

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Finland, the Ministry of the Environment of the Kingdom of Norway and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation on cooperation on the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia

The Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Finland, the Ministry of the Environment of the Kingdom of Norway and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, hereinafter referred to as “the Signatories”,

Recalling that the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Norway, and the Russian Federation are Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

Desirous to express the political will to cooperate in the light of the aim to halt the loss of biodiversity, to which the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation are all committed;

Recognising similar international undertakings promoting transboundary environmental protection, in particular the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) motion on the European Green Belt (Barcelona, 2008) and the cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council;

Referring to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection of 29 April 1992 and to the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection of 3 September 1992;

Recalling the ongoing transboundary cooperation between the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation, on the Green Belt of Fennoscandia, which is a network of existing and planned protected areas of differing status along the Finnish-Norwegian, Finnish-Russian and Norwegian-Russian borders and stretching from the Gulf of Finland to the Barents Sea;

Have come to the following Understanding:

1. This Memorandum of Understanding will facilitate ecologically, economically, socially and culturally sustainable transboundary cooperation

along the Finnish-Norwegian, Finnish-Russian and Norwegian-Russian parts of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia.

The Green Belt of Fennoscandia includes existing protected areas of differing status and enables the inclusion of planned protected areas when established.

The Green Belt of Fennoscandia enhances the ecological connectivity of the protected areas and offers a unique opportunity for studying and monitoring climate change.

2. The Signatories will cooperate on the basis of the present Memorandum of Understanding, within the framework of their jurisdiction and in compliance with the legislation and international commitments of their States.

3. The Signatories will promote cooperation on the Green Belt of Fennoscandia by regional and municipal border areas and their administrations, protected areas of differing status, enterprises, scientific institutions, non-governmental organisations and other bodies (hereinafter referred to as the Stakeholders). The Signatories, within the framework of their jurisdiction, express their intention to encourage cooperation at regional level and to make all necessary efforts to ensure that the existing and planned protected areas in question are equipped to address transboundary cooperation.

4. Transboundary cooperation between the Signatories on the establishment, development and management of protected areas will be conducted on the basis of mutual interests and priorities. The Signatories will determine the main forms and directions of cooperation, taking into account the need to develop the network of protected areas and management needs. The Stakeholders may conclude agreements for the purpose of cooperation in compliance with priorities determined by the Signatories.

5. The Signatories will continue the cooperation on the Green Belt of Fennoscandia within the existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation formats between the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation, in particular the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection of 29 April 1992, the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection of 3 September 1992, and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. Thus, the main bodies that will develop and follow up the cooperation on the Green Belt of Fennoscandia are the Finnish-Russian Working Group on Nature Protection under the Joint Finnish-Russian Environmental Commission, the Joint Norwegian-Russian Environmental Commission, created under the

above-mentioned Agreements, and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council's Working Group on Environment, in particular its Nature Protection Subgroup.

6. This Memorandum of Understanding is not an international agreement and does not create any rights or obligations under international law for the Signatories.

7. This Memorandum of Understanding will come into effect upon signature and will be valid for a period of 10 (ten) years, after which it may be prolonged for periods of equal length if none of the Signatories notifies the other Signatories of its intention to terminate the Memorandum in writing at least six months prior to expiration of the period in question.

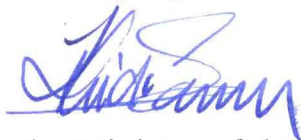
This Memorandum of Understanding may at any time be terminated by one of the Signatories upon six months' written notice of its intention to the other Signatories.

8. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended and supplemented by a joint decision of the Signatories.

Signed in Tromsø, Norway on 17 February 2010 in three sets, each containing the text in both English and Russian language.



For the Ministry of the
Environment
of the Republic of
Finland



For the Ministry of the
Environment
of the Kingdom of
Norway



For the Ministry of
Natural Resources and
Environment
of the Russian
Federation