

Event **9th JMC Meeting of the Kolarctic CBC 2014–2020 Programme**

Date **23rd June 2020 (10:00-16:00 Finnish Time)**

Location **Online, using conference tool Microsoft Teams**

Language The meeting was held in English.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE MEETING

Members and Deputy Members

Finland Tuulia Väliheikki, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (Joined 10.02)
 Birgit Autere, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
 Leena Ruokanen, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
 Timo Rautajoki, Lapland Chamber of Commerce

Norway Lisbeth Nylund, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation
 Jan Edøy, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (Joined 10.02)
 Ivar Prestbakmo, Troms and Finnmark County Council
 Tarjei Jensen Bech, Troms and Finnmark County Council
 Kari Anne Bøkestad Andreassen, Nordland County Council

Russia Vsevolod Vovchenko, Ministry of Economic Development
 Syuzanna Vatfa, Ministry of Economic Development (Left 14.55)
 Igor Kapyrin, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
 Denis Moskalenko, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
 Ilya Ostapchuk, Murmansk Region
 Sergey Kungurtsev, Nenets Autonomous District
 Elena Demidova, Arkhangelsk Region

Sweden Isabella Palomba Rydén, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation
 Bror Martin Karlsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
 Johan Antti, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten
 Glenn Berggård, Region Norrbotten

Other participants

Simona Pohlova, European Commission, DG REGIO
 Filip Chybalski, European Commission, DG REGIO
 Marita Thelin, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten
 Päivi Ekdahl, Regional Council of Lapland
 Anna-Mari Ruisniemi, Swedish Branch Office
 Jan M. Solstad, Norwegian Branch Office
 Linda Mosand, Norwegian Branch Office
 Julia Korshunova, Russian Branch Office
 Olga Klisheva, Russian Branch Office
 Riikka Oittinen, Managing Authority
 Katri Niska-Honkonen, Managing Authority
 Marjaana Lahdenranta, Managing Authority
 Laura Mäki, Managing Authority
 Svetlana Peltoperä, Managing Authority
 Joonas Holopainen, Secretary of the meeting, Managing Authority

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Tuesday 23.6.2020

1. Opening of the meeting, approval of the Agenda of the meeting

The Chair of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) Mr. Vsevolod Vovchenko opened the meeting at 10:00 (Finnish time). The participants of the meeting introduced themselves. It was announced that Jan Edøy, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, in this meeting represents the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway. The Chair gave technical meeting practices and the meeting agenda was presented.

Decision:

Participants of the meeting were notified and quorum was confirmed. The changes in the JMC members and deputy members were noted. Meeting agenda was approved.

2. State of Play of the Kolarctic CBC 2014–2020 Programme

Financial Manager Katri Niska-Honkonen gave a presentation on the Interim Reports and payments to projects with realized budgets (**Annex 1**). The financial part of the Annual report is to be finished during the autumn. In response to the presentation Simona Pohlova from DG REGIO, European Commission made a notification that the current way of showing funds per country is not used in Interreg programmes, and this might need to be changed in the future. She also commented that it is possible to use the financing of the programme to finish the final report of the current programme.

Programme Manager Riikka Oittinen presented the problems encountered by the projects due to COVID-19. Problems include cancellation of events, changes in expected outputs and objectives, and the possible need for extensions.

Filip Chybalski, DG REGIO, European Commission gave a presentation on the Implementing Regulation modification (**Annex 2**). The modification includes changes in the deadlines, possibility for COVID-19 response at project level and flexibility for the payment of the final balance.

Riikka Oittinen presented update information on the cross-programme cooperation (**Annex 3**). The topics discussed were cooperation between the Arctic Programmes within the Northern Cluster and between the FI-RU CBC Programmes, including the Programmes' visibility in the common events during 2020. Simona Pohlova, DG REGIO, European Commission commented that coordination between programmes is important and it will be incremental concerning the upcoming programming period.

The Branch Offices of the Kolarctic CBC 2014-2020 Programme gave an overview of their work during the current year.

