

Interim Joint Committee – Rescue cooperation in the Barents region

Chair: Norway 2008 (Ms. Bente Michaelsen)

Finland 2009 (Mr. Timo Viitanen)

Annual report 2008

The most important task within the rescue cooperation in the Barents region has been to finalize the Agreement between the Governments in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region on cooperation within the field of emergency prevention, preparedness and response.

The last negotiations were held in Kirkenes in April 2008. The Russian Federation hosted a signing ceremony in Moscow on 11 December 2008 with participants from all the Parties to the Agreement.

In the north, we are dependent on our neighbours. The Barents Region is a huge region with long distances and scarcely located rescue resources. It has also a cold climate and rough weather. In many search and rescue operations, the time factor is critical. Rescue resources may be located closer in a neighbouring country. A well-established search and rescue cooperation across borders can therefore be of vital importance to ensure a successful rescue operation.

The signing of this Agreement represents a new era within the rescue cooperation in the Barents Region. The purpose of the Agreement is to further develop and increase the rescue cooperation between the four countries in the region. The Agreement will act as a basis for mutual assistance, including the use of cross border rescue resources and rescue personnel. The Agreement will play an important role in preventing large consequences of incidents and accidents.

The new Agreement also allows for regional or local agreements and arrangements. To ensure a successful rescue operation, it is of vital importance that local actors across borders know each other and have established contact points and routines for cooperation before the accidents or incidents occur. We are therefore welcoming local agreements and cooperation at several levels and fields, such as for example health, fire and local rescue actors.

The Agreement has not yet entered into force, but will do so on the thirtieth day following the receipt of the last written notification to the Depository, which is the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, of the implementation by the Contracting Parties of the internal state procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement.

We encourage all the Parties to the Agreement to submit, as soon as possible, the necessary notes to the Depositary, allowing for the entry into force of the Agreement.

The Committee had two meetings in 2008, one in Kirkenes on 21-23 April and one on the vessel MS Trollfjord (from Bodø to Kirkenes) on 17-21 November, with the participation of the European Commission at the last meeting.

The Committee is engaged, through its national delegations, in the planning of the exercise Barents Rescue 2009. The Agreement will form an important basis for the exercise Barents Rescue 2009 to be arranged in the Murmansk Region and hopefully some of its provisions will be exercised. Further details and development of exercise will be discussed at the Main Planning Conference to be held by the EMERCOM in Murmansk in March 2009. The Committee, as such, will in the future endeavour to be an active participant in relation to the exercises Barents Rescue.

Finland has taken the lead in a planned project called "Enhancing the Emergency Preparedness in the Barents Region". Finland has invited Sweden, the Russian Federation and Norway to participate in the programme. It is expected that the project will start soon in 2009 and that the project will apply for finances through the KOLARCTIC programme.

The Committee is continuing its work to develop electronic maps of the Barents Region, which identify the location of rescue resources. To be able to refine the maps, financial support would be necessary. Hopefully, the development of the maps can be a part of the new project "Enhancing the emergency preparedness in the Barents Region".

The Committee has also developed a Barents Joint Manual (for operational use). The Manual contains inter alia the contact points to which address requests of assistance. The Manual will soon be distributed after its final review.

The Committee has for several meetings been working on a fax sheet regarding early warning and request of assistance. The Committee agreed to the layout and the content of the fax sheet as it now stands. The aim is to use the fax sheet during the next exercise, e.g. Exercise Barents Rescue 2009.

The Committee is in the process of developing aims and objectives of the Joint Committee with the aim to finalize it in the near future.

The Committee notes that the European Commissions Arctic Strategy focuses on the challenges in the northern regions, contains EU policy in the area and represents the basis for further discussions. The Strategy supports the conclusion of the above-mentioned Agreement.

Plans for 2009:

The next meeting of the Committee will be held in Finland late spring 2009 under the chairmanship of Finland. Venue and time to be confirmed. The meeting will focus on following and, if necessary, promoting the implementation of the agreement on rescue cooperation in the Barents Region. The Committee aims at concluding its Terms of Reference

in 2009 irrespective of the implementation process. The Committee is going to discuss the relationship with CSO and put forward proposals accordingly.

”Enhancing the Emergency Preparedness in the Barents Region” -project will be a key topic with Committee members assisting the actors in finding each other for a successful final result. Additional partners may be found in Arctic Council’s EPPR working group in its annual meeting in March.

Committee representatives follow the planning of Barents 2009 exercise in their respective countries and, if proves necessary, support coordination between the countries.

30 January 2009

Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues (JWGHS):

Activity report for 2008, submitted by Co-Chairs Sweden (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs) and Arkhangelsk Region (Regional Health Administration)

New Co-Chairmanship for 2008-2009

The Joint Working Group practises a joint Chairmanship between a Nordic country and a Russian Barents Region. In January 2008 the Co-Chairmanship was transferred to Sweden and Arkhangelsk Region, after Norway and Murmansk. Co-Chairs were Ms. Kerstin Ödman, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden, and Mr. Sergey Emmanuilov, Director and Head of the Arkhangelsk Regional Health Administration. On 1 December 2008 Mr. Andrei Krasilnikov succeeded Mr. Emmanuilov as Director of the Arkhangelsk Regional Health Administration and Co-Chair of the JWGHS.

Meetings of the JWGHS and its subgroups

The JWGHS has had two meetings, both of them in Arkhangelsk, on 27 March and 13 November, with participation from central and regional levels in Finland, Norway and Sweden and, from regional level, from Arkhangelsk, Murmansk and Komi. Also other participants have taken part at one of two meetings, such as the IBS, the CSO Chair, the WHO, the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Steering Committee for the sub-programme on HIV/AIDS, chaired by Minister of Health of Murmansk Arkadij Rubin, had two meetings, one in Oslo and one in Syktyvkar, Komi.

A newly established Steering Committee on the sub-programme for cooperation on Children and Youth at Risk (see below) had two meetings, both of them in connection with the meetings of the JWGHS.

General about the Working Group and its activities

Members of the Working Group are Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia at both central government level and the Barents regions in all four countries. Also a representative of the Indigenous People's Working Group is member. The EU Commission, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being take part in the work.

2008 was the first year of implementation of the new Co-operation Programme 2008-2011. The JWGHS worked in accordance with the programme. The scope and priorities of the programme are: prevention and combat of communicable diseases, prevention of lifestyle-related health and social problems, and support to children and youth at risk, and development of primary healthcare, public health and social services.

Assessment of the situation as regards tuberculosis

The Declaration of the Prime Ministers, at their meeting at Kirkenes 2003, states that the Barents authorities are to gain full control of the tuberculosis situation in the region within 10 years, i.e. 2013. At its November meeting the JWGHS therefore made a mid-term assessment of the situation today.

TB expert and WHO representative Mr. Andrei Maryandyshev, Northern State Medical University, Arkhangelsk, presented a report showing that positive results had been achieved from the efforts in North West Russia on reducing new cases and using modern methods of cure. As an example, the number of new cases per 100 000 inhabitants in Arkhangelsk dropped from 73 in 2006 to 59 in 2007, compared to 82 and 83 in Russia as a whole.

Four emergent needs for the future cooperation were pointed out:

1. The threat of extensively-drug resistant (XDR) TB

2. The need of Molecular-genetic research
3. The need of a base of data on multi drug resistant TB in the Barents region
4. The strengthening of cooperation on services in the penitentiary institutions.

