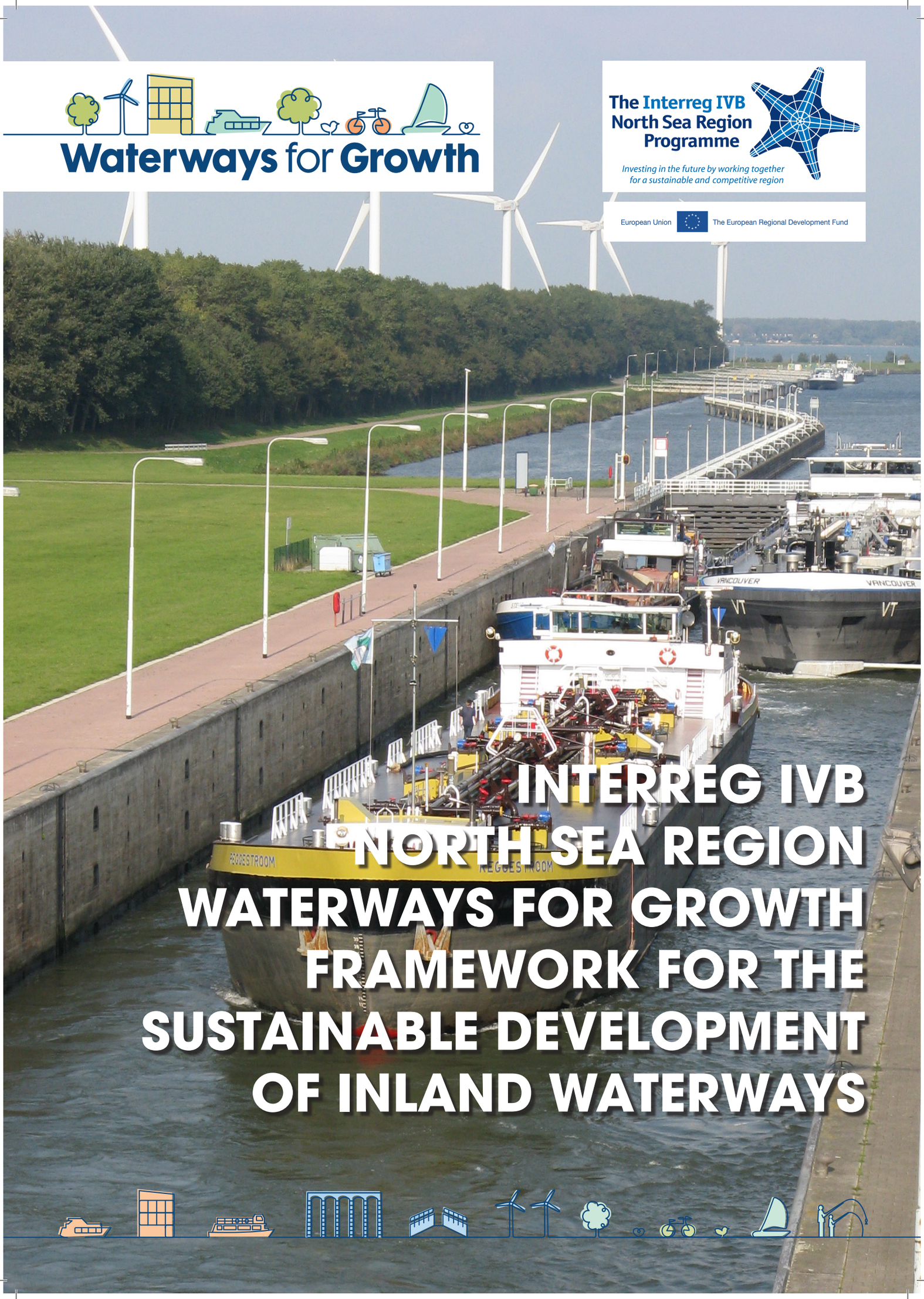
Waterways for Growth

The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme

Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

European Union The European Regional Development Fund



INTERREG IVB NORTH SEA REGION WATERWAYS FOR GROWTH FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF INLAND WATERWAYS

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INSIDE COVER

INTRODUCTION

Navigable inland waterways - rivers, canals and lakes - form a distinctive feature of the region surrounding the North Sea. Most waterways were made navigable and developed for freight transport reasons. Many still perform this function, particularly in terms of connecting North Sea ports with their hinterland. On other waterways, other functions have become more important, particularly tourism and recreation. From a European and often national policy perspective, inland waterways are often considered purely in terms of their transport function. In reality they form a multi-functional green infrastructure resource, delivering a wide range of services to society – economic, social and environmental.

