

medcoast

scandinavia

Annual Report 2008



www.medcoast.org

MedCoast Scandinavia

The 2008 annual report

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Front pictures by Peter Svensson and Trond Isaksen

Back pictures by Ida Næss Wangen, Thea Tønnessen, Peter Svensson and Trond Isaksen

The chairman's comment

A turbulent year has passed. The reasons for that are not over yet. The outlook for 2009 seems to be affected as well and positive forward looking statements are scarce. Economically we fear stagnation and that the lack of resources for investments will potentially shrink even further. But is the situation really so gloomy and pessimistic. This might be the time to invest for the future.

The GO (Gothenburg-Oslo) region, is in a favourable situation. The regional and national political organisations have through different measures, decided to increase support to research and innovations in the bioscience field. The Swedish government with the new research bill where the importance of innovations and innovation support is highlighted is just one example. The Norwegian government also made explicit provision for life sciences research and innovations within its NOK20bn stimulus package, the biotechnology component being more than NOK3bn. Together this must be one of the most active political moves supporting research, but more importantly also stressing the virtue of innovations.

MedCoast, was created with a top down perspective where all the members - from the political, educational, health care and business sectors - could meet in a neutral and independent forum. Independence is fantastic utilised in a responsible way. We have continued to grow as an organisation and it is obvious that MedCoast Scandinavia increases the region's impact, both internally and in relation to other regions. The activities this year have further demonstrated the importance of networking, between small companies and the universities. In particular, MedCoast is making a difference when it comes to early innovations.

MedCoast is a learning organisation and this also means learning from each other. Therefore it is gratifying to note that the entrepreneurship education programme is boosting the number of young managers and entrepreneurs available for the start ups in the region. For instance, during 2008 an agreement was reached between the University in Oslo, Medinova and Oslo Cancer Cluster to support the students with projects to evaluate. This initiative is one of the key factors in stimulating creativity and innovation. The importance of early innovation management is supported and stimulated on a national and European level by for example the Framework VII and other research calls.

MedCoast Scandinavia is registered as an organisation in Norway, with offices in both Oslo and Göteborg. The key to building an even stronger regional organisation and presence, is local knowledge. In an organisation as MedCoast, the board play an increasingly important role in defining and building projects. The working partners, Oslo Bio and Göteborg BIO are thus acting locally and reaching out to their respective community and having a significant impact on MedCoast activities and vice versa.

The network cooperations have already led to significant achievements and the continually growing health care, scientific and SME cooperation is increasing the possibility of attracting public funding for future work.

The annual report gives a summary of events in 2008 and shows that MedCoast has enjoyed considerable success. The number of members is steadily increasing; mainly due to the benefits of having a neutral platform and a comprehensive network supporting early innovation.

Therefore let's work together and continue to be one step ahead by demonstrating our immense potential.

Boo Edgar, Chairman MedCoast Scandinavia



*Boo Edgar, Chairman
MedCoast Scandinavia*

Vision

**The greater
Göteborg-Oslo
region will
become a leading
biomedical region in
Europe.**

Introduction

MedCoast Scandinavia is a Swedish-Norwegian network organisation, which aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation and further develop the biomedical sector in the Göteborg-Oslo region. Our vision is that this region will become a leading biomedical region in Europe. Together we believe we have the right competences, science and cooperative spirit to achieve this.

MedCoast Scandinavia works as a catalyst to facilitate collaboration between scientists, companies and the public sector; enhancing entrepreneurship and commercialization of innovations. We work to strengthen the region's biomedical sector; develop and implement effective methods for networking and knowledge sharing, stimulate research, cooperation, start-ups and investment within the field of biomedicine. Through the biomedical network Scanbalt we collaborate with other bioregions and groups to reach our objectives. We also work to facilitate access to venture capital in the biomedical sector and to increase foreign investments.

MedCoast Scandinavia works closely with GöteborgBIO and Oslo Bio, which are the two leading local biomedical development and marketing organisations. Together we have the resources to form a successful region and increase future potential!

History

Back in 1995 a joint venture agreement was signed for the Göteborg-Oslo region. The purpose of the agreement is to stimulate economic development and increase the interaction and attraction of the region internationally. The development of the biomedical sector was given the highest priority.

