

Barents Euro-Arctic Council Working Group on Environment



Communication Strategy 2014-2015

Version 2013-11-25

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APPENDIX 1: INDICATIVE ACTIVITY PLAN 2014-2015ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

APPENDIX 2: WORKSHOP OUTCOMES, ROVANIEMIERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

1 Introduction

Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) is the forum for intergovernmental and interregional cooperation in the Barents Region. BEAC was established in 1993 in order to "provide impetus to existing cooperation and consider new initiatives and proposals". The Working Group on Environment (WGE) was launched in 1999 and the chairmanship rotates between Sweden, Finland, Russia and Norway.

The Barents Region is becoming a strategic region for Europe. Its natural resources and new transportation routes will change the global map on resource use and transportation. With good reason, Barents Region is proud of its clean environment, large intact natural areas and unique indigenous culture in Europe. An important challenge, thus, for the prosperity of the region is to promote responsible, sustainable and environmentally sound economic activities.

During the Finnish Chairmanship 2012-2013 it has been decided that environmental challenges facing the Barents region need to be brought to light, especially since the 20-year anniversary of the Barents cooperation is celebrated in 2013. So in order to meet these challenges connected to the increasing use of natural resources in the Barents Region, a crosscutting theme for the future work of BEAC-WGE will be communication.

This strategy, developed to support the work program of every chairmanship-period, is based on input from all working members of the BEAC-WGE.

1.1 The role of communication

Planned communication is a vital instrument to become more systematic and to better focus communication in order to maximize the probability of success in attaining the objectives laid out in the BEAC-WGE framework.

Communication – when adequately planned – facilitates the management of dialogue. It can also help foresee and take preventive action against communication problems that otherwise might occur and jeopardise project contributions.

Communication has a key role in spreading awareness about the work of the WGE and in making the objectives accessible and understandable.

Planned internal communication within and between WGE and its subgroups ensures that people involved in projects and programmes has correct and complete information about decisions, processes, and other relevant conditions within the organisation to be better equipped to conduct an efficient effort.

In this communication strategy the WGE has two main key perceptions on communication that will guide future interventions:

- Communication *for* results - strategic communication as a tool for effective implementation. Have both internal and external dimensions. External to engage key stakeholders in project activities and internal for learning and more joined-up action.
- Communication *about* results – to strengthen core values such as accountability and transparency and to create commitment by communicating success stories.

1.2 Purpose of the communication strategy

The purpose of this communication strategy is to support the overall objective of the BEA-WGE framework. The strategy includes two parts; i) a strategy for the effective implementation of planned communication activities and ii) an indicative activity plan.

The communication strategy is four-folded covering different types of communication identified:

- Internal (operational) communication - collaboration and coordination to ensure timely and effective sharing of relevant information within the WGE-team and institution units.
- Policy dialogue - to influence changes and gaining commitment at policy level and promote issues related to development.
- Project and programme communication – supporting capacity to include strategic communication as a tool in projects and programmes.
- Corporate (external) communication – communicate the mission and activities of WGE and the subgroups to external stakeholders.

2 Strategy

2.1 Overall objective

The overall objective of the communication strategy is to support the ultimate objective of the BEAC-WGE.

This will be done by supporting the work-programme of respective chairmanship-period.

2.2 Overall communication objective

The overall communication objective for WGE is to enhance its contribution impact (improve environmental outcomes) through increased outreach efforts and awareness of the work of the Working Group on Environment. WGE will thus continue enhancing synergies with relevant regional environmental processes.

2.3 Expected key results and outputs

2.3.1 Internal (operational) communication

TARGET GROUPS

WGE and its subgroups

EXPECTED KEY RESULT

Efficient and constructive team management and administration through enhanced internal communication.

OUTPUTS

1. Principles, routines, roles and responsibilities for internal communication established within the team
2. Vision, strategies, objectives, and common values understood and endorsed by the team
3. Relevant information on activities and achievements are shared timely within the team and other working groups

2.3.2 Policy dialogue

TARGET GROUPS

Central, regional, federal, local authorities in Barents countries and partners (the BEAC, the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers etc.)

EXPECTED KEY RESULT

There is a clear understanding among relevant decision-makers and partners in Barents Countries (at all relevant levels) on strategic issues raised in the work-programme.

OUTPUTS

1. A strategic approach for policy dialogue developed to increase effectiveness based on planned communication and the issues identified as strategic in the work-programme.
2. Raised awareness of “hot” Barents issues among relevant decision-makers and partners.

2.3.3 Programme/project communication

TARGET GROUPS

Implementing partners, Beneficiaries, Investors

EXPECTED KEY RESULT

Increased contribution impact through enhanced programme and/or project communication.

OUTPUTS

1. Strategic and planned communication is a standard component in new programmes and/or projects.
2. Capacity within the team to promote planned communication in programmes and/or projects established.

2.3.4 Corporate (external) communication

TARGET GROUPS

Implementing partners, Beneficiaries (including general public), Investors

EXPECTED KEY RESULT

Raised profile of WGE activities and achievements among key stakeholders.

OUTPUTS

1. WGE contribution and achievements communicated to key stakeholders.

2.4 Target groups, messages and methods

Target groups, messages and methods used will be further defined in the activity plan where they are linked to the activities, outlined for each communication output.

2.5 Time frame

This Communication Strategy is valid to 2015. The strategy will be revised regularly and a new activity plan developed in line with the revised strategy.

2.6 Follow-up

The chair shall have the overall responsibility to follow-up the implementation of the strategy and the activity plan.

Follow-up of the strategy will be done every 2 year in connection with change of chairmanship.

Follow-up on the activity plan will be done regularly in connection with scheduled BEAC-WGE meetings.