

NOVA-BOVA CC Action Plan

October 2002 – December 2003

1. Background

NOVA-BOVA effectively is a new cooperative agreement even though the cooperation between NOVA and BOVA universities reaches mid 1990s, cf. Box 1. Initially cooperation activities were carried out through the NOVABA programme whose primary activity was organisation of short MSc courses at the BOVA universities.

NOVABA yielded good results, as confirmed by positive evaluations by participating students and teachers as well as an external expert. One of the greatest values lies in the creation of a strong platform for the future cooperation in the form of established personal professional networks. However, the major deficiency in NOVABA activity was complete dependence on the external financing, namely by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Little effort was made to find other sources of financing and NOVABA faced a sharp decline in its activities in 2001 when the support by the Nordic Council of Ministers ceased.

Responsible representatives of NOVA-BOVA recognised the need for new agreement with strengthened institutional capacities on the BOVA side. For this purpose, the NOVA side succeeded to get a grant from the K&A Wallenberg foundation. The grant of SEK 2.5 million can be used until the end of 2004.

Box 1. Brief description of major cooperation agreements:

NOVA – The Nordic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University – is a joint institution established in 1995. NOVA promotes a number of cooperation activities but primary emphasis is on education. So far, the most extensive activities were organisation of joint Nordic PhD courses and initiation of Danish-Swedish MSc programme in horticulture. NOVA's annual budget makes around 1.0 million Euro, from which around 75 per cent is internal financing, i.e. contributions by member universities. NOVA organises its activities through a secretariat that, since the beginning of 2002, comprises three full time positions. NOVA considers cooperation with BOVA to be one of its primary activities.

BOVA – Network of Baltic universities in agricultural, forestry and veterinary sciences established in 1996. In 1996-2000, BOVA took actively part in the NOVABA programme and focused on short MSc courses. BOVA has also promoted establishment of professional contacts between members of its universities. BOVA budget relies solely on external funding as member universities do not channel any direct financial contributions. Thanks to grant by K&A Wallenberg, the BOVA secretariat with one full time position was established in June 2002. Also, three 0.25 coordinator positions are established at agricultural universities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. NOVA is the major BOVA's partner in the international arena.

NOVA-BOVA – Network between NOVA and BOVA universities initiated in 2001. The major aim of NOVA-BOVA is to induce the cooperation between NOVA and BOVA universities, with special emphasis on strengthening institutional capacities on the BOVA side. NOVA-BOVA budget relies solely on external financing. Since February 2002, K&A Wallenberg's grant is used to finance 0.5 position of NOVA-BOVA coordinator. NOVA-BOVA Coordination Committee (CC) secures coordination of NOVA-BOVA activities at all member universities. The planned activities are described in this document, i.e. NOVA-BOVA action plan.

Presently, a crucial issue is to achieve sustainability of NOVA-BOVA activities in the long-term. This implies a need for careful planning of activities, including clear definition of objectives and planned activities. The NOVA-BOVA action plan spans the period from the second meeting of the NOVA-BOVA Coordination Committee (October 2002) until the end of 2003.

2. Overall objective¹

The overall objective of NOVA-BOVA is a qualitatively improved and highly internationalised education leading to high competitiveness of member universities nationally and internationally.

NOVA-BOVA focuses on the Nordic-Baltic dimension of university internationalisation, but promotes cooperation with other countries as well. NOVA-BOVA puts emphasis on the internationalisation and development of BOVA side universities, however, it contributes to analogous development objectives of the NOVA side.

Within the scope of NOVA-BOVA responsibilities, the following indicators can verify the level of achievement of the overall objective:

- Member universities attract increasing numbers of Baltic and foreign students
- Member universities offer study programmes of high level
- Number of international study programmes is increasing
- Increasing number of researchers participate in international projects
- Member universities receive increasing funding from national authorities
- Member universities receive increasing external funding

3. Immediate objective²

October 2002 – December 2003 will be a period of building up NOVA-BOVA activities, therefore, the action plan states the following ***immediate objective***:

High institutional vitality and potential proved by the end of 2003.

