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EUROPEAN POLICIES RESEARCH CENTRE

University of Strathclyde Glasgow

Northern Periphery Programme Preparatory Project – Arctic Collaboration Mechanism

Final Report

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TROMS fylkeskommune
ROMSSA fylkkasuohkan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final report of the 'Northern Periphery Programme Preparatory Project – Arctic Collaboration Mechanism' details project progress and results to date and sets out the final steps for the project.

The report draws on a synthesis of past project outputs and new research and consultation. The overall aims of the project are to consider the need for improved collaboration across regional economic development programmes in the Arctic and High North, and how a collaboration mechanism can be optimally structured and delivered.

A considerable volume of work has already been undertaken on the potential for collaboration in the High North, most notably through the so-called Bodø process. This work highlights the thematic, policy, operational, and area specific rationale for collaboration. It also identifies challenges and concerns, including the risk of overlaps with existing institutions, varying interpretations of what a collaboration mechanism could/should be doing, and operational concerns. Key areas of consensus are the need for practical, 'operationally oriented' activities, activities and information that complements and builds on existing sources, and arrangements that support and facilitate the work of partners in the region and do not unnecessarily add to an already complex institutional and policy environment.

While there is consensus on the overall rationale for collaboration, the way in which collaboration should be managed and the form it should take have not been explored in as much detail. In order to develop thinking on this area, as part of this work three models were developed to illustrate the various forms a collaboration mechanism could take and to help refine thinking and options. From these models a more coherent proposal for the mechanism developed, based on critical evaluation of the options and consultation feedback.

The principles guiding the proposed mechanism are as follows:

 - **complementary** – the mechanism will not duplicate efforts, but can complement, support, and amplify the work of existing centres of expertise
 - **facilitation** – the mechanism is voluntary and informal aiming to ease and facilitate engagement, not prescribe or set courses of action, or control/oversee resources
 - **regional/territorial** - the focus of the mechanism is on territorial and regional development
 - **a bridging link** – the mechanism is open to the full range of regional and territorial 'programmes, initiatives and policies' and the potential that lies in the links between them. It is not solely focussed on EU Programmes.
- **results and added value** – the mechanism demonstrate results and add value.

The mechanism has three main objectives:

1. Strategic foresight: to facilitate strategic thinking and debate on emerging development challenges and opportunities and policy trends related to the Arctic & High North;

2. Knowledge exchange: to facilitate the exchange of information and experience on the management and implementation of Arctic-relevant initiatives, priorities and projects among programmes and stakeholders;

3. Programme/project brokerage: to provide tailored support to initiate and accelerate collaboration between programmes and projects on Arctic-relevant issues.

The services of the mechanism should be demand-led and tailored to stakeholder needs. Key stakeholders in the process are: **regional and territorial policymakers and programme/policy practitioners**, from regional, national and Commission levels, and **cooperation project/policy participants** and applicants.

The mechanism would have a: steering group and a management group more closely engaged in the practical operation of the mechanism; role for facilitators based in a network of 'nodes'; web-page with basic information to support meetings and events, and meetings chaired by relevant partners on an annual basis and hosted linked to existing events.

As is illustrated in the case of innovation support, a collaboration mechanism can 'fill a gap' and can bring about results and added value. However, there are also limits to what can be expected particularly in the early phases of development. Therefore, care must be taken to undertake strategic discussions about where and on what issues to focus initial efforts, e.g. working together on one specific theme/issue and making strategic inputs into a specific area of concern.

In order to take this concept forward the following points should be taken into consideration:

- wide consultation has already been undertaken, any gaps in this process should be filled.
- securing resources for the mechanism is a critical point. A clear structure and proposal for the mechanism should facilitate this process.
- the proposed facilitators will be central to the success of the mechanism, thus recruitment is a key issue.
- maintaining momentum in the collaboration process is critical.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

This draft final report of the 'Northern Periphery Programme Preparatory Project – Arctic Collaboration Mechanism' details project progress and results to date and sets out the final steps for the project.

The report draws on a synthesis of past project outputs and new research and consultation. The overall aims of the project are to consider the need for improved collaboration across regional economic development programmes in the Arctic and High North, and how a collaboration mechanism can be optimally structured and delivered. In doing so, the project critically assesses the potential for synergies, the benefits for stakeholders of improved collaboration, and options for systems/platforms for collaboration and knowledge sharing and building.

More specifically, the objectives of the project are to:

- develop a proposal of different models and options for regional collaboration in the Arctic region;
- assess the attitudes and preferences of relevant programmes in relation to these models;
- provide a template for a cross-programme implementation support service;
- establish models for knowledge-sharing, service delivery and funding across the area and illustrate how it could practically be operationalised; and
- develop a main project for pilot-testing the concept for discussion with partner cohorts/group influencers

The methodology for the project is grounded in desk-based research and qualitative research interviews and survey. Engagement with key stakeholders at EU, national, regional and stakeholder levels is central to the research process throughout the development and delivery of the project.

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 details the research framework and methodologies used;
- Section 3 reviews the context to the projects including the challenges faced to date;
- Section 4 considers the models and options tested;
- Section 5 sets out a proposed model for a High North regional collaboration mechanism;
- Section 6 looks at how the proposed approach could be applied to the case of innovation; and
- Section 7 sets out conclusions and a proposal for a collaboration mechanism.

2. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Change in the Arctic has an important regional dimension. Regional territorial cooperation is considered an important driver for development in the Arctic and adjacent northern European regions and is supported by European Arctic States and the European Union. Against this background, this study built on two interrelated processes (see Figure 1).

First, the 2007-2013 Northern Periphery Programme previously funded a preparatory project that helped scope out the new (2014-2020) NPA Programme's involvement in the Arctic and, in particular, established how the Programme as a whole might engage with an Arctic dimension.

Second, the so-called 'Bodø process' was initiated in March 2013 by the Norwegian Government in Bodø and explored the prospects for greater collaboration through territorial cooperation programmes in the Euro-Arctic and near-Arctic.[1] Following seminars in Bodø and Brussels hosted by the Norwegian and Scottish governments, a conference was held in Glasgow in June 2014 hosted by EPRC on behalf of the Scottish Government.

Figure 1: Key stages in project lead up

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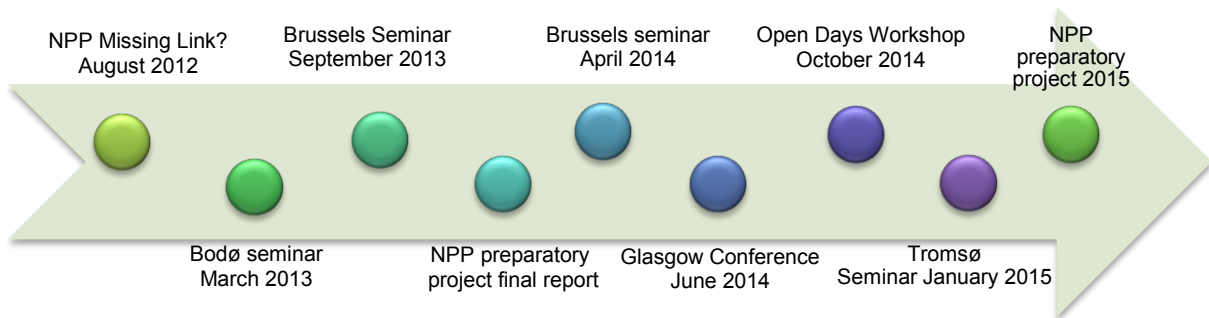
[1] The discussions mainly considered the Euro-Arctic region (although there are also clear links to Canada).

Linked to these events and projects, considerable consultation, discussion and analysis were undertaken, (see Box 1).

Box 1: Papers produced linked to Bodø process

- Gaskell, F. and Didriksen, J.H. (2012) *NPP – The Missing Link,* Final report on options for the strategic framework of Northern Periphery Programme for the period 2014 -2020, Report to the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, August 2012.
- van der Zwet, McMaster, I. Gaskell, F and Bachtler, J. (2013) The Arctic Dimension in the Northern Periphery: Perspectives from Scotland Ireland and Northern Ireland, Report to Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Mikkola, P. et al (2014) NPP 2014-2020 – The gateway to the Arctic? Arctic Dimension in the Northern Periphery Cooperation, Arctic Dimension in the Northern periphery cooperation, preparatory project, 1.10.2012-8.7.2013, final content report, March 2014
- van der Zwet A, Bachtler, J and McMaster I (2014) Arctic Connections – Mapping regional Cooperation in the Arctic, Paper prepared for the Arctic Connections Conference in Glasgow, 10-11 June 2014
- van der Zwet A, McMaster, I Bachtler, J. and Gaskell, F. (2014) Proposal for a cross-Arctic regional collaboration mechanism (ARC-NET), Paper prepared for the Arctic Connections Conference in Glasgow, 10-11 June 2014
- Miller, S. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper – developing regional transport and accessibility solutions in the Arctic. Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014.
- Miller, S. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper - addressing climate change and environmental challenges through regional networks in the Arctic, Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014. Miller, S. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper – community based cooperation in the Arctic, Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014.
- Vironen, H. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper – Collaborative approaches to developing and diversifying regional resource based economies, Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014.
- Miller, S. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper – regional innovation: entrepreneur networks and economic diversification, Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014.
- Miller, S. (2014) Conference Discussion Paper – Collaborative Energy Projects in the Arctic, Arctic Connections Conference 10-11 June 2014.
- van der Zwet A, McMaster, I Bachtler, J. and Gaskell, F. (2014) Arctic Connections Post conference report to Scottish Government, EPRC/Integritas Liaison

Resulting discussions, most notably during the Glasgow conference and a follow up meeting in Tromsø, confirmed broad interest among relevant stakeholders in establishing a potentially multi-nodal network for regional collaboration to promote information sharing, knowledge exchange, project cooperation, project support and capacity-building across programmes and other regional initiatives in the north of Europe. Nevertheless, as will be discussed, questions were raised about, e.g. the added value in relation to existing structures and institutions and the possible scale, bureaucratic burden, and supervisory aspirations of a collaboration mechanism.

Although there was broad agreement on the rationale for a collaborative mechanism, much remained to be decided on the structure, governance and operation of the concept. Key questions included:

- **the structure of the collaborative mechanism**
  - What are possible ways of organising such a mechanism with optimal efficiency and minimal additional administrative burden?
  - How should engagement with existing or proposed Arctic institutions or networks be organised to avoid overlap and ensure effective collaboration?
  - Where should the nodes be? Which organisation (s) in practice would constitute one or more of the nodes; and what would be their broad responsibilities?
  - How should engagement with the European Commission be organised (not just with DG Regio but also DG Emploi, DG Enviro, DG Mare, DG RTD – as well as the EEAS)?
  - How much funding will be required? Who is prepared to contribute and how much?
- **the scope of engagement of the various programmes and institutions**
  - What are the common themes and priorities on which collaboration could take place?
  - Which organisations can contribute/ participate, and how?
- **the added value of the collaborative mechanism**
  - What are various stakeholders' specific interests?
  - How can any conflicts between national policies and regional / local ambitions be balanced?

2.1   Research Approach and Methodology

This report builds on existing assessments of the need for improved collaboration across programmes in the High North and looks in detail at how a collaboration mechanism can be optimally structured and delivered. The study adds to previous work by:

(a) developing a number of models and options for a collaborative mechanism;
(b) engaging with key stakeholder to consider the value and functionality of the model (s);
(c) developing practical examples that illustrate the added value and potential application; and
(d) proposing a model that can be implemented in a pilot project.

Figure 2: Schematic outline of project
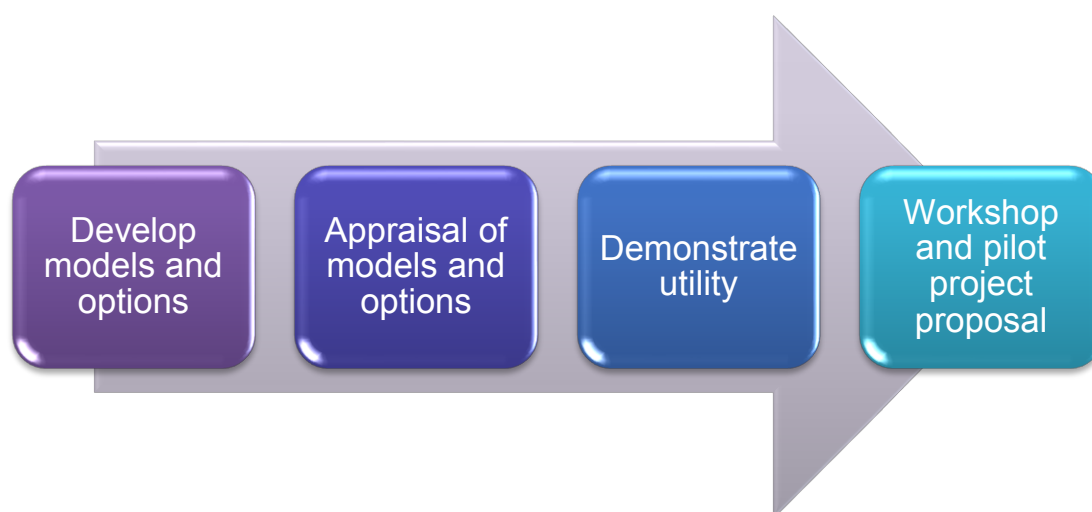
The analysis consists of a number of interlinked methodological stages, see Figure 2, including:

1. **development of models and options**, drawing on analyses of existing structures and potential models**,** mainly identified through desk-based research; and
2. **an appraisal of the utility and functionality** of a collaborative mechanism which consists of:
    a. a series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders to identify attitudes towards model(s);
3. **a demonstration of the utility** of the proposed model, by focussing on innovation as a theme to develop examples, consisting of:
    a. a systematic review of programme documentation carried out through desk research;
    b. a series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders to identify potential collaborative approaches in the field of innovation;
4. a **pilot project proposal and workshop** to raise the profile of the concept, engage key stakeholders in its development, and develop the pilot project.

3. PROJECT CONTEXT

As has been noted, a considerable volume of work has already been undertaken on the potential for collaboration in the region. Thus, it is important to critically evaluate progress to date.

3.1 Rationale and support

(i) Thematic Rationale

While the High North is a diverse region, specific development issues linked to extreme environments, peripherality, and a sparse population are common threads linking the geographically large Arctic and near Arctic regions in Europe, and they provide solid, proven areas for collaborative working, (see Table 1). Collaboration provides an opportunity to address issues and opportunities which may appear marginal in a domestic context but may be relevant to similar regions across a wide number of countries. While there is already a range of long-standing initiatives based around sectoral cooperation, a regional perspective working across themes has been lacking. There is an opportunity to reinforce and build on existing strengths within regions, and extend wider linkages.

