



Energy and Climate Change Group (ECCG) - 28 February 2020 – Florø, Norway

Present:

Councillors

Jimmy Gray - Chair
Tjisse Stelpstra – Vice Chair
Jon Olav Strand – Vice Chair
Hanne Marte Vatnaland
Harvey Johnston
Isobel Davidson
Natalia Golis
Soukaina Legdani

Region

Highland
Provincie Drenthe
Agder Fylkeskommune
Rogaland Fylkeskommune
Orkney
Aberdeenshire
Deputy Mayor – Vestland County Municipality
Vestland County Municipality

Officers

Audun Erik Sunde
Clara Zakariasson
Johan Scholte
Tara Murray
Thomas Kokshoorn
Trond S. Kristiansen

Region

Vestland County Municipality
North Sea Commission
Provincie Drenthe
Aberdeenshire
Province of Groningen
Ager Fylkeskommune

Update and Minutes from 4 October 2019:

No comments were raised from the minutes of the meeting in Inverness on 10 October 2019.

Round-table updates:

The meeting began with a round-table discussion focussing on specific regional actions around climate emergency declarations, changes to governance, new energy / climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, partnership projects and ideas for 2020 onwards. The discussion can be summarised as follows:

- **Aberdeenshire:** Aberdeenshire Council has not declared a climate emergency because it supports and accepts the climate change emergency declared by both the UK and Scottish Government. They are awaiting the new Climate Change Plan (Scotland) which will be released by the end of April after the Scottish Government announced its target of 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2045. Aberdeenshire are considering aligning these reductions and are developing a mitigation and adaptation strategy 'Climate Ready Aberdeenshire' which includes biodiversity. Unsure of Brexit impact yet but Aberdeenshire hopes to remain part of the NSC and stay active in thematic groups, which will help them keep engaged with what is happening across the North Sea bordering regions. Asked to please keep partnership project ideas open with them as they are unsure about funding streams and what alternatives will be created by the Scottish Government.
- **Agder:** Ager has merged into a bigger region since last meeting in October. Their responsibilities are more or less the same at the moment. Jon Olav introduced Electric Region Agder which is their vision to have the first fully electric society with

100% renewable energy by 2030. This is a joint venture between the public and private sector and includes a 45% emissions reduction target by 2030 (two thirds of their current emissions are from transport sector). They will need help from national government to achieve this as although they are very rich in renewable power and have some resources, they need more technology, especially in for the transport sector.

- **Drenthe / Groningen:** Working on actions from the Netherland's Climate agreement. One big part is every region needs a regional energy strategy together with government and net suppliers of heating and renewable energy. Drenthe must make a national offer of much energy they'll produce. The Northern region have received a Hydrogen subsidy for industry, transport, etc and have started the development of a large scale hydrogen project which has not been approved yet due to technical reasons, but they are trying for approval again. Drenthe is also working on the impact of the European Green Deal on the Northern Netherlands. They have a new project: 10GW wind farms at sea combined with hydrogen at sea to get energy onshore (<https://www.rechargenews.com/wind/shell-unveils-worlds-largest-offshore-wind-plan-to-power-green-hydrogen/2-1-763610>). They will need a lot of energy to make this work and has been support by the Hydrogen Valley grant and the Hydrogen agenda. The Marine Spatial Planning processes (2014) states all NSC regions are to make a Marine Spatial plan by 2021. The Netherlands are making this plan with government and stakeholders and a €200 million agreement was made 2 weeks ago.
- **Highland:** Producing lots of energy, on and offshore through hydro and wind. The region is trying to get smaller micro hydro systems and are going through planning for this now. They are producing lots of renewable energy but unsure how to use it. Historically Highland have used carbon sinks and large areas of peat for heating but may use carbon capture (peat not environmentally friendly). They also have lots of forestry but are unsure how to use this. They are using biomass for heating with various success. With regards to the impact of climate change, the region's biggest issue is flooding. One of their projects is communicating with schools and the public to get change expectancy from these groups and educate them on what Highland are doing. Highland are unsure of impact of Brexit yet.
- **Orkney:** The are 70 islands in the region, 16 of which are inhabited and had the first utility grid connected wind turbine in the UK. Wind and tidal power produce most of their electricity and are provided by the EMEC (European Marine Energy Centre). One tidal machine has produced more power in last 2 years than all tidal machines in the world. Orkney are producing too much energy and would like to share this but there is not an efficient connector. They have had to shut down wind turbines on windy days. There is an Orkney Hydrogen strategy. Hydrogen is already being used but there are not enough interconnectors to contribute hydrogen to the grid. They can take power into Orkney but cannot export as do not have interconnector for this. The plan is to put up more wind turbines with a private wire to produce and use their own electricity (the group then discussed how this fits with the community power strategy). Orkney have declared a Climate Change emergency and are looking to recruit a Climate Officer with their own funding as no funding has been received from the Scottish Government.
- **Rogaland:** The SDGs will be focus of everything and they are developing their Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy which will include biodiversity. 50% of their CO2 emissions are from industry, 15% transportation and 15% agriculture. One of their actions to reduce this is fully electric high-speed vessels which will transport locals across city islands. Construction for this starts this summer (2020) and will be completed by January 2022. Currently high-speed vehicles account for only 4% of all travel but 51% of all emissions.
- **Vestland:** On 1st Jan 2020, regions have merged and now have 650,000 inhabitants. Oil & gas, maritime and fishing are the region's main industries and they produce more than 25% of Norway's hydro power. They rely on hydro power, making energy cost cheap. There are planned projects to develop turbine power, but these will have impact on biodiversity and wildlife. Politicians are pushing for EVs on land and water.

