

Ex-Ante Evaluation of Interreg III B, North Sea Programme – Final Report

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Nordic co-operation

takes place among the countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, as well as the autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

The Nordic Council

is a forum for co-operation between the Nordic parliaments and governments. The Council consists of 87 parliamentarians from the Nordic countries. The Nordic Council takes policy initiatives and monitors Nordic co-operation. Founded in 1952.

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Stockholm, Sweden
2001

Preface

This is the ex ante evaluation of the North Sea Region Interreg III B programme. The work was commissioned by the North Sea Region Interreg II C programme. The intention of the ex ante evaluation was to improve and strengthen the quality of the III B North Sea Programme under preparation. During 2000, a programming committee had a series of meetings and working group sessions, where the decisions determining the content of the programme were made. The evaluators attended meetings, participated in the discussions of the committee and communicated with the secretariat. The main part of the evaluation project consisted of comments and other contributions at various stages of the *process* of producing the programme

In the final stage of the development of the programme, the Commission Methodological Working Paper was made available to the evaluators. A summary evaluation report is included as a chapter in the CIP, as required by the regulations.

The operative Nordregio evaluation team consisted of Merja Kokkonen, Kai Böhme and Åge Mariussen, with Åge Mariussen as project manager. This report is written by Merja Kokkonen and Åge Mariussen. The partners, Will Zonneveldt, Delft University of Technology, OTB Research Institute, and Adrian Healy, Ecotec Consulting Ltd, gave valuable comments and inputs to documents during the process, and contributed with interviews.

Stockholm, February 2001

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1. Introduction

This ex-ante evaluation report is written as prescribed by Article 41 of the Council Regulation No 1260/1999, of 12 June 1999, Article 25 in the Communication from the Commission to the Member states of 18/02/00 and the Commission's Methodological Working Paper on ex-ante evaluation (25.7.2000, part 2), as well as in accordance with the contract established between the NSR IIC programme and Nordregio, discussed at the meeting in the preparatory committee in Copenhagen 15.1.00.

The intention of the evaluation was to improve and strengthen the quality of the III B North Sea Programme under preparation. Key issues were:

1. To *learn* from outcomes, results and experiences of the II C programme of the North Sea, including the projects, as well as experiences and informed opinions from partners and the secretariat.
2. To *reflect upon* these experiences, keeping in mind Community guidelines for the 2000 - 2006 III B programme period, available experiences from other II C and III B programmes, and available knowledge of the situation in the region, in order
3. To *improve* strategy, SWOT, objectives, monitoring and evaluation, and in particular
4. To consider whether the *strategy* of the new programme is appropriate for a programme consistent with the Guidelines of the Community Initiative Interreg for 2000 - 2006 III B, and for addressing the key issues confronting the area. In addition,
5. To produce an ex ante evaluation report which can be submitted with the SPD.

The analysis of experiences from the IIC programme (issue 1) was based on interviews and conversations with project owners and members of the formalised partnership institutions at an early stage of the evaluation. These interviews gave answers and opinions, underpinning the analysis and conclusions on the IIC programme. This analysis was communicated to the programming committee, and used as a basis of the development of the CIP during the spring of 2000.

The CIP of the IIIC was constructed by a programming committee set down by the monitoring committee of the IIC programme. During 2000, this committee had a series of meetings and working group sessions, where the decisions and debates determining the content of the CIP were made. This process was supported by an elaborate series of hearings and consultations conducted in the wider partnership, regionally and nationally. In practice, the secretariat of the IIC programme gradually assumed an important role in the production of the text.

The evaluators attended meetings, participated in the discussions of the committee – and communicated with the secretariat. To clarify certain issues relating to the regulations, DGREGIO was contacted once. The main part of the evaluation project consisted of comments and other contributions at various stages of the *process* of producing the CIP (issues 2, 3 and 4). As the finalisation of the CIP was delayed, compared to the original contract, this phase was considerably expanded in time and in terms of resources. In the final stages of the production of the CIP, the evaluators also gave contributions to the text on the SWOT and regarding the over all strategy.

A draft ex-ante report was prepared to a meeting in the preparatory group of the programme at 13th of March, 2000, related to the *first two points of the evaluation*: to learn from previous experiences, and reflect upon them in the light of EU regulations of the IIIB strand. The other major objects of the study (3, 4, and 5) have been discussed during the programming procedure.

In the final stage of the development of the programme, the Commission Methodological Working Paper was made available to the evaluators. As the Working Paper lay down what might be regarded as *requirements* for the ex ante evaluation, it was decided, after consultation with the secretariat, to proceed in the direction defined in that document in this evaluation report, with two limitations: this evaluation does *not* address the Compliment, where the indicators are defined. The evaluation does *neither*, as indicated by the Working Paper, undertake the analysis leading up to the SWOT. Instead, the evaluators were commenting these parts of the CIP. The analysis in chapter 2 was carried out partly by a consultant, partly through input from various partners.

In this report (issue 5), we discuss the points made by the Working Paper:

- Strength, weaknesses and potential in the area of co-operation
- Appraisal of Added value of Intervention
- Appraisal of Implementation Procedures.

A summary evaluation report is included as a chapter in the CIP, as required by the regulations.

The operative Nordregio evaluation team consisted of Merja Kokkonen, Kai Böhme and Åge Mariussen, with Åge Mariussen as responsible. This report is written by Merja Kokkonen and Åge Mariussen.

The partners, Will Zonneveldt and Adrian Healy, gave valuable comments and inputs to documents during the process, and contributed with interviews.

2. Strengths, weaknesses and potential in the area of co-operation

During the preparation of the programme, the development of a more clear strategy and focus has been an on-going process. The analysis of the NSR region has evolved, as new questions are included. The evaluators have made a number of comments to the on-going work on the SWOT to improve the conceptual clarity of the SWOT analysis, strategy, priorities, and measures.

