

Revision of the Community Guidelines Decision No 1692/96/EC

Dear Miss Loyola De Palacio, President for the Directorat, Transport and Energy.

The committee, which is called "The High Level Group", presented its report on 30 June 2003. One of the main tasks has been to recommend a number of prioritised projects in the transport network in the enlarged Europe.

We, the undersigned, have noted that the northern parts of Sweden and Finland to a very limited degree are represented among the prioritised projects. Despite a limited population, the region has a significant and important export industry, based on the large amounts of natural resources in the area. A good modern infrastructure is necessary and vital for the development of this industry and the growth of the region, in the spirit which was decided at the summit meeting in Lisboa

Transport links in east/westerly directions, guarantees of further expansion of the TEN-T corridors in the northern parts of Sweden and Finland, pre-requisites for effective shipping and developed intermodality are the demands that will be made on the infrastructure to enable the development of the region and link it with the other parts of the union.

Sweden, supported by Finland, has suggested the link Boden-Kemi as a cross-border project to the High Level Group, but this was not in the priority list. The project is a missing link and a cross-border project that is of great importance for Sweden and Finland, as well as for third country states, Norway and Russia.

"Motorways of the Baltic Sea" is a vital project for the Gulf of Bothnia, since the region between Skellefteå and Oulu transport almost 27 million tonnes by sea per year. The concentration of industry connected to the forest and ore resources is very high in the coastal area. Good shipping conditions are of great importance to enable the northern industrial area to develop, and overcome the disadvantages of a long transport distance to the market. The proposition from Sweden and Finland concerning fairways, icebreaking, ports and hinterland access and monitoring systems is supported by the industries in the region.

The above mentioned projects are essential to accomplish and develop intermodality in the Barents region, which will benefit the competitiveness of the products produced in the region. Increased intermodality in the north will also contribute to decrease the congestion problems in Central Europe, where most of the companies around the Gulf of Bothnia have their main markets.



LULEÅ NÄRINGSLIV AB



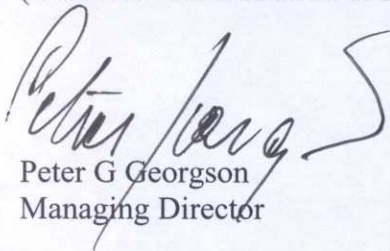
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We support the proposition from Sweden and Finland to include the project Boden-Kemi among the priority projects and also wish to stress the importance of securing and developing the Bothnian Corridor. We also support the proposition for "Motorways of the Baltic Sea" into the Bothnian Arc.

Yours sincerely

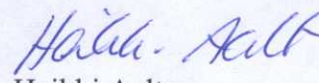
Luleå and Oulu 2003-08-25

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