**The North
Sea Region
Programme**
2007–2013

FINAL REPORT

Added Value

Sub-theme 3: Legacy

DSN
Connecting Knowledge

Ongoing Evaluation of the INTERREG IVB North Sea Region Programme 2007–2013

This report is part of a series about the on-going evaluation process of the Programme. In accordance with the on-going evaluation approach these reports are:

Institutional Capacity and Performance:
    (1) Financial management and control set-up
    (2) Programme structures
    (3) Application procedures and project development

Added Value:
    (1) Programme impact and coverage
    (2) Transnational cooperation
    (3) Legacy

Publicity and Communications:
    (1) Programme and project cooperation in communications & programme visibility

Table of contents

0. Introduction

This report addresses programme bodies, project partners and stakeholders of the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme (NSR Programme). The report is part of the "On-going Evaluation" which presents the main findings and recommendations regarding the issue of "Legacy" of the NSR Programme 2007-2013.

The evaluation design includes the following methods: Desk research, an online survey and complementary telephone interviews. In accordance with the evaluation question formulated by the programme bodies, this report aims to assess and comment on what kind of relevant measures and activities that have been undertaken by the projects in order to safeguard the legacy and follow-up impact on both project and cluster level.

Based on the above stated evaluation question, this report on "Legacy" concentrates on the analysis of the:

- Variety and differentiation of project results
- The projects' experiences in creating legacy
- Support by the NSR Programme regarding the legacy issue

The report focuses on the main findings (!) and recommendations (✓) of the evaluation process, which are highlighted with symbols in the margin. In addition, opinions taken from the online survey give an impression of different perspectives on the projects. The report summarises the findings and recommendations of the "On-going Evaluation" in an easy to read way.

This final report is based on the main results from the desk research and an online survey, in which answers were given by 9 out of 10 selected project lead beneficiaries of the NSR Programme. The projects were sampled out against the background of the following criteria. The projects are (1) all near completion. The selection of projects (2) covers the different national states involved in the NSR Programme and (3) they comprise the four priorities of the NSR Programme. The report concentrates on the general findings and recommendations with strategic relevance to both the improvement of the current programme period as well as to the next programme period 2014-2020.

More information on methodology and the evaluation model of the "On-going Evaluation" is provided in appendix A.

1. Recommendations at a glance

Below, an overview of the recommendations regarding the issue of "Legacy" of the NSR Programme, which are explained in detail in the following chapters, is to be found.

- ✓ The programme should implement a knowledge platform of good examples for legacy. This should demonstrate how projects managed their legacy and why they were successful.

- ✓ The programme should ensure that projects proactively plan the legacy of their project results at an early stage. A relevant tool would be a market analysis resulting in a legacy strategy. The legacy strategy also needs to be integrated into the risk management of the projects.

- ✓ The "Portfolio Managers" from the Joint Technical Secretariat (see interim report "Added Value. Sub-theme 2: transnational cooperation") could support the development of projects legacy strategies by linking to stakeholders and institutions at an European and national level.

- ✓ Resource limitations are a main issue for projects to safeguard legacy. The financing of the continuation of project results should be considered within the projects` legacy strategies.

- ✓ The activities of cluster projects should be directly linked to the legacy strategies of the singles projects.

2. Variety and differentiation of project results

This chapter offers an overview of the different types of the NSR projects' results. It focuses on the project lead beneficiaries appraisal regarding the category of project results likely to continue having an impact after project closure.

General findings

Within the online survey, the project lead beneficiaries were asked to identify their project results and to additionally ascertain results assumed to have a lasting impact.

! The responses indicate the type of results to vary considerably among the surveyed projects. Depending on the project's stage of development, respectively the position of the project's central issue within the innovation cycle of the overall subject, the project results can be characterised according to their differing functions. These functions range from the definition and analysis of a specific issue to the development of methods to approach a thematic challenge and, furthermore, to the implementation of newly generated knowledge, technology, services and products in practice.

While some project results intend to inform and serve as an inspiration, others contribute to the stock of academic knowledge or provide a basis for stakeholder participation.

According to the online survey, the following types of project results will be continued, respectively implemented after project closure. The list of project result categories, which has been developed by INTERACT, is backed up with examples, which were stated by the lead beneficiaries in the online survey.