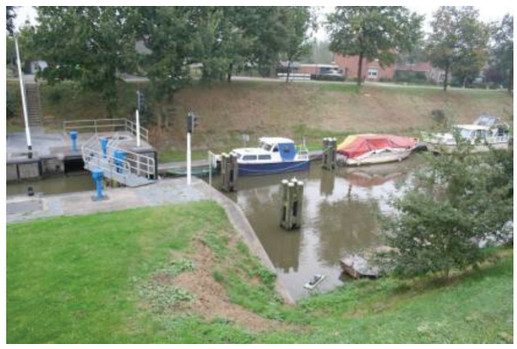
Waterways for Growth is a project developed under the Interreg IVB North Sea Region programme which explores these issues. The project runs from 2009 – 2012 and brings together 15 partners from 6 countries surrounding the North Sea - Belgium (Flanders), Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (see Appendix). Partners include national waterway agencies, regional and local authorities and tourism development bodies. The project is led by Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways), the main national inland waterway authority in the UK.

Waterways for Growth is supported by pilot actions carried out in the partner areas under three themes:-

- Business and product development
- Waterway regeneration
- Sustainable management of the waterways

A key overall output of the project is the development of this transnational Framework for the sustainable development of inland waterways. Drawing upon the project results, this suggests a way forward for the on-going development of the region's waterways, by building on their multi-functional role. It is intended that all or some of the proposed measures and actions in the Framework can be taken forward, whether at a European, national, regional or local levels.

THE MULTI-FUNCTIONAL USE OF INLAND WATERWAYS



As mentioned in the introduction, navigable inland waterways are often viewed in terms of a single function – usually freight transport, which is of course why most inland waterways were made navigable in the first place. In addition funding support for waterways is also often based on single services delivered.

However, in reality, inland waterways form a multi-functional resource that delivers a range of services and benefits to society. These include:-

Economic

Waterside regeneration

Inland waterways form a focus for the economic and social regeneration of adjacent land areas. Waterway banks and towpaths provide "blue" and "green" space around which people live and work. They form part of the country's green infrastructure, which is recognised as being essential for creating attractive, environmentally sustainable communities.

Attractive and welcoming inland waterways
improve the economic performance of regions and localities through:-

- Enhancing civic pride and the image and perceptions of towns, cities and rural areas. Waterways form a key element in their "brand value";
- Attracting private sector investment to regenerate waterside areas. Waterways act as a catalyst for urban and rural regeneration, based on their unique mix of landscape, natural environment and heritage, coupled with public access by land and water. Cities around Europe have been transformed by the development of previously derelict or under-used waterfronts, while waterways create a focus for reinvigorating smaller towns and rural areas. The attractiveness of office and retail developments is enhanced by proximity to high quality water environments, while various studies have shown that waterside residential property values can be up to 20% higher than equivalent properties elsewhere. This means that waterside locations can play a significant role in delivering high quality housing;
- Encouraging increased footfall to support businesses, thus influencing business location decisions.

Within the *Waterways for Growth* partnership, a number of partners have been active in furthering waterside regeneration by creating new waterway links:-

Municipality of Emmen (Netherlands) – Developing the new Erica – Ter Apel waterway connection, which will create a new cruising loop between the canals of Drenthe, Groningen and Friesland and link to waterways in Germany. It will also open up waterside regeneration possibilities in the city of Emmen.

Municipality of Langedijk (Netherlands) – Creating new water routes within the municipality, as a focus for tourism and business development.

City of Bradford (England) – Regeneration of the Canal Road corridor along the route of the former Bradford Canal that connected the city with the rest of the English canal network.

Scottish Canals (Scotland), through the Helix project, which will improve the water connection between the Forth & Clyde Canal and the North Sea and create new green infrastructure to support business development around the towns of Falkirk and Grangemouth.

Business development

Inland waterways support a number of business sectors. These include:-

- Tourism, recreation and the leisure marine industry. The waterway visitor economy supports a range of businesses in both the tourism/recreation and leisure marine industry sectors. These are often small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that have grown up to serve the visitor economy – marinas, holiday hire boat companies, trip boat operators, boat builders, equipment manufacturers & chandlers, hospitality businesses (pubs, restaurants, accommodation etc.) Waterway tourism is particularly important in rural areas, based on the attractive cultural heritage and environmental attributes of the waterway corridor.
- The construction sector benefits from waterway maintenance and development contracts, while the water transport, communications (through fibre-optic cables in towpaths) and renewable energy sectors also support employment.
- Not-for-profit businesses within the social economy have become increasingly important in some regions, delivering social and community activities on and around the waterways;
- The cultural and creative industries are increasingly clustering around waterside sites, based on the arts and the cultural heritage of waterways.

All these sectors are characterised by small & medium-sized enterprises, innovation and high growth potential.

