

GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN INTERREG IIIB PROGRAMMES

Vienna, Austria, 10 – 11 July 2006

Venue: Museumstrasse 3/A/III – 1070 A-Vienna.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Project development:

1. In order to comply with EU, national and regional policies does your programme proactively stimulate potential applicants to develop strategic projects (project generation)? If yes, what kind of top-down approaches (e.g. info days, manuals, projects database, umbrella projects) does your programme use?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - project ideas database - website where project ideas can be registered - participation in Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation (programme contribution of 225,000 € for 2007/8) - documents: application form manual; guide for project developers; information sheets on key concepts - national information days 2 months prior to each call with project ‘surgeries’ where a tandem of project officers has a 45 minute session to discuss application development - thematic seminars on ICT, maritime, flooding
Alpine Space	Info days and manuals. Concerning Info Days three Seminars were organised. One related to transports, one concerning climate changes and another one dealing with the development of rural areas in the mountains. Furthermore we outsourced the drawing up of a prospective study whose results should be useful for developing strategic projects.
Baltic Sea Region	Partner search forums, project ideas database on the web, project individual consultations, seed money facility, thematic calls, guidance note, promoting programme in various external events
MEDOCC	Info days, Vade Mecum, Project data base online

2. Besides the usual calls, does your programme use other bottom-up project development tools? What kind of tools (e.g. pre-assessment individual consultation, local support structures, financing project development)?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	<p>Contact point network very active in assessing initial ideas and advising</p> <p>Meetings with project developers at the Secretariat and guidance via email and phone</p> <p>Some national authorities provide seed money</p>
Alpine Space	National Contact Points network as well as the JTS should be the responsible in developing project ideas from local needs. We are currently investigating more specific tools for the next programming period.

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Baltic Sea Region	Seed money facility, individual project consultations for lead applicants during the calls, pre-assessment of the project idea
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3 Does your programme support partner search? How (e.g. partner search forum/fair)?

PROGRAMME	
Baltic Sea Region	Project ideas database on the web, partner search forums, providing contacts during the consultations
MEDOCC	Online database in our website. Contact with coordinators for orientation.

4 Does your programme also involve partners outside the EU borders? How does the partner search work there?

PROGRAMME	
Alpine Space	Switzerland and Liechtenstein have their national references for this kind of activities.
Baltic Sea Region	Contacts are mostly established by the applicants themselves; programme cooperate with other initiatives/institutions, which organises events in countries outside EU, during which also EU members are invited.
MEDOCC	MEDA countries, partnership research tool in web site. Institutional contacts of MEDOCC partners and local coordinators (e.g. Morocco).

5 What good practice example/s in the project development could your programme provide?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	- Project development, assessment and monitoring always in tandems; developers not involved in assessment - A lot of time and staff resources made available for advising projects; meetings at JTS
MEDOCC	Partner search data base online, and individual project development advisory through helpdesk at the JTS

6 What bottlenecks in the project development has your programme experienced?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	- Getting the right people mobilised in thematic areas (maritime, transport, ICTs etc)
MEDOCC	Delays and low quality of the projects in the first calls. Bottom-up approach. Limited capitalisation from other programmes-

Project implementation:

7 Do you think that responsibilities of programme bodies for the implementation of your programme are always clearly set?

PROGRAMME	YES	NO
North West EU	X	
Alpine Space	X	

REGISTRATION FORM



Baltic Sea Region	X	
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To be improved

PROGRAMME	
Baltic Sea Region	On one hand it would be useful if the division of tasks of the programme bodies (MA/PA/JS/SC/MC) would be more precise, on the other hand with very precised rule the programme structure lose flexibility, which was always seen as an advantage of INTERREG. Therefore a reasonable balance is needed.

8 What are the most used ways of communication regarding implementation achievements among the programme bodies work? (E.g. reports, regular meetings, SC, MC)

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Assessment of project achievements regarding indicators; announcement of major conferences and events; programme newsletter; invitations to events; collection of annual pressr releases sent to all members of committee
Baltic Sea Region	Annual reports, regular SC/MC meetings, regular newsletter, e-mails, brochures, web-site, seminars/quality workshops/conferences,
MEDOCC	Meetings, written procedures.

9 What role does informal communication (e.g. E-mail, informal gatherings) play?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Much communication by email and phone for day-to-day management of projects within the JTS; informal chats with prejct coordinators about the state of the partnership
Alpine Space	Apart from day to day contacts (emails and calls) NCPs network meets regularly with JTS and MA/PA. National Coordinators meet regularly as well
Baltic Sea Region	Very important role, most of comunication is done via e-mail, informal meetings are ground for finding new ideas and ways on how to deal with certain issues and chlleges
MEDOCC	Important (especially for JTS in the preparation of MC and SC meetings)

10 How does the communication between programme bodies and project owners work?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Little direct communication; mostly via JTS
Baltic Sea Region	After the project are approved the Lead Partner seminar and also Financial management seminar are organised to explain programme main requirements concerning the project implementation. Due to the huge amount of the project partners, the every communication goes mainly through the Lead Partners and is mostly demand driven (means the projects contact JS in case of questions), this flexible approach seems to be appreciated by the projects. In addition there are quality workshops organised on specific teams that are relevant for both projects and programme bodies.

