

Meeting of the Working Group on Environment  
28 March 2019  
Norrbotten, Sweden

Draft 6 May 2019

## Minutes

### Welcome and opening of the meeting *Elin Kronqvist, WGE-chair*

The WGE Chair Elin Kronqvist, welcomed participants to the 51<sup>st</sup> WGE meeting, in Stora Sjöfallet. The Chair underlined the importance of having a high-level representative, Alexander Yerulik, the Minister on Natural Resources and Timber Industry of Arkhangelsk Region, at the meeting. The agenda of the current meeting and the minutes from the WGE meeting in Skellefteå in November 2018 were adopted.

## 2. Tourism

### 2.1 Presentation from the Joint Working Group on Tourism by Monica Lejon, chair of the JWGT

[https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/Storasjofalletmars2019\\_JWGT.pdf](https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/Storasjofalletmars2019_JWGT.pdf)

Monica Lejon presented the work of the JWGT. In 2019 the JWGT will focus on the following goals: 1. Producing and spreading an information brochure on labels for sustainable tourism; 2. Cooperation with the WG of Transport (BEATA) and the Swedish Transport Agency for influencing the Barents transport plan on tourism; 3. A new action plan for 2019-2020 to be developed; Next meeting is planned in Kiruna in 10-11 June and WGE representation was welcomed. Monica Lejon welcomed any comments and suggestions from the WGE group on the new information brochure of JWGT. The Chair of the WGE will receive a draft of brochure and circulate it to the WGE for comments.

### 2.2 Presentation about sustainable tourism by Camilla Bondareva, Destination strategist at Swedish Lapland Visitors Board

[https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/CamillaBondareva\\_Sustainabletourism\\_SwedishLapland.pdf](https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/CamillaBondareva_Sustainabletourism_SwedishLapland.pdf)

Camilla Bondareva provided information on the tourism in Swedish Lapland and told how they market that part of Sweden. Camilla underlined that more individuals are booking tourist destinations, so that the growing trend in tourism is an individualistic approach. Swedish Lapland Visitors Board is working on renewing the regional strategy for tourism, which will be valid from 2020-2030. There is a 63 percent increase in tourism in the period of 2010 to 2017. Camilla underlined that changing climate has an impact on tourism in Swedish Lapland. She also informed about 'Visit Arctic Europe'.

The relation between nature protection, tourism and indigenous people has been discussed. Camilla also noted that many Russian Barents regions are interested in becoming a part of Visit Arctic Europe.

### **2.3 Summary of the discussion about tourism in the SNW-group by Ellinor Bomark**

Ellinor Bomark, from the Subgroup on Nature and Water, provided a summary from the discussion on tourism in the SNW-meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup>: The success of some methods tried and currently used to lower negative environmental from tourism was discussed, as well as what kind of tourism is preferable to have in the Barents region from a nature point of view in order to protect the nature values we are selling. Previous projects concerning sustainable tourism in cooperation with local businesses has generally been viewed as successful during the project time, however long-lasting result are difficult to obtain. Henrik Forsström informed the WGE on a new project on Kenozero national park which stands for development of the model in rural areas in Russia, aiming at increasing sustainable tourism in the Kenozero park.

### **3. Nature and water subgroup (SNW) Chair Mats-Rune Bergström and members of the subgroups**

<https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/Mats-RuneSNW.pdf>

The Chair of the Subgroup on Nature and Water, Mats-Rune Bergström provided a summary of the SNW-meeting held on March 27<sup>th</sup>. He informed about the planning of the Habitat Contact Forum in Murmansk, 18-19 June 2019. HCF 2019 will be organized around four themes and include youth participation from the Barents region. The group had discussions on terrain vehicles and green infrastructure and will return to these issues at their next meeting.

In addition, Mats-Rune spoke about the Seminar on Great Predators, which was held in March 2019 with 50 participants. The next seminar on Great Predators in the Barents may be arranged in Arkhangelsk.

A discussion on how the group will work with intact forests as the strategy for intact forests is on hold followed. Mats-Rune informed that the group is going to present updates on national and regional work with forest preservation at the next SNW-meeting.

Alexander Yerulik informed that the national project on forest preservation has been approved in the Russian Federation with a strategic goal of 100 percent reforestation by 2024. Alexander Druchinin commented that the Barents strategy is focused on intact forests and not the entire forest sector. Alexander Yerulik commented that under this national project there is a subproject on preservation of biological biodiversity where each Russian region has undertaken to set targets and establish new special protected zones. The Arkhangelsk region is in the final stage of establishing the Dvinsky-Vochegostskij reserve.

### **3.1 Cross-border dialogue and multi-use planning, Tiia Kalske, Office of the Troms and Finnmark County Governor**

[https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/TiiaKalske\\_SNW\\_2019.pdf](https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/TiiaKalske_SNW_2019.pdf)

Tiia Kalske provided a presentation on cross-border dialogue and multi-use planning in the Pasvik and Gense Jakobselv river catchments (MUP). Project period 1.12.2018-30.11.2020. Tiia underlined that the expected results of the project will be: 1. Multi-use plan is to be a practical management tool, including a program of measures for the years 2021-2030; 2. Themes ranging from fisheries management, pollution issues to erosion control etc. Tiia Kalske informed that the planning group had a meeting on planning procedures of the multi-use plan on 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2019.

