowledge centre promotion is still limited. The NSR can become a pioneer, with a strong involvement of non-government sectors, profit and non-profit. An experience exchange can be particularly useful.

Approaches to using modern communication technologies to develop education, economy and inter-regional co-operation are studied by the InterregIIC

project *Nordnet.* But this project concentrates on possibilities to reduce the need for vehicular traffic (see VISION 5 – Urban regions in the NSR develop in an environment friendly way).

A successful example for the establishment of tele-working jobs is an "Innovative Action" supported by the LEADER programme (see VISION 10 – Rural populations participate in economic and social progress of societies). This project has shown that teleworking is far more than simple data entering. About 100 high quality jobs have been created.

Conclusion

The economic potentials of new communication technologies and the way the are used are given too little attention in the current InterregIIC projects. These potentials are not limited to the promotion of peripheral regions. They may strengthen secondary cities in their competition with major cities. They have an impact on spatial structures within urban agglomerations by changing the way communication is carried out among companies, introducing new forms of shopping, and changing location factors for commerce and services. Spatial planning needs to acknowledge these new forces and use and direct them for the benefit of towns and rural areas.

This offers wide and promising potentials for further co-operation and experience exchange with Interreg IIIB and beyond.

Strategies:

♦ Identify more clearly the economic potentials resulting from IT for different types of cities and regions

♦ Develop IT links that favour peripheral areas, technically as well as financially

♦ Develop further existing co-operation networks, inter-city, cross-border and transnational by regional and local authorities, research and education institutes –public and private–

♦ Enhance "media competence" in disadvantaged as well as in privileged regions, particularly as regards SMEs as motors of sustainable economic development.[56]

1.2   High-quality transport infrastructure and services link the NSR with other regions

The more progress is made with the TEN concept of the EU, the more important will it be to improve the integration of internal transport infrastructure of the NSR with trans-European infrastructure. Though this is recognised by the EU Commission, it puts additional demands to national infrastructure policies, and to a clear formulation of needs of individual regions.

The NSR *ports* play an important role in the policy 'from road to sea'. So far, this policy cannot claim major achievements. A "state-of-the-art" study[57] (also see box 1) prepared on behalf of DGVII, concludes:[58]

"Perhaps the most important trend ... is a significant degree of "fragmentation" of R&D effort in the SSS field, ... problems that are methodologically similar in many contexts have been typically addressed in isolation. The most obvious consequence ... is that the impact of R&D efforts to serve the real needs of European SSS has been so far limited."

DGVII (Transport) has launched "Concerted Actions (CA)"[59], among which it included actions to co-ordinate SSS development.

SSS requires action on the side of shipping compa-nies, forwarders, shippers, ports and port hinterland infrastructure. Each of these components, pursued individually, runs a high risk of failure. None of the major players has so far ventured to take this risk, whereas the trends towards major intercontinental hubs has largely been induced by shipping companies. Only concerted action can overcome this trap.

The DGVII initiative, while providing valuable insight into needs and potentials, will not close by itself this co-ordination gap. Those having the highest interest in SSS – the port regions – should assume a stronger role in SSS promotion, in co-ordination with the different actors. As regards port hinterland infrastructure, within TEN and outside TEN, they need to lobby for more support from national and EU bodies.

Within the NSR InterregIIC programme, one project also deals with SSS (see box). This is another contribution to the initiative of DGVII, including joint marketing measures. But again, it may not be enough to trigger off a development which was so far hindered by the absence of integrated, cross-sector, transnational promotion.

The InterregIIC project includes major NSR ports, such as Oslo, Göteborg, Bremen, Great Yarmouth. The involvement of a greater number of minor ports would be desirable once the project approach has been demonstrated as promising.

SSS-CA

CONCERTED ACTION ON SHORTSEA SHIPPING

(EU Commission, DG VII)

State of the Art Study

A **"state of the art" study** initiated by DGVII[60] concludes:

There has been an explosive growth in shortsea shipping related research during the last six years. ...there have been about 80 papers presented at the three European Research Roundtable on Shortsea Shipping conferences ... (1992, 1994, and 1996). In addition, the three FAST international conferences on fast waterborne transport (1991, 1993, and 1995) presented close to 300 papers, of which about 70 directly focus on shortsea shipping. Various projects, national and international, have been also initiated in this area. In the context of the 4th Framework Programme, the European Commission/ Directorate General for Transport (DGVII) has launched in early 1996 several shared cost projects, as well as a concerted action explicitly targeted to shortsea shipping. Other directorates such as DGXII and DGXIII have also launched related projects in early 1996.

Research Projects funded by the EU

DGVII

- ASDSS: Analysis of supply and demand of shipping services.
- BOPCOM: Baltic open port communication system.
- EUROBORDER: Identifies bottlenecks, develops functional specifications and proposes demonstrators to improve the ports' function as intermodal hubs.
- E-EIS: Transport Sector. Development of the E-EIS methodology for the European transport sector and its application to the European shipping sector.
- EMMA: The potential for transferring freight from road to high speed sea transport.
- INTRASEAS: Safety and economic assessment of the performance of port-related intermodal transport management.
- IPSI: Improved port-ship interface.
- SHIFTING CARGO: Seeks to increase the utilisation of Europe's waterways. Identification of short and long term strategies.
- SPHERE: Small/medium sized ports with harmonised, effective re-engineered processes.

DGXII (Brite-Euram)

- EIES: European Information Exchange Service for the Communication between Harbour Areas.
- INTERPORT: Integrating Waterborne Transport in the Logistic Chain.
- WISDOM: Waterborne Information System Distributed to Other Modes.

InterregIIC Project

NETWORK OF SHORTSEA SHIPPING PROMOTION CENTRES

Partners:

- City of Bremen, D (Lead Partner)
- Chamber of Commerce Oldenburg, FRG
- Oslo Port Authority, N
- Göteborg &Västra Götaland Region, S
- City of Padborg, DK
- North England Assembly, UK
- Norfolk County Council, UK
- Napier University Business School, Edinburgh, UK

Background: This is a continuation of the InterregIIC project "Identifying regional logistic parameters"[61] showing chances to strengthen shortsea shipping through main stakeholders co-operation.

Objective: Increase the share of Shortsea Shipping in total transport to substitute land, particularly: road, transport

Expected project result: Strategies and Instruments for marketing of Shortsea Shipping

Strategies:	Activities:
1. Set up SSS promotion centres	• Analyse conditions for successful co-operation among companies and of ports with shipping companies • Specify internal (within the region) and external (within the network) working structure of promotion centres • Set up a communication and presentation platform
2. Promote co-operation to optimise logistic processes	• Determine co-operation needs and requirements of public authorities and the private sector • Identify co-operation areas • Regional project teams provide technical assistance
3. Promote networking, form a lobby for SSS	• not indicated
4. Increase market transparency through an electronic data base	• not indicated; kind of information foreseen: transit time, type of cargo, available capacity, ports of call

Time Schedule:

1. Analysis (finalised October 1999)
2. Develop Network of Promotion Centres (Aug-1999)
3. Set up co-operation network (Dec-2000)
4. Benchmarking (finalised March 2001)

Present status (Dec. 99): no results are available yet

The *spatial impacts* from the project are only indirect. Spatial planning is affected when it comes to the improvement of accessibility of ports and their hinterland for the benefit of SSS and the region. No particular statement is made in the project description about the upgrading of hinterland links.

Another project component with potentially spatial significance deals with co-operation between ports and forwarders for improved logistical centres. But this is not a specific focus of the project.

Conclusion

A major issue to be actively promoted in the NSR is short-sea shipping (SSS). Various EU-sponsored projects, including InterregIIC projects in the NSR, are already dealing with SSS. But there is the need for a broader approach. The Interreg programme is particularly suitable to this. But there should be close consultation with existing other programmes in this field from DG VII and others.

Strategies

- ♦ Promote an improved integration of NSR infrastructure into the TEN network.

- ♦ Port regions co-operate to take a leading role as intermodal junctions[62] in the promotion of short-sea shipping, involving actors responsible for port hinterland infrastructure[63], shipping companies, shippers and forwarders.

- ♦ Port regions develop their lobbying power towards SSS promotion, including strong involvement in pertinent EU programmes.

1.3   Good internal transport links in the NSR ensure that all parts of the region share the benefits from external integration

Parallel to the TEN networks the strengthening of internal transport links within the NSR is of equal importance. External integration will not bring about the desired regional development impacts, unless the individual NSR regions are bound together more effectively. Improvements are still required, for example (and not exhaustively) on the axes:

- Göteborg – Oslo as part of the Copenhagen/ Malmö – Oslo axis;

- Amsterdam – Groningen – Bremen – Hamburg, this maybe being the prototype of a transnational axis with potentially strong regional impact.

Similar other relevant regional links shall be identified with the involvement of regions affected.

Peripheral regions will not all be developed through further urbanisation. This is neither economically feasible, nor is it desirable from the viewpoint of diversity. To ensure the participation of their populations in economic progress, they need to be linked effectively to the NSR's activity centres:

A major problem for sparsely populated regions is the weak economic basis for organising reasonable public passenger and good transport services. This even more so in some peripheral regions of the NSR.

The peripheral regions in the NSR have some experience to share, e.g. as regards the role and commercial fundaments for regional air transport. Such experience may be used to develop improved transport services.

Railway services will, in many cases, not be feasible to bind peripheral and central regions together (except along major corridors running through peripheral regions), and air links can only have a complementary role. Coastal ferries and bus services therefore have an important role to play. An exchange of experience on commercial limitations, needs for public support, best ways of organising transport services, the role of local and regional authorities and interdependencies with economic development promotion would be beneficial.

Another aspect calling for improved internal transport systems is the general change in logistics of industry and commerce, distribution patterns, warehousing and just-in-time systems.

Conclusion

There are two main issues which should be promoted: linking axes (a) between economically powerful, though not of European agglomeration status, NSR regions, and (b) between peripheral regions as well as the efficiency of transport services both for passenger and freight traffic with special focus on environmentally friendly modes of transport.

Strategies:

- ♦ Identify, with regions' participation, priorities to develop efficient regional transport systems[64] [65], and promote identified priority axes vis-à-vis national governments and EU bodies.

- ♦ Improve transport links of peripheral regions including islands, taking into account air and ferry

transport and the further development of corresponding infrastructure facilities.[66]

1.4   Co-operation across regions and countries enhances the effectiveness of spatial policies

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Under the new Community Initiative for cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation to promote balanced development that the Commission proposes for ERDF funding as of the year 2000, the Commission has declared its intention"... to foster co-operation between urban areas in different Member States. Such co-operation will concern in particular the development and implementation of joint cross-border and inter-regional urban development strategies and planning approaches".[67]

First experience from projects of the InterregIIC programme clearly indicates the usefulness of such cooperation to improve spatial planning.

Strategies:

The NSR subscribes to the strategies (policy options) identified in ESDP:

♦   Promote integrated spatial development strategies for city clusters within the framework of transnational and cross-border co-operation, including corresponding rural areas and their small cities and towns.[68]

♦   Promote co-operation at regional, cross-border and transnational level of towns and cities in the NSR.[69]

1.5   The NSR's common interests are effectively brought forward vis-à-vis national and international bodies

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To defend the joint interests of various parts of the NSR, an effective identification of joint interests and corresponding lobbying are required.

This document is one step to this end. This needs to be continued to feed in the NSR areas' specific requirements, when nation-wide or transnational initiatives are formulated.

In the course of the InterregIIC North Sea programme various networks are being set up for a whole range of topics. The expert knowledge gained in these networks forms a valuable basis, if properly used, for

the promotion of NSRs common interest at the European as well as world-wide platform.

The NSR can play a leading role in sharing experience with other regions and countries having similar problems (example: Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

Conclusion

The lobbying (in its proper meaning) for common interests of the NSR is a legitimate aspiration. It requires close co-operation among different existing transnational initiatives in the region. Ways need to be found to better mobilise expert knowledge gained through InterregIIC and other joint projects to the benefit of other initiatives.

Strategies:

♦   Make more systematic use of joint cross-North-Sea initiatives and programmes (e.g. protection of the Wadden Sea, development of North Sea energy or fishery resources, coastal zone protection).

♦   Continue with the identification of common interest.

♦   Promote experience exchange between the different Interreg regions on issues of joint interest.

VISION STATEMENT 2
A NSR with a balanced spatial structure

Main **aims** to achieve this vision had been identified in chapter II as follows:

➢   Reasonable accessibility for populations in all parts of the NSR to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information is ensured.

➢   Cross-sector co-ordination at all levels helps to make sector policies instrumental (in addition to sector objectives) for spatial policies.

➢   Large single or multi-sector projects are located and designed so as to support wider spatial development objectives.

The implications of these criteria are discussed below.

2.1. Reasonable accessibility for populations to differentiated employment markets, education facilities, cultural activities, and information is ensured

During last decades national spatial policies within the NSR have changed their ambitions to shape the functions and economic levels of different regions lagging behind, particularly peripheral regions.

A more modest attitude has gained attention nowadays which does not try to bring all regions to the same level of economic development. One reason was the perceived difficulty in achieving that goal. At the same time, the value of diversity is more appreciated nowadays.

But declared spatial policies have rarely made this explicit, leaving spatial policy objectives vague - in some NSR countries more, in others less. It might be the time now to draw conclusions, and this requires primarily the input from the regions themselves in question.

The EU Commission, DGXVI, has launched a transnational co-operation programme for the Northern Periphery, including Scotland (Highlands and Islands, adjacent areas of North and West Grampian, Rural Stirling and Upland Tayside). Sweden (all objective 6 and adjacent coastal areas) and Norway are also included, but only for regions outside the NSR (see box overleaf.)

This programme aims at sustained support for, and maintenance of, current settlement structures. Proposed instruments include support to consumer and business services, including the use of IT, promotion of co-operation among SMEs, of distance learning, and of resource based economic activities. It also includes projects for sustainable resource management (land, water, energy, wild-life).

The Commission background report to the programme states: "From the Scottish perspective peripherality causes problems not encountered in other participating countries, such as Sweden and Finland; ... in Scandinavian countries, policy decisions have been made at Government level which have led to increasing decentralisation of public and other agencies. There has also been a policy commitment towards positive selective action to benefit remoter areas. It is for this reason that this programme focuses on the more peripheral Highlands and Islands of Scotland ...."

No results from this initiative have been received yet.

Conclusion

An unbiased evaluation is required as regards success potentials for, and the desirability of, policies to maintain present settlement structures in peripheral areas against current trends, the role local policies can play, required cross-sector national support. Peripheral regions are called to discuss different options for their future, instead of remaining the object of sometimes unclear national and transnational spatial policies.

Strategies:

♦ Differentiate support measures to peripheral regions depending on their individual potentials;

♦ Seek agreement with individual peripheral regions on specific, instead of uniform, development objectives;

♦ Set up a priority programme for improved accessibility to and from peripheral regions, based on such agreements.

2.2. Cross-sector co-ordination at all levels helps to make sector policies instrumental (in addition to sector objectives)

In the course of ESDP discussions, the consideration of spatial impacts from EU sector programmes has been given impetus. This is now widely recognised by the EU Commission, particularly as regards application of Structural Funds. The Commission included into its "Sustainable Urban Development in the EU action framework as Action 1: "Explicit urban programming for Structural Fund Support".

While the general interdependencies have become more clear, and the need for cross-sector considerations accepted, a need still exists to specify present policies' shortcomings in this regard. Also, some policies such as CAP are less responsive than others.

Regions play an important role to bring such theoretical considerations to real life, by indicating where they observe unwanted impacts and by proposing conceptual amendments. This refers to EU as well as to national policies.

But also at regional levels, inter-sector co-ordination with regard to the spatial, social, environmental and economical effects of sector measures needs to be enhanced. In this context, there is wide room for international exchange of experience.

- Northern Periphery –
PILOT ACTIONS FOR TRANSNATIONAL CO-OPERATION ON SPATIAL PLANNING
(ARTICLE 10 ERDF)

Objective: Sustained support for, and maintenance of, current settlement structures through support based industries in the areas.

Types of supported projects:

1. Projects involving the provision of services
2. Projects concerning business development and sustainable resource management
3. Dissemination of knowledge, exchange of good practice

1 Projects involving the provision of services:

Address barriers which prevent the provision of efficient service production for households and local companies in sparsely population areas.

Project themes:

A. Maintenance of household oriented services, e.g.:

- pooling of public and private sector resources to maintain a satisfactory level of service;
- improving local planning practices to obtain more cost-efficient solutions;
- inter-regional co-operation to provide specialised services.

B. Making use of information technology to compensate for a remote location and long distances, e.g.:

- distance learning to provide higher level or specialised education not otherwise accessible;
- specialised health-care through tele-medicine;
- specialised business services and market related information through the application of IT;
- locating information-oriented services in remote areas by means of new technology.

C. Co-ordination of actions to provide services for SMEs, e.g.:

- advice and information on locational questions
- bulk transport arrangements for groups of small businesses.

3 Disseminate knowledge, exchange good practice:

A. Documentation of specific conditions and best practise in the northern periphery:

- concepts of peripherality and northern conditions;
- strategies for rural economic development;
- situation in transportation and communication;
- planning practices in areas with depopulation;
- welfare strategies and service provision in sparsely populated areas.

2 Business development and sustainable resource management

New ways of value creation in existing companies and, through entrepreneurial activity, in new businesses in very sparsely populated areas; sustainable management of resources.

Project themes:

A. Sustainable management of natural resources, e.g.:

- conditions for economic viability of rural communities
- sustainable land, marine and water management
- sustainable energy provision
- wild-life surveillance and management

B. Promoting resource based industries, e.g.

- exploitation of primary resources
- cross-sector projects to promote trading networks
- adding value locally, e.g. for quality control
- joint marketing strategies
- tourism, particularly cultural, historical and wild-life based;
- commercial activities based on Northern/Arctic conditions (car testing, arctic construction, cold climate technology).

C. Environment of co-operation among SMEs and between SMEs and commercial or development partners. Strategies to overcome problems of small scale businesses through networking between SMEs and major R&D institutes, e.g.:

- establishing functional linkages and communication between local SMEs and their partners outside the peripheral areas;
- increasing interaction and mobility among universities/ high-schools, local companies and local development organisations;
- establishing export and marketing co-operation among SMEs;
- co-operative production in networks of small scale manufacturers.

Conclusion

Requirements for improved co-ordination among different national as well as among EU sector programmes are nowhere better identified than at regional and local levels. Regions are called to identify perceived negative impacts from insufficient co-ordination. But the sector co-ordination task at regional and local levels, too, requires permanent monitoring, and different approaches may be interchanged.

