



Kolarctic ENPI CBC – Programme 2007-2013

Action Plan **2011**

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1. Background to the Programme

The Kolarctic ENPI CBC 2007-2013 Programme continues and promotes cross-border cooperation between the countries in the North Calotte and northwest Russia. The Programme is funded by the European Union from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, and funding shall be granted to joint projects operating in line with the strategy and priorities jointly agreed by the Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Russian partners.

The overall aim of the Programme is to reduce the periphery of the countries' border regions and problems related to the periphery as well as to promote multilateral cross-border cooperation. The Programme aims to help the regions within the Programme area to develop their cross-border economic, social and environmental potential, which shall be achieved by supporting innovative cross-border activities, accessibility, and the sustainable development of natural resources, communities and cultural heritage

The Programme is divided into three priorities that recognize regional strengths and problems. These priorities are:

1. Economic and social development
2. Common challenges
3. People-to-people cooperation and identity building

The purpose of the Joint Development Strategy of the Kolarctic ENPI CBC 2007-2013 Programme is to manage the Programme in close partnership with all participating regions and to select and implement activities so that they take place equally between all regions, authorities, actors and people. The implementation of the strategy shall take into account the principals of EU regulations concerning partnership, equality, sustainable development and the information society.

The fundamental requirement for action is the additional role of the Programme when compared to national strategies and support within the Programme area. The common focus of any action carried out with the support of the Kolarctic ENPI Programme is on internationalisation and cross-border cooperation within the implementation of the priorities. The strategically important themes for each year as well as project selection criteria will be reflected in the annual plans and guidelines for calls for proposals. The annual plans shall also specify the financing resources available for each call for proposals.

The indicative allocation of Community funding in the ENPI CBC Strategy Paper 2007-2013 to the Kolarctic ENPI CBC Programme is € 28.241 million for the years 2007-2013.

The implementation of the Programme is based on the *Commission Regulation (EC) No 951/2007 of 9 August 2007 laying down implementing rules for cross-border cooperation programmes financed under Regulation 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council*. The management of the Programme is based on full equality and partnership between the participating countries, which is reflected in the composition and designation of the programme bodies and the selection of consensual decision-making as a general rule. The Programme shall be implemented through shared management by the Joint Managing Authority (the Regional Council of Lapland) located in Rovaniemi (Finland).

Russian Federation and the European Commission concluded the Financing Agreement concerning the Kolarctic ENPI CBC Programme in Stockholm on November 18th 2009. The Agreement concerns the financing and implementation of the Kolarctic ENPI CBC Programme.

The JMA is responsible for managing and implementing the joint operational programme in accordance with the principle of sound technical and financial management. It shall also help Programme Committees in their work. The Programme also has Branch Offices in Murmansk, Luleå and Vadsø, all of which shall ensure close contact between the Programme and the coordinating bodies in the Programme area. The Branch Offices shall also help the JMA operational unit with the dissemination of information to potential beneficiaries.

As a rule, Calls for Proposals shall be launched twice a year. Guidelines shall be published for each call separately. The guidelines shall include two parts: the first describing the operational frame, content, objectives and available resources of the call and the second dealing with practical information about the process of applying for funding.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to form a strategic framework to the activities implemented under the Programme and to give information about the emphasis set to the activities during the time-frame. The suitability of the planned activities in a financing application is one aspect of assessment within the assessment process.

The Joint Monitoring Committee of the Kolarctic ENPI CBC –Programme has approved this Action Plan 2011 in its meeting 16th October 2010.

2. Focus set on the Programme priorities for the year 2011

The focuses set on the Programme are presented underneath according to the operative aims of the priorities defined in the Programme document. The Northern Dimension framework is the background framework in the implementation of the Programme and connections to its priorities will be strengthened.

2.1. Economic and social development

Aim: Cross-border networks and business relations are established between SME's

Activities supporting sustainable business development within economically growing businesses in cross-border cooperation are rising in importance.

The emphasis is put to overall development of cross-border SME entrepreneurship and cooperation between different fields of economy with a target to develop existing and create new businesses. The focus of activities is on female entrepreneurs and young people.