It was also suggested to set up a number goals for Barents cooperation on TB.

The JWGHS Co-Chairs were given the task to elaborate proposals based on his recommendations and proposals made in the discussion.

Establishment of a sub-programme on Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents Region (CYAR)

In accordance with the new co-operation programme on Health and Related Social Issues the JWGHS has adopted a new sub-programme on Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents Region (CYAR). This programme was elaborated during the previous Co-Chairmanship of Norway and Murmansk. The programme aims at strengthening the competence among the regional and local social administrations in the Barents Region to assist children and youth at risk.

A Steering Committee has been set up for the implementation of the programme. After quite lengthy initial difficulties Norway has taken on the responsibility to chair the Steering Committee, and Mr. Pål Christian Bergström, Senior Adviser, Regional Office for Children, Youth and family Affairs in Northern Norway, has been elected Chair. Co-Chair is Ms. Elena Viktorova, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Labour and Social Development in Murmansk Region. One of the most important tasks of the Steering Committee is to find financing for the programme, and an investigation is going on concerning the possibilities to apply to the ENPI Kolarctic Programme or other funding opportunities for support.

In spite of the initial difficulties a few projects have started in connection with the programme:

With direct reference to the CYAR programme, Norway and Murmansk region signed a co-operation protocol for the period of 2008-2009, declaring their intentions to increase project partnership activities in accordance with the profile of the programme.

The first partnership to be elaborated is on the topic of rehabilitation of adolescents who commit crime. The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality and the Ministry of Justice and police have with the Governor of Murmansk and the FSIN penalty execution authorities agreed to establish a long-term project partnership on experience- and competence exchange starting in 2009. Special focus will be given to the topics of prevention of criminal behaviour, alternative forms of punishment, effective treatment programmes for youth with behavioural problems and successful re-integration to society through multi-sectoral co-operation.

Furthermore, a new project partnership agreement was made between the Ministry of Social development in Murmansk region and the Regional office for children-, youth and family affairs Northern Norway for the period of 2009-2010. The target group of the project is families who have children with disabilities, and the objective is to strengthen the parents' ability to provide good care for the child through a strong relationship between themselves.

Sub-programme on HIV/AIDS

This programme was first established in 2005 and then prolonged from 2008 – 2011. Chair is Mr. Arkadi Rubin, Minister of Health of Murmansk Region. Finland finances a programme coordinator.

The programme aims at reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents region through multi-sectoral action. It aims at strengthening the national capacity to respond to the epidemic. The programme will contribute to the following overall objectives: 1) scaling up and accelerating the national response to HIV/AIDS to reduce the spread of HIV, 2) providing support to activities in the priority areas of prevention and mitigation of socio-economic impact at individual, household, and community levels. This programme aims at assisting the Russian National HIV/AIDS Programme truly multisectorally by mainstreaming HIV/AIDS control into the action plan of every Local Government Authority.

During the year a monitoring has been carried through. The most important findings of the monitoring is that great progress has taken place in Barents Region after the planning phase of the Programme (in 2004). AIDS Centres have become strong and professional, collaboration with other authorities has improved, the work gets support from higher levels. Sustainability of the HIV work seems good; institutional framework, funding, human and technical resources are in place. Recommendations of the monitoring expert include stronger input into prevention of HIV, capacity building in project planning and management and closer collaboration with TB activities. According to the monitoring expert the "Barents HIV/AIDS Programme has potential for a continuous source for new innovative approaches".

In the end of 2008, totally 18 projects were ongoing, 3 proposals reviewed and 9 projects completed within the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme, see enclosed list.

Development of the situation in the health care and social sectors/projects

One important aim of the co-operation programme is to improve co-ordination and improve transparency of the international cooperation going on in the Barents region in the fields of health and related social issues. At all its meetings the members of the JWGHS exchange information concerning projects in which they are involved. Still a great number of cooperation projects are going on, but a reduction in financial contributions from the Nordic countries, above all Sweden, has been carried through during the year. Finland has announced a reduction of its contributions.

Co-operation with the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council is a Partner of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS). The Chair of the JWGHS regularly informs the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the activities of the JWGHS, and the Partnership is represented in the JWGHS. In 2008, Norway has been the NDPHS Chair and reported to the Working Group.

Database/webpage

During the year the contents of the Barents Health database has been transferred to the database of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS), www.ndphs.org. In total this database contains a description of 391 projects in the Barents Region. It is still possible to find the information in www.barentshealth.org, but this information is not up-dated.

Planning for 2009

The JWGHS plans for two meetings, the first meeting in Umeå, Sweden, on 5 May. The second meeting will take place in Arkhangelsk in November.

One important task for the JWGHS is to follow up the assessment made of the TB situation last year and strengthen the coordination and promote the cooperation in the field of TB. The Working Group will also follow the cooperation in the fields of HIV/AIDS and Children and Youth at Risk (CYAR). As usual the Joint Working Group will also generally follow the developments of the cooperation in the health and social fields.

The HIV/AIDS Steering Committee plans among other things to work on the implementation of the recommendations from monitoring of the Programme, organize a Capacity building workshop in programme/project planning, a combined study tour to Finland for representatives of two NW Russian regions and continued coordination of the Murmansk and Kantlahti LTSC project. The Steering Committee plans two meetings, the first one taking place in Luleå, Sweden, preliminarily on 15-17 April.

The Steering Committee for the programme on Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents region plans will give priority to finding out possibilities for financing of the programme. It will also if possible initiate different activities in order to get the implementation of the programme started. The Steering Committee plans two meetings, one in March in Komi and the second in November in Arkhangelsk.

Enclosure:

Project list of the Barents HIV/AIDS programme

Enclosure

List of projects of the Barents HIV/AIDS programme

Ongoing Finnish – Russian projects

1. "Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Partnership Programme Regions, phase II (2008-2010)". Coordination of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme and support to EG on HIV/AIDS for the ND partnership. Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, and Murmansk Regional Health Committee. Approximate budget – 600 000 EURO (3 years).
2. "Further Development of Low Threshold Services in Murmansk and Kantalahti" (2008-2010) Pilot project of the above mentioned programme. Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare (Finland) and Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre. Approximate budget 300 000 EURO (3 years).
3. "Prevention of HIV infection in the Republic of Karelia in 2007–2009". Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, and Republican AIDS Centre. Approximate budget 300 000 EURO (3 years).
4. "Strengthening of intersectoral action to fight drug abuse and drug related harm in Murmansk Region 2008–2009". Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, and Murmansk Regional Anti-drug commission. Approximate budget: 178 000 €.

Ongoing Norwegian – Russian projects

5. "Cross action between STI Clinic in Archangelsk and Olafia Clinic in Oslo" (B504). Coordination: The Olafia Clinic, Norway. Approximate budget: 279 000 NOK.
6. "Only for you". The ConTact Bus- Murmansk Region (B606). Coordination: Norway and Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre. Approximate Budget 34 700 USD
7. "Youth education Program - HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse - Murmansk region". Coordination: Norway. Approximate budget - NOK 549 779
8. "The Clinton HIV/AIDS initiative and Russia. Exchange of Russian and Norwegian clinicians". Coordination: Directorate for Health, Norway. Approximate budget - NOK 460 000
9. Education program for pedagogical personal and health specialists in the field of "Healthy lifestyle" and prevention of HIV/AIDS and drug addiction (B705). Murmansk Region. Coordination: Norwegian Church Aid. Approximate budget 257 000 NOK.
10. Youth peer education in Murmansk related to HIV, STI and communication skills (B710). Coordination: Pertinax Group, Norway. Approximate budget 207 000 NOK.