Strategies

♦ Involve regions in the clarification of spatial impacts of EU and national sector policies and in recommendations for their early consideration

♦ Develop improved inter-sector co-ordination *procedures* across borders (not limited to the immediate border zones, e.g. of Euroregions) at regional and local levels.[70]

2.3. Large single or multi-sector projects are located and designed so as to support wider spatial development objectives

Inter-sector consultation during project design should be compulsory for any major development project, whether single or multi sector.

It is not always the lack of co-ordination willingness of sector institutions preventing proper consideration of spatial, social, environmental or economical impacts. Sometimes there is a lack of readily available inputs from spatial planners. This can be attributed to (a) insufficient assessment instruments and experience, and (b) each individual project being too specific to allow the application of generalised methods.

The latter is frequently true. But it is not a speciality of spatial planning, and should not prevent from developing standardised assessment tools (not just methodologies), as is common practise under similar conditions in sector planning.

The deficiency in available standard tools can be overcome through regular ex-ante evaluation and ex-post monitoring, corresponding regular updating of assessment instruments, and broad dissemination of individual projects' assessment.

An issue, which has gained attention, is the location of new large retail centres. Traditional city cores are weakened by draining away of customers. The service standard for less mobile people decreases and, especially in smaller towns, the car dependency

for shopping rises. At the same time individual shops are substituted by commercial chains.

In the countries of the North Sea Region the location of retail centres tends to be increasingly regulated. The common aim is to strengthen town centres and to avoid developments outside central areas that lead to urban sprawl. The increased dependency on car-use shall be hindered. Exceptions are granted according to conditions in the different countries.

In Denmark 50% of shopping floor area built during 1987-1994 were located outside the city cores, with a preference to the edges of town centres. Policies are that a larger proportion of shopping areas are located in central parts of the cities or greater neighbourhoods, and a variety of shops must be found in small and medium sized cities. Municipal planning in Denmark must therefore, with some exceptions, by law

- promote a varied supply of shops in smaller and middle sized towns and cities and in the individual parts of bigger cities

- ensure that areas for shopping are well accessible for especially walking, bicycling, and public transport,

- promote socially environmentally sustainable retail structures with reduced transport distances in relation to shopping, and

- locate areas for bigger shopping purposes in the central parts of cities or (in bigger cities) in central areas of bigger neighbourhoods.

Regional plans in Denmark must have been revised accordingly until the year 2001. The responsible ministry reports every two years to the parliament on the achievements.

In Germany shops with more than 700 m² of floor space must be built in designated areas provided by local land use plans.

In the Netherlands the A-B-C strategy is applied: Retail trade can only be located at public transport junctions (A centres); and in locations (B centres) with good accessibility by public and individual transport. In locations only accessible by cars (C centres) retail trade is not permitted.

Norway has issued a temporary ban for the next five years on the construction of shopping centres outside central areas of cities and towns. The limit for the development of new shopping centres is 3,000 m² without approval of the county governor. Exceptions are made on the basis of an impact study supplied by the developer.

Conclusions

Operational tools for quick first assessment of large projects' spatial impacts are required to promote the receptiveness of sector planners for this particular need. More systematic execution and cross-project evaluation of territorial impact studies shall be supported. International exchange of experience may facilitate this ambition.

As regards the location of large new retail areas, various NSR countries are experimenting with different planning tools. A close impact monitoring and cross-countries evaluation should be arranged.

Strategies:

♦ Identify priority projects where the combination of different sector measures is expected to promote regional development

♦ Promote territorial impact assessment (TIA) as an instrument for spatial assessment of large projects (particularly: in the transport and energy sector, but also for major business, residential or retail districts).[71]

♦ Create standardised 'quick-assessment' tools for TIA.

♦ Document and analyse the experience with TIA.

VISION STATEMENT 3

The NSR as a Model for Democratic and co-operative Planning

Main **aims** to achieve this vision had been described in chapter III as follows:

➢ Improved communication between the elected and the electorate minimises barriers.

➢ Improved tools for effective participation are applied.

➢ Transnational consultation on plans having transnational impacts is practised.

The implications of these aims are discussed below.

3.1   Improved communication between the elected and the electorate minimises barriers

In democratic societies the electorates delegate decision powers affecting their daily life to those elected and to the administrations controlled by these. A wide gap in the level of information creates mistrust on the side of the electorate, and a tendency on the side of the elected to use information advantages for pressing through decisions.

New IT instruments may provide an opportunity to reduce this information imbalance. There is still little experience of how such instruments can be effectively used and will reach the different target groups.

Strategies

♦ Experiment with the use of IT instruments to improve information and involvement of the electorate and of specific target groups.

♦ Promote the international exchange of experience on the use of such tools.

3.2   Improved tools for effective participation are applied

Although the elected and the administrations are accountable to the electorate, it will not be avoided that people sometimes feel unsatisfied with decisions made, and deem to have little influence. Even with participation being bound by law - e.g. in town planning matters – this is often perceived by population as a mere one-way information by planners and politicians, with people's suggestions or objections are being adequately considered.

The "European Sustainable Cities Report"[72] indicates a number of mechanisms facilitating greater public involvement in decision making processes.

Environmental Fora: This non-standardised model brings together various sections of the community to discuss issues and contribute to the decision making process. "The most important characteristic is that a discursive and consensual approach is maintained, thereby facilitating liaison between the local authority and the community and between different interests within the community"[73].

Roundtables: This is a type of environmental forum having three significant functions: It is a catalyst of the promotion of policies and processes for sustainable development, it bases the decisions on broad consensus and comprises a broad range of key persons. Other characteristics like multi or single focussed, level of political sphere, etc. can differ according to the purpose of its initiation.

The Natural Step: This mechanism for consensus building is "based on a process of enlisting support for a 'consensus' set of principles or decisions through co-opting established interests and building support from below. Once the basic set of principles have been agreed there is a much stronger basis for generating further involvement".[74]

A local project in this regard was initiated in 1994 by *Drammen*, Norway. Students from local schools elaborate suggestions and priorities concerning their situation, which are sent to the municipality. The proposals are checked there regarding existing plans and economic possibilities. During annual meetings chaired by the mayor, the students present their proposal to the Youth parliament. The members negotiate on their implementation. Each school is granted some proposals. For the time being the CYC deals exclusively with school related topics. It is envisaged to integrate regional subjects and other public issues.

A youth parliament has also been initiated in *East Lothian*, UK with the purpose to raise awareness of the needs of young people and to recognise their contribution to the community. The parliament is made up by representatives from six towns and their surroundings which constitute East Lothian. In future it is intended to gain more weight and to be set up as a Council Committee disposing of an own budget.

The experience in the NSR countries with these and other forms of participative development is valuable. Its systematic and comparative assessment among NSR regions and local authorities is considered extremely useful.

Enhanced effective participation needs to be supported by technical assistance: Otherwise, those invited to participate will easily feel lost in 'techno-speak' – unable to seriously participate -, are misled by over-simplification, or do not sufficiently consider the indirect impacts of different decisions under discussion. Technical assistance and innovative co-ordination instruments can also help to bring down the 'lowest possible level' of decision taking according to the subsidiarity principle.

A major aim of the InterregIIC project NOORD XXI is the enhancement of participation in planning processes, with a particular focus on the youth. (Another aim of the project is to find ways for local economic promotion based on endogenous potentials and rural-urban integration). The project is still in the stage of preparation. No results are available yet.

Participation needs also to be discussed under the aim of social integration. Such approaches require adequate technical support and must consider the specific difficulties of those groups traditionally less involved in participative processes.

The City of Oslo/ N and the Ministry of Environment have initiated a project meeting these requirements (see box overleaf).

A striking characteristic of this project are the strong and active community based organisations. The local community has been the driving force over a long period.

A strong partnership between the local community and the local administration was established at the initial stage, formulating the goals for the Oslo Old Town. Considerable improvements of the physical environment in several neighbourhoods could be achieved since then. This has led to renewed optimism. The closing conference of the project, as well as the Environmental Cities programme, will be in September 2000.
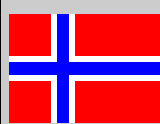
Conclusion

Effective ways for participation need to be permanently developed due to an ever-less mono-lithic electorate and more distinct interest groups. Practical approaches in NSR countries at regional and local levels provide a valuable source of mutual learning. Considerable experience with participative development exists in the different parts of the NSR. Transnational exchange of experience is promising to strengthen local capacities and should be further promoted.

Strategies

♦ Promote the exchange of experience on different approaches to achieve effective participation of different population groups.

♦ Promote the identification of ways how to provide adequate technical assistance to those to participate.

♦ Promote bottom-up approaches without neglecting the needs for a comprehensive overview (top-down responsibility for adequate consideration of overall interests).

♦ Develop specific tools to involve specific population groups in planning processes.

InterregIIC Project NOORD XXI – QUALITY BY IDENTITY BEYOND TRADITIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Partners:

- NOORD XXI Foundation, Groningen, NL (lead partner)
- Østfold County, N
- Buskerud County Council, N
- Västra Götaland, S
- Aberdeenshire Council, UK

Objectives:

- Promote public participation in planning processes
- Enhance youth involvement in planning and policy making
- Enhance rural-urban interaction
- Promote the use of regional potentials
- Strengthen identity of regions

Expected project results:

- Coherent cross-sector planning approaches,
- Models for improved public participation,
- Measures for sustainable economic promotion,
- Analysis of recent changes and problems regarding the urban-rural system,
- International network providing advice and supporting transnational projects.

Strategies:	**Activities:**
1. Promote regional identity and quality to become a stable basis for regional development	• Analysis of the image of towns and regions judged by the residents and from visitors. • Initiate local projects for the promotion of identity
2. Promote bottom up approaches for the integration of target groups	• Set up local youth parliaments

Time Schedule:

1. Project preparation and organisation
   June 1998 – Sept. 1998
2. Description of partner regions' spatial planning issues
   July 1998 – November 1998
3. Selection of local projects
   December 1998 – June 2000
4. Implementation of local projects in Ostfold, Buskerud, Västra Götaland, East Lothian, Aberdeenshire
   Feb. 1999 – June 2000.
5. Evaluation of local projects
   January 2000 – Aug 2000
6. Evaluation of NOORDXXI, final plenary
   October 1999 – December 2000

Present status (Dec. 1999):

The project is in the stage of preparation; concrete local projects not yet defined

Best Practice OSLO OLD TOWN – COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT[75]

Initiator:

Ministry of the Environment, Municipality of Oslo, Norway

Objectives:

Improvement of environmental, housing and health conditions, creation of new jobs, drawing attention to assets of historic monuments

Background:

The Old Town in the inner city area of Oslo, with 22,000 inhabitants, has potential to become one of the main attractions in Oslo. In the late eighties, environmental conditions were poor, with derelict housing and a lack of green areas and parks. Railway lines, harbour and heavy traffic routes covered more than 35% of the land-area making the noise-level, pollution- and accident rates the highest in Oslo. Education levels of its residents were low by Norwegian standards and unemployment rates were twice the Oslo average.

The Process:

When the project was initiated in the late eighties the planning process and public participation were the key word. Funding was provided by the Ministry of Health in association with WHO's Healthy Cities Programme. The process is directed towards the elaboration of a plan for the promotion of the Environmental Health for Oslo Old Town.

A series of workshops were the fundament of the planning process. Different community-based organisations and the local administration took part.

An environmental status report was prepared proving the poor conditions in the Old Town.

Short term/ spot improvements (upgrading of public parks, outer appearance) and long term developments through the "Vision for Oslo Old Town year 2000" were decided.

Neighbourhood associations became active partners and used the media, local politicians and key persons from the administration to support their views.

In 1993 "The Environmental Town of Old Oslo" programme was established financed jointly by the city and the state with an annual budget of 1.2 million Euro.

A secretariat was set up and co-ordinated activities, projects and allocated "seed" money closely collaborating with residents and administration.

Achievements (selection)

- Children's City Farm
- New road tunnel for through traffic
- Environmental streets with tree lining, bicycle lanes ...
- Upgraded urban parks and open space
- Re-opening of primary school
- Building of secondary school
- Refurbishment of school yards
- Medieval festival to promote positive identity
- Multi-cultural information centre
- Various self-help initiatives
- Reduction of pollution, traffic

3.3 Transnational consultation on plans is enhanced

In many cases spatial development measures or large projects have impacts across national borders. The consequences in the neighbouring country need to be taken into account. This can also generate synergy effects, for example when dealing with traffic infrastructure.

The transnational dimension to look at a plan can help to point out benefits and problems concerning long term developments in the affected region.

Strategies

♦ Establish contacts between relevant planning departments among North Sea countries.

VISION STATEMENT 4

The NSR which takes care of its Natural Resources and Ecological Equilibrium and its Cultural Heritage

Main **aims** to achieve this vision were identified in chapter II. as follows:

➢ Planning systems are directed towards sustainability.

➢ Management of ecological, natural and cultural heritage in non officially protected areas is effective.

➢ Natural resources are restored and developed in a sustainable way.

➢ Environment friendly forms of energy production are more widely used.

➢ Spatial policy tools contribute to the protection of the North Sea ecology.

Further aspects related to nature and environment friendly spatial policies are discussed under the VISION STATEMENT 5 "Urban regions in the NSR develop in an environment friendly way" and VISION STATEMENT 9 "Human activities in rural areas are in harmony with nature".

4.1 Planning systems are directed towards sustainable development

It is becoming more and more obvious that efforts undertaken by various sector authorities need to be co-ordinated in order to achieve a sustainable development pattern – environmental, social, economical. Integrated cross-sector approaches and long-term orientation are key components for adjustments of the planning system.

The analysis of NSR spatial structures and trends, chapter III exemplified the need for more integrated planning approaches to find sustainable development paths:

- coastal zone management,

- planning with water,

- controlled protection and use of valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes endangered or decaying, including the development of instruments for assessing risk factors and for managing critical situations,[76]

- promotion of sustainable mobility.

Integrated coastal zone management (and planning) ICZM&P

The state of integrative coastal zone management differs significantly among the NSR countries: from "... most advanced in Sweden and Norway to almost total lack of statutory integrative planning land and sea in the UK and in Denmark".[77] In England, the Highlands and the Forth Estuary, and in the Netherlands, there is experience in voluntary partnership approaches for area management, in Germany experience exists with integrative planning of larger projects (pipelines, wind mill parks).

ICZM has also been highlighted by the Trilateral Governmental Conference (Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands) with its Esbjerg Declaration and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan.

The European Commission initiated the INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMME in 1996 as a joint initiative of the Directorate Generals Environment, Fishery and Regional Policy and Cohesion. The programme is based on a series of demonstration projects to provide experience on practical steps and solutions which ease pressure on coastal zones from land use conflicts and continued degradation.

The projects were selected chiefly in the context of the financial instrument LIFE-ENVIRONMENT and of the TERRA programme. Thirty-five projects have been selected by the Commission, three thereof in the North Sea Region[78]: the Wadden Sea, the Forth Estuary (Scotland), the Dønna region in Norway (with national funding). (See boxes)

Each project has its specific focus: sustainable tourism, job creation, promotion of partnerships and co-operation of different actors, as well as management concepts.

The priority of the Wadden Sea project is the integration of tourism in this fragile environment. 53 million overnight stays annually are estimated for the Wadden Sea Area. This boosts resident number in the high season notably. Since local income generation depends considerably on tourism and the latter on a clean environment, integrated approaches are sought.

The ICZM demonstration project "Forth Estuary Forum", Scotland, deals with an estuary of 100 km extension with a catchment area of 4,500 km². This zone is densely populated and highly industrialised. At the same time, it is an important area for bird populations of European significance. The project focus is to mobilise joint action by various stakeholders, public and private, with a view at sustainable development and management.

The Forth Estuary Forum attempts to co-ordinate the different uses of an environmentally valuable area on an informal basis. By uniting several interest groups it seeks to promote sustainable development.

The results of this project will show to which extent a voluntary, legally not binding institution can influence decision making.

A further project financed by the Norwegian state addresses the local and regional level, to elaborate management plans for the coastal zone. It provides a good example for support given to local and regional bodies when dealing with complex issues and integrating them into legally binding plans.

Since these projects aim mainly at the local and regional levels, a transnational European dimension is important to enrich the output. This dimension is supplied by the InterregIIC programmes. In the North Sea programme, the project NORCOAST tackles the issues of ICZM at a transnational level (see box).

The NORCOAST project comprises partners from all NSR countries. A comprehensive report on current planning procedures evaluating shortcomings and suggesting amendments has been prepared. Results of this project are expected to have quite positive spatial implications. Details for pilot projects are not yet available.

Planning with water

The NSR contains major low-altitude wetlands, particularly in its English, Dutch and German parts. Water planning, in the past, was mainly directed at engineering works to secure water supply, avoid flooding, enable shipping, and reclaiming areas for agriculture and urban development.

Mutual effects of

- agricultural policy with
  - nitrate infiltration endangering potable water supply;
  - demands for extinction of flooding reserve areas,
- regional development
  - reclaiming areas for urban expansion and for transport infrastructure, and
- water sector planning proper

have not always been considered to the aggregated best.

The Netherlands have suggested a modified planning approach[79] which is based on a catchment area view, on the promotion of buffer areas, multi-sector water-use planning. It proposes more attention to water retention measures, and to problem solutions at the source (instead of using the North Sea as the final deposit of polluting materials). Agriculture is called to assume its responsibility for clean water, creation of wetlands, using water as an attraction.[80]

This approach will be further discussed in chapter VI (Working with the Vision). It requires not only new attitudes at the level of national governments and at EU General Directorates, but also strong co-operation among regions and local authorities.

Strategies

♦ Promote integrated strategies for coastal zone management, planning with water, protection and use of valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes, integrated urban-rural development, promotion of shortsea shipping, strengthening of rural urban centres, promotion of sustainable mobility.

♦ Integrate bio-diversity considerations into sector policies (agriculture, regional policies, transport, fisheries, etc.) as indicated in the Community Bio-diversity Strategy.[81]

♦ Strengthen the early consideration of social, environmental and economic impacts major plans and actions.

ICZM Demonstration project

INTEGRATED CO-OPERATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM & RECREATION IN THE WADDEN SEA AREA

Partners: Denmark, Germany, Netherlands

Objectives: Promote sustainable tourism and jobs

Anticipated strategies and results:

- Improvement of co-operation between authorities and bodies concerned with the Wadden Sea Region
- Participation of the population in decision-making
- Application of the principles of sustainability and integration into regional planning.
- Demonstration of how the concept developed through the project can be incorporated into the everyday decisions of the various authorities and be applied in other trans-boundary coastal areas.
- Dissemination of knowledge acquired and consideration of the results at the Ninth Conference on the Wadden Sea in the year 2000.