In brief, the four elements of a SWOT analysis undertaken as part of a wider strategic planning are:

- A strength = a resource or capacity the organisation can use effectively to achieve its objectives.
- A weaknesses = a limitation, fault or defect in the organisation that will keep it from achieving its objectives.
- An opportunity = any favourable situation in the organisation's environment.
- A threat = any unfavourable situation in the organisation's environment that is potentially damaging to its strategy

The actions, which are seen to follow from these four elements in turn are:

- Build on strengths
- Eliminate weaknesses
- Exploit opportunities
- Mitigate the effect of threats.

At best, SWOT should form a continuum internally and have clear connection, first, to description of the region, and second, to priorities and measures. In practise, these connections have not been very clearly seen in the draft versions of the programme and thus the evaluators have proposed some changes, which have been discussed and taken into account during the process.

The analysis of the North Sea Region in the CIP is addressed in section 1.7 of Chapter 1 (Key Characteristics of the North Sea Region), in Chapter 2 (Analysis of the North Sea Region), as well as in Chapter 4 (The SWOT Analysis).

These three sections of the CIP lay out a sketch of a region characterised by a well-developed culture, rich natural resources, partly of economic significance (hydrocarbons and fish), partly natural assets worth protecting, as well as a well developed and modern transportation system.

On this background, the main challenges identified are partly *loss of sustainability*, like changing coastal conditions and environmental degradation, partly *loss of balance* between different types of regions within the NSR, notably the expanding gap between large city regions, areas characterised by small cities and urban areas, coastal regions and deeply rural hinterlands.

This analysis is summarised in 1.7, documented in chapter 2 and detailed fairly well, with explicit references to the priorities, in chapter 4.

Based on this analysis, the IIIB programme accordingly aims at

“A spatially developed integrated region, which offers a good quality of life for all its citizens in a balanced and sustainable way”.

This choice of strategy gives the program a focus on achieving increased balance and sustainability, where integration and development are necessary means to these ends.

This emphasis is also expressed in the financial table, where priorities 4 (Water Management) and 3 (Sustainable Management and Development of the Environment, Natural Resources and Cultural heritage) get most resources. This emphasis is also obvious from the choice of measures in priorities 1 and 2, through the promotion of several “balance and sustainability friendly” solutions, like polycentrism, improved rural-urban interaction, diffusion of IT technology, short sea shipping, enhanced inter-modality, innovation support etc.

The IIIB programme strategy builds on the experiences from the IIC programme. The IIIB programme now addresses several important, new issues. The major innovation, as compared to the IIC programme, is the inclusion of a new priority addressing water management, relating to the urgent question of how the NSR may handle consequences of global warming.

The North Sea area is very diversified. The most important challenge, and opportunity, for improving economic and territorial integration is to form networks and clusters of different partners – cities, small towns, rural areas – in co-operation area. As stated in the CIP, for enhancing regional development especially in the rural areas, there is a need for integrated and cross-sectoral co-operation between different authorities and stakeholders. Of the thematic co-operation the top priority can be set to the development of sustainable water management and transport improvement.

The internal coherence and consistency is good. The SWOT is well in line with the analysis, strategy, priorities and measures of the programme.

The opportunities and challenges for economic and territorial integration in the area of cooperation may be seen within two areas:

- Innovation, based on learning how to solve similar problems in different parts of NSR.
- North Sea is the connecting element of NSR, and thus sea-related issues can be seen as a second core of the program, constituting common problems.

Commission guidelines on evaluation speaks merely *common analysis* of the region and *common potential*, which should lead to *common or jointly defined needs and priorities of the area*. It is not explicitly said that analysis on subregions should be excluded. Large transnational B programme areas, such as NSR, are usually heteroge-

neous. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats may be shared or common in some sub-areas, but not in the whole programme area.

It is therefore reasonable to pay attention sub-regional issues in the analysis, even if the main focus has to be on the area as a whole. This has been taken into account in the SWOT analysis.

3. Appraisal of added value of interventions

In the working paper of 18.2.00 (WD 18.02.00), Interreg *objectives* and *principles* are defined. The *over all aim* of Interreg is:

“...national borders should not be a barrier to the balanced development and integration of the European territory.”

Thus, Interreg is motivated with reference to the *over all* policy of *European integration*. This statement (WD, 18.02.00, page 1) leads to a reference to the other measures of the policy of European integration, and then the more precise definition of the particular subset of problems relating to European integration that are *created by borders*, they

- ...cut off border communities from each others ...
-hinder the coherent management of eco-systems
-turn border areas into peripheral in the national context, and therefore, neglected in national policies.

The objective of the new phase is to strengthen *economic and social cohesion* in the European Union by promoting cross border, transnational and interregional co-operation and balanced development of the EU territory. Within this context, stand B is concerned with the task of

“Contributing to harmonious territorial integration across the EU.” WD, 18.2.00, page 3.

To solve this task, B should:

“....build on the positive experience of genuine co-operation within current programmes and progressively develop structures for such co-operation across the European Union and with neighbouring countries.” WD, 18.2.00, page 3.

The key concept defining IIIB is “genuine co-operation” (. .) across large territories, like “the European Union and neighbouring countries”.

The NSR *programme* aims at:

“a spatially developed integrated region which offers a good quality of life for all its citizens in a balanced and sustainable way”,

achieved through (objectives 1 – 4).

A strength of the programme is a clear focus on network development supporting learning, exchange of experiences and good practice. It also promise action plans and it attacks practical problems with a high potential of practical action.

The programme is expected to have positive impacts to environment, as sustainable development is a horizontal aim throughout the programme. Equal opportunities are mentioned as one of the Community priorities that the programme will follow. However, it is not a top priority for Interreg IIIB programme - it does not have as clear connection to priorities and measures as, for instance, in IIIA programmes. Thus it is needed to be taken into account when it has relevance. From this point of view the CIP is consistent with these two criteria, environmental impacts and impacts to equal opportunities.

ESDP and priority community policies have been taken as basic framework for programme implementation. ESDP recommendations are also well reflected in priorities and measures.