Waterways also provide a focus for training and skills development. Initiatives range from schemes aimed at maintaining traditional heritage skills to more general programmes through welfare-to-work schemes or Intermediate Labour Markets (ILMs),focussing on getting the unemployed back into work or providing training for excluded young people and adults.

Environment

The natural environment

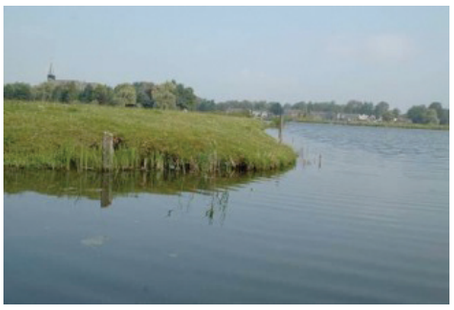
Waterways provide a range of aquatic and riparian habitats, thus supporting biodiversity and enhancing the quality of the landscape. Inland waterways form important habitat corridors for wildlife, providing vital links in an increasingly fragmented landscape. They deliver a cross-section of habitats, from woodland or hedgerow, through grassland to wetlands and open water. The waterway network is easily accessible by the public both from the land and by boat. It constitutes a “living landscape”, encouraging people to interact with, enjoy and understand the natural environment.

There can be potential conflict between navigation, tourism & recreation and the natural environment. The Water Framework Directive categorises most navigable canals and rivers as “artificial or heavily modified water bodies”. This means that the ecological quality requirements are less stringent than for other water bodies. Allowance can be made for modifications needed

for navigation, such as bank protection and dredging. Mitigation measures can reduce any adverse effects eg. through:-

- The implementation of "green" techniques of waterway management, where it is cost effective to do so eg. the use of soft bank protection, such as coir rolls;
- Undertaking channel maintenance work, such as dredging, aquatic weed control and de-watering, using techniques that minimise ecological damage;
- Working with riparian landowners to improve the ecological quality of adjacent farmland, thus extending the environmental corridor based on the waterway, improving ecological connectivity and reducing nutrient and sediment run-off.
- Visitor management measures to control recreational use.

Climate change



In terms of climate change mitigation, waterways can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions through:-

- Stimulating the production of renewable energy through hydro power and heat exchange systems;
- Supplying grey water to industry, which avoids the use of treated potable water;
- Supporting sustainable transport initiatives.

Inland waterways also facilitate climate change adaptation through:-

- Acting as ecological corridors, facilitating the migration of plant and animal species along canal and river routes in response to climate change.
- Facilitating water management. In summer, canals and associated reservoirs can attenuate water to ensure availability for navigation. During winter floods, water levels can be drawn down to provide extra capacity to manage excess water.
- Contributing to city cooling. An early effect of climate change is likely to be increased urban temperatures – the so-called "heat island" effect. Waterways can contribute to alleviating this through the cooling presence of water in cities and by supplying water for vegetation and trees to provide shade.

Sustainable transport

Many inland waterways in the North Sea Region remain important for freight transport and some of the higher capacity waterways form part of the TEN-T network. Moving goods by water is fuel efficient compared with other transport modes, leading to reduced atmospheric pollution and CO2 emission. (CO2 emissions from barges are perhaps one-quarter of that of road transport.)

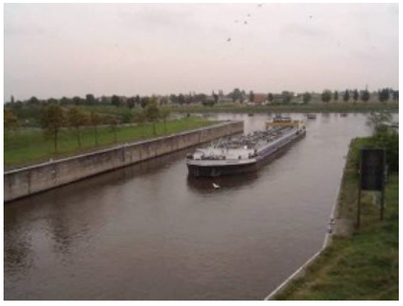
Many of the region's waterways are of comparatively small dimensions. They are unable to take advantage of the economies of scale afforded by high capacity waterways. Nevertheless freight transport on smaller inland waterway can be economic if the conditions are right, particularly if both origin and destination of the goods is waterside. Increasing transport costs (particularly fuel), congestion on other modes and a growing interest in sustainability is causing shippers of goods to look to alternatives to road transport to move goods.

Within *Waterways for Growth*, projects in Varmland (Sweden) and Scotland have investigated and implemented measures to encourage the retention or re-introduction of water freight to these smaller waterways.

Some waterways also provide sustainable transport for passengers. In many cases water

passenger transport tends to be leisure-orientated, but some initiatives, such as the waterbus services in Karlstad (Sweden), promoted through *Waterways for Growth*, combine leisure and commuting functions.

Waterway towpaths and banks are widely used by walkers and cyclists for commuting and other functional activities. Waterway towpaths often form trunk routes in and out of towns & cities. The availability of high quality waterway routes encourages people to get out of their cars for both transport and recreational purposes, thus delivering other benefits such as increased health and well-being.