- **New knowledge or analyses**, e.g. academic work on service-delivery and data-driven decision making

- **New ways of working**, e.g. application of new tools and principles within the planning environment

- **Changes in policy or public behaviour**, e.g. policy recommendations to support the adoption of technologies

- **Products or services**, e.g. adoption of a concept of contact service centres

- **Investment or infrastructure**, e.g. test-bed for e-Navigation services that enhances regional accessibility

The lead beneficiaries point out that particularly newly created knowledge and results of analysis are likely to have future impact and potentially lead to changes in policies and public behaviour. It is also assumed that some project results will have long-lasting effects due to the implementation of new ways of working, respectively the continuation of products and services, which were developed during the project phase. Furthermore, project results will also be continued within the framework of investments and installed infrastructure, as well as within follow-up projects.

- The respondents appraise the transnational geographical level as being the most important level for the adoption of the project results. This is consistent with the NSR Programme's intention to support transnational integrated development, based on the exchange of knowledge, partnership and cooperation.

- Concerning the stakeholders that will benefit from the project results, the lead beneficiaries generally presume a broad range of actors to gain from novel knowledge and a change in routines. It can be observed that some projects have a specific vision about a rather narrowed target group that potentially benefits from the project results, both in regard to thematic and geographical level. Other projects rather define a broad set of actors as the target group. The degree of narrowness respectively broadness of specific target groups may depend on the projects' thematic content. Thus, for instance, a project developing user applications within the realm of transport (phase within the innovation cycle: implementation/commercialization of invented solution), not only defines the potential users of the application. It further also identifies decision-makers with influence on further support of the innovative transport application, as the target group for the project results. In comparison, a project that focuses on the generation of novel knowledge within the framework of coastal zone planning identifies a narrowed target group that consists of specialists in ICZM.

- Furthermore, it has to be pointed out that the project results are not only beneficial for stakeholders external to the project, but also create an added value to project-internal organisations.

3. The projects' experiences in creating legacy

This section summarises the findings on approaches and key factors for successful continuation of the project results applied, respectively identified within the realm of project realisation. This comprises activities carried out by the projects and the challenges encountered in the process of doing so.

The project's approach for successful result continuation

! The lead beneficiaries show a broad range of approaches to safeguard legacy of their project results after project closure. There is no general approach, but rather individual solutions to communicate the project results into specific networks.

- These approaches are for instance related to the continuation of web tools and homepages, as well as continued communication of the project results via printed media (e.g. brochures and reports). Furthermore, personal contact of the project partners/beneficiaries to relevant stakeholders within the framework of e.g. conferences and boards is viewed as useful approach for successful continuation.

- The results of the online survey also indicate the significance of personal networks and the engagement of the project partners concerning project result legacy. The transfer of knowledge, experiences and results of the NSR projects strongly depends on continued and close personal contacts.

The surveyed projects implemented different kinds of activities during project realisation to prepare for sustainable maintenance of the project results after project closure. Also the level of sophistication varies.

- Those projects that developed a strategy and action plan to ensure legacy have also carried out complementary activities. They, for instance, additionally set up a task group and/or a work package regarding legacy or integrated external experts and/or developed an organisation model on how to organise the project's legacy. The other surveyed project lead beneficiaries indicated either to not have yet prepared for the legacy issue profoundly or the project results to be safeguarded by a follow-up project.

The starting time of activities developed by the projects to ensure legacy differ.

- Some projects started to address the legacy issue at an early stage of the project implementation, whilst others initiated approaches for continuation in the second half of the project implementation. However, it can be observed that those projects that have recognised the legacy issue at an early stage of the project implementation, have also developed more advanced activities to safeguard the project results.

Opinions from the online survey

Below some opinions of the lead beneficiaries taken from the online survey concerning practical approaches to successful continuation of the project results are to be found:

"Validate your results by involving research and academic partners and let them spread the word."

"Understand well what is valuable outputs respectively results of the project and what it means for whom."

"Liase with mainstreaming partners (central government, European Commission, network groups) from day one of the project and involve them in key decision moments of the project. They not only will provide valuable input but also will take your own good work into their networks."

