

**RESOLUTION of the
International Workshop
“Development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia: environment, economy,
education”**

*Petrozavodsk (KarRC RAS); Vlg. Niemelänhovi, Sortavalsky District, Republic of Karelia
(Ladozhskaya Usadba resort)*

October 2 – 4, 2018

On October 2–4, 2018 the international workshop “Development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia: environment, economy, education” took place, organized by KarRC RAS, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Republic of Karelia with the participation of the Kola Science Centre RAS, Ministry of the Environment Finland, Finnish Environmental Institute, University of Helsinki, Metsähallitus. The workshop relied in its work on the “Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of the Environment of the Kingdom of Norway, the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Finland and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation on Cooperation on the Development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia” dated February 17, 2010, “Development Concept for the System of PAs of Federal Importance” until year 2020 (RF Government Ordinance dated 22.12.2011), and Strategy for the Green Belt of Fennoscandia until 2020.

The workshop has gathered over 60 participants representing research and educational institutions from Russia (Republic of Karelia, Murmansk Region) and Finland (Finnish Environmental Institute, University of Helsinki, Metsähallitus), Russian federal- and regional-level ministries and authorities, PA Directorates of the Republic of Karelia and St. Petersburg.

The workshop participants have listened to and discussed presentations about the delineation and development prospects of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF), its role in biodiversity conservation and as a cornerstone of economic development in border areas, including tourism development. Talks and discussions dealt with the protection of valuable natural objects and systems, conservation and management of historical and cultural heritage, development of PA-based ecosystem services, educational and ecological tourism.

The agenda of the second part of the workshop, which took place in the Ladoga area, included, in addition to presentations, the roundtable “Prospects of GBF development in the mid- and long term”, at which the workshop participants from Russia and Finland, together with representatives of the Sortavalsky District (Head of Sortavalsky Municipal District, Vice-Director of the Northern Priladozhye Regional Museum) discussed the issues of further coordination of activities in protected areas in the Green Belt of Fennoscandia, activation of cross-border projects, and expansion of the territory under PA’s. The workshop participants have also discussed the final report on phase 2 of the Public contract # NI-10-23/119 “Scientific substantiation of the establishment and development of the Russian part of protected area network shared with Norway and Finland”.

The following decisions have been taken based on the workshop proceedings:

1. **Approve the project results and emphasize the importance of continuing the efforts** to work out concrete proposals on conferring an official status on GBF territory, its zoning, and formulation of development priorities.

2. Recognize GBF as a key component of the common North European PA system. Acknowledge the marked progress in the study of PA's in the European North within the Green Belt of Fennoscandia.
3. Consider the possible nomination of all prospective PA's (whose designation has been recognized necessary in regional PA development concepts and spatial planning layouts) falling with the Forest Fund lands for the status of National forest heritage forests, according to the new Forest Management Instruction approved by the Order of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation # 122 of 29.03.2018 with view to improving connectivity between individual PA's and preserving the natural integrity of GBF.
4. Expand joint (Russia, Finland, Norway) research for the study and conservation of the natural, historical and cultural heritage of border areas to establish the scientific grounds for the utilization of the tangible and intangible resources in GBF territory; work out the GBF development program.
5. Recalling the expiry in 2020 of the ten year period since the signing of the trilateral (Norway, Finland, Russia) Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on GBF development, prepare proposals for its renewal.
6. Strengthen interactions with municipalities and augment the efforts to raise the awareness of local people and businesses in GBF to join forces in the conservation of the natural systems and socio-economic development in the borderlands.
7. Intensify the work to prepare publications about GBF (both academic and popular-science) to raise broad scientific and public awareness of the significance of this territory, its role in the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of border areas, and development of international relations. Start the work to create the atlas of GBF.
8. Deem it necessary for the nearest future to establish key PA's in territories within GBF: national park Kutsa, federal nature reserve Vorjema, regional integrated nature reserve Ionn-Nyugoayv, landscape reserve Tulos, wetland and hydrological reserve Koitajoki. Prepare proposals for the establishment of new landscape reserves for the conservation of pristine forests.
9. Define the priorities for the economic development of border areas to make GBF more attractive for investors, especially in the tourism sphere. Prepare recommendations for regional economic development ministries (Republic of Karelia and Murmansk Region) on socio-economic development in GBF.
10. Post the presentations prepared by the workshop participants on the KarRC RAS' "Green Belt of Fennoscandia" website (given the authors' consent).
11. Acknowledge the high performance standard of the workshop and thank its organizers, as well as all KarRC RAS staff involved in its preparation and implementation.