The immediate objective is divided in two sub-objectives:

- Efficiently functioning administrative structures and routines developed by the end of 2003.
- A number of cooperation activities between NOVA and BOVA universities successfully initiated and running by the end of 2003.

¹ Overall (or development) objective – is the long-term organisational objective, providing the ultimate reason for establishing and developing NOVA-BOVA.

² Immediate objective – state of the art that should be achieved by the end of the validity of the action plan. The immediate objective should contribute to the achievement of the development objective.

The level of achievement of the immediate objective will be recorded in an annual report that will be presented to NOVA-BOVA CC for approval.

4. Activities

Seeking to achieve the immediate objective, NOVA-BOVA will concentrate its activities in six areas. The rationale, status and a specific target level are described for each activity in the following:

i) Establish disciplinary NOVA-BOVA networks

Strong disciplinary networks are the essential precondition for developing joint MSc programmes and other *educational and research* activities. In April-May 2002, NOVA-BOVA has conducted a survey on previous and planned activities. Compiled survey results should be presented to NOVA-BOVA CC in September 2002. On the basis of survey results and discussions at the CC meeting, NOVA-BOVA will attempt to consolidate active people in the disciplines with the highest potential for the Nordic-Baltic cooperation. *At least 3 strong disciplinary networks will be formed before the end of 2003.*

ii) Organise NOVA-BOVA conference

NOVA side has a fruitful experience of organising NOVA conferences, where the most engaged representatives of member universities exchange their experiences, plan joint actions, get better acquainted with activities of the NOVA secretariat, etc. It is considered that a joint NOVA-BOVA conference could be very stimulating for developing cooperation between NOVA and BOVA. In particular, the conference will induce the formation of strong disciplinary networks. *A NOVA-BOVA conference involving 40-60 people from the BOVA side and 15-30 people from the NOVA side will be organised in October 2003.*

iii) Establish and promote joint MSc programmes

Establishment of joint MSc programme has very high priority in NOVA-BOVA, however it requires substantial preparatory work and supportive environment at appropriate faculties. So far NOVA-BOVA has facilitated and will further support Nordic-Baltic MSc programmes in forestry and agricultural economics. *During 2002-2003, NOVA-BOVA will determine the most promising disciplines for joint programmes at the BOVA universities and induce initiation of at least 1 new MSc programme.*

iv) Promote the Baltic participation in the NOVA PhD courses

BOVA universities strongly desire to increase cooperation with NOVA at the postgraduate level. Baltic students would highly benefit from participation at NOVA PhD courses. NOVA-BOVA has actively investigated possibilities of external support. Likely, NorFa will provide financial support for selected Baltic students, decisions will be made for each separate course. *At least 20 qualified Baltic students will participate in NOVA PhD courses during 2003.*

v) Organise short NOVA-BOVA MSc courses

Organisation of short joint short MSc courses drastically declined during 2002 due to the lack of financing. However, selected representatives of BOVA and NOVA universities showed strong wish to revive these activities. NOVA-BOVA has submitted an application to NCM in August

2002 and is waiting for an answer. *Having positive approval, NOVA-BOVA aims to organise at least 6 MSc courses with strong component of distance learning during the academic year 2002/2003.*

vi) Develop information services and raise visibility of NOVA-BOVA

At the initial phase of institutional development, a crucial task is to ensure smooth flow of information within the NOVA-BOVA network and also outside target groups. NOVA-BOVA will make efforts to increase its visibility and build up a good reputation. Two major means are envisioned: issuing a newsletter 'NOVA-BOVA news' and developing a BOVA website. *At least 25 numbers of the newsletter will be issued before the end of 2003. An initial 'frame' version of the BOVA website will be ready before end of 2002 and developed further during 2003.*