Cultural heritage

In the North Sea Region, waterways have been important transport routes since pre-historic times and many cities owe their origins to rivers or canals. In Britain in particular, the waterway network is globally significant as the first industrialised transport system that connected materials, manufacture and markets during much of the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This has left a rich legacy in terms of cultural heritage. For example, Canal & River Trust is the third largest owner of historic buildings & structures in the UK.

Waterway heritage tends to be immensely diverse, including:-

- Buildings such as warehouses and lockkeepers cottages;
- Structures, including aqueducts, lock flights, dykes and tunnels;
- Historic boats and shipyards;
- Archaeological remains, such as sunken boats or the buried remains of old harbours;
- Small scale artefacts such as mileposts;
- Archive material;
- Oral traditions, such as song and stories;
- Historic landscapes.

Heritage and heritage activity underpin the many economic and social benefits that waterways deliver, by:-

- Supporting tourism and heritage skills development.;
- Creating attractive places for healthy outdoor recreation;
- Creating a sense of belonging for local communities and an education resource for local children;
- Providing a focus for regeneration initiatives based on historic waterfronts and sites.

SOCIAL

Health & well-being

Active lifestyles are known to be essential for good health and an important contributor to general well-being. Evidence shows that increasing physical activity levels in the population helps prevent or manage many medical conditions and diseases, including coronary heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and obesity. Water-related recreation (both on and beside the water) has an important role in promoting mental well-being and combating stress. Inland waterways support all types of water recreation, whether by powered or unpowered craft. Riverside paths and canal towpaths are well used for recreation by walkers, cyclists, joggers and sightseers, while they provide attractive off-road routes for more functional activities such as commuting and dog walking.

Waterways and waterway paths also support more formal sporting activity, such as angling, canoeing, rowing, sailing, swimming, triathlon, cycling and (in Winter) skating.

Education & learning

Inland waterways can play an important role in formal education, in a diverse range of subjects. Waterways are also important for informal learning and for learning outside the classroom, whether through school visits to waterside sites or museums or through specific programmes and initiatives, such as “floating classrooms”.

Social cohesion

Inland waterways provide opportunities for good quality outdoor access for all sectors of the community close to where people live. Waterway towpaths tend to be flat and level and provide a readily accessible resource for the elderly and for disabled people.
Around Europe there are many cases where waterways support projects aimed at combating social exclusion or promoting community cohesion and thus change peoples’ lives. Many initiatives involve the use of boats to support the work undertaken, which may involve working with, for example, children excluded from school, offenders, ex-offenders and young people at risk of offending, or groups of disabled, elderly or people from BME communities.
Other types of projects aim to get local communities to work together to achieve outcomes that positively benefit their neighbourhoods, thus building community cohesion and promoting social capital. Examples include community events, waterway adoption schemes & clean-ups and projects to improve the quality of the waterway environment and associated open space. Such initiatives often involve the participation of volunteers.

WATERWAYS AND EUROPE 2020

Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth is the new agenda for European Union. It aims to bring together the economic, social and environmental agenda in a more structured and coherent way, taking account of the current economic and financial crisis. It is in effect the successor to the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs (2000).

The strategy will be at the centre of all future EU actions and will drive future funding programmes and policy initiatives. Europe 2020 is based on three inter-related priorities:-

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; and
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

To take these priorities forward, seven flagship initiatives are proposed. Inland waterways can contribute to a number of these:-

Innovation Union
This initiative recognises the importance of encouraging education in science, mathematics & engineering (the so-called STEM subjects) and to focus school curricula on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Inland waterways create an opportunity to focus practical education initiatives in these areas, working with the academic sector. A particular measure under this will relate to European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs). The first of these concerns active & health aging. Others are planned related to topics such as water efficiency and transport emissions.

Youth on the move
Reducing unemployment amongst young people is one of the aims of this initiative, through apprenticeships, work experience and a scheme to promote labour mobility across the EU. Inland waterways already provide employment and training for young people in many countries.

Resource efficient Europe
The aim is to move towards a more resource efficient, low carbon economy. Inland waterways can contribute to this through promoting green technologies in terms of the management of resources, sustainable tourism, sustainable transport and renewable energy (through, for example, hydro power and supply of water to heat & cool buildings).

An industrial policy for the globalisation era
Amongst other actions, enhancing the competitiveness of the European tourism sector is identified as a priority here. Water tourism can contribute here as a European tourism brand, building on local distinctiveness.

An agenda for new skills and jobs
This agenda aims to modernise labour markets by empowering people to acquire new skills. Waterways can contribute here through developing and providing training opportunities in sectors in demand, such as green technologies and heritage conservation.

