



Minutes

Meeting of the Subgroup for Hotspots Exclusion (SHE)

Kiruna, April 21, 2010

Participants

Åke Mikaelsson, co-chair, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden
Ruslan Butovsky, acting repr. of Minpriroda RF, Russia (on telephone)
Ingrid Berthinussen, Climate and Pollution Agency, Norway (on telephone)
Hanne Aronsen, Climate and Pollution Agency, Norway (on telephone)
Henrik G. Forsström, Nordic Environmental Finance Corporation, NEFCO (observer)

Finland has agreed on and accepted these Minutes.

From Agenda point No4:

Ms Elvira Makarova and Mr Igor Konyukhov, Committee on Nature Resources and Environment of the Murmansk Oblast Administration, Murmansk, Russia.

Background

The main purpose of the meeting in Kiruna was to establish the Subgroup for Hotspot Exclusion, SHE, and to complete the drafting of the Work Programme of the subgroup.

The following items of agenda were discussed and the following decisions were made:

1. Opening of the Meeting

The Swedish co-chair opened the meeting.

Sweden and NEFCO were present physically in Jukkasjärvi (Sweden) whereas the representatives from Norway and Russia participated on the phone. Finland's representative did not attend the meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

After minor adjustments the agenda was adopted to the order reflected in these minutes. Åke Mikaelsson was appointed chair of the meeting and Ruslan Butovskiy as secretary of the meeting.

3. Discussion on the draft Work Programme for the Subgroup

3a. General views on the draft work programme

The SHE subgroup discussed the draft Work Programme and accepted its general structure and content. The necessity of enhancing the process of development of working groups in 5 regions of Russia and the possibility of use of the NEFCO Barents Hot Spot facility (BHFS) in the work on exclusion, and cooperation with other programs (CPESC) and Arctic Council were stressed.

3b. Subgroup mandate

The mandate of the subgroup is elaborated from the Tromsø Declaration from 17th of February 2010, adopted by *the BEAC WGE Environment Ministers*.

The parties discussed the set of questions and Mandate statements and agreed on the necessity of correspondence of the Mandate to the Tromsø Declaration.

3c. Method of work

The group discussed different issues on practices, formalities and attitudes in the operational work of the SHE subgroup and agreed to include a special section on work methods into the SHE Work Programme and approved the methods of work as follows:

- a) The SHE subgroup will have minimum 2 meetings every year, preferably back to back with the WGE meetings,
- b) The subgroups should work by consensus and all decisions made be reflected in the protocol from the meetings,
- c) The subgroup should develop and agree on a work plan for the period 2010-2011,
- d) All documents from the SHE subgroup should, if not otherwise decided, be posted on the BEAC webpage to secure availability and transparency,
- e) Participation in the SHE subgroup is open to federal and regional authorities in the Barents Region. Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden should have appointed members to the subgroup. Representatives from indigenous peoples organizations and other relevant organizations, including NGOs and institutions may participate as observers in the subgroup,
- f) The chairmanship of the SHE-group will be split between the chairmanship of BEAC and Russia,
- g) Reports and recommendations from the SHE subgroup will be submitted to the WGE for approval.

3d Objectives

The objectives proposed in the draft were discussed and compared with the amendments proposed by Norway. It was agreed that the objectives in the Work Programme need to reflect the mandate and at the same time give a clear direction for the work and its priorities which also can be logically reflected in the activities. Efforts for satisfying these aspects in the next draft of the Work Programme will be made.

3e The Work Programme and Action Plan

The participants of the SHE subgroup discussed the work programme and action plan, presented in a table format. They paid attention to the necessity of detailed planning as related to the meetings planning and the budget justification for the activities on hot spot exclusion. The special attention has to be paid to the seminar funding in the regions.

The parties agreed on the necessity of promote the creation of working groups in 5 regions, and the subgroup asked the Russian counterpart to send the letters from Ministry for Natural Resources and Ecology RF to the administrations of Russian regions, stating the necessity of development of regional working groups on hotspot exclusion. The parties also agreed that further discussions were needed to define the (legal and other) role(s) and tasks of such regional groups.

The Russian counterpart suggested to organize a meeting as initiated by MNRE (conference or seminar) and announce the practical phase of project implementation of hotspot exclusion. The suggestion was accepted and the SHE subgroup will assist in organization and conduction of this kick-off seminar.

The parties must evaluate the costs of the practical project implementation and its support (including meetings, travelling and conferences participation).

It was agreed that a special section on resources required both for operation of the SHE subgroup in terms of man days and means for supporting projects as well as in terms of funds available for action projects need to be included in the Work Programme. It was also agreed that the detailed table on activities is amended so that it better distinguishes between tasks of the SHE subgroup and tasks of the regional hotspots groups and that the detailed table is re-allocated to an Appendix while the activities are described more broadly but with explanations in the Work Programme itself.

The comments and amendments discussed during the meeting will be incorporated into the Work Programme – primarily by Åke and Ruslan - and a new draft then circulated to the SHE members as soon as possible.

4. Information on Progress by Minpriroda RF

The participants were informed by SHE subgroup co-chair Mr. Peshkov A.S. (as presented by Butovsky R.O. through conference call) on the specifics of Russian legislation, as related to SHE as well as the report of the representatives of the Murmansk oblast administration, who presented the information on the activities of the Commission on the HS survey in Murmansk region.

5. Discussions with the Murmansk Delegation

The specially invited delegation from the Committee on Nature Resources and Environment of the Murmansk Oblast Administration described the situation and plans for the 10 Barents environmental hotspots located within the Murmansk Oblast. It was understood that the Committee follows the development on these hotspots rather well, that a special commission with Federal and Subject level authorities, enterprises and other organizations has been formed earlier and that some work has been done incl. actions for deepened monitoring of air pollution from some of the hotspots. SHE and the Murmansk delegation also discussed the Exclusion Procedure as described in the TF Report to the Ministers on February 17, 2010 and assessed the procedure as more or less feasible and appropriate.

6. Next meeting

Suitable dates for next meeting could be either 24th or 28th of May 2010, back to back to a project meeting between CLIF and Minpriroda RF in Oslo.

7. Any Other Business / Next Steps

1. The most prioritized task for the SHE members till the next meeting is to make the final refinements of the SHE Work Programme, in particular the Mandate, the Method of work, and the Work Plan for the SHE subgroup.
2. During the intermeeting period the SHE subgroup will contact by e-mail.
3. Request for the Russian counterpart to facilitate the establishment of regional hotspots groups in the 5 federation subjects in the Russian part of the Barents region and to collect information on their priorities of the hotspots, assessment of situation and work done etc.
4. According to Step 1 of the Exclusion Procedure, Minpriroda RF shall assign the Federal Authority/-ies (Assigned Federal Authority = AFA) to determine responsibilities of the different hotspots and to appoint the relevant authority (Appointed Authority = AA) on federal or subject level to initiate and implement the exclusion procedure. Till the next meeting Minpriroda RF will report on how this work has proceeded.