Appraisal of the contribution to the objectives of Interreg IIIB

A strength of co-operating in the context of NSR seems to be that the unique and wide NSR context makes it easier to innovate, diffuse and implement solutions to highly specialised problems, as compared to the lock-in situations frequently preventing learning in specialised topics in closed national networks. Networks of learning and action plans attacking problems shared by groupings of regions or regions throughout NSR with common characteristics may be expected to have a high added value, and innovate and implement practical solutions to several important problems, contributing to integration, balance and sustainability, thus contributing to the over-all objectives of IIIB.

Expected impacts

Impacts of action in relation to the original situation will be defined by the indicators, which are to be specified in the Complement.

Taking the added value of co-operation in the context of the NSR into consideration, the major impact of the programme may be expected to be innovation of new strategies, policies and procedures in the areas of spatial planning, transport and communication system development and management of common resources (nature, cultural heritage and water).

Impact indicators, accordingly, should identify and assess these innovations, including their diffusion and practical application. These innovations may be seen as practical changes that are invented and applied because of the enhanced possibilities for learning created by the larger NSR context.

The long-term output of the programme may be seen as the effects of these changes on spatial integration and balance, transportation and communication systems, nature and ecology of the NSR. Output indicators, accordingly, should include measures of spatial integration, balance and sustainability.

These points will be briefly clarified below.

As a point of departure, we may look at the priorities in the light of the IIC experiences and projects. In the IIC period the project partners have represented a wide variety of local and regional authorities and other actors, such as energy agencies and research institutes. Public authorities are the main actors. According to the secretariat, there have been an average 6 partners per project. Of the total of 57 regions in the eligible area of the programme, 53 regions have been participating to projects. The programme has thus had impact nearly to whole area.

Priority 1: Transnational spatial development strategies for urban and rural and maritime systems in the North Sea region.

This priority builds on the Spatial Vision of the NSR. The NSR Spatial Vision is an effort reflecting a network of planners. This will provide the IIIB programme a basis for NSR - wide (global) and advanced project networks in this area. The priority is based on the idea of complementarity between cities and regions: to build on simultaneously on the advantages and to overcome the disadvantages of economic competitions. As the urban structure of the region is very *diversified* the individual skills and identities can be used to enhance common aims and abilities.

It is worth reflecting upon that the SWOT does say that the situation in this respect in NSR is a strength. In comparison to the former programme, the CIP has a clear emphasis on maritime strategies *using water as a spatial element*. This is a strategic choice that may have new opportunities for the implementation of the programme.

In terms of *added value*, measures 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4 under this priority are likely to lead to transfer of good practices and learning, through *networks and projects*, based on specific similarities in a region with wide regional and spatial varieties. The NSR is characterised by *variability* in terms of regional structures and urban – rural systems. One might hope that *by learning in an extended NSR context*, questions relevant to groupings of regions with similar characteristics may provide not only new insights, but also new and improved practices.

The programme, however, also has a strong emphasis on action plans and implementation of measures. By changing practical solutions, and implementing them in the various areas pointed out by the programme, we might expect new solutions that would not emerge in the lock-in situation preventing learning in national networks.

Measure 1.1 and 1.2 may help to identify and initiate development strategies, which *functionally interlink* several countries and regions, through polycentrism (1.1) and urban networking (1.2). Measure 1.4 may lead new solutions on water related planning and maritime design, with a focus on co-operation on research and development which can be a prerequisite for enhancing co-operation on other fields.

Relevant experiences from IIC

In the following, few examples of projects from the former period are described to give a view to *expected* outcome of the priority 1. Table 1 shows all the financed projects.

Measures under priority 1 were:

1.1: The development of the relationship between urban and rural areas

1.2: The development of towns and cities

1.3: Urban networks

Table 1: Priority 1. Urban and Regional Systems

Project	Measure	Aim	Partner by country (and number of partners involved) <i>Project leader partner in italics</i>	Pro-gramme grant, EUR
<i>NOORD XXI: Quality by identity, beyond traditional spatial and economic development</i>	1.1.	Introduce new concepts for spatial planning based on these regions own experiences and qualities	<i>Netherlands</i> (1) Norway (2), Sweden (1), UK (2)	372,800
<i>Regional development strategies and their spatial implications</i>	1.1.	Quality improvements in the policy of spatial planning, regional development and provision-/sponsorship of business support services	<i>UK</i> (2), Germany (1), Norway (1), Denmark (1)	196,000
<i>A string of pearls</i>	1.1.	Development of tourism related activities in rural areas, to improve liveability of regions ant to offer tourists new facilities	<i>Netherlands</i> (2), Germany (1), Norway (1), Sweden (1)	160, 000
<i>Sustaining the vitality and self-sufficiency of rural service centres in the NSR region</i>	1.1.	Creating a network that could, by exchange of experience, find solutions for rural service centres to survive and develop	<i>UK</i> (1), Norway (1), Sweden (1), Denmark (1)	433,327
<i>Integrated development</i>	1.1.	Learn how to be competitive in a globalised world by increasing co-operation and networking	<i>Denmark</i> (1), the Netherlands, Norway (1), Sweden (1), UK (1), Denmark (1)	236,000

<i>The North Sea bioenergy network</i>	1.1.	to create a new integrated resource based method for planning at local level; promote bio-fuel by introducing new plants; create cohesion and sustainable development; support and develop SME's	Sweden (1), the Netherlands (1), UK (1)	91,877
<i>Water city international</i>	1.2.	Draw up integral urban water plans and based this co-operation develop guidelines for planning for use for other cities	<i>The Netherlands</i> (3), Germany (1), Sweden (1)	326,250
<i>Revitalisation of harbour towns and cities in the NS region</i>	1.2	To contribute sustainable revitalisation of harbour towns and cities	<i>The Netherlands</i> (1), Germany (1), UK (3)	348,215
<i>Integrated city and data area: Datashare</i>	1.2	To develop and test geo-reference data-sharing intranets in order to facilitate cross-sectoral planning	UK (2), Germany (2), The Netherlands (2)	651,486
<i>Benefit of pipelines, BOP</i>	1.3	To optimise the economic benefit of from pipelines and deal with the consequences of oil and gas industry	Germany (1), UK (1), the Netherlands (1)	133,045
<i>Cross-national waste management network</i>	1.3	To link business activity and sustainable environmental development (waste management) through co-operation on spatial planning	Germany (1), UK (1), the Netherlands (1)	996,300
<i>City centre managers network</i>	1.3	Set up a network of historic cities with an interest in developing a city centre management approach to spatial planning	UK (2), the Netherlands (1), Norway (1)	295,873

NOORD XXI (Measure 1.1 and 1.3)

The lead partner of the project is a private NOORDXXI foundation, located in Groningen, The Netherlands. Other partners are Ostfold County and Buskerud County, Norway, Västra Götaland region, Sweden, East Lothian Council and Aberdshire Council, UK. The project creates networks of local and regional authorities and its aims are to introduce new concepts for spatial planning, to learn from each other by comparing different models of urban and rural development, promote sustainable development and strengthen the identity of the regions.