(ii) Strategic policy rationale

Policy development in the High North is a topic of global interest and concern. This has led to a plethora of sectoral policies, strategies and action plans. Since 2006, all Arctic states have formulated strategies in an attempt to address effectively the challenges and exploit the opportunities that the region faces. Near-Arctic states including the UK are also formulating policies that set out their interest in the Arctic and how they will work with Arctic states and the wider international community. The EU is also looking at its role in the region, and its Arctic policy is evolving.[2] As part of this, the EU Commission is actively encouraging collaboration between programmes in the region, calling for "proposals for the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy by December 2015. As part of this exercise, the Council encourages the Commission to ensure effective synergies between the various EU funding instruments in the Arctic region".[3]
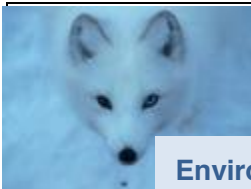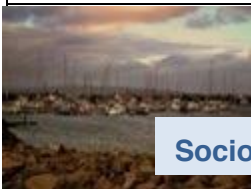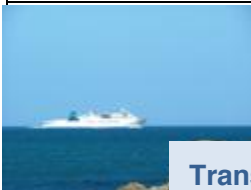
Given the pace of change and the number of developments, for stakeholders in the region the process of monitoring these developments can be challenging, as is engaging effectively with related events, consultations and dialogues. Much of this work falls at national level. Nevertheless, regional and territorially–based policies, programmes and even projects are expected to be developed in line with such strategies and can inform, illustrate and animate their implementation.

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[2] Developing a European Policy towards the Arctic Region – Joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council (26.06.12)

[3] Council conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region - FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting, Brussels, (12 May 2014).

Table 1: Thematic links and opportunities

Environment	- Unspoilt natural and environments - Management of mineral resources - Impact of climate change; climate change adaptation - Bio-resources - Extreme environments
Socio/econ	- Managing shifting patterns of economic activity - Demographic change in remote rural areas - Public service provision - Youth out-migration and employment; retention and development of skilled workforce - Managing cultural assets - Mainly SME/micro enterprises - Raw material industry - Mainly branch offices, few headquarters
Transport	- Responses to new transport routes and links - Provision of related infrastructure and services - New sustainable transport solutions - Clean transport technologies and solutions - Opportunities through high-speed broad band
Energy	- Potential for increased renewable energy production - Know-how on energy efficiency, green-technologies and renewable energy - Tailored energy solutions for remote communities - Access to sustainable energy sources
Innovation	- Diversifying economies - Engagement of small and micro enterprises in innovation cycle - Potential in the creative and heritage industries, as well as - Reinforcing business- research links - High level of expertise in specialist sectors - Cold climate technology

(iii) Cohesion and territorial policy rationale

Increased budget constraints at national levels, together with the growing emphasis on EU programmes delivering results, present a strong incentive for the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and European Neighbourhood Initiative (ENI) programmes to collaborate. The drive for greater collaboration is reinforced by explicit references in the Cohesion policy regulations for 2014-2020 to sectoral and territorial coordination of Union intervention under the ESI Funds and, in turn, with other relevant Union policies and instruments. Also, a guide for beneficiaries of European Structural and Investment Funds has been produced which gives an overview of complementary instruments available at the EU level[4] and internal discussions have been initiated on how cooperation between programmes works.

Programmes and Member States have already looked within their own portfolio of projects to encourage more strategic collaboration. For example, the 2007-13 North Sea Region Programme 'clustered' established projects working in similar fields and provided additional funding to encourage collaboration on key themes for the Programme.[5] During the programming process for the 2014-2020 programmes, reviews of policy coherence were undertaken, noting links to domestic and EU policies. However, work to develop operational links and monitor coherence needs to be continually up dated as policies change, policy and programme cycles develop, and funding increases and decreases.

(iv) Operational rationale

For project partners the requirements to deliver results, demonstrate relevance, and engage with wider policy frameworks are substantial. Collaborative working offers a way for projects to extend their influence and deepen their results. Information is being made available for project partners on how to work, for example, across funds, and to up-scale their ideas etc. However, for partners, particularly those engaged in comparatively small-scale territorial cooperation programmes, taking the 'step up' to apply for new or additional sources of funding is demanding and gathering the knowledge and understanding of the options available is highly time consuming.

(v) Specific 'High North' rationale

In the context of the High North, the role for regionally-based collaboration is amplified. The region faces interrelated challenges that demand a context specific response. The current pace of change, strategic interest in the region, and the array of Arctic-specific interventions coupled with challenges such as the lack of critical mass to develop and deliver projects, scale of key development issues, and expectations placed on projects and programmes pose specific challenges.

While it has been possible to identify numerous points in favour of actively pursuing greater collaboration, there are considerable challenges and questions raised about the need for, and utility of, a formal collaboration mechanism.

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[4] CEC (2014) Guidance for Beneficiaries of European Structural and Investment Funds and related EU Instruments', CEC Brussels.

[5] McMaster I. van Der Zwet, A. and Vironen, H. (2014) Ex Ante Evaluation of the North Sea Region Programme 2014-2020, Managing Authority of the North Sea Region Programme,

(i) Coordination, cooperation or collaboration

Greater clarity on the precise role of the mechanism was required. It needs to be clear that the focus is collaboration and mutual support. The aim is not top-down coordination, or enforced cooperation. The need for clarity is particularly important in relation to an area as strategically important and politically charged as the Arctic, and in an environment where organisations and stakeholders have to work to their own agendas and justify their actions to domestic interests.

(ii) Overlaps

The high risk of institutional and informational overlap has caused some significant concerns. The risk of duplication of effort and the sense that much was already being done through existing structures working in related areas were noted. As discussions about the precise role and function of a collaboration mechanism developed, the scope and scale of the concept has expanded and contracted. At some points, the aims of the mechanism came too close to the activities of other organisations, and risked losing focus on their initial intentions. A lack of clarity and varying interpretations of the concept led to additional concerns.

(iii) Institutional overload

Concerns were raised about the perceived value of adding another 'arrangement' to an already congested policy and institutional environment. An additional set of meetings, an additional 'layer' of debate and deliberation, and another set of requirements to liaise and share information could simply add weight to existing institutional and administrative burdens. Given the already complex and demanding task of engaging in territorial cooperation, would organisations and stakeholders have the time and resources to engage with the facility?

(iv) Operational concerns

Initial discussions of the mechanism 'set the bar high' in terms of the services and structures proposed. The need to build in a period to trial, test, and, if appropriate, grow the mechanism was not adequately reflected. Consideration of the location of any proposed structure encountered considerable sensitivities, with various locations proving attractive, but the selection of some places over others proving challenging.

3.2   Points of consensus

While there have been concerns and challenges, common points of consensus emerged and were returned to throughout the various events and discussions. These points form the basis of a new starting point for considering a collaborative mechanism for High North regional development programmes, (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: A basis for collaboration

Significant number of events, institutions, programmes that are concerned with Arctic development challenges and engage in territorial cooperation and regional development activities and finance it
Extent, number and range of interests and issues combined with the pace of change places pressures on stakeholders
Regional and local economic development benefits from wider, regionally-based cooperation, collaboration and consultation on shared issues
Overlapping/complementary geographies, goals, priorities and stakeholders
Emphasis on delivering results at EU level and national level

Desirability of complementary collaboration on operational challenges of implementing regional development programmes across the Arctic and near Arctic

Consensus centres around:

- *practical, 'operationally oriented' activities and information* to complement and support existing cooperation and tailored to the specific needs of regional economic development partners in the Arctic and near Arctic. Besides the operational benefits, collaboration provides potential for policy-relevant thematic and strategic action to be generated (e.g. through liaison with policy-oriented partners such as BEAC, Northern Dimension and the Arctic Council working groups).
- *activities and information* that complement and build on existing High North cooperation networks; and
- *arrangements that support and facilitate the work of partners in the region* and do not unnecessarily add to an already complex institutional and policy environment. Every level from the respective Managing Authorities through the stakeholders to the beneficiaries will benefit from improved support, intelligence and partnership access.

4. MODELS AND OPTIONS

While there is consensus on the rationale for collaboration, the way in which collaboration should be managed and the form it should take had not been explored in as much detail. Therefore, the project sought to draw lessons from existing cooperation/collaboration models and develop options for consideration in the context of High North regional collaboration.

Based on an analysis of existing forms of cooperation nine case studies were identified.[6] These ranged from on-line information resources to dynamic networks and involve differing levels of e.g.:

- 'push' vs 'pull' of the knowledge flow – systems can be based around the collection and wide dissemination of data and information; alternatively they can respond to an information demand from users and providing tailored responses to individuals' preferences, or offer a combined approach;
- internal vs external expertise – the information provisions can be based on internally generated knowledge (peer to peer) or brought in expertise (i.e. by using thematic experts), or a combination of the two;
- virtual vs physical presence - using established centres is one option, exploiting on-line resources and tools is another, or a combination of the two;
- networks vs core institution/s - there is scope for loose arrangements bringing together multiple partners or having a clear lead institution; and
- conference vs ongoing contact – cooperation can operate through regular meetings or conferences or via a sustained, permanent presence.

The options available were grouped into three main types, differing in terms of the services they provide, their structure, stakeholder commitment, inputs and outputs, services, and resources involved. It was highlighted that each option could be treated as distinct, but could also be viewed as points on a continuum, where collaboration evolves from a 'light touch' on-line resource to a more developed extensive network of engagement over time, (see Table 2). Related, elements of the various models can be combined to developed tailored solutions.

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[6] McMaster, I. van der Zwet et al, A. (2015) Northern Periphery Programme Preparatory Programme: Arctic Collaboration Mechanism, workshop background paper, 8 June , EPRC

Table 2: Collaboration Models

	Model A	Model B	Model C
Type	Information Resource	Information and Learning Platform	Network
Services	• Database • Analysis of strategic issues • Newsletters and emails	• project boot camp • focus on thematic issues • direct knowledge exchange • facilitate project ideas • conference	• strategic engagement by project directors • in-depth exchange on implementation practices • peer to peer reviews
Structure	Mainly virtual	Virtual with ad-hoc physical meetings or conference	Regular physical meetings
Commitment	Partial consensus required	Strong commitment from most stakeholders	Consensus is critical
Resources	Limited	Higher costs due to need for expert and administrative support	Long term funding commitment
Examples	Keep; RegioNetwork2020; Transnationality	Med-Lab; Jaspers platform; Fi-Compass; FINE Network	European Urban Knowledge Network, IQ-Net

In each case infographics were prepared to illustrate how each option could apply in the case of High North collaboration, (see Annex 2-4). A workshop was held in Belfast on 8 June to debate, refine and rework the options. The resulting discussions drew on lessons and feedback from previous discussions, and critically reviewed the options, (see Table 3).

Table 3: Critical Review

	Assessment	
Model A	✔	Value in the provision of background materials for meetings Information could be requested and built up over time Some kind of web presence required
	✘	Questions over the utility and 'usability' of another web-based information resource, including potential overlaps with existing sources, to what extent will stakeholders have the time to engage, the time effort and cost in initially gathering information together is high and maintaining data bases and on-line resources would be substantial. A purely virtual resource means the mechanism lacks scope to build substantial links and relationships.
Model B	✔	More practical orientation Engagement at project, as well as strategic levels valuable. Potential to turn ideas and 'talk into action
	✘	Lacks a strategic, forward looking element. Also, initially, too wide a thematic focus and trying to cover all themes/issues could weaken the contribution of the mechanism. There are already fora for exchange of best practice and peer-peer learning.
Model C	✔	Strategic engagement In depth informed engagement
	✘	May not be confined to programme directors Don't want to just be another talking shop and network, want to have a practical element to the work

On this basis, a revised model was developed, (see Table 4), and a wider consultation initiated. The consultation focussed on a more detailed outline of the proposed mechanism which helped to allay some concerns, illustrate how previous criticisms were taken into account, and build a more in depth discussion.

Table 4: Model 'D' Strategic Collaboration Network

	Model D
Type	Strategic Collaboration Network
Services	• strategic tailored demand-led information resource • thematic and policy briefing notes • brokerage and facilitation • networking key stakeholders
Structure	Based around strategic meetings and project oriented events, supported by a web-site
Commitment	Strong commitment from most stakeholders; scope to develop over time
Resources	Dependent on participation and engagement of stakeholders Costs linked to need for expert and administrative support

The consultation exercise identified significant consensus around the model, with respondents commenting on potentials and opportunities. Where concerns and reservations were expressed, respondents commonly followed up with a proposal of how to address or work round the issue. Additionally, despite extensive support for the high level aims and objectives of the model, some respondents expressed that there still is a lack of clarity on the exact focus of the mechanism. In a more limited number of cases, opposition or significant reservations were expressed to the idea of a collaboration mechanism for the High North.[7]

Aims

Strategic and forward looking

A *clear theme in the interview responses has been the perceived value of enabling strategic foresight activities and dialogue.*

- Strategic coherence and engagement
- Scope to 'lift the horizons/perspectives' of Policies, Programmes and Projects
- Potential to look at longer-term trends and opportunities

Synergies

The value of policy, programme and project synergies and exchanges was highlighted. Crucially, a system to ease, support and facilitate such exchanges is generally considered valuable for stakeholders.

- Synergies, and the associated effectiveness and efficiency benefits are valuable.
- There is a perceived missing 'regional' link in existing collaboration efforts, meaning regionally-based collaboration has the potential to 'fill a gap' and complement existing arrangements.
- Scope to build projects and interventions with local relevance and engagement in wider developments
- Cross fertilisation of ideas between programmes and interventions could help stimulate better project design, encourage wider engagement, and new combinations of project partners and in particular more engagement of private sector.
- Importance of widening and deepening project results through synergies
- The lack of critical mass in the region in terms of population and institutional partners means that the region needs collaboration to help keep standards up and address the issues it faces.
- Regions and relevant authorities are already trying to be strategic in their approach to project generation and use of financial resources. The mechanism should take this into account and make sure programme contact points and advisory services are not overlooked.

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[7] Care was take to integrate the specific concerns raised in these cases into the points listed below and address some of the issues raised in the proposal.

- Value noted in links to Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Minister, the Northern Dimension and BEAC.
- The process has its drive, focus and rational rooted in ETC programmes, however a complex mechanism cannot just be set up for a limited number of comparatively small programmes, there has to be clear wider engagement and relevance.

Tangible benefits

Concrete results are required to get stakeholders involved. There has to be an answer to the question what are the results? Respondents could identify areas where results could be delivered, but stressed that the administrative and financial practicalities would have to be very carefully considered when setting targets.

- 'Funding follows success', a priority would be to gain 'quick wins' that will produce tangible benefits.
- It is important to start off modestly and not to overpromise.
- Getting more out of the resources available. Support existing activities; help to capitalize on existing resources and use resources in innovative ways.
- More strategic projects with better results from a wider range of partners
- New partnerships in a position to apply for new funding or looking at ways to become self-sustaining.
- Efficiency savings – facilitation and information resources to save projects developers and programmes time.
- The practicalities of delivering joint projects and activities is administratively vastly complex.

Learning and knowledge exchange

Although not easily measurable, learning and exchange is still seen as a valuable element of the process.

- Learning for Programmes
  - looking beyond narrow opportunities and operations
- Learning for projects
  - new ideas, new networks, new approaches
- Scope to extend learning from single programmes and projects to wider policy communities.

Services and Stakeholders

Focussed

Adopting a strong initial focus was favoured as a way for the mechanism to be piloted and tested. Trust and engagement with the process has to be built carefully. If the mechanism can demonstrate practical results, it will gain credibility.

