



A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

Annual report summary 2020

Interreg
North Sea Region
European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

Reinventing the region

The North Sea Region Programme in a nutshell

From digital disruption to green transitions:
Our programme is designed to respond to
challenges and trends that go beyond borders.

We provide support that enables people to
work together and make their innovative ideas
happen throughout the region.

We do this to build a vibrant future for the
North Sea Region.



Adapt & overcome

The year 2020 was strongly marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused insecurities and delays for our projects. On top of this, many were also dealing with Brexit-related questions.

On the flipside, we were super impressed by the extraordinary resilience and creativity shown by projects adapting to the situation.

We are therefore very proud to present the results and highlights from 2020, including examples of how the projects dealt with the challenges.

Stories of resilience

Projects suffered many setbacks and delays, but they found ways to push back - sometimes with help from unexpected corners! Here are a few snapshots among many examples.



Coping with a big crisis

When festivals shut down, this seemed to ruin InnoQuarter's main concept of testing innovations at festivals. But rather than giving up, they charged ahead with new concepts such as mini-festivals and online events where the participants tested products from home.

Mascot in new role

In 2IMPREZS, school kids save energy at their schools. When the pandemic struck, the project used its mascot to empathise with the kids and remind them of other important behaviours.



Food suppliers on the line

As restaurants shut down one after another, the pandemic hit hard among SMEs in food supply chains. Some projects contributed to keeping local suppliers in business.



Home deliveries take off

In SURFLOGH, cargo bike services are part and parcel of green urban cargo traffic. Cargo bike delivery SMEs experienced rising demands for home deliveries during the pandemic - and this may help create a future trend, too.

Local food boxes

Through REFRAME's Short Food Supply Chain Network, two organisations jointly helped Dutch farmers provide a local food box directly to the consumers. A local bank even donated 100 boxes to the Food Bank, a social initiative.



Lost & found in the North Sea

In March 2020, experts from the German JOMOPANS partner BSH were dismayed to find their North Sea underwater sound measuring station had broken loose. Six months of valuable data lost at sea!

But a month later, far away in Sweden, the measuring device washed ashore on a small island, in good condition.

Luckily, Elias Sörqvist paid a visit to the island. Walking along the coast, he found the device and contacted the scientists. However, the pandemic travel restrictions did not allow the Germans to go to Sweden and collect it.

In the end, Elias' brother Johannes Sörqvist brought it all the way to Kiel in his own sailing yacht! The return journey took five days.

Five starfish to the two brothers and the crew!

Johannes Sörqvist (left) and his ship-mates arrive in Kiel with the device.



JOMOPANS maps underwater noise in the North Sea to help protect marine wildlife.

A person wearing a VR headset and a backpack is standing in front of a poster for 'CUPID'. The poster features a colorful abstract image and the text 'CUPID' and 'CULTURE POWER DUST'. The background shows a sign for 'Esplanade Theatre' and logos for 'Interreg' and 'H2020'.

Coping through culture

Song, dance, and theater are important in social cohesion, not least in times of crisis.

During the pandemic, CUPIDO successfully multi-streamed cultural events. More than 8,000 joined the livestream of a Swedish theater play "Västenaa Jul", while 50,000 watched the recording.