The project has been proceeded well and in time, although it remains unclear how the outputs of the project will be implemented in concrete terms in each partner region. This is a typical ‘exchange of experience’ project that may lead more concrete co-operation between partners in the long run.

Benefit of Pipelines (Measure 1.3)

The leading partner of the project is the City of Emden, Germany, the other partners being Province of Groningen, the Netherlands and Stockton-on-Tees Borough, UK. The project aims to optimise the economic use of pipelines and deal with the consequences of the oil and gas industry in advantage of the region.

The project is divided into four phases:

1. Preparation of trans-national, cross-sectoral exchange of experience between public authorities and private industry.
2. Workshops and networking.
3. Testing of strategies for development and problem solving.
4. Final report comparing national laws and policies relating to spatial planning and development.

The project has a concrete aim to improve the use of pipelines. It also increases information between partners, both public and private, on the practical issues like national laws and policies, which are important for future co-operation.

Cross-national waste management network (Measure 1.3)

The lead partner of the project is ARGE (Arbeitsgemeinschaft) Waste network, Germany, in that the main tasks, such as international co-ordination, administration, pilot companies co-ordination and policy consultation have been divided between member authorities. Other partners are Danish Consortium Green Network Sonderjylland and Northamptonshire County Council, UK.

The aim of the project is to promote to build-up of a model integrated materials management infrastructure involving SMEs and their administrative counterparts in a pilot scheme based on a German-Danish-British partnership.

The project contributes learning and exchange of experience both for SME’s and the administrative actors. As it includes also pilot actions it may lead to more intensive co-operation in the future.

Expected impacts of priority 1

The chains of events initiated by this measure may be expected to include:

- New policies and strategies
- New planning and implementation procedures
- New practical actions.

The value added by NSR co-operation in this context, must be seen in the ability of projects to generate *changes* in spatial planning institutions, policies and practices, that would not otherwise have emerged.

The impact indicator should, accordingly, be policy and institutional innovation.

These innovations (new policies, strategies, plans, procedures, measures, possibly also institutions) may be emerging through the identification by the partners of a project of new “best case” solutions, through incremental adjustments of practices, as a result of the NSR level co-operation, or through other co-operative activities in the project. These discoveries are then implemented by the partners, in changing their policies, planning and practical actions. These changes (innovations) may be isolated to the partners of a particular project – or they may be diffused and applied on a broader scale, they may be temporary – or institutionalised, they may have various scope, various impacts on different policy and planning levels (regional, national, EU), and various implications on practical outcomes.

Expected outcomes on urban, rural and maritime systems

The next step will be to identify *practical outcomes* of institutional innovations at the level of spatial development planning on the regional structure of the NSR, in terms of spatial structures, urban – rural relations, innovation policies etc, with implications for urban, rural and maritime systems – and to identify and assess to what extent these regional level outcomes may be contributing to indicators measuring integration and balance.

In moving from impacts to outcomes, however, it is important to realise that this chain of events is long and complex. Urban, rural and maritime systems may be expected to be influenced by a number of factors, and the impacts of spatial development strategies may be expected to be limited. This should be taken into consideration when balance and integration are considered.

Priority 2: Efficient and sustainable communications and improved access to the information society.

Measure 2.1 under this priority are likely to lead to *network based learning*, through transfer of ideas and models of effective and sustainable transportation in rural areas, urban areas and in rural – urban connections, as well as action plans and concrete projects, developing new communication systems, and improving existing systems.

The expected activities include for instance exchange of knowledge on achievements in transport solutions, improving co-ordinations and links between transport nodes. These interventions are further developed in the programme complement.

The NSR is characterised by a *large variability* in terms of access to new IT technologies. By working in this field in the NSR context, one might hope that lagging regions may learn from advanced. Improved access to IT technology for SMEs (2.4) and the public sector (2.5) is a possible outcome, based on transfer of experiences between different parts of the NSR, providing networks between advanced as well as lagging areas.

Projects may also enhance spatial integration, at local levels (2.1) as well as on inter – regional and global basis (rural – global in 2.2, global transportation systems in 2.3). Through promotion of inter – modality, this is done in a way which may increase sustainability (2.3).

The transportation projects under the IIC programme were the last to be initiated. In the development of the IIIB programme, this bias has to a certain extent been corrected, in particular, through the measure including SMBs.

The inclusion of public – private partnership relations in this priority needs further attention in the implementation of the IIIB programme.

Relevant experiences from IIC

Priority 2: Transport and communications

Measures included are:

2.1: Improvement of North Sea links

2.2: Promotion of Multi-modal transport centres

2.3: Information and communication technologies to enhance more regionally balanced development.

