

GREEN BELT OF FENNOSCANDIA

Report on the preparatory workshops

Preparatory workshop / Metsähallitus Tikkurila 24.4.2014
Northern Sub-Region / Inari 15.-16.5.2014
South-East Finland Sub-Region / Lappeenranta 19.5.2014
North Karelia and Ostrobothnia Sub-Region / Joensuu 2.6.2014
Karelian Republic Sub-Region / Petrozavodsk 3.-4.6.2014

13.6.2014

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1. Background

Four sub-regional workshops on development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF) were held during May –June 2014 in Inari, Lappeenranta, Joensuu and Petrozavodsk to discuss GBF's sub-regional development needs, opportunities, priorities as well as to elaborate initial priority actions. Before the sub-regional workshops, a preparatory workshop for elaborating an initial vision and target setting for 2020 was organized at Metsähallitus in Tikkurila.

The workshop participants included representatives of regional authorities, municipalities, research institutions, private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Ministry of the Environment of Finland. The participants are presented in Annex A.

Three working sessions were held in each sub-regional workshop:

- 1) Identification of development opportunities based on GBF
- 2) Elaboration of the GBF vision and targets for 2020
- 3) Identification of high priority actions.

The detailed results of the workshops are presented in the annexes B-E.

2. GBF Vision and Concept

The initial GBF vision and concept statement prepared in the Tikkurila workshop was discussed in all workshops, and was modified as presented below. This initial statement will be subject to further development by the trilateral working group in autumn 2014.

Green Belt of Fennoscandia - Vision for the future

The Green Belt of Fennoscandia is a framework for cooperative actions between Finland, Russia and Norway for promoting environmental sustainability and protection of biodiversity, economic growth, and social well-being generated by the region's unique nature and cultural heritage.

The concept of the GBF network

The core of the Green Belt is formed by a representative network of nature protection areas and buffer zones that ensure both north-south and east-west ecological corridors for migration and protection of species. It is a platform for trilateral biodiversity and climate change research and awareness raising, and it provides a framework for development of sustainable livelihoods and social well-being in the region. The rich cultural heritage of the region is another base factor for GBF development.

GBF development is implemented through a cooperative network of institutions, business community, non-governmental organizations and communities, with special focus on participatory cross-border processes. GBF forms also a platform for promoting environmental sustainability in spatial planning and in coordination of development processes in the area. Increasing environmental awareness at all levels is a fundamental element in all GBF-related development. Through development of a clear brand, GBF provides a framework for sustainable economic development, especially for tourism and related services, forestry, and clean tech.

As a part of the wider European Green Belt, GBF forms also a mechanism for wider European cooperation in research, nature protection and economic and social development.

3. Key findings and recommendations of the sub-regional workshops

The detailed findings and proposals of the working sessions are presented in annexes B-E. The key issues are highlighted below:

3.1 Opportunities

Development of the GBF may provide several opportunities to the protection of biodiversity, economic and regional development as well as for social and cultural development. The key opportunities as identified in the workshops are presented in the following:

Protection of biodiversity

- GBF provides a platform to strengthen biodiversity considerations in spatial planning (regional plans, buffer zones, connectivity / ecological corridors)
- GBF may be a platform for wider north-south and east-west research as well as for monitoring of the impacts of the climate change
- GBF may be a platform for research on species and their spatial distribution and migration, including analyses of differences and their causes
- GBF may be a mechanism for strengthening of protection area networks: establishment of protection areas (already planned PAs), further development of twin parks, including development of existing ones and match making with new twin parks. GBF could facilitate twin park development with a target that all parks within the GBF region would belong to some twin park arrangement.
- GBF may also become a framework for voluntary protection (e.g. Metso programme) for improved connectivity
- If GBF is clearly integrated into development policies and programmes, it may function as a tool for targeted funding for development and research projects/processes
- GBF provides a framework for wider and more holistic research cooperation covering three countries or (Fi-Ru-No)
- GBF may become a framework for improving the sustainability of use of nature resources, especially regarding forestry
- GBF provides a platform for strengthened cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs and associations) which may provide important new opportunities for their influence

Economic development

- GBF brand may provide possibilities for several business sectors through new business opportunities, wider marketing and image factor (tourism, local production, sustainable forestry, clean tech, etc.)
- GBF provides a strong platform and framework for development of nature tourism (including elements of culture) whereby development of new tourism products and networks may be done under the GBF brand
- GBF provides also a platform for improving local businesses and traditional livelihoods (e.g. reindeer herding, processing of berries and mushrooms, etc.): products from the clean nature and culture of the GBF region
- If main industries become committed partners, GBF may improve their image through more sustainable businesses. However, this requires that strict criteria must be set for the businesses as otherwise the GBF brand may be damaged.