ICZM Demonstration project

FORTH ESTUARY FORUM: A DEMONSTRATION OF EFFECTIVE ICZM

The Forth Estuary Forum, Edinburgh, Scotland

Objectives: Joint action by stakeholders (public/ private) with a view at sustainable development and management

Strategy: Establishment of a Forum (in 1993) involving more than 200 representatives of various public sector institutions and private associations on a voluntary basis

Anticipated results:

- Assessment of the effectiveness of non-statutory voluntary partnerships for integrated management of the estuarine area.
- Commitment to sustainable development
- Improvement of environmental protection.
- Preparation of an integrated management strategy and action plans for the Estuary and Firth of Forth.

ICZM Demonstration projects

LOCAL MANAGEMENT PLANS ON THE NORWEGIAN COAST

National Pilot Project, Dønna, 18 municipalities at the west coast of Norway

Objective: Promote sustainable local management of coastal zones

Anticipated Results:

- Establish ways how to carry out "County Plans", including a review of mechanisms and frequency.
- Execute pilot projects, learn the lessons from these, including and any implications for national legislation.
- To establish the role of participation in the management process.

InterregIIC Project

NORCOAST

Partners:

- County of North Jutland, DK (lead partner)
- Hordaland Municipality, N
- Västra Götaland, S
- Lower Saxony (Ministry of Interior), D
- Province of North Holland, NL
- Highland Council, UK
- Suffolk County Council, UK

Objective: Improve planning and implementation approaches for Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Expected project results:

- Compilation of the state-of-the-art in Integrated Coastal Zone Management & Planning (ICZM&P) in the NSR
- Implementation of pilot projects
- Recommendations for improved ICZM&P

Strategies:	Activities:
1. Identification of sustainable solutions for ICZM&P	• Assessment of strength and weaknesses of current ICZM&P procedures within each region
2. Support transnational planning on regional level.	• Organisation of an interregional seminar open to experts and councillors • Exchange of planning officers among regions of different countries
3. Tackle problems related to weak planning and management procedures	• Initiate projects in pilot areas containing transnational and common problems in each country

Time Schedule:

1. Compilation of state-of-the-art CZM&P issues from each region. Functional assessment of procedures
June 1998 – April 1999 (report)
2. Interregional seminar open for all regions to exchange experiences and discuss results of phase 1; presentation of EU CZM projects;
April 1999 – August 1999 (report)
3. Initiation of pilot projects (one project in each region). Project group visits pilot areas to discuss problem solutions and experiences
August 1999 – April 2000
4. Final Seminar to present pilot projects; discussion on interchanging planners; lessons learnt from other EU projects;
April 2000 – August 2000 (final report)

Present status (Dec. 1999)

NORCOAST is among the most advanced projects of the NSR InterregIIC programme. The analysis has been conducted comprehensively and results were presented at an interregional seminar. The initiation of pilot projects is under way. First results are expected beginning of next year

Integrated Approach

PLANNING WITH WATER, NL

Ten building blocks for policy innovation in planning[82]

1 Design with water: Better use of opportunities presented by water flows for the design of land through three hydrological design principles:

- *Catchment planning approach:*
  Long term development for each catchment area
  Assembling land uses and activities with compatible environmental requirements by allocating land use profiles to each catchment area and increase the water storage capacity within it.

- *Location approach:*
  Guiding lands use changes within the plan area
  Order various land uses and activities within each catchment area that they affect each other as little as possible.

- *Buffering approach*:
  Solving existing land use conflicts
  Land uses with incompatible environmental requirements are allowed to co-exist, e.g. the hydrological buffering of natural areas from surrounding agricultural land.

2 Water for combined land uses: Promote the combination of land uses during policy development, through harmonisation of plans (infrastructure, tourism, etc.). The following combinations have been made in the Netherlands:

- Raising storage capacity in the river basins through habitat creation, landscaping and outdoor recreation areas

- Water storage, habitat creation, natural water treatment combined with new urban development.

- Management of groundwater reserves combined with light forms of recreation

- Nature and landscape development with natural water treatment (e.g. re-naturalisation of rivers)

- Drinking water supply combined with habitat creation

3 Hold on to water: Restoration of water storage capacity of soil; take more account of water in urban and landscape design; flexible water management to prevent flooding and reduce peak discharges and lower high water tables in the area.

4 Work together at blue junctions: Transition zones between areas can be seen as junctions where water from one catchment area enters the other. Often environmental problems are passed on from area to the other due to a lack of treatment at the source. Water and environmental mangers as well as planners should work together on an (inter) regional level to prevent the passing on of environmental problems, supplemented with spatial policies.

5 Ensure sufficient clean water - now and in future: Stop excessive drainage of ground water to safeguard groundwater capacities as a source of clean drinking water. International co-operation is needed to manage cross-border ground and surface water. At regional and local levels zoning for water use based on quality requirements, raising the self-purification capacity of rivers, and the construction of filtration and water treatment marshes are appropriate measures to safeguard clean water.

6 Create wetlands: Wetlands are vital for bio-diversity, a key resource for sustainable development. Conditions can be improved for existing as well as new wetlands through a combination of preventive and curative policy. The development of transnational networks for spatial planning can play an important role to link the demands of wetlands with other activities such as recreation or water abstraction.

7 Moderate the use of water in agriculture: Agriculture is a major water consumer and contributes to water quality degradation and resources depletion. A flexible approach should be applied according to local conditions: e.g. agriculture in dry areas needs to adopt more efficient irrigation and take a careful choice of crops and cropping methods. Workable options for guiding agriculture towards a balance with water can be generated through transnational co-operation in spatial planning.

8 Build with water: Opportunities offered by water when designing new settlement areas and infrastructure should be taken into account and thus enhance the quality of residential environments. The natural characteristics of the area should form the starting point for building with water. This can reduce sewer overflows, improve quality of treatment plant effluents and stabilise water tables in urban areas. The Two Network Strategy for example takes the management of the water and the transport networks as basis for spatial development proposals.

9 Exploit the special opportunities of clean areas: Today there are only few environmentally clean areas left. The tasks is to safeguard these clean areas since the contain a high natural capital. Development in these areas must be of such that can only flourish under specific high quality environmental conditions e.g. sources for drinking water, habitat creation or organic farming. These areas must be of high interest for transnational spatial planning.

10 Make room for sand and water on the coast: In coastal zones many demands such as ecosystems, tourist activities, resource exploitation compete for priority treatment. The most limiting factors are space and bio-diversity under the influence of water and sand. Human activities put strain on coastal environmental conditions. In order to reduce the vulnerability of the coastal line to flooding and other threats it must be left as a dynamic system. This means to leave space for movement of water and sand, when undergoing expected changes in relation to changing climate and morphology. The key strategy is ICZM, which combines employment, mobility and social and economic renewal with the needs of the coastal areas.

4.2 Management of ecological, natural and cultural heritage in non-officially protected areas is effective

While the creation and the management of protected nature areas has advanced in Europe, it is increasingly recognised that nature protection can not be limited to these areas. Wide natural and cultural landscapes display intensive use through agriculture, forestry, and smaller settlements, but play also an important role for sustainable development.

This role requires recognised concepts for sustainable co-existence of nature protection with human activities, and the joint management – across municipalities, sometimes across regions and even national borders – of such areas.

Here again, a dialogue must be sought with sector policies, e.g. agricultural policies: functionally designed agricultural landscape in all parts of the NSR have been set up at the expense of smaller fields divided by hedges and scrubs, which formed the habitat of various local species. Habitats are influenced through eutrophication and pesticide pollution from leaching, endangering bio-diversity.

The management of our heritage is important in order to preserve its character for future generations.

Conclusion

Management concepts for nature and cultural heritage areas not having nature protection status require specific approaches for which only scattered knowledge exists. New co-operation projects in this field would be particularly beneficial.

Strategies

♦ Make greater use of economic instruments to recognise the ecological significance of protected and environmentally sensitive areas.[83]

♦ Develop and implement tools for management and development of nature and cultural heritage.

♦ Develop strategies at regional and transnational levels for risk management especially in disaster-prone areas.[84]

♦ Improve co-ordination of development measures which have an impact on landscapes.[85]

No InterregIIC-NSR project focuses on this issue.

4.3 Natural resources have been restored and are developed in sustainable ways

The North Sea Region is rich in natural resources, though no comprehensive overview is available yet. Efforts by the European Environment Agency (EEA) or of the European NATURA2000 programme envisage an improvement of inventory data and maps.

Spatial planning approaches may support this undertaking by contributing planning-oriented criteria for consistent mapping and planning.

Another deficit of current activities is the slow integration of the data for the Norwegian territory. In view of the intended broad approach, this gap should be closed as soon as possible.

Present InterregIIC-NSR projects do not cover sufficiently above mentioned aspects, which therefore would be appropriate candidates for future funding:

Conclusions

Spatial planning is called to contribute to the development of coherent nature area networks. Corresponding planning criteria and inventory information need to be further developed.

Strategies

♦ Continue development of European ecological networks proposed by Natura 2000, including the necessary links between nature sites and protected areas of regional, national, trans-national and EU-wide importance.[86]

♦ Contribute spatial planning criteria for NSR-wide inventory of nature areas geared to support planning conclusions.

♦ Extend current inventory and planning approaches at EU level to include Norwegian territory.

♦ Identify restoration needs for valuable landscapes which have suffered through human intervention, and identify proposed recultivation measures.[87]

♦ Promote transnational and interregional co-operation for the application of integrated strategies for the management of water resources.[88]

♦ Preserve and restore wetlands, which are endangered by excessive water extraction or by the diversion of inlets.[89]

♦ Strengthen regional responsibility in water resource management.[90]

4.4 Environment friendly forms of energy production are widely used

Apart from fossil energy sources mainly found in offshore areas, there are wide potentials for environmentally friendly forms of energy production in the NSR. Norway uses nearly exclusively hydropower for electricity production. Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands have become leading countries world-wide concerning wind power generation. In Sweden the use of bio-mass as energy source is increasing.

New potentials for wind energy exist particularly for off-shore wind farms. Planning criteria for mainland and off-shore installations are under discussion in view of feared aesthetic and noise impacts as well as impacts on water flows and bird migration.

Apart from this already widely used technology, the potentials of other alternative energy sources - wave energy, solar power - need to be taken advantage of.

The European programme SAVE II[91] promotes the rational use of energy within the Community[92] with the aim "... to stimulate a "bottom up" approach to energy management by encouraging local and regional action for energy efficiency, the use of local energy resources, and the creation of optimum energy supply at local level."[93]

Energy Agencies were set up throughout Europe within the SAVE II programme, but, as regards the NSR, only in Sweden and the UK (see box). There seems to be room for an expanded participation, including also Norway. These agencies provide vital inputs for sustainable energy management at local levels, particularly if complemented by exchange of experience.

The Regional Energy Agency of Kattegat in Halland Sweden is also Lead Applicant for the InterregIIC project "The North Sea Bio-energy Network" (see box).

This Interreg project contributes to the promotion of renewable energy production and distribution. It focuses at the local level and deals with small-scale heating plants operating on bio-gas basis. Other renewable energy sources are not addressed. A combination is sought of spatial planning with energy resource management. Guidelines for local authorities shall help level to plan small scale district heating plants.

Save II Programme

LOCAL AND REGIONAL ENERGY
MANAGEMENT AGENCIES IN THE NSR

Sweden
- County of Halland: Regional Energy Agency of Kattegat
- Regional Energy Agency of Skaraborg County: Energikontoret Väst (West Energy Network)

UK
- Leicester Local Energy Agency
- Orkney Energy Agency
- Regional Energy Agency of Newark & Sherwood District
- Shetland Islands Council Energy Agency

InterregIIC Project

THE NORTH SEA
BIO-ENERGY NETWORK

Partners:
- Halland Energy Agency (REAK), S, lead partner
- Netherlands Energy Research Foundation, NL
- Northern Energy Initiative, UK

Objective:
Promotion of bio-fuel use in power generation

Project results:
- Method of integrated resource planning at local level.
- Installation of small scale bio-fuel plants.
- Creation of green jobs through the support of SMEs.

Strategies:	Activities:
1. Initiate pilot projects for bio-energy	• Three pilot-projects in Sweden
2. Promote district heating plans	• Elaborate district heating plans for pilot communities
3. Initiate Municipal Energy Planning Acts	• not indicated

Time Schedule:
1. Study of spatial planning regarding energy use and levels of deregulation;
   August 1999 – August 2000
2. Technical study of optimal size of plants and bio-fuel availability; set up three pilot projects in Sweden;
   August 2000 – February 2001
3. Development of local networks which integrate local labour force;
   February 2001 – July 2001
4. Evaluation
   July 2001 – December 2001

Present status (Dec. 1999)

no results available yet

Spatial strategies for supporting power production from wind energy are pursued in many parts of the NSR. Increasing resistance due to unwanted effects from wind mill concentrations have led to the promotion of off-shore wind farms. The implications for the regions and for natural equilibrium are not sufficiently clarified.

Conclusion

Spatial policy implications of growing concentrations of wind farms, including off-shore locations are not negligible. Experience with planning and evaluation approaches exists in different parts of the NSR and should be shared.

Strategies

♦ Use the potential for renewable energy in urban and rural areas, taking into account local and regional conditions, in particular the cultural and natural heritage.[94]

♦ Potential coastal areas increasingly considered for wind farms.

4.5	Spatial policy tools contribute to the protection of the North Sea ecology

The North Sea is a significant supplier of gas and oil and its bordering countries take advantage of this. Other resources like fish stocks are also utilised for industrial purpose.

Periodical international conferences on the protection of the North Sea resulted in 1992 in the signing of the Oslo-Paris (OSPAR) Convention, including the obligation accepted by all North Sea States and the European Commission to adopt the precautionary principle and the "polluter pays" principle in their work of protecting the marine environment.

At a series of conferences it was decided to elaborate a management plan covering the Wadden Sea from Den Helder to Esbjerg, leading to the adoption of the Wadden Sea Plan.[95]

Many North Sea areas receive protection as conservation sites of national or international importance. A high proportion of biotopes of major conservation importance reported to the EU Co-ordination of Information on the Environment (CORINE) are coastal sites covered by statutory protection.

The Wadden Sea has gained a comprehensive protection status at national and transnational levels (EC Habitat Directive, EC Bird Directive) and

conventions (Ramsar Convention, UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves).

The North Sea Quality Status Report 1993[96] provides a review of – mostly land-based – economic activities affecting the sea. But this has not yet been translated into a consistent spatial strategy considering both, sea water and land.

Conclusion

The North Sea ecology is affected by human activities not only in the sea, but also on land. Spatial policies need a transnationally agreed concept how to contribute to the initiatives for protection and restoration of the North Sea.

Strategies

♦ Make transparent impacts of different spatial policies on maritime ecosystems and identify appropriate strategies on that basis.[97]

♦ Agree on spatial policy principles for protection of the North Sea ecology, and contribute to existing transnational initiatives.

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2. Strategies for Urban Regions

VISION STATEMENT 5
Urban Regions Developing in a Sustainable Way

The main **aims** to achieve the vision of sustainable urban development had been described in section II as follows:

➢ Growth of demand for vehicular traffic is reduced.

➢ Land consumption for urban expansion is limited.

➢ Land use pressure on valuable areas is minimised, seeking other ways to satisfy new housing, recreational and business area demand.

These strategy implications will be discussed below.

5.1	Disadvantages caused from vehicular traffic is reduced

Negative effects of growing reliance on the private car are obvious: congested cities, threats to health through accidents and emissions. In previous decades, urban structures were adapted to the needs of the car, weaker road users were pushed back.

Changed spatial structures to limit total travel demand and to facilitate the use of public transport systems are now being sought. Within urbanised areas, this implies close location of residential and business, shopping and leisure areas without excessive spatial concentration, and improved public transport. Urban residents shall be motivated to choose locations close to job places, instead of motivating them (e.g. by tax privileges) to commute.

The levying of road tolls to internalise external costs[98] would also contribute to this goal, though existing studies indicate that levies have to be higher than external costs, if the desired reactions are to be achieved[99]. The trade-off between resulting dis-economies and positive environmental impacts must be made transparent and carefully discussed.

The potential for substitution of physical transport through information flows, e.g. video conferencing, has been intensively discussed. It is expected that with currently experienced decreasing user prices, this has become considerably more realistic.

Other options, though not under the ruling of spatial policies, include the promotion of energy saving motor and vehicle technologies, and the use of renewable energy.

Several transport research projects (see box) within the Fifth Framework Programme of the EU's DGVII (Transport) deal with mobility management in order to reduce car traffic and to use transport structure more efficiently.

A number of InterregIIC-NSR projects deal directly or indirectly with the reduction of travel demand. *Nordnet* concentrates on remote regions (see **VISION STATEMENT 9**). The TARGET programme approaches the issue quite comprehensively (see box overleaf).

Indirect spatial effects can be attached to the strategy of growing use of new technologies for business and commerce. A more decentralised delivery of services can be initiated.

Conclusions

Broad knowledge with regard to sustainable urban development has already been gained through various research and co-operation projects. But there seems to be a severe gap to:

- Identify and deal with trade-offs between economic and environmental impacts (not always, and not automatically identical also in the longer term).

- Identify the contribution spatial policies can make to strategies now mainly directed by the transport sector itself.

- Put into practise different approaches to test their impacts.

Strategies

♦ Enhance co-ordination of spatial development policies and land use planning with transport and telecommunications planning.[100]

♦ Promote mixed land use, within environmental limits.

♦ Take care that the increasing use of city-city complementarities (labour markets, education and culture facilities) will not further increase the amount of vehicular traffic.

♦ Enhance the use of more environment friendly modes of transport.

♦ Use IT to reduce commuting.

♦ Promote increased use of renewable energies in order to reduce vehicle emissions, and to save fossil resources.[101]

5.2	**Land consumption for urban expansion is limited**
5.3	**Land use pressure on valuable areas is minimised, seeking other ways to satisfy new housing, recreational and business area demand**

Urban populations want to live in a healthy and attractive environment. This has in the past not always been met. Growing car ownership and, hence, mobility enabled residents to avoid living in unwanted urban environments, without having to miss urban services and attractions.

Limiting urban expansion calls primarily not for restrictive policies, but for positive improvement of urban environments, meeting ever more diverse demands and ever higher quality expectations.

Many cities in the NSR have during recent years increased their efforts to make derelict urban areas – industrial sites, large railway areas, port areas not suitable for their original purposes – available for new urban development. Examples for plans to convert previous port areas into urban development areas are the cities of Hamburg ('Port City' project), Emden/ D, and the city of Göteborg/S.