Table 2: Priority 2. Transport and communication

Project	Measure	Aim	Partners	Budget
<i>Nordic transport political network</i>	2.1.	To create a network with the aim to analyse how transport policy decisions are made, how various types of transport interact or compete, what are the development trends and how to promote, develop or regulate transport by political decisions	<i>Denmark</i> (4), <i>Norway</i> (19), <i>Sweden</i> (2)	320,000
<i>Transport study NSR: Strategic study and action programmes</i>	2.1.	A pilot study; Create an initial platform for co-operation, get a narrower definition of the action plan to the main project and produce background information	<i>The Netherlands</i> (6), <i>Germany</i> (2), <i>Norway</i> (2), <i>Sweden</i> (2), <i>UK</i> (4), <i>Denmark</i> (3)	100,200
<i>Network of short shipping promotion centres</i>	2.1. and 2.2.	Strengthen and promote the competitiveness of short sea shipping and obtain a higher share of modal split	<i>Germany</i> (1), <i>Norway</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	452,500
<i>North European Trade Axis, NETA</i>	2.1.	Develop the potential for West/East trade axis across the NS	<i>UK</i> (7), <i>Germany</i> (2), <i>the Netherlands</i> (4)	216,680
<i>Spatial integration through inland waterways</i>	2.1.	Set up a network concerned with the improvement of inland waterway networks	<i>Germany</i> (3), <i>the Netherlands</i> (3), <i>UK</i> (2)	279,353

<i>Pilot development of rail ferry links and terminals for sea-ports</i>	2.1.	A feasibility study on rail-ferry connection for freight transport	<i>The Netherlands</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	60,000
<i>Identifying of regional logistic parameters</i>	2.2.	Provide a survey on sea shipping volumes, look into what extent requirements of the demand side have been met, identify requirements and partnership networks and develop a method for benchmarking logistics	<i>Germany</i> (2), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	36,500
<i>TARGET: travel awareness regional groups for environment</i>	2.2	Test different approaches to reducing need to travel and dependency on car use	<i>UK</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>Germany</i> (1)	1,250,000
<i>I-Sea-U</i>	2.3	Establish and operate an actual and virtual network of the NS region	<i>Norway</i> (3), <i>Germany</i> (1), <i>the Netherlands</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	250,000
<i>Project Nordnet</i>	2.3	Create a network for development in the regions, create job opportunities and facilitate remote education by use of communication technology	<i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>Norway</i> (1), <i>Germany</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	420,796
<i>Sustainability centres in the North Sea region</i>	2.3	Influence the spatial distribution of land uses and their densities	<i>Netherlands</i> (1), <i>Germany</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	250,000
<i>Uniform archiving and harmonisation of electronic data</i>	2.3	Promote better electronic access to planning data and existing knowledge of the regions	<i>Germany</i> (3), <i>the Netherlands</i> (2), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	404,500
<i>Implementation of citizens environment information system (DITO)</i>	2.3	Encourage the preparation of common guidelines for representative of natural resources in land use planning, develop a database and establish a network for the use of this information	<i>The Netherlands</i> (2), <i>Germany</i> (2), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	450,000
<i>Knowledge flow network for IT-related business</i>	2.3.	Look the possibilities for a large Interreg III project concerning introduction of e-commerce and internet trade in SMEs	<i>The Netherlands</i> (2), <i>Germany</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	

TARGET – Travel awareness regional groups for environmental transport (Measure 2.2)

Lead partner of the project is West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, UK, other partners being Freie Hansestadt Bremen, Germany and Trafikkontoret Göteborg, Sweden.

Target is a pilot phase for an 8-year project testing different approaches to reducing need to travel and dependency on car use. The project is divided to six work packages

that cover a range of topics: car sharing, flexible working, shopping and leisure, school travel plans, pollution reduction, green travel plan and cycling and walking.

Project has been assessed as a clearly defined, practical and action-based project. The project has a long list of expected results but few clearly measurable outputs or products.

Network of Short Sea Shipping Promotion Centres (Measure 2.2 , with delivery of 2.1)

Lead partner of the project is Senator für Häfen, überregionalen Verkehr und Aussenhandeln, Germany. Other partners are Göteborg Region, Sweden; Oslo Port Authority and ADGER Research Foundation, Norway; Padborg, Denmark, and Industrie und Handelskammer Oldenburg, Germany.

The project aims to strengthen and promote the competitiveness of short sea shipping in the NSR to obtain a higher share of modal split. An additional aim is to increase competitiveness of logistic and value added services in the port regions involved. The project is divided into four phases: 1) analysis of the current situation, 2) development of a network, in close co-operation of market actor both from supply and demand side, 3) analysis of international port co-operation and 4) “benchmarking”, identifying and measuring the impact of project activities to the region.

Expected outputs of priority 2

It may be expected that projects under this priority will enable partnerships to innovate new transportation and communication system solutions - which would not have been designed or thought of in national or regional programmes – and to start implementing these solutions.

Output indicators will identify these innovations, and assess the potential of the partnerships to implement them. In doing so, the inertia of existing transport and communication system solutions must be taken into consideration. This inertia can only be overcome by the dynamics of the project partnerships. Taking these things into consideration, attention must be taken to the importance of including relevant private actors, as well as the relevant sets of public sector institutions, in order to enable the partnerships to implement *practical* changes.

Output studies should include assessments of the diffusion potential of the innovations, as they may be expected to be isolated to the partners of a particular project – or applied on a broader scale, they may be temporary – or permanent, and they may have various practical implications on transportation and communication systems.

Expected impacts of priority 2

Expected long-term impacts will be new transportation and communication systems and system improvements. Impact studies should map the diffusion of new system solutions, and measure their observable impacts on integration and sustainability, compared to the old systems. It is a challenge to operationalise integration and sustainability in a way that may be correlated to project outputs.

Priority 3: Sustainable management of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage

The countries in NSR share a common history, and have deeply rooted lines of contact. Important aspects of the cultural heritage may therefore be seen as a common property of the NSR. The NSR also shares a common nature, influenced by the same basic parameters and threats, and building upon common or similar types of resources.

Given this point of departure, there is reason to believe that both in terms of :

- Learning, transfer of good practice, as well as
- Implementation of policy measures promoting good management,

the NSR programme will result in interventions which are innovative and different, hence give an added value, compared to existing national and regional policies in this area.

Projects and groups of projects, which will contribute to developing measures to:

- Protect and promote a sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable energies.
- Promote good management of cultural heritage and natural landscapes.
- Ensure integrated management of the coastal zone.
- Improve use and management of natural marine resources.

The focus is on:

- Landscapes
- Heritage
- Energy and waste
- The sea as a common resource.

