

The State of Play from Finland



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland

Sustainable Arctic Travel Destination Programme



- **Finland's Strategy for the Arctic Region**
 - published in 2013, updated in 2016
 - to achieve growth and competitiveness in tourism industry, includes also a **programme to enhance, develop and promote sustainable tourism**
- **Sustainable Arctic Travel Destination Programme 2018-2019**
 - to enhance, develop and promote Finland as **"Sustainable Finland"**.
 - Programme follows the definition provided by UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) : *"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"*.
- The implementation is done by Visit Finland (Visit Finland works to develop Finland's travel image and helps Finnish travel companies to internationalize, develop, sell and market high-quality travel products) and steered by Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

- The **goals of the programme** are:
 - to develop sustainability of tourism destinations and businesses
 - to promote Finland as a responsible tourism destination and country
 - to increase the number of overnights in sustainable tourism businesses.
- The **measures of the programme** include, for instance
 - studies of practices of Finnish tourism businesses and international sales channels for sustainable travel services,
 - communication campaigns for tourism businesses (to motivate businesses to adapt the responsible practices of doing business), tour operators (information about Finland as sustainable tourism destination) and travelers (to motivate and educate travelers to act responsibly),
 - creating and piloting a **Sustainable Finland label** (e.g. approx. 780 companies have some kind of an environmental certification label now),
 - organizing media trips to sustainable tourism destinations/businesses and small scale marketing campaigns with in social media.



Project for Responsible Tourism Practices with Sámi Culture in the Arctic and Barents Region (*work title*)



- **The goals are:**
 - **to discuss** together with Sámi in the Barents region **about the responsible ways to see Sámi cultural heritage as an inspiration to enhance tourism business** in the Arctic region
 - **to explore practices and measures** of, as well as strengths and challenges **in tourism** based on collective Sámi culture.
- The project is accepted to be funded by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the project is coordinated by Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland.
- The budget of the project is approx. 90 000 euros. The second phase of project planning is started: more discussions with actors and bodies involved are executed and the detailed project plan is provided during May.
- The planned project implementation is August 2018 - June 2019.

Tourism Quality and Sustainability Programmes, Labels and Criteria in the Barents Region



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Recommendations and steps



1. *to create and launch a Nordic umbrella label*

Steps

1. Approve the used certifications under the umbrella label

- Agree on minimum criteria
- Agree on certifications that are approved under the umbrella label

2. Design a common Nordic umbrella label

- Agree on a logo / word to be used for the umbrella label

3. Introducing the common Nordic umbrella label

- Communication plan
- Agree on schedule to introduce the umbrella label

4. Monitor the use of common Nordic umbrella label

- Monitor the use of common umbrella label
- When necessary choose other certifications under the umbrella label

2. to explain the significance of Nordic certifications and criteria as well as promoting their awareness and introduction in Russia



Steps

1. More explicit situation analysis in the target area (survey)

- **Research the companies' objectives and wishes to create an umbrella certificate.**

2. Interviews with tourism information centres and regional administration

- **Method to survey the need for a common and national certification in the Barents region.**
- **Negotiations with Russian Federal Agency for Tourism on the needs and possibilities concerning tourism sustainability and quality and their certifications in the Barents region**

3. Draw up an implementation/communications plan (what, to whom, how and when)

- **Draw up a communication plan on the common certification and its implementation together with regional administration and tourism industry representatives**

Separate funding will be applied for the (e.g. EU)

3. to recognize, implement and inform of common measures in the Barents region



Step

1. JWGT – monitors and directs the implementation

- **Participation in JWGT meetings and agreement on measures**

2. Nordic measures are implemented in Russia where applicable

- **Negotiations with Russian representatives for example on the application of the Nordic umbrella label in Russia.**

3. Increase in general awareness through induction and training

- **Briefings, seminars, research papers, website for certificate administrator.**



Questions for discussion

- **What plans do different countries have according the sustainability labels?**

For instance, Finland is considering the possibility to launch "Sustainable Finland" label; it might follow the example of "Green Travel" label in Norway

- **Could Norwegian label be broden to other Barents Region countries as well?**