vii) Initiate fund-raising activities

Rising financial support is critical for the successful continuation of NOVA-BOVA activities after 2004, when financial support from the K&A Wallenberg foundation will cease. It should be stressed that successful continuation of activities is unlikely only relying on external funds. BOVA universities should commit themselves to channel some funds, at least for maintaining 1 full time position at the BOVA secretariat and having some cooperation activities between the BOVA universities. NOVA-BOVA should form appropriate opinions at their universities. Also, NOVA-BOVA will initiate external fund raising from several donors including EU. An expression of interest has been already sent to the 6th framework programme and the possibilities of applying to the programme will be tracked. *NOVA-BOVA should prepare or facilitate preparation of at least three successful applications for external funding before the end of 2003.*

5. Budget

NOVA-BOVA budget is primarily formed by the grant by K&A Wallenberg foundation, that granted SEK 2,500,000 for the development of the BOVA secretariat. The major part of the grant is used for financing NOVA-BOVA staff: 1.0 position of the BOVA secretary, 0.5 position of NOVA-BOVA coordinator and three 0.25 positions of BOVA coordinators.

NOVA-BOVA has received funds for developing MSc programmes. The Nordic Grant Scheme (administrated by the Nordic Council of Ministers) granted DKK 200,000 for MSc programme in agricultural economics and DKK 220,000 for forestry. The latter network also received SEK 600,000 from the Swedish Institute.

Also, NOVA-BOVA applied to the Nordic Council of Ministers for DKK 320,000 to organise short MSc courses at the BOVA universities. The budget estimate is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. NOVA-BOVA budget for 2002-2003, in EUR

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
Building up the NOVA-BOVA administration:	A&K Wallenberg		
- NOVA-BOVA coordinator		31,000	34,000
- BOVA secretariat		33,000	31,000
- meetings, travel for other staff		22,000	14,000
- other administrative expenses		11,000	8,000
Organising short MSc courses	NCM		43,000
Running MSc programme in agroeconomics	NCM	27,000	27,000
Running MSc programme in forestry	NCM	34,000	30,000
	The Swedish Institute		65,000
Total		157,000	252,000

Annex I. Implementation plan

Activity	Action (a more operational level)	Timing	Responsible ³
1. Establish and promote joint MSc programmes			
1.1 Support existing MSc programmes	1.1.1 Submit application to EU for Curriculum Development project in forestry	Nov 1, 2002	V.Brukas
	1.1.2 Coordinate MSc in forestry incl. selection of Baltic students	During 2003	V.Brukas
	1.1.3 Coordinate MSc in agricultural economics including selection of the Baltic students	During 2003	<u>O.Gjølberg</u> , R.Zaleckyte
1.2 Initiate new MSc programmes	1.2.1 Based on survey results and discussion at the CC meeting, select the most promising disciplines	Nov, 2002	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas, BOVA coordinators and CC members
	1.2.2 Organise discussion with BOVA board on division of competencies to organise MSc programmes	Until Dec 2002	<u>A.Kusta</u> , BOVA coordinators, BOVA CC members
	1.2.3 Prepare short report on the potential of MSc programmes	Jan 15, 2003	<u>M.Liegus</u> , R.Zaleckyte, <u>K.Korgesaar</u>
	1.2.3 Discuss the potential of joint MSc programmes at the meetings of disciplinary networks	March 1, 2003	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas,
	1.2.4 At the CC meeting, initiate preparation of action plans for selected MSc programme(s) at the BOVA conference	March 22, 2003	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas, BOVA coordinators
2. Establish disciplinary NOVA-BOVA networks	2.1 Based on survey results and discussion at the CC meeting, select responsible people for each network at each university	Oct 1, 2002	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas BOVA coordinators, CC members, A.Kusta, P.Jensén
	2.2 Initiate preparation of agendas for discussion in disciplinary network meetings	Feb 1, 2003	Network responsible, assisted by BOVA coordinators
	2.3 Organise disciplinary seminars at BOVA universities	March 1, 2003	BOVA coordinators, CC members
	2.4 Prepare reports from the disciplinary seminars	March 15, 2003	<u>M.Liegus</u> , R.Zaleckyte, <u>K.Korgesaar</u>
3. Organise NOVA-BOVA conference	3.1 Arrange appropriate conference facilities and accommodation	February 2003	<u>M.Liegus</u> , A.Sarlauskas, R.Delivvas
	3.2 At the CC meeting, discuss reports from disciplinary seminars and outline schedules of parallel workshops at the conference	March 22, 2003	<u>Vilis Brukas</u> , Alvidas Sarlauskas
	3.3 Invite potential members of networks to the BOVA conference	May 2003	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas, BOVA coordinators
	3.4 Send out final agenda of the conference	Sep 1, 2003	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas
	3.5 Hold the conference	Oct 2-4, 2003	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas

³In case of several responsible persons, the major responsible is underlined

4. Promote the Baltic participation in the NOVA PhD courses	4.1 Having approval by NOVA course organisers, Baltic candidates are identified and prepare appropriate documentation	2.5 month bet. Norfa deadl.	BOVA coordinators
	4.2 Submit BOVA side documentation to NOVA side	1.5 month ,,,,	A.Sarlauskas
	4.3 NOVA side further assists with application preparation	1.5 month ,,,,	<u>V.Brukas</u> , K.Waldstedt
5. Organise short NOVA-BOVA MSC courses	5.1 Prepare course evaluation and description forms	Oct 1	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas
	5.2 Check whether and how distance learning component is initiated according to the course planning	1 month before meeting in person	M.Liegus, R.Zaleckyte, K.Korgesaar
	5.3 Assist course organisers with arrival and accommodation of guests as well as other administrative matters	Cf. course plans	M.Liegus, R.Zaleckyte, K.Korgesaar
	5.4 Compile course evaluations and descriptions for discussions at the CC meeting and preparation of the final report	Immediately after course	M.Liegus, R.Zaleckyte, K.Korgesaar
	5.5 Prepare final report to NCM	Sep 2003	V.Brukas
6. Develop information services and raise visibility of NOVA-BOVA	6.1 Periodically issue the newsletter NOVA-BOVA news	During 2002 and 2003	A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas
	6.2 Establish the draft frame version of the BOVA website	Dec 2002	A.Sarlauskas, M.Liegus
	6.3 Fully develop and maintain the website	During 2003	A.Sarlauskas, M.Liegus, V.Brukas
7. Initiate fund-raising activities			
7.1 Internal fund-raising on the BOVA side	7.1.1 Prepare fund raising strategy including estimate of future funding requests	November 2002	M.Liegus, A.Sarlauskas, V.Brukas
	7.1.2 Address the question of BOVA side financial contribution to the BOVA secretariat and activities	BOVA board in 2002-2003	A.Kusta, M.Liegus
7.2 External fund raising	7.2.1 Submit application to EU for Curriculum Development project in forestry	2002.11.01	V.Brukas
	7.2.2 Elaborate a strategy of approaching national ministries of education with activity proposals on the Baltic education space	November 2002	A.Vooremae, H.Tuherms, R.Deltuvass, BOVA coordinators
	7.2.3 Approach the national ministries of education with proposals	November 2002	A.Vooremae, H.Tuherms, R.Deltuvass, BOVA coordinators
	7.2.4 Map possibilities of applying to EU and other external donors	November 2002	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas
	7.2.5 Place information on funding possibilities on the web	December 2002	A.Sarlauskas
	7.2.6 Continuously search for new funding possibilities and update the information on the web	2003	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas
	6.2.7 Actively provide information on funding possibilities to emerging disciplinary networks and consider financial support for the preparation of applications	2003	<u>V.Brukas</u> , A.Sarlauskas