11. "Love your neighbor". Arkhangelsk region. Coordination: Norway. Approximate Budget 330 000 NOK
12. Assistance in development of palliative aid in Archangelsk Region 2007. Coordination: Norwegian Church Aid and NGO RAssvet. Approximate budget 214 000 NOK.
13. "Vera". Development of international network of interaction between organisations dealing with women and adolescents, involved in commercial sex business and trafficking victims. Coordination: NGO Stellit, Russia (Pro Sentret, Norway). Approximate budget: 549 000 NOK..
14. "HIV: to be aware means to live". Coordination: Norwegian Church Aid and NGO RAssvet, Archangelsk Region. Approximate budget: 250 000 NOK.
15. Youth peer education in Archangelsk related to HIV, STI and communication skills. Coordination: Pertinax Group, Norway, three partners in Archangelsk Region. Budget 207 000 NOK.
16. Research project "Governance of HIV/AIDS prevention in North-West Russian" Coordination: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research. An additional component of the project is financed by Finland
17. Educational project "New view". Coordination: Norwegian Sami Mission and "New Beginning", Murmansk Region. Grant 250 000 NOK in 2008

Ongoing Swedish – Russian project

18. "HIV/STI and Drug preventive efforts in Murmansk, Archangelsk and Karelia". Coordination: Sweden - Noaks Ark Barents. Approximate budget – SEK 980 000

List of projects under consideration

1. "“Prevention of HIV infection among young people through advocacy, support, development of policies and actions in Murmansk region”". Coordination: Norway. Project proposal
2. Enhancing HIV/AIDS reporting in the Republic of Karelia through training of media professionals. Applied from Finland
3. TB/HIV collaboration in Murmansk. Applied from Finland
4. Training of Russian police officers on injecting drug use and HIV in Murmansk, International Centre for Migration and Health in Switzerland. Coordination: Norway, Project proposal

List of completed projects

1. "Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Partnership Programme Regions in 2005–2007" Coordination of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme and support to EG on HIV/AIDS for the ND partnership. Coordination: STAKES, Finland. Approximate budget EUR 715,000 (3 years). Financier: Finnish Government.
2. Development of Low Threshold Support Centre in Murmansk region". Pilot project of the

- above mentioned programme. Coordination: STAKES, Finland. Budget EUR 247,905. Financier: Finland.
3. "Workshop of workers in LTC sites for IDUs". Coordination: National Public Health Institute, Finland. Approximate budget EUR 20,000. Financier: Finland.
 4. "AIDS Alarm in North-West Russia". Coordination: Norway. Approximate budget NOK 151,000. Financier: Norway.
 5. "Sexual and reproductive Health of Adolescents in Northwestern Russia" Coordination: Sweden, RFSU. Approximate budget SEK 16,091,000 (1997–2007).
 6. "Activate patients at Murmansk Municipal HIV/AIDS Centre". Coordination: Norway and Murmansk AIDS Centre. Approximate budget NOK 16,000. Financier: Norway
 7. "The Bus" for Republican AIDS Centre, Petrozavodsk. Approximate budget NOK 250,000. Financier: Norway (Humanitarian Fund of Crown Prince Haakon and Crown Princess Mette-Marit).
 8. "The ConTact Bus – Arkhangelsk Region". Coordination: Norway. Approximate Budget: NOK 280,000 (Continues with financing by the Archangelsk Region)
 9. "Territory of Life. Mobile unit work for prevention of HIV in Murmansk Region" Coordination: Norwegian Institute of Public Health. Approximate budget NOK 270,000. Financier: Norway

Outcome of the activities of the BEAC Working Group on Economic Cooperation during Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC in 2007 - 2009

(Interim Report for 2007 – 2008)

1. Main directions of the work. General considerations.

1) Main directions of the work of the BEAC Working Group on Economic Cooperation (hereinafter named as BEAC/WGEC) were elaborated bearing in mind the Priorities of the Russian Federation during its Chairmanship in the BEAC, which had been approved by the Russian Foreign Minister as BEAC Chairman.

2) We took into consideration that already gained experience has utmost importance for the successful work of the BEAC/WGEC, including the previous Russia's Chairmanship of the BEAC in 2000 – 2001, practice and main results of the BEAC/WGEC activities under the Chairmanships of Sweden, Norway and Finland in 2001 – 2007. We proceeded from the need to continue what have already been started and to contribute to what is under implementation.

3) When formulating guidelines for the BEAC/WGEC we took into account the dynamic of regional economic processes.

4) Proper attention was paid to defining trends of development of the BEAC/WGEC and the Council itself, as well as to the changes in the format of regional economic cooperation. Particularly we consider that:

- several years ago the Task Force on Custom Matters was separated from the BEAC/WGEC and transformed into the

independent BEAC Working Group on Customs Cooperation (hereinafter–BEAC/WGCC);

- a number of issues, which the BEAC/WGCC is now dealing with, has direct connection to the topics discussed at the BEAC/WGEC Meetings (trade liberalization, logistic improvement, etc.);
- in 2004 new area of cooperation was set up, which has been matured as an independent one, – assistance to the contacts of the businessmen in the framework of international conference “Barents Industrial Partnership” and other events;

5) Main directions of the BEAC/WGEC activity are:

- to evaluate current economic situation in the region;
- to explore opportunities and prospects of interaction between ministries, agencies and business circles, taking into account the aforementioned economic situation;
- to contribute into possible elaboration by the BEAC Member States common or similar approaches towards cooperation issues;
- to assist in implementation of regional projects (including joint ones).

6) The Russian Chairmanship planned to consider following issues:

- opportunities for multilateral assistance to international business in the region and for implementation of mutual economic projects;
- expediency and ways to involve in the activities of the BEAC/WGEC representatives of the large companies and firms from the Member States (in order to exchange views on BEAC issues);
- cooperation in the area of innovations, including views expressed by the experts on special economic zones and zones aimed at

application of the achievements of science to production, which were established in the Russian Federation – it means to invite such experts to the BEAC/WGEC Meetings (this was never realized before);

- sustainable forest management (bearing in mind recent changes in the Russian legislation);
- general forestry issues (taking into account that there is a subordinate to the BEAC/WGEC working body – Barents Forestry Special Task Force, chaired by the representative of the Russian Forestry Agency);
- possible assistance in the framework of the BEAC/WGEC to promotion of the large projects in the entities of the Russian Federation, which are constituent in the Barents Region (on the basis of the proposals from these entities' regional authorities).

7) Bearing in mind that the most important direction of the economic cooperation within the BEAC is the interaction of the national business communities, it was planned:

- to hold consultations with the B-BAG (Barents Business Advisory Group) on the issues of the activities of the Latter;
- to take part in several Meetings of the B-BAG;
- to explore the opportunities to join the work of the BEAC/WGEC from the part of regional Chambers of Commerce and Trade (Russian-Norwegian, Norwegian-Russian, Stockholm CCT, Lapland CCT and others – due to their interest to such cooperation);
- to elaborate the possibility of joining the regional economic cooperation process by the relevant divisions of the Russian

Chamber of Trade and Industry and Russian Union of Entrepreneurs and Producers.

