

Minutes of the bilateral Pasvik-Inari cooperation meeting 6.9.2024

Place: Nature Centre SIIDA, Inari, Finland

Time: Friday 6.9.2024 8.30–15.00

Riina Tervo, Metsähallitus

Alexander Kopf, Metsähallitus

Kirsi Ukkonen, Metsähallitus

Jari Pasanen, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY)

Tiia Kalske, County Governor of Troms and Finnmark

Lisa Bjørnsdatter Helgason, County Governor of Troms and Finnmark

Anne Wikan, NIBIO Svanhøvd

Jaana Seipiharju, Municipality of Inari

Rolf E Sch Kollstrøm, Manager Øvre-Pasvik National Park

Kurt Wikan, Leader of the Øvre Pasvik National Park Board

Cecilie Hansen, Coleader Øvre Pasvik National Park Board

Amy Brox Weber, Øvre Pasvik National Park Board

Are Jørstad, Øvre Pasvik National Park Board

1. Opening of the meeting and presentation of the participants

- Kirsi Ukkonen opened the meeting at 8.30 am
- The attendees presented themselves

2. Selection of chair and secretary

- Riina Tervo was elected to be the chair
- Kirsi Ukkonen and Alex Kopf were elected as secretaries

3. Important information from each organization

Important information from Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland presented by Riina Tervo

New organization of Parks & Wildlife Finland has been operating since 1.1.2024. Reasons for reorganizing were

1. Need for a sustainable solution for organisation and way of working
2. Declining funding
3. Possibility to modify the scale of operations in a controlled manner

In a new organization

1. value produced to the customer leads the way
2. Self-guided teams
3. agile ways of working and teams guiding themselves



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEAHČIÁÐDEHUS

4. organised under national "value streams" and services are developed according to demand
5. no overlapping services or tasks

Regional organisation does not exist anymore. There are national value streams and national teams in the streams. Planning and implementation of operational work takes place in one and the same unit. Cooperation with regional and local stakeholders happens without regional structures.

Changes to transboundary cooperation:

New contact persons:

Working group: Kirsí Ukkonen and her substitute Alexander Kopf
Advisory Board: Riina Tervo in 2024, Marko Sievänen following up

Only most prioritized activities implemented in P-I cooperation: annual meetings of work group and advisory board and re-evaluation process of Transboundary Parks' certificate.

News from the field: Customer service point Kiehinén is closed in Saariselkä. Screens from the exhibition made in PAN-project are relocated to Customer service point Korvatunturi in Savukoski. The gate to Urho Kekkonen National Park in Saariselkä provides actual information on its screens. Information about Urho Kekkonen National Park given via phone and email and in Customer service of Siida. There is less staff working in the organization.

Arctic fox has been breeding successfully in Finland 2022–2024. Gyrfalcon nested in a man-made, open nest box for the first time in Northern Lapland with three chicks.

Report of Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Finland's Protected Areas 2023:
<https://julkaisut.metsa.fi/en/publication/management-effectiveness-evaluation-of-finlands-protected-areas-2023/>

Outdoor etiquette for Sámi homeland has been published:
<https://www.nationalparks.fi/homelandofthesami>

New "Into the nature" - Luontoon -service (nationalparks.fi), aim to publish in the end of November 2024.

Important information from Lapland ELY-centrer presented by Jari Pasanen

The reform of regional state administration will bring the central government's permit, guidance and supervision functions together in a new national agency. At the same time, new regional Economic Development Centres will be established.

The new agency will also take on some of the functions of the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) related to the environment. Environmental permit and supervision functions will form a unified organisation in the new agency. The remaining

functions of the ELY Centres will be brought together in Economic Development Centres that will build on more robust regions.

Regional state administration will begin operating under the new organisation in 2026 at the latest.

The reform covers the tasks of nine administrative branches and concerns 23 agencies and 4600 employees.

Central government's permit, guidance and supervision agency:

1. Social Services and Health Care Division: official duties related to health and social services, health protection, administration of alcohol and tobacco administration, adoption matters and appeals.
2. Early childhood education and care, education and culture: tasks related to early childhood education and care, education, youth, education, libraries, sports and burial.
3. Environment Division: tasks related to environmental and nature protection and environmental impact assessment, permitting, steering, planning and supervision tasks related to land use and construction, water and marine management, permit and supervision tasks related to water management and other tasks concerning the use and protection of the environment.
4. Occupational Safety and Health Division: tasks related to permits, supervision, guidance and product supervision by the occupational safety and health administration.
5. Rescue Division: supervision of the quality of rescue services and supervision and assessment of the quality, availability and level of rescue services, assessment of major accident exercises at sites causing a special hazard, administration and supervision of aerial forest fire surveillance, tasks related to state subsidies to rescue services.