The MedCoast Scandinavia organisation was founded as a result of work initiated in April 2002, when MedCoast Scandinavia was established as a project supported by the GO Council. MedCoast Scandinavia then became an independent member organisation on the 9th of November 2004 and began operating on the 1st of January 2005. Hence, MedCoast Scandinavia is a young organisation with the advantage of being able to draw on strong regional foundation and support.

Nowadays an increasing number of members join from outside the region to access the network's unrivalled local knowledge.

Strategy

As MedCoast Scandinavia has members from both the private and public sector we act as a neutral and independent forum, in the interest of the region as a whole and with a longterm vision. The arena in which MedCoast Scandinavia acts is the interface between the public sector; academia, health-care and industry. MedCoast Scandinavia utilises existing competences and structures to create added value between the two countries.

The region

530 million EUR in public university funding to biotech

Several Science Parks in the region surrounded by outstanding education and research institutions

3 400 professors, lecturers, assistant professors etc. working at the universities in the region

380 PhD students graduate annually with biomedical subjects

2 700 students graduate annually with biomedical subjects

About 3 000 articles published each year

About 20 new biomedical start-up companies each year

10 000 employed in the biomedical sector

GIBBS (Göteborg International Bioscience Business School) offers the only Master's level program for bio-entrepreneurs in Europe focused on creating new ventures

A main gateway to the Nordic countries with their 25 million inhabitants

4 million inhabitants in the MedCoast region

Through MedCoast Scandinavia two countries; one EU member and one EEA member can be reached



We initiate, stimulate and coordinate projects in the region where a broader perspective is both necessary and beneficial. It is our philosophy to participate and run these projects only as long as our presence is needed. Furthermore, MedCoast Scandinavia acts in the interest of our members, by creating network opportunities, forums for marketing and knowledge development and sharing, and providing members with access to our networks, competences and experience .

We focus on meeting our members' needs and measure our performance through media exposure and member feedback.

Founders

GO-rådet
Akershus Fylkeskommune
Business Region Göteborg
Chalmers Tekniska Högskola
Oslo Kommune
Norges Veterinærhøgskole
Universitetet for miljø- og
biovitenskap
Universitetet i Oslo
Göteborgs Universitet
Västra Götalandsregionen
Østfold Fylkeskommune

Founders and Members

An influential group of organisations, which all still support us economically, founded MedCoast Scandinavia.

These founders are influential and powerful not only in the region and provide a broad insight into the region's current situation and needs. In this aspect we also highly value our members, SME's and large firms. MedCoast Scandinavia is also the only marketing channel where the region and founders can market their competence jointly. All members can be found at our website, www.medcoast.org.

Organisation

To further optimise opportunities for local support MedCoast Scandinavia has a secretariat in Göteborg, where all administration is handled, and an office in Oslo. To integrate the organisation, the offices are located in the centre of the biomedical community in both cities.

Economic update

MedCoast Scandinavia is a non-profit organisation registered in Norway. Bookkeeping in line with all regulations and standards. The yearly audit is conducted by Deloitte. An economic update is given on our homepage.

MedCoast Scandinavia's activities are to large extent financed by member fees and financial support from founders and other large actors. A few projects are regional development projects and other forms of cooperative projects, which are financed by other external project-specific grants from EU, the Swedish research council, the Research Council of Norway and Innovation Norway. Members and other organisations contribute with significant amount of 'in kind' activities.

Gladly the number of members is increasing but the profiling external activities, are increasing in cost mostly due to the competition from other regions. A balance and agreements must be reached between our activities and the activities of our members and partners. Therefore grant applications and

approvals from the communities, regions, the national boards of sciences and both structural and scientific funds are essential for MedCoast to continue to be successful.

Marketing and Networking

Regional marketing and positioning is growing in importance from both a European and Global perspective and an even stronger regional brand will benefit all actors in this region. For many reasons, the members, contributors will demand their contribution to be visible; clear links to the origin are essential. MedCoast Scandinavia works hard to position the region as a highly competent and future-oriented biomedical region, where networks and competence is readily available and actors cooperate actively to reach their goal. The close collaboration with Oslo Bio and GöteborgBIO are vital. Operating in the MedCoast region should be in itself an assurance of quality and members should feel proud to be in and supported by the network. MedCoast Scandinavia is also the only forum where the region can position itself comprehensively, from a political through to a commercial point of view. To this end, MedCoast Scandinavia has during 2008 been highly visible in the media and at a number of high profile events such as Bio2008 in San Diego and BioTech Forum 2008 in Copenhagen.