Tourism is important for the whole Programme area, though development of tourism industry is in different stages when comparing areas with each other. Development of regional strategies and products is a matter of every region, but within the Kolarctic ENPI Programme activities could be implemented to develop the attractiveness of the whole region and to bring it visible. It is important to gain from other regions' experiences, to build and to market joint products, to build competence and improve quality of the products and of the services.

Natural resources are valuable for the economy in the Programme area. Their utilization is an important fundament for economic and social development and therefore it is important to develop further the cooperation within this field in the Programme area. The programme supports to increase opportunities for small and medium sized enterprises to do business in the Barents Region through an eco-efficient economy.

Construction, installation work and development of technology connected to mining and other industries have a lot of potential for co-operation and sub-contracting within the Programme area during the coming years. Networking of enterprises with a target to enable subcontracting agreements and to find joint solutions for common problems hindering this co-operation is one of the priorities.

Fisheries and fish industry is an important fundament for traditional economy at the coast. Examples of project cooperation within fishery and fish industry are in general to improve the dialog between fishery authorities on both side of the border, and also problems connected to deliverances of sea products, both to harbours and across borders.

Aim: Ongoing communication and joint educational planning between businesses and education in the fields of the required competences

Aim: Movement of the labour force across the borders is facilitated

As a consequence of the financial crisis a lot of jobs are under a thread to vanish and the Programme area might be losing population because of that. Efforts should be done to make the movement of labour within the Programme area easier and to reduce obstacles to mobility. It is also important to increase knowledge about regional labour markets and to develop practises and regulations between the

participating countries. Different kinds of expertise is needed in different areas, some fields of economy are still lacking skilled labour and activities should be done to educate new professionals around the Programme area to fill the regional needs.

Activities such as education of young specialists and professionals, student exchange, working practise exchange, anticipation of educational and labour needs, joint activities within vocational training and working life and development of work-related immigration are seen to be important.

Aim: SME's and authorities have better understanding of cross-border business and working opportunities

Implementation of education and research activities in different fields are needed in order to promote cross border entrepreneurship and to increase entrepreneurs' and their personnel's competence related to it. Good experiences have been gained, for example, from the safety issues which bring the importance of the quality of services into knowledge. Also it is important to develop new and existing internationalisation services for the entrepreneurs to support planned CBC activities.

Aim: Cross-border transport, logistics and communication systems are developed to respond to the needs of the Programme area in line with sustainable development

Lack of public transport connections within the Programme area is an obstacle which every organisation and person involved in cross border cooperation are facing. Development of transport infrastructure and logistics is also strongly connected to the economic development and thus is also one of the themes within the year 2011. Ongoing activities in cooperation of the harbours and in development of new railway and flight connections and within overall logistics are to be continued.

Aim: Energy cooperation, the use of renewable energy sources and active energy saving have risen

The programme acknowledges the targets set by the EU to diminish the energy consumption. The ENPI CBC supports activities in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The programme also stress the importance to build networks for and raise awareness of sustainable production and consumption in the Barents region.

Aim: Businesses enhancing the cultures of the indigenous people are supported

Within economic and social development there is also a need to develop the livelihoods of the indigenous people and their connection to the supporting economies. As a good example of this is to connect reindeer husbandry and tourism in cooperation with the indigenous people and tourism industry. Special features of Sami and Nenets districts bring an added value to the Programme area and it should be brought visible.

Aim: Public and private services are cooperating for the benefit of the inhabitants

Aim: Municipalities are cooperating and exchanging best practices

Within the cooperation of regions and municipalities it is important to keep the focus in the development of joint services and local administration and in the quality of public management in order to keep up the service structure and quality in these sparsely populated areas. Local, twin-city cooperation has turn out to be a good way to build long-lasting cooperation, which can easily be spread to cover also other fields of cooperation. Also overall cooperation and interaction between the administrations within the countries in the Programme area are of vital importance.

2.2. Common challenges

Aim: Local and regional authorities have common plans, agreements and/ or activities for multilateral cooperation in common challenges

As important as raising the overall knowledge, it is also important to organise joint education for authorities concerning the common challenges in order to reach common understanding about them. For example to standardise interpretation and adjustment of the EU directives is seen needed.