8) Contacts with the International Barents Secretariat (Kirkenes)

2. Events of the BEAC/WGEC during the Russian BEAC Chairmanship (end of 2007 - 2008). Main results.

1) Russian MFA, Moscow, 4 December 2007: First BEAC/WGEC Meeting under the Russian Chairmanship, the Chairman of the Group met the representatives of the Embassies of the BEAC Member States in Moscow (minister-counsellors, economic counsellors, diplomats from the EU Representation Office in Moscow).

Participants: Embassies of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden in Moscow, the EU Representation Office in Moscow, Russian MFA (Second European Department and Department of Economic Cooperation), Ministry of Economic Development and Russian Forestry Agency, Russian Academy of Science, entities of Russian North-West, which are the BEAC Members.

Topic: exchange of views on the Russian plans for Chairmanship of the BEAC/WGEC.

Summary: with due attention to the views expressed by the participants the Russian Side elaborated the Priorities of Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC in 2007 – 2009 concerning regional economic cooperation, as well as the Perspective Plan for the Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC/WGEC in 2008.

Representatives of the BEAC Member States, EC, Russian Ministries and Agencies agreed with views proposed by the Russian Chairmanship for the BEAC/WGEC. These proposals were also presented at the Meeting of the CBSS Working Group on Economic Cooperation (Riga, 16 January 2008).

Russian Federation stressed the necessity for these two Working Groups to cooperate considering that said coordination of their efforts may bring a synergy effect and contribute to the common goal – sustainable development (especially – in the economic area) of the Barents and Baltic regions of Europe.

The relevant documents (the Priorities of Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC in 2007 – 2009 and the Perspective Plan for the Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC/WGEC in 2008) are placed at the Russian MFA web-site and sent to the International Barents Secretariat.

2) Russian MFA, Moscow, 21 May 2008: the BEAC/WGEC Meeting

Participants: representatives of the Embassies of Finland, Norway, Sweden in Moscow and of the EU Representative Office in Moscow, representatives of Russian Ministries and Agencies (MFA, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry Agency, Academy of Science).

Main issues:

Information of the representative of Finland on the main outcome of the Finnish Chairmanship of the BEAC/WGEC in 2005 – 2007; Adoption of the Plan for the Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC/WGEC in 2008 – 2009; Information on the outcome of the BEAC CSO Meeting on 7 – 8 April 2008 in Moscow; Discussion on forestry management development in the Barents region within the framework of the BEAC/WGEC (Report on the work of the Barents Forest Sector Task Force (BFSTF) in 2005 – 2007; Information on recent development, current situation and legislative changes, prospects for the future in the Russian Forestry Sector (by the representative of the Russian Forestry Agency); Prolongation of the BFSTF mandate; Exchange of views on matters related to the tentative meeting of the BEAC/WGEC in Brussels (who participates, items to be discussed, etc.); Information on B-BAG

activities (Chairman – Mr. T.Rautajoki); Exchange of views related to the next Barents Industrial Partnership (BIP) Conference, etc.

3) St.-Petersburg, 27 November 2008: the BEAC/WGEC Meeting

Participants: representatives of the Embassies of Finland, Norway, Sweden in Moscow and of the EU Representative Office in Moscow, representatives of Russian Ministries and Agencies (MFA, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry Agency), the head of the Informational Bureau of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Main issues:

Information on the BEAC/WGEC activities since the BEAC WGEC Meeting (Moscow, 21 May 2008); Discussion on issues related to the forestry in the framework of the BEAC WGEC (appointment of Mr. S.Shtrakhov (Russian Forestry Agency) to the post of BFSTF Chairman; Information on recent development and future prospects in the Russian Forestry Sector in view of cooperation within the Barents Region); Results of the Meeting of BEAC WGEC Chairman in Brussels with the EC representatives (in June 2008); Information on B-BAG activities; Exchange of views related to the next BIP Conference; Information on economic developments in the regions of the BEAC Member States.

Information was presented on several economic projects being implemented in the entities of the Russian Federation – members of the Barents Regional Council (at the request of the heads of these entities):

- a) Republic of Karelia – “Barents-Link”; construction of the International Road Border Check-Point “Suvaoro – Parikkala”; reconstruction of the International Railway Border Check-Point “Vartsilla – Lutta”;

- b) Republic of Komi – construction of the Railway Line “Solikamsk – Gainy – Syktyvkar – Kargopory – Arkhangelsk”;
- c) Nenetsk Autonomous Okrug – “BARENTSKOMUR”.

3) Arkhangelsk, 16 December 2008: the 7th International Conference «Barents Industrial Partnership»

Participants: the representatives of the Russian Federation (MFA, Administrations of the entities of the Russian West-North), Finland, Norway, Sweden, business communities of the BEAC Member States.

Topic of the Conference: «Barents Industrial Partnership in Changing Economic Conditions».

Participants discussed the prospects of further broadening multilateral economic cooperation in the region in the spheres of economy, trade, science and technologies, education, environment protection and implementation of joint projects.

The Russian participants presented information on the opportunities to improve further cooperation within the framework of the BEAC in such areas as shipbuilding and shiprepairing, development of port infrastructure, forestry, etc. Information was considered with interest.

Results of the BIP – 2008 confirmed interest of the BEAC Member States towards international cooperation in the Barents region. It was underlined that effectiveness of such cooperation for the Russian Federation would depend at large extent on dynamic involvement into the process from the part of its entities of Russian North-West, in particular – Arkhangelsk and Murmansk Regions, Republic of Komi, Republic of Karelia and Nenetsk Autonomous Okrug.

Deputy Head of the Arkhangelsk Regional Administration, Mr. D.Pletnev, and Director of the International Barents Secretariat

Ambassador A.Ignatiev addressed the participants with welcoming speeches.

3. Other BEAC events with participation of the BEAC/WGEC Chairman

1. BEAC CSO Meeting, Moscow, 7 – 8 April 2008.
2. BEAC Working Group on Customs Cooperation, Moscow, 5 June 2008.

4. Meetings, Negotiations, Consultations of the BEAC/WGEC Chairman on BEAC issues

1. With the leadership of Russian-Norwegian and Norwegian-Russian Chambers of Commerce and Trade, Moscow, 5 February 2008
2. With the representative of Denmark – the incoming Chairman of the CBSS Working Group on Economic Cooperation, Moscow, 8 June 2008
3. With representatives of the European Commission, Brussels, 19 June 2008.
4. With the Chairman of the CBSS Working Group on Economic Cooperation (Denmark), Copenhagen, 10 September 2008.



Working Group of Indigenous Peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

Chair: Mr. Bjarne Store-Jakobsen, Norway

Annual report 2008

1. *The period* of this annual report is from 01.01-31.12.2008. This annual report concerns status and activity for the Working Group of Indigenous Peoples (WGIP) in BEAR.
2. *WGIP* held two (2) *meetings* during 2008.
 - April 3rd – 4th, Naryan-Mar
 - October 30th, Rovaniemi

The Head and the secretaries held two (2) work meetings during 2008.

- January 17th, Tromsø
- September 18th, Tromsø

3. *WGIP* consisted in 2008 of the following six (6) members:

The Saami members from Finland, Sweden and Norway are formally appointed by the Saami Parliamentary Council, after decisions from the respective Saami parliaments.