Vestland is trying to move away from oil and gas to renewable energy and trying to develop land farming for fish. Regarding rail development, this is an issue across Norway. Bergen/Oslo rail needs to be refurbished but high-speed trains are extremely expensive due to the mountains and requirement for tunnels, so they are focussing on other things, for example new roads.

Northern Lights – Carbon Storage in the Seabed.

Presentation Geir Grøttveit, Operations Manager, Northern Lights.

The meeting continued with a presentation by Geir Grøttveit, Operations Manager, Northern Lights. The presentation highlighted the work Northern Lights are doing with regards to their carbon capture, transport and storage solution (CCS). Project has come from Paris agreement 2015 and is close to a partner decision. Currently the project is expensive and needs to get costs down, they are hopeful that technology development will lower costs but will need government funding to achieve this. They are also trying to sell extra capacity to other businesses. Capture is 1.5m NOK kr, pipeline is 5m NOK kr and the total cost of project is 6b NOK kr. Drilling the well to see if project is successful began in December 2019 and will end in February 2020, results will hopefully be available by the end of March 2020. By late 2023 will be ready for receiving CO2 and will get this by 2024, they are waiting on the Government to release final numbers. Northern Lights are currently seeking customers across Europe - their aim is to share their experience and technology, not compete. Seven MoUs signed an agreement at the CCS conference in Sept 2019. Northern Lights are currently in the tendering stage and are hopeful that the NSC can contribute to this. The execution stage will be 2021 – 2023.

Reducing the Environmental Impact of Cruise Ships

Presentation by Even Husby, Head of Environment, Port of Bergen, Norway

The second presentation from Even Husby, Head of Environment introduced the group to the Bergen Port Approach. Negative media coverage and public opinion regarding cruise ships in Norway, and political pressure has resulted in action to reduce the environmental impact of cruise ships. Port of Bergen approach – develop an Environmental Port Index (EPI) which was developed as a way of knowing how much pollution each cruise ship is causing while in port. The approach is that the polluter pays, and all cruise ships need to adhere to this to get into port. EPI: environmental accounting, stimulate green operations and polluter pays. The EPI portal is an environmental reporting system (EIR) that every cruise ship must complete before leaving the port. Cruise ships are charged dependent on their EPI score 1 (poor) – 100 (best). The score reflects the ships themselves (age/efficiency etc) and how they are used. This process was established in 4 ports in 2019 and planned for another 15 in 2020. Ports are seeing a difference already in EPI scores and a subsequent reduction in high polluting cruise ships. In the long term, all ships should have the ability to be green while in port with the Bergen approach. Cruise ship companies seem to be on board as Bergen is a very popular port. The port is also using local companies to build better looking cable management systems for cruise ships through PLUG (joint company with BKK). Bergen also has the benefit of short busy cruise seasons.

Vestland County Council

Presentation by Natalia Golis, Deputy Mayor, Vestland County Municipality

Deputy Mayor, Natalia Golis gave a presentation regarding the political and administrative environment of the Vestland region. Vestland has a Zero emissions target by 2030. The World heritage Fjords have a 2026 net zero target but are trying to extend this to all Fjords and want to include tourism in the NSC strategy and are working on incentives to encourage businesses and public to do this. Vestland hasn't declared a climate change emergency and feels the time has passed to do this and to focus instead on action. They are working closely

with industry, for example hydro aluminium. The Deputy Mayor stressed that industry is part of the solution and not the problem and this includes the oil and gas sector.