- GBF may function as a tool for environmental awareness raising among enterprises
- GBF (or its sub-region) could become a model area for clean tech (e.g. water protection)
- GBF may be used as a lobby factor for improving cross-border access (e.g. simplified visa procedures, improved access to border areas)

Social and cultural development

- GBF may be a platform for collecting and strengthening common cultural heritage: empowerment of local identities ("northern pride"), highlighting the role of nature in the local cultures
- GBF-related tourism and other businesses may provide some additional opportunities for local livelihoods (employment, customers, networks, infrastructure)
- GBF may be a mechanism for improved cooperation and exchange between communities, especially in cross-border cooperation
- GBF provides an agenda for environmental awareness raising and education on ecological responsibility (especially youth but also general public and specific groups)

3.2 Comments on the initial GBF vision and concept

The initial vision and concept of GBF prepared in the preparatory workshop at Metsähallitus on 24.4.2014 was discussed in the sub-regional workshops and the following key comments were given. The vision and concept statement presented in chapter 2 already incorporates most of the comments.

- GBF can function as a mechanism for active cross-border cooperation at all levels and provide a platform for networking
- High environmental awareness important part of the vision
- Fundamental base of the GBF: nature + cultural heritage
- Focus on ecological sustainability and how it provides opportunities for economy and social development
- GBF should promote north–south and east–west corridors
- Biodiversity development should be done in a way that improves also well-being
- Linkage with the European GB should be defined
- Open concept or area with clear borders? Definition of the GBF area is important in Russia while flexibility of the scope is important in Finland (ecosystem boundaries ≠ administrative boundaries ≠ activity boundaries)

3.3 Targets 2020 and regional specifics

The initial GBF-level targets developed in the 24.4.2014 workshop were discussed from the sub-region's point of view in the workshops. The main comments are highlighted below (annex C includes specific comments of all workshops).

Biodiversity and protection issues

- Designation/establishment of already planned and pending PAs important (especially Ladoga Skerries and Ingermanlandsky National Parks)
- Key features (critical areas, hot spots, corridors and buffer zones, PAs, geology, etc.) need to be identified and mapped for future protection and spatial planning; GIS data base should be developed and made widely available
- A system for impact monitoring of climate change need to be developed

- Water courses are important parts of the GBF especially in the southern sub-region; buffer zones for water bodies need to be developed
- Twin park cooperation could cover all PAs (e.g. also Lake region parks)
- Strong linkages with the European GB would provide several opportunities (protection, tourism, research)
- Cooperation with NGOs (associations) is important and may provide additional resources and mechanisms for conflict resolution

Economic and regional development

- Each sub-region has its specific touristic attractions. GBF should provide a brand for development of nature/culture tourism under the GBF umbrella; GBF-region wide development and marketing based on specific uniqueness of each sub-region.
- GBF needs to be integrated to the development and spatial plans at all levels
- Cross-border access needs to be eased; active lobbying needed for simplified border formalities and improved access to border areas (e.g. nature tourism in the border areas of the PAs)
- A concept should be developed for ecosystem services that could provide income for local communities/entrepreneurs
- Should the scope of GBF include also clean tech? If yes, S-E Finland could be a model region for clean tech under the GBF umbrella; e.g. focusing on clean water
- Specific targeting of funding is needed for GBF-based business development

Social and cultural development

- Opportunities to create local income should be considered in all GBF actions
- Cultural heritage should be combined with nature issues, e.g. mapping of the cultural heritage sites, tourism development combining nature and culture
- GBF should be used as a mechanism to empower local communities (self esteem through strengthened identity)
- GBF should be used as a platform for environmental awareness raising and education