"Link your project with (changing) EU und national policies, also after the end of the project."

"Valorise opportunities, like participating in cluster projects and link your project to other projects (outside NSR), European networks etc. to spread the message."

"Invest in some good layout and good copywriting which leads to valuable (electronic) documents that you make available in different settings. We still get invitations from all over the world to speak – or requests to reproduce schemes and graphics – even though the project has been finished three years ago."

"Engage in social media. During the project a LinkedIn group was created, which proved to initiate a plenty of debate, without any of the original partners putting any effort in it."

Key factors for successful result continuation

- The inquiry about the experiences of the NSR projects in creating legacy shows that the project results are as multifaceted as the projects' approaches for sustainable continuation of the project results are diverse. However, a good practice of result continuation depends on the relevance and the connectivity of the project results and is common to all projects. The projects' choice of legacy approach is strongly connected to the function of the project results. The more relevant the results are for the defined target groups, the more sustainable the project results can be secured. In addition, it is even easier to ensure the valorisation of the project results, when the results are compatible to the stakeholders' needs and policies. From this point of view the relevance of project results for stakeholders as well as the connectivity of project results to the stakeholders' needs and policies can be stated as key factors for result continuation.

- There have also been indications within the online survey that the implementation of a work package in projects regarding legacy is also a key factor for a successful result continuation. Within this work package projects start to develop a business plan for follow up activities after project closure.

- The lead beneficiaries, participating in the online survey, were asked to assess the significance of several additional factors for the continuation of their project. Figure 1 illustrates the mean values of significance for these factors. It can be discerned that the motivation of the project partners seems to be an overall condition for post-project result continuation, as this factor is presumed to be extremely important. In addition, all other factors in Figure 1 are also perceived as at least moderately important. But also other factors are of importance for project results continuations, as there are:

- The lead beneficiaries emphasise the role of funding for legacy activities. Currently no funding is available for post-processing of the project. From some lead beneficiaries' point of view, a kind of funding of "post-processing costs" would be helpful.

Challenges

!

- In order to maintain the project results, it is mainly necessary to implement continued communication and networking activities. According to the project lead beneficiaries, this continued implementation of communication activities after project closure is primarily hampered by limited resources. In this regard, a lack of funding after project closure, as well as limited time for further engagement are perceived as the most significant restrictions. The absence of money for e.g. staff and printing is recognised as critical.

Figure 1: How important are the following factors with regard to the continuation of your project results? *(multiple selection possible)*

Source: online survey, mean values

- The lead beneficiaries also describe the missing project structure after project closure as challenging. Moreover, as the project personal have moved on and the work load resources are thus reduced, the dissemination of the project results is perceived as being delicate.

- Moreover, some lead beneficiaries pointed out that the sectoral organisation of national (planning and policy) authorities hampers cross-sectoral transfer of project results, as integrated, cross-sectoral thinking is not inherent to many organisation's working procedures.

4. Support by the NSR Programme regarding legacy

The following findings illustrate how the surveyed lead beneficiaries perceive the role of the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) concerning assistance to continue the project results after project closure, as well as the lead beneficiaries' view to the utility of the cluster approach for legacy.

General findings

!

- The project lead beneficiaries participating in the online survey were asked whether they have contacted the programme for assistance regarding their project legacy. Two of the lead beneficiaries responded that they have already asked the JTS for assistance to better deal with the legacy issue. Two other respondents declared planning to engage with the JTS in future. The other four lead beneficiaries stated to not have consulted the JTS for help, yet.

- The lead beneficiaries were asked to assess the support of the programme for projects to safeguard the legacy of the project results after project closure. Those lead beneficiaries that had already actively asked the JTS for support, also stated to be extremely satisfied with the programme's support.

- However, the project lead beneficiaries were also requested to comment on the kind of assistance by the JTS appraised desirable to ensure the continuation of the project results. Different opinions were stated, mainly asking for better information of best practice legacy approaches and coordination measures by the JTS (see box below).

Opinions from the online survey

Below some opinions of the lead beneficiaries taken from the online survey regarding the kind of programme assistance desired to better safeguard the project results are to be found:

„It would be helpful if they would define light-house results, [which they] communicate during the programme [period]." (result requirements)

"[Provide] information about similar or relevant projects starting or continuing beyond our project."