Mr. Bjarne Store-Jakobsen is appointed by the Saami Parliament of Norway and Ms. Kirsti Guvsám is the substitute member.

Mr. Per Labba is appointed by the Saami Parliament of Sweden, and Mr. Stefan Mikaelsson is the substitute member.

Mr. Tuomas Aslat Juuso is appointed by the Saami Parliament of Finland and Ms. Maria Sofia Aikio is the substitute member.

Ms. Elizaveta Kharitonova is appointed by the Vepsian Cultural Organisation and Ms. Zinaida Strogalschikova is the substitute member.

Mr. Alexander E. Belugin is appointed by the Nenets organisation “Yasavey” and Ms. Galina A. Arteeva is the substitute member.

Ms. Valentina V. Sovkina was appointed by the Murmansk Regional Saami Coordinative Council (dissolved 2008) and Mr. Andrey Ageev is the substitute member.

4. The WGIP representation in the formal structure of the Barents cooperation

Committee of Senior Officials: Mr Bjarne Store-Jakobsen represented the WGIP in the CSO meetings during 2008.

Regional Council: Mr Tuomas Aslat Juuso represented the WGIP in the Barents Regional Council. Ms. Maria Sofia Aikio is the substitute WGIP representative.

Regional Committee: Ms Christina Henriksen (secretary of the WGIP) represented the WGIP in the Barents Regional Committee during 2008.

Barents Regional Working Group for Youth Issues: Mr Lars Miguel Utsi is appointed WGIP’s representative and Mrs. Andrey Dubevtsev is the substitute member (decision 11/08).

Barents Joint Working Group on Culture: Ms. Matrëna Taleeva is appointed WGIP’s representative and Ms. Valentina Zganich is the substitute member (decision 11/08).

Barents Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues: Ms. Galina Arteeva is appointed WGIP’s representative and Maria Filippova is the substitute member (decision 11/08).

Steering Group to the program for Children and Youth at Risk: Ms. Alexandra Artieva is appointed WGIP’s representative and Ms. Valentina Sovkina is the substitute representative (decision 11/08).

Ad-hoc working group on the Barents Program/Barents 2010+ (2008): Mr. Per-Ivar Henriksen is appointed WGIP’s representative. Evgeny Yushkov is the substitute member.

5. Secretariat

Two (2) secretaries, Ms Christina Henriksen, adviser at the Norwegian Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes and Mr Evgeny Yushkov, Head of Barents Indigenous Peoples Office (BIPO) in Lovozero until October 1st, serve WGIP.

6. Representation of leader, members and secretaries of WGIP

Mr. Bjarne Store-Jakobsen:

- The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)
 - June 17th-18th 2008, Naryan-Mar
- Joint meeting with the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs and others
 - June 2008, Kirkenes
- Joint meeting with RAIPON, WGIP, the Saami Council, the Saami Parliament, and Saami Women’s Forum
 - June 2008, Kirkenes

Ms. Valentina Vyacheslavovna Sovkina

- Joint meeting with the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs and others
 - June 2008, Kirkenes
- Joint meeting with RAIPON, WGIP, the Saami Council, the Saami Parliament, and Saami Women's Forum
 - June 2008, Kirkenes

Ms. Christina Henriksen

- The Barents Regional Committee
 - February 15th, Kajaani
 - May 28th, Kuusamo
 - September 24th, Kirkenes
 - November 18th, Umeå
- The Barents Regional Council
 - May 19th, Kuusamo (secretary)
 - November 19th, Umeå (substitute for Mr. Tuomas Aslat Juuso and Maria Sofia Aikio)
- The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)
 - June 17th -18th, Naryan-Mar (secretary)

Mr. Evgeny Yushkov

- Conference on Saami self-determination
 - February 4th -5th, Alta
- The Saami Conference and the Saami Cultural Heritage Week
 - October 27th-31st, Rovaniemi
- Presentation of the work on establishment of a Saami parliament in the Russian Federation
 - November 24th, Karasjok

7. *Activities*

The WGIP has focused on the following issues during the period:

The Action Plan of indigenous peoples 2009-2012

The WGIP and the secretariat have been working on a draft for the Action Plan of indigenous peoples 2009-2012. The Plan will be adopted in January 2009.

Meeting with RAIPON and others

The meeting between the WGIP, RAIPON, the Saami Parliament of Norway, the Saami Council, the Saami Women's Forum and the Norwegian Barents Secretariat took place in the Norwegian Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes on June 9th 2008. Mutual interests and fields of cooperation were

discussed, and focus was put on joint challenges connected to industrial activities in indigenous peoples' areas.

Meeting with the Norwegian Minister of Foreign affairs

The WGIP met the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Jonas Gahr Støre, during a lunch meeting in Kirkenes on June 9th 2008. RAIPON, the Saami Parliament of Norway, the Saami Council, the Saami Women's Forum and the Norwegian Barents Secretariat were also present. Items of discussion were the challenges faced by indigenous peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

The project “Obshina Kildin – Re-establishing family reindeer husbandry” is a joint pilot project between BEAC and NCM. The WGIP is the project owner, and the project is led by Sámi Trade-and Development Centre in Norway and Jelena Koroleva in Russia. Mr Bjarne Store-Jakobsen is a member of the steering group of the project and has had several meetings with different actors concerning this matter.

International Barents Secretariat (IBS)

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will second a position to the International Barents Secretariat in 2009, and the WGIP has been an advisory body regarding the content of such a position.

Indigenous Entrepreneurship

The WGIP has been working on the proposal for this upcoming project, and a grant is given from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The grant (DKK 500 000) is to be divided between the IE project and the Micro Credit project executed by the Saami Trade- and Development Centre in Deatnu/Tana.

Visits to Nenets Autonomous Okrug

- The Head of the WGIP followed the program of the delegation from Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino municipality on their visit to Naryan-Mar in April 2008. The visit was coordinated with the WGIP meeting, and the Head of the WGIP visited the village of Nelmin-Nos (April 5th) and a reindeer herders' brigade (Kharp) outside of Naryan-Mar (April 6th).
- The Head of the WGIP participated in the CSO meeting in Naryan-Mar on June 17th-18th) and an excursion to Nelmin-Nos was organized in this occasion. WGIP met with the administrative Head of the Malozemelsky selsovet, Mr. Mikhail Taleev, and visited several of the local institutions.



MINISTRY OF SPORT, TOURISM AND YOUTH POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Department of youth policy and international cooperation

26 January 2009

**Barents Euro-Arctic Council's
Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP)
Annual report 2008**

Background

The Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP) was established as an Ad Hoc Working Group in 1999 upon a Finnish proposal. By a decision of the CSO in December 2002, the mandate of the group was prolonged and revised, and the group was transformed into a permanent working group, integrated in the structure of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. The work of the WGYP is based on the Plan of Action adopted at the Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth Policy in the member states of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Tromsø 14 -16 of May 2001.

Activities in 2008

During the Russian chairmanship in 2008 the work of the WGYP focused on the following activities:

- Implementing the Tromsø Plan of Action;
- Cooperating with other bodies of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Regional Council, as well as with international organisations and relevant regional structures;
- Steering and supporting the Barents Youth Cooperation Office (BYCO) activities.