Development of research

- Holistic analyses of connectivity (e.g. Gap analysis) is needed (north-south and east-west; cross-border and over administrative borders within the countries)
- GBF should be used for targeting funding; essential to ensure that GBF is included in research and development programs and funding instruments
- Coordination of research should be improved under the GBF umbrella; multisectoral research should be initiated on GBF-topics
- Scientific tourism could be developed as a new service

Institutional development

- GBF brand provides a platform for networking at all levels
- Comprehensive web-based information needed on stakeholders (stakeholder descriptions, roles in the GBF, contact information)
- Sharing of best practices for replication should be active (regular GBF workshops/conferences, shared web information including publishing of reports and other publications)
- Issue of boundaries:
 - Clear boundaries important in the Russian side; flexible approach more relevant in the Finnish side

- Possible solution: Clear nature boundaries, flexible boundaries for development of services and businesses
- Participation in GBF should include all stakeholders; platforms should be developed also for participation of businesses, NGOs /associations and local communities

3.4 Priority actions

Tentative ideas on priority development needs and actions were elaborated as the last step of the workshop processes. The key proposals are as follows:

- Study on the European GB should be conducted soonest possible for identifying possibilities for wider European networking and compiling best practices: process and present situation of the development of the European GB, possible linkages, relevant best practices
- It must be ensured that GBF is integrated to relevant development programs and funding instruments (regional and sectoral development programs and funding instruments, research funding, etc.)
- Branding process for the GBF should be started soon after preparation of the GBF program
- Preparation of the GBF implementation program for 2015-2020 (vision and strategy, joint processes, portfolio of thematic and sub-regional projects, institutional arrangements) should be drafted during 2014
- Founding of already planned PAs should be speeded up
- Inventory and mapping of key GBF sites as well as results of already implemented projects/processes should be started soon and a GBF data bank needs to be established.
- Analyses of connectivity (critical locations, corridors and buffer zones) the key research priority. It is essential for preparation of an action plan for improved connectivity
- Development of the joint GBF monitoring program is a priority after the mappings and connectivity analysis

Annex A: Participants of the preparatory GBF workshops

Inari, 15.-16.5.2014

12 persons

Paul Eric	Aspholm	Bioforsk
Pertti	Itkonen	Metsähallitus
Tiia	Kalske	Office of the Finnmark County Governor
Venla	Karkola	Golden Geopark of Lapland -project, Inari Municipal Business and Development
Vesa	Luhta	Suomen luonnonsuojeluliitto ry
Päivi	Lundvall	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Lapland
Tarja	Manninen	Inari-Saariselkä Tourism Ltd
Bjorn Arne	Naess	
Anni-Helena	Ruotsala	Saami Parliament
Riina	Tervo	Metsähallitus, Natural Heritage Services of Lapland
Marina	Trusova	Pasvik State Nature Reserve, Russia
Heli	Viiri	Finnish Forest Centre

Lappeenranta, 19.5.2014

13 persons

Tuula	Dahlman	MTK-Kaakkois-Suomi
Jukka	Halonen	Metsäteollisuus ry
Frank	Hering	Kymenlaakson liitto
Arto	Hämäläinen	Etelä-Karjalan liitto
Eeva	Jernström	Lappeenrannan University of Technology
Anssi	Kemppinen	Uutisvuoksi
Toomas	Lybeck	Cursor Oy
Heli	Ojala	Kotkan kaupunki/ympäristökeskus
Kirsi	Pohjankoski	Kehittämisyhdistys Sepra ry
Sanna	Poutamo	Etelä-Savon maakuntaliitto
Aune	Ritola-Grahn	Parikkalan kunta
Tuula	Tanska	Kaakkois-Suomen ELY-keskus
Mikko	Tiira	Metsähallitus/luontopalvelut

Joensuu, 2.6.2014

21 persons

Sari	Alatossava	Metsähallitus, Pohjanmaan luontopalvelut
Darja	Flogny	Metsähallitus
Matti	Fritsch	Itä-Suomen yliopisto
Matti	Hovi	Metsähallitus, Pohjanmaan luontopalvelut
Teemu	Huikuri	Pohjois-Karjalan maakuntaliitto
Kerttu	Härkönen	Metsähallitus
Jyrki	Haataja	Suomen metsäkeskus, julkiset palvelut, Kainuu
Tuomas	Kallio	Pohjois-Pohjanmaan liitto
Marja	Kolström	Itä-Suomen yliopisto
Henna	Konu	Itä-Suomen yliopisto