The internet is today an important strategic communication. The MedCoast website is therefore continuously updated and aims to be target audience oriented, user friendly and with a clear structure. Overall it aims to function as a door opener to the biomedical sector in the MedCoast region.

Major Communication events in 2008

BIO 2008

MedCoast Scandinavia participated in the world's largest BIO convention, which this year was held in San Diego. MedCoast Scandinavia exhibited in the Scandinavian Pavilion where all Scandinavian countries have gathered together to create critical mass. This was the fourth year in a row that the Scandinavian countries exhibited together; a concept that has proven very successful and which, in fact, was initiated by MedCoast Scandinavia.

Biotech Forum 2008

Biotech Forum is without doubt Northern Europe's largest and most important meeting place for the biomedical sector and related companies and universities to demonstrate their willingness to partner. Biotech Forum is the forum where regions exhibit and showcase their potential and competence; it is a strategically crucial positioning opportunity. It is also an efficient marketing arena and the first networking point for young participating companies. Hence, the success of Biotech Forum is a pressing issue for the region as a whole.



Photo. RR HF-foto, Thea Tønnessen:



*Photo: Biotech Sweden.
Richard Brånemark with
Norwegian patient Erik Ax*

In 2008 MedCoast Scandinavia hosted a regional pavilion at Biotech Forum, with the focus on early innovation where academic institutions, entrepreneurship schools, companies, and public stakeholders exhibited and demonstrated the region's overall competence and cooperation activities. In particular, the exhibition demonstrated how world-class academic and applied research from western Scandinavia can be turned into business through borderless collaboration and early network formation.

MedCoast also arranged a successful luncheon seminar on biomaterials: "Rickard Brånemark (Integrum) brings us the future today - how life has changed for amputated patients having received new prosthesis on bone anchored implants" A patient was brought to the seminar, to show and demonstrate how the implants actually work. See www.integrum.se (Biotech Scandinavia Richard Brånemark and Erik Ax)

A morning session was arranged by SINTEF, the largest independent research institute in Scandinavia including a workshop on "Micro technology based Medical Devices" to highlight the services offered through the EU-project www.microbuilder.org by some of Europe's leading silicon micro system high precision plastic manufacturing and design players.

The daily paper Biotech Sweden again contained news from the meeting.

Exhibitors at the MedCoast Pavilion: Arterion/BBV, Biotec Pharmacon, Chalmers/Inst. for Micro Technology and Nanoscience MC2, Gothenburg International Bioscience Business School (GIBBS), GöteborgBIO, Institute for Biomaterial and Celltherapy (IBCT), Integrum AB, Mare Life, Mare Novum/ University of Gothenburg, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB), Oslo Bio, Oslo Cancer Cluster Peak Search AB, Polypure AS, Proffice, Promimic, Sahlgrenska Science Park, Samba Sensors, SINTEF, University of Oslo/ EMBIO, Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Oslo, Wireless Healthcare. The interesting exhibitors and mix of stakeholders in the pavilion resulted in a large and steady number of visitors. The arrangement resulted in several articles where MedCoast Scandinavia or some of our participating companies were mentioned.

Career day for scientists

The dedicated recruitment fair for life scientists was held for the second time as a joint GöteborgBIO/ Oslo Bio and Medcoast activity. The well-attended meeting started with an outlook on the life sciences landscape on a national level, as well as detailing more about biomedical companies in the region. The afternoon was devoted to meetings with Norwegian and Swedish companies presenting their career opportunities for scientists.

Project updates

Scandinavian Chemical Biology Initiative

The Scandinavian Chemical Biology Initiative is working to establish a platform for Chemical Biology by offering access to High-Throughput Screening (HTS) and large compound libraries. The Initiative looks to support new ideas for increasing the possibilities of evaluating and explaining function on the molecular, cellular and organism level. Access to a HTS-platform is instrumental in identifying bioactive compounds which can serve as starting-points for drug candidate development. Identifying such compounds will also help to increase the value of academic drug target projects in the region significantly, and thus bridge the gap between academic and commercial life science R&D.