"It might be helpful to identify case studies on how the legacy of different projects is carried out, and whether there are lessons to be learnt from projects […]. The lessons learnt aspect would be particularly helpful in ensuring that the same mistakes are not made or how an approach can be improved based on previous experience. However, it is acknowledge that different projects would have different requirements which would make this task somewhat harder to translate to other projects."

"[I] hope they can support us in bridging our message further to national and EU authorities."

"[Expand] invitations to conferences and events, etc."

Significance of the cluster approach

!

- Two of the surveyed lead beneficiaries participated in a cluster project and responded to a question concerning the utility of the cluster approach to safeguard the legacy of the project results. Both project lead beneficiaries highly appreciate the utility of the cluster approach, as it is a very helpful approach to secure the continuation of the project results. Cluster projects focus mainly on the communication of already finalised results. They are thus valuable for result continuation.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations cover the findings elucidated above. They contribute to the issues addressed based on both the feedback provided by the project lead beneficiaries as well as the desk research carried out by the evaluators.

✓ **The programme should implement a knowledge platform of good examples for legacy. This should demonstrate how projects managed their legacy and why they were successful.**

Within the online survey and the telephone interviews, project participants have suggested it would be helpful to have good practice examples available on how different projects in the NSR Programme secured their legacy. This would enable a mutual learning process in this field. The examples should not focus on the thematic area of the projects, but on their strategy to ensure legacy and how they managed the continuation of project results after project closure, instead. Within the demonstration of good practice examples, it should be highlighted why these projects were successful in safeguarding their legacy. It would thus make it easier for other projects to adapt legacy strategies for their own project. The Joint Technical Secretariat should select good practice examples and make them available for other projects via the programme`s website, e.g. by implementing a good practice knowledge platform. A collection of good practice examples, including a description of their legacy strategies, could also broaden the knowledge of the programme bodies on different strategies to secure legacy. In this regard, the programme should develop a classification of legacy strategies as a tool to classify legacy approaches, depending on the specific project results, the functions of the project results within the innovation cycle and their potential target groups.

✓ **The programme should ensure that projects proactively plan the legacy of their project results at an early stage. A relevant tool would be a market analysis resulting in a legacy strategy. The legacy strategy also needs to be integrated into the risk management of the projects.**

The results of the online survey indicate that there is a correlation between the starting time of the implementation of legacy activities and the level of sophistication of instruments applied to safeguard result continuation after project closure. In this context, the programme should request the projects to plan the legacy of their project results proactively. The programme should therefore ask the project to define a legacy strategy, consisting of an exploitation and a communication strategy specific to the topic of legacy. The programme should ask the projects to develop their legacy strategy at an early stage of project implementation. Potential users and stakeholders should thereby also be involved early in the project phase to ensure the relevance and connectivity of project results for them. It turned out that especially an early start of the planning of the legacy during the project lifetime is very effective. Within the legacy strategy, the type of expected project results as well as the actors and institutions that potentially could benefit from the project results should be identified. As part of the legacy strategy, projects should integrate legacy aspects into their risk management.

The risk management enables the projects to manage changes in relevant markets and potential user groups. Moreover, the projects should keep in mind to integrate communication activities that fit the specific legacy strategy to ensure good legacy. The communication material should be adjusted to the specific target groups that could benefit from the project results after project closure. In this regard, the online survey showed that professional communication is also viewed as a key factor for successful continuation of the project results. The legacy strategy should also consider incorporating project results into larger schemes, such as regional plans or national pilots. This would strengthen the continuation of project results as they are integrated into superordinate systems, strategies, plans or pilots.

An option to support legacy strategies is the implementation of a work package on legacy for the projects of the NSR programme, which has been discussed contrarily within the telephone interviews. In general, the Lead Beneficiaries polled viewed a work package as a helpful instrument to strengthen legacy in NSRP projects. They, however, also mentioned that this work package should not be overly bureaucratic and that the design of such a work package should depend on the type of project.

