



## Cooperation Agreement

### Introduction

The western economy is following the global trend of rapid change into a knowledge and service economy. Knowledge, innovation, value creation and sustainable development are key concepts of this new economy. There are two connected main objectives: strengthening the economic structure and improving the living environment. Intensifying and broadening the economic structure will demand an outstanding level of services and facilities, such as attractive living and working areas, excellent education and interesting recreational and cultural facilities. In other words: excellent conditions for establishing innovative businesses and attractive living communities for high education workers.

### Ambition

Against this background major transitions are taking place in various port cities and port regions. For port cities this process is particularly complex. The interaction between city and port activities in close proximity can often present difficult environmental and spatial issues that need to be solved. But at the same time these circumstances can trigger new and unexpected economic opportunities.

These transitions are characterized by discerningly high quality ambitions and international stature. The importance of sustainable development is growing, aimed at the durable future of city and port and taking into account the effects of the energy transition and climate change. Besides the focus on energy, water and environmental issues, a common target is to establish a social and economic development. This is based on the definition of Brundtland: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

### Sustainable development

Sustainable development, knowledge and innovation are key concepts for transition. The transition of large areas of vital economic importance is a major challenge, in which the local circumstances, both social, economical and cultural historical, are often decisive in terms of successful interventions. On a more abstract level, the planning and execution of any large scale development program has to follow certain basic rules, regardless of the local context. Cooperation between similar transition programs by exchanging experiences (the do's AND don'ts) can be extremely helpful in developing new insights and determining universal terms of success.

### Cooperation

On the basis of this premise we have agreed to establish some form of cooperation between the organisations that direct the transition process in these areas. This agreement will be characterized by an open exchange of information and best practices in collective meetings. These meetings will grow into a long term relationship and take the form of an international review. The results of this relationship will be beneficial for all participants and may possibly develop into a collective strategy towards the European Union and other international forums.

The organisations below have agreed to fully support this platform of cooperation and will actively contribute by sharing their knowledge and experiences.

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HafenCity GmbH,

London Thames Gateway  
Development Corporation,

Stadshavens Rotterdam,

Jürgen Bruns Berentelg

Peter Andrews

Hans Beekman