Economic Development Centres

1. Employment and culture: promotion of regional employment, skills and culture of the workforce.
2. Rural areas and agriculture: agriculture and horticulture, rural development, delegated paying agency tasks, fisheries and reindeer husbandry, food, safety and quality of agricultural products, animal health and welfare, plant health and water management.
3. Transport: functioning of the transport system, road safety, road and traffic conditions and road maintenance.
4. Business and competitiveness: sustainable business growth, research, development and innovation, internationalisation and competitiveness, and energy production.
5. Immigration and good relations: labour and education-based immigration, promoting immigrant integration and good relations.

6. Nature conservation and environment: promotion of good status of biodiversity and management of the cultural environment, promotion of good water status, promotion of land use and climate work, environmental education.

7. Regional and structural policy of the European Union: implementation tasks of the European Union's regional and structural policy programme, implementation tasks delegated by a paying agency accredited under the provisions governing the European Union Agricultural Guarantee and Rural Development Fund.

Other topic issues

In Our Precious transboundary waters (Interreg) -project 4 work packages. Budget is app.1,4 M €.

WP1 about Environmental status of the Pasvik river basin and outcome will be a report on the state of the environment at the time of closure of the nickel smelter.

WP2 about Brown Trout in the Pasvik-Inari area and as an outcome to develop genetic tools to identify human-induced changes in unique natural trout populations in the Pasvik river and Lake Inari river basins.

WP3 Näätämöjoki salmon and as outcome to obtain new information on the state of salmon stocks in the Näätämöjoki river.

WP4 about *Gyrodactylus salaris* salmon parasite and outcome with updated instructions for tourists and fishermen *G. salaris* to prevent the spread ([contingency plan, information plan and materials etc.](#)).

Important information from Municipality of Inari presented by Jaana Seipiharju

Inari is alive and slowly growing municipality – one of the few in Lapland. Economy is in balance and stable. More apartments are needed. Work opportunities in many fields.

New personnel in the municipality are development manager Henna Kotsas and business advisor Jonna Ylimaunu. New project coordinator Hanna Mäki.

There are new schools in Inari and Ivalo. New multipurpose school is under construction in Sevettijärvi. 2 new nurseries/daycare centres are under construction in Ivalo and Saariselkä. There is a new government building for the police and Finnish border guard in Ivalo.

Nanguniemi hotel has got permits for construction. Miesniemi did not get a permit for hotel – smaller holiday village is still under planning.

Wilderness Hotels have renovated Hotel Juutua. UTAC Outdoor II ja III (arctic testing), 20M€. Sámi Education Institute expanding 2023–2025.

There is an updated Arctic Inari 2030 strategy and Municipality Strategy 2030.

Strategy 2023: Inari's unique natural environment serves as the cornerstone of all endeavours. We use natural resources responsibly, fortifying our natural capital.

The vitality of our municipality rests upon well-managed, evolving industries. We diversify economic activities for year-round.

Socially sustainable growth and understanding the significance of intergenerationally are fundamentals for a fulfilling life. We foster community spirit, enhance resident safety, and prioritize the well-being of our youth.

Sámi heritage is a valuable part of Inari municipality. By collaborating with other stakeholders in the Sámi region, we increase the prominence of Sámi languages and culture.

Road map for economic development 2024-2023 exists:

Main emphasis on entrepreneurship, accessibility and making use of our Arctic location.

Special efforts will be made to increase availability of competent work force, improving functional and safe traffic connections and emphasizing our unique nature and culture to attract visitors throughout the year.

Inari is **aiming to sustainable** tourism. Tourism income in Inari is 156772 million euros/year

Visitor statistics in Finland are available in: www.visitory.fi/fi/fi

Vision of the municipality is: INARI – Mighty by nature. Mission: INARI – A responsible promoter of vitality and good life.

How do we get the youth to this cooperation? Since last year there has been meetings and events between the youth of Inari and Sør-Varanger.

