

*Introductory speech of Mr. Alexander Erulik,
Arkhangelsk region minister on natural resources
and timber-industry complex, Russia
at the Seminar on Predators in the Barents Region
on March 5, 2019 in Skellefteå (Svansele), Sweden*

Dear Mrs. Magdalena Andersson!
Dear Messrs. Governors, colleagues and experts!
Dear Mr. Hallberg!

First and foremost, let me express our gratitude to the County Administrative Board of Västerbotten, and personally to Mrs. Governor, as well as to the International Barents Secretariat for their support and input to organize this important seminar. I am confident, the relevance of the topic under discussion will be a starting point for interesting discussions, fruitful exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of regulating the population of predators in the Barents region.

It should be noted that in the Arkhangelsk region, being so rich in forest resources, there are many wild predators. For example, the population of brown bear is estimated as more than 18 thousand individuals, and wolves – more than 1 thousand 200 individuals. Because of the settlements' fragmentation, and in most cases, because of their seasonal availability, we observe now quite frequent entries of large carnivores in close proximity and even on the territory of some settlements.

The executive bodies of the state power in the Arkhangelsk region pay special and increased attention to searching for optimal solutions with reference to this problem. The regional Ministry on natural resources and forestry, together with the Main Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia for the Arkhangelsk region (Police) and the Inspectorate for Veterinary Supervision in the Arkhangelsk region, are implementing an Agreement that provides an Order for humane actions to accompany those predators back to the forest, in their usual habitat.

I do sincerely hope that during the seminar discussions the experts will present their various views, conclusions and recommendations on how to solve the problem in the best way. We will be glad to study our colleagues' positive experience and apply it in practice in the Arkhangelsk region.

In conclusion, let me wish all the participants and organizers of the seminar fruitful work and further success in research!

Thank you for your attention!