Anna-Mari Ruisniemi, Senior Advisor, BO Sweden: Working as the substitute for Marita Thelin. The current year has been busy, and there has been lot of work related to Call for Proposals. This open call has included tailor-made consultations and meetings with potential applicants. There has also been abundance of work concerning the Swedish regional Assessment Group.

Jan Martin Solstad, Programme Coordinator, BO Norway: No traveling during this year. The 4th Call for Proposals produced abundance of work; consultations, instructions.

Norwegian BO has made efforts to increase the coordination between programmes in our region. Linda Mosand, Programme Auditor, BO Norway: Norwegian BO is following the budget plans; multiple meetings with project representatives.

Julia Korshunova, Head of the Branch Office, Russian BO: due to the 4th Call for Proposals there has been plenty of work, there are multiple applications from Russian organisations received. During the Call we organised three seminars, in Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Naryan-Mar, with around 60 participants in these events.

Olga Klisheva, Programme Coordinator, BO Russia: Large amount of consultations, organising events, programme activities, preparation of the Regional Assessment Group meeting, translating relevant programme documents from English to Russian. The Call for micro projects produced applications that are important for future development of cross-border cooperation in our region.

Decision:

Presentations and information were noted by the JMC. The information about the EC adoption of the modification was received by the JMC during the meeting.

3. Decision on the approval or rejection of the micro projects submitted during the 4th Call for Proposals 3.2. – 31.3.2020

Simona Pohlova gave a presentation on the status of the Joint Operational Programme (JOP) amendment process in the European Commission. JOP is currently under translation and is expected to be adopted in mid-July. CBC Coordinator Joonas Holopainen gave a presentation on the Results of the 4th Call for Proposals (**Annex 4**).

The paper on applications has been available to the members of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) in PROMAS and it has also been delivered with the meeting materials. The Annexes of the Agenda (Annex 2. Summary of Applications and Annex 3. RAG scores) have been delivered to the Joint Monitoring Committee members on 8th of June, 2020. In support for the project selection, application form (Annex 4 of the Agenda), evaluation grid (Annex 5 of the Agenda) were also delivered to the JMC prior to the meeting, on the 1st of June 2020.

Riikka Oittinen gave an introduction to the discussion on the project selection:

- 1) The MA asks the JMC for an authorization to calculate the shares of different sources of financing for each project, which means that the JMC would decide only on the approval or rejection of the applications.
- 2) The MA proposes the JMC, according to the practice in previous discussions on project selection, to decide whether to reject the applications that are under the average scores, and discuss only the once above the average.
- 3) Two approaches for handling the applications were presented: to make the decisions on the base of one common list, including applications in both TO1 and TO6, or to handle the applications in one TO at a time.
- 4) The MA proposes to select a few projects to a reserve list, in case if some of the micro projects will not start or if some of the ongoing projects are realised smaller.
- 5) After the JMC decision, the MA will proceed with the chosen applications to issue executive order and Grant Contract according to the framework set by EC regulations and Finnish national regulations and Programme document. The MA

is responsible for ensuring that the projects are in accordance to EU and National legislations and, when necessary for meeting this condition, makes necessary and specifying changes to the plan before signing the executive order and grant contract.

Decision:

- 1) The JMC authorized the MA to calculate the shares of different sources of financing for each project.
- 2) The applications with lower scores than the average 51,79 were rejected.
- 3) It was decided that the project applications will be discussed from one common list, following the points given by the RAGs. Necessary transfer of financing from TO1 to TO6 will be made by the JMC in a Written Procedure, after the EC approval of the JOP amendment.
- 4) It was decided to make a reserve list. The decision on financing projects from the reserve list will be made by the MA, according to how financing may be released from other projects.
- 5) The JMC noted the information.

The approval of all projects is conditional until the EC approval of the JOP amendment.