	Research projects supported by EU-DGVIII for sustainable transport

Mobility Management

- MOMENTUM: Mobility Management for the Urban Environment; 13 demonstration projects testing concepts, strategies and tools
- MOSAIC: Mobility Strategy Application in the Community; demonstration and assessment of mobility management initiatives
- ECOMM: European Conference on Mobility Management; European forum for mobility management. Conferences held in 1997,1998,1999. Further conferences are under preparation
- EPOMM: European Platform on Mobility Management; Information exchange and awareness making optimal use of existing infrastructure

Sustainable Mobility

- POSSUM: Policy Scenarios for Sustainable Mobility, Development of alternative policy scenarios for 2020 to promote protection, regional development, economic efficiency related to the Common Transport Policy (CTP).
- EUFRANET: European Freight Railway Network; Identification and evaluation of strategies for a freight network and its operating system.
- IMPULSE: Innovations to attract cargoes by sustainable modes

	InterregIIC Project TARGET – TRAVEL AWARENESS REGIONAL GROUPS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSPORT (PILOT PHASE)

Partners:

- West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, UK (LP)
- Trafikkontoret (Traffic bureau) Göteborg, S
- Aalborg municipality, DK
- City of Bremen, Environment protection department, D
- Sub-partners from each country

Objective: Reduce the need to travel and, if travelling, the dependency on car use for the benefit of the environment.

Project results:

- Key components of a long-term strategy to reduce vehicular traffic.
- Evaluated approaches to enhance travel awareness.

Strategies:	Activities:
1. Create Travel Advice Centres	• Evaluate related approaches in Bremen, Göteborg and U.K.
2. Use new opportunities of electronic commerce & business to promote flexible working	• (30 persons trial)
3. Reduce traffic related to shopping and leisure	• Evaluation of responses to opportunities regarding the use of the internet/ home delivery services and responses to large out-of-town retailers
4. Reduce emissions through cleaner vehicle technologies	• Evaluation of projects & initiatives addressing remote sensing, alternative fuel vehicles, green travel plans
5. Develop working techniques for the establishment of green travel plans	• Evaluate standard survey software, Support / promotional material, car share initiatives
6. Develop strategies for school travel plans	• Evaluate initiatives on safer routes to school, walk to school initiatives, road safety training, school gate parking, public transport promotion
7. Encourage cycling and walking	• Evaluate initiatives dealing with cycle awareness and confidence, school cycle training

Time Schedule:

1. Strategy development 1999 – 2001;
2. Final report (6/01)
3. Implementation of recommended strategy 2001 – 2007 (not part of the current project)

Present status (Dec.1999)

Application just approved in its pilot phase. The main project phase is envisaged for eight years. The project has set up an extensive network of institutions and experts of approx. 60 members, organised into seven working groups each dealing with the evaluation of one of the strategies.

Within the InterregIIC programme for the Baltic Sea Region, one project deals with 'Urban Waterfront Development' to make derelict port areas available for urban uses.

Such projects offer various advantages: opening-up of close-to-city areas appropriate for business and residential use, integration with public transport services, opening-up of cities towards water areas with attractive locations for offices and residential buildings.

By providing appropriate opportunities for internal expansion towns and cities will be able to grow economically and at the same time retain the urban–rural boundary. 'Inward' urban development contributes to the protection of valuable landscapes in the areas around cities.

But infrastructure preparation may be quite expensive, and land property clearance can be difficult, especially if areas are contaminated. Cities with moderate land prices may have difficulties in recovering their development costs or attracting development.

Another space-consuming development is the growing requirement for waste disposal areas. While policies for waste avoidance are to be pursued by responsible national authorities, cities can contribute to limiting disposal area demands through enhanced waste recycling and waste management.

"The Green Paper on Urban Environment (CEC, 1990) considers that the 'compact city' form is the most energy efficient as well as having social and economic advantages. The – not sufficiently tested - assumption is that it is possible to reverse the current preferences of people. Concerns have also been expressed about the loss of open space and bio-diversity through 'town cramming'."[102]

Where this strategy is not sufficient, and national/ regional policies will not or can not divert growth from these to other locations, urban external expansion needs to be directed carefully.

No InterregIIC-NSR projects focus on these aspects.

Within its "Fifth Environmental Action Programme Towards Sustainability", the EU Commission has contributed the urban dimension through THE SUSTAINABLE CITIES PROJECT. This comprises a Sustainable Cities *Report* and a European Sustainable Cities & Towns *Campaign*. A summary is presented on the following page.

In this context, sustainability has been defined in accordance with the Brundtland report as "development that delivers basic environmental, social and economic services to all residents of a community without threatening the viability of the natural, built and social systems upon which the delivery of these services depends."[103]

The policy report addresses air quality management, municipal waste incineration, wastewater treatment, as well as developments in the transport, tourism, energy and industry sectors having strong impacts on urban environmental quality. The report also comprises a best practice section.

The Sustainable Cities Project is intended to contribute new policy approaches which translate urban sustainability policy into action. Wide dissemination to increase awareness and to develop new skills for urban management[104].

The European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign is supported by various networks of local authorities to promote information exchange, capacity building and marketing.

Local Authority Networks

- International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)
- EUROCITIES
- United Towns Organisation (UTO)
- Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- HEALTHY CITIES PROJECT of the World Health Organisation (WHO)

The Directorate General XVI (Regional Policy and Cohesion) has initiated URBAN PILOT PROJECTS funded through the ERDF. This programme's objective is to support innovation in urban regeneration and planning in the policy framework of promoting economic and social cohesion.

During 1990 to 1993 a total of 33 Urban Pilot Projects were initiated. In the second phase 26 projects received funding.

Two of these projects are located in the NSR: Huddersfield/ U.K., and Bremerhaven/ D. In both cases, neighbourhoods are characterised by high unemployment, social exclusion and lacking opportunities for their residents. The Huddersfield project (see box) aims at promotion of the local economy (will be discussed under VISION STATEMENT 6). The Bremerhaven project (see box) focuses on social inclusion (see VISION STATEMENT 7).

	Sustainable Urban Development in the EU: A Framework for Action (COM/98/605F, Oct-1998)

POLICY AIM 1: Strengthen economic prosperity in towns & cities

Policy objectives

- Strengthen the role of towns and cities as centres of regional economic growth, productivity and employment, through explicit integrated urban programming; support a polycentric, balanced urban system and inter-urban co-operation.
- Promote a diverse, flexible and competitive urban economy, with emphasis on human capital, innovation, entrepreneurship and SME development incl. tourism; supporting factors for this are efficient transport, communications and planning systems, a good natural and physical environment, good environmental performance of enterprises, good quality of life in social and cultural terms and an attractive urban ambience.
- Underpin development of knowledge and experience as regards economic performance of urban areas, incl. underlying conditions for this performance, the impact of Community policies and the good urban management practices.

Action

Action 1: Explicit urban programming for Structural Fund support
Action 2: A stronger urban dimension in employment policies
Action 3: Support for "European knowledge centres"
Action 4: Promotion of inter-urban co-operation
Action 5: Promotion of attractive urban transport
Action 6: Development of know-how and exchange of experience on urban economic performance.

POLICY AIM 2: Promoting equality, social inclusion and regeneration in urban areas

Policy objectives

- Extend pathways to employability and integration, in particular for the hard core of the long-term unemployed, young drop-outs, lone parent families and ethnic or racial minorities and others who are economically or socially excluded.
- Provide adequate, accessible and reasonably priced basic services, especially in relation to employment, education and training, health, energy, transport and communications, policing and justice with a view to preventing as well as remedying problems of exclusion.
- Enhance economic development and employment especially through business start-ups, provision of suitable infrastructure and advisory and other support services for existing businesses and community enterprises.
- Improve physical environment, reduce pollution, develop natural landscapes in urban areas and neighbourhoods in difficulty.
- Prevent urban crime incl. juvenile delinquency, increase security.
- Strengthen local capacities to respond to the specific needs and potential of communities in deprived urban areas and neighbourhoods in an integrated way.

Action

Action 7: Co-operation against discrimination and social exclusion
Action 8: Structural Fund support to area-based action for urban regeneration
Action 9: Second chance schools
Action 10: Development of know-how and exchange of experience on discrimination, exclusion and urban regeneration

POLICY AIM 3: Protecting and improving the urban environment: towards local and global sustainability

Policy objectives

- Improve ambient air quality in urban areas, reliability and quality of drinking water supplies, protection and management of surface and ground waters; reduce at source the quantity of waste requiring final disposal and reduce environmental noise.
- Protect and improve built environment and cultural heritage, and promote bio-diversity and green space within urban areas.
- Promote resource efficient settlement patterns that minimise land-take and urban sprawl.
- Minimise environmental impacts of transport through aiming at less transport-intensive path of economic development and by encouraging the use of more environmentally sustainable transport modes.
- Improve environmental performance of enterprises by promoting good environmental management in all sectors.
- Achieve measurable and significant reductions of greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas, especially through rational use of energy, increased use of renewable energy sources and combined heat and power and reduction of waste.
- Minimise and manage environmental risks in urban areas.
- Promote more holistic, integrated and environmentally sustainable approaches to the management of urban areas; within functional urban areas, foster eco-systems-based development approaches that recognise the mutual dependence between town and country, thus improving linkage between urban centres and their rural surroundings.

Action

Action 11: Better implementation of existing environmental legislation at urban level
Action 13: Strengthening pollution control and clean-up in towns and cities
Action 14: Contributing to a reduction of the environmental impact of urban transport
Action 15: Sustainable urban energy management
Action 16: Climate protection
Action 17: Extending Eco-Labelling and the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)
Action 18: EU Structural Fund support for protecting and improving the urban environment
Action 19: Development of know-how and exchange of experience on the urban environment

POLICY AIM 4: Contributing to good urban governance and local empowerment

Policy objectives

- Increase information for local authorities and other urban actors, including citizens, on EU policies and build dialogue with them in the formulation of EU policies.
- Involve towns and cities more fully in implementation of EU policies.
- Promote policy integration and synergy between and within all levels of government within functional urban areas
- Support local capacity building so as to increase the quality and effectiveness of urban governance including exchange of best practice between different levels

Action

Action 20: Awareness-raising, exchange of experience and capacity building for sustainable urban development
Action 21: Innovative urban development strategies
Action 22: Increasing safety by promoting prevention in the field of urban crime
Action 23: Improving comparative information on urban conditions
Action 24: Contribution to Member States' "Urban Exchange Initiative"

The U.K. cities of Leeds, Leicester, Middlesborough and Peterborough have initiated a co-operation to develop an **"Environmental City Model"**. An environmental forum is supported by Specialist Working Groups to work on specific environmental themes, to formulate strategic policies, to monitor the state of environment and to set up projects.

A co-ordination and information centre accompanies the process. No results are known yet.

Conclusions

In view of the huge potential for internal urban expansion and its possibly positive impacts, this development should receive strong support for concrete projects, accompanied by systematic monitoring and evaluation of their experience.

Strategies

- ♦ Encourage development within towns and cities to prevent urban sprawl and redirect the demand for additional settlement space to areas without pressure.

- ♦ Promote the recycling and/ or restructuring of underused or derelict urban sites and areas.[105]

- ♦ Keep a clear line between urban and rural areas to avoid urban sprawl.

- ♦ Develop urban development areas in sufficient volume at locations with less sensitive natural environments.

- ♦ Integrate the countryside surrounding large cities in spatial development strategies for urban regions, aiming at more efficient land use planning, paying special attention to the quality of life in the urban surroundings.[106]

- ♦ Develop major seaside leisure facilities preferably within towns and cities, rather than outside.

VISION STATEMENT 6
Urban Regions as Motors of Economic Regional Development

Main **aims** to achieve this vision were identified in chapter II as follows:

- ➢ Urban regions are strengthened by networking.

- ➢ Good accessibility to and within urban regions supports regional economic development.

- ➢ Regional centres, including intermediate cities and towns, make effective use of their potential for new economic activities.

6.1	**Urban networking contributes to the strengthening of urban regions**

Urban networking does not eliminate competition. But it puts stronger emphasis on the use of functional complementarities. It offers opportunities for joint enhancement of regional attractiveness to populations and businesses at improved cost effectiveness.

The concept has been promoted through specific programmes, e.g. in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. Corresponding cross-border co-operation is supported by the EU within the framework of Interreg.

Initially, inter-municipal co-operation focused on city-hinterland regions regarding utilities supply (water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, public passenger transport). This was extended to include city clusters with overlapping hinterlands, and to embrace business promotion, large retail centres, logistical multi-modal centres, education and culture.

In Germany the responsible Federal Ministry has set up a concept of city networks in 1992 and integrated it into the national Guidelines for Regional Planning (1993). Within the research programme "Experimental Housing Construction and Urban Development", eleven inter-communal networks were supported, two of them located in the NSR (see box).

The motives for setting-up co-operation networks vary. Some aim at the relief of bigger agglomerations. Others serve the development promotion of rural areas. Main purposes are: promotion of economic development, city marketing, culture and tourism and transport infrastructure.

In some small and medium-sized cities regional development processes have been initiated. Despite their own interests, the communities accepted that in many fields co-operation is preferable to competition.

Co-operation networks have shown to support regional development. They can also result in reduction of work load for the administration of specific fields. Good results were achieved concerning land management, with more efficient establishment of large connected green areas.

No specific InterregIIC project has been proposed to focus on these issues. There is an impression that this concept has been largely promoted 'top-down'.

Conclusion

A wide range of experience on inter-city cooperation networks already exists. There is a need to review the benefits from urban networking, as seen by its partners.

Strategies

♦ Promote the assessment and discussion of practical experience made with city networks.

♦ Adapt support programmes to the results of such assessment.

♦ Make us of functional complementarities among cities.

	RESEARCH PROGRAMME: EXPERIMENTAL HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
City Network K.E.R.N.	

Partners:
- City of Kiel, Schleswig Holstein
- City of Eckernförde, Schleswig Holstein
- City of Rendsburg, Schleswig Holstein,
- City of Neumünster, Schleswig Holstein,
- County of Plön, Schleswig Holstein,
- Chamber of Commerce, Kiel,
- Labour Union Nordmark, Schleswig Holstein
- Association of Private Companies of Kiel and Mittel-Holstein

Objective:

Promote inter-communal planning co-operation in the fields of technology and economy. Inspire organisations of the economic sector, the Unions, the federal state and research and development institutions to set up joint efforts.

Background

The cities participating in this network are very different in size and functions. The network is financed by membership fees and donations. The co-operation is organised as a non-profit association. Every partner organisation is represented in the board of directors. Only high-ranking persons may join the board of directors.

Five working groups were established dealing with

- land management,
- waste management,
- professional education,
- tourism and
- public transportation.

A forum for the evaluation of planned large shopping facilities with spatial impacts on the different communities and infrastructure networks has been set up.

Transborder co-operation is established with between the Technical College in Kiel and the technical university of København and other partners of the private economy.

6.2 Good accessibility to and within urban regions supports regional economic development

Urban regions will not play their role as economic development motors unless they provide good accessibility internally and externally.

As regards internal accessibility, spatial policies shall promote spatial structures which ease accessibility by appropriate location of new activities and sensitive mixing of urban functions. Special attention has to be paid towards the accessibility of the city core since they are centres of employment and services. Despite the efforts to reduce motorised individual traffic in urban centres, decent accessibility for employees and visitors is still a requirement. Such policy shall be complemented by improved public transport services.

As regards external accessibility, reference is made to VISION STATEMENT 1. A particular issue arises in ultra-peripheral regions of the NSR (parts of UK, Norway) which need complementary regional air links, also discussed under VISION STATEMENT 1.

No InterregIIC projects have been proposed in this regard.

Conclusions

The external accessibility of cities is discussed in the context of Vision 1.3 (good internal transport links). It is an important issue for Interreg when cities in border regions need to be well accessible across borders to fulfil their functions.

The delimitation of Euroregions may not always be large enough to reflect such aspects.

Improvements of internal links are largely in the hands of local and regional authorities, with little need for transnational programme support, except for an enhanced exchange of experience on how to approach this problem through integrated land-use and transport planning.

Strategies

♦ Enhance accessibility within city regions through location policy and land use planning, to stimulate sensitive mixing of urban functions and the use of public transport.[107]

♦ Further improve urban transport systems to provide good access for urban as well as rural populations to services, economic opportunities, culture and education, nature and recreational facilities.

♦ Urban transport systems are suitable for efficient goods transport, relying where feasible on rail transport.

♦ Regional air links across the sea provide opportunities for easy travelling between non-metropolitan cities.

6.3   Regional centres, including intermediate cities and towns, make effective use of their potential for new economic activities

The promotion of regional urban centres' economic development is primarily the task of respective local and regional authorities together with private stakeholders. This shall be based on the improvement of location characteristics, and on the use of local potentials, which in turn requires full use of rural-urban relationships.

Additional support is required where location conditions depend on an improvement of interregional accessibility and other national sector policies.

The "Sustainable Urban Development" initiative of the EU Commission includes a number of action proposals to promote urban economies which, apart from EU's own policies, include:

Action 3: Support for "European knowledge centres".

Action 4: Promotion of inter-urban co-operation.

Action 5: Promotion of attractive urban transport.

Action 6: Development of know-how and exchange of experience on urban economic performance.

Within the EU initiative for urban pilot projects, the town of Huddersfield has started an initiative for local economic development. The focus there is on the human element to support creative persons and companies, particularly in the field of IT application (see box).

The project does not deal with location policy of industry or other sectors. But it has spatial implications, when successfully attracting economic activities and thus strengthening the region.

The use of synergy effects is the task of the InterregIIC project "Benefits of pipelines (BOP)". It

seeks to strengthen the local economy, by enhancing the local processing of primary energy, which arrives through pipelines. The BOP project was set up by the city of Emden - an important transit station for natural gas; Stockton-on-Tees – head station of two North Sea pipelines: CATS and Ecofisk; Groningen region - exploiting substantial gas reserves.

Since energy production plays a vital role in the entire NSR, it might be useful to extend the partnership to Norway, the largest energy producer in the NSR.

Conclusion

The issue of economic development of urban regions has not received major attention through InterregIIC applicants, except for two quite specific projects, in contrast to rural urban centres, see V ISION 10. Approaches for cities to promote new economic activities through co-operation need to be promoted.

Strategies

♦ Develop new opportunities for urban regions based on their cultural and architectural identity, and endogenous potentials.[108]

♦ Promote economic diversification in cities which are too dependent on a single branch of economic activity[109].

♦ Enhance rural-urban integration.

♦ Promote networks between small and medium sized in towns and countryside[110]

♦ Promote the development of knowledge centres

♦ Make more use of synergy effects between infrastructure, economic and spatial measures.

♦ Support urban regions with coastal ports which can be developed into logistical services centres.

♦ Expand the strategic role of "gateway cities".[111]

InterregIIC Project BOP – BENEFITS OF PIPELINES

Partners:

- City of Emden, FRG
- Province of Groningen, NL
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, UK

Objective:

Optimise the benefits from the oil and gas industry in the regions in the sense of sustainability.