The projects and networks envisaged under this priority may benefit *groupings of neighbouring regions* or regions throughout the NSR with *common characteristics*.

Some interventions may be expected to have a *global impact*, benefiting culture, nature and economy in the entire NSR. *These global impacts are hard to specify*.

Experiences from the IIC Programme

Priority 3: Natural resources and cultural heritage

Measures:

3.1: Promotion of coastal zone management

3.2: Protection of valuable natural areas and wise management of natural resources

3.3: Promotion of cultural tourism.

Table 3: Priority 3. Natural resources and cultural heritage

Project	Measure	Aim	Partners	Budget
<i>Norcoast</i>	3.1.	Investigate and promote good practice in coastal zone planning through study and exchange of experience; contribute to the Norvision	<i>Denmark</i> (1), <i>Germany</i> (1), the <i>Netherlands</i> (1), <i>Norway</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (2)	286,896
<i>SEAGIS</i>	3.1.	Improve GIS as a tool for coastal zone planning by investigating how GIS can be utilised and by exchange of experience	<i>Norway</i> (6), <i>Germany</i> (1), the <i>Netherlands</i> (1), <i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1)	
<i>Greenport</i>	3.1.	Support regional co-operation on spatial harbour planning and develop management system for collection and disposal of ships' waste generated in the NS region	<i>Norway</i> (2), the <i>Netherlands</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	217,282
<i>Documentation and development of the seaside tourism in the NS region</i>	3.1.	Compare and contrast the development of seaside tourism and planning issues to promote economic activity	<i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>UK</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	340,000
<i>Development of tools for sustainable planning (SUSPLAN)</i>	3.1	Study how planning guidance implementation effects sustainability at a sub-national level	<i>UK</i> (1), the <i>Netherlands</i> (2), <i>Denmark</i> (2)	359,260
<i>Forum Skagerrak</i>	3.1	Raise common environmental issues concerning Skagerrak to the highest regional level of decision in order to gain a common use of knowledge on the objectives and measures	<i>Sweden</i> (1), <i>Norway</i> (1), <i>Denmark</i> (1)	367,901

<i>Sustainable development in coastal areas of NS region</i>	3.1	Determine cohesive spatial planning approach: protect natural and historic environment contra developing tourist potential; safeguard traditional seaside towns contra new sustainable tourism products; manage transport demand and promote multi-modal choice	<i>UK</i> (1), the Netherlands (1), Norway (1)	275,000
<i>North Atlantic shellfish management</i>	3.2	Document the present situation of shellfish production, exchange experience and support networking of the industry for technology adaptation and dissemination between farmers, suppliers and mechanical industry	<i>Denmark</i> (1), Norway (1), Sweden (1)	250,000
<i>Restoration of transnational ecological networks (2 phases)</i>	3.2	Build a data-base of the transnational ecological network; collect successful strategies for the re-establishment of ecological infrastructure, formulate LIFE-projects; realisation of transnational, integrated strategies	1. phase: <i>the Netherlands</i> (2), Germany (2), Denmark (1), UK (1); 2. phase: <i>Germany</i> as a lead partner	140,000 + 105,000
<i>Wetlands in spatial planning</i>	3.2	Give tools for good maintenance, tourism and better participation taking away resistance against re-naturalisation	<i>Sweden</i> (1), Germany (1), Norway (1) Denmark (1), UK (1)	496,400
<i>The landscape and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea region (LANCE-WAD)</i>	3.2	Develop common guidelines and criteria for sustainable management of the heritage of the Wadden Sea region	Germany (3), the Netherlands (1), Denmark (1)	1,058,460
<i>The North Sea cycle route</i>	3.3	Develop a cycle route circuiting the North sea	Norway (1), Sweden (1), Denmark (1), UK (2), Germany (1), the Netherlands (1)	385,480
<i>North Sea Viking legacy</i>	3.3	Build a network co-operation on developing tourist attractions related to Vikings	Norway (2), Sweden (1), Denmark (1), UK (1)	516,325

<i>Kings of the North Sea</i>	3.3 & 1.3	Integrate results from archaeological research into international policymaking and setting guidelines on the fields of cultural history and spatial planning	<i>The Netherlands</i> (1), (1), Denmark (2), Germany (1), Norway (1)	490,000
<i>The Nortrail project</i>	3.3.	A feasibility study for a larger project that aims to optimise and manage tourist use of the cultural landscape	<i>Norway</i> (1), Denmark (1), UK (2)	64,400
<i>North Sea traditional fish</i>	3.3	Enlighten the relationship between the cultural touristic aspects of the marine resources and traditions and regional development	<i>Germany</i> (1), Norway (1), UK (1)	112,500

Norcoast (Measure 3.1)

The lead partner of the project is County of North Jutland, Denmark. Other partners are Niedersächsisches Innenministerium, Germany; Highland Council and Suffolk County Council, UK; Provincie of Noord-Holland; Hordaland fylkeskommune, Norway and County administration Västra Götaland. Aim of this pilot project is to investigate and promote good practise in coastal zone planning in the countries around North Sea, though a study and exchange of experience. An aim has been to contribute to the development of spatial vision of the North Sea programme. The project is divided into four step of actions: investigations; interregional seminar to exchange experience on current planning issues studied in first phase; using the experience on selected pilot areas; and a final seminar for discussing results.

The project has had clearly defined goals and an action plan. There are no common guidelines for planning and management of coastal areas. Coastal area planning is a key strategic issue for the planning Interreg IIIB programme period.

Seaside Tourism (Measure 3.1)

The lead partner of the project is the County Council of Halland, Sweden, the other transnational partners being Lincoln University, UK and North Jutland Amt, Denmark. The project was later extended with a new partner, the Netherlands Design Institute. The project aims to plan the development of sustainable seaside tourism in coastal areas based on environmental considerations and respect for the natural and cultural heritage. Furthermore the project attempts to improve relationship, between urban and rural areas. During the project, seaside tourism and planning issues will be compared and contrasted between the partner countries in order to promote economic activities and employment opportunities.