Approved (additional conditions and JMC's comments are given after each project):

- KO5127 Detect and stop the spread of Gyrodactylus salaris on the North Calotte
- KO5133 Remediation strategies for ultra-low sulfur fuel oil in winter conditions
- KO5101 GREEN ICE CAMERA
- KO5094 New Natural Kolarctic Products SME Assistance
- KO5106 Capacity Building for Black Carbon mitigation efforts: a roadmap for cross-border activities
- KO5021 Nitrogen compound removal processes
- KO5004 Gap and barrier analysis of Euro-Arctic coastal wetlands conservation
- KO5100 Treasures from the Northern Nature
- KO5043 Look more often to the North
- KO5000 Smart Arctic National Parks: Digitization of Waste and Water Management (WWM) Systems in National Parks and Nature Reserves Cross-Border (*condition: the use of the collected information has to be specified beforehand*)
- KO5055 "Industrial Tourism: Developing New Destinations in the Arctic"
- KO5008 EXcavator Pro in Ecological ResToration
- KO5080 Drone safety monitoring systems for Arctic mining (*JMC's comment: during the GC negotiations the MA will inform the LP that licences are needed from the land owners, and ask to look for a Norwegian partner to the project*)
- KO5109 International School of Eco-volunteers (*condition: transfer of financing between the TOs*)
- KO5023 Wood Industry 4.0 – If financing available (*condition: transfer of financing between the TOs*)
- KO5135 Environmental Safety and Sustainability of Wind Energy Projects at Remote Territories of Arctic Region (*condition: transfer of financing between the TOs*)
- KO5042 Revival of the Northern Farm. Genetic biodiversity of northern breeds in the Barents region (*condition: transfer of financing between the TOs*)
- KO5029 Aurora Borelias monitoring system for tourism business needs

KO5125 Arctic Layered Intrusions as a Source of Critical Metals for Green Economy
(condition: transfer of financing between the TOs)

Projects to be placed in the reserve list. In case of financing released, the projects will be financed in the order presented here:

- KO5096 International Barents Center of Excellence for Arctic Ecosystem Restoration
- KO5108 Virtual Integrated Innovative Product Development
- KO5150 Restoration of wooden boats in the North Calotte: Business development & sustainable knowledge
- KO5033 Stabilisation and control of energy use and indoor climate of buildings in arctic regions
- KO5049 Smart HVAC Systems for Public Buildings in Arctic
- KO5124 Environmental Quality Control Popularisation: Kolarctic region
- KO5079 Blockchain for Arctic Climate Challenge

Rejected applications:

- KO5069 Solar energy in Arctic and cold regions
Justification: The project topic has received previous attention in the Programme area and has been found to be better suited for private sector funding.

The following applications reached scores lower than the average 51,79 and were therefore rejected:

- KO5038 Digital Marketing Tools for Business
- KO5099 Large Predators in Barents Region
- KO5019 Fish farming in the Arctic extreme environment: green technology and waste management
- KO5093 Arctic Sustainable Tourism
- KO5087 Capitalising the creative industries in Kolarctic
- KO5060 Arctic Cuisine GuIDE
- KO5018 Northern towns-new business opportunities
- KO5073 Proactive Climate Adaptation and Tourism
- KO5132 Praise North - raising welfare and prosperity in the Barents region
- KO5011 Greenhouse for entrepreneurs and business leaders of near border territory
- KO5032 Living in rural communities: common challenges - shared decisions
- KO5112 Shungite CBC Project
- KO5091 Handicrafts-oriented eco-tourism in Finnish and Russian Lapland
- KO5012 Marine cooperation between Russia and Norway
- KO5025 Barents region logistic line.
- KO5062 Arctic Circle Across Borders
- KO5169 Live Reindeer Transfer
- KO5074 Arctic Guide

At the meeting, the JMC took note of the following declarations of conflict of interest and the following persons excluded themselves from discussions on the projects in question: Timo Rautajoki (KO5008, KO5038, KO5055, KO5106), Johan Antti (KO5008), Leena Ruokanen (KO5008).

Summary of project decisions is in **Annex 5**.

4. Approval of the Programme documents for the budgetary year 1.7.2020 – 30.6.2021.

Riikka Oittinen gave a presentation on the Work Programme 2020-2021 (**Annex 6a, 6b**). The Work Programme received good remarks concerning the information on COVID-19 effects.