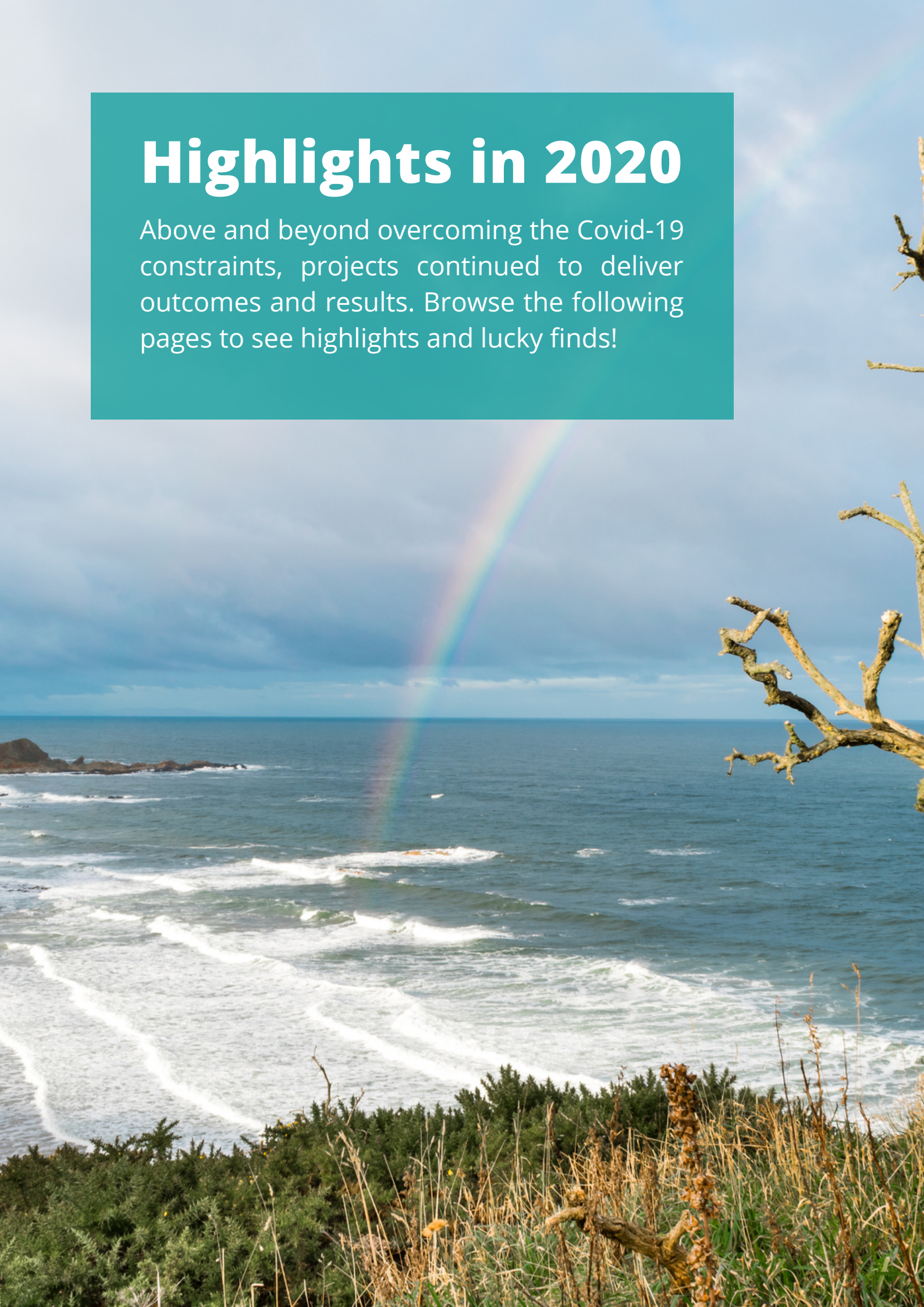
CUPIDO's online seminars on using digital tools to share cultural heritage attracted 11,000 participants from across the EU and beyond.

Local initiatives included a drive-in concert to save a local pub in Norway from bankruptcy.

CUPIDO explores local cultural heritage as a driver of regional development.

Highlights in 2020

Above and beyond overcoming the Covid-19 constraints, projects continued to deliver outcomes and results. Browse the following pages to see highlights and lucky finds!



2020 in numbers

At the end of 2020, North Sea Region projects had produced lots of positive outcomes!