11. Do you hold meetings with lead partners /project partners on a regular basis? How often?

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PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Yes. All lead partners invited to a lead partner seminar in Lille soon after approval and issuing of Grant Offer Letter; presentation of requirements for activity report and payment claim
Baltic Sea Region	One Lead Partner seminar (after approval), seminar for financial controllers and 1st level controllers (after the first months of the project implementation, before the first reporting dead-line), quality workshops, individual advice via phone, e-mail (on demand).
MEDOCC	Once a year (Transnational conference of partners)

12. Do you hold exceptional meetings with partners/project partners? In which case?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	often projects request meetings to discuss changes to action plans and revised applications which are later circulated for approval to the PSC via written procedure site visits are organised to inspect content and communications at lead partner premises, including visits to 1 or 2 investments last year we conducted N+2 visits to LP HQs to discuss spending plans and profiles to avoid programme (and project) decommitment
Alpine Space	We normally organise one LP Seminar just after the SC approval of the projects where LPs are trained in reporting and I&P measures. JTS normally attend the kick off event and the final conference of each project. If any of the projects of the Programme show special/particular needs we offer our support via email or we organise a meeting (mostly during a project Steering Committee meeting or just after).
Baltic Sea Region	Yes, individual meetings if the project problem cannot be solved via e-mail/phone. One-off event in 2006: Project conference "Setting regions in motion" in Malmö, 16-17 M
MEDOCC	Information days with new lead partners + thematic seminars (e.g. accessibility)

13. What support tools do you use for a smooth cooperation with project owners? (E.g. Monitoring system, individual advisory opportunity)

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	PMS; project and finance officer
Baltic Sea Region	Reporting forms, Forms for standard requests for changes (budget reallocation etc.), programme management database (pre-filling e-mails/templates for projects), programme manual, quality workshops
MEDOCC	Info days, individual helpdesk, monitoring system

14. What good practice example/s in the project implementation could your programme provide?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Lead partner seminars

MEDOCC	Innovative transnational partner management and work, good interaction with managing instruments proposed by the programme (e.g. reporting system)
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15 What bottlenecks in the project implementation has your programme experienced?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Few projects approved at the beginning due to PSC decisions
Alpine Space	They are mostly related to the certification of expenditures and FLC in general.
Baltic Sea Region	Reporting dead-lines each 6 months: with around 80 projects running the reports cannot be processed (checked/paid) at once; in some countries central audit system is introduced, due to insufficient amount of auditors, the project audit take longer time, which delays submission of the Reports
MEDOCC	Difficult to combine at the transnational level the rules and procedure of each national administration. Difficulties with transnational expenses.

Financial management:

16 How does your programme handle Common Transnational Activities, if they are foreseen (very short description)?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Common transnational activities should be claimed by the partner that have incurred the expenditure. Internal invoices between partners (for those type of costs) are of course possible, but should not be included in the payment claim (only the original costs incurred by the partner)
Baltic Sea Region	Guidance note on sharing of costs between partner: the implementing partner is responsible for auditing and informs the LP
MEDOCC	JTS discourages projects to use them. If they want to cofinance activities: partner carrying out activities should pay and certify expenses, then send to other partners a dossier with bills and certifications and tables containing pro-quota participation. The other national FLCs are asked to issue a national certification for every partner and all this documentation is included in the payment claim.

17 How does your programme handle revenues in the financial reporting (very short description or attachment for examples)?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	With the current IIIB programme, revenue have to be deducted from the budget line that are related to (i.e. if a seminar is organised by a project and a small fee is asked to the participants, the revenue should be recorded as a "negative expenditure" under the budget line "Meetings, seminars and publicity".
Baltic Sea Region	Revenues must be deducted from the reported amounts, the auditor confirms it in the auditor statement.
MEDOCC	Revenues reduce the amount requested and eligible expenses totally or partially depending on whether the revenues were generated totally or partially by the project.