European platform against poverty
Many inland waterways pass through areas of social deprivation. They create opportunities for people to become involved with their local environment, supporting social cohesion and promoting health and well-being.

WATERWAYS AND EUROPEAN POLICY 2014 – 2020

Waterways also contribute to the emerging new European sectoral policies, which will help take forward Europe 2020. In this section we:-

- Describe how inland waterways can help deliver EU policy;
- Discuss challenges associated with the multi-functional nature of the waterways that might inhibit their contribution;
- Suggest a way forward for maximising the contribution that waterways can make to the future of Europe, by taking forward actions, whether at European, national, regional or local levels.

The discussion concentrates on the role of the smaller regional waterways (ie. less than Class IV), which are the focus of work through *Waterways for Growth*, as opposed to the high capacity TEN-T network. However many of the opportunities and issues discussed are also applicable to these larger dimension waterways.
To take advantage of the opportunities presented, appropriate governance structures need to be in place to facilitate waterway management and development. These need to ensure wide stakeholder involvement to maximise the opportunities arising from the multi-functional use of inland waterways.

Regional Policy

Policy
Europe 2020 European Commission proposals for regulations under the Structural Funds (2011), particularly those related to European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and European Territorial Cooperation

Inland waterway opportunities

- Green (& blue) infrastructure, creating attractive communities that support inward investment & jobs and enhance the quality of life of local people
- As a catalyst for urban & rural regeneration, based on the attributes of waterways – a mix of landscape, natural environment & cultural heritage
- Directly supporting the creation & development of businesses – particularly tourism & recreation-related
- Directly supporting employment, training & skills

Challenges

- The financial crisis has put pressure on public sector funding for inland waterway management authorities
- Waterway-based businesses are often insular and inward-looking in their approach

What needs to be done

- Greater recognition of the multi-functional role of waterways in delivering smart, sustainable, inclusive growth
- Support for waterway infrastructure to create attractive communities and to drive forward regeneration
- Encouragement for networking and clustering of waterway-based businesses and the promotion of innovation
- Support for measures to grow funding / in-kind support for waterway management from the private and not-for-profit sectors eg. From property developers, Through social enterprises

Tourism

Policy

Europe, the world's no.1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe (2010)

Inland waterway opportunities

- Inland waterways in Europe form a unique tourism brand, based on natural & cultural heritage, which can be marketed at an international level. Waterways can be accessed on foot or by bike, as well as by all types of boats
- Niche waterway tourism products, such as eco-tourism, inland cruising etc.

Challenges

- Limited season in northern European countries
- Impact of Winter ice on waterways in northern European countries (also a niche tourism opportunity)
- Development of new tourism offers

What needs to be done

- Support for the active promotion of European waterways as a brand to countries outside Europe, within a wider "Europe brand" if appropriate
- Support for innovation, clustering / networking & extension of the season within the waterway-based tourism sector
- Support for the increased use of new technology for promotion and interpretation
- Support for the development of real or virtual tourism "routes" based on inland waterways

Education & skills

Policy

Europe 2020 – Youth on the move; An agenda for new skills & jobs

Lifelong learning programme – Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig

New skills for new jobs: Anticipating and matching labour market and skills
Social Business Initiative: Creating a favourable climate for social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and innovation

Inland waterway opportunities

- Education & learning for young people, based on waterways and their attributes – "learning outside the classroom" eg. about the Water Framework Directive
- Waterways as a vehicle for training & skills and the creation of pathways to work – particularly related to construction, heritage & environmental skills
- Environment & heritage-related volunteering, based on inland waterways, often involving older citizens

Challenges

- How best to get young people active in learning about waterway issues

What needs to be done

- Support for exchanges & placements through the Lifelong Learning programmes
- Support for waterway-based social enterprises to deliver employment & training programmes associated with inland waterways, particularly those targeted at disadvantaged groups – the

long-term unemployed, young people and ex-offenders
- Support for volunteering schemes, particularly those that bring the generations together

Maritime

Policy

An integrated maritime policy for the European Union
Blue Growth: Opportunities for marine & maritime sustainable growth, 2012
North Sea Commission Strategy – Contributing to the Europe 2020 (North Sea Commission publication, 2012)

Inland waterway opportunities

- Linkages between inland and maritime areas in terms of transport, tourism (including cruising and yachting), recreation & cultural heritage

What needs to be done

- Greater recognition of the linking role of inland waterways in Maritime policy and measures to develop the maritime economy
- Involvement of the inland waterway sector in marine industry clusters and centres of excellence

Natural environment

Policy

Europe 2020: Resource efficient Europe
Our life insurance – our natural capital: EU biodiversity strategy to 2020
Water Framework Directive
Birds & Habitats Directives

