

20.1.2011

Joint Working Group on Tourism (JWGT)

The Joint Working Group on Tourism was established in 2008 to develop tourism business in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and to promote ecologically, socially and culturally sustainable tourism. In practice this means promoting multilateral co-operation and joint projects, networking and exchanging information and best practices.

The JWGT was established in December 2008 and officially approved by the CSO in February 2009. The Russian Ministry of Tourism was appointed as the chairman of the working group and Finnish Lapland as the regional co-chair.

The JWGT works 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.

JWGT's activities in 2010

During the first action year 2009 the JWGT identified the need to collect together the tourism research and data from the BEAR level. This was necessary in order to define the relevant development actions in the future, and plan their implementation. Therefore it was clear already from the start that the JWGT needed more personnel resources and networking in order to effectively contribute for the tourism development.

The BART project (Public – Private Partnership in Barents Tourism) was planned as a practical tool for the tourism co-operation and the JWGT's work. The project application was submitted to the the ENPI CBC programme in April 2010, and the funding was granted in December 2010.

The objective of the BART project is to create development mechanisms in long term public-private partnership for the tourism industry. Main result from the first phase of the project will be an Action plan, which will define the goals for development and the roles and tasks of the different actors in a tourism field (developers, funding organizations, educational organizations, entrepreneurs, destination organizations etc.) (check attachment: BART project presentation).

The lead partner in BART project is Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences. Other partners are mainly educational institutions from Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia. The project period is two years and the total budget 921 500 €.

The activities of the BART project include establishing R&D peer review group and creating the Action plan. The implementation of the Action Plan will take place in the second phase of the project, BART2, where the tourism entrepreneurs will also be involved.

The JWGT will act as an active participant of the R&D peer review group to support the development of the Action Plan. In order to ensure the flow of information some of the JWGT members are also invited to participate to the project's own groups, like e.g. R&D peer review group.

The JWGT meeting was organized on the 12th of May 2010 in Rovaniemi. The main themes in the meeting were the tourism development and economical situation, the BART project and status of the tourism business in a development work. It was considered important to supervise the interest of tourism business so that it could have all the same development opportunities than other fields of industry.

In the meeting it was also decided to develop the JWGT's action by networking with other WGs and trying to find common interest and co-operation.

Actions for the 2011

The BART Kick Start seminar will be arranged in March (week 11) in Rovaniemi. The JWGT's meeting will also be arranged this week.

The International Tourist Forum will take place in Archangelsk on the 25.-26. of May. This year's second JWGT meeting are planned to be arranged in association with this Forum.

Chairs 2010

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