

Programme Board for Russia and Western Balkan**Time:** Thursday, 4. February 2010, 10-15**Place:** University of Stavanger, Arne Rettedals hus**Present:** Olav Refsdal (Vestfold University College), Jasna Bogunovic Jakobsen (University of Stavanger), Gunnar Jordfald (The Norwegian Association of Research Institutes - FFA)**Secretariat:** Birgit Jacobsen (Research Council of Norway), Gro Tjore (SIU), Ingeborg Revheim (SIU)**Apologies:** Elisabeth Roman (Narvik University College), Karsten Fledelius (University of Copenhagen), Magny Thomassen (University of Life Sciences), Tove Lyngra (Ministry of Education and Research), Gro Beate Vige (Ministry of Education and Research), Kari Steenstrup Vaalund (Ministry of Education and Research), Harald Sandhåland (MFA- Section for the High North, Resources and Russia), Tobias Svenningsen (MFA- Western Balkans Section)

01/10 Adoption of agenda

It was agreed that the item "project presentations" would take place after lunch.

Decision: The Agenda was adopted.

02/10 Adoption of Minutes from Meeting on 28 October, 02/2009

Minutes

Decision: The Minutes were adopted.

03/10 Legal competence

Decision:

The issue of legal competence was not relevant for the agenda for this meeting.

04/10 Project presentations:**Research project: MAREBASE (Nansen Centre)**

The project is ending in December 2010. The Nansen Centre focuses on the education of young scientists and the development of cooperation. This project has two annual meetings. The Phd students spend 3 months in Norway every year. The information generated through this project is mainly intended for resource management (gvt. level). The main challenge in this project is access to data – still waiting for data from one of its main Russian partners. In general, it seems to be harder to access data now compared to the 1990s, especially oceanographic data. Satellite data are more available to all.

Education project: “Geo-ecological monitoring and rational use of natural resources in the northern oil and gas production regions” (UiS and St.Petersburg State University)

The last phase of the project started in the autumn of 2009 and aims at achieving sustainability for the project. The students in the project receive a double degree as joint degrees are tricky – also on the Norwegian side. The Master courses are taught in English, but the Norwegian students also receive some basic Russian language training, through excellent cooperation with the Norwegian University Centre in St. Petersburg. Currently, there are three Norwegian and 5 Russian students in the project. New students will be accepted in 2010 and will finish in 2012. In terms of sustainability, they are trying to involve various stakeholders: industry, research institutes, national/regional authorities. They are aiming at providing internship opportunities for the candidates in Norway. On the Russian side, they are trying to make links to the industry e.g. through field work.

Decision: The Programme Board takes notice of the information.

THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME WITH RUSSIA

05/10 Summing up: project manager seminar, 10 December 2009 in Oslo

Decision: The Programme Board takes notice of the information and the findings and conclusions from the seminar will be included in the preparations for the final conference of the Programme.

06/10 Monitoring visits 2010

Decision: The Secretariat will plan a visit to Arkhangelsk in week 17 based on the model from the St. Petersburg visit in 2009. At least two Board members should participate for the trip to take effect.

07/10 Final conference, Cooperation programme with Russia

The final conference for the cooperation programme with Russia will be integrated into the larger High North conference of the Research Council. SIU is to take part part in the secretariat for this conference. It is preferable that the Programme also has a separate closing session during the conference. The main question is what the effect of the Norwegian funding has been – what is the impact of the cooperation programme? Russian project partners should be invited to participate. The education part of the programme must also be given attention.

It was agreed that there will not be a separate publication to mark the end of the programme, but the regular publication series of NFR (“Forskning”) and SIU (“Global Knowledge”) will be used as appropriate. The annual report 2010 can also be expanded to include more impact analysis (reporting from the conference).

Decision: The Norwegian Research Council and SIU will make plans for the High North conference 2010 to also encompass the conclusion of the Cooperation Programme with Russia

08/10 Review of the Cooperation Programme with Russia

Decision: The Secretariat will make revisions to the draft Terms of Reference based on the Programme Board's comments, and the draft will be sent to the MFA.

THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME WITH THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES**09/10 Final conference Sarajevo 11-12 March 2010**

Decision: The Secretariat will finalise the conference as planned.

10/10 Information

- A. Consultation Meeting with the MFA, Russia
- B. Consultation Meeting with the MFA, Western Balkans
- C. Publication, Western Balkans

The next meeting of the Programme Board: 8 April in Oslo, 11-15.