Inland waterway opportunities

Nature & biodiversity
- Halting biodiversity decline, by the conservation of species, habitats and landscapes, taking account of the other functions of waterways
- Facilitating ecological connectivity along water corridors
- Educating people about the role waterways have for nature & biodiversity

Environment and health / quality of life
- Improving the quality of the urban environment through providing green infrastructure and supporting walking and cycling

Water supply
- Particularly water supply to industry, thus avoiding the need to use treated potable supplies

Challenges

- Balancing the natural environment of the waterways with navigation & economic development
- Variable interpretation of EU environmental legislation between Member States eg. Natura 2000; Water Framework Directive
- Resource requirements for dealing with alien invasive species, which are often water-related and spread along water corridors
- Costs associated with removing sediment from waterways, particularly dredging
- Costs associated with dealing with anti-social behaviour, including litter, dumped waste and graffiti

What needs to be done

- Greater recognition of & support for green infrastructure as both a driver of economic growth and an environmental resource
- Europe-wide approach and funding for tackling alien invasive species
- Support for the development of innovative approaches for maximising the biodiversity value of waterways, while supporting navigation
- Support for encouraging better environmental behaviour amongst recreational users of waterways and the development of more energy-efficient and less polluting / ecologically-damaging vessels
- Support for implementation of the Water Framework Directive
- Greater clarity & consistency regarding the application of EU environmental legislation on inland waterways

Agriculture

Policy

Common Agricultural Policy 2014 – 2020

Inland waterway opportunities

- Supporting the environmental management of adjacent agricultural land
- Supporting farming diversification & new rural businesses through waterway recreation & tourism in particular
- Supplying water for irrigation and stock

Challenges

- Nutrient and silt run-off from adjacent agricultural land imposes costs on waterway managers in terms of dealing with plant & algal blooms and the need for dredging

What needs to be done

- Support for a landscape-wide approach to rural development, based on waterway corridors and bringing together the wider environmental management of the land & water, with economic development (farm diversification, tourism etc.)
- Funding & support to deal with the adverse consequences of agricultural & forestry practices – eg. nutrients & siltation

Climate change

Policy

Europe 2020: Resource efficient Europe
Roadmap for moving to a low carbon economy in 2050

Inland waterway opportunities

Climate change mitigation through:-

- More efficient and cleaner transport – switch from road to water freight & passenger transport; and walking & cycling on waterway towpaths.
- Renewable and lower carbon fossil fuels for power generation - hydro power; heat exchange for heating / cooling buildings; wind power (on waterway banks etc.)

Climate change adaptation:-

- Water management in response to flooding

- Supporting city cooling to combat the heat island effect. (Waterways are cooling agents in their own right and they may supply water for the irrigation of shade-providing vegetation.)
- Providing migration corridors for water-related species in response to climate change

Challenges

- Future availability of water for navigation, due to competition from other uses as a result of climate change.
- Additional costs for waterway management authorities to deal with adverse effects of climate change eg. increased algal blooms; increased pressures on structures, such as embankments; increased instances of flooding.

What needs to be done

- Greater awareness, recognition and valuation of the full range of ecosystems services that inland waterways deliver, including those related to climate change
- Support for initiatives to mitigate climate change – sustainable transport, renewable energy
- Support for initiatives to adapt to climate change eg. flood management; city cooling schemes etc.
- Development of integrated waterway initiatives incorporating navigation with flood risk management, sustainable drainage and the supply of water for cooling buildings / processes.

Transport

Policy

Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area: Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system
NAIADES action programme for inland waterways

Inland waterway opportunities

- Sustainable transport as an alternative to road transport in terms of:-
  - water freight & passenger services
  - walking & cycling on waterway towpaths & banks

Challenges

- Cost competitiveness of road transport compared with inland waterway transport on small-dimension waterways, particularly where transhipment is involved
- Lack of awareness amongst shippers of the inland waterway mode
- Additional costs of maintenance for waterway authorities in maintaining small dimension waterways for limited volumes of freight
- Loss of sites for transhipping cargo, particularly in cities
- A lack of suitable vessels that can optimise payload on small waterways
- A lack of trained crews

What needs to be done

The NAIADES action programme for inland waterways is addressing many of these issues in terms of markets, fleets, jobs & skills, image and infrastructure (multi-modal networks & river information systems). However more needs to be done in terms of the smaller dimension waterways, particularly in terms of:-

- Greater understanding and recognition of the full range of ecosystem service benefits delivered in the appraisal of water freight transport schemes and in EU / national government support for transport by waterway