✓ **The "Portfolio Managers" from the Joint Technical Secretariat (see interim report "Added Value. Sub-theme 2: transnational cooperation") could support the development of projects legacy by linking the projects` legacy strategies to stakeholders and institutions at an European and national level.**

Within the framework of the interim report "Added Value. Sub-theme 2: transnational cooperation", an advancement of the current project officers of the Joint Technical Secretariat to "Portfolio Managers" was already suggested. Portfolio Managers are an instrument to facilitate the cooperation between the NSR programme projects within a thematic scope. The function of the Portfolio Managers extends beyond technical project administration. As "thematic specialists", the Portfolio Managers will gain detailed insight into the projects, their thematic area and results and their (anticipated) impact. With their detailed and specific knowledge of both the programmes' strategy and results of single projects, they can actively facilitate synergies and cooperation between project activities within the NSR Programme. The position of Portfolio Managers is also relevant with regard to the issue of legacy, as they are familiar with the contextual scope of the project results. Thus, they could both support projects in legacy issues as well as encourage the communication and exploitation of the project results to stakeholders from both the national and European level. Moreover, Portfolio Managers could cross-sectorally link specific project results, identify best-practice solutions and support the projects with coordination measures.

✓ **Resource limitations are a main issue for projects to safeguard legacy. The financing of the continuation of project results should be considered within the projects` legacy strategies.**

From the projects' point of view, one of the main problems to ensure legacy is related to resource limitations, which are mainly manifested in funding shortages. Financial awareness is necessary to actively support the exploitation of project results, also after project closure. The programme should request the projects to consider the financing of the post project phase as part of their legacy strategies. In ideal circumstances, legacy would already be implemented within the framework of the project. In justified cases it is appropriate for projects to implement legacy after project closure. In these justified cases, the instrument of prolongation of projects should be used to finance the implementation of legacy strategies.

✓ **The activities of cluster projects should be directly linked to the legacy strategies of the singles projects.**

The main purpose of cluster projects is to improve the communication of project results in order to increase the visibility in specific thematic areas. The results of the online survey indicate that, also from a legacy standpoint, the cluster approach is an efficient way to ensure the project results. Already within the framework of the interim report "Added Value. Sub-theme 2: transnational cooperation" the continuation of the cluster approach was recommended, as mutual communication amongst projects with similar thematic backgrounds has increased and thus a broader perspective on strategic and contextual issues has been provided. With regard to the legacy of project results, the cluster approach helps to raise awareness for the results and creates added value to the projects participating in a cluster project. Moreover, cluster projects potentially serve as a way to ensure funding for legacy activities. Within the framework of cluster projects, project results should not only be communicated and disseminated, but also facilitated to be exploited in terms of content. A clear connection between the cluster project and the legacy strategies of its single projects should be visible.