63

climate adaptation
methods



193

sites applying
new solutions



20165

enterprises in
new partnerships



166

green transport
solutions



3930

organisations
adopted solutions



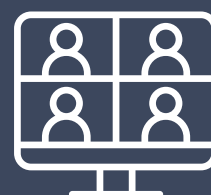
117

Business support
measures



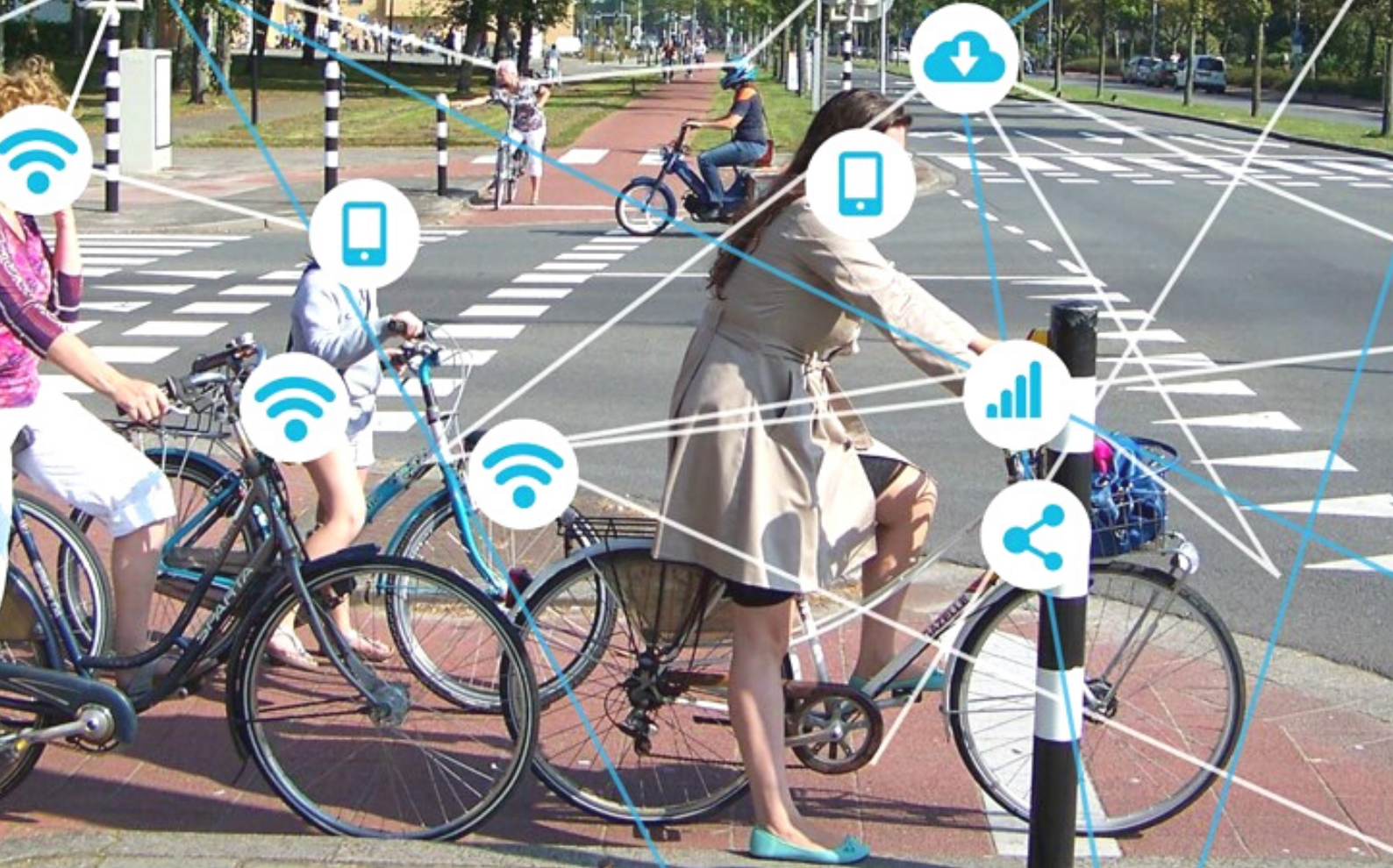
90

Public service
support measures



730

joined virtual
programme events



BITS pedals ahead

In 2020, the Province of Antwerp won the Flemish Road Safety Award for their BITS pilot using 3D cameras to improve road safety for cyclists.

BITS promotes intelligent transport systems to increase bicycle use in the North Sea Region. Did you know that cycling saves an estimated 16 million tonnes of CO2 each year in Europe?

The interest in cycling is huge. The BITS community reached 1,000 members, while a survey on cycling and intelligent transport systems received a staggering 7,000 responses!

Green waves at the EU Green Week

The #IWTS 2.0 project marked the EU Green Week 2020 with a splash, as the partners livestreamed the launch of Greenwave, a new electric barge.

Its virgin journey started at the Dutch port of Heere-warden and ended in Ghent (Flanders) where its role is to transport building materials. Powered by solar, of course!

#IWTS 2.0 promotes inland waterways in shipping.



The BBC featured **Sullied Sediments** and their citizen science project gauging phosphate in waterways.

