

Mandate of the Barents Forest Sector Network

1. Background

The Barents Forest Sector Task Force (BFSTF) was a subgroup of the Working Group on Economic Co-operation under the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) established in May 2000. The forest sector is an important part of the economic, social and environmental development in the BEAC region. BFSTF was renamed as Barents Forest Sector Network (BFSN) to reflect the change in working approach in order to better facilitate the forest sector cooperation.

2. Objectives

The aim of the network is to promote sustainable management of forest resources, to follow and timely contribute to BEAC activities, to advocate balanced and coherent view on forests as well as on products and services they provide. To this end BFSN is to:

- promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable management of forest resources, and
- contribute to conditions of sustainable and multifaceted utilisation of forest resources and to promote ecosystem services in the Barents region.

3. Working methods

The scope of the network is, to follow and timely contribute to initiatives that are related to forests and the forest sector in the Barents region, to share relevant information and when needed, to launch and implement activities with a view to promoting the objectives of BFSN.

The key principle of BFSN is to facilitate collaboration (ref) in flexible and cost-efficient manner. Working methods of the BFSN include:

- networking, with the aim of exchanging information and preparing joint contributions,
- group meetings that can be arranged as needed, and
- identification and carrying out of activities that include, but are not limited, to expert meetings, seminars and projects.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Chair of the BFSN

The Chairmanship of the group is shared among the members following the rotation of the BEAC. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the networking activities and maintaining the list of country representatives, focal points, BEAC and BRC working group representatives and other stakeholders as appropriate. The Chair invites to the group meetings after consultation with the host country. Invitations to other stakeholders should first be consulted with the Country representatives. The Chair is responsible for reporting to the BEAC governing body when required.

Country Representatives

The BFSN core group consists of Country Representatives from Finland, Norway, the Russian Federation and Sweden. The Country Representatives are the formal members of the BFSN, who nominate the Focal points and invites specialists and stakeholders of the respective countries. The Country Representatives or their substitutes take also part in decision-making when necessary. Decision-making is done on consensus basis.

Focal points

Focal points are nominated by each country. The main tasks of the Focal Points are to coordinate activities and information exchange in their respective countries; inform the group on national/regional developments and activities which might be of relevance for the work of the BFSN; and, when necessary to stimulate participation at the national/regional level.

5. Term of the mandate

The mandate was approved in Sept, 2014 by the members of the Barents Forest Sector Network. The mandate will in force for an indefinite period of time.