Jukka	Korhonen	Suomussalmen kunta
Eugene	Lopatin	Itä Suomen Yliopisto
Hannu	Luotonen	Pohjois-Karjalan ELY-keskus
Tiina	Moisala	Pohjois-Karjalan maakuntaliitto
Liisa	Mononen	P-K Biosfäärialue ohjausryhmä
Eero	Oura	Joensuun Latu
Vilho	Pasanen	MTK - Pohjois-Karjala
Janna	Puumalainen	Joensuun kaupunki
Vesa	Rantanen	Kuhmon kaupunki
Asko	Saarelainen	Lieksan kaupunki/kansalaisopisto
Maarit	Vainio	Kainuun ELY-keskus

Petrozavodsk, 3.6.2014

19 persons

Anastasia V.	Vasileva
A. N.	Gromtsev
A. M.	Kryshen
O. L.	Kuznetsov
N. V.	Mikhailova
J. V.	Savelev
A. F.	Titov
Olga N.	Bahmet
Aleksei V.	Kravchenko
Vladimir V.	Belkin
Ivan V.	Kipruhin
Denis J.	Maksimov
Sergei V.	Tarkhov
Sergei A.	Pozdnyakov
Boris J.	Loskutov
Tamara A.	Putrolajnen
Nikolai N.	Bigun
Elena V.	Karhu
Dmitri V.	Bazegski

Total amount of participants:

65

Annex B: Opportunities provided by the GBF

Green Belt of Fennoscandia – Opportunities for Development

Four sub-regional workshops on development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF) were held during May –June 2014 in Inari, Lappeenranta, Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. Three working sessions were held in each workshop: Identification of development opportunities based on GBF, elaboration of the GBF vision and targets for 2020, and identification of high priority actions.

Underneath are compiled the findings of the sessions on development opportunities.

Opportunities for the Northern sub-region (Norway, Lapland, Kola peninsula)		
Issue	Opportunities	Who may benefit
Protection of biodiversity	Enhancing carbon storage capacity	
	GBF provides a framework for wider protected area network and network of ecological corridors (also cross-border)	
	GBF may strengthen the protection status of some areas	
	Provides a platform for major environmental projects (research, protection areas and/or management approaches), framework for targeted funding	
	GBF-related projects may provide possibilities for new innovative GBF-related green products	
Regional / economic development	Nature tourism: tourism for four seasons covering three countries: new products, networks, services, side-services, local handicrafts, etc.	Tourism companies, tourists, local economies linked with tourism (e.g. small-scale artisans)
	Green Belt is a European concept => some potential tourists already know it and may be interested to visit also GBF	
	Main new potential in the Russian side (Finland already has a long-term history for Lapland tourism); Finnish model could be a model for tourism dev in Russia => dev of wider joint packages	
	When status of GBF is strengthened => framework for branding of nature tourism	
	Companies focusing on sustainable (green) production and business may benefit from the GBF brand; requires that businesses really are sustainable as otherwise the damage to the GBF brand is serious; both small-scale and larger scale	Green business companies
	Possibility for cross-border tourism packages	Tourist and companies
	Strengthening of the sustainability of forestry through clearer allocations of protected areas and buffer zones. =>	Forestry companies emphasising sustainable forestry
	GBF may be used as a platform to discuss forestry mgt practices with different stakeholders though improved local awareness	Environmental NGOs and local people
	GBF provides a possibility for environmental awareness raising among companies	Companies using nature resources
	GBF provides a framework for project funding for developing green business and services (nature- and local production based products)	Local green businesses
Possibilities for carbon trade (through storage)????		