The project comprises four clearly defined parts:

1. Documenting history and development of seaside tourism around North Sea
2. Analysis of the present situation.

3. Planning strategy: Community information, guidelines for planners and information pack for tourism industry and marketers.
4. Project evaluation.

The project brings together a large number of different sectors and fulfils the aim of transnationality. The project has concrete aims and may lead to improvements in developing sustainable tourism around the coastal area.

North Sea Atlantic Shellfish Management (measure 3.2)

Co-ordinator of the project is the Sogn og Fjordane fylkeskommune (County Council Administration) from Norway and other partners are respective regional organisations from Sweden, Bohuslandstinget and Denmark, Viborg Amt. This 3-year project will, first, produce a document on the present situation on shellfish production to identify important actors, interests, current laws, policies and government practises. Aim of the project is thus support network activities between industry for technology adaptation and dissemination between farmers, suppliers and mechanical industry. The project aims also to find good methods for marine biotoxin monitoring and control.

The project has a good cross-sectoral approach and may lead to concrete co-operation in the field.

Expected outputs of priority 3

It may be expected that the projects under this priority will enable partnerships to innovate new ways to manage natural resources, cultural heritage, coastal zones and marine resources, which would not have been designed or thought of in national or regional programmes – and to start implementing these new management solutions.

Output indicators will have to identify these innovations, and to assess the potential of the partnerships to implement them. In doing so, due attention should be paid to the well-known findings of research on co-management (the “Tragedy of the Commons” literature). Impact studies should assess the potential of the innovations to develop regional level co-operation, as well as national level and EU policies. Impact studies should include assessments of the scope of the innovations, as they may be expected to be isolated to the partners of a particular project – or diffused and applied on a broader scale, they may be temporary – or permanent, and they may have various implications on practical outcomes.

Expected impacts of priority 2

Expected long-term impacts will be new co-management systems, which enhance sustainability. Impact indicators should operationalise and measure sustainability in a way that may be related to project outputs.

Priority 4: Water management

Under this priority, measures 4.1 and 4.2 will develop planning strategies and action plans for river catchment areas and fresh water management highly relevant to *groupings* of countries and regions within the NSR area, and with a potential significance also for the entire NSR, where one might hope for transfer of knowledge between advanced and less advanced regions within the NRS.

Measures will be based on specialised networks put in place for this task.

Measure 4.3 suggests *research* supporting management of disasters which may also have a *global* interest.

Expected outputs of priority 4

Projects under this priority will enable partnerships to innovate new ways to manage water, which would not have been designed or thought of in national or regional programmes – and to start implementing these new management solutions.

Output indicators will identify these innovations, and assess the potential of the partnerships to implement them. In doing so, due attention should be paid to the well-known findings of research on co-management (the “Tragedy of the Commons” literature). In particular, due attention must be taken to the research findings on the importance of the partnership in developing new co-management solutions. Impact studies should include assessments of the scope of innovations, as they may be expected to be isolated to the partners of a particular project – or diffused and applied on a broader scale, they may be temporary – or permanent, and they may have various implications on practical outcomes.

Expected impacts of priority 4

Expected impacts will be innovation and diffusion of systems of water management which prevents flooding, improve handling of regional water surplus, water shortages and deterioration of water systems – and integrates water management in spatial planning strategies. Long-term impact indicators should be operationalisations of these factors.

External coherence in relation to other interventions

The external coherence in relation to other, national or EU-level interventions is not clearly indicated in CIP. Chapter 1.6 includes a list of Community programmes that are complementary to NSR Interreg IIIB programme, but there is no further description or analysis on this, neither indication on possible co-ordination between different programmes.

Internal coherence between needs, objectives and resources allocated

The analysis of the region identifies needs, which are referred to in the IIIB programme as the following aims:

“A spatially developed integrated region, which offers a good quality of life for all its citizens in a balanced and sustainable way”.

This choice of strategy gives the program a focus on achieving increased balance and sustainability, where integration and development are necessary means to these ends.

This emphasis is also expressed in the financial table, where priorities 4 (Water Management) and 3 (Sustainable Management and Development of the Environment, Natural Resources and Cultural heritage) get most resources. This emphasis is also obvious from the choice of measures in priorities 1 and 2, through the promotion of several “balance and sustainability friendly” solutions, like polycentrism, improved rural-urban interaction, diffusion of IT technology, short sea shipping, enhanced inter-

modality, innovation support etc. The internal coherence between needs, objectives, and resources allocated is good.

4. Appraisal of implementation procedures

The core programme partnership of IIC is working well, with efficient and transparent procedures, a well-developed decision making system and a generally satisfactory division of labour between the three core elements, the Monitoring and Steering committees and the secretariat. The secretariat is an important factor in achieving the administrative success of IIC.

In the administrative arrangements of the IIIB programme, these strengths have been utilised, and further developed. The layout of this new organisation is explained in the CIP. It has been decided to build on the experiences of the IIC secretariat.

Some relevant points from the evaluation of IIC:

- Focusing on “hands – on” inter – action between “practical people” actually working with the topic of the project, enhance the potential for learning and innovation.
- Learning and organisational innovation emerging from a project is impossible to plan for, it may take surprisingly long time, and it may come in surprising areas. This makes the provision of adequate indicators hard. The solution in IIC was to define process indicators (reports and seminars). This is clearly inadequate for IIIB.
- An important externality of projects is the development of thick and multi – layered networks of programmes, projects, and actors, often with vast spans in terms of space, topics, institutions and time – often combining different structural fund programmes, and a wide range of other private and public sources. These networks may be considered as the principal form of *European integration* promoted by Interreg.
- The dynamics and structure of these networks constitute an important context of the partnership of the new programme, both in terms of project outcomes, as well as in terms of new ideas and projects and in considerations of relations between programmes. In particular, actors operating as bridges between networks (nesting different project or programme partnerships) as well as central network actors (“stars”), should be considered as important and constructive players, taking due consideration to the need for partnership expansion, transparent and open procedures and distribution of resources.
- Project owners may successfully combine different IIIB programmes – enabling “North Sea versions” of projects financed in other IIIB programmes, like NVMA. This nesting of IIIB programmes should be encouraged, as it clearly contributes to the over all Interreg- objective of European integration.