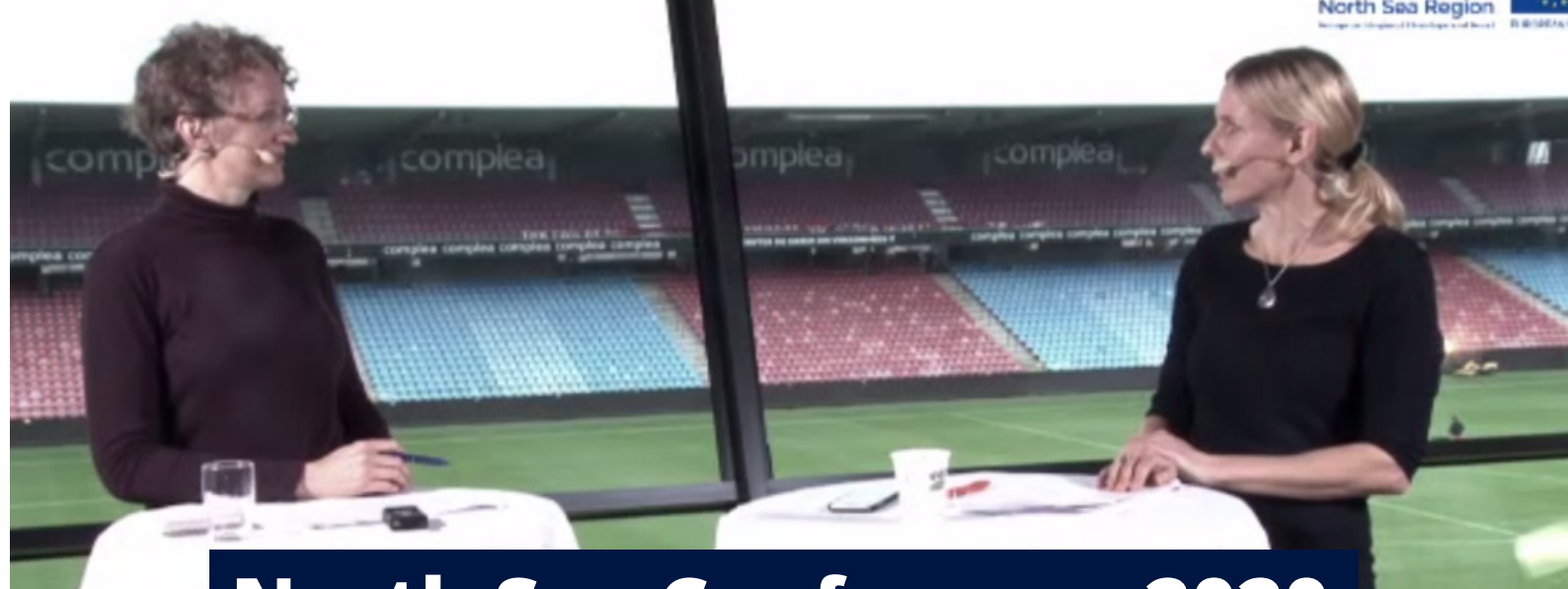
Building with Nature presented its policy brief to the EU Floods Working Group. The brief was well received in Brussels.



Accolades for INDU-ZERO

The European Committee of the Regions highlighted INDU-ZERO among 200 best practice examples for the EU Green Deal. The project was also an invited speaker at the BEYOND2020 conference on sustainability in the built environment.





North Sea Conference 2020

On 10 November 2020, the first-ever virtual North Sea Conference took place in a studio next to an empty football stadium in Aalborg. The 280 participants gladly seized the chance to connect in the digital space.

The conference marked the launch of the North Sea Commission's North Sea Strategy 2030, and ideas for the future North Sea Region Programme were discussed during breakout sessions.

Many thanks to all speakers and participants for the great inputs. We hope to see you again for real in 2021!



North Sea video hits

The North Sea Video Contest 2020 saw an unprecedented level of quality, and the jury had a hard time picking the very best! Here are the winners showcasing the best in 3-minute videomaking.

Explainer video: Sullied Sediments

What does your makeup or shaving foam have to do with our waterways?



[Watch video](#)

People in focus video: 2IMPREZS

Here's a video to make you smile: A serious message with a delightfully funny twist. Those school kids rock!



[Watch video](#)

North Sea Photo Contest

The North Sea Conference revealed the amazing winners of our very first photo contest. We were blown away by these beautiful and evocative images!