Suggestion by Jaana Seipiharju: Invite members of Nuva, Youth Council of Inari and similar team from Sør-Varanger to this advisory board.

I Important information from County Governor of Troms and Finnmark presented by Lisa Bjørnsdatter Helgason

A new County Governor will be appointed before the end of the year and there will also be appointed a second Vice Governor.

The Government has decided not to divide any of the adjoined County Governor offices, so Troms and Finnmark will continue as one Governor's office, with the current office locations. The structure of the current organization has been evaluated in 2024 and it may lead to some changes. Financial situation has been difficult, and there have been cuts in budgets and the amount of staff the last years have as a consequence of that been reduced.

The Environmental dept. has 4 sections: fish and water, pollution control and supervision, nature conservation, and motor traffic and game issues.

There are recommendations in Marine protection in Porsanger fjord and Tana fjord. 5% of the marine areas in Norway have been protected so far (aim 20–30). 17% of the land areas in Norway on national level has been protected now (aim 30%).



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEAHČIRÁÐDEHUS

Management plans: Voluntary forest protection has been highlighted and prioritized, but Troms and Finnmark did not get financial resources for it this year.

Nature and nature habitats: International work: Last week forestry and agricultural minister from Finland, the King of Sweden, Minister of environment from Sweden were visiting to Torne River valley hear about the TRIWA Life project and the cooperation between Norway, Finland and Sweden.

Interreg Aurora OPreWa-project (ref. to Jaris presentation) – we are involved.

We are planning a marine litter project, seminar will be held in Tromsø 24-25.10.2024.

Pink salmon invasion in 2025: intensive preparation work is going on. There will be installed fish traps in over 100 rivers in Northern Norway.

Norwegian-Finnish Transboundary water board commission meeting was held 2.-3.9.2024.

Important information from Øvre Pasvik National Park Board, presented by Rolf Kollstrøm

Visitor Point of Gjøken was opened in June 2023, next to the Pasvik Landscape Protection Area (LPA) and Pasvik Nature Reserve that is governed by the County Governor.

Øvre-Pasvik National Park and Øvre Pasvik LPA are governed by the Øvre-Pasvik National Park Board.

The three-country border at Muotkavaara is the most popular attraction in Øvre-Pasvik National Park. About 1500–2000 visits/year made.

Restoring of the vegetation on a worn-out area around the three-country border cairn have been planned. Gravel paths with some duckboard for bikes have been built outside of the national park. Bikes are not allowed in the National Park.

Øvre-Pasvik National Park is the first place in Norway to receive an International Dark Sky Park certification. Official opening will be held 27. –28.10.2024.

Important information from NIBIO Svanhovd by Anne Wikan

At Visitor Point Gjøken the Official opening was celebrated in June 2023. According to the counter during a period of 1 month from 12. July 2024 393 cars visited Gjøken.

Activity Day Pasvik school and a Bark Workshop (skolt sámí traditions) were held at Gjøken autumn 2023. PNC - Phenology of North Calotte -school program gathering with 50 kids and teachers from Norway and Finland in Gjøken in September 2024.



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEAHČIÁÐÐEHUS

Waterbird registration on River Pasvik: Contact researcher to researcher to agree on dates between Norway and Russia is allowed. Counting is done from separate boats on each side of the border at the same time.

Result from the Norwegian boat (2023)

23rd May 649 birds (729)

30th May 409 birds (-)

28th August 511 birds (294)

3rd September 368 birds (208)

Ducklings counting was not done. Very few juveniles were seen 2024.

Brown Bear monitoring in 2023: There were 20 traps in Norway and 23 in in Finland. There were 11 bears discovered on Norwegian sites and 13 on Finish sites (2 of them in both countries). 10 of these bears were new individuals. The 2nd highest number of unique individuals per sampling area. 2 of the cameras were destroyed during the monitoring period. Bears enjoy rolling in the "perfume" mixture.

About the moose: Citizens Science continues by gathering samples from hunters. DNA and heavy metals are monitored of the moose.

The application of Interreg Aurora was rejected (NIBIO, FeFo, LUKE, Metsähallitus).

Moose migration counting from Russia 102 moose were discovered in winter 2023/24

There is a Moose project (Master student) to find methods to monitor moose by using camera-trapping, scat counting and genetic identification. To be continued also this year with cameras (23 cameras around Svanvik area). There are still many ideas on future moose projects.