Expected project results:

Strategies to solve the conflict between economic demands of the industry and ecological and social demands of the regions, which serves nature protection needs and at the same time offers employment opportunities.

Strategies:	Activities:
1. Analyse current situation and isolate valuable approaches.	• Working groups in each country to conduct the analysis; comparison among the countries to assess the transfera-bility of best practice
2. Set up a network between public and private organi-sations for exchange of experience	• not indicated
3. Develop common research projects	• not indicated
4. Attract companies proces-sing of primary energy or intermediate products to eliminate the mere transit function for energy	• not indicated
5. Attract innovative industries	• not indicated

Time Schedule:

1. International conference (working procedure, analysis of current situation and implications of pipelines and the associated industries, common items and issues) May 1999 – Feb. 2000
2. International meeting: comparison of results, founding of partnerships for pilot projects March 2000
3. Evaluation of transferability of strategies, pilot projects, testing of strategies April 2000 – February. 2001
4. Final report March 2001 – June 2001

Present status (Sept.1999):

no results available yet

Urban Pilot Project, Phase II HUDDERSFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE, UK

Objective: Regeneration of the local economy through investment in creative individuals and companies; use of information technology via the "CREATIVE TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVE".

Present situation: Huddersfield (130,000 inhabitants) is the administrative centre of the Kirklees district in West Yorkshire. The town faced decline in traditional industries as well as public sector employment and lacking investments. Furthermore the city failed in retaining local innovative actors and suffered a "brain drain" to larger cities.

The concept: The Creative Town Centre Initiative should provide opportunities for creative individuals to develop ideas and products.

Part of the project is a "Creative Quarter". Currently derelict buildings are developed into a centre for the development and production of electronic music and sound.

The establishment of a creativity forum is envisaged. This forum provides the interface between experienced profes-sionals and local people with creative capacity. A range of business support and training schemes as well as an advisory service for inventors are planned.

Organisational set up: The initiative is administered by Kirklees Metropolitan Council in association with the towns regeneration agency. Major public agencies, the sector and the local community will form a management board.

Present status: No results have been received yet

Urban Pilot Project Phase II BREMERHAVEN, GERMANY

Objective: Regeneration of a neighbourhood using a Multifunctional Service Centre

The Situation: The district of Grünhöfe is severely affected by declining shipbuilding industry resulting in high employment especially concerning foreign residents. The area is characterised by poor living conditions, lacking recreational facilities and social exclusion of its inhabitants.

The Concept: Creation of a Multifunctional Service Centre. The main purposes are: economic promotion, environmental improvement and community safety, social and cultural activities, and training. The Centre will also support SMEs. A cultural centre, an advice and social centre, and a marketing and public relations office shall serve the different target groups. Training courses for long-term unemployment and self-employment initiatives will be established.

Organisational set up: Several local, city and regional-level departments will support the project. The Bremen Ministry of Economy, local SMEs, Technology and European matters is the main partner of the project.

VISION STATEMENT 7

Urban Regions which Promote Social Integration

Main **aim** to achieve this vision is identified in chapter II as follows:

➢ Integrated urban development is sensitive to social diversity and inclusion.

7.1   **Integrated urban development is sensitive to social and cultural diversity and inclusion**

The EU Commission's initiative for sustainable urban development puts emphasis on the issue of social inclusion. One pilot project is implemented at Bremerhaven/ D.

No current InterregIIC projects fall under this category.

Conclusion

Promoting social integration and preventing exclusion is one the pressing issues for most urban societies. Transnational exchange of experience is regarded as a promising tool to strengthen local capacities in dealing with this task, and should be further promoted.

Strategies

♦ Improve *employability*, in particular for the long-term unemployed, young drop-outs, lone parents, ethnic or racial minorities.

♦ Ensure adequate, accessible and reasonably priced *basic services* in relation to employment, education and training (incl. 'second-chance' schools), health, energy, transport and communications, policing and justice.

♦ Generate employment especially through business start-ups.

♦ Improve the *physical environment* in urban areas and neighbourhoods in difficulty (urban regeneration).

♦ Strengthen *local capacities* to respond to the needs of communities in deprived urban areas.

♦ Counteract spatial segregation trends in urban neighbourhoods.

♦ Provide housing locations with good accessibility to jobs and services.

♦ Offer adequate public transport for the lesser mobile and non-car-owner population.

VISION STATEMENT 8

Urban Regions which are attractive Places for their Populations and Visitors

Main **aims** to achieve this vision have been identified in chapter II as follows:

➢ Urban structures respond increasingly to the needs of quality of life.

➢ Urban regeneration is widely practised.

➢ Buildings and ensembles provide diversity and have an attractive design.

➢ Urban development management has been introduced.

The strategy implications are discussed below.

8.1   **Urban structures respond to the needs of quality of life**

Urban structures can contribute to the quality of life in many ways. Green areas and structures are vital for recreation and are meeting places of people. Every quarter needs its green spots, where children can play safely and residents can gather. Green areas also improve the urban micro-climate.

Urban structures that promote short distances to services through a healthy mixture of utilisation are beneficial not only for the less mobile population strata. They help to reduce car traffic and give way to more environmentally friendly modes like bicycles.

Appropriate urban structures contribute to the perception of safety and to the reduction of crime. Besides police measures, social control through avoiding "dead" inner cities, and identification with the quarter are necessary.

No InterregIIC project has been included under this topic.

Conclusion

Transnational co-operation at this level is difficult. Specific actions have to correspond to the particular local situation. An exchange of different approaches among cities with similar problems and the evaluation of the transferability can be valuable.

Strategies

♦ Promote urban ecology and bio-diversity including green areas/ structures in cities.

♦ Increase awareness for the contribution of urban and spatial development policy to the cultural heritage for future generations.[112]

♦ Promote public transport.

♦ Design environment to help reduce crime and so people feel safe.

♦ Anticipate more extreme climate circumstances in location decisions.

8.2   Urban regeneration is widely practised

During the UK presidency, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions of the UK, has proposed an "Urban Exchange Initiative" taking forward the ministerial agreement at Noordwijk.

Three strategic themes were considered:[113]

• a comprehensive approach to urban regeneration as a way of tackling areas of multiple deprivation,

• town centre management, including mixed use development, to deal with some environmental and urban quality issues,

• good governance and community involvement in order to improve local democracy, with particular reference to regeneration initiatives.

Examples for best practice for each of these themes in the NSR are described overleaf (see box).

The Oslo project discussed above is good example for urban regeneration addressing the issues mentioned under 8.1.

Conclusion

This issue is closely linked to others already discussed above, and should be given more weight in future Interreg. A large variety of best practice examples is already available. The evaluation of project results would help to identify the effectiveness of strategies.

Strategies

♦ Promote and revitalise the cultural and architectural identity.

♦ Develop new opportunities for entertainment, recreation and socialising.

♦ Apply differentiated policies towards different types of urban areas.

8.3   Buildings and ensembles provide diversity and have an attractive design

The aesthetic value of a town contributes to its attractiveness. Landmarks are important for people to identify themselves with their town and quarter. Many NSR towns have a colourful historic heritage, which can be activated for the benefit of the town. New buildings and structures need to be integrated into existing structures in ways that they fit and still reveal their own characteristics.

No InterregIIC project focuses on these strategies.

Conclusion

Again, transnational co-operation in this field is not widely practised due to the particularity of the locality. Although it is not a priority issues for co-operation among the North Sea countries, this issue is important for attractiveness and distinctness of towns.

Strategies

♦ Maintain and promote a creative redesign of urban ensembles worthy of protection.[114]

♦ Promote contemporary buildings with high architectural quality.[115]

♦ Support the diversity of urban structures and locational choices corresponding to the diversity of demand (differentiated instead of uniform development).

8.4   Urban development management has been introduced

Cities and urban regions may be seen as 'products' to be properly marketed. It is essential to attract business development and foster employment opportunities for the economic and social vitality of a town. Since competition among towns is strong, good marketing is needed to highlight the merits. Recent experience shows that the concept of 'development management' can be useful, as opposed to urban administration. This may go as far as the appointment of city managers.

No InterregIIC project has been proposed here.

Urban Exchange Initiative
COMPREHENSIVE (INTEGRATED) REGENERATION, S [116]

Objective:

Reduce unemployment, promote ecological sustainability.

Strategy:

Set up a *Local Investment Programme, with a focus on* the renovation and conversion of existing buildings and technical infrastructure in deprived urban areas.

Municipalities were asked to produce proposals for actions based on broad local investment programmes in partnership with the private sector, local people and public organisations.

The proposals had to reflect local needs and present a holistic strategy for local sustainable development.

Status:

Almost all municipalities have submitted proposals; of these 50% focus on urban areas. Implementation of the programme is ongoing but the experiences so far indicate that the work is successful.

Urban Exchange Initiative
GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT LEEDS, UK[118]

Objective:

All sector actions are directed towards sustainable development

Anticipated Result:

Comprehensive regeneration strategy, Local Agenda21 Plan.

Strategy:

The regeneration strategy seeks to reduce inequality and social exclusion. Strategic programmes, pilot studies and "bottom up" involvement are developed. A Council plan on local service delivery is elaborated in parallel.

To evaluate the current position of the city six workshops were conducted involving 600 people from different target groups. The draft strategy report was developed from the findings of the workshops. It was distributed for consultation with a summary questionnaires to 200 community information points and leaflets to all households.

Almost 10,000 responses were collected. These are, in connection with a resident survey, the input for the final strategy document and the prioritisation of action and their implementation.

Urban Exchange Initiative
TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT ENSCHEDE, NL[117]

Objective:

Creation of a lively meaningful meeting place with a rich range of facilities.

The Situation:

Enschede has overcome the collapse of the textile industry and has developed into a centre for the region of Twente. It is also a tourist destination for visitors from Germany. On the other side the town suffers from high levels of unemployment, below average training and weak public involvement. Higher income population is also moving outside of town.

Anticipated Result:

Town centre with improved access to public transport; less private car use; increased diversity of shops, hotels, restaurants; supply of residential and office space at the fringe of the town centre.

Strategy:

A Master Plan has been drawn up with the aim to improve the town centre's identity, its presentation and organisation and attract supplementary activities. Integrative planning shall ensure long term development. The planning process involved town centre residents, developers, investors and local companies.

LEADER II Innovative Action
RECONVERTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS INTO FIRST CLASS ACCOMMODATION

Province of Noord Friesland, NL

Objective:

Safeguard historic buildings through the assignment of new functions

Project Result:

High quality apartment hotels in historic buildings

Activities:

- Establishment of a foundation "Culture and Tourism in Friesland" in 1993 as interface between local authorities, cultural organisations and tourism sector
- Transfer of ownership of public historic buildings to foundations with the aim of restoring them
- Foundation co-ordinates restoration plans and oversees work
- After restoration buildings are leased to local operators

Present status:

Five hotels had been established in 1997; a number of tourism products have been developed in order to combined the stay with discovery activities.

Conclusion

The issue of town management will gain importance. As mentioned before, trans-national co-operation in this field can only mean exchange of experience due to different legislative and economic general conditions.

Strategies

♦ Promote the exchange of experience on the instruments for city management

3. Strategies for Rural Areas

VISION STATEMENT 9

Human Activities which are in harmony with nature

Main **aims** to achieve this vision were described in chapter II as follows:

➢ Human activities are harmonised with strategies for protection of the environment.

➢ Environment friendly forms of tourism have been widely introduced.

An advanced programme funded by the European Community concerning the development of rural areas is the LEADER PROGRAMME.

It aims "to support innovative, demonstrative and transferable operations illustrating the new paths rural development could follow"[119]. After the LEADER II programme lasting from 1994 until 1999 a new initiative "LEADER+" (2000 - 2006) has been set up. 2.02 bn Euro[120] will be allocated by the commission.

LEADER II supported local partnerships of private, community, voluntary and public actors, by giving substantial sums of money to implement integrated local strategies. A renewal of rural activities and the creation of innovative actions has been initiated that truly reflects local needs.

Innovation is a key concept of LEADER. During the LEADER II programme many local action groups have dealt with the topic of innovation in rural areas. New solutions thought up by local actors to deal with specific challenges of their area were analysed by about 80 case studies.

LEADER identifies innovation in three directions:[121]

- diversification of local economies,
- new interaction between the local and global context,
- strengthening of relations between local actors: towards new internal or local synergies.

Diversification of local economies: For a long time production was established in large units favouring agglomerations. Now, technology enables small units to be equally productive. The increasing demand for high quality products can be an opportunity for small scale units. New rural functions emerge such as environmental protection or management of natural resources. Extensive agriculture and agro-tourism provide chances for a changing pattern of farmers' activities.

New interactions between the local context and the global context: The mutually growing together of the EU and the Single Market erased isolation in many regions. Large-scale infrastructure built across Europe enhanced accessibility and communication. New information and communication technologies offer a wide range of possibilities in rural development and facilitate external relations. Databank systems supply enterprises in remote areas with needed information. Teleworking provides new job opportunities.

The development of new internal synergies: The linkages of local actors are essential in order to join forces for accessibility of new technologies as well as new markets, improvement of supply of tourism facilities and activities, etc.

A LEADER "Innovative Action" having used these internal synergies to provide new facilities has converted public historic buildings into high-standard privately managed accommodation facilities.

| 9.1 | Human activities are harmonised with strategies for protection of the environment |

The InterregIIC-NSR project *Nordnet* (box) seeks to strengthen rural areas through the use of IT, while reducing the need for travelling.

Besides traffic the industrialised agriculture puts pressure on the environment of rural areas. Strategies to minimise the negative effects and to promote environmentally sound methods of land cultivation are required for the benefit of soils and water.

The protection of valuable cultural landscapes and their historic and aesthetic heritage needs to be fostered and their value should be emphasised when setting up concepts for spatial development.

A few InterregIIC projects focus on specific issues, while integrated approaches have not been proposed.

Conclusion

This vision comprises a broad spectrum of aspects largely addressed by the EUs LEADER programme, leaving little need for additional action.

Strategies

♦ Secure sustainable agriculture through the application of environmental measures and diversification of land utilisation.[122]

♦ Protect soils as the basis of life, fauna and flora, through the reduction of erosion, soil destruction and overuse of open spaces.[123]

♦ Preserve and develop cultural landscapes with historical, aesthetic and ecological importance.[124]

♦ Enhance the value of cultural landscapes in the framework of integrated spatial development strategies.[125]

♦ Improve co-ordination of development measures which have an impact on landscapes.[126]

♦ Restore landscapes having suffered through human intervention, including recultivation measures.[127]

♦ Promote sustainable coastal fisheries

9.2   Environment friendly forms of tourism have been widely introduced

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This vision has attracted considerable attention, due to the expectancy that tourism provides a sustainable alternative source of employment and income where job opportunities in traditional rural activities are declining.

Since many regions in the NSR are highly frequented tourist destinations, the Vision seeks to promote environmentally friendly forms of tourism with a special emphasis on cultural heritage.

Sometimes, the approach is focused on ecological tourism, though one should be aware that this market segment is of limited size only and will usually not compensate for job losses elsewhere.

InterregIIC Project
NORDNET

Partners:

- Sotenäs Municipality, S
- Halden Municipality, N
- Skagen Production school, DK
- Chamber of Commerce Emsland–Osnabrück, D
- Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, UK

Objectives:

- Reduce the need for vehicular traffic
- Reduce out-migration of younger rural population
- Reduce disadvantages for lesser mobile population

Expected project results:

- Extended knowledge among key persons how to use IT to enhance remote education
- Clarification of strategies to fight unemployment with IT
- Network of co-operation between SME
- Transnational co-operation in the use of IT

- **Strategies:**
- Exchange experience on ways to combat unemployment at regional levels
- Stimulate key personnel to actively use ICT
- Set up of common remote education plan

Time Schedule

1. Set up transnational and local work groups on labour market, communication technology, education, industry; January 1999 – March 1999

2. Seminars of the working groups;
   April 1999 – September 2000

3. Seminar on new ways of combating unemployment, simplification of remote education, multi-sector co-operation, new communication channels, experience of project work groups, transnational business communication. August 2000- December 2000

4. Final report February 2001

Present status (Sept. 1999)

No results are yet available. The project has set up its organisational structure and working groups. Some overall strategies have been defined. Specific activities to achieve the project goal have not yet been identified.

Tourism can put pressure on landscapes and the environment. Some coastal areas suffer from tourism activities and tourism has become a major income sector, though in some regions the growing competition with other tourist destinations is a threat.

Tourism is dealt with in a number of InterregIIC-NSR projects. The project "Documentation and Development of Seaside Tourism" (box) intends to provide an overview of the development of seaside related tourism in the NSR in cities as well as in rural areas. It aims to assist tourism businesses in their promotion, and to provide advice for local planners on how to deal with sustainable tourism.

Guidelines for spatial planning elaborated in the course of the project promote so-called "tourism development zones". This approach needs yet to be specified.

A specific tourism segment, boat tourism, looks back to a long tradition in the NSR. This type of tourism is particularly dependent on the networking of related port infrastructure. In the Baltic Sea Region, a specific project to promote such network-based tourism has been set up. This may be an example of interest for the NSR, too.

Another InterregIIC project focusing on tourism is the NORTRAIL project (see box) which, in its first approved phase, comprises a feasibility study for a larger project. At the current project stage, it mainly deals with the evaluation of the present situation. Strategies on how to promote a network of footpaths have been briefly mentioned, but work is still at an early stage. For the main project to come the partners seek to increase the number of regions involved.

Conclusion

Various InterregIIC projects for the NSR deal with sustainable tourism development. This underlines the importance of this issue.[128] Current projects tend to concentrate on specific forms of tourism, such as cultural tourism. Sometimes, too high expectations seem to be placed on the expected employment generation.

A major spatial policy challenge is how to deal with ordinary 'mass' tourism, particularly in seaside locations, including the rehabilitation or restructuring of derelict old tourist resorts. The latter is not addressed by any InterregIIC project.

Strategies

♦   Exploit the development potential of environmentally friendly tourism.[129]

♦   Harmonise tourism development with coastal zone protection.

♦   Protect and use cultural heritage.

♦   Seek ways to restructure derelict tourist resorts towards changed tourist preferences.

VISION STATEMENT 10

Rural Populations which participate fully in Economic and Social Progress

Main **aims** to achieve this vision were identified in chapter II as follows:

➢   Service functions in rural areas are supported.

➢   Rural economies have been promoted.

➢   Information technology and innovation support the development of peripheral, non-agglomeration, regions.

The EU-sponsored pilot actions for the Northern Periphery have listed a number of contemplated measures. These are in general equally valid for other rural areas (see box).