The WGYP held one ordinary meeting (24-25 November in Moscow) chaired by Roman Aleksandrov, Deputy Head of Department of youth policy and international cooperation of Ministry of sports, tourism and youth policy of the Russian Federation.

In accordance with the program of the chairmanship of the Russian Federation in the BEAC for 2007-2009 the WGYP has started to work on organizing The Conference of Ministers responsible for youth policy and international youth event in 2009.

The WGYP prolonged the agreement on the Barents Youth Cooperation Office (BYCO) for the period of 2009-2010.

Plans for 2009

The WGYP will identify the dates, places and format of the events, set in points 41-44 of the program of the chairmanship of the Russian Federation in the BEAC for 2007-2009

The Conference of Ministers responsible for youth policy will take place in Murmansk.

Provisional dates: 28 September – 2 October 2009.

The WGYP will prepare a Declaration to be adopted by Ministers. The next WGYP meeting will be devoted to detailed elaboration of the Declaration. The draft will be finalised at the September meeting of the WGYP.

The International youth event will take place in Murmansk straight before the Ministerial Conference.

Provisional dates: 26-27 September 2009.

50 youth representatives (4 from each Barents region) and observers from international youth structures will be invited to the International youth event.

The Russian Federation will pay meals and accommodation of participants. Travel costs will be covered by each region itself.

The meetings of Working Group of Youth Policy of the BEAC:

24-26 March 2009

26-27 September 2009

Working Group on Environment (BEAC WGE)

Annual Report 2008

Since the meeting of the Barents Environmental Ministers in Moscow November 2007, Norway has chaired the BEAC Working Group on Environment. The activity in the Working Group is based on the Ministerial Declaration of 8 November 2007 (Annex-1). The following areas are of priority to the Norwegian chairmanship:

- Climate change – consequences, adaptation and mitigation measures
- Environmentally hazardous substances – reduction of emissions and improvement of hazardous waste handling
- Biodiversity – protection of habitats and species, strengthening of the network of protected areas
- Hot spots and cleaner production – contribution to solving the 42 most urgent environmental problems in the Russian part of the Barents Region, the so called environmental “hot spots”, and promotion of cleaner production
- Water management – co-operation on cross boarder water bodies, reduction of emissions to water and supply of clean drinking water

The goal has been to establish some concrete project co-operation under the working group and to strengthen the co-operation between the national and regional levels.

Working group meetings

The Working group on Environment has held three meetings in 2008. The meetings were held in Tromsø 9-11 April, in Svanhovd (Pasvik) 16-18 June and in Murmansk 8-10 October.

Establishment of subgroups, strategies and action plans

In order to develop concrete projects it was decided in 2007 to establish the three subgroups under WGE. The three subgroups were established during the first meeting in Tromsø:

- Subgroup on cleaner production and environmentally sound consumption, chaired by Norwegian Pollution Control Authority,
- Subgroup on nature protection, chaired by the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management
- Subgroup on water issues, chaired by the Environmental Department of Finnmark County Administration.

Sweden, Finland, Russia and Norway have appointed national representatives in the subgroups. The subgroups are open for participation from other interested parties and regional representatives.

Based on the declaration and the mandates from the ministers, the subgroups have formed strategies and action plans (Annexes 2-4). Projects will be financed by contribution from the member countries and by application to EU and Nordic sources of finance. For co-ordination and reference purposes the subgroups have created and will maintain lists of other environmental projects in the Barents region, related to the respective field of work.

The Second International Roundtable on sustainable lifestyles and cleaner production was held in Yasnaya Polyana, Tula oblast, Russia, 27-28 May 2008.

The Fifth meeting of the International Contact Forum on Habitat Conservation in the Barents Region was held in Umeå, Sweden 15-16 October 2008. The main topic of discussion was biodiversity and climate change. The Barents Habitat Contact Forum has since 1999 been a meeting place for Russian and Nordic experts in the field of biodiversity and habitat conservation in the Barents Region. In 2008 the Habitat Contact Forum officially became a part the Subgroup on nature protection.

A calendar of completed and planned events under the WGE and its subgroups is enclosed (Annex 5).

Environmental "hot spots" in the Barents Region

Relating to the 42 environmental "hot spots", identified in 2003 by the AMAP/NEFCO "hot spots" report, by year-end 2008, 40 sector studies, pre-feasibility studies and other project development measures had been approved for support from the Barents Hot Spots Facility (BHSF), which is administrated by the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO). See NEFCO-report Annex-6.

Hot spot K10 in Karelia has eliminated summer 2008 as a result of a Finnish-Russian project. 12 tonnes of obsolete pesticides of Karelia were transferred to Finland and finally destroyed at Ekokem high thermal destruction facility in Finland.

WGE decided in 2007 to set up an information database on "hot spots", and to establish an international task force with the mandate to propose criteria for eliminating "hot spots" from the list. These tasks will be prioritized in 2009, with certain financial support from the BHSF

In 2008 there has been close contact between NEFCO and the WGE in order to promote work on the "hot spots". The goal has been to increase the commitment to elimination of the "hot spots" on the regional and central levels in Russia, and to promote cleaner production as a method to generate projects with relevance to the "hot spots".

In September 2008 there was a meeting between the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology, the WGE chair, NEFCO, and the Cleaner Production and Sustainable Development Centre(Moscow), where the parties discussed how to proceed the work on elimination of the "hot spots".

Some of the "hot spots" are owned by large industrial enterprises. If the enterprise belongs to the federal category, Rosprirodnadzor executes the control with their compliance to the environmental legislation. If the enterprise belongs to the regional category, environmental control is executed by the bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

There are, however, "hot spots" of various categories, where regional authorities may play an important role in the solution. In the Republics of Komi and Karelia the regional authorities have established separate working groups to lead and co-ordinate the work on elimination of "hot spots" and promotion of cleaner production. WGE will promote this idea also in other subjects in the Russian part of Barents Region.

In October 2008 WGE in co-operation with The Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in the Murmansk Region arranged a seminar on "hot spots" and cleaner production for "hot spot"-owners, enterprises, regional authorities and other interested parties. There were presentations related to elimination of "hot spots", including presentations from industrial enterprises on their experience with the cleaner production concept. The chairman of The Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in the Murmansk Region presented his view and priorities related to elimination of the "hot spots" in Murmansk region, and suggested that some of the original "hot spots" may be eliminated from the list, as well as some new project ideas.

In 2009 WGE intends to follow up with corresponding seminars in Arkhangelsk and Nenets Autonomous District.

WGE has also taken an initiative to renew the co-operation with the Arctic Council's working group ACAP on "hot spots" with emissions of environmentally hazardous substances. This will be followed up in 2009.

Climate change

The action plans of subgroups contain several projects and project areas, connected to climate change. Furthermore, a project is being conducted in co-operation between WGE and the Nordic Council of Ministers to study the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem goods in the Barents Region. The project will be completed in 2009.

The WGE plans to arrange a conference on climate change with main focus on the effects of climate change and possible adaptation measures for the Barents Region the autumn 2009. All Barents countries, regions and The International Barents Secretariat will contribute to the conference.

National and regional co-operation

The Regional Working Group on Environment (RWGE) has in 2008 held its meetings back-to-back with the WGE-meetings, which gives the regional representatives the opportunity to take part in the subgroup- and WGE-meetings. In this way the Barents co-operation provides a unique forum for contact between the national and regional level. It has been a problem to get Russian regional representation to the meetings. However, at the meeting in Murmansk in October all but one of the Russian Barents regions were present.