PARTRIDGE



Inn2POWER



CANAPE



These photos were chosen among 72 gorgeous entries submitted in three categories. [See all the images](#)

Interreg



30 years
together

The year 2020 marked the 30th anniversary of Interreg. We celebrated this virtually with other Interreg programmes through joint exhibitions, events, campaigns, etc.

First Interreg podcast episode!

We were very proud to hear the voices of PARTRIDGE and INDU-ZERO in the first-ever Interreg podcast episode, A Green Europe. [Listen and subscribe](#)



European Cooperation Day

We celebrated the EC Day with a webinar for university students and a video where MEP Niels Helveg Petersen who talks about cooperation in the North Sea. [Watch the video](#)

This Interreg leaflet on climate change features four North Sea Region projects: BEGIN, BwN, CATCH, and TOPSOIL! [See the brochure](#)



Finalists in the spotlight at #EURegionsWeek

Two North Sea Region projects made it all the way to the finals of major Interreg events with their top quality videos. We are extremely proud of these nominations!

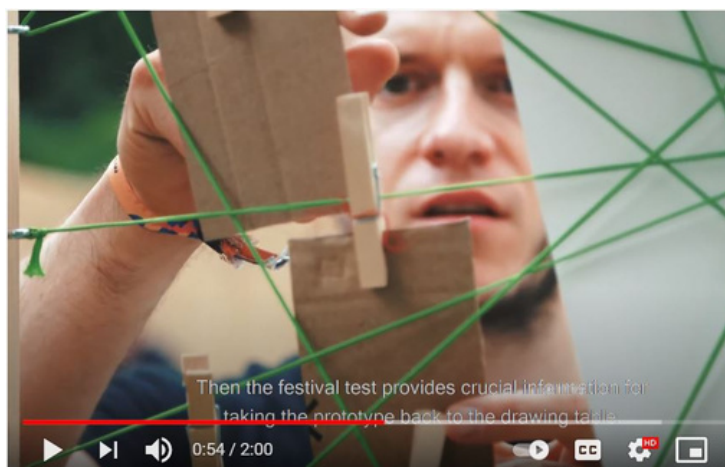
HyTrEc2: RegioStars finalist



The HyTrEc2 partners have their eyes set on green hydrogen and a future where transport is fossil-free.

[Watch the video](#)

InnoQuarter: Interreg Project Slam finalist



InnoQuarter helps young entrepreneurs test their innovations at festivals.

[Watch the video](#)

State of play & evaluation

So far, so good: Two reports summarised progress and impacts of the North Sea Region Programme VB thus far.



Evaluation finds positive impacts

An independent evaluation found that the programme has almost reached the performance framework targets for 2023 as well as its specific objectives. Kudos to our projects for all their achievements!

[Read the report](#)

State of Play report

Prepared by the Joint Secretariat, this report outlines progress, impacts, and lessons learned so far.

[Read the report](#)



North Sea Region projects 2014-2020



Priority 1 Thinking growth

BLING	Lean Landing
COM3	Like!
CORA	Northern
Create Converge	Connections
CUPIDO	North-Tick
EXSKALLERATE	PERISCOPE
FBD	PROWAD
GrowIn4.0	LINK
I2I	REFRAME
In For Care	RIGHT
Inn2POWER	SCORE
Inno-Quarter	SHINE



Priority 2 Eco-Innovation

2IMPREZS	ProCirc
ACCESS	SalFar
BIOCAS	SCALE-UP
Carbon Farming	SMARTGREEN
Circ-NSR	SOILCOM
COBEN	Stronghouse
DecomTools	WASP
Dual PORTS	
EMPOWER 2.0	
INDU-ZERO	
NON STOP	
OESA	



Priority 3 Sustainable NSR

BEESPOKE	NSW
BEGIN	NuReDrain
BwN	PARTRIDGE
C5A	Sullied Sediments
CANAPE	TOPSOIL
CATCH	WaterCoG
FAIR	
FRAMES	
GEANS	
IMMERSE	
Jomopans	
NorthSEE	



Priority 4 Green transport

IWTS 2.0	Stronger
ART-Forum	Combined
AVATAR	SURFLOGH
BITS	ZEM Ports NS
G-PaTRA	
HyTrEc2	
MOVE	
North Sea	
CONNECT	
PAV	
SEEV4-City	
SHARE-North	



**Keep in touch
& stay safe!**



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