CBC Expert Laura Mäki presented the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2020-2021 and the changes in the plan (**Annex 7a, 7b**), in comparison to the previous Monitoring and Evaluation plan. The document has gone under major changes and more focus has directed towards the indicators. Julia Korshunova, Head of the Russian Branch office presented the questionnaire to be executed on projects, in relation to the COVID-19 effects on the project implementation (information is included in **Annex 7b**). Simona Pohlova commented that the EC would like to receive the conclusions of the inquiry on the effects of COVID-19 to project implementation. Tuulia Väliheikki from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment commented that it will be useful lessons learned material for the next programme period.

Riikka Oittinen presented the changes made in the Risk Management Plan 2020-2021 (**Annex 8**). The changes included updates on the Risk Register.

CBC Expert Marjaana Lahdenranta presented the additions made in the Information and Communication plan 2020-2021 (**Annex 9**). Simona Pohlova commented that communication is important to ensure programme visibility and told that there is a new template produced, to be used for the future Information and Communication Plans.

Katri Niska-Honkonen presented the Technical Assistance Action Plan 2020-2021 (**Annex 10**) and the updates made in it. Isabella Palomba Rydén from the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation brought out that in the Swedish Branch Office there will be a full-time employee from the beginning of the next Programme, although a part-time employee until the end of the ongoing Programme.

Decision:

The JMC approved the programme documents as proposed, with no changes.

5. Programming of the 2021-2027 Programme

Riikka Oittinen presented the indicative workplan and timeline for the programming process (**Annex 11**). The workplan and timeline was accepted in the 1st meeting of the Programming Committee with participation of the national level representatives on the 17th of June, 2020. In that meeting the Regional Council of Lapland as the MA of the current Programme was given the mandate to coordinate the programming process.

Tuulia Väliheikki (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment), Lisbeth Nylund (Ministry of Local Government and Modernization), Igor Kapyrin (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), and Isabella Palomba Rydén (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation) gave an overview on the programming in each country from the point of view of the countries' representatives.

Simona Pohlova (DG REGIO, European Commission) presented the legal requirements for the Programme content and the status of the start of the programming from the point of view of the European Commission (**Annex 12**).

Decision:

Information was noted by the JMC.

6. Any other business

Igor Kapyrin pointed out the need to amend the Financing Agreement according to the amendments made to the Implementing Regulation. Simona Pohlova agreed with the need and the need to make the amendments as soon as possible, and mentioned an exchange of letters as one possible method. In this context, Simona Pohlova provided the Joint Monitoring Committee with an update on the adoption of the Implementing Regulation by the Commission during this JMC meeting.

7. Next meeting

The MA will contact the Chair of the JMC in August, to discuss the time and place of the next meeting.

8. Closing of the meeting

The Chair closed the meeting at 16:35 (Finnish time).

Vsevolod Vovchenko
Chair of the JMC

Joonas Holopainen
Secretary of the JMC

List of Annexes:

- Annex 1** Interim reports and payments to the projects, realization of budgets (Katri Niska-Honkonen)
- Annex 2** ENI CBC Implementing Regulation modification in response to COVID-19 pandemic (Simona Pohlova/Filip Chybalski)
- Annex 3** Update information on the cross-programme cooperation (Riikka Oittinen)
- Annex 4** Presentation on the results of the 4th Call for Proposals (Joonas Holopainen)
- Annex 5** Summary of the project decisions
- Annex 6a** Work Programme 2020-2021 (final, approved)
- Annex 6b** Presentation on the Work Programme 2020-2021 (Riikka Oittinen)
- Annex 7a** Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2020-2021 (final, approved)
- Annex 7b** Presentation on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2020-2021 (Laura Mäki)
- Annex 8** Risk Management Plan 2020-2021 (final, approved)
- Annex 9** Information and Communication Plan 2020-2021 (final, approved)
- Annex 10** Technical Assistance Action Plan and Budget 2020-2021
- Annex 11** Indicative workplan and timeline for the programming exercise 2021-2027 (Riikka Oittinen)
- Annex 12** Presentation on the legal requirements for the Programme content (Simona Pohlova)