18 How does your programme assess and ensure the financial sustainability after project closure? (e.g. impact indicators, on the spot checks)

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PROGRAMME	
North West EU	So far, only 3 NWE projects are closed. Evidence need to be given in the final activity report. The JTS is also doing site visits towards the end of the project (but so far, never after it ended)
Alpine Space	It is considered while assessing the project proposal (we have a specific section in the AF were we clearly ask what after the project closure). Furthermore we always invite LPs to find an agreement in order to keep online their project's website at least one year after the closure of the project itself, but this is not legally binding in any form.
Baltic Sea Region	The assessment of sustainability is made already before approval, continued during the project monitoring. After project closure there are no further controlls carried out by the JS.
MEDOCC	Through impact indicators

19 Private project partners: Are they eligible? What is their legal status (e.g. public equivalent bodies, ONGs)? Under which conditions/requirements (e.g. bank guarantee)?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	According to the CIP and the Programme Complement, private partners are eligible, but the Lead Partner must be a public body or a non-profit private body. If the Lead Partner is a private body (non profit), then a bank guarantee is requested.
Alpine Space	They are eligible as fully Project Partners
Baltic Sea Region	Not eligible. Only public equivalent bodies (according the definition of the public procurement rules). Private partners participate either as sub-contractors (fully paid by a project partner) or with own funds (not generating ERDF) of via associations (e.g. association of forest owners)
MEDOCC	Not eligible. But public euivalent bodies are if they comply with EU DIR 2004/18/EC conditions. The MS has the final word.

20 For Neighbourhood Programmes: How is the financial flow for EU and non-EU project partners (short description or attachment flow chart)?

PROGRAMME	
Baltic Sea Region	Tacis funds are managed by the Europeand Commission / EC-Delegations according the Tacis (PRAG) rules.

21 What good practice example/s in the financial management could your programme provide?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Lead Partner seminars + audit seminars for projects Group of National Auditors meeting twice per year (in charge of sample checks) Avoid any decommitment risk (at least at the end of 2004 and 2005)
Baltic Sea Region	Seminars for Financial Managers and project auditors (before the first reporting dead-line) Programme Management Database

22 What bottlenecks in the financial management has your programme experienced?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Clearly the struggle against decommitment! But we managed to overcome the threat.
Baltic Sea Region	N+2 rule does not reflect the programme spending curve After the reporting dead-line it is not possible to process all report at once
MEDOCC	FLC in some countries are extremely slow.

Information and publicity issues

23 Does your programme foresee a Communication Plan?

PROGRAMME	YES	NO
CADSES	X	
N W E	X	
ALPINE SPACE	x	
B S R	X	

24. Does any programme body foresee a responsible communication officer?

PROGRAMME	YES	NO
CADSES	X (but only since April 2004)	
B S R	X	

24 What are the most innovative features of your programme in the communication policy?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	Information & Publicity guidelines on website, Mid-term event, communications seminars
Alpine Space	I&P reporting
Baltic Sea Region	Communication training for project managers, Newsletter sent to all project partners and stakeholders (mailing list of more than 5000 addresses), website, which is regularly updated
MEDOCC	A complete and functional website and extranet available for 7 groups/levels (partners, lead partners, TS, SC, MC, JTS, Future programming). Online and hard copy of communication tools (newsletter, project guide).

25 What are the main information and publicity requirements for project owners? (e.g. reporting tools, handbook)

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	There is a specific section in the project application where project partners are asked to develop their communication strategy to promote and disseminate their project activities and outputs. Project partners then report on the implementation of their communication plan in their activity reports every six months

CADSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission Regulation (EC) 1159/2000 - Measures set out in the section „Actions for publicity and dissemination“ included in the Application Form (§ 9) - CADSES Communications Guide providing useful guidelines and insight into effective communication - Project Management Book - Online Section “Project Publicity Package” - Subsidy Contract (§ 9 Publicity) - Reporting on information and communication (Progress and Final Report)
MEDOCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect of graphic charter in all internal and external communication

26 What good practice example/s in the information and publicity could your programme provide?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme Mid-Term event (including project fair), specific project examples of good practice (Artery, SDF, JAF ...)
CADSES	<p>Publications: Project Book, Bulletin, Project Management Book, Communications Guide</p> <p>Events: Annual Conference & Exhibition,</p> <p>Website: Online Database with approved projects, Project Section on the website</p> <p>CADSES Contact Points (CCP) information activities at national level</p>
Baltic Sea Region	<p>We have built up a system: website, news on the web, newsletter to all, flyers and brochures distributed at meetings, communication trainings for project managers. None of the elements is really innovative, but together it is a well functioning mix</p>

27. What bottlenecks in the information and publicity has your programme experienced?

PROGRAMME	
North West EU	
CADSES	<p>Internal Communication Flow</p> <p>Coordination among national and transnational activities</p>
Baltic Sea Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of awareness of importance of communication issues in projects - Communication between project partners and in partner organisations (between employees involved in project and the rest of the organisation) - Lack of skills necessary for good communication in projects
MEDOCC	<p>Difficulty to find communication focal points at the level of national coordination or project teams. Lack of follow up at national regional level.</p>