The IIC programme managed to initiate adequate projects relevant to the SPD in a short time period, due to efficient mobilisation of existing North Sea Conference networks. The major bottleneck, in terms of initiation of IIC was transport, where the core programme partnership had weakly developed links. In the new IIIB programme, the partnership has evolved, as competencies covering new areas are consulted.

National level partnerships are organised differently in different states. Some national level partnerships also include private and social partners.

Monitoring, evaluation and management build on and develop further experiences from the IIC programme. They were efficient in terms of administrative processes, and reflect a partnership with a high level of social capital.

Indicators and quantification of impacts were process oriented in IIC. It is a major task to develop impact and output indicators measuring balance and sustainability in the IIIB Program. As indicators are left to the programme complement they are not assessed in this report. Few general comments, however, can be said for defining indicators:

Programme indicators form an essential part of the monitoring system to analyse the contribution of resources used as intervention inputs towards the effectiveness of the entire intervention. Moreover, indicators form the basic data for assessing a programme comprised of several interventions with regard to its expected outcomes as a true learning system. Thus, programme indicators have several functions. They can be used *externally*, to monitor the success and capacity of the programme itself. They can also be used *internally*, to analyse the advancements achieved through the interventions – and to adjust the interventions based on the indicators.

The new period of INTERREG IIIB presents good preconditions for improving the indicators used for evaluation and monitoring for two reasons: 1) there is experience from the previous period, and 2) the new six-year period could better enable the definition of indicators that measure:

- Concrete results (products, such as number of jobs),
- Identifiable outputs (e.g. how many persons took part in educational initiatives),
- Other impacts, such as changes in methods or knowledge, sustainable outcomes,
- Benefits to the whole programme and the programme area (global impact).

A clear and practical framework that can be used for defining indicators could be thus indicators that measure:

- Resources (financial, human, that were needed)
- Outputs
- Results and
- Impacts.

One problem with the previous period was that the indicators used measured primarily identifiable inputs, or concrete results, where and if such had emerged. INTERREG IIC was a programme from which few very concrete results (such as investments) could be expected. It has been, first and foremost, a learning process. But even the learning has been relatively poorly measured. It can be expected that IIIB programme, with a longer time period and a slightly different emphasis in content, will be able to result in more concrete benefits to the programme area.

INTERREG IIIB North Sea

ex-ante evaluation - project interview

Project name

Contact person (name / institute)

Date

Questions on process:

I. General Information on North Sea IIC

I.1 Information flow

How did you get information on INTERREG IIC North Sea?
Who gave it?

I.2 Quality and quantity of information

Did you get enough information?
If not, what was missing?

II. Application Procedure

II.1 Information during the application procedure

Was it easy to get information and apply for INTERREG financing?
If not, what were the main problems you faced?
Did you get all information needed / did you feel fully informed?
If not, what was missing?

II.2 Application procedure

Have you been satisfied with the application procedure?
(application form / deadlines / suggestions for improvement)

II.3 Assessment and adoption of applications

1. Have you been satisfied with the assessment and adoption procedures?
Were the decisions comprehensible? (suggestions for improvement)
2. Did you realise any differences between the assessments of the various countries involved in your project?

II.4 Guidance / supervision by the secretariat

1. Have you been satisfied with the guidance/supervision by the secretariat?
(Suggestions for improvement)
2. Did any complications appear because of the involvement of national actors, secretariat and committees?
(Inconsistency in information, double burden, etc.)

II.5 Contracting

Did any problems occur regarding contracting?
Did you receive your contracts in time?

III. Payment

- III.1 Have you got paid so far?
- III.2 Have you been satisfied with the payment procedures?
- III.3 What are the other sources of financing in the project?

Questions on project and its results:

IV. Project Preparation

IV.1 What was first, hen or egg

1. Put those three in right chronological order: - project idea
 - co-operation partners/contacts
 - information on funding opportunities
2. Would the project been implemented without INTERREG financing?

IV.2 Content

1. What is the Project's contribution to spatial planning and regional development?
2. Has the project resulted in learning, if so, what have you learned?
3. Has the project resulted in policy changes in spatial planning and regional development?
4. Has the project resulted in changes of administrative or other practices in spatial planning and regional development?
5. What is the future potential of the project in terms of changes in policy and / or practices?

IV.3 Co-operation partners

How did you find your partners?

relations established through activities undertaken by the North Sea Commission

Other previous co-operation?

Help of the secretariat / others?

V. Project Results so far

V.1 Time flows

1. When did you start your project?
2. In what stage is the project at the moment?
 - If there are any delays, why?
3. Will the aims be fulfilled in the planned timetable?
 - If not, why and to what degree not?

V.2 Major changes

1. Have there been changes in
 - (1) timetable?
 - (2) content?
 - (3) partners?
 - (4) anything else?
2. If so, what sort of changes?

V.3 Co-operation

1. Do you have a trans-national project working group, and if this is the case, what are its tasks and how does it work/function?
2. How has co-operation succeeded with your national / EU / Norwegian partners?
3. Methods of communication, has there been problems?

VI. Outlook

VI.1 Side effects

Will there be any unexpected long-term or side effects of the project?

VI.2 Future co-operation between the project partners

Will co-operation continue after the end of the project / future plans?

VI.3 Follow ups of the project

Will the work on the project task continue after the INTERREG funding?

General Impressions

VII.1 Cross-linkages

1. Do you have contact/linkages to other *North Sea projects*?
2. How would you describe the work of the *secretariat*?
Do you consider the secretariat as helpful?
Would you prefer a national secretariat?
3. Are you familiar with the work of Steering and Monitoring Committees?
Have you been in contact with them?
What is opinion on their work?

VII.2 So what?

Do you consider the North Sea Programme as meaningful?

Why (not)? (Suggestions for improvement)

Are you considering/ do you find it possible to apply financing for a new project from Interreg IIIB?

VII.3 Suggestions for improvement