	GBF-related business development provides opportunities for local livelihood development (jobs, possibilities for artisans, etc.)	Local businesses
	Improving the sustainability of reindeer herding	Reindeer herders
	Provides a platform for cross-border land-use planning (corridors)	All
Social development	School networks and cooperation: monitoring database of phenological information and a common ecological vision	Pupils, teachers, local communities
	Attractive Arctic: joins forces (cooperation) and answers to global demand by improving attractiveness of the Arctic	Local communities, customers
	GBG is an opportunity to develop nature tourism which sustainably utilizes traditional knowledge and creates cooperative projects, e.g. cultural nature tourism + culture tourism (incl. hunting and fishing)	Local communities, traditional culture
	GBF may be a process for sustaining traditions and traditional livelihoods (e.g. through ecosystem services)	Local communities, traditional culture
	GBF may be a platform for inventory of common cultural heritage and specifics and for making it well-known	Local communities, traditional culture
	Brand for marketing locally produced goods, e.g. within tourism	Local communities, customers
	Framework for cooperation in sub-regions, within the whole GBF and with the European GB; mechanism for creating contacts	
	GBF may bring together cultural traditions (common cultural heritage) of the region	
	Possibility for combining all elements together (cultures, nature, history, ethno-biology)	

Opportunities for the South-East Finland, LenOblast and St. Petersburg sub-regio		
Issue	Opportunities	Who may benefit
Protection of biodiversity	Improvement of ecological corridors; improved connectivity, especially in the Finnish side, and strengthened east-west connectivity	All stakeholders
	Improved connectivity of water routes	
	Development of centers of knowledge for improving international competitiveness, linkages at national level	
	Strengthening of cooperation to combat alien species (e.g. giant hogweed)	
	Strengthening of the protection of threatened species (e.g. migrating fish)	
	GBF-network is a possibility to get resources for nature protection and green technology	Institutions, businesses, NGOs
	GBF may form a framework for research cooperation; possibilities for joint projects	Research institutions
	GBF may be a framework for sustainable forestry management; protection also in private land	
	GBF provides also a framework for joint development actions and new businesses (environmental services, clean tech)	
	GBF may be a platform for twin-park cooperation also in S-E	Repovesi, Linnansaari,

	Finland area	Kolovesi and Ladoga Skerries Eastern Gulf of Finland parks
	<p>GBF may be a mechanism for awareness raising and development of sustainable practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “All can participate in protection of environment” - Joint awareness raising projects - Best practices in sustainable forestry management - Promotion of Metso and improvement of Metso criteria for more effective implementation in the sub-region - Environmental issues of agriculture 	<p>Metso program and forest owners</p> <p>Environmental education institutions</p> <p>Various events in the region</p> <p>General public</p>
Regional / economic development	<p>GBF provides a forum for cooperation between different stakeholders and sectors (business, administration, research, communities) => open joint discussion may decrease antagonism. County plans form basis for further GBF-cooperation. Clean Tech key sector in South-East Finland.</p>	Broad network of stakeholders
	<p>(Nature) tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBF provides a platform for cooperation of tourism operators (especially cross-border tourism), nature may be an element in development of wider/other tourism products and services (tourism targeting well-being, culture tourism, shopping tourism) • Region has several nature-related and unique attractions that form basis for nature tourism (lake districts, archipelago, arctica and birds, etc.) • Green belt = Blue belt in the S-E Finland and neighboring Russian regions: Lakes Saimaa and Ladoga, Eastern parts of the Gulf of Finland form the key nature attractions. • Interesting joint history and active culture life provide also basis for wider tourism development • High market potential due to vicinity of St. Petersburg and Helsinki metropolitan area. • Linkage to the European GB may provide new opportunities (tourism products, contacting potential tourists) • Development of free-time fishing has much potential • The sub-region has many possibilities for varied tourism services targeted at Finnish, Russian as well as other foreign tourists (interesting history, active culture, lake districts and archipelago) 	<p>Tourism operators and tourism-related other businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seal tours (norppa) • Eastern Gulf of Finland • Bird watching (e.g. Siikalahti) • Tourism-related SMEs? • Possible twin parks (• GBE ⇔ GBF <p>Nature parks (Repovesi, Linnansaari, Kolovesi, Ladoga)</p> <p>Travellers/tourists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and national • Russian • International <p>Educational institutions</p>
	<p>Other businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image of a green and clean environment may be an attraction-factor for various businesses to be located in the sub-region • For forestry companies, GBF does not provide any new innovations but may improve cooperation with other stakeholders and improve the image of forestry (if environmental sustainability criteria are met) 	All business sectors, specifically clean tech sector
	GBF may provide a framework for environment-targeted funding to businesses	Tourism industry and clean tech – enterprises