Appendix A - Evaluation Model

The evaluation model adopts the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) model approach as a starting point and applies it to the context of the programme evaluation. The key message of the evaluation approach is that any impact which occurs at the programme level is generated via the quality and effectiveness of the funded projects. This new paradigm focuses not only on stakeholders such as the Commission or regional administration, but also on the projects themselves as core customers of the programme management. Consequently, the programme should support the projects' work as strongly as possible, as so to enable them to manage their activities effectively.
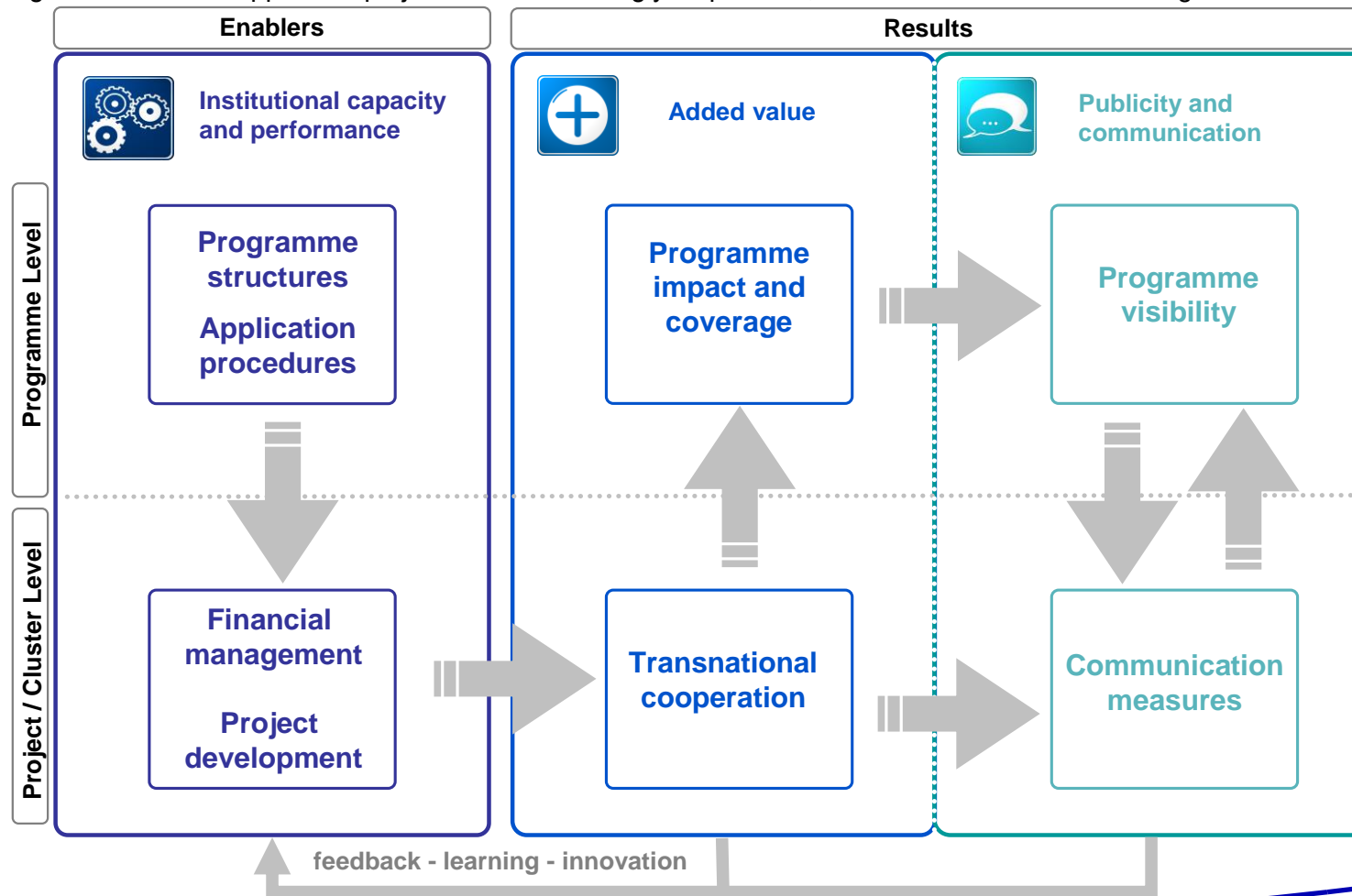
Source: DSN

Appendix B - Members of the Evaluation Steering Group:

Christian Byrith - Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme (Head of Secretariat) christian.byrith@northsearegion.eu

Carsten Westerholt - Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme (Project Development and Communications Unit Manager) carsten.westerholt@northsearegion.eu

Jesper Jönsson - Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme (Project Development Officer and Evaluations co-ordinator) jesper.joensson@northsearegion.eu

Matt Nichols - Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme (Project Development and Communications Officer) matt.nichols@northsearegion.eu

Stefaan Pennewaert - Agentschap Ondernemen (Belgium) stefaan.pennewaert@agentschapondernemen.be

Asger Andreasen - Danish Regions asa@regioner.dk

Jens Kurnol - Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (Germany) jens.kurnol@BBR.Bund.de

Lidwien Slothouwer-van Schipstal - Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (Netherlands) lidwien.slothouwer@rvo.nl

Vidar Jensen - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development Vidar-Martin-Hasle.Jensen@kmd.dep.no

Cecilia Lagerdahl - Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications (Sweden) cecilia.lagerdahl@regeringskansliet.se

Jim Millard - European Structural Funds Division, Scottish Government (United Kingdom) Jim.Millard@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

The North Sea Region Programme Secretariat