- Mechanism needs to have a strategic focus; could pilot the mechanism on a specific theme
- Can be beneficial to focus on a small number of themes with a small number of people as this creates greater ownership of the process
- Interest in collaboration on joint policy reflections and discussion paper
- Better to do a few things very well rather than try and do too many things, confuse everyone and at the same time not deliver what is intended in the process.
- Initial need for 'quick wins' as evidence of added value and to build trust and interest.
- It is important to not be too ambitious in the thematic coverage. It is not possible to 'do everything'. At least initially, focus should be on areas where clear and rapid results can be demonstrated.

Policy focus

The scope for policy discussions on key areas of common interest was of particular interest for a number of respondents, both from the point of view of policy makers and project leaders looking to maximise results and policy awareness.

- The mechanism has the potential to raise the perspectives and horizons of regional and territorial programmes. Offering the potential for policy influence and awareness.
- Facilitation and commissioning of joint policy reflections and discussion papers commissioning etc.
- Open discussions on post 2020 planning and the identification of issues of mutual High North concern on which papers might be jointly commissioned for submission to the Commission and other institutions.
- Oversight panel/collaboration steering committee potentially a good conduit to Arctic Council, Northern Dimension Commission at policy level.
- Engagement at an influential level is vital to securing the solid foundation of the mechanism and to satisfy doubts and demonstrate benefits. The process needs to pull key senior representatives into the process from the start

Project focus

Operational and project engagement is seen as vital to the relevance, role and sustainability of collaboration. Interview evidence suggested a number of ways in which collaboration could add value to and support existing activities.

- Learning from the EUSBSR is that collaboration needs to engage the operational level at an early stage.
- Provision of practical project oriented support is valuable.
- Could aim to offer a brokerage/ facilitator service and possibly a 'pre-pilot' phase for project ideas
- Facilitation between programmes and stakeholders is well served through professional networks which are best placed to capitalise on initiatives.
- The 'charm' of territorially based projects is the fact that they are tailored to the very specific needs of communities, and that they are 'bottom-up' solutions. However, the scope for 'up-scaling' and 'growing' local solutions also flows from this, as part of a 'project continuum'.
- Projects can tend to develop in 'glorious isolation' and there is a risk of 'information loss' when the project ends. Tendency to pursue niche solutions to niche problems. Thus, …
    - scope for developing wider applications and more joint solutions.
    - scope for more and better dissemination; for small projects to pull together.
    - project stakeholders want to know what/how/what else should they be doing. There is a need for guidance on effective dissemination and knowledge sharing.
    - there could be value in an organised discussion on themes of common interest – the possibility of an Arctic measure in the societal changes programme of Horizon 2020 was mooted.
- The mechanism could be working with strategic partners to develop links in specific areas and build capacity for future Horizon 2020 bids;
- Project development 'clinics' could be held for strategic partners in key areas of thematic interest.
- Scope to 'freshen up' partnerships and stimulate new project content.
- More lead on the types of projects desired might be possible through a cross programmes commissioning approach
- Project promoters could be catered for with meetings tailored to their requirements including e.g. project cafés. To make these more focused and simultaneously control numbers these might be themed and involve commissioning of projects.
- Potentially fruitful to look at the smart specialization strategies, (and related strategies & plans in non-Member States), and regional development plans to look for shared agendas and common themes.
- A number of Programmes are already in the process of committing large amounts of funding, the concept needs to be aware that the programming period is moving on**.**
- Large projects are not always favoured, needs to be sensitive to the fact that smaller carefully constructed projects could be appropriate.
- One option could be to look more systematically into the theme cross program partnership. This can renew old partnerships; bring in new competence and perspectives. This might also trigger project ideas that has not been established earlier, because of lack of partnership resources.

Information resource

The provision of background papers for strategic meeting was viewed as important. The provision of additional information resources, e.g. database, was the subject of greater debate. A key recurring point was that the information should respond to demand and be more than a 'static' resource.

- Strategic meetings need background papers to stimulate discussions and gather conclusions.
- Information should be demand-led and develop to meet requirements as they arise.
- Note the existence of numerous source of Arctic know-how, e.g. Arctic Information Centre and Arctic Portal.
- Provision of usable, strategic, concise information resources, e.g. updates on financing in the programmes; joint newsletter; regional expertise; advice on how to link partners and projects.
- Provision of on-line resource to support decision making and ensure transparency within the mechanism would be helpful
- Could provide overview of territorial cooperation effort in the region.[8]
- Provision of tailored guidance for applicants operating in peripheral regions.
- Clear mapping of the different initiatives with geographical and thematic focus and common goals identified at programme/policy level.
- Syntheses of projects and their outcomes in different thematic areas in the Arctic.
- Joint information events for potential partners in the Arctic.
- The scope for dissemination of information and sharing of knowledge, not just on technical results, but of the cooperation efforts themselves was noted.

Meetings and action

The importance of face-to-face meetings at practical locations and times, e.g. linked to existing events was frequently referred to. The need for practical follow up on points raised at meetings was stressed.

- Face to face meeting opportunities must be included.
- Regular meetings, complemented by an annual conference to discuss whether several projects could be coordinated, were noted as options.
- The key essential work happens in between the big meetings, at grass root level.
- Based on the geographic distances involved, there is a need to be innovative in approaches to engagement and meetings, i.e. link to existing events and offer on-line 'webinars' and exchanges
- There might be virtue in creating thematic sub groups across the programmes and organisations.
- Not more than two high level meetings per year in order to balance effectiveness with burden placed upon high level official with many competing calls on their time.

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[8] Interact has a database of EU-territorial cooperation projects covering 2000-06 and 2007-13 periods, a regional analysis of trends could be interesting. The database is currently limited to ETC and ENI, although the intention is to extend the coverage in the future, what could be added is the regional focus and analysis of trends.

- Scope to associate meetings with existing events, e.g. the Commission *Open Days* or the *Arctic Frontiers* event.
- There may be value in rotating plenary meetings to key area across the territory.
- If the structure evolved thematic or sectoral cross-programme groups these might meet at venues dictated by the nature of the group.
- Webinars and regular meetings in somewhere like Copenhagen would be helpful as this would be easier to access from some of the partners. Skype and Webinars are very effective tools to see the people you are collaborating with although a face to face meeting is also helpful.

Practical

Linked to the perceived need for focus, particular emphasis was placed on the need for practical engagement. The role for facilitators was broadly welcomed. Views diverged on the need for a financial resource linked to the mechanism.

- The proposed collaboration mechanism must be very practical and support concrete activities.
- A facilitator-role could provide a practical, 'hands on approach'
- Links to scientific developments and innovation is particularly important in such a rapidly changing environment. Territorial cooperation has the scope to take innovation and pilot/test practical applications; it can span research, demonstration, and policy acting as an interface between knowledge and policy.
- Need to be sensitive to the fact that financial resources are limited and a key aim should be using existing resources more effectively.
- There should not be a new funding source, but rather support to gather relevant people together and to find funding from the existing national and EU funding sources.
- Pre-financing is already possible within other financing programmes, building up a new structure for that might make the existing situation overly complex.
- What could be done is to raise knowledge of existing resources and opportunities.
- Ultimately to make an impact, some kind of financial resource may have to be provided, e.g. the Barents cooperation have established a seed fund to initiate pre-studies and other processes with the aim of developing synergies for regional development.
- Dedicated finance is essential and problematic, especially if it is to be generated from the Programmes because of constrained technical assistance budgets and the need to gain steering group/monitoring committee approval. Jurisdictions and who can do what, what money can/cannot be committed to needs to be clearly set out.
- Funding must be managed on the regional level in each country.
- Considerable care still needs to be taken in how the mechanism is presented, in particular highlighting the fact that it is not a top-down imposition or an initiative that is closed to regions neighbouring the Arctic. One of the main concerns of stakeholders is losing control over funding, thus the mechanism needs to be about opening access and resources.
- The complications of organising something such as a joint project are considerable for programmes and partners. Would need extremely large well established partners just to be able to deal with the administration involved in working with more than one source of funding.

Structure and Operation

Transparent, credible and accountable

Respondents stressed that any new mechanism would have to be seen as neutral and transparent in order to build and maintain trust in the process.

- Engagement at an influential level is vital to securing the solid foundation of the mechanism
- Comprise a steering group and management group for decision-making (Programme Managers, Commission, Member States, and relevant partners).[9]
- 'Oversight Panel'/steering group to provide guidance and interface with Arctic focused policy bodies with a second tier management group drawn from Programme Directors and similar to manage operationally
- Role for a specialist 'facilitator', as the mechanism also needs to build in operational level links with the programmes and strategic partners. Need the resource to be mobile and flexible person/people
- Key requirement for the facilitators are knowledge of the region, neutral (not favouring any country/organisation), knowledge on funding sources and mechanisms.
- Must have a clear, inclusive, transparent process to identify specific thematic areas of interest for the Programmes.
- Regional Advisory Groups have proved valuable links between the strategic and local levels for transnational programmes, most notably the NPP/NPA programme, this type of approach could work on an Arctic level as a means to identify areas of potential interest.
- The process has to be transparent, accountable and, where relevant, take into account the reporting requirements of individual processes and mechanisms.

Partnership and sensitivity to existing structures

Building links to existing initiatives and institutions was emphasised. The scope for productive working links with existing organisations were noted.

- Recognition that any mechanism would have to 'prove its worth', would evolve over time and build momentum and relationships
- There is scope for a collaboration mechanism to work in partnership with existing organisations on specific themes, e.g. Interact.
- Existing organisations, such as Arctic Portal, Nordregio, Arctic Centre can see scope to engage and have a productive role.
- Build on the existing expertise in Programme secretariats.

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[9] Incorporating high level representatives of the Partner countries and of the more strategic bodies active in the High North such as the Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Minister, the Northern Dimension and BEAC together with senior level participation from the EEAS and the appropriate Commission Services: the second possibly comprising Directors of the main programme secretariats and appropriate key stake holders

- Many intelligence and information nodes operating in the High North. Typically the existing actors are too small to operate with significant effect alone, a framework for collaboration could be beneficial.
- A partnership initiative is already being pursued between the Arctic Portal, the Arctic Centre at Rovaniemi and Nordregio.
- Could develop links with increased liaison with the University of the Arctic network. Also worth noting other initiatives, such as CATCH ON initiative[10] comprising research institutes from USA and Canada through to Russia to establish a network of circumpolar knowledge hubs.
- Need to engage with representative organisations of the indigenous populations of the Arctic.
- Good ad hoc links exist between programmes and can be built on.
- Care should be taken that greater collaboration doesn't 'muddy the waters', confuse applicants, dilute ideas (try to be too many things to too many people).

Light touch, but requires some structure

A light-touch organisational structure was supported. However, interpretations of what 'light-touch' comprises of varied. Some respondents were keen to avoid a structured presence for the mechanism, at least initially; others noted the need for at least an administrative base.

- Recognition of the importance of avoiding 'yet another institution' in an already complex institutional environment, but also of the need for some system to make the mechanism work.
- Some concern over the early appointment of a Unit and Director and fixed location. Favour a more informal structure involving active facilitator/animateur initially.
- The mechanism must be lean and be facilitated by one or at most two intermediaries appointed for their seniority, contacts, influence and credibility. Clear need for modest dedicated resource – one or two persons – and at least one fulltime equivalent admin support
- A facilitator could be outsourced depending on the subject of the meeting. More benefit is gained if (s)he is also an expert of the topic. When outsourced, there is no need to think of the location.
- The mechanism needs a 'home' and person or persons tasked with responsibility for its establishment and conduct.
- Challenge of severely constrained Programme technical assistance budgets. The support and services that the mechanism offers are not likely to be provided solely by the programmes, each of which is tied to its own time periods and budget.
- Support for the establishment of a strategic steering group, with broad representation and, smaller management group. Programme secretariats should be regarded as a key resource in the mechanism. They have built up extensive experience on the ground and would ensure that the mechanism is anchored in the region.
- A small, coordinating, facilitating etc, unit, will probably have an overwhelming task.

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[10] The Circumpolar Arctic Coastal Communities Observatory Network (CACCON – 'Catch On') is a new initiative aiming to build knowledge hubs to support, sustain and share adaptation for coastal communities. CACCON creates knowledge to support evidence-based decision making to adapt to climatic and socioeconomic changes.

Location

Respondents put forward a variety of opinions on the best location for the mechanism. Some respondents question whether a fixed location was required at the outset; others stress the merits of specific locations.

- Mechanism needs to have a physical base
- Hubs of knowledge throughout the region. Regular meetings in Tromsø and Rovaniemi and valuable institutional links, e.g. to knowledge hubs in Universities.
- Location of the venues of these meetings should be dictated by convenience rather than sensitivity.
- For groups meeting regularly flight hub, Copenhagen or Brussels should be considered
- Need to reliably secure full attendance – accordingly events might be associated with existing events
- Tromsø as a central node questioned by some, as it already has Arctic Council Secretariat and is not in an EU Member State.
- Want to avoid any stakeholder 'assuming perceived control'
- Location must be dictated by the demands of the function. For example the 'facilitator role' might need to be discharged from a point in the High North area most strategically placed for that purpose whereas the hub for meetings might be chosen for its ease of access from centres in the High North.
- Meetings and events might be associated with existing events that already command the interest of our target participants such as the 'Open days' in Brussels or the Arctic Frontiers event.
- virtue of major meetings in High North territory recognised, but strongly advises location of working management meetings be dictated by convenience of access – e.g. Brussels or Copenhagen.
- Is there a role for a multi nodal network at the moment? There are considerable tensions and divergences of view about the most suitable locations.

Added Value

Respondents noted a number of key areas of added value.

Strategic and forward-looking perspective

- Provides a wider, forward looking and strategic analysis
- Looks at developments in the wider policy environment in the region to make connections to concerns/opportunities for regional programmes
- The scale, intensity, and experience of effective, efficient and productive cooperation in the region could mean that the Arctic could lead on developing greater collaboration across cooperation mechanisms
- Central added value of the proposed collaboration structure is to bring key players into one platform
- Facilitates the development of critical mass and widening the pool of potential project partners, given the particular challenges faced by regional development programmes in sparsely populated areas.

Complementary

- The main point is to strengthen regional cooperation in the High North. It is not an effort to replace any of the existing structures but to complement them with regional approach.
- The mechanism brings capacity added value that cannot be provided by Programmes.
- Real added value in linking up existing proliferation of programmes.

Practical

- Facilitates a strategic, proactive dialogue on areas for practical collaboration
- Contributes to building better, more strategic, innovative projects, new ways of working, new partners and partnerships and maximising project results
- Working at an 'Arctic-regional level' offers a useful balance between strategic actors and local practitioners, e.g. to ensure the best of local technology and research and the chance to up-scale.
- Facilitated exchanges could have multiple benefits for the development of existing and new projects.
- Facilitated meetings help in building new networks and in spreading of information about ongoing and implemented activities. Quite often good partnerships and new ideas remain unexploited since there are no possibilities to exchange information in unofficial manner.
- Offers a better use of existing financing and resources
- Scope to work in small ways towards bigger change and collaboration would support this.