- Support for technological innovation in logistics systems for freight transport on smaller inland waterways eg. vessel design, cargo handling equipment etc.
- Support for the use of new technology in managing waterway infrastructure to improve efficiency and reduce costs (eg. remote operation of structures, mobile working etc.)
- Grant support (capital & revenue) for inland waterway freight & passenger services to encourage a shift from road transport
- Recognition of the green infrastructure role of waterway towpaths and banks in encouraging sustainable transport through walking & cycling, particularly in terms of creating "trunk" routes within towns & cities
- Recognition of the multi-functional role of inland waterways in future waterways policy eg,. NAIADES

Culture

Policy

On a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world

Inland waterway opportunities

- Historic inland waterways as a unique part of a common European heritage
- The origins of historic towns & cities and historic maritime industry along waterways

Challenges

- Heritage structures at risk due to pressure on public sector funding for waterways

What needs to be done

- Support for initiatives to conserve and promote public access to waterway heritage & landscapes and to build on this heritage as a driver for economic growth eg. through tourism or regeneration of waterfronts
- Promote exchanges / dialogue between inland waterway cultural operators in the context of common heritage (including countries outside the EU that have been influenced by European waterway development)

Health

Policy

Together for health: A strategic approach for the EU 2008 – 2013

Inland waterway opportunities

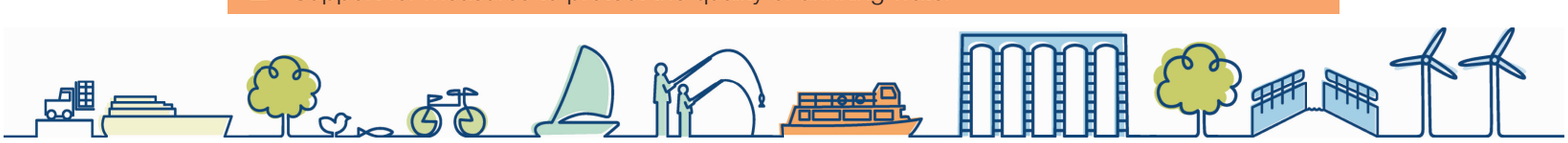
- Potable water supply (for drinking)
- Promoting physical health and mental well-being through the recreation & sustainable transport use of waterways and towpaths

Challenges

- Maintaining water quality for drinking water

What needs to be done

- Greater recognition of the role of waterways in delivering health & well-being benefits to local people, particularly in inner city areas where there are often few alternative opportunities and for an ageing population
- Support for measures to protect the quality of drinking water



Research

Policy
Horizon 2020: The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

What needs to be done

- Research priorities:-
  - Identification & valuation of the ecosystems services delivered by inland waterways
  - Opportunities for the development of freight transport on small dimension inland waterways
  - Development of new technology solutions eg. For waterway management; communicating with users
- Development of an Inland Waterway Innovation Hub to support the development & exchange of innovative products & practices

PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

The *Waterways for Growth* partnership has identified a number of themes and potential actions as priorities for future cooperation at a transnational level. There is potential for cooperation at a number of levels, ranging from exchange of knowledge to joint development and implementation of policy, approaches and actions. The themes identified relate to the policy areas outlined above. They also support a number of the investment priority themes identified for future structural fund cooperation under proposals for ERDF, ESF and European Territorial Cooperation for 2014-20. Themes relate to:-

- Business development & entrepreneurship, especially in terms of SMEs
- Climate change
- Protecting the environment and protecting, promoting & developing cultural heritage
- Sustainable transport
- Attractive & sustainable communities - promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
- Education, skills & life-long learning

Potential actions

Business development & entrepreneurship

Action	Possible topics
Development of the creative industries	- Using waterway environment / heritage as a stimulus for developing the creative industries - Clustering of activity - Re-use of underused waterside buildings & sites - Enhancing the waterway environment / heritage
Waterway cruising routes	- Developing & promoting direct water connections between waterways / waterside locations - Flotilla sailing development
Cruise ships	- Development of inland (canal/river) and inland-sea cruising
Attracting tourists from outside the EU	- Drawing upon the role of waterways / ports in facilitating past emigration - Targeting genealogical connections - Promoting multi-location visits to partner areas - Developing packages / visitor welcome aimed at specific markets
Multi-modal networks	- Development & promotion of multi-modal networks accessible by boat, canoe, bike & foot - Development of interchange hubs between modes, as a focus for business development / clustering - Development of international standards / classification for interchange hubs
Services based on new technologies	- Mobile information services for visitors (both land & water-based) - New technology apps aimed at young people
Support for waterway infrastructure	- Support for the maintenance and development of the basic waterway infrastructure that underpins the above opportunities for developing businesses and creating economic growth & jobs

Climate change

Action	Possible topics
The role of waterways in city cooling (in response to the heat island effect)	- Research into the cooling effect of water within cities - Development & implementation of strategies for maximising the impact of waterways in terms of both direct cooling and the supply of water for irrigating vegetation cover
Carbon reduction strategies	- Development & implementation of strategic approaches for waterway management authorities to reduce carbon emissions from their own activities
"Living on the water"	- Innovative concepts for floating communities
Integrated sustainable waterway initiatives	- To incorporate navigation with flood risk management, sustainable drainage and the supply of water for cooling buildings / processes.