	Concept of “green business” provides opportunities for local products/services (local = green), especially when linked with the wider European GB concept.	Local SMEs
Social development	If border crossing is made simpler, social contacts and cooperation will be strengthened	Especially Parikkala-Syväoro crossing point and stakeholders using it
	Nature tourism and its side products/services – alone or combined with other types of tourism (e.g. culture/shopping/history tourism) – may provide possibilities for local livelihood development; branding needed	Local communities and tourism stakeholders
	Local culture (e.g. food) provides many opportunities for tourism development and linkages to GBF-concept	Micro enterprises
	GBF may strengthen the local identities (Karelia and orthodoxy, shared sea, cultures in the archipelago)	Local communities

Opportunities for the North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region		
Issue	Opportunities	Who may benefit
Protection of biodiversity	GBF may provide a base for protection of common species – a holistic and coordinated approach is needed to develop research, management and monitoring of endangered species (e.g. forest reindeer, big predators, migrating fish), including coordinated cooperation with different institutions and projects	All stakeholders involved in protection
	GBF a major possibility to develop connectivity (networks of PAs and buffer zones, north-south and east-west connectivity): critical actions to strengthen connectivity need to be defined	
	GBF provides a framework for cooperation and mainstreaming sustainability in regional, sectoral and spatial planning (network of PAs, forestry (zones with specific criteria), other activities and buffer zones, connectivity)). Working over administrative borders important as ecological and relevant activity borders differ from administrative borders.	
	Protection of biodiversity and landscapes essential for development of nature tourism	Tourism companies and tourists
	Bogs/mires in natural condition in the Russian side provide possibilities for research	Researchers
	GBF may be a framework for capacity building on sustainable management of nature resources and for conservation, including cross-border cooperation and sharing of experiences	Educational institutions
	GBF may be a framework for institutional cooperation in protection of biodiversity and pollution control	
	GBF provides a framework for wider/holistic research (e.g. impacts of climate change in the North)	Researchers
	Possibilities for reference areas related to cooperation within the EU’s water directive	
	GBF may be used as a mechanism for dealing with high value areas within the border zone for improved protection	
Importance of connectivity could be brought up through using		

	distribution and migration of species as examples (e.g. big predators, forest reindeer, migrating fish) => actions for improving connectivity	
Regional / economic development	GBF is a possibility for strengthening cross-border economic activities (nature/culture tourism, increased business cooperation); the GBF brand should be based especially on the GBF's cross-border nature.	Tourism and linked businesses
	Several potentials for development of nature/culture tourism based on clean nature and rich biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From routes to trails –project has already studied possibilities and concepts => concrete projects based on the identified opportunities • GBF should be used for lobbying easier border formalities which would facilitate cross-border tourism packages (ref. simplified procedures in cruises from Helsinki to St. Petersburg); improving access to the Russian PAs along the border very important for nature tourism development • Combining nature, culture and history provides possibilities for new tourism concepts and cooperation between business, communities, NGOs and culture organizations, e.g. combined cross-border culture and nature tourism packages, canoeing over borders, etc. => platform for wider networks • New possibilities for fishing and hunting tourism. Note! Wrong approach may also damage the GBF • Nature (forests, lakes) as a base for tourism targeting well-being • Local entrepreneurs may strengthen their business through the GBF brand and through wider networks • GBF-brand may be a platform for development of tourism for four seasons • Possibility for wider marketing within the European GB framework 	Tourism companies, other related businesses, tourists
	Accessibility a key problem in the Russian side => GBF may be used for targeted funding (tourism infrastructure) and for improving border crossing (making it easier)	As above
	If forestry industries develop a GBF brand (with improved sustainability of forestry management), it may provide image benefits	Forestry sector
	The uniqueness of the sub-region is based on boreal forests, some interesting species (big predators, seals, forest reindeer), bogs/mires, small-scale water courses and Karelian culture => the uniqueness may be marketed through connecting it with the wider GBF (and EGB) under the common brand.	Tourism operators, communities, tourists
	CoGBF could be used for lobbying for Improved and simplified border crossing	All stakeholders
	GBF could also be a framework for clean tech	Clean tech companies and institutions
Social development	GBF may provide mechanisms for improved transaction between people, NGOs and communities	Communities, NGOs, individuals in the GB