As has been illustrated, consultation results have been encouraging and productive. However, there are on going notes of caution that should be taken into account, in addition to those raised during previous discussions.

5. AN ARCTIC COLLABORATION MECHANISM

The following discussion is based on an independent evaluation of the available options, and takes into account previous discussions and debates, and the variety of views set out in section 4.

A key theme running through this analysis is that the mechanism needs to build trust and acceptance among the key stakeholders. Therefore, in a departure from previous conceptualisations of the mechanism, a proposal for an evolving, rolling process, is presented, (see Figure 4). The central rationale and aims of the mechanism are clear and remain consistent throughout. However, as will be described, there is scope for the role and structure of the mechanism to develop over time.

Figure 4: Evolution of Arctic Collaboration Mechanism

Collaboration 'lite'
- A period to build foundations
- Host strategic meetings
- Deliver first operational outcomes

Networked
- Establish regular meetings & events in the 'Arctic Calendar'
- Deliver results
- Build nodal links and networks

Institional
- Well-established institution
- Network of nodes in region
- Capacity in key operational & thematic areas
- Supporting policy, programme & project actions

Another key point to highlight is the broad focus of the potential mechanism, not only on EU-funded programmes and projects. Throughout the following sections of the report, the aim is to reflect this point, thus terms like programmes and projects refer to a wide range of development activities, not solely those funded through EU policies. Similarly, references to territorial cooperation activities are not limited to ETC programmes, but cover can cover a range of actions funded through other sources.

5.1   Objectives

Based on the evidence gathered, a demand exists for encouraging more strategic thinking and operational collaboration on Arctic-related issues - 'enhancing High North territorial cooperation through collaboration based on strategic foresight and active facilitation'. The value of both strategic and more operational engagement was stressed, although opinions varied on the degree of emphasis to be placed on each activity. Taking these views into account, the mechanism could have three main objectives:

(a) **Strategic foresight:** to facilitate strategic thinking and debate on emerging development challenges and opportunities and policy trends related to the Arctic;

(b) **Knowledge exchange:** to facilitate the exchange of information and experience on the management and implementation of Arctic-relevant priorities and projects among territorial regional and cooperation programmes and stakeholders;

(c) **Programme/project brokerage:** to provide tailored support to initiate and accelerate collaboration between programmes and projects on Arctic-relevant issues.

The purpose of these activities would be to respond to needs identified by respondents, including:

i) deepen existing links and encourage new forms of cooperation between stakeholders across programme boundaries and other funding mechanisms;
ii) facilitate better, strategic, innovative projects and partnerships;
iii) increase the 'reach' and visibility of programme, projects and partnerships (EU and Non EU);
iv) support more effective use of resources on Arctic-related challenges and opportunities;
v) build a better understanding of what regional and territorial development programmes and projects can do in practice to address challenges and exploit opportunities; and
vi) where relevant, increase awareness on the development and regional policy directions related to the Arctic.

This remit is based on the recurring calls for 'more and better collaboration' among regional and territorial cooperation programmes and stakeholders, but collaboration in a form, which does not involve complex or expensive new structures or institutions. The overall goal is to maximise the quality of regional and territorial support and interventions to the overall benefit of the region and its population.

5.2   Organisation of Services

Given the wide variety of stakeholders involved in this process, opinions varied on the range of services the mechanism should offer. It would be challenging for the mechanism to reconcile and include all the points raised. As was stressed by a number of respondents, the risk would be that the mechanism tries to do too much too soon in too many areas. Thus, a more practical option would be for the services of the mechanism to be demand-led and tailored to needs on the ground. A possible programme of activities would be as follows:

(a) **Strategic foresight meetings** at six-monthly intervals for programme managers and policy directors from national/regional administrations. The focus would be on reviewing economic, social and environmental changes in the Arctic, and the implications for programmes and policies, share information on policy trends and developments, particularly new strategies and initiatives, and identify potential areas of interest for collaboration.

(b) **Knowledge exchange events** aimed at practitioners involved in the management and delivery of policies, programmes and projects and focusing on implementation challenges, opportunities and experiences. Events would focus on specific themes – such as project generation, project clustering, maximising results and dissemination - and be organised to facilitate exchange of experience and good/innovative practice.

(c) **Programme/project brokerage** – undertaken on request in response to demand from individual programmes/stakeholders who are looking to find partners, build synergies, networks or capacity.

Services would be supported by web-tools and use of traditional and social media to facilitate ongoing communication flows. Meetings and events would be held throughout the region, potentially working alongside the timetables of existing events in order to reduce travel costs and times. Briefing papers on relevant themes could be prepared in advance to facilitate productive discussions, (see Box 2). Similarly, subsequent 'meeting reports' can be prepared to: ensure transparency, reinforce conclusions, and facilitate follow up.

Box 2: Meeting papers and reports

Much of the information and insights developed through the collaboration process will be generated by stakeholders exchanging their own knowledge and expertise. However, key meetings can be supported by background papers to stimulate and help to structure discussions.

In order to provide the best insight into developments, initially, work on papers could be subcontracted out to experts in the field. If required, the relevant experts could then present and discuss their work. Institutions of relevance include:

- Nordregio;[11]
- University of the Highlands and Islands;
- Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland;
- Northern Dimension Institute
- Arctic Portal;
- The High North Centre University of Nordland; and
- The Norwegian Arctic University in Tromsø.

As working relationships become more established more fixed arrangements could be made with specific 'nodes'.

Over time, a more regular provision of review material may be required by participants, e.g.

- regular thematic papers – prepared by specialists in the field;
- exchange and analysis of basic programme information, identifying areas of potential complementarity, such as clustering and time-scales;
- combined evaluation papers, offering pan-Arctic insights into the role of projects and programmes;
- papers linked to working groups on specific themes;[12] and
- common communications produced for project or strategic partners.

It would take time to develop, but an ultimate aim could be to have an established presence with:

- regular up dates and meetings;
- established point/s of contact for the mechanism;
- an annual two day event associated with an existing event in the region, comprising:
  - a pre-conference strategic foresight meeting for policy makers, with background papers prepared in advance;
  - territorial development conference, with high-level speakers, and the opportunity for operational engagement through poster sessions, thematic workshops and fora;
  - project brokerage sessions and meetings; and
- option to establish a system of seed funding for strategic project development. Although a number of respondents have stressed the importance of simply making better use of the current resources.

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[11] As part of the consultation exercise contacts were made with these organisations.

[12] Such as cruise tourism, creative industries or community energy

5.3   Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in the process are identified as:

- **regional and territorial policymakers and programme/policy practitioners**, from regional, Member State, Non Member States and Commission levels; and
- **cooperation project participants** and applicants.

The mechanism aims to address the needs of a number of different stakeholder groups, and in doing so provide productive and proactive links between them. Key groups include:

- National government representatives, engaged in territorial cooperation;[13]
- Programme managers/representatives;
- European Commission DG Regio, EEAS, DG Mare;
- Relevant area organisations, e.g. Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, Barents Cooperation, the Northern Dimension, Nora and BEAC[14];
- Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat;
- Programme contact points;
- Area research institutions; and
- Project partners.

While a core of the mechanism will be stakeholders involved in regional and territorial cooperation programmes and initiatives, the aim of the mechanism is to broaden and extend links to wider policy communities, e.g. through identifying links to national Cohesion policy programmes, and smart specialisation strategies. Thus, the mechanism has direct relevance beyond a limited number of regional and territorial cooperation programmes. As with other elements of the mechanism, the scope to build and develop links over a period of time was noted as important. It may not be possible to ensure 'buy-in' from all the relevant partners at the outset, but over a period such links can be developed.

5.4   Operation and management

Opinions diverged on a number of points in relation to the operation and management of the mechanism, e.g. on the role/need for facilitators, the need for a network of nodes, and the location of nodes. Sensitive to these points, but recognising the need for a clear proposal, the following option could be developed as a 'light-touch' mechanism that complements and works with existing structures.

The mechanism should be:

- **a flexible, forward looking, responsive system initially based around meetings and events**, with inputs from experts in relevant fields as required; and
- **supported by dedicated facilitation team and led by an inclusive steering and management groups**, (see Figure 5).

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[13] In this case territorial cooperation is not limited to EU-funded programmes, but covers a wide range of activities such as Barents Cooperation and NORA, it also covers EU and Non-EU countries.

[14] This is an indicative and non-exhaustive list. Initial participation in the mechanism could be built around the organisations with the greatest interest and engagement and the process, and additional inks can be developed in the future.

Figure 5: Structure
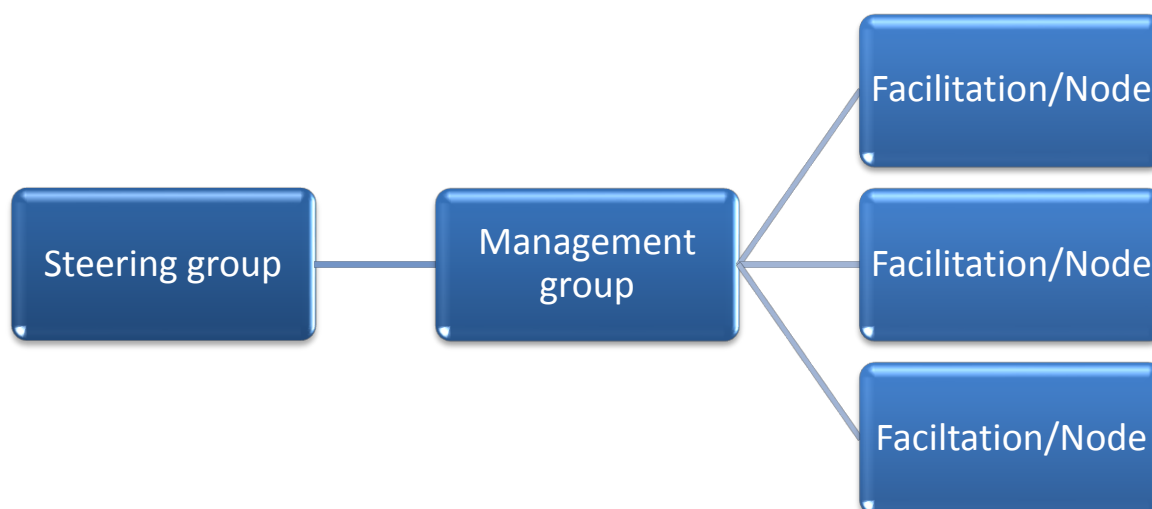
(i) Management

A **steering group** should oversee the management of the mechanism, and form the core for strategic foresight activities and meetings. The steering group could be chaired on a rotating basis by relevant authorities. A smaller, **management group** should be more closely engaged in the operational management of the mechanism. A key principle within these groups is that participants are engaging on the 'the same footing' with no single stakeholder having predominance.

Particularly in the early stages of operation, **avoiding a complex institutional structure and ties to a number of specific locations could work to the mechanism's advantage**. For instance, strategic meetings could be held in conjunction with existing event to minimise need to travel, e.g. annual conferences, such as the combined conference of the Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Council of the Baltic States, BEAC and the Northern Dimension meetings, and where possible virtual meetings may be used. The suggestion has also been made that - in order to minimise the cost in time and travel and facilitate participation - some administrative management group meetings could take place at a flight hub accessible to the members, e.g. Brussels or Copenhagen.

(ii) Facilitation

The option to have 'facilitators' was supported by many respondents, but a number were more cautious about the potential imposition of another actor/resource and questioned what they would actually 'do'. However, in order to deliver tangible results, it is important to have some kind of resource to follow up on points, help build connections and links, and to draw in information on needs from stakeholders on the ground, thus building in a 'bottom-up' element to the process. Without this function, the mechanism would be more limited to strategic discussions and engagement.

For the mechanism a **fixed point of contact in the form of a facilitator provides a 'public face' and continuity between meetings**. However, they need not be 'separate' from existing institutions,

but could be embedded within them[15]. The facilitators could be appointed for their seniority, contacts, influence and credibility. To 'get the best person for the job' the mechanism should flexible enough to take into account where a key individual is based. Initially identifying a key, well-respected individual to act as an initial facilitator and advocate for the process would be key. Following an exploratory phase, a network of regional facilitators or 'contact points' could be established, which can help the mechanism develop the links to the more operational, project-level stakeholders, see Figure 6.

In order to support the facilitation role, a secretariat/administrative base would be required. Initially, this role could simply be administration in relation to events and subcontracting any research work. However, as the mechanism establishes itself building capacity in relation to managing links to partner 'nodes' will be important.

Figure 6: Nodal system

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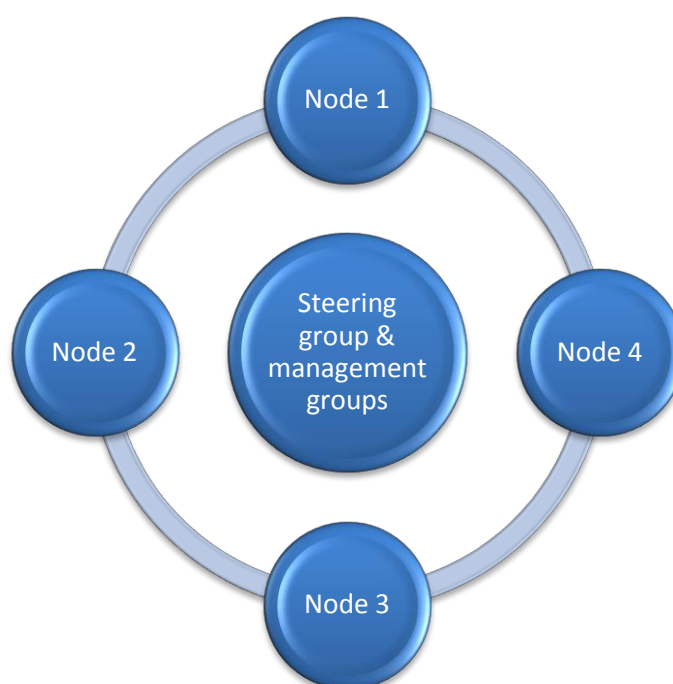
[15] Rather than imposing new structures/personnel, the mechanism should, where possible, aim to build on and complement existing capacities, resources and knowledge within existing institutions. For example, regional contact points for EU funding mechanisms and regional/local authorities have already built up overviews of local involvement and opportunities across Programmes, which could be complimented by a wider regional perspective. However, particular care needs to be taken to compliment and not overlap with these functions, e.g. making it clear there will be no loss of resource, no overlap in decision making responsibilities and highlighting how the mechanism could offer supporting information and complimentary services that extend and deepen the existing knowledge base and offer a link between valuable existing resources, such as contact points, as a means to share and exchange knowhow in the region.

(iii) Location

The question of location has proved challenging. Two strands of opinion emerged which directly relate to questions concerning location.

- *The mechanism should have a strong nodal presence from the start*

Based on the general consensus on the need for more and better collaboration and addressing information gaps identified by stakeholders, a well-defined, strong resource, and fixed locations/nodes[16] with specialist capacity was one option identified by stakeholders.

