

RESOLUTION

FROM THE TENTH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT FORUM ON HABITAT CONSERVATION IN THE BARENTS REGION (HCF X)

The tenth Meeting of the International Contact Forum on Habitat Conservation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, further HCF X, was organized on the 18-19th of June 2019, in Murmansk, Russia.

HCF X was held according to the mandate and the recommendations of previous forum meetings; Trondheim 1999, Petrozavodsk 2001, Kuhmo 2003, Syktyvkar 2005, Umeå 2008, Arkhangelsk 2010, Bodø 2013, Petrozavodsk 2015 and Oulu 2017. HCF activities are part of the activities of the Nature and Water Subgroup of the Working Group on Environment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (WGE). Sweden holds the Chairmanship of WGE (2018-2020).

The declaration from the ministerial meeting in Vadsø 2017 forms the overall basis of Sweden's Chairmanship of the WGE. During Swedish chairmanship the priorities are: -exchanging best practices for continued conservation and restoration of wetlands; -cooperating on water protection and management activities, including new interregional projects; -facilitating knowledge exchange and cooperation on tourism's impact on Barents ecosystems; and -organizing the 10th Habitat Contact Forum in Murmansk, Russia, in 2019.

The result from the IPBES report "Global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services" that over 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction was stressed during the HCF 2019.

The HCF X gathered over 90 participants, including national and regional authorities, scientific institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations and other organizations from Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and Finland. The HCF X encourages the participation of young persons in HCF and students were incurred to participant. Based on the presentations and discussions during the meeting, the HCF X concludes the following:

HCF X supports the process of establishing a Ramsar site in Pukhozero area in the Russian part of the Pasvik zapovednik.

HCF X concludes that more inventories are essential for the conservation of habitats and biodiversity.

HCF X emphasizes the importance of maintenance and further development of networks of protected areas for conservation of biodiversity in a changing climate. The green infrastructure of the landscape should be considered in protection planning.

HCF X highlights the importance of nature inventories and encourages protection of high conservation value areas, including securing their connectivity, in order to contribute to the achievement of Aichi target 11¹ adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

HCF X highlights that the nature of the Barents region is sensitive and any tourism development should be done sustainably in dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. The carrying capacity of the ecosystems should be taken into account.

¹ Aichi target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape.

HCF X sees a possibility for developing cooperation in citizen science including data collection in open databases.

HCF X notes that invasive species are a threat to biodiversity and more information exchange and cooperation is needed on the monitoring and counter-measures towards invasive species.

HCF X recognizes the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF) as an example of successful transboundary cooperation activities that have resulted in concrete outputs in the region. HCF X further encourages the stakeholders to continue the efforts of project preparation and implementation.

HCF X proposes that the GBF memorandum of understanding (from 2010) between Norway, Finland and Russia should be prolonged.

NEXT MEETING OF THE HABITAT CONTACT FORUM

HCF X suggests that the organization of the next meeting could be in Norrbotten, Sweden 2021 under the WGE chairmanship of Finland.

Participants of the HCF X expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Economic Development of the Murmansk Region, Russia, for hosting and organizing the meeting.

Murmansk, Russia, 18th of June, 2019.

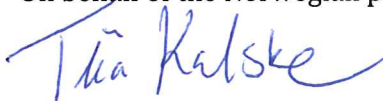
On behalf of the Finnish participants



Tapio Lindholm

Finnish Environment Institute

On behalf of the Norwegian participants



Tiia Kalske

Office of the Troms and Finnmark County
Governor

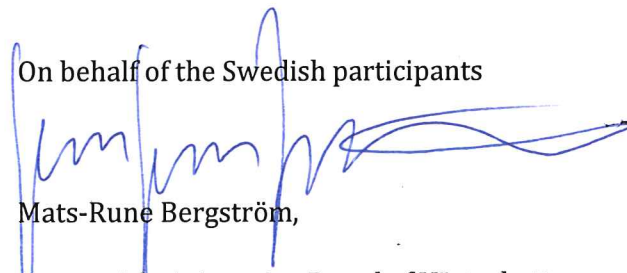
On behalf of the Russian participants



Alexander Kryshen

Forest Research Institute of the Karelian
Research Centre of the RAS

On behalf of the Swedish participants



Mats-Rune Bergström,

County Administrative Board of Västerbotten