In October 2008 the chairmanship of RWGE was handed over from the Republic of Komi, Russia, to the County of Finnmark, Norway.



REGIONAL COUNCIL OF LAPLAND

15.12.2008

JOINT WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM Proposals for co-operation from Finnish Lapland

In the meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials 15. - 16.9.2008 the Russian Ministry of Tourism took an initiative to establish a Joint Working Group on Tourism (JWGT) for Barents region. The Barents Regional Committee supported the initiative in Kirkenes meeting 23. – 24.9.2008. The Russian Ministry of Tourism is the chairman of the working group and Finnish Lapland is the regional co-chair.

The Joint Working Group on Tourism is intended to work on both national and region levels. The national level will provide information on the current state policy in this sphere, plans, programs, national legislation and amendments. The regional level is implementing the co-operation in practice. Finland has not appointed a national level representative for the JWGT at this stage. The work of the JWGT will be followed and reported to the Ministry of employment and the economy by the regional participant, Lapland.

The first meeting of the JWGT was arranged 1.12.2008 in Moscow by the Russian Ministry of sports, tourism and youth policy. The programme of the meeting and the list of participants are attached.

The county of Lapland considers cross-border tourism development in the Barents region very important. The difficult situation in world's economy is making the competition harder in tourism sector. In order to maintain the competitiveness of the Barents region in the word market it is beneficial to co-operate e.g. in tourism marketing.

The Russian Ministry of sports, tourism and youth policy introduced a proposal for the mission, tasks and mandate of the JWGT. The mission of the JWGT would be:

- to support and increase confidence of Government Authorities, Society and Business to tourist projects
- to promote development and realization of tourist projects of different level and purpose

The tasks of the JWGT would be:

1. to increase tourist flow to regions
2. to increase tourism revenue in regions
3. to increase diversification in local employment

4. to increase cultural contacts and social adaptation to national and global development process

5. improvement of cultural knowledge of tourists and understanding of surrounding, internal and external integration

The mandate of the JWGT would include following:

- Countries of BEAR define priority tasks at national and regional level and concentrate efforts on solution of current ones. Current task could not be complicated, nevertheless it would be difficult to develop tourism without its solution,
- Participants of JWGT inform each other about tasks to be solved in collaboration. Other participants support and assist them.
- Discussion of current tasks, directions of cooperation should be held at the sessions of JWGT twice a year (spring and autumn)
- For the practical cooperation JWGT initializes the establishment of special expert groups. Russian side has a proposal to establish expert group on marketing.

The county of Lapland supports these proposals for the mission, tasks and mandate of the JWGT.

The Regional Council of Lapland sees many possibilities for co-operation in the following issues:

- The ENPI CBC programmes are considered to be major funding instruments for the cross-border projects in the tourism sector. Therefore, the launching of the programmes on schedule is very important. The ENPI CBC programmes are still waiting for the final ratification from the Russian part.
- Winning mutual benefits through cross-border marketing and product development
 - Joining resources in marketing to reach new markets (India, China)
 - Gaining more visibility as the Barents region, stronger brand
- Developing accessibility: Flight traffic, railway traffic
- Making the border crossing and visa formalities more easier
- Promoting sustainable tourism and adapting to the challenges of climate change
- Building joint products based to the rich culture of the Barents region, e.g. indigenous peoples
- Co-operating in education and research

Lapland considers the JWGT as an important forum for promoting these joint objectives in tourism development both in national and regional level.

Update 12/02/2009

Working Group on Tourism (JWGT)
Chairs: Russia, Lapland

In 2008 the Russian Ministry of sports, tourism and youth policy proposed to launch a co-operation on tourism. The proposal was supported by the CSO September meeting. A first expert meeting took place in Moscow in early December where the mandate of the Group was discussed.

The mission of the JWGT:

- to support and increase confidence of Government Authorities, Society and Business to tourist projects
- to promote development and realization of tourist projects of different level and purpose

The tasks of the JWGT:

1. to increase tourist flow to regions
2. to increase tourism revenue in regions
3. to increase diversification in local employment
4. to increase cultural contacts and social adaptation to national and global development process
5. improvement of cultural knowledge of tourists and understanding of surrounding, internal and external integration
6. to develop accessibility: flight traffic, railway traffic
7. to simplify border crossing and visa formalities
8. to promote sustainable tourism and adapting to the challenges of climate change
9. marketing, information support, building of combined products based on the rich culture of the Barents region, e.g. indigenous peoples

10. cooperation in education and research

The mandate of the JWGT would be:

- Countries of BEAR define priority tasks at national and regional level and concentrate efforts on solution of current ones.
- Participants of JWGT inform each other about tasks to be solved in collaboration. Other participants support and assist them.
- Discussion of current tasks, directions of cooperation should be held at the sessions of JWGT twice a year (spring and autumn).
- For the practical cooperation JWGT initializes the establishment of special expert groups.

Plans 2009-2011

According to the tasks and the mandate of JWGT the Russia suggests to create following specialised expert groups:

1. Marketing of BEAR:

- creation of a unite information field about tourist possibilities of BEAR;
- creation of unite brand of BEAR and assistance in regional branding;
- creation of the transboundary combined routs on the basis of a rich ethnocultural heritage of BEAR inhabitants;
- consolidated promotion of BEAR tourist product at the largest international travel fairs.

2. Traffic accessibility, border crossing and visa formalities:

- discussion and preparation of proposals on traffic development to the responsible governmental authorities of BEAR (including cruise tourism);
- discussion and preparation of proposals on development of cross-border and visa formalities to the responsible governmental authorities of BEAR.

3. Investment and infrastructure development:

- exchange of experience of the state support of investment activity;
- creation of unite data of investment offers and projects of BEAR;
- promotion of the generated investment offers to the investment markets and international financial bodies.

4. Education and research:

- exchange of experience on state regulation of tourism development;
- exchange of experience on state support of tourist business;
- exchange of experience on statistics and estimation methods of tourism contribution to regional and national development;
- exchange of experience on international cooperation in tourism;
- exchange of experience on development of rural and guest houses;
- development of network education cooperation in tourism, remote training for inhabitants of outlying from administrative centres territories.

Chairs of the JWGT BEAC - the Russian Federation and the county of Lapland consider cross-border tourism development in the Barents region very important and the the JWGT as an important forum for promoting joint objectives in tourism development both in national and regional level. The difficult situation in world's economy is making the competition harder in tourism sector. In order to maintain the competitiveness of the Barents region at the world market it is beneficial to co-operate e.g. in tourism marketing.

Russia (Ministry of sports, tourism and youth policy and within its jurisdiction Federal agency for tourism) has a proposal to establish in 2009 expert group on marketing and to coordinate its activities.

After CSO approval of the establishment of the JWGT at the meeting in Petrozavodsk, February 18-19 Chairs of JWGT plan to arrange 1st JWGT meeting (preliminary late spring) in Lapland (to be confirmed by Lapland).