An Introduction to CPMR and NSC

Presentation by Clara Zakariasson, CPMR Assistant Executive Secretary

The final presentation introduced the new members of the group to the CPMR and the NSC. This included the history of the NSC, its purpose, political involvement, governance and organisational structure of the Executive Committee and four Thematic Groups. During the presentation Clara asked the group to put the Annual North Sea Conference in their diaries for 23rd to 25th June in Rotterdam. She also asked that if anyone has Youth Council members, to please let her know so she can add them to Youth Council meeting on 23rd June. Clara also reminded the group that the deadline for strategy consultation is 6th March 2020. 11th June is a river clean in cooperation with KIMO (Clara will include details in the newsletter). The CPMR has emailed all members a link for access to the intranet site and has increased access from 3 members per region to 10 due to requests.

CPMR update

Damian Perisse, Climate Task Force Coordination Team

Damien joined the meeting via Skype: The CPMR are preparing a reaction to the Green Deal that was proposed by the European Commission and is looking to collect feed-back from ECCG members on the detailed CPMR policy position to be presented at the CPMR Political Bureau in March. They are preparing for the meeting in Brussels next week at which they will launch a new initiative. Damien will get feedback from the task force today and at meeting next week regarding the Green Deal, Stable Investment Plan and Climate Law (published next week). The ECCG can input into CPMR's stance on the Green Deal by sending feedback to Damien. There are 5 points in the draft policy paper including a 55% emission reduction by 2030. Funding (sustainable investment plan). It is estimated that £260B per annum by 2030 is required and this doesn't include adaptation and agriculture. There will be full involvement and Partnership with the region and a climate pack will be published next month. The CPMR region for the Green Deal will be discussed next week and the plan is to have an interactive map on the CPMR website with information on strategies and investments across the region regarding climate change. To do this the CPMR need to collect this information from all region members. They will start to collect this after its been approved at next week's meeting and will collect over a period of months. Damien will email everyone in CPMR after 19th March regarding this. The purpose of this information is to build better capacity and platform for discussions with the European Commission and Parliament and give us a stronger position. It will also help to facilitate discussions between regions and share information regarding what each region are doing and to build projects across regions.

NSC 2030: Strategy Development Plan

- Group Work

The purpose of the group work was for the group to discuss and come up with at least two actions for one of the four points in section 2 (A Climate-Neutral NSC pg.5) of the strategy that we can achieve in next 2 years. Unfortunately, due to time constraints the group were unable to fully discuss and come up with actions so have been asked to email Tara at least two suggestions for each of the four points within this section **by 18th March 2020**. Thomas Kokshoorn will send his prepared list to Claudia.

- Any feedback from regions on the consultation

Group members suggested changes to the consultation including a request from Soukaina to add tourism/sustainable tourism and a request from Isobel that the strategy and action

plan are flexible. The group discussed whether the strategy should include the consequences of Brexit?

- Creating an action plan from 2020-2022

The group will send proposed actions to advisors first to add content then for consultation **by 18 March 2020**.

- Developing the work of the NSC

The group will consider and email feedback to Clara on the draft of this report which will be discussed at the next NSC ExCom meeting on 16-17 April 2020.

- Adaptation Position Paper

The group agreed to adopt this paper and Claudia will make it available on the NSC website for sharing ASAP.

Wrap Up and Any Other Business:

- Nothing further from the group.
- Minutes from all other Thematic Group meetings can be found on the NSC webpage - <https://cpmr-northsea.org/documents/>
- Claudia Cowie is going on maternity leave from 01 May 2020 – 01 March 2021 and Tara Murray will cover the post of advisor during this time.

ACTION FOR THE GROUP:

- **Group** save the date **23rd to 25th June 2020** - Annual North Sea Conference, Rotterdam – once registration is available it will be shared.
- **Group** to send names of any Youth Council members interested in the Youth Council meeting on 23rd June to Clara.
- **Group** to check if they have received an email from the CPMR with a link to access the intranet and add their members (regions can now have 10 members).
- **Group** to send any European Green Deal feedback to Claudia.
- **Group** to send at least two suggestions for the action plan for each of the four points within section 2 of the NSR 2030 Strategy to Claudia by **18th March 2020**.
- **Claudia** will put the Adaptation Position Paper on the NSC website.

Future Meetings:

- Next ECCG meeting TBC – Tjisse has offered to host the meeting in Drenthe if no one else comes forward. If anyone is interested, please email Claudia by 30th April 2020 and Tara after April.