Natural environment & cultural heritage

Action	Possible topics
Innovative approaches to enhancing the natural environment of waterways	- Joint development of approaches - Implementation & evaluation of pilot actions
Approaches for the sustainable restoration of waterways	- Conserving & enhancing biodiversity, while restoring navigation to abandoned waterways
Promoting good environmental behaviour amongst recreational boaters	- Joint codes of practice, promotion etc. - Innovative approaches to reducing pollution from boats / boating-related activity - Developing & promoting environmentally-friendly propulsion systems for boats
Alien invasive species	- Development & implementation of joint approaches to dealing with alien invasive species in the water environment
Route of waterway heritage	- Development & promotion of routes between waterway heritage sites, accessible by land, water or virtually

Sustainable transport

Action	Possible topics
Freight transport on small inland waterways	- Incentivising & promoting freight transport - Overcoming institutional, technical & market barriers to freight development - Development & piloting of innovative logistics systems
Water passenger transport	- Developing & piloting of water passenger services
Walking & cycling development	- Development of waterway banks & towpaths for walking & cycling as an alternative to the car - Creation of waterway trunk routes in and out of city / town centres - Management of interaction / potential conflicts between commuting and recreational use of bank & towpaths - Links to health & well-being

Attractive & sustainable communities

Action	Possible topics
Development of the social economy for managing tourist / cultural resources	- Opportunities for museums & other heritage facilities - Potential for involving older people (link to active aging) - Links to skills development & labour mobility
Developing & promoting inclusive design for waterway environments & facilities	- Securing access to the resource for all sectors of the community, including disabled people etc.
Waterways & young people	- Developing programmes to involve young people in the heritage & environment of waterways and further Youth on the Move

Education, skills & life-long learning

Action	Possible topics
Heritage skills training	- Development & implementation of a transnational approach to the retention of heritage skills associated with historic inland waterways
Professional exchanges	- Transnational staff & knowledge exchanges between organisations involved in the management & development of waterways
Training & support for waterway-related entrepreneurs	- Gain a better understanding of what entrepreneurs need from public authorities involved in waterway management - Increase awareness of opportunities amongst entrepreneurs & encourage clustering of activity

The way forward

To further on-going cooperation in these and other fields, the *Waterways for Growth* partnership has established a Hub to support the creation of innovative approaches to the management and development of waterways and further on-going transnational cooperation within the sector. The Hub provides opportunities for organisations both within and outside the partnership to come together to share ideas and approaches and develop joint initiatives. It can be accessed at:- http://www.waterwaysforgrowth.eu/
Social networking sites have also been successfully used through the course of the project.
http://www.facebook.com/#!/waterwaysforgrowth?fref=ts
http://www.linkedin.com/groups/waterways-growth-4122426?goback=%2Eanp_4122426_1355321863039_1

It has also been suggested that a useful way for the project partners to keep in contact with one another would be through the various European Boat Shows that take place annually. Many of the project partners attend these events anyway, so it would be relatively easy to arrange informal meetings at the shows in order to maintain the close working relationships that the project has fostered over the last three years. By utilising key events such as these, it will negate the need to organise specific meetings that could be difficult to arrange now that the project is drawing to a close.

INDICATIVE DATES (2013)

London	12 - 20th January
Dusseldorf	19 - 27th January
Gothenburg	2 – 10th February
Belgian	2 – 4th & 8 – 10th February
Oslo	13 – 17th March

APPENDIX

WATERWAYS FOR GROWTH PARTNERSHIP

Partner	Country
Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways)	UK – Lead partner
Scottish Canals (formerly British Waterways Scotland)	UK
Telemark County Council	Norway
Varmland County Administrative Board	Sweden
City of Karlstad	Sweden
Forshaga Municipality	Sweden
Grums Municipality	Sweden
Hammaro Municipality	Sweden
Kils Municipality	Sweden
BIS Bremerhaven Touristik	Germany
Municipality of Emmen	Netherlands
Municipality of Langedijk	Netherlands
Stichting Recreatietoervaart Nederland (SRN)	Netherlands
Toerisme Scheldeland	Belgium
Province of West Flanders	Belgium
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	UK

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Waterways for Growth

The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme

Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

European Union The European Regional Development Fund