

NOVA-BOVA activities. Focus on common benefits and main issues

Vilis Brukas, NOVA-BOVA coordinator

Activities (1): joint MSc programmes

STATUS

- NOVA-BOVA Working Group on MSc matters 2003-2004 (focus on BOVA side)
- Agreement between BOVA universities signed
- Three areas (BLM, Agroecology, and Bioinformatics) attracted external funding
- NOVA works in several model areas

☺ NOVA has a few functioning Nordic programmes

☺ BOVA has platforms in 3 areas

⊗ Little common activity between Nordic and Baltic sides

⊗ Problems of motivation and partnership on the Baltic side

**No common
benefits yet!**

**Exception:
Euroforester**

Activities (2): Baltic students in NOVA PhD courses

STATUS

- Agreement with NordForsk: scholarships to Baltic PhD students
- Well functioning administrative support
- NordForsk is under reorganisation but promises support



☺ *Positive Nordic teachers, happy Baltic students; external funding*

☺ *> 10% of NOVA course participants, more diversity, new contacts*

☹ *No courses in the Baltic countries:*

missed opportunity to develop Nordic-Baltic networks and to save funds

Joint PhD studies

What about Vet PhD network that under coordination by EULS received Nordplus grant?

An IDEA:

Shall they prepare a N-B PhD course with joint funding (NOVA funds for Nordic students and NordPlus funds for Baltic students)?

Activities (3): Short MSc courses

STATUS

- Annually around 8 courses under NCM support
- NCM changes routines, future funding unclear
- BOVA started using Socrates for teacher mobility

☺ *Course benefits:*

- *Appreciated by students*
- *'Sawing' of networks*
- *Potentially a base for joint programmes*



- ☹ *Hasty planning, courses not included in university curricula*
- ☹ *NCM funding for 2006 not secured. External funds will cease sooner or later*



Are BOVA universities interested to continue MSc course activity relying on own and Socrates funding?

New developments: distance learning

STATUS

- NOVA-BOVA seminars and a course for Euroforester teachers in 2005
- 1st pure distance MSc course arranged by Estonians in 2005
- Course in ICT pedagogy expected in spring 2006
- Application to Tempus for an ICT project with RU, BYE, UKR

- ☺ *"Hot" approach, probably cheaper?*
- ☹ *Not easy to find and engage teachers, additional working load*



New developments: courses for teachers

- 1st course in autumn 2005 at EULS
- Topics: scientific writing and academic presentations
- 30 participants, very good evaluation
- BOVA universities supported teachers travel and accommodation!

☺ *Great 1st experience, such courses very important for Baltic staff*

? **Would Nordic teachers be interested to attend joint courses in pedagogy, scientific writing or similar?**

A chance for a truly joint activity?!

Other activities

Russia:

- promising cooperation with St. Petersburg Forestry Academy
- contacts established with several other u-ties

EU Socrates:

- NOVA discusses Socrates possibilities in board and KUF
- BOVA conducts a project - mapping Socrates activities and possibilities

Fund raising



- Substantial external grants (around € 1,000,000) attracted in 2002-2005
- Starting with 2005, BOVA allocated funding (around €20,000) for maintaining BOVA secretariat

- ☺ *Sizeable external funding, securing N-B expansion since 2002*
- ☹ *Huge imbalance between NOVA and BOVA sides*
- ☹ *NCM is likely to reduce the support*



Is it realistic to raise base own funding on the BOVA side? What is the right internal/external balance?

Operative coordination



- NOVA secretariat: 3.5 positions including 0.5 N-B coordinator
- BOVA secretariat: 1.0 position

- ☺ *Significant advancement of capacity during 2002-2004*
- ☹ *BOVA secretary overloaded?*
- ☹ *No funding secured for N-B coordinator position*

A couple of questions to ponder

 Does KUF and CC wish to have any real joint Nordic and Baltic engagement in an MSc programme?

 Would NOVA and BOVA sides wish to test one truly joint and equal activity, e.g. a course for teachers?

 What is the right balance of internal/external funding for N-B activities?