Aim: Public awareness about the common challenges has risen

Aim: Environmental knowledge has risen

Within all sectors of Common challenges (environment and nature, health, security and management of border issues) it is important to increase the level of knowledge among people living in the Programme area. Dissemination of information and best practises on common challenges can effectively be done in cooperation with authorities and other organisations. Important fields of activities in spreading the information are, for example, environmental threads, sustainability, health and safety issues and traffic behaviour.

In regard to the issue activities can be implemented to support of the overall preparedness for and prevention of common challenges. Support to the joint activities, such as emergency preparedness and protection against cold climate, can be directed to the projects as well as support to the Proactive and prevention work against, for example, drug abuse, threads for health and welfare and social exclusion especially within the youth.

Aim: Activities in environmental and nature protection have been implemented,

Aim: Adaptation to climate change has progressed

Climate change will have a profound ecological consequences in the program area, with effects on human health, biota, infrastructure and economic activity like sea and land transport, forestry, fisheries, hunting and reindeer husbandry. The programme focus are set on activities that are adressing to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Equally important issue is the protection of the environment and nature.

Aim 6: Border crossing authorities are cooperating multilaterally to harmonise and to simplify procedures

Border crossing is an everyday experience for people, who are involved in CBC activities. Reinforcement of the cooperation of the border authorities, police and customs can be, on its part, a good way to shorten the time used for border crossing. This cooperation can include, for example, language and culture training, exchange of best practises and harmonisation of procedures and regulations.

2.3. People to people co-operation and identity building

Aim: Common cultural/ sports events and meeting places bring people together from the Programme area

Strengthening the social and cultural cooperation between people living in the Programme area is an important means in strengthening the northern identity and in promoting positive attitudes for neighbouring countries. Activities like joint cultural happenings, studies of cultures and languages, meetings in different forums between young people would get us closer to the target.

Aim: Common information is published in the public media

Existence of common, up to date information from the Programme area is the overall base for cooperation. Activities are needed to strengthen the cross border cooperation within media and thus give possibilities to increase the production and release of joint information. At the same time with the information production it is also important to develop the existing channels to spread the common information for example thru new technology in media.

Aim: Cooperation and communication is increased

Aim: Cooperation between cultural institutions is increased

A natural and profitable way to increase CBC within people is to create and implement exchange programmes, for example within education and culture, where people can get familiar with other regions and, especially, with people from the other regions and countries. It is also important to develop and market new joint educational packages and to support overall cooperation in the field of education and culture within the Programme area.

Joint research activities are also needed to raise the knowledge about the northern area and its people. Information is needed for example about the social influence of the climate change and of the state of the environment.

In order for the NGO's to take actively part to the implementation of the Programme, steps can be taken to strengthen the competence of societies, foundations and communities to participate in CBC activities. NGO's are also in important position when we are talking about their role in service production within the area, the development of which can also be included into the Programme activities.

Aim: Promotion of the cultural diversity is supported

Cultural diversity in the Programme area is wide and activities to strengthen it are to be taken. These activities can include, for example, support for maintaining cultural heritage and development of traditional handicrafts. Also, development of the livelihoods of indigenous cultures and languages is supported.

3. Call for Proposals

The objective for the Programme period is to have at least two calls each year after the Financing Agreement is signed.

3.1. Timetable for the calls for proposals 2011

As a rule, Calls for Proposals will be launched during the first and the last quarter of the year. During 2011 three Calls for Proposals will be launched.

Indicative timetable for the Calls for Proposals:

| Call is opened | Call is closed | Opening session | RAG meetings | JSC | JMC |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 14.03.2011* | 13.06.2011* | 15.06.2011* | week 35, 36/2011* | week 39/2011* | Week 42/2011* |

* The timetable of the 2nd Call has been settled in March 2011

3.2. Available financing

II Call for proposals 14.03.2011 – 13.06.2011

Combined Programme Financing (EU+Finland+Russia) € 11 725 000 (option for extra € 3,5 million)

Norwegian equivalent financing € 1 900 000

Other national Co-financing from participating countries (Sweden+ Norway) € 3 575 000

III Call for proposals

Timetable and amount of financing will be confirmed on JMC meeting 2011

IV Call for proposals

Timetable and financing will be confirmed on JMC meeting 2011

All the remaining financing from the previous Calls will be added to the amounts available in the next Call.