Draft Minutes (18.12.2008)

MEETING IN OSLO 24.11. FOR CO-CHAIRS BEAC (BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC ENERGY WORKING GROUP)

Present:

Co - chair Anatoly N. Lykin (Archangelsk Region)
Co- chair Johan Vetlesen (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy)
Roman O. Saitov (Russian embassy to Norway)
Tor-Morten Bakken (Barents secretariat)
Tom Wiersdalen Karlsen (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy)
Ole Jacob Edna (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy)
Morten Sand Andersen (interpreter)

1) Welcome

Mr. Vetlesen welcomed Mr. Lykin and the other participants to the meeting for Co-chairs Barents Euro Arctic Energy working Group (BEAC). The intention of the meeting was to start an informal discussion on future activities within the energy cooperation in BEAC in the new format of co-chairmanship for the energy working group between Archangelsk region and the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy.

2) Past experiences with BEAC cooperation

The co-chairs of the past experiences and noted that until 2004 there had been more frequent meetings and activities in progress mainly in connection with the energy efficiency centers located in the North West Russia. The level of activities initiated within the formal cooperation fell after 2004. The co-chairs agreed on making efforts in order to revitalize the cooperation on issues drawn up in the terms of reference.

3) The priorities of renewable energy and energy efficiency

There was an exchange of information on the main tools in promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy production in the NW Russia and Norway and in the Nordic energy cooperation. The co-chairs took note of the situation and underlined the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency. In the Nordic cooperation it is a joint understanding that cooperation on implementation of EU/EEA-directives is important priorities as well as information on best practice. In the North West of Russia a lot of attention is drawn to the building sector both in terms of energy efficiency, environment and security of supply. Mapping of good locations for wind energy production is under consideration as a priority.

4) Main orientation of future work

The co-chairs agreed to focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy production in the future work. To do this it is important to identify the important stakeholders in terms of competence, and financial resources. In the discussions common themes were mentioned like: wind energy locations, capacity building in public and private sector, training, energy efficiency in the public sector, models for policy making and implementation (best practice), regional planning and the role of financing mechanisms (NEFCO etc)

5) Terms of reference (TOR) for BEAC energy working group.

The co-chairs agreed that only small adjustments to the terms of reference from 2005 were needed. Co-chairs could agree on how to proceed on this matter in written procedure towards the next co-chair meeting.

6) Format of meeting and participation.

The co-chairs agreed to present lists of specified organisations or key personnel which can give positive contribution to future work. A tentative list will be completed in January 2009. In the second quarter of 2009 the entire group of involved will meet.

7) Relations to other multilateral cooperation and processes

The co-chairs underlined the need for coordination with other international activities and processes. Coordination and exchange of information with Baltic Sea Energy Cooperation (BASRFC) and Northern Dimension was underlined as important.

8) Planning of future meetings and next steps.

The next co-chair meeting will take place in Archangelsk in February 2009. The co-chairs will also discuss the appropriate role of the Barents-secretariat.

Joint Working Group on Culture (JWGC)

Annual Report 2008

Chairs: Troms, Russia

Incoming Chairs Oct. 2009: Archangelsk (?), Sweden

The Group met twice in 2008: January, Kirkenes and at before the International Forum "Culture of the Barents Region" June 16-18, in Arkhangelsk.

It was the essential event of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation within the framework of the Russian Chairmanship of the BEAC. More than 400 (from Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the NCM Secretariat) participated in this Forum. It was initially planned for 120 participants. Two Ministers of Culture (from Russia and Norway), the representatives of many Russian and international institutions and organizations took part in the Forum. The delegations from Finland and Sweden were headed by the Directors of the ministerial Departments.

In 2008 the Group worked on the implementation of the Program for 2008-2010: *New Winds in the Barents Region*. The overall objective is to strengthen cultural cooperation and thus increase the impact of culture in the Barents Region. The aim is to promote cultural diversity and multicultural dialogue and culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development and to create new cultural meeting places. The challenge is to boost international visibility and to develop the cooperation within the EU Northern Dimension Policy and the EU-Russia Cooperation Action Plan for Culture.

In 2008 the Group finalized the report of the previous Program 2003-2006: *Voices in the Barents Region*.

Plans 2009

JWGC met in January, Kirkenes. A decision was to renew the list of projects (bilateral and multilateral) implementing the Program for 2008-2010.

Next meeting will most likely take place in Lapland, Finland. The date is yet to be decided.

CONCLUSION

OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM

“CULTURE OF THE BARENTS REGION”

Arkhangelsk, the Russian Federation

16-18 June, 2008

Ministers of Culture and representatives of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) Member States met on 16-18 June 2008 in Arkhangelsk (the Russian Federation), discussed possible directions of fostering regional cultural cooperation in the Barents region and declare the following.

I. While global political and economic integration processes have become deeper, the value of regional cooperation is increasing. The Barents Euro-Arctic region (BEAR) remains one of the dynamical regions with considerable human potential, unique historical heritage and various cultural traditions.

Culture is an essential component of society's capacity to deal with social, economic, cultural and environmental challenges to the benefit of sustainable development of the Barents region. At the same time international cultural cooperation plays an important role in providing the population with access to cultural heritage of other countries, contributes to the active exchange between the Barents region peoples, provide new possibilities for cultural self-expression, preservation and development of traditions.

In this context the BEAC opens favorable opportunities for the development of the interaction in the Barents region. The activity of other northern regional organizations such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States, Nordic Council of Ministers and Arctic Council is of great importance in promoting of the dialogue among members of the cultural community.

The participants of the Forum express their readiness to contribute to further prosperity of the Barents region, support the efforts aimed at enhancing

cultural cooperation, increasing cultural exchanges with a view of strengthening mutual understanding and good-neighbourliness, deeper knowing of the unique social and cultural environment of the Barents region.

II. Ministers of Culture, representatives from the BEAC Member States and organizations of regional co-operation:

- support the decisions of the 11th BEAC Ministerial Session in Povaniemi (Finland) and 11th session of the Barents Regional Council (November 14-15, 2007) concerning the continuing validity of the principles and aims of the Barents cooperation, reaffirming the overall objectives of the cooperation in the Barents region to promote stability, security, wellbeing and sustainable development in all its spheres,
- note the need and will strive for enhancing of interaction in the field of culture with the regional organizations of the Northern Europe,
- underline that the work at the local and regional levels is a basic part of successful co-operation between the BEAC states at the national level,
- consider the exchange of views at the Forum as a useful contribution to continuation of the fruitful co-operation among heads of institutions and specialists in the fields of culture and cultural heritage,
- emphasize the importance of the renewed Northern Dimension policy regarding the development of the Barents Region and welcome initiatives and proposals that could become an integral part of this policy,
- believe that the positive experience in the regional cooperation within the framework of the BEAC should be used when preparing the Action Plan in cultural sphere between the European Union and the Russian Federation as well as for its practical implementation,
- support further development of cultural interaction between the BEAR countries and activities of the Joint Working Group on culture according

to the objectives of the new Programme of cultural co-operation “New winds in the Barents region. 2008 – 2010”;

- point to the need for closer coordination of all positions of the BEAC Member States when working out and implementing the international treaties on cultural heritage preservation within the framework of the appropriate international forums, as well as recognize the diverse roles of other organizations of importance to the northern region, in order to avoid overlapping work and facilitate beneficial development.

III. Ministers of Culture, representatives of the BEAC Member States, Barents Regional Council, organizations and institutions of regional co-operation express their cordial gratitude to the Administration of the Arkhangelsk Region for its hospitality and for hosting the Forum.