#### **4. Subgroup on Hot Spots Exclusion (SHE) (Co-chairs Åke Mikaelsson and Alexander Druchinin)**

<https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/SHEtoWGEinStoraSjofallet28March2019.pdf>

The Swedish Co-Chair of SHE, Åke Mikaelsson, provided an overview of the work done in the period of December 2018 to March 2019. The SHE group will propose to the WGE to recommend Ministers to exclude the A5 hot spot through the fast-track procedure. The WGE asked the group to prepare all necessary documentation well ahead of the next WGE-meeting in September 2019. The Co-Chair informed that three new Support Activities had been implemented (No1b in Syktyvkar, Petrozavodsk and Naryan-Mar) and that a similar Support Activity is planned to be conducted in Arkhangelsk in April 2019. A summary of all the steps taken together with the recommendations made by the SHE-group can be found in the link above.

Furthermore, the Russian Co-chair Alexander Druchinin presented the Russian view of the Barents hot spots process and reconfirmed the strong linkages with the implementation of the new Russian BAT-legislation (FZ-219). The presentations followed by a short discussion about how the hot spot exclusion process could be developed and how the conducted SHE-work, including with the Supporting Activities, could be more streamlined.

#### **5. Climate change**

##### **5.1 Status report about the implementation of the Action Plan on Climate Change (Julia Bobina, IBS)**

[https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/MonitoringoftheActionPlanonCCfortheBarentscooperation\\_WGE\\_meeting\\_march2019\\_Bobina.pdf](https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/MonitoringoftheActionPlanonCCfortheBarentscooperation_WGE_meeting_march2019_Bobina.pdf)

Julia Bobina provided an update on the implementation of the Action Plan on Climate Change. The monitoring of the Action Plan was implemented in accordance to activities and tasks formulated in the second edition of the Action Plan on Climate Change for the Barents Cooperation (2017). The full status report about the implementation of the Action Plan on Climate Change for the period 2017-2020 can be found [here](#).

##### **5.2 Presentation about the Nordic-Russian Programme for Environment and Climate Co-operation (PECC) and possible areas for increased Barents cooperation (Henrik Forsström, NEFCO)**

<https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/NEFCOBEACWGEPECC20190329.pdf>

Henrik Forsström informed about the Programme for Environment and Climate Co-operation (PECC) which provides grants in the range from 30,000 to 200,000 EUR (with co-financing requirements) to encourage and promote Nordic- Russian non-commercial co-operation projects addressing environment and climate at regional and local levels in Northwest Russia. The first nine PECC-project was implemented and completed by the end of 2018. Four projects focused on different aspects of forestry – all related to the Barents Region. Two projects focused on climate issues. Henrik informed that PECC-2 version is in the pipeline (a final NCM and BHSF decision likely in June). A call for proposals may be launched during summer 2019. NEFCO concluded that PECC-1 was successful.

##### **5.3 Hot spots and climate change – an overview (Åke Mikaelsson)**

Åke Mikaelsson informed that climate change has not yet been included as a component to the hot spots work. Ingrid Lillehagen commented that climate change was a relevant factor in the exclusion of Ko7.

#### **5.4 Regional climate and energy strategies – next steps in the Barents cooperation (Ylva Sardén, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten)**

[https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/WGE190328\\_Ylvas\\_.pdf](https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/WGE190328_Ylvas_.pdf)

Ellinor Bomark, on behalf of Ylva Sardén, made a short presentation on possibilities for further joint initiatives on regional climate and energy strategies, based on a discussion paper sent out before the meeting. The WGE Chair stressed the need for a participation from other countries and regions if this initiative is to be taken further. Participants asked the WGE Chair to outline a more concrete proposal for the suggested one-day regional workshop as such a proposal would help the other countries and regions to find the right level of participation.

A discussion on further cooperation on regional climate change strategies followed. Alexander Yerulik commented that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Timber Industry of Arkhangelsk Region has founded the Center of environmental investment, which together with Norrbotten County administration implemented a successful project. The most important outcome of the project was the inventory of the emissions. The largest emissions come from the energy sector (87 percent). The region is working together with enterprises on developing strategies on emission reduction up to 2030. Alexander Yerulik underlined the need for international cooperation, especially on waste-energy solutions and the need in advices from experienced partners.

In the discussion that followed, Ingrid Lillehagen advised to look at Komi Republic's experience with hot spot Ko7. They have reduced waste amounts emanating from sawmill industry by producing fuel pellets from the saw dust from the many saw mills in Komi.

Saija Vuola added that Finland has a lot of experience in waste management and suggested to focus on the principles of circular economy in the Arkhangelsk region. Finland is moving to this direction now.

