

RESOLUTION

FROM THE NINTH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT FORUM ON HABITAT CONSERVATION IN THE BARENTS REGION (HCF IX)

The ninth Meeting of the International Contact Forum on Habitat Conservation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, further HCF IX, was organized on the 6th-8th of June 2017, in Oulu, Finland.

HCF IX was held according to the mandate and the recommendations of previous forum meetings; Trondheim 1999, Petrozavodsk 2001, Kuhmo 2003, Syktyvkar 2005, Umeå 2008, Arkhangelsk 2010, Bodø 2013 and Petrozavodsk 2015. HCF activities are part of the activities of the Nature Protection Subgroup of the Working Group on Environment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (WGE). Norway holds the Chairmanship of WGE (2016-2017).

The HCF IX gathered more than 40 participants, including representatives of ministries of environment, national and regional authorities, scientific institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations and other organizations from Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and Finland. Based on the presentations and discussions during the meeting, the HCF IX concludes the following:

CONSERVATION OF NATURE

HCF IX highlights the importance of nature inventories in less studied areas and encourages protection of high conservation value areas, including securing their connectivity, in order to contribute to the achievement of Aichi target 11¹ adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

HCF IX encourage the participation of the Barents countries at the conference "International and interregional connectivity of protected areas in the European North" to take place in Petrozavodsk in November 2017.

CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY

HCF IX notes the entry into force of the Paris Agreement and further notes with concern that the Arctic is warming at more than twice the rate of the global average.

HCF IX acknowledges the importance of the ecosystems in the Barents region as global carbon storages and is aware of the growing evidence of the impact of climate change on biodiversity in the Barents region.

HCF IX emphasizes the importance of maintenance and further development of networks of protected areas for conservation of biodiversity in a changing climate.

BOREAL FOREST

¹ Aichi target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape.

HCF IX in addition encourages the continuation of relevant actions under BPAN umbrella.

NEXT MEETING OF THE HABITAT CONTACT FORUM

HCF IX suggests that the organization of the next meeting, the 20th anniversary of the forum, HCF X in 2019, will be discussed at the next meeting of the Working Group on Environment.

Participants of the HCF IX expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of the Environment of Finland for hosting and organizing the meeting.

Oulu, Finland, 7th of June, 2017.

On behalf of the Finnish participants



Tapio Lindholm

Finnish Environment Institute

On behalf of the Norwegian participants



Tiia Kalske

Office of the Finnmark County Governor

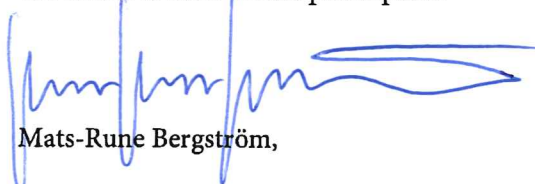
On behalf of the Russian participants



Alexander Kryshen

Forest Research Institute of the Karelian
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On behalf of the Swedish participants



Mats-Rune Bergström,

County Administrative Board of Västerbotten