An initial node could be established in Tromsø. This location offers a number of advantages. Part financing has been offered in the past; Tromsø is at the heart of the High North Region; it is already the location of other relevant institutions, e.g. Arctic Council Secretariat and other Arctic institutions; and it is a centre of expertise and know-how in the region.

Additional nodes of the network could be based geographically, e.g. in Roveniemi, Inverness, and linked to thematic expertise. The role of the nodes could either be offering specialist thematic input or to act as an operational point of contact for the mechanism. The nodes would be the "hubs" in the mechanism, cooperating with both regional stakeholders and partners in the High North. In order to deliver results, the nodes would be expected to be mobilise joint activities and action, building on the strengths, resources and capacities in different locations (nodes) in the High North.

This option has some strong support. This option also offers clear identifiable 'go to' points for partners to engage with, rather than a vague virtual association or isolated individual actor. However, there are some challenges with this option.

- Establishing a multi-nodal network from the starts demands a high level of coordination within the mechanism itself.
- There would need to be a coordinating 'hub' to manage such as network. A number of key partners have reservations about the mechanism potentially having a central , coordinating base in Tromsø. However, in these cases Tromsø is recognised as a logical location for a 'node' and an important centre of expertise. Being based in a non EU Member State poses barriers to attracting support and funding for the mechanism from sources such as the European Commission, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and even cooperation and regional development programmes.
- The process of collaboration relies on consensus building, imposing a geographically fixed structure of nodes at an early stage could risk alienating some partners and constraining relationships and ties that may need to evolve and change in the future.
- Establishing a fixed network of nodes early on in the process, leaves little scope to tailor links in the future.
- Existing institutions, such as local authorities are already under considerable pressure in terms of resources and undertaking their own reviews of collaboration and additional resource to engage with can be off putting, even though its intentions are to support their efforts.
- Other locations, in particular Copenhagen have been mentioned as a more convenient option, because of the links to the NPA secretariat, transport links, and existing hubs for key organisations. However, this is outside the Arctic region.

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[16] This does not imply a new structure as nodes could be existing institutions.

- *Evolution*

Taking into account the considerable sensitivities involved, another option emerged which is a more organic, 'light-touch', evolving approach to establishing the mechanism. This option does not exclude the development of a nodal system, but proposed an initial 'preparatory' stage to build and prove a role of the mechanism.

A more flexible, mobile approach could be developed. Targeted engagement with key programmes, e.g. territorial cooperation programmes, at the outset could be used to trial and build up trust in the mechanism.

An initial series of meetings of key policy makers, supported by a key facilitator, and if required, supported by papers prepared by specialist subcontractors, could be used to identify a limited number of concrete areas for concerted action. Delivery of early results, such as joint position papers or collaborative bids to key funding sources would build trust, engagement and credibility for the mechanism, allowing it to continue to build.

This option would be flexible, responsive, light touch and could engage closely and directly with key partners. It would also allow progress to be made without being obstructed by some of the more challenging issues involved in establishing a fixed network. However, the option does not exclude the possibility of establishing a more comprehensive nodal network once the mechanism has proved itself and there is an 'organic' demand from stakeholders to advance and deepen the collaboration.

However, again there are limitations:

- The facilitators could be viewed as 'lone/isolated actors' without sufficient resources to have meaningful impact.
- The mechanism may just been seen as a 'talking-shop' and lacking the structure to turn ideas into action.
- There still has to be some kind of administrative base from which to manage a web-page and sub-contracting contracting work.
- Without identifiable regional bases the mechanism loses its operational-level links and relevance and could be seen as too much of a 'top-down initiative'.
- Would the key actors 'notice' the achievements of a relatively small-scale initiative?

5.5   Time scales and targets

As has been stated, it may be appropriate to consider an evolving mechanism that builds and proves itself. Time scales and targets are, therefore, important.

The mechanism needs a fixed period of time to pilot activities. As a means to achieve this, one option is to develop a main project application that could be made to the 2014-2020 Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme. The NPP/NPA programme has a long-standing involvement in this issue. Any application should be developed and submitted as soon as possible after the completion of this preparatory project, in order to capitalise on the momentum that has been built so far.

The project is likely require a thematic focus/slant in order to fit with the NPA priority axes, specific objectives and targets, e.g. building in a focus on innovation and in particular opportunities for SME

engagement in R&D, new business opportunities for SMEs, awareness of energy efficiency options and environmental management options in relation to climate change.[17] As is illustrated in section 6 of this report, innovation, and in particular the role of SMEs and microenterprises, is a fruitful area for collaboration in the region and will provide a practical test of the mechanism's ability to deliver added value.

This option offers the opportunity for focus and drive in the early stages of the mechanism, but it also poses some potential challenges. It ties the mechanism closely to one ETC Programme and work would have to be done to broaden the reach and appeal of the mechanism. An NPA application may have to be very tight in its focus in order to meet NPA outcome and result indicators, and targets. Looking to the future careful consideration of additional funding options should also be considered.

A 'pilot' phase of the mechanism would be of significant value. A main project would run for three years and could aim to deliver the following **outcomes**:

- Policy paper aimed at increased awareness of key opportunities in the region (prepared and disseminated),[18]
- Policy paper on strategic issues for territorial cooperation in the region, e.g. role and engagement of small and microenterprises in Cohesion policy (prepared and disseminated);
- Conference which demonstrates operational engagement and identifies stakeholders' perspectives and priorities;
- Cluster/s of project stakeholders in regular contact on future collaboration options, e.g. H2020 bid in relevant area of activity or funding from sources such as Barents cooperation;
- Proposals for how to develop concrete programme collaboration post 2020;
- Exploration of a funding mechanism to support the initiation of collaborative projects;
- Established links with key organisations and nodes in the region; and
- Options for the development of a financially viable self-sustaining mechanism.

With a view to building trust and developing the mechanism and to ensure accountability and transparency for stakeholders, building evaluation and reporting activities would be important. Annual reports could be prepared, in addition to programme reporting requirements. In addition, two years after the establishment of the mechanism an initial evaluation could be commissioned, with a view to critically assessing the mechanism's role and future development.

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[17] NPA (2104) Northern Periphery and Arctic Cooperation Programme 2014-2020.

[18] These could be develop in line with the result indicators set out for the NPA priority axes.

5.6   Added value and results

Based on an overall assessment of the evidence gathered, there is a role for a process and mechanism which complements existing structures. Rather than being a formalised institution or structure, a productive way forward could be for the mechanism to be a flexible process that can be applied in a range of ways according to the changing demands of the policy and programme implementation cycle and developments within the region, and can evolve and develop over time. Key areas of added value were identified:

- Specific focus on regional/territorial development;
- Links strategic foresight and practical, operational project-level actions;
- Dynamic, flexible, responsive and independent mechanism;
- Bridge between EU programmes and non-EU funded regional policies programmes and initiatives; and
- Facilitation of productive links across EU-funded programmes and initiatives.

Potential results are:

- Strategic collaboration and synergies on issues of common interest;
- Embedded knowledge exchange and learning;
- Better, innovative projects/collaborations;
- New partnerships;
- Efficiency savings; and
- Maximising, widening and deepening policy and programme results.

6. COLLABORATION IN PRACTICE: INNOVATION

Previous studies carried out as part of the Bødo process examined strategic links and interconnections between programmes, institutions and structures across the Arctic and neighbouring regions.[19] Through this work, the broad complementarity and coherence of regional development policies and programmes was highlighted and the related expectations for territorial cooperation in the region were apparent.[20]

Innovation is a recurring theme across EU and Non-EU funded programmes and policies, (see Table 5 & 6 and Figure 7), in particular the specific strengths, weaknesses opportunities and challenges faced in promoting innovation in the Arctic and High North.

Table 5: Focus on innovation in ETC programmes

ETC		Priority	Focus areas / sectors	
A	**Nord**	P1 R&I	• Sami industry • Interaction between basic industry and SMEs • Service development (e.g. health care, social services, wellbeing) • Testing activities	• Culture and creative industries • Digital service industry • Energy and environmental technology / Cleantech
A	**Botnia-Atlantica**	P1 Innovation	• Sustainable energy and environmental technology • Digital services • Forestry and trees • Marine environment • Food	• Service sector (e.g. how to maintain services in sparsely-populated areas) • Tourism • Culture and creative industries • Safety and rescue activities
A	**Sweden - Norway**	P1 Innovative environments	• Tourism • Culture and creative industries Environment and energy	
A	**Ireland- N. Ireland- Scotland**	P1 Promoting business investment in R&I	• Life and health sciences Renewable energy	
B	**Northern Priphery and Arctic**	P1 Innovation	• Increased innovation and transfer of R&D • Increased innovation in public service provision	
B	**North**	P1 Thinking	• Sectors such as energy, environmental sciences and nanotechnology	

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[19] van der Zwet, McMaster, I. Gaskell, F and Bachtler, J. (2013) The Arctic Dimension in the Northern Periphery: Perspectives from Scotland Ireland and Northern Ireland, Report to Highlands and Islands Enterprise and van der Zwet, A. Bachtler, J. McMaster, (2104) Arctic Connections- Mapping regional Cooperation in the Arctic, Paper prepared for the Arctic Connections Conference in Glasgow 10-11 June 2014

[20] In line with the reformed Cohesion policy, EU programmes are concentrating investments on a limited number of thematic objectives and investment priorities, including Thematic Objective 1 'Research and Innovation' and the related investment priorities. ERDF investments are aimed at innovation, technological development and applied R&D and related to business needs and capabilities. Innovation is approached from a broad perspective encompassing technological, social, product, service, commercial, non-commercial, private-sector and public sector innovations. Given the EU framework (e.g. with investment priorities forming the basis for the definition of specific objectives within programmes that take into account the needs and characteristics of the programme area)[20], it is not surprising that at least amongst the ETC programmes, the overall objectives concerning innovation are relatively similar. Nonetheless, although there are a number of common focus areas with respect to the theme of innovation, the regions are at different stages of innovation. Therefore, the key in the forming of any future partnerships is to identify those complementarities and capitalise on the different strengths at different stages.

	Sea	growth P2 Eco-innovation	identified as strengths.
B	North West Europe	P1 Innovation P3 Eco-innovation	• E.g. eco-innovation, such as renewable energy, the environment and energy and resource use.
B	Baltic Sea	P1 Capacity for innovation	• R&I infrastructures (ICT, agro-food, healthcare/wellness, biotech, cleantech, energy, advanced materials, maritime sector) • Capacity building (e.g. implementation of smart specialisation strategies) • Reinforcement of non-technological innovation
B	Atlantic Area	P1 Innovation and competitiveness P2 Eco-innovation	• Sectors identified in the RIS3 strategies of the participating countries/regions.
C	Interreg Europe	R&I	• Key societal changes in the EU, including health, demographic change and wellbeing

Table 6: Focus on innovation in other High North initiatives

Programme	Focus areas (innovation)
NORA	Collaboration and innovation related to fisheries and marine resources[21]
Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers	E.g. Working Group 3 under EK-R: Green growth – innovation and entrepreneurship 2013-2016; various funding schemes (e.g. business and innovation).
Arctic Council	All themes encouraged to take innovative approaches and adopt innovative solutions.
Barents	E.g. One of the aims of the Barents programme 2014-2018 is concerned with enhancing innovation and research cooperation by increasing critical mass.
Northern Dimension	Collaboration on e.g. economic diversification and energy efficiency and environmental management
NSPA	Work on a number of different objectives to raise awareness of the NSPA and to influence EU policy.

A common challenge for many regions is that R&D investments in businesses are low, and that there are difficulties in translating research results into practice. Another commonality, particularly in the more peripheral areas, is the long distance to research intensive environments. For example, in Northern Scandinavia there are fewer actors, universities, research institutes and small businesses than in more central areas of the region. There is also a lack of venture capital in the region. The innovation system is fragile and, in many cases, depends on individuals rather than organisations. SMEs in the region are often micro enterprises that have to focus on their core business and lack the capacity and finance to undertake the long term development of new services, products and new markets. These and other challenges present an opportunity to create new complementary partnerships, not least to gain the critical mass of actors and competences to strengthen the innovation potential.

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[21] http://ipaper.ipapercms.dk/Nora/StrategiprogramEN/ (accessed 4 July 2015)

Figure 7: Examples of common innovation themes across High North initiatives
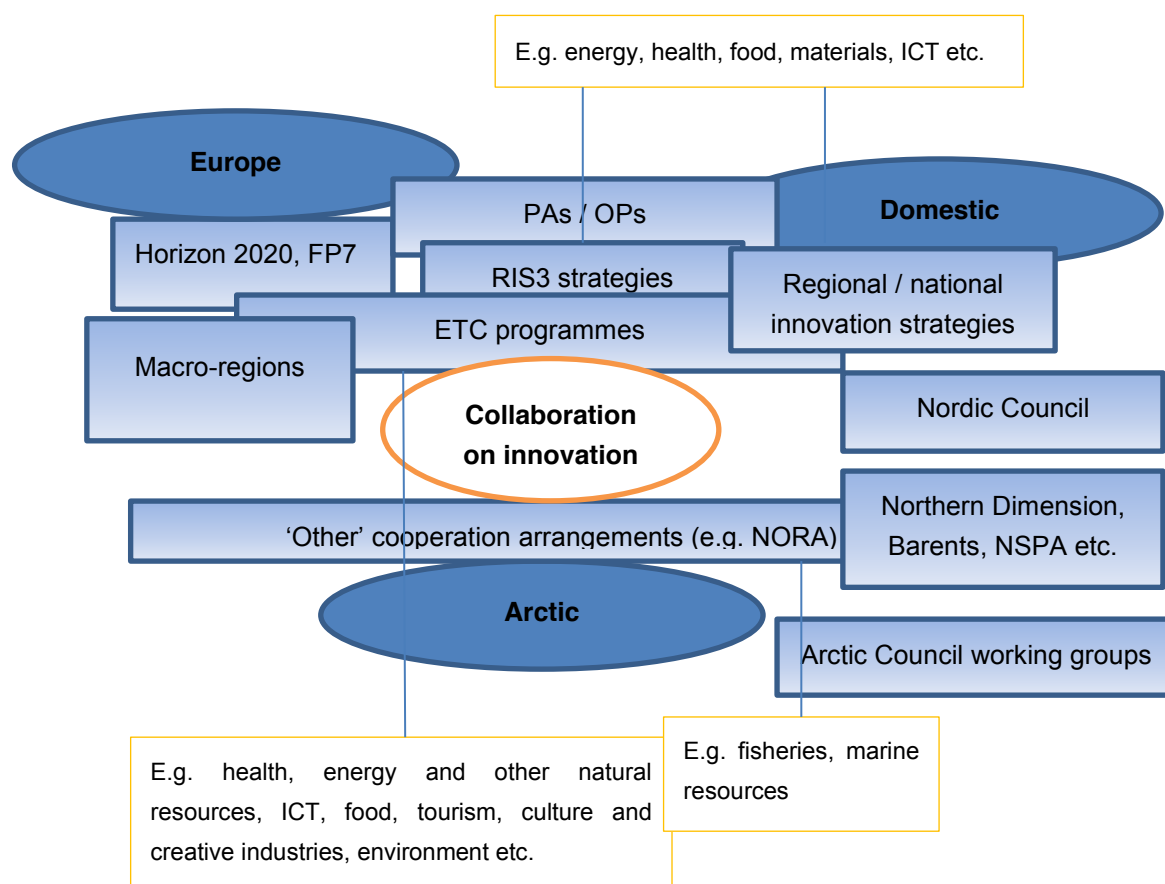
6.1   A role for Arctic Collaboration?

