



THE BARENTS WORKING GROUPS  
ANNUAL REPORT

Name of the Working Group: **Regional Working Group on Environment (RWGE)**

The current Chair and the Chairmanship period: **Finnmark 2018-2019**

1. Priorities of the RWGE:

The environmental work of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) is far reaching and diverse, including themes and areas of e.g. climate change, environmental pollution issues, nature protection, water management, environmental policy work, youth work and environmental education etc. It is important that the environmental issues in this regional network are considered both at the national and international levels.

2. Meetings (meetings held, main topics and outcomes of the meetings)

Two meetings planned. Back-to-back meeting with BEAC WGE in Piteå in May was not implemented due to only Murmansk region was present of all Russian regions. One meeting implemented, 13.11.2018 back-to-back with BEAC WGE subgroup on nature and water. Topics in the meeting: finalization of RWGE mandate, current environmental information from all regions present (only Nordic regions present at the meeting) and information exchange on current issues.

How to get Russian regions to take part in the working groups work is a recurrent issue at every meeting.

3. Other activities (projects, events, programmes etc.)

Revision of mandate.

4. Results of the year (decisions, new initiatives, improvements)

One meeting implemented back-to-back with WGE subgroup nature and water. The plan is to have two annual meetings, but without participants from the Russian regions we will not arrange extra meetings. The Nordic regions meet regularly also in other fora.

5. Evaluation of the work (What went well, what needs improvement)

Nordic regions take regularly part in the meetings. For the group to be functioning it should be secured participation also from Russian regions.

6. Other

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Bente Christiansen

RWGE Chair 2018-2019