	Russian immigrants living in Finland could be used as resources in GBF-related developments	Russian immigrants
	GBF could be a framework for youth cooperation, e.g. international camps and exchange	Youth, NGOs, institutions
	All work within the GBF-concept should improve local identity and be based on local ownership => participatory approaches essential, mobilizing of local resources (including NGOs)	Communities, NGOs
	GBF is a possibility to present and protect/strengthen local cultural heritage; Karelian cultural heritage a key issue in this sub-region	Communities, cultural heritage institutions
	Possibilities to simplify and improve border crossing important also to local people (decreasing restrictions, improving infrastructure in the Russian side)	All stakeholders
	GBF could be used as a framework also for training and education (culture, nature, language, sharing of best practices)	Institutions, target groups of trainings
	Positive and well known brand may improve the image of the region	All stakeholders

Opportunities for the Karelian Republic sub-region		
Issue	Opportunities	Who may benefit
Protection of biodiversity	Presently a chain of protection areas with different kinds of classifications => Further development of the GBF a possibility to study the possibilities of minor scale corridors between the PAs	Protection agencies, all stakeholders
	Knowledge on core areas improving all the time; strong research capacity in Karelia => possibility for in-depth and holistic research along the whole border area (north-south and east-west)	Research institutions
	Forests classified into harvestable and protective; water side and other buffer areas important => GBF provides a possibility for improved sustainability of forestry	Protection agencies, forestry industries
	Ladoga skerries: GBF important for speeding up the protection process	Protection agencies
	Biosphere reserves: GB may strengthen the dvl of biosphere reserves and vice versa	Protection agencies
	Possibility to preserve game habitats	Protection agencies, hunters
	Northern part may be an important ground for climate change – related research (particularly tundra area very sensitive)	Research institutions
	GBG is a fund raising possibility for nature and climate change research	Research institutions
Regional / economic development	Possibility for establishment of a free economic zone	All stakeholders
	Dynamic sustainable dvl of local communities; especially through cross-border tourism	Tourism related businesses, local communities
	Comprehensive inventory of the territory; landscape based inventory => preparation of spatial dvl plans	Planners, all stakeholders
	Infrastructure development initiated by GBF needs (especially roads to improve accessibility)	All stakeholders
	Green technologies are needed to develop the GBF and GBF may	Green tech industries

	be a platform for green tech development	
	GBF may be used for lobbying of eased regulations for mobility and improved access	All stakeholders
Social development	Problem: A third of the territory is restricted area => GBF may be used for lobbying for improved access	Local communities, all stakeholders
	Area consists of scattered small settlements => GBF may create networks for cooperation	Local communities
	A possibility for initiative and active persons to push development ahead	Development actors
	Cultural (rural) tourism combined with nature tourism (trekking, bird watching etc.) may provide some opportunities for local communities (jobs, investments, new population)	Local communities
	Military history -related tourism also relevant in the GBF area	Local communities, tourists and tourism businesses
	GBF could become a model for peaceful cultural cooperation => example for other parts of Europe	All stakeholders
	GBF may improve possibilities to direct funding for infrastructure development (roads, tourism infrastructure) which is beneficial also for local population and businesses	Local communities, tourism and other businesses
	GBF could be a platform for environmental awareness raising for people (especially youth) as well as for businesses	Educational institutions, NGOs, people and businesses

Annex C: GBF vision and targets 2020

Green Belt of Fennoscandia

Vision for the future

The Green Belt of Fennoscandia is a framework for cooperative actions between Finland, Russia and Norway for promoting environmental sustainability and protection of biodiversity, economic growth, and social well-being generated by the region's unique nature and cultural heritage.

The concept of the GBF network

The core of the Green Belt is formed by a representative network of nature protection areas and buffer zones that ensure both north-south and east-west ecological corridors for migration and protection of species. It is a platform for trilateral biodiversity and climate change research and awareness raising, and it provides a framework for development of sustainable livelihoods and social well-being in the region. The rich cultural heritage of the region is another base factor for GBF development.

