

## **Minutes. Virtual BFSN meeting August 18 – 2020.**

### **Participants;**

#### ***Sweden:***

Lars Andersson

Camilla Widmark

María Rosario Garcia-Gil

Kristina Nilson

Jonas Rönnberg

#### ***Finland***

Pasi Poikonen

Saana Paanukoski

Jyrki Haataja

#### ***Russian Federation***

Maria Sokolenko

Natalia Demidova

#### ***Norway***

Terje Hoel

Knut Øistad

### **Agenda**

1. Welcoming words and adoption of the agenda
2. Presentation of selected research activities at Svanhovd research station. Emphasis on the cooperation between Russian Federation, Finland, Sweden and Norway. Introduction by Head of department Snorre Hagen, NIBIO-Svanhovd
3. Deliberation on the suggestion to use the Barents cooperation as a platform to establish collaboration between Biosphere Areas in the Barents region and potential to use BR as platform for implementing BEAC/BFSN activities. Introduction by the Swedish delegation.
4. Status for the Barents Forests Sector Network in the BEAC. Introduction by Chair of BFSN, Terje
5. International Junior Forest Contest of Russia. Introduction by Maria
6. Update on the preparations for Barents Forest Forum 2021. Introduction by the secretariat.
7. Input to the agenda for the next meeting (all)

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

Terje Hoel welcomed the participants. The agenda was approved.

## **2. Presentation on the research and activities at Svanhovd Research Station, Pasvik NOR**

Head of Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Ecosystems in the Barents region, Snorre Hagen made a presentation on the activities at the Svanhovd Research Station. Svanhovd is part of Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research, NIBIO and the northernmost research station in the organisation. Svanhovd is in Pasvik, close to the border with Russian Federation and Finland. An active cooperation between these countries exist in the region: BFSN will continue to emphasize and work towards increased cooperation between research institutions from BFSN member countries on Forestry-related issues. The BFSN may have an exchange of views on this later during Norwegian Chairmanship upon suggestions by the secretariat.

## **3. Possibilities for cooperation between Biosphere Reserves (BR) in the Barents region and the BEAC/BFSN.**

Kristina Nilson introduced the topic based on a background document from the Swedish delegation.

Within Biosphere Reserves (BR), collaboration is underway to develop sustainable solutions for the future, both economic, ecological and social aspects. BR do not impose any new restrictions or limitations. Instead, collaborations between different actors can help to strengthen the sustainability. BR are model areas for sustainable development and a platform for cooperation and involvement of actors - vertical and horizontal. It promotes ecosystem services and foster learning about sustainable development.

Issues discussed was the possibilities to:

- establish collaboration between BR areas within the Barents region (and if possible, in the long term with co-financing from any suitable Nordic or EU program). It could also be an opportunity to strengthen the regional cooperation within the Barents Cooperation
- use BR as platforms to implement BEAC own WG activities, strengthen cooperation between the BEAC WG and highlight forest and forestry in the natural resource sector. Most Barents WGs are working on issues that are of high relevance for the BRs. For example, ecosystem services are a subject for BR, and some BR have more specific mentioned SFM, Bioeconomy, Climate etc. Many BR activities also include collaboration with and between research institutions.

BFSN agreed to proceed, first by investigating if any BR-related issues have already been explored or currently are on the agenda of any Working Groups in the Barents cooperation.

Depending on the investigation, the BFSN will consider the idea of a study on the possibility and opportunities for cooperation between BFSN/BEAC and Biosphere Reserves. Sweden signalled the possibility for some financial support for this work.

## **4. Status for the Barents Forests Sector Network in the BEAC.**

Terje Hoel introduced the agenda item based on a background note from the Norwegian delegation.

BFSN request the Secretariat to draft an application to the CSO on changing the status of BFSN to a Working Group (Alt 2 in the background note) and provide a draft amended mandate as a part of the application. The draft application and amended mandate will be circulated to members for their input prior to submission to CSO.

The option of changing the name was also discussed, but not concluded. The BFSN Secretariat will provide some alternatives for the consideration of the members of BFSN.

Norway will consult with the WG on Economic Cooperation before submitting the application to CSO.

## **5. International Junior Forest Contest held by Federal Forestry Agency of Russia.**

Maria Sokolenko informed the participants on the upcoming International Junior Forest Contest scheduled for 30 November – 4 December 2020.

The contest will be of a hybrid format – i.e. junior researchers will present their research papers online. Participation of observers is also virtual as well as the addresses from experts at the Opening/Awarding ceremonies. The organisers are aiming for that International Jury of the Contest will be able to gather at one place in Moscow. More information about the Junior Forest Contest is here:

[http://rosleshoz.gov.ru/activity/education/international\\_junior\\_forest\\_competition?e299777f1b2677380c63215988a504c0](http://rosleshoz.gov.ru/activity/education/international_junior_forest_competition?e299777f1b2677380c63215988a504c0)

Based on the deliberations in the BFSN meeting, Federal Forest Agency of Russia will send a letter to BFSN, inviting the network to nominate a jury member for the contest.

## **6. Update on the preparations for Barents Forest Forum 2021**

BFSN Secretariat informed that Norway is cooperating with representatives from the forest community in Northern Norway (Nordland, Troms og Finnmark) in the preparations for the Barents Forest Forum 2021. The forest sector in Northern Norway is planning a conference “Forests in the North”. We are joining forces for a combined conference with Barents Forest Forum 2021.

The conference Forest in the North and Barents Forest Forum is scheduled for 31<sup>st</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. Venue will be Scandic Hotel in Alta, Finnmark. Organisers are also considering virtual solutions for the conference.

BFSN Secretariat will be in contact with representatives for the organisers of Forest in the North in developing the agenda, inviting speakers and other aspects in the planning. Members of BFSN will be invited to give input in the planning.

## **7. Input to the agenda for the next meeting**

Next meeting in the BFSN is tentatively scheduled for second half of November 2020. A doodle poll will be distributed before selecting the exact time for the meeting. This will be a virtual meeting.

The meeting will focus on youth and youth perspectives. Regional youth organisations will be approached in order to investigate their interest of participating in the meeting. The meeting will build on outcomes from Barents Forest Forum in Umeå in 2019, and the rich material collected there during workshops on youth issues.

Knut Øistad  
BFSN Secretariat  
Division of Forestry and Forest Resources

NIBIO, Norsk institutt for bioøkonomi /  
Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research  
Postboks 115. 1431 Ås,

(+47) 90537767  
[www.nibio.no](http://www.nibio.no)