As has been illustrated, there is a wide range of existing valuable mechanisms, information resources, and processes to share information and promote networking and cooperation in this area. Where the mechanism can add value is:

- *Foresight:* drawing on information available from existing sources and applying strategic foresight, and
- *Capacity Building & Action*: supporting action and the mobilisation of collaboration.

(i) Foresight

Working within these frameworks, a process of collaboration can identify areas of consensus-based common interest to programmes and stakeholders in the region. It is crucial that this process is based on open discussion and consensus, and is not prescribed in advance. The process of discussion and deliberation could be facilitated and supported by the mechanism, e.g. through the provision of discussion papers and the organisation of meetings. Such discussions and meetings could help to build:

- **Strategic foresight to identify new entrepreneurial opportunities on the basis of common innovation themes and trends**. Examples of themes include Arctic climate

change, where efforts could address the challenges and opportunities related to economic diversification. For instance, the North Atlantic and Arctic cruise industry will benefit from reduced sea ice cover, with associated revenue gains for coastal infrastructure such as port facilities, and cruise industry supply chain industries. Traditional (heritage and craft) and creative industries are likely to see associated benefits. Renewable energy sector growth is another avenue of regional opportunity. Here a related issue is the need to have comparable Arctic-wide data on innovation potential (data that covers also non-EU Member States and regions).

- **Develop strategic links across programme and policies.** In addition to Cohesion policy programmes, a wide range of national and regional policies and programmes are involved in promoting innovation. Through strategic overviews and follow up engagement with relevant programmes or strategies, areas for potential collaboration could be explored and tested, before inviting more operational engagement by project partners.

- **Feed into strategic discussions on future support for innovation in remote and peripheral regions.** There is potential to develop joint policy reflections based on shared concerns, for example, the need for policy to adequately reflect the specific challenges and opportunities faced in the High North in terms of driving and applying innovation.

- **Develop innovation networks to improve interaction.** Strong inter-regional knowledge and trade/entrepreneur networks can help to overcome some of the disadvantages of peripherality and remoteness, and provide a basis for stronger industry performance. Dialogue between research-based organisations may also stimulate supply chain benefits and job creation. Efforts can also be undertaken in terms of improving interactions between the research infrastructure providers and the user communities.

- **Transfer knowledge and commercialise outputs.** To strengthen the process of High North innovation, there is a need to create links between the local/regional context (community issues and competences) and commercial interests. One way to do this is to support links to the smart specialisation strategies, which emphasise a strategic approach to regional innovation by exploiting place-based industry strengths, (see Table 7). Smart specialisation is not intended simply to support existing regional strengths, as this can risk reinforcing vulnerability (particularly in regions of the High North which may lack economic diversity). Instead, it should also facilitate diversification into related industry areas with growth potential.[22] For instance, in the context of resource-based industries, focus could be on developing innovative niches (e.g. local food initiatives) and taking a multi-functional approach whereby communities are not dependent on a single activity.

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[22] Charles, D, Gross, F & Bachtler, J (2007) 'Smart specialisation' and Cohesion policy – a strategy for all regions?, IQ-Net Thematic Paper No. 30(2), European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

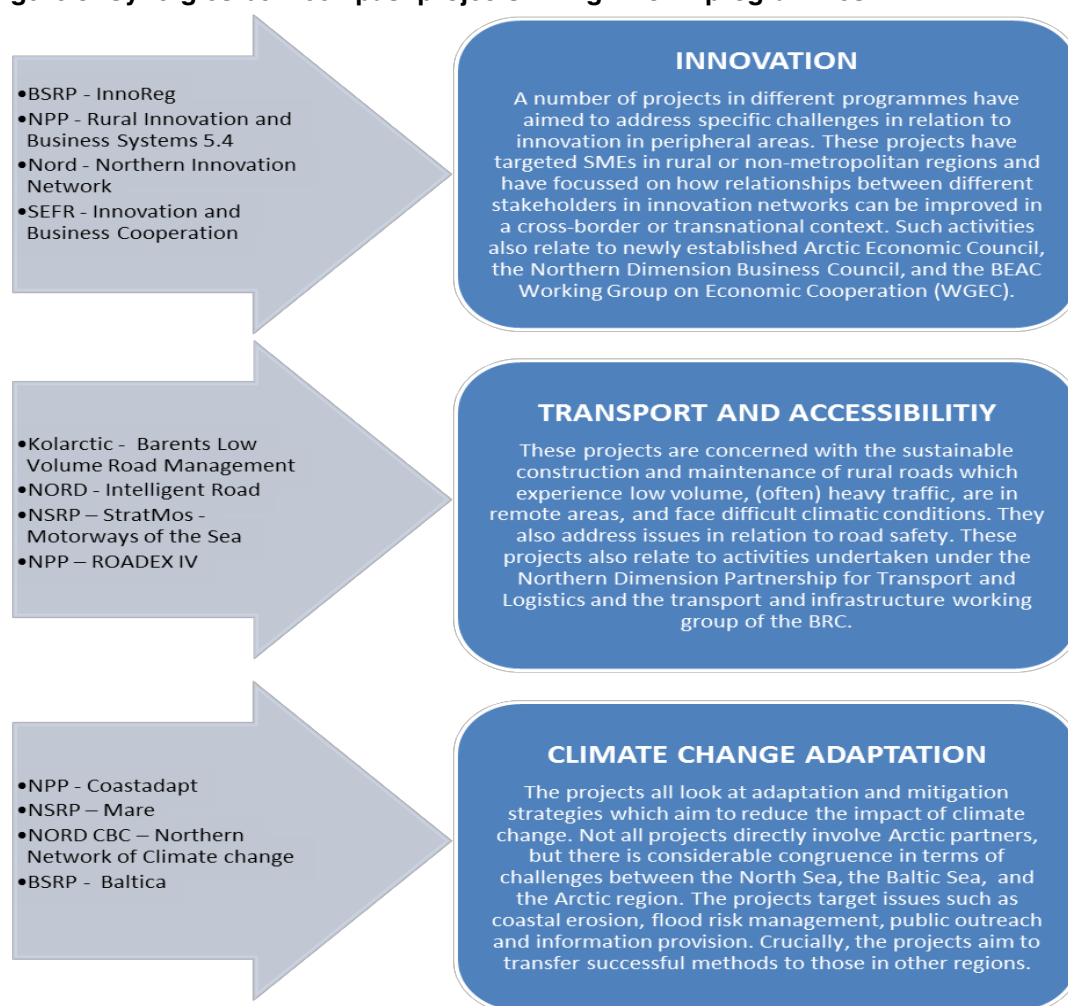**Table 7: Innovation themes in the Smart Specialisation (RIS3) strategies**

Country	Themes	
Finland **North and East**	• Arctic expertise • Tourism • Natural resources • New products and bioenergy related to wood raw materials • Environmental issues and sustainable development in all activities	• Decentralised solutions in energy and service provision • Utilisation of the potential brought by Russia • World-class expertise in selected industries.
Sweden **Mellersta Norrland, Övre Norrland**	• Cooperation within process industry and businesses • Test and training activities • Sustainable energy and Environmental technology / cleantech • Digital service industry • Culture and creative industry • Cluster activities • Utilisation of the proximity to Norway	• Healthcare • Life sciences • Technology and service development in the industry • Bioeconomy • Processing of forestry products
Scotland	• Creative industries (e.g. games, music, textiles, data storage and informatics) • Energy (marine, off shore and renewable energy technology) • Food and drink • Life sciences	
Northern Ireland	• Agri-Food Technology • Sustainable Energy • ICT • Advanced Man & Mat (e.g. advanced Engineering, Composites, Electronics & Electrical Components) • Life & Health Science	
Ireland	• Future networks & communications • Food for health • Data analytics, management, security & privacy • Sustainable food production & processing • Therapeutics • Innovation in services & business processes • Digital platforms, content & applications • Marine renewable energy	• Connected health & independent Living • Smart grids & smart cities • Medical devices • Manufacturing competitiveness • Diagnostics • Processing technologies & novel materials
Norway **Nordland**	• Industry and energy • Marine sector • Experience industry	

• **Reporting and review** - an overview of programme and policy activities in relevant fields could provide policy makers, programmes and projects a valuable resource for reporting and developing future actions. This review/evaluation process could work alongside existing programme and institutional reviews. For example, through including a small number of questions on Arctic collaboration to individual evaluations, a combined Arctic overview could be developed with minimal effort.

(ii) Action & capacity building

A framework and rationale for collaboration is in place, but the key challenges lie in activation and operationlisation. Through the process of collaboration, consultation and discussion, the mechanism can develop collaborative solutions to support the promotion of innovation in the region. The range of actions will vary depending on the programme and policy cycle and external policy environment. Some indicative actions could include:

- **Work to combine regional strengths in key sectors** including energy, health, food, natural resources, ICT, creative industries etc. Within these areas there is an opportunity for stronger collaboration in putting forward larger and better projects that could be financed though larger programs such as Horizon 2020. Clustering existing projects in related fields, with the aim of encouraging the widening and deepening of their results across a wider area of the region could be pursued. Figure 8 provides examples of projects from previous programme periods, which demonstrate that there is an existing stock of knowledge and experience in the wider region which could be useful in the further development of Arctic projects or clusters. In the context of innovation, it has been suggested that, for example, the creative industries and the already demonstrated power of their networking in the Nordic area offer many further opportunities for productive networking across the programmes that will inevitably deliver SME benefits.   Also, services provided by the mechanism might be improved by the involvement of sectoral and industry experts in the preparation of application calls and the engagement of this expertise in assisting individual project design

Figure 8: Synergies between past projects in High North programmes

- BSRP - InnoReg
- NPP - Rural Innovation and Business Systems 5.4
- Nord - Northern Innovation Network
- SEFR - Innovation and Business Cooperation

INNOVATION

A number of projects in different programmes have aimed to address specific challenges in relation to innovation in peripheral areas. These projects have targeted SMEs in rural or non-metropolitan regions and have focussed on how relationships between different stakeholders in innovation networks can be improved in a cross-border or transnational context. Such activities also relate to newly established Arctic Economic Council, the Northern Dimension Business Council, and the BEAC Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC).

- Kolarctic - Barents Low Volume Road Management
- NORD - Intelligent Road
- NSRP – StratMos - Motorways of the Sea
- NPP – ROADEX IV

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITIY

These projects are concerned with the sustainable construction and maintenance of rural roads which experience low volume, (often) heavy traffic, are in remote areas, and face difficult climatic conditions. They also address issues in relation to road safety. These projects also relate to activities undertaken under the Northern Dimension Partnership for Transport and Logistics and the transport and infrastructure working group of the BRC.

- NPP - Coastadapt
- NSRP – Mare
- NORD CBC – Northern Network of Climate change
- BSRP - Baltica

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

The projects all look at adaptation and mitigation strategies which aim to reduce the impact of climate change. Not all projects directly involve Arctic partners, but there is considerable congruence in terms of challenges between the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the Arctic region. The projects target issues such as coastal erosion, flood risk management, public outreach and information provision. Crucially, the projects aim to transfer successful methods to those in other regions.

Source: van der Zwet, A. Bachtler, J. McMaster, (2104) Arctic Connections- Mapping regional Cooperation in the Arctic, Paper prepared for the Arctic Connections Conference in Glasgow 10-11 June 2014, p. 19

- **Building private sector links and strategic partnerships**. In order to capitalise on funding opportunities. Partnerships in key areas could be established around specific themes, with a view to building capacity for future H2020 bids**.** For SMEs opportunities for meetings might usefully be sought alongside existing events such as Arctic Circle meetings and the Arctic Energy Summit.

- **Create critical mass.** Innovation in remote and peripheral areas faces the particular challenge of the lack of critical mass. Territorial cooperation can act as an interface in between all the innovation and economic development players. For instance, in the case of Northern Norway, the demand for skilled employees to work in resource-based industries could prompt cooperation. In addition, specific actions could focus on engagement with specific groups of actors, such as **the private sector.** Strengthening the involvement of SMEs and micro enterprises in remote areas as partners in the Programmes is a particular area of interest.

- **Link the innovation cycle.** Complimentary policies and programmes could help link actors at the different stages of the innovation cycle and result in more strategic projects (with scale, reach and policy relevance) and better results (maximising the impact/use of ideas) and draw together the innovation cycle and ensure its continuity, (see Figure 9). Such activities may not necessarily involve formally funded projects, but opening lines of communications and access to new networks could be valuable to projects wishing to disseminate results.

Figure 9: **Arctic Collaboration Mechanism – possible contribution to the innovation stages**
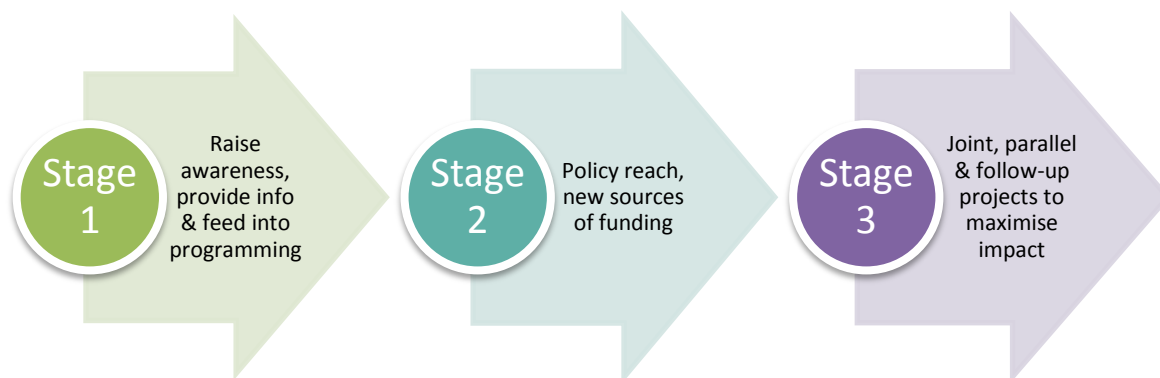
- **Access a wider portfolio of support.** Practical support is very relevant given the number of programmes and stakeholders who are interested in cooperating. Territorial cooperation initiatives focus on both 'hard' and 'soft' support:
  - *Soft support* relates to (usually non-financial and non-material) support in the form of information provision, awareness-raising and advice. Some cooperative territorial initiatives have aimed to raise awareness of Arctic innovation and/or economic diversification through collaborative knowledge exchange or trade promotion events. For example, the annual Arctic Business Forum which is organised by the Lapland Chamber of Commerce, with partners including the Murmansk Northern Chamber of Commerce and Industry amongst others.
  - *Hard support* relates to financial or material support such as grants or loans to firms and other innovating organisations. For example, Nordic Innovation's High Growth Entrepreneurship Initiative is currently supporting the Nordic Crowdfunding Alliance project.[23] This represents a means of supporting 180 entrepreneurial ventures through pan-Nordic seed capital funding.