NIBIO has an interest to cooperation with Finland about the moose.

2 female wolfs were discovered in Pasvik.

PAN- Kolartic closeup -meeting 5.9.2024: highlighted that good cooperation is important

PNC - Phenology of North Calotte -program is held between Norway and Finland for the 2nd time in September 2024 – due to war Russia is no longer a partner, so Finland has been called to participate in this program.

4. Current situation in cross-border cooperation: Issues for discussion and information:

- **EUROPARC** -cooperation: re-evaluation application for EUROPARC 2025. Discussion about the suggestions in re-evaluation report 2018



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEÄHCIRÄDEHUS

- Deadline for re-evaluation 15.11.2024
- Re-evaluation every 5th year; This term was extended by 2 years, due to the war in Ukraine
- Costs about 2.000€ for the application + on-site costs of the evaluator's visit
- Advisory boards agreed on the suggestion of procedure
- Suggestion 1 for Finland: Management plan for Lake Inari: Possibility for a short summary of existing reports
- Suggestion 2 for Finland: Invitation of Sámi people representative to the advisory board still under process, due to organization and staff changes within Metsähallitus
 - Rolf's comment: Skolt Sámi are represented in Pasvik-NP advisory board
- New agreement for bilateral cooperation.
 - Bilateral between Norway and Finland:
 - New agreement needed and to be made after the re-evaluation has been accepted.
 - New agreement terms to be checked with juristic section (MH)
 - Agreed that the working group will make a draft for the agreement, which will be ratified by the advisory board if the re-evaluation is accepted.
 - Official name for cooperation
 - New name: Pasvik-Inari Transboundary Area
 - Logo
 - To be worked on after accepted re-evaluation
 - Working group will suggest the process to the Advisory board and make preparations in spring 2025.
- Involvement of the youth in Pasvik-Inari cooperation.
 - Kirsi informed about the Youth4Cooperation Ambassadors
 - Rather active exchange between P-I and youth representatives than only inviting them once a year to AB-meeting
 - Ask about existing cooperation and how they would like to be involved
 - Inspire young people to choose educations / jobs in nature linked fields
 - Work shadowing for youngsters
 - What is inspiring? Meeting also a larger audience
 - Youth councils are offering possibilities
 - **Finding ways of contact and involvement on the national level first.**

5. Report from the working group on implementation of the work in 2024:

- Management and cooperation
- Monitoring

- Enlightenment and dissemination of information activities
- Other activities from the action plan
- Details in Annex 1

6. Targets for 2025, Suggestion from the Working Group:

- Management and cooperation
 - Staff exchange -> invitations in the end of 2024, exchange itself possibly in March/April 2025
 - Annual meetings will be held: WG and Advisory board
 - Re-evaluation and site visit, beginning of June 2025
- Monitoring:
 - Bird registrations, ringing and visitor counting

c. Environmental enlightenment and dissemination

d. EUROPARC cooperation

e. Implementing CLAP and other Interreg Aurora projects in the Pasvik-Inari area

→ Advisory Board approves the suggested activities and targets mentioned above

7. Workshop, issues for the re-evaluation application

- SWOT
- Advantages and disadvantages of the transboundary cooperation

8. Other issues

- Spirit of Inari 2024 -seminar in Inari: The Future of Regenerative Tourism 31st October, also live streaming possibility for participating. On live streaming there is no possibility for commenting or discussion but to follow it is possible.
<https://www.inari.fi/fi/tapahtumakalenteri/spirit-of-inari-2024-the-future-of-regenerative-tourism.html>

9. Next meeting in Norway 2025

- 1 face-to-face meeting connected to the on-site evaluation visit in June 2025
- Advisory board meeting in the end of August 2025 in Norway
-

10. Closing of the meeting at 14.08.

Date:

Date:

Date:



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEAHČIIRÁÐDEHUS

11.2.25

13.02.25

30.1.2025

Lisa B. Helgason

Lisa Bjørnsdatter Helgason
County Governor
of Troms and Finnmark

Kurt Wikan

Kurt Wikan
Øvre Pasvik National Park
Board

Riina Tervo

Riina Tervo
Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife
Finland



Statsforvalteren i Troms og Finnmark
County Governor of Troms and Finnmark



Øvre Pasvik
nasjonalpark



METSÄHALLITUS
FORSTSTYRELSEN
MEHCIRÄÖDEHUS