

**RESOLUTION**  
**The Fourth Meeting of the International Contact Forum**  
**on Habitat Conservation In The Barents Region**

**I**

On September 19-25, 2005 in Syktyvkar, the Republic of Komi, Russia a meeting of specialists from Finland, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, Estonia and Russia took place aimed to discuss the questions of cooperation within the International Contact Forum On Habitat Conservation In The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR), further – the Contact Forum.

**II**

The fourth meeting of the Contact Forum was held according to the recommendations of the first Contact Forum which took place in 1999 in Trondheim (Norway), the second meeting in 2001 in Petrozavodsk (The Republic of Karelia, Russia) and the third meeting in 2003 in Kuhmo (Finland). The fourth meeting was organized and hosted by the Republic of Komi. In 2003-2005 the Russian Federation chairs the Contact Forum.

The participants underlined the importance to develop an ecological activity in the Barents region and the expansion of the region after the Republic of Komi joint it.

The participants of the meeting, more than 130 delegates total, representing governmental environmental organizations, scientific and nongovernmental institutions discussed actual tasks of preserving nature, paying special attention to future plans and initiatives.

**III**

In the fourth meeting a special attention was paid to the following topics:

- Preservation and monitoring of the old growth boreal forests as well as a sustainable use of forest resources in general;
- The network of Barents region protected nature territories: how to achieve its representativeness;
- Monitoring and strategy of conservation: how to minimize habitat fragmentation and restore natural values;
- Quality control, biodiversity and monitoring of fresh and sea waters;
- Environment and indigenous and local population role.

An importance of the further work to develop nature protection within the frames of Barents Euro-Arctic Council and other relevant cooperation programs, including:

- The participants marked the importance of the Contact Forum, especially in the knowledge exchange and informing about national and international protected territories networks development and management of these areas and networks;
- The participants underlined the importance of creation a representative network of ground and marine nature protection zones in the Barents Euro-Arctic region;
- The participants underlined the necessity to strengthen the efficiency of management of the protected areas and nature preservation in general;
- The participants underlined the importance and applied for the support to BEAR Council and other national and international interested parties and persons to introduce the following initiatives and actions in their programs on biodiversity:
  - Support and development of forest protection;
  - Development of Fennoscandia green belt;
  - Development of trilateral and other transborder protected territories;
  - To continue activities in habitat restoration;

- To support the process of GAP-analysis for specially protected nature territories.
- The participants stressed the importance of increasing the role of ecological and social, cultural aspects in the programs of the Barents Forest Group;
- The participants marked the climate change influence on protected territories;
- The participants underlined the importance of marine habitat conservation;
- The participants agree that the report referring the fourth meeting will be published. The Republic of Komi will in charge of publishing the report (Institute of Biology, Komi Science Center, UrB, RAS). The report will be submitted to BEAR Council, Arctic Council and corresponding Northern countries Councils of Ministers. The report will be located on the Institute of Biology web-site ([www.ib.komisc.ru](http://www.ib.komisc.ru)).
- The participants agreed to submit proposals prepared by the working groups of the fourth Contact Forum meeting (Appendix 1).
- The participants once again confirmed the Mandate of the Contact Forum (Appendix 2).
- The meeting participants pay attention to the necessity to expand the support to BEAR Indigenous Peoples Working Group.
- The participants supported the idea to create the International Scientific Consultative Council on the Pechora Sea and Pechora River Monitoring (Appendix 3).
- The participants made a decision that during a few coming two years the Contact Forum will be chaired by Sweden and Norway will co-chair.

The fifth meeting will be dedicated to the following topics:

- Forest biodiversity conservation;
- The further development of Barents region protected territories network;
- Protection and sustainable use of water resources;
- Management of protected territories.

The meeting participants expressed gratitude to Russia and the Komi Republic for organizing and hosting the fourth Contact Forum meeting.

The next Contact Forum meeting will take place in 2007 in Sweden.

Syktyvkar, the Komi Republic, 22 September 2005.

On behalf of Finland,  
Tapio LINDHOLM, Environment Center of Finland

On behalf of Norway,  
Jan-Petter HUBERT HANSEN, Directorate for Nature Management

On behalf of Sweden  
Sune SOLBERG, Environment Protection Agency, Sweden

On behalf of the Republic of Komi, Russia  
Alexandre BOROVIINSKIH, Minister of Natural Resources and  
Environment Protection, the Komi Republic