



## Minutes of the *Regional Working Group on Environment (RWGE)* Meeting

Venue: Helsinki, Ministry of the Environment

Time: Tuesday, February 7th, 13:00-17:00

Working language: English

Invited: Regional members of the RWGE

Chairman: Mr Mattias Lindgren, Adviser, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten, Sweden

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### **1. Opening and welcome**

The Chair Mattias Lindgren welcomed every member to the meeting and a short introduction of the participants was held by each member. Mr Jonas Lundin was appointed secretary for the meeting. The list of participants is found in annex number one.

### **2. Adoption of the agenda and consensus of the notes from the last meetings.**

The agenda for the meeting was adopted without any amendments. The agenda for the meeting is found in annex number two.

### **3. Open discussion on the state of play of the RWGE – how to increase participation and strengthen the role for the group in the BEAR/BEAC cooperation**

Tatiana Tiupenko, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Komi, Russia, initiated a discussion about the possibilities of using videoconferences for RWGE meetings in addition to the regular meetings. The chair seconds the proposal and added that minor adjustments can be made through Skype for example. Some concerns about translating were addressed, but assurances were made that it should be able to work. Some trial session should be held, to establish that the technology actually works, that the bandwidth is sufficient. If it is incorporated into these kinds of meetings, it may be easier to get the different Russian regions to participate.

The strength of the group was also discussed and they difficulty getting appointed member regions to participate. It was stressed that the group needs to renew its mandate. It is important to the group to figure out who's the right person to talk to in the regions that aren't regularly attending. The group also agreed that it was important to disseminate information on activities to the proper contacts.

### **4. Updating the list of members in the RWGE**

The chair raised the question concerning the difficulties updating the list of members of the group from the different Russian regions. The Komi region is represented regularly by Mrs. Tatiana Tiupenko, but uncertainties about the people that are representing the Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Karelin and Nenets Autonomous Okrug regions arose. After some discussions it was decided that the group will send letters to the governors of the concerned areas and that the group will also contact the regional councils for assistance in this matter. A letter will be drafted in the RWGE group.

### **5. Updating the action program and division of tasks**

After some discussions among the members of the group, it was concluded that the group needs a mandate from the council and review the action plan. The Rio20 tasks should also be reviewed by the

group in order to establish any coherency with the RWGE tasks. A draft will be written and everyone in the group is expected to help with the contents of the draft. The review is to be completed before week 14 and it should be implemented at the next meeting.

#### **6. Cooperation with WGE subgroups and other regional groups**

The chair Mattias Lindgren informed the group that we have had some cooperation with other working groups, mainly with CSPEC and JWGT. Discussions were held about the linkage between youth and climate change knowledge and if this was something that was connectable to the group's work. A hands on approach in these kinds of projects were favoured. Mr Jari Pasanen, Lapland Regional Environment Centre, Finland, told the group of Finland's national intentions on trying to connect the youth with climate change. Ms Bente Christiansen, County Governor of Finnmark, Norway, informed the group that in Norway the main focus was on adaptation towards the upcoming climate changes. Finland was also currently working with this issue. Ms Tatiana Tiupenko, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Komi, Russia informed the group about a project on permafrost that included Finnish scientists. It was noticed that there are cooperation ongoing between different WGE's. The members agreed to report to the Chair about the ongoing projects until week 14.

#### **7. Presentation of the project list and short information about current activities**

The different members of the group presented the projects that their country or region have been participating in. A description of these projects is found in annex number three.

#### **8. Other issues**

No other issues were addressed.

#### **9. Meeting plan and next meeting**

Next scheduled meeting for the WGE and RWGE is in September. The location will be in Kajaani, Finland. The participants of the meeting discussed an idea concerning the possibility of moving the RWGE meeting in September to the day before the WGE meeting in order to ease up on the time constraints that already affect the WGE and RWGE meetings. It was concluded that the group would try to do so. An interim meeting may be planned to June in Haparanda, back to back with the Barents Reunion.

#### **10. Closure of the meeting**

The meeting was closed by the chairman.