- **Joint projects.** Collaboration could help to define projects in a wider sense making them relevant for the whole region based on trends/analysis and bringing in relevant partners to implement the projects. This could be important at points during the programme period when there is a lack of relevant projects in specific themes. It could also draw on the strengths of actors from different parts of the High North.

A system of joint projects may be an ultimate ambition, but is likely to be highly complex. Table 8 illustrates just a few technical aspects in relation to EU Programmes that have to be

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[23] http://www.nordicinnovation.org/projects/nordic-high-growth-entrepreneurship-/nordic-crowdfunding-alliance/

considered in developing such an effort. Developing jointly-funded projects could be more realistically dealt with in a later phase of the collaboration and could be taken into account in the next round of EU Programme preparation.

Table 8: Project Processes

	Project stages/requirements	Administrative challenges
	Calls	Calls issued at different points by different programmes
	Project approval	In some cases, secretarial, regional advisory groups and monitoring committee/steering committee involved
	Approval with conditions	Different programmes may set varying conditions
	Start dates	May differ
	Grant letters	Likely to be awarded at different time
	Financial management systems	Different systems for different sources of funding?
	Attendance at seminars and events	Required attendance at lead partner seminars for each programme?
	Communication	Would separate communication strategies have to be developed for each programme
	Monitoring and evaluation	Different time scales, plans requirements for each programme
	Financial control	Different first and second level controllers in different countries
	Financial checks and irregularities	Different processes
	Reporting	Varying indicators and systems
	Claims	Different IT systems
	Payment	Possible delays in payment

However, it may be possible to explore ways in which different programmes and initiatives could be used to finance different elements of a larger 'umbrella' project, Figure 10. Specific programmes or initiatives could finance specific partners and activities. Each can work within their own programme/initiative but for the purpose of, for example, dissemination of results and the development of future ideas they benefit from being part of a wider informal network. It is recognised that maintaining partnership links is challenging, even within formal projects, but many partnerships also have the scope to build and grow and such a mechanism could support this process.

Figure 10: Umbrella project
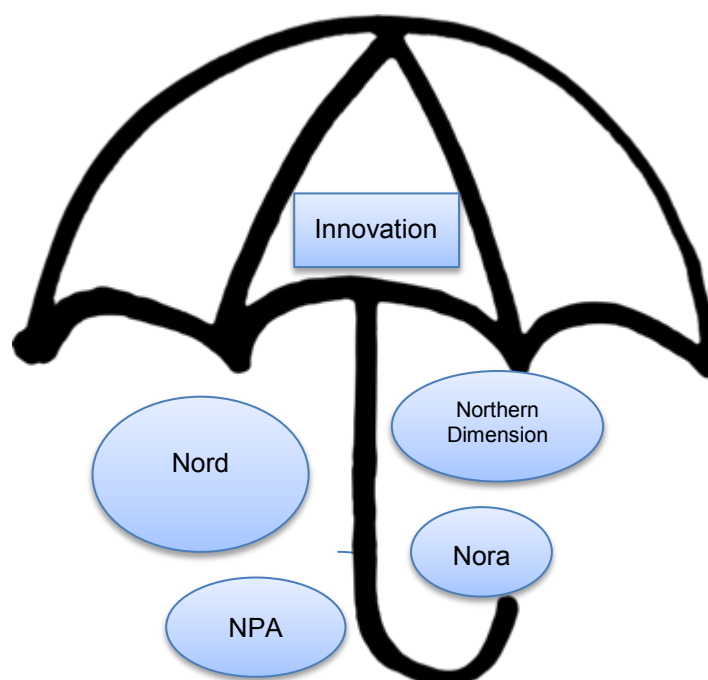
- **Financial Instruments and State Aid.** Territorial cooperation programmes have made limited use of financial instruments and State Aid and financial instruments. Yet, as has been noted, national governments and the ETC regulations stress the need for greater focus in ETC programmes and a strong results orientation.[24] In this context, the role of the private sector in ETC is particularly valuable.[25] Increased involvement of private partners widens the pool of potential project partners. These factors coupled with changes in the ETC regulations could gradually lead to greater programme engagement with State Aid and Financial Instruments. As has been highlighted in the case of establishing joint projects, a cross programme approach to these issues would face countless complexities and administrative challenges. However, in order to build individual programme engagement a collaborative effort could establish a strong, common base of area-specific experience and expertise, which is currently available to Programmes operating in single Member States but not readily available to ETC programmes. Such work could potentially link with INTERACT.[26] It is recognised that this example is of particular relevance mainly to EU-Funded territorial cooperation programmes, but illustrates a way in which the mechanism could be used to address specific areas of concern for a number of stakeholders.

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[24] EU (2014) Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal, see: http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1299

[25] McMaster I *et al* (2012) *Final Report of the 2ⁿᵈ Ongoing Evaluation of the 2007-13 Northern Periphery Programme*, report prepared for the County Administrative Board of Västerbotten

[26] INTERACT supports territorial cooperation between Regions of the EU. They promote cooperation as a tool for growth and change through policy development and strategic orientation, within territorial cooperation and beyond. http://www.interact-eu.net/about_us/about_interact/22/2911

6.2 Overview

As has been illustrated, there are a number of areas where initiatives can extend their influence and reach through a process of mutual engagement. A collaboration mechanism such as the mechanism can also provide a platform to consider practical ways in which to start addressing some of the administrative barriers to collaboration, e.g. through use of financial instruments in future programmes. Thus it is possible to build up an illustration of the types of activity the mechanism could engage in:

- Strategic foresight meeting – identifying and agreeing key areas of interest, thematic or procedural, that would benefit from a collaborative effort, e.g.
  - An area of key growth for the region such as Blue Growth, innovative solutions to public service provision in remote regions,
  - An issue such as the boosting engagement of the private sector in cooperation programme
- Scope to commission a short briefing note on relevant issues and provided by thematic or policy experts.
- Exchange of knowledge and best practice across interventions and areas.
- Networking regionally-based efforts to build contacts, e.g. linking two projects funded by different sources with a view to developing knowledge exchange and capacity building.
- Strategic discussion of potential common opportunities and barriers, e.g. knowledge of the sectors, regulations, e.g. such as state aid in the case of private sector engagement.
- Engagement with strategic partners supported by facilitator to examine practical ways to develop new project ideas, formulations of partnerships, engagement with strategic audiences to disseminate role/results etc.
- Development of joint actions in key areas of activity.

7. CONCLUSION AND PROPOSAL

Based on thematic, strategic, policy and operational considerations there is a clear rationale for establishing some form of collaboration between territorial policies and programmes in the Arctic and near Arctic. Yet the practicalities of agreeing the form, structure and role of such a mechanism are challenging. In the past ambitious plans and expectations have been set out.[27] However, as has been highlighted in this report, it is important for any mechanism to start in a pragmatic, focussed and considered manner, working in areas of agreed common interest, remaining a flexible resource, strengthening productive links and relationships with partners over a period time. On this basis the following proposal is put forward. In order to take this proposal forward the following points should be taken into consideration:

- wide consultation has already been undertaken, any gaps in this process should be filled.
- securing resources for the mechanism is a critical point. A clear structure and proposal for the mechanism should facilitate this process.
- the proposed facilitators will be central to the success of the mechanism, thus recruitment is a key issue.
- maintaining momentum in the collaboration process is critical.

AN ARCTIC COLLABORATION MECHANISM – PROPOSAL

The research for this study demonstrates that there is a clear role for better collaboration at regional level In the High North. Regional and local development actors face dynamic and complex challenges in a demanding strategic context, yet on the ground there is often a lack of critical mass to develop and deliver projects, compounded by a weakly coordinated range of interventions.

Aims and Objectives

Against this backdrop, the study team have been tasked with developing a proposal for a collaboration mechanism which will enhance Arctic and High North territorial cooperation by encouraging more strategic thinking and operational collaboration on Arctic-related issues   - 'enhancing (High North) territorial cooperation through collaboration based on strategic foresight and active facilitation'. The principles guiding the proposed mechanism are as follows:

- complementary – the mechanism will not duplicate efforts, but can complement, support, and amplify the work of existing centres of expertise
- facilitation – the mechanism is voluntary and informal aiming to ease and facilitate engagement, not prescribe or set courses of action, or control/oversee resources
- regional/territorial - the focus of the mechanism is on territorial and regional development
- bridging – the mechanism is open to the full range of regional and territorial 'programmes, initiatives and policies' and the potential that lies in the links between them. It is not solely focussed on EU Programmes.
- results and added value – the mechanism demonstrate results and add value.

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[27] van der Zwet at al (2014) Arctic Connections, Mapping Regional Cooperation in the Arctic, paper prepared for the Arctic Connections Conference, Glasgow, 10-11 June 2014.

The following sections outline a model for a collaboration mechanism which meets these principles.

Objectives

The proposed mechanism has four main objectives:

(a) links - to deepen and complementing existing links and encourage new forms of cooperation between stakeholders across programme and policy boundaries;

(b) dialogue - to promote greater strategic policy dialogue on areas of joint interest to territorial cooperation stakeholders and partners;

(c) synergy - to boost the geographic and policy 'reach of programmes, projects and partnerships; and

(d) innovation - to facilitate better, strategic and innovative territorial cooperation partnerships and actions.

Functions

The proposed mechanism would have the following three functions: strategic foresight; knowledge exchange and programme/project brokerage..

(i) *Strategic foresight*

The first function would involve facilitating strategic thinking and debate on emerging development challenges and opportunities and policy trends related to the Arctic. This would operate through regular meetings (six-monthly?) for programme managers and policy directors from national/regional administrations, as well as representatives of other area relevant organistions. The meetings will be used to share information on policy trends and developments, particularly new strategies and initiatives, with a view to promoting knowledge exchange and, crucially, identifying key areas of joint interest for collaboration.

(ii) *Knowledge exchange*

The second function would involve actively promoting the exchange of information, ideas and experience on the management and implementation of Arctic-relevant priorities and projects among territorial cooperation programmes and stakeholders. This will be aimed at practitioners involved in the management and delivery of programmes and projects and focusing on implementation challenges, opportunities and experiences. Events and activities would promote engagement and exchange of experience, and the identification of good or innovative practice through various media, focusing on specific *implementation tasks* – such as project generation, project clustering, maximising results – *development themes* such as blue growth or transport

(iii) *Programme/project brokerage*

The function would involve providing tailored support to initiate and accelerate collaboration between programmes and projects on Arctic-relevant issues. This would be largely responsive, undertaken on request in response to demand from individual programmes/stakeholders who are looking to find partners, build synergies, networks or capacity.

Much of the information and insights developed through the collaboration process will be generated by stakeholders exchanging their own knowledge and expertise. However, key meetings would be supported by expert briefings and guidance notes to stimulate and structure discussions. The focus of discussions will be set by the stakeholders themselves, rather than being imposed by from outside.

Developing the functions

An initial meeting to identify key areas of interest will be used as a platform to build future work and engagement. Key thematic areas of interest have previously been identified and can be refined. Areas of operational/policy interest could lie in the development of proposals for strategic regionally based bids to key funding bodies, position papers on key areas of joint interest, policy options for future sources of joint funding, commissioning research and engagement on practical concerns such as the role of small and micro enterprises in territorial cooperation in the High North.

Supporting these services demands a well maintained web-site, initially providing, organisational information and supporting materials for meeting and events. The services provided via the web-site can be developed based on user demand.

Expert input and engagement can be embedded in the mechanism through the development of a multi nodal system, in which links are developed with key knowledge hubs throughout the region. Institutions of relevance include:

- Nordregio;
- University of the Highlands and Islands;
- Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland;
- Northern Dimension Institute;
- Arctic Portal;
- The High North Centre University of Nordland; and
- The Norwegian Arctic University in Tromsø.

In these cases, links nodes can provide a valuable source of impartial review/evaluation of policy developments, interventions in specific areas, foresight on future developments and trends, which would inform the mechanisms strategic thinking. Such links do not have to be imposed at the outset and can be developed over a period, taking into account demands, and capacity. Services will be complementary to existing structures and mechanisms, working in collaboration with existing centres of knowledge and expertise.

The scope of the mechanism to engage and develop requires more operational capacity:

- Capacity to draw key strategic stakeholders together and engage with them,
- Capacity to organise events and respond to changing demands, and
- Capacity to work in a pragmatic and productive manner at an operational level, engaging with project stakeholders.

The mechanism, therefore, requires 'public face' in the form of a facilitation team to enable activities, take forward agreed areas of activity and act as a point of contact for the mechanism. As with other elements of the mechanism, the scope and scale of this role will develop over time and in careful consideration of the functions of existing organisations. Particular care needs to be taken to

compliment and not overlap with existing functions and highlighting how the mechanism offers supporting information and complimentary services that extend and deepen the existing knowledge base and offer a link between valuable existing resources, such as contact points, as a means to share and exchange knowhow in the region.

Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in the process are:

- National government representatives, engaged in territorial cooperation;
- Programme managers/representatives;
- European Commission DG Regio, EEAS, DG Mare;
- Relevant area organisations, e.g. Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, Barents Cooperation, the Northern Dimension, Nora and BEAC ;
- Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat;
- Programme contact points; and
- Regional and territorial cooperation project partners.

Structure

A **steering/oversight group** will oversee the management of the mechanism and form the core for strategic foresight activities and meetings. The steering group will comprise of relevant national policy and programme directors, representatives of the European Commission, other areas relevant organisations, e.g. Arctic Council, Northern Dimension, BEAC, NORA and Barents cooperation. This will comprise a group of approx. 20 representatives. All partners will participate in the group on an equal basis. A smaller management group, appointed by the steering group, will engage in the operational management of the mechanism. The steering group should meet at least twice annual in the first years of the mechanisms operation. The management group should meet three times/year.

Central to the objectives and functions is an expert **facilitation team**, based in key network nodes. While the consultation has identified understandable concern about creating new organisations and bureaucracy, achieving effective collaboration requires a range of a mix of thematic expertise, as well as communication, facilitation, research and brokerage skills. Combined with the vast area of the High North and the number of different actors and interests at different scales, there is a need create a small team of facilitators which would act as a flexible and mobile resource. These would need to have the following attributes:

- extensive and long-standing knowledge of the region;
- well-established links to partners across the region;
- a high level of expertise in working at a strategic level with policymakers and programmes; and
- experience of operational engagement with project partners.

Organisation

The proposed organisational model for the collaboration mechanism is a **network model,** linking together a small number of key institutions in several countries. The selection of nodes should seek:

- a balance of non-EU and EU locations;
- defined and complementary capacity and expertise on the Arctic and High North;
- an international profile in strategic research and knowledge exchange;
- the ability to draw on academic, policy and practitioner expertise
- know-how on territorial cooperation programmes and policies;
- a willingness of the institutions (or their governments) to make available administrative, personnel and financial to the establishment and running of the mechanism.

