

**Sakshandsamar:**

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**Vår ref.**

Sak nr.: 17/8625-3

Gje alltid opp vår ref. ved kontakt

**Dykkar ref.**

North Sea Commission

Executive Committee

**Dato**

LEIKANGER, 07.12.2017

## Expression of interest to host North Sea Commission (NSC) Secretariat

### Dear Mrs President and members of the Executive Committee,

Further to the call for interest dated 21st September, the Council of Western Norway (CWN) would like to express its interest in hosting the North Sea Commission Secretariat for the next period as outlined in the call.

### About CWN and its ties to NSC

The Council is made up of four counties all of which are North Sea Commission members – Rogaland, Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane and Møre og Romsdal. Together these four regions make up the geographical area of Western Norway. The Council is a political collaboration between the four regions, with representation at the highest political level from each county council.

The Council discusses and decides on issues of common interest and relevance for its four members, including issues on, for example, transport, shipping, pollution and emissions, climate change, tourism, common infrastructure, industry, internationalisation and cultural heritage. The NSC priority issues are therefore well aligned with CWN policy issues.

Each county has been active in North Sea Commission in their own right through participation in the working groups where there is participation both on the political and administrative level. In addition, Rogaland hosted the advisor position for the Marine Resources Group from June 2012 to September 2014 when it was moved and hosted by Hordaland until November 2017.

Hordaland has previous experience running the Secretariat from 2014-2016 under the Presidency of Cllr Tom-Christer Nilsen and, in the final months, under the then acting President, Cllr Kerstin Brunnström. The Council therefore still has existing knowledge and networks and can secure a smooth transfer and good follow-up work from the current Secretariat without losing valuable knowledge and time.

There are already close links between the CWN and the North Sea Region Programme. The national contact point for the programme is hosted by CWN and is also a member of the programme Steering Committee. Hordaland also has a position on the programme Monitoring Committee where the national contact point also has observer status.

The current NSC Executive Committee member for Norway is Cllr Marianne Chesak from Rogaland. Cllr Chesak is also deputy member of the CPMR Political Bureau for Norway where she meets regularly in addition to Vice President, Gunn Marit Helgesen.

## Proposal

The proposal is for the Council for Western Norway to host the Secretariat at one of the four member counties. The Executive Secretary, and an additional part-time member of staff would therefore be formally employed by one of the county councils. The position of Executive Secretary would either be filled by an existing member of staff with the relevant background and experience or would be recruited by the hosting council. It is not yet decided which council would host the Secretariat. This will be decided at the next meeting of CWN in the new year.

It is expected that a part-time member of staff would also be located in Brussels. CWN is represented in Brussels through two Brussels representation offices. These organisations are membership based. The counties of Hordaland, Sogn & Fjordane and Møre & Romsdal are members of West Norway Office whilst Rogaland is a member of the Stavanger Region European Office.

These organisations are currently fully staffed and a solution for including NSC secretariat staff has not yet been discussed. However, we are confident that we will be able to find a good solution where one or both of these offices is involved in NSC work.

There are certain conditions attached to our proposal at this time. These conditions are related to the financial obligations in running the Secretariat. Our internal discussions around finalising the model are still ongoing. CWN expects to have the financial issues clarified by the first spring meeting, 15th February 2018. Therefore, any negotiations or discussions are currently on a conditional basis.

We hope our proposal is of interest and we look forward to discussing the details with you in the new year.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Følling  
County Council Governor/Mayor

Tore Eriksen  
County Chief Executive

*Brevet er elektronisk godkjent og er utan underskrift*

### Mottakar

North Sea Commission  
Executive Committee

### Kopi til:

Møre og Romsdal fylkeskommune  
Rogaland fylkeskommune  
Hordaland fylkeskommune