During 2008, the project focused on positioning the region in the field from a European perspective and MedCoast aimed to seek and obtain funding with the European Chemical Biology Infrastructure (ECBI), to strengthen existing platforms in order to provide open access screening facilities to researchers throughout the EU. Unfortunately, the work to win European support was unsuccessful.

However, the network continues to operate successfully and been utilised for a couple of projects from Gothenburg. One of them aims to develop new substances to be able to treat autoimmune diseases, for example rheumatoid arthritis. The drive during 2008 was to find and further develop groups of substances that may eventually become new drug candidates. The close collaboration between academic units from the ECBI and SCBI led to a screen of more than 60 K substances and a successful result in animal models during 2008.

This is a typical example of the cooperation between clusters and networks that results in start ups in the region and the initial support required.

In Norway Chemlex AS has been formed to further support these activities, but the SCBI remains as an informal network linked to both Oslo Bio and GöteborgBIO's efforts to support local initiatives.

Mare Life and MareNovum

MareLife has managed to establish itself as a suitable vehicle for expressing the opinions of the Norwegian bio marine sector as well as defining the major challenges and opportunities to be addressed through R&D and innovation. This has been communicated to the authorities and official recognition has resulted implications for budgeting and the priorities of the grant programs. Among such major issues are: forecasting aquaculture productivity and yields (disease control, biomass measurements etc), mapping and monitoring marine resources and environments to optimize management regimes, sustainable bio marine production systems (feed resources, energy and environmental friendly systems etc), quality assurance, transparency and



Photo: PhotoDisc



Photo: PhotoDisc

traceability in the seafood value chain to build consumer confidence, building trust and strong brands and strengthening the blue biotech sector; targeting ingredients and other marine bio active molecules for a wide variety of purposes.

Some selected projects facilitated by MareLife or wherein MareLife has been involved:

“Mackerel Trace” (genetic verification of mackerel stock structures enhancing quality of management and catch regimes and contributing to building trusted brands), “ChemBioNet Norway” (linking the generic drug discovery platform of Biotechnology Center of Oslo with the leading marine pharma companies), entered into pilot projects in the following fields: “Live culture prediction” (fish health, bio banks and biomass measurements), “Micro algae” (feeds, ingredients, pharma, fertilizer, energy etc), “Ocean Box” (remote sensor based ocean environments surveys), “El-Trace/GenVer” (linking electronic traceability with genetic verification of origin of seafood), “Competent capital tool case” (assist the commercialization of ideas, inventions and start ups with potentials), “Reputation management” (communication strategies), “MareLife Storby” (consolidating Norway as a concerted action biomarine cluster), installing a unique cross sector innovation arena within MareLife.

Mare Novum, a collaboration between the region, the University of Gothenburg and the holding company at the University, acts as a gateway between industry and academia and has an extensive network both within Sweden and abroad. The Cluster mediates collaborations between industry and others, e.g. in joint R&D programs, by arranging discussions forums and seminars in relevant topics, and supporting the commercialisation of innovative ideas.

“MARINN” is the working title of a Swedish- Norwegian plan aimed at defining and managing a Scandinavian marine biotechnology competence platform, building on the strong research and entrepreneurial spirit within this area. MedCoast Scandinavia and the MareLife counterpart in Sweden, Mare Novum, have been instrumental in these efforts. The MARINN initiative will be linked with the recently Interreg IVA granted project COINCO with the aim to define and develop the Skagerrak/Kattegat region as world leading in selected knowledge based industry fields, where life science targeting the bio marine sector is one of the prioritized areas.

Oslo Cancer Cluster

Cancer is one of the whole region's research strengths par excellence and has led to the establishment of Norwegian Centre of Excellence in the Oslo Region in particular. The earlier activities have also led to major commercial successes, from Nycomed Amersham (now GE) imaging systems to PhotoCure's Photo Dynamic Technology therapy. Furthermore, the cancer research in the Oslo Region has led to many small start-up companies, and more than 7 companies being successfully listed on the Oslo Stock

Exchange. Norwegian cancer research was recently rated “very good on the border of outstanding” by international auditors, and co-operation is extensive with the US National Cancer Institute, and other leading cancer research institutions in the US and EU.