The process selecting initial 'nodes' for the mechanism must be transparent. Tenders should be issued for institutions to host an administrative centre for the mechanism, potentially beginning with one non-EU Member State node and one EU Member States node. The next stage in the process would be to invite tenders for calls to host geographic and thematic nodes, in response to emerging demands from stakeholders.

Timescales and Targets

The mechanism needs a fixed period of time to pilot activities, build and 'prove its self'. A 'pilot' project will run for three years and could aim to deliver the following **outcomes**:

Foresight

- Policy paper aimed at increased awareness of key opportunities in the region (prepared and disseminated),[28]
- Policy paper on strategic issues for territorial cooperation in the region, e.g. role and engagement of small and microenterprises in Cohesion policy (prepared and disseminated)
- Proposals for how to develop concrete collaboration post 2020

Knowledge exchange
- Conference which demonstrates operational engagement and identifies stakeholders' perspectives and priorities;
- Established links with key organisations and nodes in the region

Programme project brokerage

- Cluster/s of project stakeholders in regular contact on future collaboration options, e.g. H2020 bid in relevant area of activity;
- Debate on need for a funding mechanism to support the initiation of joint projects;

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[28] These could be develop in line with the result indicators set out for the NPA priority axes.

Within this period, the following timescales are proposed applied.

March 2016 – October 2016	- facilitators and administrative base would be awarded on a competitive, transparent basis; - initial discussion papers and documentation commissioned; - a strategic meeting of key partners should be held within three months to identify specific interests and concrete areas of action;
November 2016- March 2017	- administrative base and facilitators in post and actively engaged; - initial meetings with operational partners within 6 months; - having established clear areas of interest and potential action, wider links could be developed and pursued, e.g. with national programmes and other forms of collaboration; and key stakeholders; - strategic partners meeting to plan future events and further actions;
April 2017 – October 2017	- an initial large-scale event could be hosted after 18 months, to develop further options and opportunities, but also to highlight achievements to date; - strategic partnerships working in common areas of interest should be established with a view to submitted joint funding applications to, e.g. H2020; and - strategic policy engagement.
November 2017 +	- secure further resourcing - well-established multi – nodal network

To ensure accountability and transparency for stakeholders, building evaluation and reporting activities is important. Annual reports should be prepared. In addition, two years after the establishment of the mechanism an initial evaluation could be commissioned, with a view to critically assess the mechanism's role and future development.

Funding

One funding option is to develop a main project application could be made to the 2014-2020 Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme. The NPP/NPA programmes have a long standing involvement in this issue and the Programme geography has the same boundaries as that of the proposed mechanism. However, it should be noted that the application would need to incorporate a thematic focus/slant in order to fit with the NPA priority axes, specific objectives and targets, a specific area of interest could be linked to SME/R&D links under priority 1 of the NPA. During the pilot process, careful consideration should be given to future funding options.

Added value and results

The mechanism offers forward looking, strategic analysis linked to practical collaboration on regional and territorial development.

Added value:

- Bridge between EU programmes and non-EU funded regional policies and programmes;
- Specific focus on regional/territorial development;
- Links strategic foresight and practical, operational project-level actions;
- Dynamic, flexible, responsive and independent mechanism; and
- Facilitation of productive links across programmes and initiatives.

Results:

- Strategic collaboration and synergies on issues of common interest;
- Embedded knowledge exchange and learning;
- Better, innovative projects;
- New partnerships;
- Efficiency savings; and
- Maximising, widening and deepening policy and programme results.

8. ANNEX

8.1 Annex 1: Partnership Agreements

Country	Partnership Agreements on ETC
Finland	• By increasing cooperation and promoting the exchange of experiences and good practices, the ETC and ENI CBC programmes can significantly impact the competitiveness of the regions (especially border regions) and their economic, social and ecologically sustainable development. • The programmes promote the functioning of labour markets. • In addition, the programmes aim to strengthen the economic area of the Baltic Sea and to find solutions and models for the development problems facing sparsely-populated areas.
Ireland	• Cross-border and transnational perspectives should be considered in country-specific programming and need also to take account frameworks such as the Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean Area. • Prioritised areas for ETC are: • Innovation clusters and smart connections between business, research and higher education; • Result-oriented innovation projects including also actors beyond science and academia; • Eco-innovation projects (including observation of the ocean environment); • Cooperation, sharing of best practice and economies of scale between SMEs; • Energy efficiency and the production, distribution and use of renewable energy; • Environmental risks, particularly maritime pollution across borders; • Maritime economic potential of the maritime border areas by bringing about cooperation synergies. • Transnational dimension of the Atlantic strategy can bring new dynamism to the maritime economic sectors as well as enlarge their economies of scale. • Cross-border cooperation programme will focus on ICT, competitiveness of SMEs, low carbon economy, environmental protection and resource efficiency, sustainable transport, employment and labour mobility and social inclusion and combating of poverty. • The continuation of North-South cooperation and EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV) are important.
Sweden	• Prioritised areas in the ETC programmes are: • To strengthen cross-border innovation systems and activities to build up critical mass within R&D and cluster development; • To promote competitiveness of industry in the border regions; • To develop unique cross-border natural and cultural environments and protect environment, coasts and the ecosystem; • To promote the adaptation to energy, environment and climate challenges; • To contribute to sustainable transportation through strong planning of infrastructure and communications. • In addition, the cross-border programmes can include activities that contribute to the development of joint community functions and joint labour markets and the development of innovative solutions to demographic challenges in the sparsely populated areas. • Similarly, measures that contribute to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region need also be addressed in all cross-border programmes. • The aim in Sweden is to have a few thematic objectives and to concentrate resources. • Regional opportunity to influence and a good anchoring of the content and priorities at the regional and national levels are important prerequisites for successful implementation. • An important condition for the territorial cooperation programmes to contribute to sustainable growth is that they are coordinated with other regional, national and European growth work. • The regional programmes for growth and jobs entail for instance the possibility to pursue cooperation in the context of cross-border transport (TEN-T) and in the context of mobility of labour, in particular within the Baltic region. In the national programme, international cooperation is promoted in the context of thematic objectives 1 and 4, as well as in the context of the Baltis Sea Region Strategy. • Within Rural Development, transnational projects can be supported within cooperation measures and within leader. Projects can be larger flagship projects within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region, or smaller projects that contribute in different ways to sustainable rural development and improved competitiveness in agriculture and forestry.
UK	• As a whole the UK has four key priorities for cooperation programmes: • A clearer focus on meeting genuine economic growth opportunities and challenges; • Better at evidencing the outcome-based impact of genuinely cross border and transnational activities (not duplicating other funding streams); • Ensure a legacy once funding has finished; and • Linked more closely to the UK growth agenda and other ESI funds. • ETC could add value in energy, eco-innovation, natural assets and use of natural resources to drive growth. ETC programme focus particularly on thematic objectives 1, 3, 4 and 6. • Atlantic Strategy welcomed, particularly in the areas of research and technology, cooperation and sharing of information, aquaculture and biotechnology in terms of their growth potential, tourism.

8.2 Annex 2: Model A - Virtual Portal

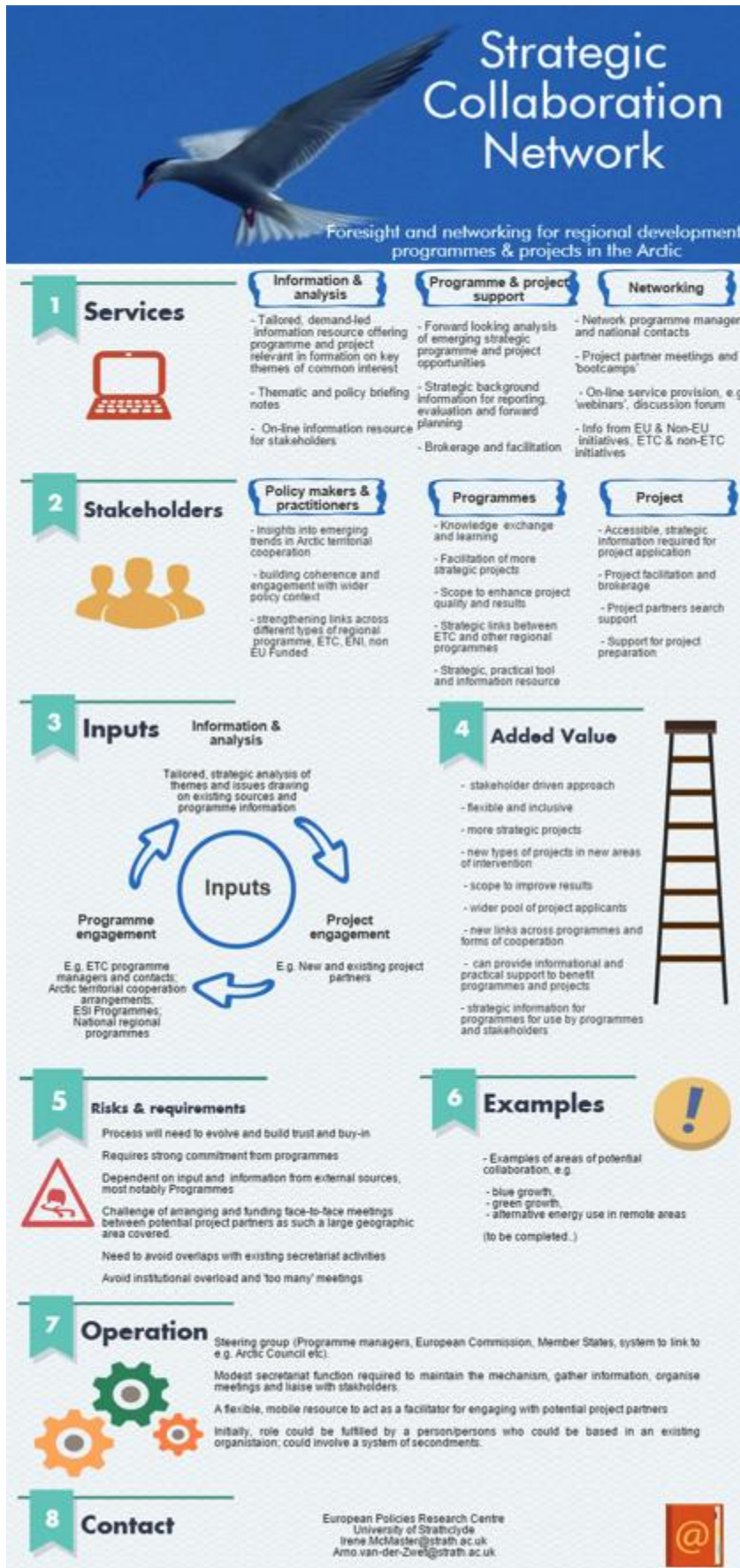## 8.3 Annex 3: Model B - Support Platform

8.4 Annex 4: Model C – Collaboration Network

8.5 Annex 5: Model for consultation

8.6 Annex 6: 'Entry-level' Costs

The following cost table has been developed as an indication of a base 'entry' point for the mechanism, which can be developed and built depending on the final scope and scale of the mechanism. The points referred to as travel hubs are purely illustrative.

Costs

		Day rate	Annual estimate	Annual estimate
Staff cost	Research Fellow[29]	500	36 days	18,000
	Administration Costs	180	20 days	3,600
	Strategic Facilitator[30]	750	48 days	36,000
	Specialist Contractor	650	15 days	9,750
Research				
Travel	**Costs based on departure from Copenhagen**:		2 staff; 4	
	Tromsø return	310	events	2,480
	Rovaniemi return	360	based on 1	2,880
	Inverness return	380	night	3,040
Meeting	**Conference package[31] price:** Based on 1 day meeting and accommodation + use of meeting facilities: Conference package price per person	250	20 participants; 4 events based on 1 night	20,000
Conference Materials		80	4 meetings	320
Overheads				
Accommodation	Tromsø (1 night b&b)	190	2 staff; 4	1,520
	Rovaniemi (1 night b&b)	165	events	1,320
	Inverness (1 night b&b)	135	based on 1 night	1,080
Subsistence & Local Travel	**Estimated costs per day, per person**		2 staff; 4	
	Tromsø	80	events	640
	Rovaniemi	50	based on 1	400
	Inverness	60	night	480
Marketing/publicity/branding				
Web-page	**Web developer costs[32]**		Based on an estimate of 4 days	720 - 2,200

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[29] Based on an allocation of 26 days for two background papers (prepared for annual meetings) and 10 days for two briefings (prepared for 2 further events).

[30] Based on a two-day working week (total 24 days a year).

[31] Costs for the annual meeting may be higher than for the other two events.

[32] Web development entails one-off costs for the first year only. These costs vary depending on the developer and the complexity of website. Estimate done on the basis of a similar website to http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet

8.7   Annex 7: Funding

Interview evidence identified a number of options that could be considered in relation to funding.

- Different options could be applied in different locations, e.g. for a non EU Member State base and for a base in and EU Member State
- Applications could be made to the Committee of the Regions.
- Applications could be made to the European Parliament, previously resources were awarded to the North Sea Commission,   (€250,000 from the European Parliament for a preparatory action looking at a macroregion for the N. Sea).
- Some organisations may be willing to cover a modest commitment of staff time, e.g. travel to meetings and staff time.
- Following the identification of specific themes of interest, Arctic Council working groups could be a valuable strategic link.
- Pooling resources from programmes is problematic due to constrained technical assistance budgets.
- Discussions with the European Commission would be worthwhile.

8.8   Annex 8: Responses

Responses: the following notes the organisations that have submitted responses to interviews or questionnaires. It should be noted that the research was undertaken at a time when a lot of respondents were away on extended period of annual leave. Over 100 organisations and individuals were contacted and sent a background briefing note and outline of a proposed model around which to base discussions. As well as providing research data, this process will have also served a function as an awareness raising and engagement process.

- □□□□□□□□□□□□□□County
- Norland County Council
- Barents Secretariat
- Norrbotten County Council
- Department of European Cooperation, Russian Foreign Ministry
- Ministry Employment and Economy Finland
- Dimension Transport and logistsic partnership
- Northern Dimension institute
- Regional Council of Pohjois-Savo
- Scottish Government
- DG Regio
- Highlands Council
- BMW region
- UHI
- HIE
- Lapland regional council
- Nordic Council
- Nordregio
- Rovaniemi City
- University of Lapland
- University of the Arctic
- Botnia-Atlantica Programme
- Nordic Council of Ministers
- Regional Coucil of Lapland
- Kolarctic ENPI CBC Programme, Regional Council of Lapland, Finland
- UIT The Arctic University of Norway
- Nordland County Council, dep of economic development
- Icelandic Regional Development Instititute
- Interreg Baltic Sea Region MA/JS
- Karelia ENPI CBC
- European Commission (DG NEAR)
- SHETLAND AMENITY TRUST
- Special EU Programmes Body, Cross Border Body set up under the Good Friday Agreement in NI & Ireland
- Arctic Centre, University of Lapland
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise

- Interreg Baltic Sea Region Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat
- MA of Kolarctic ENI
- Managing Authorities Nord program,

Small sample of project partners

- Cork Centre for Architectural Education, University College Cork, Ireland
- Shetland Amenity Trust
- International Resources and Recycling Institute
- NPA project Craft Reach (Norwegian Lead)