#### **6. Possibilities to increase cooperation between the WGE and the Arctic Council (Saija Vuola, Ministry of the Environment, Finland and Elin Kronqvist, chair of the WGE)**

<https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/ArcticChairmanship.pdf>

Saija Vuola reminded about the Arctic Environment Ministers' meeting, which took place in Rovaniemi in October 2018. The meeting focused on the following topics: Climate change / mitigation, Climate change and health / black carbon, Biodiversity, Pollution / Hot Spots, waste management, National best practices. She presented ideas for possible areas of cooperation between the Arctic Council and the Barents WGE.

In the discussion that followed, many speakers highlighted the idea to build upon an existing ACAP -project on public transportation.

Saija underlined the role of indigenous peoples in nature protection and biodiversity. Henrik Forsström added information about a CAFF-project on micro plastic using Arctic birds.

Tiia Henrika Kalske informed that on the Norwegian side they have local management: municipalities and/or Sami authorities manage protected areas (national parks etc.).

Saija Vuola underlined the problem with waste management in remoted areas. The Ministry of Environment of Finland have applied for the funding of projects focusing on waste cooperation between Russia and Barents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Saija Vuola added that at the end of presentation there is also a link to the best national practices from Canada, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S.

## 7. WGE contribution to the Youth Oriented Recommendations

The WGE Chair informed that, when celebrating 25 years of Barents cooperation last year, the Swedish Chairmanship of BEAC arranged a conference in Luleå “*25 years of Barents cooperation: youth perspective on future*”. Following this conference, all working groups were tasked to propose youth-oriented recommendations to be presented to the Foreign Ministers in October 2019. The Chair’s proposal for a youth recommendation was sent out in advance. The proposal was presented and accepted by the WGE.

The WGE was also informed that there is a bus that will be provided for youth participants from Rovaniemi to Murmansk in order to participate in Habitat Contact Forum 2019 .

Additionally, Ingrid Lillehagen informed about a very successful ongoing project in schools in Finnmark and Russian Barents. The project is focusing on pupils and they get opportunity to learn about climate change and biodiversity at schools and can later share their knowledge.

## 8. Next WGE –meeting

The WGE Chair thanked everyone for active participation and concluded the meeting by announcing the date of the next WGE-meeting, **24-26 September 2019** in Västerbotten County. The WGE members are encouraged to check their calendars and notify the WGE Chair as soon as possible if the proposed dates do not work.

## 9. The Ministerial meeting

The Ministerial meeting will tentatively be held **4-5 February 2020** in Norrbotten County, Sweden.

## Meeting documents

Please follow the link below to find all meeting documents that have been uploaded on the website:  
[https://www.barentscooperation.org/events/Working-Group-on-Environment-\(WGE\)-meeting-in-Stora-Sjofallet,-26-28-March-2019/3cn33qja/e073fefc-8a7a-456e-8e7c-2b0ec3b9983b](https://www.barentscooperation.org/events/Working-Group-on-Environment-(WGE)-meeting-in-Stora-Sjofallet,-26-28-March-2019/3cn33qja/e073fefc-8a7a-456e-8e7c-2b0ec3b9983b)

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 28.03.2019

1. Elin Kronqvist, Deputy Director, Ministry of Environment and Energy, WGE Chair (SE)
2. Josefine Strand, Administrative Official, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten (SE)
3. Åke Mikaelsson, Programme coordinator for Russia, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SE)
4. Rickard Nätjehall, Policy Officer, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SE)
5. Mats-Rune Bergström, Senior Adviser, County Administrative Board of Västerbotten (SE)
6. Ellinor Bomark, Environmental Adviser County Administrative Board of Norrbotten (SE)
7. Maano Aunapuu, Head of Unit, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SE)
8. Monica Lejon, Chair of Joint Working Group of Tourism, Region Norrbotten, Barents Cooperation (SE)
9. Camilla Bondareva, a Destination strategist, Swedish Lapland Visitors Board (SE)
10. Saija Vuola, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Environment (FI)
11. Helena Dahlbo, Senior Researcher, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) (FI)
12. Tapio Lindholm, Leading Expert, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) (FI)
13. Katja Sukuvaara, Regional Development Manager, Regional Council of Kainuu (FI)
14. Kimmo Kalervo Aronsuu, Senior Specialist, ELY- Centre for North Ostrobothnia (FI)
15. Janne Kärkkäinen, Director, ELY-Centre for North Karelia (FI)

16. Ingrid Lillehagen, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Climate and Environment (NO)
17. Anne Marie Mo Ravik, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Environment Agency (NO)
18. Tiia Henrika Kalske, Senior Adviser, County Governor of Troms and Finnmark (NO)
19. Alexander Druchinin, Deputy Head of International Organizations Division, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of RF (RU)
20. Alexander Yerulik, Minister on Natural Resources and Timber Industry of Arkhangelsk Region, Government of Arkhangelsk Region (RU)
21. Ivan Matrjåhin, Otkrytoe Obschestvo Saamov Murmanskoy Oblasti (OOSMO) (RU)
22. Henrik G Forsström, Senior Adviser, Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO)
23. Julia Bobina, Climate, Environment and Hot Spots Adviser, International Barents Secretariat (IBS)
24. Ola Bergdahl, Sami Consultant, Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer (CLEO)
25. Sylvie Blangy, Researcher, The French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)