



President's Annual Report - 2009

Friends and Colleagues

Firstly I would like to welcome delegates to this our 19th Annual General Meeting and Conference and thank Gemeente Den Haag for the hospitality they have extended to us. There is always a large amount of work done in the background to prepare an event like this and I appreciate the efforts of all those involved.

When I accepted the role of President last year I planned to work with the Secretariat to achieve several aims for my time in office: to increase the professionalism of the organisation, to increase our influence in Europe and to expand our membership. I feel that as an organisation we have made progress towards those aims in the last year.

KIMO has produced a new website with updated features, such as video clips, and simplified layout to ensure KIMO members can find the information they need. A new update brochure has been developed, which you should have received in your conference pack, promoting the work of the organisation to potential new members, politicians and senior officials. The KIMO Kontakt newsletter has been reinstated to highlight to our own members the ongoing work of the organisation and how it is representing them at the highest political levels.

The organisation's work on marine litter has also been recognised in the high profile book "Plastic Soup" which focuses on microplastics in the marine environment. National Geographic promoted the book launch and I was able to participate in a TV debate on the issue helping raise the profile of the organisation in the wider public. KIMO, in partnership with Plymouth University, has applied for funding for a three-year research project into the environmental effect of microplastics and I hope we are successful as this is a serious pollution issue.

In the EU we have been intrinsically involved at all levels in the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. KIMO is the only NGO in Europe representing local government to be invited to participate in the Marine Strategy Coordination Group and the Working Group on Good Environmental Status

(GES). Both of which will play a key role in implementing the directive over the next 10 years. KIMO also has continued to lobby the EU on container ship issues such as compensation from non-toxic pollution and lost containers. A campaign pack has been sent out to all members including reports, background information and a draft letter to lobby their MEP's and an initial meeting has been held with the Chair of the European Parliament Transport Committee to discuss how we can take this issue forward.

KIMO membership has also increased in the last year and in particular in the Baltic and in Germany where Insel und Halligkonferenz have become associate members. KIMO has also gained observer status at HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission). This will allow us to present the concerns of our Baltic members directly to Baltic governments and influence policy in the region with the added dimension that HELCOM also considers shipping issues. The Baltic Forum has also applied for Interreg IVb funding to develop a FFL Baltic initiative and is developing a project on coastal erosion lead by Ystad Municipality.

The Networks have also been working hard on behalf of their members. In the Netherlands/Belgium the network has been working with the Ministry of Transport and Water Management and the North Sea Foundation on the "Wandering along the Sea" project. It aims to reduce the amount of litter left on the beach by visitors and tourists, by amongst other things, displaying litter collected from the beach in public areas. The project will involve nine municipalities along the Dutch Coast. The Fishing for litter initiative also continues to expand with two new harbours in IJmuiden and Scheveningen bringing the total number to 10.

KIMO Denmark has hosted its first Thematic Group on coastal issues where there is a desire to work toward standardisation of data collection in relation to waste originating from the sea. The network is also about to publish a report that documents the amount and costs of marine litter cleaned up at sea by fishermen or by municipalities through beach cleaning. This report contains information about the character and amounts of rubbish as well as present recommendations for future monitoring, treatment and regulation. A pamphlet dealing with marine pollution has been produced the purpose is to communicate the message about litter in 3 languages - English, German and Danish. The folder will be distributed to tourists and citizens at the coast.

In the UK the network has benefited from a full time coordinator and has held its first annual conference in Aberdeen on lessons to be learnt from the MSc Napoli Incident and has started directly targeting coastal municipalities to increase membership. The network has responded to a UK government consultation on marine protected areas and written to the Scottish and UK governments about non-toxic pollution, container shipping, radioactive leaks from nuclear submarines and the introduction of heavier fuel oil by the state owned ferry

service in Scotland. Also with Fishing for litter expanding in both Scotland and South West England the coordinator has started work on developing a National Fishing for Litter Strategy for the UK.

KIMO Sweden have held regular meetings for their members where they have held discussions with representatives from a coastal zone management project covering the Swedish part of the Skagerrak. The network has also been appointed a position on the board of the Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation, which has been taken up by Cllr Andreason who attended the last board meeting.

KIMO's smaller members have also been working hard over the year and in Faeroe following on from the successful FFL trail a permanent scheme is now being developed in Toftir harbour. The Isle of Man has also been following up on British Irish Council commitments on Fishing for Litter and is investigating presenting a report on the containership issues.

I feel that the activities I have outlined show that we are making good progress towards our goals and I plan to working closely with the Secretariat, Board Members, National Coordinators to ensure that KIMO continues to provide the service that our members expect. I would like to thank you all for the hard work you have put in over the last year and I look forward to my next year as President.

Thank you.

Mayor Albert de Hoop (President)
Gemeente Ameland
The Netherlands