Oslo Cancer Cluster has been initiated to continue building on this regional expertise. The aim is to create the leading centre in Europe for cancer diagnostics and treatment. Oslo Cancer Cluster is built on strong foundations dating from the early 1930s; Oslo’s Radium Hospital is now Northern Europe’s largest comprehensive cancer centre. Already, together with the Centre for Cancer Research and the Norwegian Cancer Registry, the Norwegian Radium Hospital has built a dynamic biomedical cluster for research into cancer and commercial spinout of cancer diagnostics and therapies.

Oslo Cancer Cluster already has over 50 members, including industrial companies, academic research institutions, health initiatives and support groups in the field of biotechnology with the main focus on cancer; see www.oslocancercluster.no OCC have taken on a challenging vision.

To transform world class cancer research into new and accessible cancer diagnostics and treatment and thereby improve and prolong the lives of cancer patients. We aspire to be one of the five most innovative cluster for developing new cancer diagnostics and treatment in the world by 2013 - measured by oncology pipeline

First steps for OCC are to facilitate collaboration with the members, and in order to fulfil this to build an innovation park nearby the Radium Hospital. Already in 2007 OCC received Norwegian Centre of Excellence status. The Oslo Region has now all three types of official support within the cancer field; that is Centre for Excellent Basic Research in Cancer, Centre for Research Based Innovation in Cancer, and Norwegian Centre of Expertise. The cancer research and its application are iworld-class in terms of innovation and quality. The region has also a unique infrastructure - from biobanks to extensive patient registries - that in Norway and Sweden help accelerate the translational research crucial to converting ideas from the lab into diagnostics and treatment. For updated information, see www.oslocancercluster.no





Photo: RR HF-foto, Thea Tønnessen

Wireless Healthcare - a fruitful year

The Wireless Healthcare Initiative has grown during 2008 and the first results are imminent. One success has been to get the 6th international workshop on Wearable Micro and Nanosystems for Personalised Health to Oslo 24-26 June 2009. The workshop will focus how to face healthcare needs in the near future. A primary focus will be user-centred development and successful implementation. The workshop will demonstrate successful technology implementation at hospitals and in the healthcare sector, and present and discuss new possibilities and future solutions of tomorrow.)

Networking is one of the important activities in the network, and this year has seen five major meetings focusing different aspects of wireless healthcare scenarios. In February, the Nordic collaboration project Biomedical Wireless Sensor Network (BWSN) and presented and demonstrated the results from the 1st phase of the project at an open meeting at Rikshospitalet in Oslo. Wireless Healthcare facilitated the meeting, and was also involved in the set-up of the follow-up project BWSN-II, starting up in June 2008.

Another successful meeting was held in June at Høgskolen in Østfold, focusing on elderly people in a home care setting. How can wireless sensors contribute to improved quality of life was one of the topics discussed. This meeting also had presentations from Chalmers in Gothenburg and Grensebroen, a Swedish-Norwegian cross-border collaboration.

In September, the Wireless Healthcare Initiative discussed the needs for communication standards for patient centric equipment in hospitals. The meeting was held at the Hewlett-Packard European Health Centre of Excellence in Oslo, and gave an opportunity to study the technology demonstration suites in the centre.

Wireless Healthcare offers companies, research teams and projects access to technical and clinical test environments for biomedical sensors and wireless systems and the opportunity to test new services and applications in the healthcare sector. See www.wirelesshealthcare.org for more information.

Support for groundbreaking cross border research and development project

The Norwegian Research Council (NRC) granted MedCoast support for research collaborations between companies and universities in Norway and Sweden. The funds have been allocated for work within the MedTech field, Wireless Patients, Bio Prospecting for new substances for wound management, and early cell studies in oncology. MedCoast will continue to support such projects based on grants from the NRC and other bodies.

Participation in Innovative Medicine Initiative (IMI)

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) has recently been launched by the European Commission and EFPIA (European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations) in order to accelerate the development of safe and more effective medicines. This will be achieved by a focused effort on

better understanding the mechanisms of disease, predicting safety, and efficacy, understanding why some drugs work and others do not. The initiative is described in a Strategic Research Agenda, which presents research needs and the way to address within its four cornerstones: 1) Safety, 2) Efficacy, 3) Knowledge Management and 4) Education & Training. The Innovative Medicines Initiative targets five focus areas: a) Brain disorders, b) Metabolic disorders, c) Cancer, d) Inflammatory diseases and e) Infection.