10.1   Service functions in rural areas are supported

Service functions in rural areas are vital for the quality of life of their populations. Decreasing service functions often mean a severe restriction for some population groups.
It is common agreement that a decent level of services needs to be maintained in rural areas to ensure their liveability.

The InterregIIC project "Sustaining the Vitality and Self-Sufficiency of Rural Service Centres" (box) aims at the preservation and enhancement of the poly-centric urban structure. Pilot projects will start at the beginning of 2000. A wide range of topics are covered, addressing all facets of life in rural areas.

Regions from four NSR countries (Nordic countries N, S, DK, plus UK) are involved. Since rural service centres play a vital role throughout the entire NSR, a later involvement of regions from other NSR countries would be desirable.

	InterregIIC Project DOCUMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SEASIDE TOURISM

Partners:

- County Council of Halland, S (lead partner)
- Nordjyllands Amt, DK
- Netherlands Design Institute, NL
- Lincoln University, UK

Objectives:

- Promote economic activity and employment opportunities.
- Solve conflicts between seaside tourism and competing interests.

Project results:

- Material for visitor information.
- Guidelines for planners to encourage sustainable seaside tourism.
- Common marketing strategy.

Strategies:	**Activities:**
1. Exchange experience related to conflicting interests between sea-side tourism and environmental as well as residents interests	• Set-up of co-operation network
2. Compare the develop-ment and the present situation of seaside tourism in order to reveal common problems and good and bad practice	• Application of Common Pool Resource (CPR) management technique (selected coastal zones comprising objects for comparison with others are analysed
3. Revitalisation of the environment through new planning practices	• Elaboration of guidelines for planners on seaside tourist zones" and their infrastructure requirements
4. Draw attention to hidden attractions and authentic cultural environments	• Set principles for a "North Sea Heritage status for seaside areas"

Time Schedule:

1. Documentation of history and development of seaside tourism; importance of climate, natural resources, cultural and social factors; April 1999- Feb 2000
2. Analysis of the present situation: Is there an authentic North Sea seaside Tourism? Comparative view of value of seaside tourism, best practice; March 2000 – September 2000
3. Planning strategies: Community information, guidelines for planners, information pack for tourism industry and marketers; October 2000 – June 2001
4. Evaluation July 2001 – September 2001

	InterregIIC Project NORTRAIL NORTH SEA COASTAL FOOTPATH

Partners:

- The Centre for Cultural Landscapes, Hordaland County Council, N
- Ringkjøbing Amt DK
- Lincolnshire County Council, UK
- East Lothian County Council, UK
- Aberdeenshire Council, UK

Objective: Optimise tourist use of the cultural landscape for the benefit of the regions.

Expected project results: Feasibility report for the set-up of larger project in this context.

Strategies:	**Activities:**
1. Evaluate existing approaches and their transferability	• not indicated
2. Revitalise traditional crafts	• Building of traditional wooden boats "osevar" at the City of Os
3. Revitalise old trade inns and hostels	• not indicated

Time Schedule:

1. Development of the organisational framework
2. Survey of programmes and action related to network of footpaths, transport and accommodation facilities, historic attractions, information system ;June 1999
3. Feasibility Study: study of coastal path and related features in each country; establishment of data base. September 1999

	EU Programme NORTHERN PERIPHERY

Project themes proposed by the EU Commission:

A. Maintenance of household oriented services, e.g.:

- pooling of public and private sector resources to maintain a satisfactory level of service;
- improving local planning practices to obtain more cost-efficient solutions;
- inter-regional co-operation to provide specialised services.

B. Making use of information technology to compensate for a remote location and long distances, e.g.:

- Distance learning to provide higher level or specialised education not otherwise accessible;
- Specialised health-care through telemedicine;
- Specialised business services and market related information through the application of IT;
- Locating information-oriented services in remote areas by means of new technology.

C. Co-ordination of actions to provide services for SMEs, e.g.:

- advice and information on locational questions
- bulk transport arrangements for small businesses.

The spatial impact of the project can be far reaching, if it succeeds to find ways how to strengthen rural centres, thus counteracting the loss of population — especially of younger and skilled people.

A research programme financed by the responsible German Federal Ministry examined the establishment of small multi-functional shops (called 'neighbourhood shops') in rural areas (box). Pilot projects showed that even in small communities such shops can be viable, and that it is more the human element which limits their success. Even under unfavourable conditions the esprit and the wealth of ideas of shop operators have led to success.

Using this experience and similar approaches in other EU countries, the EU Commission has compiled best practise regarding local shops in disadvantaged rural areas, addressing major topics: business formats, supplying of retailers, methods of business co-operation, measures providing technical support for businesses and their contribution to local development.

Conclusion

Many approaches have been initiated to strengthen the service supply in rural areas, some of them successful. The approach of the ongoing InterregIIC project 'Sustaining the Vitality and Self-sufficiency of Rural Service Centres in the NSR' is promising. A close co-ordination with similar projects under the LEADER programme would be useful. Results should be awaited before launching new projects in this field, but an extension of participants to involve other NSR countries should be welcomed.

Strategies

- ♦ Maintain a basic supply of services and public transport in small and medium-sized towns in rural areas, particularly those in decline.[130]

- ♦ Strengthen small and medium-sized towns in rural areas as focal points for regional development and promotion of their networking.[131]

- ♦ Promote non-traditional public transport in sparsely populated regions (car pools, train taxi); Improve public transport and provide a minimum level of service in small and medium-sized towns.[132]

- ♦ Promote changed rural-urban relationship which help to maintain local identity.

| 10.2 | **Rural economies have been promoted** |

This issue is closely linked to those discussed under VISION STATEMENT 10.1, as regards rural urban centres, and VISION STATEMENT 9.2 (rural tourism). Furthermore, local businesses and industries need an efficient promotion. For example, local products need to be effectively marketed, such as ecologically sound food products. Sustainable coastal fishing activities can secure local income generation. Sometimes, it can be combined with tourism activities such as boat trips.

Education and training in rural areas need to be supported to generate jobs also outside the traditional rural sectors. Where this seems not feasible for single regions, interregional co-operation can help to secure viability by joint operation and financing of educational facilities and the use of complementarities.

Strategies

- ♦ Promote diversified development strategies, sensitive to the indigenous potentials in the rural areas and which help to achieve an indigenous development (including the promotion of multi-functionality in agriculture).[133]

- ♦ Support rural areas in education, training and in the creation of non-agricultural jobs.[134]

- ♦ Promote partnership-based co-operation among small and medium-sized towns at a national and transnational level through joint projects and the mutual exchange of experience.[135]

- ♦ Promote co-operation between towns and countryside aiming at strengthening functional regions.[136]

- ♦ Support co-operation and information exchange between rural areas.[137]

- ♦ Support coastal fisheries and sea farming as economic bases for coastal communities.

- ♦ Increase the importance of locally produced food.

- ♦ Accentuate the role of rural areas as food provider.

InterregIIC Project S*USTAINING THE* V*ITALITY AND* S*ELF-SUFFICIENCY OF* R*URAL* S*ERVICE* C*ENTRES IN THE* NSR

Partner:
- Lincolnshire County, UK (lead partner)
- Møre og Romsdal County, N
- Västra Götaland Region, S
- Viborg County, DK
- Local partnerships in each country

Objective:
Sustain the vitality and self-sufficiency of rural service centres for the benefit of a balanced and polycentric spatial structure

Project results:
- Cross-sector strategies and mechanism that help to ensure vitality and self-sufficiency,
- transnational and local network to exchange experience

Issues analysed:
- Education and training
- Business development
- Culture & leisure
- Town centre vitality
- Healthcare and social exclusion
- Transport & accessibility

Strategies:	**Activities:**
1. Examination of new methods of service delivery	• Scenario planning to examine options for future development and discuss results • Discussion with stakeholders to develop investment strategy
2. Establishment of innovative partnerships	• conduct visits between members of different regions to learn about individual approaches • establishment of community focus groups to discuss local issues • planning for real exercise (imaginative planning of local communities)
3. Use opportunities offered by new technologies	• not yet identified

Time Schedule:
- Project preparation
(April - July 1999)
- Identification of current techniques/ initiatives and preparation of testing
(August – December 1999)
- Testing of techniques and initiatives
(January – July 2000)
- Evaluation and distribution of results
(August 2000 – May 2001)

R*ESEARCH* P*ROGRAMME*: E*XPERIMENTAL* H*OUSING* C*ONSTRUCTION AND* U*RBAN* D*EVELOPMENT*

Neighbourhood Shop 2000 [138]

Objectives:
- Establish a minimum standard of supply and service provision in small rural towns
- Integrate different services into the grocery shop
- Prevent forced mobility through the establishment of small decentralised service facilities.
- Provide adequate living conditions for the less mobile population strata

Background:

In many small rural towns basic supply and services facilities (grocery shops, post offices, outlets, banks, local government offices, etc.) have been drained by larger facilities in the vicinity. The village shops are often the only meeting point for communication of the population. Social cohesion is endangered, when the shops disappear. The loss of these facilities has far reaching consequences for certain groups of the population.

Twelve shops in different communities took part in the project. The villages have a population less than 1,000.

Lessons learnt:
- A neighbourhood shop consisting of a grocery shop; a postal outlet, a mail order agency, a lottery and pools outlet and an agency for small scale services can be run without any support from public bodies by private persons as well as citizen action groups in a catchment area of approximately 700 inhabitants upwards. Below that line the operating result is fairly low and special forms of operating are needed.
- Support by public funds helps to reduce the financial burden on profitability from the investment phase.
- A broad product range should be offered from grocery dry goods over fresh sausages and cheese, bread and pastries to household goods.
- Distance to the nearest larger shops should be more than eight km [139]
- Shops should be open in the morning and the afternoon and about 33 hours a week to ensure decent turn over.
- The establishment and the success of a neighbourhood shops depends first and foremost on the energetic operator.
- Lottery/ pools companies, post offices and mail services can be integrated quite easily.

10.3 Information technology and innovation support the development of peripheral regions

This issue has already been discussed under VISION STATEMENT 1.1 (access to knowledge) and VISION STATEMENT 6.3 (Regional centres, including intermediate cities and towns, make effective use of their potential for new economic activities).

It is especially important for rural development. Information and communication technologies offer potentials for new jobs in remote areas. This has been demonstrated in the course of a LEADER project in Scotland (box).

Conclusion

The strengthening of rural economies is certainly one of the more difficult challenges for spatial policies and requires continued support through research, pilot projects and exchange of experience. But some practical and promising experience already exists which needs to be widely spread.

Strategies

♦ Develop IT links so as to avoid discrimination of peripheral areas: Improve the access to and use of the telecommunication facilities and the design of tariffs in accordance with the provision of "universal services" in sparsely populated areas.[140]

♦ Enhance "media competence" in disadvantaged regions.

♦ Develop and use knowledge centres -science, education - for regional development.

♦ Support the establishment of innovation centres as well as co-operation between higher education and applied Research and Development bodies and the private sector.[141]

♦ Integrate knowledge-relevant policies, such as the promotion of innovation, education, vocational training and further training, research and technology development, into spatial development policies.[142]

♦ Develop packages of measures which stimulate supply and demand for improving regional access and the use of information and communication technologies.[143]

LEADER II Innovative Action (EU)
SUPPORT FOR TELEWORKING
Partner:
Western Isles Council , Skye & Lochalsh Group, Scotland
Objective:
Strengthening of teleworking in a remote area
Project Impact:
Approximately 100 teleworking[144] jobs were established
Strategies and Outputs:
• Establishment of "Western Isles Information, Communication and Technology Advisory Service" in 1994
• Elaboration of a list of potential teleworkers indicating their skills
• Setting-up of a company to manage contracts and participate in tenders.
Service offered:
• Production of digests, indexing and abstracting of scientific publications
• Conversion of publications to electronic media (Internet, CD-ROM)

VI. VISIONS INTO ACTIONS

1.   Introduction

NorVision is an advisory document which, it is hoped, will influence spatial planning in the NSR. It is expected that projects to be developed under INTERREG III will include measures which conform to the vision and which seek to put it into practice.

This chapter describes how the visions might be implemented by giving examples of projects. To do this, it first identifies the stakeholders. It then high-lights themes requiring more integrated planning and development approaches. In addition to these cross-sector themes, it summarises more specific issues which have emerged from the previous chapters.

These themes are the basis for suggesting projects to be contemplated for Interreg IIIB or for other co-operation programmes.

It is intended to discuss the vision document with stakeholders, with a view to specifying problem/ potential statements, to refine proposed strategies, and to suggest further concrete action.

2.   Stakeholders for the Vision

As indicated in the first chapter, the Vision addresses itself towards a range of stakeholders considered important for the implementation of the common vision:

- Regional and local authorities

    These are among the main addressees. Regional and local levels play a vital role for the implementation of the Vision.

    Thus, it is hoped that regional and local authorities will see the vision also as theirs, considering it when preparing regional plans and development concepts.

In particular, the Vision may be an incentive to identify fields where transnational co-operation could be beneficial and to formulate the regions' ambitions within the European Union.

Conversely, regions are invited to contribute with problem and potential specifications and with project ideas. This could enrich and streamline this document as well as the Operational Programme for Interreg IIIB.

- NSR Interreg bodies

    The Secretariat and the Monitoring Committee can use the NorVision document as a major input to the Operational Programme for Interreg IIIB. The Vision document can also serve as a reference when evaluating the ongoing Interreg IIC programme for the NSR.

- Ongoing Interreg IIC NSR projects

    Project leaders had been contacted at an early stage of the vision process. They have started to feed their experience into the vision and particularly into the formulation of strategies.

    With further progress of the projects, this dialogue shall continue. Then, the visions and strategies may be further refined. The projects themselves, which often focus on specific issues, may benefit since the vision provides a background to widen project approaches.

- Governmental and non-governmental national sector institutions

    The Vision seeks to inspire sector institutions, in particular those responsible for environment, nature, transport. Cross-sector aspects shall be promoted when developing concrete projects, for example short-sea shipping, transport infra-structure development linked to regional development. NorVision provides indication, where cross-sector approaches may be effective.

    Sector institutions are invited to point out where co-operation with other fields is seen as necessary by them.

- National spatial planning institutions

  NorVision provides a background for future national planning documents and contributes to the European perspective of national planning issues. NorVision has received inspiration from national approaches and best practice.

- Transnational spatial planning institutions

  It is hoped that the concepts developed in NorVision are considered useful by DGXVI, to be promoted vis-à-vis other transnational sector institutions such as for example DGVII (transport).

- Research institutions

  NorVision may motivate further research in areas relevant for the implementation of the Vision. Researchers are invited to participate in the discussion on NorVision and to contribute to its potential future refinement.

- Other organisations

  Private or public organisations interested in the issues dealt with are welcome to contribute to the discussion on the common Vision and its implementation.

The diversity of addressees underlines the cross-sector character of the Vision aiming at integrated spatial development.

3. Integrated Planning - Key Themes

For the purpose of easier discussion, chapters II (The Vision) and V (Strategies) were arranged according to 10 Vision Statements which related to the NSR as a whole or primarily to urban respectively rural regions.

But the analysis of NSR spatial structures, trends and future challenges, and the discussion on potential strategies have also demonstrated the need for more integrated planning approaches, covering different vision statements and area types simultaneously.

Therefore, the VWG has identified the following key themes for more integrated planning approaches. These cover many of the 'departmentalised' strategies presented before, but put them into a broader context. It should be stressed that this list is not exhaustive:

1. Integrated town-hinterland and inter-city development,

2. Controlled protection and use of valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes,[145]

3. Development of peripheral regions,

4. Strengthening of rural urban centres,

5. Promotion of sustainable mobility,

6. Regional transport infrastructure development embedded into regional development promotion.

7. Promotion of short-sea shipping,

8. Planning with water,

9. Integrated coastal zone management and planning.

These themes set the scene for the translation of visions into projects. They are briefly discussed below.

3.1 Integrated town – hinterland and inter-city development

The functional relationship between town and country must be considered in a way that both sides benefit from the functions supplied to and by each other. Linkages between urban areas and their hinterland are becoming ever stronger due to:

- functional interdependencies growing with increasing mobility (job commuters, urban services for 'rural' populations, 'rural' areas offering recreation opportunities, 'rural' populations demanding their fair share in economic prosperity),

- land-use competition due to existing fiscal systems (communities around urban areas seeking own tax incomes through development of industrial and service bases),

- joint responsibility for the nature,

- dependency of urban areas from food and water supply as well as waste disposal areas in their hinterland,

- new potentials in urban hinterlands to produce renewable energy.

This calls for co-operative planning among local authorities of the same region which, though not at all new, requires new approaches.

A similar issue arises where cities form clusters with close linkages and overlaps in their hinterlands: Integrative concepts can help to economise public expenditure and to enhance the aggregated urban quality.

Though some InterregIIC projects deal with rural-urban integration, this is generally not their particular focus.

3.2 Controlled use of valuable natural and cultural landscapes

The creation and the management of protected nature areas has advanced in Europe. But it is increasingly recognised that nature protection can not be limited to these areas. Wide natural and cultural landscapes display intensive use by agriculture, forestry, and smaller settlements, but play an important role for sustainable development. This is true for many parts of the NSR.

Concepts are required for the sustainable co-existence of nature protection with human activities, and the joint management – across municipalities, sometimes across regions and even national borders.

Here again, a dialogue must be sought with sector policies, e.g. agricultural policies: functionally designed agricultural landscape in all parts of the NSR have been set up at the expense of smaller fields divided by hedges and scrubs, which formed the habitat of various local species. Habitats are influenced through eutrophication and pesticide pollution from leaching, endangering bio-diversity.

3.3 Development of peripheral regions

It has been noted that peripherality situations of various kinds exist in the NSR which do not easily fit into the EU-wide concept. Some peripheral, low-density population, regions seek to join development paths of more urbanised regions, others will rather maintain their identity with specific development patterns. In both cases, ways need to be identified to ensure that the population of these areas participates in general economic and social progress of their respective country. Development approaches must be differentiated according to specific regional potentials.

3.4 Strengthening of rural urban centres

With growing mobility, rural (small) urban centres are suffering from increasing competition of service suppliers from major cities. This not only contributes to unwanted additional traffic demand, but also to a downward spiral of losses in attractiveness.

Counteracting measures require the co-operation among rural centres (to avoid that internal competition leaves all of them insufficiently competitive), between ERDF measures and local economic promotion, between public and private sector initiatives.

A continuation and widening of current InterregIIC project approaches would be useful.

3.5 Promotion of sustainable mobility

There is wide consensus that new approaches are needed which minimise mobility demand without harming economic development, nor peoples' welfare. They will not be successful if pursued through independent sector policies (e.g. transport policy).

National and EU transport sector institutions have made valuable contributions to the identification of ways for promoting sustainable mobility. But more integration is needed with local and regional spatial development.

