

Operating Guidelines for the Barents Working Groups

Adopted 28 June 2017

Membership of the Working Group

- The national/regional authority has the right to decide on the appointment of the members.
- Appointed WG Members should be experienced experts in their field.
- In case of change of members, the institution in question has the responsibility to appoint a new member *and* communicate about the change to the International Barents Secretariat (IBS).
- The main principle is that each state/region can have one member. The WG of Indigenous Peoples has the right to nominate a representative to all the other WGs.
- Members of WGs are expected to actively participate in the work of WG.

Chairmanship of the Working Group

- The Chair of each Working Group (WG) has a crucial role in the successful work of WG. The Chair takes the initiative and responsibility for the activities of the WG during each two-year term. WGs are encouraged to select a vice-chair. The vice-chair should substitute when the Chair is unavailable. Other members of the WG can also act as initiators if the Chair is unable to fulfil his/her role.
- The Chair of the WG has the right and responsibility to convene the meetings. Meetings of the WGs should be held at least twice a year to ensure continuous work. The Chair should circulate invitations to its meeting, a provisional agenda and related documents at least 30 days ahead of the meeting. The Chair is also responsible for drafting the protocol of the meetings.
- Duration of the WG Chairmanship should be a maximum of two years. Only under certain criteria can the chairmanship be prolonged.
The Chairmanship rotates between Russia, Sweden, Norway and Finland. It is preferred to have the WG Chairmanship rotation synchronized with the national BEAC Chairmanship. If this is not feasible, the WG Chair should work to ensure seamless communication with the national BEAC Chairmanship.

Priority areas of cooperation of the Working Group

- The WGs are established and mandated by the BEAC Committee of Senior Officials (BEAC and Joint WGs) and by the Regional Committee (Regional and Joint WGs).
- The WGs define the priority areas of their work. It is highly recommended that the WGs take into account other relevant strategies, when defining their priorities (the United Nations 2030 goals on sustainable development, the Regional Barents Programme and others).

Reporting

- The WG Chair is responsible for submitting the annual report of the Working Group to the IBS by the end of December each year and before the biennial Ministerial Meeting. In case the Chair has changed during the year, the vice-chair or the person who acted as the Chair most of the year is responsible for submitting the report.
- The annual report should describe the activities, which have been undertaken during the past calendar year. The focus should be on the issues discussed, the results achieved, possible challenges encountered by the group as well as a work plan for the next calendar year. The report ahead of Ministerial Meetings should describe activities and results during the Chairmanship period.
- The IBS collects the reports and forwards the information to the Committee of Senior Officials and the Regional Committee.
- WGs should submit all meeting reports and other reporting documents to IBS for inclusion in the internal document archive.

Communication

- The WGs are encouraged to communicate regularly on their activities to the IBS: to give updates on their activities (meetings, projects) as well as inform the IBS on any changes in the composition of the WG.
- The WG Chairs are invited regularly to report on their activities at the BEAC Committee of Senior Officials' meetings (BEAC and Joint WGs) and the Regional Committee meetings (Joint and Regional WGs).
- The IBS organizes regular information exchange meetings for the Chairs of the WGs together with the BEAC Committee of Senior Officials and the Regional Committee Chairmanships.
- Updated information for the website should be provided to IBS for publishing.

Amendments

- Each WG should review its mandate at least once in every five years and make the needed amendments. The revised mandates should be approved by the BEAC Committee of Senior Officials (BEAC and Joint WGs) and by the Regional Committee (Regional and Joint WGs).
- Amendments of the Operating Guidelines can be made by CSO in consultation with the Regional Committee.

Attachments:

Mandate Template

Annual Report Template