Within IMI there are great opportunities for financing for healthcare, academia and industry. These are crucial to utilise to maintain the competitive edge of both the region as a whole and individual companies. MedCoast Scandinavia has an important role to inform and educate the MedCoast region about these opportunities. Furthermore, MedCoast Scandinavia can facilitate and work as intermediary in collaborative and cross-border efforts and applications within this project.

Diabetes

The number of patients with diabetes is growing across the globe. This region is not an exception and high on the priority list for research. Both universities in Göteborg and Oslo and the local healthcare organisations already receive significant grants in the area. During 2008 there were no results on an application submitted for European grants in this area. MedCoast will continue to help submit an application to Expression of Interest (EOI) for MedCoast and eligible partners as universities and hospitals, SMEs funded by EU (FP7). These consortia must propose solutions to the deliverables called for under the IMI programme.

MedTech

The MedCoast initiative to get Medical Technology (Med-Tech) organisations and companies to join forces from 2005 in the MedCoast region was revised in collaboration with Innovation Norway and Oslo Teknopol through the launch of Oslo Med-tech. A steering group was established in 2007 and MedCoast has one representative on the 9-member board consisting. In the Gothenburg area forces have successfully been working to establish MedTech West. The aim is to develop this into an additional research centre. With this created, the MedCoast region has a significant and competitive platform to support innovations, and international as well as national grant applications.

During 2008 MedCoast performed an analysis of the companies in this area. With the research done at universities, the health care organisations' willingness to provide support and the significant number of companies present, this sector could be developed into an international cluster in the GO region.



Photo: Photo Disc

A challenge for further activities is to integrate the member benefits of MedCoast and the local initiatives in Oslo and Göteborg. The question of how to attract funding from collaborative initiatives and promoting our network are activities which will be addressed for 2009.

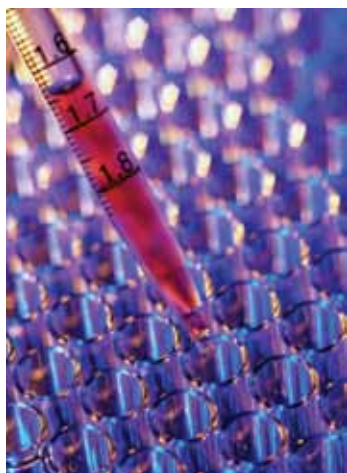


Photo: PhotoDisc

Innovation and entrepreneurship

A unique cooperation was formed during 2008 based on the collaboration between three universities and the research centres, Oslo Cancer Cluster and the Birkeland and Medinnova technology transfer offices with the help of MedCoast. The University of Oslo has Life Sciences as one of its six strategic milestones. The Life Science track is a two-year new venture management programme in cooperation with MedCoast Scandinavia/Oslo Cancer Cluster and Gothenburg International Bioscience Business School (GIBBS). The first semester takes place in Gothenburg.

This has led to further collaborations and applications to the inter regional funds for development and support of innovations and entrepreneurship in different areas. This is an in depth collaboration between the four universities in Ås, Oslo and Gothenburg with the regional authorities. For one of the applications the targets are set very high within Life science, in three years the number of students in entrepreneurship should reach three times the current level.

Future

The future for the region and MedCoast Scandinavia looks exciting and positive. We have many interesting projects and tasks to progress. We will continue working with existing projects, and marketing and positioning of the region and its competences. Furthermore, several new projects are about to start with more already in the planning stage. During 2009 we will commence projects within the fields of innovation of entrepreneurship, stress our innovative approaches to health care, and transform MedTech and biomaterials expertise into cross border clusters. The work to incorporate Oslo Cancer Cluster in Sweden in general and Göteborg in particular is also important. Cooperation through this has the potential to create an environment that may be a candidate for a Scandinavian Centre of Excellence.

MedCoast will continue to work internationally with other life science clusters in Europe, to increase the presence internationally. During 2008 MedCoast was part of three EU applications to promote the growth of the life science area. Two more are planned for early spring 2009.

2009 also brings a number of interesting events to the region. MedCoast Scandinavia will of course also be present at BIO2009. All our activities and other activities in the region will be posted on our homepage, www.med-coast.org.



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www.medcoast.org