Local and regional authorities shall be supported in their continued efforts to integrate land use policies with urban design and restructuring, and with transport sector development. Only then will it be possible to limit urban sprawl, while still responding to population's demand for quality residential areas. This calls again for more co-operation at regional levels, among local authorities as well as between these and regional ones.

3.6 Regional transport infrastructure development embedded into regional development promotion

Major parts of the NSR are not in the focus of EU and even national transport infrastructure network development plans. But they certainly require improvements in order to bind NSR centres of activity together, to ensure the accessibility from peripheral regions to urban services, to link NSR networks with trans-European networks, and to support NSR ports in their role as short-sea shipping hubs.

The identification of main transport links to be improved under these objectives needs to be done still. This undertaking should then not be limited to transport sector considerations, but include essentially regional development aspects.

3.7 Promotion of short-sea shipping (SSS)

In spite of the proclaimed intention of national governments and of the EU to promote short-sea shipping as a substitute to other modes of (particularly: freight) transport, little progress has been made, and concepts are not clearly defined. An integrated approach is required which

- joins representatives from relevant port cities around the NSR in their promotion activities,

- develops a coherent view of required infrastructure improvements in ports as well as in their hinterland connections

- considers the demands from integrated logistics involving multi-modal transport chains, distribution and inter-modal exchange centres,

- combines the interests of port cities with those of the private transport sector (sea and land).

The ongoing InterregIIC project on the marketing of SSS is a valuable basis, but should be extended towards a wider integration between urban/ regional and transport development.

Examples for such links of particular interest are:

- Göteborg – Oslo as part of the Copenhagen/ Malmö – Oslo axis;

- Amsterdam – Groningen – Bremen – Hamburg, this maybe the prototype of a transnational axis with potentially strong regional impact.

3.8 Planning with water

An integrated planning approach with regard to the use of wetlands, rivers, groundwater, and urban development, considering aspects and mutual interdependencies of flood prevention, navigation, agriculture and urban construction is proposed.

Such an approach as suggested by the Netherlands[146] (see Annex 2) would aim at a better integration between water sector management plans with regional and urban development. It will give more consideration to water retention measures, and to problem solutions at the source (instead of using the North Sea as the final deposit of polluting materials).

Such concepts need in many instances a transnational view as is already widely practised in the Rhine basis, but not with the cross-sector integration suggested here.

3.9 Integrated coastal zone management and planning ICZM&P

The scope of initiatives for ICZM has become very wide (see chapter V – Strategies). Care must be taken not to develop new 'integrated planning' programmes which do not pay sufficient attention to integration with other existing programmes on the same subject.

Notwithstanding this general comment, spatial planning needs to play a more active role in this field, not as a competitor, but as an important contributor. This seems to be important in order to conceive ICZM as a protection *and* development tool at the same time.

The InterregIIC project NORCOAST is promising, and looks for incorporation of other project experience. A continuation of this approach, with pilot projects focussing on different specific issues, and with further regions involved is recommended.

4. Specific Key Themes

In addition to the above, specific key themes emerge from the previous chapters, namely:

NSR as a whole:

(1) Improve transport links to transnational networks
(2) Secure access to knowledge
(3) Identify joint interest of NSR regions
(4) Prepare differentiated development approaches for peripheral regions
(5) Promote participation in public planning processes, with special commitment to the youth
(6) Use new media as a tool to improve information and communication flows in public planning debates
(7) Differentiated development of peripheral regions

Urban regions in the NSR

(8) Support a polycentric development within the NSR
(9) Port town development supporting short-sea shipping
(10) Sustainable waste management and promotion of ecological cycles
(11) Spatial growth containment
(12) Urban regeneration
(13) Promote social integration of minorities
(14) Enhance urban attractiveness in urban structures and design
(15) Promote cultural heritage

Rural areas

(16) Secure economic dynamics of rural areas so as not to force people to migrate to major urban centres
(17) Strengthen, rural urban centres, including co-operation among different centres
(18) Integrate ERDF measures with local economic promotion
(19) Improve knowledge on the spatial impacts from EU programmes in rural areas
(20) Use IT to offset location disadvantages
(21) Promote tourism
(22) Balance nature protection with economic development with regard to valuable natural and cultural heritage areas
(23) Promote renewable energy production

5 Visions into Projects

Visions become real through projects. A number of promising project approaches have been initiated within the framework of InterregIIC, some of which offer good potential for an extended continuation within a coming Interreg IIIB programme (see Annex 2).

A number of possible projects have been identified by the VWG. It is hoped that these will be specified and new ideas be added during the concertation process with the regions.

These projects shall as far as possible be developed in line with the above mentioned integrated planning themes.

To facilitate the discussion on the vision, project proposals are again grouped according to the 10 visions presented in chapter II, and classified into two types: projects to identify and to prepare joint action; and exchange of experience on good practise.

5.1 The North Sea Region as a Whole

VISION Statement 1
A NSR well integrated into the Development of the European Space and into the World Economy

This Vision subscribes particularly to the integrated planning themes:

- regional transport infrastructure development embedded into regional development promotion"
- promotion of sustainable mobility".

Projects should be initiated to foster the linking of all parts of the North Sea Region internally and externally. Special attention is paid to inland waterways, intermodality and rail traffic.

Access to knowledge has become an important issue for a comprehensive integration of the NSR into the European space.

Vision 1: Project Examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Identify priorities for links of NSR transport networks to national and transnational networks, including NSR port hinterland links
• Identify long-term concepts for the management of links and peripheral networks with a view at making most rational use of capacities before expanding these
• Identify potentials for enhancing inland waterway transport through better integration into spatial development measures
• Case studies for integrated train corridor management
• Development of car train facilities in tourist regions
• Promotion of inland waterway transport through strengthened networking among inland waterway ports
• Develop efficient and compatible multi-modal systems
• Set up a transnational higher education facility in the NSR for spatial planning (e.g. a three-month programme for students of all six countries based in one institution)
• NorVision PLUS: Dialogue of the VWG with futurologist institutions
• Encourage networking of SMEs to adapt to globalisation and enhance self understanding as partners in the NSR
Projects for the exchange of good practice
• Economically viable ways to promote sustainable rural-urban and rural-rural mobility (car pools, air links, low-cost public passenger transport, public-private partnership)
• Methods for improved cross-sector coordination for regional development

VISION Statement 2
A NSR with a balanced spatial structure

This vision calls for integrated approaches regarding coastal zone management in order to balance settlement and protection needs. It seeks to promote rural urban centres (dealt with under the spatial category "rural areas"), stresses the importance to strengthen the polycentric settlement structure and to maintain a functional diversity of service centres.

Vision 2: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Develop methods and approaches of integrated coastal zone management which integrate regional economic development and planning.
• Identify priorities for regional transport links to bind NSR development poles together and to improve links from peripheral to urbanised regions
• Identify, from NSR regions' point of view, regional development impacts from EU Structural Funds and other programmes, and needs for their refinement
• Co-ordinate the preparation of regional plans in transnational regions (beyond border regions), including the upgrading of regional transport links (e.g. Amsterdam – Groningen – Emden)
• Set up plans for development of knowledge centres in smaller cities and towns of the NSR based on city

Vision 2: Project examples
networks
• Co-operation of universities to find solution to specific NSR problems
• Improve access to natural and cultural sites through common routes
• Seek ways to make the sustainable development concept operational, using existing (e.g. Strategic Environment Assessment) and new methods
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Economically viable ways to promote sustainable rural-urban and rural-rural mobility (car pools, air links, low-cost public passenger transport, public-private partnership)
• Methods for improved cross-sector coordination for regional development

VISION Statement 3
The NSR - a Model for Democratic and Co-operative Planning

The projects proposed under this vision seek to enhance public involvement in planning processes. New participation processes are envisaged with a special commitment to the youth.

New media shall be used as a tool to improve information and communication flows. Besides consultation of the people on local and regional issues, projects are proposed, which aim at the common identity for the NSR and spread information on transnational issues.

Vision 3: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Establishment of population information centres using new media to inform people what is going on in local planning procedures
• Common exhibitions on planning experience, use of web-sites
• Promote new role of museums as places of information on the NSR and public debate
• Innovative ways of citizen participation
• Compare existing systems for democratic and co-operative planning and identify best practice ideas covering formal planning processes and innovative ideas
• Identify best practice on formal planning procedures with new ideas of citizen participation with special regard to youth (incl. Youth councils)
• Establishing transparency in public administration through extended use of IT.
• Assess potentials to link up citizens to the public administration through personal computers, creating easy access to legally accessible files in connection to notebook for enhancing public debate.
• Broadcasting from City Hall and County Council meetings via TV.
• Establish "Citizens' Days" prior to council meetings to enhance communication between elected and the

Vision 3: Project examples
electorates.
• Establish common procedures for cross-border and transnational public consultation and participation before and during the planning procedure.
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Ways for ensuring participative planning and implementation at local and regional levels
• Methodologies for supporting participative planning and implementation with technical assistance
• Possibilities for the use of IT as an instrument to facilitate the dialogue policy-makers – planners – population/ business

VISION Statement 4
The NSR, which takes care of its Natural Resources and Ecological Equilibrium and its Natural Heritage

The approaches "planning with water", "coastal zone management" and "sustainable mobility" are especially important for the North Sea Region. Further activities are proposed concerning natural and cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism.

The issue of renewable energy production is another field, where projects are to be initiated.

Vision 4: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Concepts to promote sustainable interregional mobility under conditions of low-density, non-agglomeration regions
• Water catchment area management, including preventive flood protection, erosion prevention, ground and surface water quality protection, integrated with regional and urban development on regional, national and transnational level
• Demonstration projects for best practice in sustainable management of rain water run-off from buildings and car parks.
• Identify long term possibilities for networks of nature and cultural landscape protection areas in the NSR as a whole
• Identify the implications of spatial policies on the ecology of the North Sea and suggest improvements
• Designation and administrative procedures of protected areas on the seabed
• Integration of nature protection aspects into regional development plans
• Demonstration project for new energy production (incl. tidal power)
• Demonstration projects for improving the energy efficiency of existing housing areas by external changes such as tree and shrub planting, fences/walls and earth mounding.
• Networks of cultural sites
• Develop management concepts for cultural heritage
• Develop criteria for evaluation of cultural heritage

Vision 4: Project examples
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Methodology and results of EIA and TIA (Territorial impact assessment) studies
• Standardised indicators and methods for EIA and spatial impact assessment
• Inter-municipal land management (green area pools)
• Urban planning with water
• Management concepts for valuable, but not protected nature areas and cultural landscapes
▪ Practise of sustainable tourism and its links to economic development
• Potentials for wave energy development

5.2   Urban Regions

VISION Statement 5
Urban Regions Developing in an Environment Friendly Way

This Vision relates to a number of integrated strategies mentioned above regarding the North Sea Region as a whole. Especially relevant is sustainable transport.

The approach of integrated town-hinterland and inter-city development is applicable for urban areas. Action is suggested to consider the total flow of matter in the urban system and to direct processes toward ecological cycles. Another important issue for proposed projects is the limitation of land use.

Vision 5: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Joint efforts of cities in border areas for water and waste management
• Compact cities and dealing with "vacant" building sites/ brownfield areas
• Pilot projects for renewable energy development, incl. solar, wind, bio-energy and hydropower
• Experience with recycling systems in urban regions
• Experience with developing Eco-cycling
• Establish closer circles of agricultural production and consumption
• Assess the possibilities of developing light rail and other transport solutions for public transport
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Promotion of sustainable mobility in urban regions through spatial policy instruments
• Promotion of renewable energy production and use in urban regions
• Ways to promote inward urban growth
• Examples how to change attitudes and stimulate people to use public transport
• Implementation exchange experience with waste recycling and waste management.

VISION Statement 6
Urban Regions as Motors of Economic Regional Development

Urban regions as motors for regional development shall make use of their inherent potentials to foster economic activities. Among such potentials not satisfactorily developed in the NSR is short sea shipping. The efficient use of infrastructure and functional complementarities are a further area for the development of project ideas.

Vision 6: Project examples

Projects preparing for joint action
- Promote short-sea shipping development by joint efforts of port cities (network of port cities), including hinterland infrastructure and corresponding development of port regions and cities
- Identify measures to make optimal use from major new transport links for regional development
- Inter-city co-operation to make economical use of complementarities among cities across national borders

Projects for the exchange of experience
- Approaches for integrated town – hinterland development
- "Creative Town" to create employment and to support innovative business
- City networks – ways to make economical use of complementarities among cities, the cities' perception
- Joint marketing of regional economic potentials
- Successful promotion of economic development, which links education, industry, spatial planning and capital provision.
- Urban benchmarking

VISION Statement 7
Urban Regions which Promote Social Integration

When promoting social integration within cities, attention shall be paid to ethnic minorities. Urban regeneration needs to go hand in hand with social integration.

Vision 7: Project examples

Projects preparing for joint action
- Develop community development centres in urban problem areas
- Promote cross-sector approaches for urban regeneration/ social integration
- Create planning principles for mixed-generation and mixed-use
- Develop spatial schemes for mixed ownership in residential areas.
- Identify the relationship of health indicators and social class indicators in different regions
- Develop schemes for mixed-ethnic employment.
- Develop mixed-ethnic user groups to act as communications groups for public administration.

Vision 7: Project examples
- Assess the development of quotation systems for ethnic and endogenous population in public housing.
- Develop procedures for decentralising authority, competence and responsibility to the citizens.

Projects for the exchange of experience
- Ways to promote social integration and to reduce segregation through spatial policies
- Ways to disseminate Information on expected planning (local, regional)
- Working programmes for maintenance of public space
- Experience on youth parliaments and other target groups' involvement
- Examples to raise identification with the quarter and public space
- New urban layout for old high rise apartment buildings.

VISION Statement 8
Urban Regions which are Attractive Places for their Populations and Visitors

Projects in regard to this vision shall deal with the enhancement of urban attractiveness, which refers to urban structures as well as to design quality. The promotion of cultural heritage shall contribute to this end.

Projects shall work towards mixed urban structures and compact city models. The shall look for integrated approaches taking the diversity of demands to urban space into account and finding a balance between socio-economic and ecological requirements.

Vision 8: Project examples

Projects preparing for joint action
- Develop indicators for comparative analysis of attractiveness
- Projects stimulating architectural design with water
- Joint promotion of the NSR as a tourist destination
- Find ways to promote local culture
- Set up network for the presentation and preservation of world heritage sites
- Develop spatial plans which reflect respect for architectural, urban and nature heritage.
- Develop spatial plans which reflect priority on recreation, urban nature and clean environment.
- Develop spatial plans which reflect priority on security and mix generations/ethnic background.
- Develop spatial plans which reflect priority on sustainable infrastructure, mix functions and balanced location of trade and industry.
- Develop spatial plans which mix architectural heritage and contemporal architecture of high value.
- Develop spatial plans which promote "Compact City" – concept.

Vision 8: Project examples
• Develop plans and procedures for the transfer from present day transport system to future sustainable transport systems.
• Develop plans for reducing the overall amount of transport through relocation (station-near) of workplaces, mix urban function development, and change of transport mode.
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Experience with pilot projects for urban regeneration, and their contribution to the attraction of visitors
• Experience with conversion of brownfield areas and derelict military sites

5.3 Rural Areas

VISION Statement 9
Human Activities which are in Harmony with Nature

"Controlled <u>use</u> of valuable natural and cultural landscape" is the key issue when dealing with rural areas.

This is related to the promotion of sustainable tourism as a main field for project ideas. But other economic activities need to be harmonised with the requirements of nature and cultural landscape preservation as well, such as farming, fishing, energy generation.

Vision 9: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Identify implications of extended use of coastal waters for wind farming of large and small scale facilities
• Develop approaches to manage the change towards sustainable tourism
• Develop thematic tourism routes which minimise negative environmental impacts
• Restoration of cultural heritage objects with common NSR identity
• Conservation and development – "ConVelopment" - of cultural landscapes
• Develop sustainable agricultural policies and related suitable instruments
• Pilot projects for the environment friendly economical use of valuable nature areas and landscapes
• Develop concepts to allow reductions in distances travelled by vehicles in rural areas (residents and visitors), without harming economic and social progress.
• Recreation of wetlands areas with special focus on biodiversity
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Potentials to use economic instruments for sustainable development of valuable landscapes;

Vision 9: Project examples
• Management experience for sustainable development of valuable landscape areas
• Sustainable development of tourism, including mass tourism
• Benefits from extensive agriculture, new role of the farmer for green area management
• Best practice to reduce negative impacts of intensive farming in border areas to enhance water quality, bio-diversity, environment/ agricultural policy

VISION Statement 10
Rural Populations participate fully in Economic and Social Progress

This vision deals with ways to secure the economic dynamics of rural areas so as not to force people to migrate to major urban centres. All integrated planning themes discussed in chapter 4 are relevant from the point of view of rural welfare.

More specific project proposals are shown below:

Vision 10: Project examples
Projects preparing for joint action
• Rural tourism promotion plans harmonised with sustainable regional development
• Networking for lengthening the tourist season
• Establish of tele-working houses
• Providing every home in a village or urban street with a PC linked to the internet and monitoring the way in which it is used for community development, economic growth and social development.
• Regional development of peripheral areas – objectives, potentials, instruments
• Analyse the regions' perception of EU CAP and EFRE and their impact on regional development
• Develop mechanisms to involve farmers in landscape management
• Identify concepts of sustainable and bio-diverse agriculture
• Develop tools and instruments that permits farming in cultural heritage areas
Projects for the exchange of experience
• Strengthening of services supply in rural urban centres
• Ways to promote endogenous economical potentials for regional development
• Use of IT for regional development
• Ways of improve media competence

6. Call for contributions to specify proposed action

This document will not be complete before regions – and Interreg IIC project leaders - have made their comments and more specific proposals, particularly as regards proposed relevant themes and projects.

They are those knowing best which action is needed for their respective region. They are therefore invited to suggest further specifications:

A. Chapter III. Spatial trends

(1) Suggest specifications to the broad statements in terms of more precise examples, indication of where such issues are particularly relevant.

B. Chapter IV. Future challenges

(2) Indicate whether the statements on future challenges are supported by the addressees, or should they be revised.

(3) Indicate where such issues are particularly relevant examples.

C. Chapter V – Strategies

(4) Comment whether the proposed strategies reflect adequate approaches as seen by the regions.

(5) Inform where the regions need enhanced support from national and transnational spatial development policies helping them to better perform their regional development tasks.

D. Chapter VI – Themes for enhanced integrated planning with cross-sector co-operation and other key themes

(6) Propose other important themes with a specific need and expected benefits to enhance cross-sector and transnational co-operation.

F. Chapter VI – Project proposals

(7) Propose other concrete projects towards joint action or exchange of experience on good practise.

