

**The 3rd International
Rural Cluster Conference**

**1-2 September 2009
Bornholm, Denmark**

BACKGROUND


The focus on clusters throughout Europe and the rest of the world has grown strong within the past 3-5 years. And today an increasing number of countries and regions have initiated cluster-based economic development programs.


A challenge in preparing these programs is how to identify and work with clusters in remote areas, as these clusters often are not well captured when applying the traditional classification codes for co-location of industries when mapping clusters. Another challenge is how to secure public support to develop clusters in remote areas, as development of clusters and the flow of funds going into cluster development tend to focus on high tech sectors such as ICT and Life Science in metropolises, whereas low tech sectors like i.e. handicraft, wellness and regional food specialties, which are often drivers of economic development in remote areas, only capture the attention from policy makers in these areas.

As a consequence of globalization, clusters in remote areas are facing new competitive challenges and opportunities. With the development of the internet and falling prices on transportation and production, suppliers and buyers in remote areas now have access to the global market. A key issue for clusters in remote areas is how to utilize these new opportunities.

For clusters in remote areas to grasp the opportunity of globalization, they need to re- think their strategy. In this process they need to identify their specialized regional knowledge and how it can be utilized in global value chains. And they need to identify new possibilities for collaboration with other clusters and with specialized knowledge providers, located outside their own geography, to increase the innovative capacity of their clusters in order to contribute to the economic development of their regional economy.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVE

-  To provide cluster stakeholders with the latest knowledge and tools to work with
 - Regional cluster based economic development
 - Identifying clusters in remote areas
 - Setting new strategic direction for development of cluster in remote areas

-  To share experience on how to work with clusters in remote areas between the participants at the conference

THE CLUSTER CONFERENCE WILL FOCUS ON FOUR THEMES:

1. What are policy makers looking for when supporting cluster development?
2. How to identify and work with clusters in remote areas
3. Cluster cases: Key successes and challenges
4. Link-up strategies: How to set new strategic directions for clusters in remote areas

3rd International Rural Cluster Conference

Program

Pre-conference arrangement – Monday, 31 August

20.00 – 22.00 Pre-conference arrangement at Baltic Sea Glass
Welcome to Bornholm by Business Ambassador, Lene Groenning

Baltic Sea Glass is a glass studio and -gallery located in a converted egg farm. The glass blowing is focused on design and production of functional tabletop glassware and one-of-a-kind works for gallery and museum exhibitions around the world.

Tuesday, 1 September

WELCOME

10.00 – 10.20 Welcome to Bornholm
Lars Nørby, Chairman of the Danish Growth Forum

10.20 – 10.40 Global trends on clusters
Juanma Manuel Esteban, President of TCI

10.40 – 11.00 Objectives of the conference and presentation of *the program*
Lotte Langkilde and Thomas Winther, Moderator

WHAT ARE POLICY MAKERS LOOKING FOR?

The purpose of this session is to get an understanding of the needs that policy makers have, when formulating cluster-based economic development programs. After each presentation there will be room for clarifying questions and discussion.

11.00 – 11.30 Promoting the competitiveness of our regional clusters: Opportunities, Needs and Challenges.
Mikkel Hemmingsen, Head of Regional Development, Region of Southern Denmark

11.30 – 12.00 15 years of cluster policy in Catalonia: Lessons learned and the way forward
Alberto Pezzi, Head of Analysis of the Observatory of Industrial Foresight of the Catalan Government Center for Innovation and Business Development (TBD)

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch

13.00 – 13.30 "What cluster activities should the public sector support? And what is the ideal funding rate?
Gerd Meyer zu Köcher, Deputy General Manager of VDI/VDI-IT, Head of Agency Competence Networks, Germany

13.30 – 14.00 "What cluster activities should the private sector support. Key messages from the Danish Mechatronics Cluster"
Hans Henrik Fischer, Consultant

14.00 – 14.30 Coffee break

14.30 – 15.00 From public to private financed cluster activities. Key messages from 10 years experiences from the cluster organization Clusterland Upper Austria.
Christian Altman, Clustermanager, Mechatronics Cluster, Upper Austria

15.20 – 15.40 Panel discussion

15.40 – 16.00 Coffee Break

IDENTIFYING AND WORKING WITH CLUSTERS IN REMOTE AREAS

The purpose of this session is to introduce different methods for identifying clusters in remote areas. Focus will be on the use of data and qualitative methods.

16.00 – 16.30 Rural and remote clusters – how do you find them? And how do they compete?
Stuart Rosenfeld, Regional Technology Strategies, US

16.30 – 17.00 Identifying emerging clusters in remote regions – a methodological approach
Kim Møller, Chairman of the Board, Oxford Research

17.00 – 17.30 Cluster studies as drivers for cluster based economic development in rural Minnesota, US
Burke Murphy, Regional Administrator for the Metropolitan Area Minnesota for the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), US

17.30 – 18.00 Plenary Discussion

18.10 Transfer back to hotels

20.00 Conference dinner (at Hotel Romantik)
Speaker at the conference dinner
Ifor Ffowcs Williams, Clusternavigators, New Zealand

Wednesday, 2 September

The purpose of day 2 of the conference is twofold. First to present and discuss the learning's from a number of practical cluster cases. And second to discuss among participants new directions and strategies for clusters in remote areas.

08.20 Transfer from hotels to conference venue

09.00 – 09.15 Introduction of day 2 of the conference
Thomas Winther, Moderator

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT IN REMOTE AND LESS POPULATED AREAS: - SUCCESS STORIES AND MAIN CHALLENGES

The purpose of this session is to provide participants with different examples of how clusters have developed in remote and less populated areas. Focus will be on both successes and challenges. Following the presentations there will be discussion in plenary.

09.15 – 09.45 The Norwegian Mountain Tourism Cluster
Kjell Gunnar Dahle, Chairman of the Board for the Norwegian Mountain Tourism Cluster (Innovation Fjellturisme), Norway

09.45 – 10.15 Towards Leather Together Cluster Initiative: The case of Taytu designer hand bags
Teshome Kebede Redie, CEO Genuine Leather Craft Ltd. Etophia

10.15 – 10.30 Coffee break

10.30 – 11.00 The Steel Tech Solution Cluster
Frederik Romberg, Consultant, Business Center Bornholm, Denmark

11.00 – 11.30 AquAtacama – Strategy and Innovation in a remote rural area (Chile)
Ines Sagrario, Consultant, Competitiveness

11.30 – 12.00 Plenary discussion

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS: LINK-UP STRATEGIES

The purpose of the break-out sessions is to give participants the possibility to discuss and to learn from their peers how to develop new strategies for clusters in remote areas. Key messages from the break-out sessions will be presented in the plenary session.

The break-out sessions will be divided according to three themes.

13.00 – 14.00 Themes for the 3 break-out sessions:

1. Cross-cluster collaboration: Working with new business opportunities in the cross section between clusters (Ifor Ffowcs Williams)
2. Collaboration between clusters and knowledge-providers: Opportunities and challenges (Thomas Winther)
3. Bottom-up mapping of clusters (tbd)

14.00 – 14.30 Reporting back in plenary

WHAT LEARNINGS CAN WE BRING BACK HOME?

The closing session will focus on the learnings from the conference and on identifying new areas for knowledge building on development of clusters in remote areas.

14.30 – 15.00 Plenary discussion

15.00 End of conference

15.15 Transfer to airport