(8) Specify relevant regions where such projects would be useful

ANNEX 1:   Delimitation of the North Sea Region (at NUTS III level)

Note: The spelling in this table is strictly following national names, even where, for better understanding, geographical references are made in English in other parts of this report

Country	NUTS III Region
Norway	Østfold, Akershus, Oslo, Buskerud, Vestfold, Telemark, Aust-Agder, Vest-Agder, Rogaland, Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane, Møre og Romsdal, Sør-Trøndelag
Sweden	Göteborgs och Bohus län, Hallands län, Älvsborgs län, Skaraborgs län, Värmlands län (from 1 January 1998 Göteborgs och Bohus län, Älvsborgs län and Skaraborgs län merged into Västra Götalands län)
Denmark	Nord Jylland, Viborg, Ringkøbing, Ribe, Sønder Jylland
Germany	Hamburg, Bremen Stadtgemeinde, Bremerhaven Stadtgemeinde, Flensburg Kreisfreie Stadt, Kiel Kreisfreie Stadt, Lübeck Kreisfreie Stadt, Neumünster Kreisfreie Stadt, Dithmarschen, Herzogtum Lauenburg, Nordfriesland, Ostholstein, Pinneberg, Plön, Rendsburg-Eckernförde, Schleswig-Flensburg, Segeberg, Steinburg, Stormarn, Diepholz, Celle, Cuxhaven, Harburg, Lüchow-Dannenberg, Lüneburg, Osterholz, Rotenburg (Wümme), Soltau-Fallingbostel, Stade, Uelzen, Verden, Delmenhorst Kreisfreie Stadt, Emden Kreisfreie Stadt, Oldenburg (Oldenburg) Kreisfreie Stadt, Osnabrück Kreisfreie Stadt, Wilhelmshaven Kreisfreie Stadt, Ammerland, Aurich, Cloppenburg, Emsland, Friesland, Grafschaft Bentheim, Leer, Oldenburg, Osnabrück, Vechta, Wesermarsch, Wittmund
Netherlands	Noord-Friesland, Zuidwest-Friesland, Zuidoost-Friesland, Oost-Groningen, Delfzijl en omgeving, Over Groningen, Noord-Drenthe, Zuidoost-Drenthe, Zuidwest-Drenthe, Noord-Overijssel, Zuidwest-Overijssel, Twente, Flevoland, Kop van Noord-Holland, Alkmar en omgeving
UK	Scottish Borders, Perth and Kinross, East Lothian, Dundee City, Midlothian, Angus, West Lothian, Aberdeenshire, City of Edinburgh, Aberdeen City, Fife, Moray, Clackmannanshire, Highland, Stirling, Orkney, Falkirk, Shetland, Cleveland, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Humberside, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk

ANNEX 2:   Project proposals for INTERREG III

Draft guidelines for the Interreg III programme suggest a focus on projects of 3 broad types:

1. Spatial development strategies for sustainable development with a polycentric urban system, promoting co-operation between towns and cities, and between cities and rural areas;

    Examples:

    -   transnational spatial development concepts;
    -   impact assessment of policies and projects on the transnational space;
    -   strengthened co-operation between agglomeration areas and gateway cities to promote the integration of peripheral regions into the world economy;
    -   strategic networks between small and medium-sized cities, including a strengthening of small rural urban centres;
    -   promotion of long-term spatial perspectives and networking of research and planning institutions.

2. Establishment of efficient and environment friendly transport networks, and of improved access to information and knowledge;

    Examples:

    -   improvement of secondary transport links to national and transnational networks and nodal systems;
    -   promotion of intermodality and modal shift to railways, ship transport and non-motorised modes;
    -   promotion of information and communication technologies to develop virtual clusters for enterprises, to improve public services (education, health etc.), and access to knowledge and innovation

3. Promotion of the environment with proper management of natural resources, particularly water.

    Examples:

    -   contributions to NATURA2000 linking protection areas across regions and borders
    -   rehabilitation of landscapes degraded by human activities;
    -   promotion of natural and cultural wealth of rural areas as a basis for tourism;
    -   joint strategies for risk management in areas prone to natural disasters;
    -   integrated strategies and actions to prevent flooding in transnational river basins;
    -   integrated strategies and actions in drought areas;
    -   concerted management of coastal waters.

In addition, the Commission proposes to continue with the promotion of transnational economic and social development poles (Interreg IIIA), and exchange of experience on good practise as well as transnational cooperation in fields of common interest (such as research, technological development, SMEs, information society, tourism, culture, employment, environment).

Notes

[1] Europe 2000+ (Brussels 1994)

[2] After some adjustments, these regions were defined as follows: (1) the central agglomerations of south-western England, southern Netherlands, Belgium, Northern/ north-eastern France incl. Paris, Luxembourg and Western/ south-western Germany; (2) the Alpine Arc including parts of France, Southern Germany, Northern Italy, Switzerland and Austria; (3) the Continental Diagonal from south-western France to central Spain; (4) the five New Länder in Germany; (5) the Mediterranean from Southern Spain through Southern France, Italy towards Greece; (6) the Atlantic Arc from Northern Scotland to Southern Portugal; (7) the North Sea Region, and (8) the French overseas regions, Canary Islands, Azores and Madeira; later on the Baltic Sea Region was also included as a specific region.

[3] The initial definition of the North Sea Region was modified by eliminating parts from Germany and Denmark, and including western parts of Sweden and Norway

[4] European Commission, Interrreg II C, Community Initiative concerning Transnational Co-operation on Spatial Planning, North Sea Region Operational Programme 1997-1999, approved by the European Commission on 18th December 1997

[5] for details see Annex 1

[6] Co-operation regions for the INTERREG II C programme are: (1) the Baltic Sea region; (2) the Mediterranean, Adriatic, Danube and south-east European region; (3) the North Sea Region; (4) the north-west European Metropolitan Region; (5) the Alps and (6) the programme region for flood prevention Rhein-Maas

[7] Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 - Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region (VASAB2010), adopted by the Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development in Tallinn (Estonia), December 8, 1994; This document was complemented in 1996 by a follow-up document "From Vision to Action"

[8] Periodical international conferences on the protection of the North Sea resulted in 1992 in the signing of the Oslo-Paris (OSPAR) Convention, including the obligation accepted by all North Sea States and the European Commission to adopt the precautionary principle and the "polluter pays" principle in their work of protecting the marine environment. A "North Sea Task Force" presented in 1993 a North Sea Quality Status Report, and in 1995 (4th Conference) the Esbjerg Declaration was adopted which summarises agreed measures on the protection of the North Sea

[9] ESDP (1999), paragraph (80)

[10] Oslo and Paris Commissions, International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, North Sea Task Force: North Sea Quality Status Report 1993, London 1993; note: an updated report is presently under preparation

[11] North Sea Commission: Strategy 1999-2006 Towards a North Sea Region, Viborg/ Denmark, June 1999

[12] ESDP (May 1999), paragraph (70)

[13] In the VASAB2010 document for the Baltic Sea Region, this is summarised under the heading "system"

[14] North Sea Commission, Strategy 1999-2006, June 1999

[15] Definition by the Interreg II C Secretariat for the North Sea Region

[16] see also ESDP (1999), p.10; VISION PLANET, Strategies for an Integrated Development of the Central European, Danubian and Adriatic Area, Policy Options Paper (May 1999), p.7

[17] Frequently, under the influence of the Brundlandt report (UN World Commission on the Environment and Development: Our Common Future, New York, 1987) the principle of sustainability is also applied for balance between different groups of society within the present generation. This wide definition has not been helpful in making the sustainability principle operational. A clear separation of inter-generational and intra-generational issues would seem useful.

[18] see Communication from the Commission "Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action", COM/98/605 F, Brussels, 28.10.1998, page 6

[19] Notions 'city', 'town', or 'urban area' have different interpretations in different countries. Here, they are used synonymously. Urban regions include the urban hinterland. As a general concept, 'hinterland' is the area around cities or towns with particularly close relationships to these. This can be expressed e.g. by labour market linkages (commuting to the city). This functional hinterland may include rural areas, small dormitory towns (suburbs) as well as towns having some service functions for their own hinterland as part of the hinterland of the major town. See also: EU Commission, Nachhaltige Stadtentwicklung in der Europäischen Union: ein Aktionsrahmen, 28.10.1998 – COM/98/605 F, p.42

[20] The following information is largely based on the North Sea Quality Status Report, published by the Oslo and Paris Commissions, London, 1993

[21] Source: North Sea Quality Status Report (1993), p.16

[22] ibid., p.13-15

[23] ibid., p.18

[24] The following information is largely based on: Eight Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea: Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan, Stade, Germany, 1997

[25] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (Ed): Threats and Opportunities in the Coastal Areas of the European Union, The Hague, 1997, pp. 6

[26] 4. Ministerial Declaration of the fourth international conference in the protection of the North Sea: "Esbjerg declaration" 1995

[27] ESDP: The Dutch contribution to a trend scenario

[28] for the following see: Interreg IIC Project Proposal (Jan. 1999): Sustaining The Vitality And Self-Sufficiency Of Rural Service Centres In The North Sea Region;

[29] European Commission, Interreg IIc: Operational Programme for the North Sea Region, p. 11

[30] The Scottish Office Development Department: Planning Advice Note 25: Planning in Small Towns, 1997; pp. 2

[31] Niedersächsisches Innenministerium: Raumordnungsbericht Niedersachsen, 1992

[32] Federal Ministry for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development: Guideline for Regional Planning, 1993

[33] Ministry of Environment and Energy: Danish National Planning Report for Denmark from the Minister of Environment and Energy: Denmark and European Spatial Planning Policy

34   see Europe 2000+ map 44 based on the Northern Seaboard Study

35   North Sea Task Force: North Sea Quality Status Report 1993, Oslo and Paris Commissions, London; p 12

36   Netforum: Sustainable Tourism Development and Recreational Use in the Wadden Sea Region, 1999

37   Life: The tourism project: Appendix c: Statistics

38   Life: The tourism project; project description; WWW.CWSS.WWW.DE\INTERREGIONAL\tourism\1sustaint\toupro

39   NORCOAST, Interreg II C project report: Review of national and regional planning processes and instruments in the North Sea regions – Summary, May 1999, page 26

40   There are a number of other coastal ports which are important for the network of coastal shipping

41   Planco Consulting GmbH, NEA: Integration of ports and maritime transport in the Trans-European network North Sea Region; Essen, Rijswijk, 1995

42   Ministry of Housing Spatial Planning and Environment, The Netherlands: Spatial pattern of transportation, Atlas of Freight Transport in Europe, 1996

43   Maps produced on the basis of figures from: Planco Consulting GmbH, NEA: Integration of ports and maritime transport in the Trans-European network North Sea Region; Essen, Rijswijk, 1995

44   EU Commission Communication "Towards an urban agenda in the European Union", COM(97)197 final, Brussels, 06.05.1997, Annex I

45   Scottish region are superseded by then new local authorities at April 1996

46   Daniel Mouqué (Ed.): Sixth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic Situation and Development of Regions in the European Union, 1998, Ch.2.2.1

47   Daniel Mouqué (Ed.): Sixth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic Situation and Development of Regions in the European Union, 1998; Ch 2.2.1. Although this indicator has its limitations since process innovation often does not result in patent application, or companies also innovate through technology transfer and direct investment, it gives a clue about innovative activities

48   Eurostat

49   Eurostat

50   Network of Short Sea Shipping Promotion Centres, City of Bremen, Göteborg county, Oslo Port Authority, North of England Assembly, Chamber of Industry and Commerce Oldenburg, City of Padborg, Norfolk County, University of Edinburgh, ADGER Research Foundation/Norway

51   European Environment Agency: "Europe's environment: The second assessment", Copenhagen, 1998; pp 255

52   Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; The Netherlands: Planning with water; 1998; p. 16 / 20.

53   European Environment Agency: "Europe's environment: The second assessment", Copenhagen, 1998; pp. 209

54   First Official draft of the ESDP (Summary), Nordwijk, June 1997, p. 4

55   COM/98/605F, dated 28-Oct-1998, Action 3 (p.9)

56   ESDP policy option #36

57   National Technical University of Athens, State of the Art Study: Concerted Action on Shortsea Shipping, Contract No. WA-96-CA.95/186, July 8, 1996

58   see also: Transport Advance, The Newsletter for European Transport Research, EU Commission (ed.), 2, Summer 1999

59   Transport Research and Technology Development Programme under the 4th Framework Programme

60   National Technical University of Athens, State of the Art Study: Concerted Action on Shortsea Shipping, Contract No. WA-96-CA.95/186, July 8, 1996

61   Partners: Bremen, Lower Saxony, Göteborg, Newcastle upon Tyne

62   ESDP policy option #33

63   ESDP policy option #25; the NSR disposes of some important gateways, such as Bremen, Hamburg, Göteborg

64   ESDP policy option #24

65   ESDP policy option #5

66   ESDP policy option #26

67   Communication from the Commission "Sustainable Urban Development ... (Oct.1998), p.9

68   ESDP policy option #3

69   ESDP policy option #5

70   ESDP policy option #28

71   ESDP policy option #29

72   European Commission, Directorate General XI (Ed): EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES Report, Brussels, 1996, pp 78

73   European Commission, Directorate General XI (Ed): EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES Report, Brussels, 1996, p 78

74   European Commission, Directorate General XI (Ed): EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES Report, Brussels, 1996, p 79

75   Together Foundation and UNCHS best practices, http://www.unesco.org/most/westeur4.htm

76   ESDP policy option #57

77   NORCOAST report (1999), p.37

78   European Commission, DG XI, ICZM: The projects; www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg11/iczm/projects.htm

79   Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (ed.), Planning with water, Ten building blocks for policy innovation in spatial planning, The Hague, Sept. 1998; also included in: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (ed.), Planning the Netherlands – Strategic Principles for a New Spatial Planning Policy, The Hague, May 1999

80   Interreg-II-C projects in this field include: Wetlands in Spatial Planning; Water City International

81   ESDP policy option #41

82   Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Planning with Water – Ten Building Blocks for Policy Innovation, The Hague, 1998

83   ESDP policy option #43

84   ESDP policy option #46

85   ESDP policy option #55

86   ESDP policy option #40

87   ESDP policy option #56

88   ESDP policy option #48

89   ESDP policy option #49

90   ESDP policy option #51

91   following the original SAVE programme (January 1991 - December 1995

92 The programme is part-funding the establishment of independent Energy Management Agencies at local and regional levels, with own staff and budget working under the aegis of local and regional authorities. These shall provide information and training on energy management, link organisations, stimulate economic activity and local projects, and mediate between local and regional authorities.

93 European Commission, DGXVII: The Save II Programme, www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg17/savform.htm

94 ESDP policy option #17

95 1994: Leeuwarden Conference, adoption of cornerstones of the Wadden Sea Plan; 1997: Eighth Tri-lateral Governmental Conference, Stade Declaration on the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan.

96 Oslo and Paris Commissions, International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, North Sea Task Force: North Sea Quality Status Report 1993, London 1993; note: an updated report is presently under preparation

97 ESDP policy option #50: Concerted management of the seas, in particular preservation and restoration of threatened maritime ecosystems

98 ESDP policy option #32

99 see PLANCO Consulting GmbH, Essen, Monetary Quantification of External Effects of different Inland Transportation Modes, study on behalf of the German Federal Railways, 1989; Market regulations affecting the competitive position of German Federal Railways, study on behalf of the Federal German Ministry of Transport, 1988; Transport Sector Scenarios 1990/2000 based on Alternative Developments of Energy Supply and Costs, study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Transport, Bonn, Germany, 1980

100 ESDP policy option #30

101 ESDP policy option #44

102 European Commission, Directorate General XI (Ed): EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES Report, Brussels, 1996, p 218

103 Definition by International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (1994)

104 The EUROPEAN GOOD PRACTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM - LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY is available on the Internet since October 1996 <http:\\www.cities21.com/europractice>

105 ESDP policy option #9

106 ESDP policy option #21

107 ESDP policy option #11

108 ESDP policy option #23

109 ESDP policy option #8

110 ESDP policy option #23

111 ESDP policy option #6

112 ESDP policy option #60

113 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Urban Exchange Initiative, www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/uei/sumchap1.htm

114 ESDP policy option #58

115 ESDP policy option #59

116 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Urban Exchange Initiative, Annex Case Study № 15, 1998

117 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Urban Exchange Initiative, Annex Case Study № 32, 1998

118 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Urban Exchange Initiative, Annex Case Study № 47, 1998

119 European Commission, DG VI: "Innovation at the service of rural development", Leader presentation brochure, Brussels, 1994

120 European Commission, DG VI: Information bulletin of the LEADER II programme, № 71, July / August 99

121 European Observatory Leader: "Innovation and rural development", The Observatory Dossier № 2, 1997, Brussels, p.19

122 ESDP policy option #15

123 ESDP policy option #45

124 ESDP policy option #53

125 ESDP policy option #54

126 ESDP policy option #55

127 ESDP policy option #56

128 Documentation and Development of Seaside Tourism in the North Sea Region, (County councils of Halmstad/S, North Jutland/DK, and Lincoln University/UK); Nortrail – co-operation network among regional and local authorities to promote walking tourism in cultural landscapes (County councils of Hordaland/N, Ringkoebing/DK, East Lothian/UK, Aberdeenshire/UK, Northumberland/UK, Universities of Bergen/N and Aberdeen/UK, Tourism promotion agencies); TARGET – approaches to reduce car travelling (including recreation and tourism) (West Yorkshire/UK, Bremen/D, Aalborg/DK, Gothenburg/S); other projects: North Sea Cycle Circuit, North Sea Viking Legacy, Kings of the North Sea

129 ESDP policy option #18

130 ESDP policy option #19

131 ESDP policy option #14

132 ESDP policy option #31

133 ESDP policy option #13

134 ESDP policy option #13

135 ESDP policy option #22

136 ESDP policy option #20

137 ESDP policy option #16

138 Federal Ministry for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development(Ed.): Nachbarschaftsladen 2000 als Dienstleistungszentrum für den ländlichen Raum; prepared by Planco Consulting GmbH, 1995

139 This number has to be considered under German circumstances.

140 ESDP policy option #27

141 ESDP policy option #38

142 ESDP policy option #35

143 ESDP policy option #39

144 "Work performed at a distance for an employer or contractor using computer and / or other telecommunications technology. This work can be home or office based". Definition by Western Isles Information, Communication and Technology Advisory Service, Scotland

145 ESDP policy option #57

146 Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (ed.), Planning with water, Ten building blocks for policy innovation in spatial planning, The Hague, Sept. 1998; also included in: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (ed.),

Planning the Netherlands – Strategic Principles for a New Spatial Planning Policy, The Hague, May 1999