GBF development is implemented through a cooperative network of institutions, business community, non-governmental organizations and communities, with special focus on participatory cross-border processes. GBF forms also a platform for promoting environmental sustainability in spatial planning and in coordination of development processes in the area. Increasing environmental awareness at all levels is a fundamental element in all GBF-related development. Through development of a clear brand, GBF provides a framework for sustainable economic development, especially for tourism and related services, forestry, and clean tech.

As a part of the wider European Green Belt, GBF forms also a mechanism for wider European cooperation in research, nature protection and economic and social development.

GBF Objectives for year 2020

The initial objectives for developmental actions by year 2020 are presented in the table below. The objectives are divided into five categories: 1) Nature protection and environmental development, 2) Economic development, 3) Socio-cultural development, 4) Development of research, and 5) Institutional development. The detailed objectives are defined at two levels: common objectives for the whole GBF area, and specific characteristics for the three geographical sub-regions of the GBF area.

Table: Strategic objective and targets of GBF development by the year 2020

1. Nature protection and environmental development		
Scope	Objectives, targets and sub-regional specifics	Comments
GBF-level strategic objective and targets 2020	Strategic objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	Targets 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific and relevant other knowledge on the biodiversity (species distribution and migration, landscapes, ecological corridors, etc.) of the GBF area is collected and key data is harmonized • Key threats towards protection of biodiversity in the region have been identified (e.g. obstacles for species distribution, harmful alien species) and actions are defined to respond to the threats • Planned protected areas have been established and their management and land use is organized • The core areas of the GBF (protected areas, buffer zones and important ecological corridors) have been defined and the principles for their management and land use have been established (legislation, land use plans, nature management practices, institutional setup) • Co-operation on environmental protection between countries is active and forms a platform for multidisciplinary co-operation between stakeholders at all levels (ministries, regional administrations, institutions, business community, non-governmental organizations, communities and individuals) • Information on the ecology of the GBF is mainstreamed and widely disseminated for improved environmental awareness at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific knowledge will not be comprehensive; prioritization is needed • GBF is a concept that is constantly changing and developing • Also establishment of new PAs may be initiated within the GBF development • Connectivity of protected areas across regional and national borders needs to be studied • Support is needed from local politicians • Networking is important at every level and between sectors • Co-operation agreement between PAs form the base for GBF development • MoU is important because of differences in legislation in the three countries • Model for co-operation available (EUROparc, tri-lateral park); Pasvik-Inari action plan a good example • Early identification of potential conflicts (nature conservation, tourism, mining, forestry) for successful conflict resolution • Maintaining the research and monitoring networks important to enable long-term research and monitoring (e.g. time series) • The forests of the GBF are the lungs of Europe
Sub-regional specifics / Northern sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Traditional knowledge may be used in management decisions and incorporated into decisions (in Norway it is legally binding)</i> • <i>Special natural biotypes and natural complexes regions should be recognized, (e.g. Pasvik has richness in species even though it is in the</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Three countries with different administrative cultures and legislations and even currencies => administrative and funding challenges</i> • <i>The heritage of Saami culture</i>

	<p>north)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geological specifics could be identified and mapped as part of the GBF data • GBF is could be used as a model area for climate change –related research 	<p>unique for the sub-region (long joint history, reindeer herding, several Saami languages and sub-cultures). Rights of Saami people differ from country to country (e.g. ILO convention is ratified only in Norway)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBF stretches from sea to sea (Gulf of Finland to Barents Sea) • Northern sub-region faces the strongest effects of Climate Change • The sub-regional working group has good links also to politicians
<p>Sub-regional specifics / S-E Finland sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The watershed of the sub-region consists of major water bodies (Saimaa, Ladoga, Gulf of Finland) whereby the focus of GBF in this sub-region is more on water courses and water-forest ecosystems. The sub-regional brand should highlight these unique characteristics • The sub-region is the most industrialized and densely populated part of the GBF => developmental processes need to find a balance between protection as well as social economic development • Sustainable agriculture and forestry management essential for development of the GBF in this sub-region • The network of PAs is weakest in the sub-region whereby connectivity needs to be addressed specifically => Comprehensive GAP-analyses could be conducted by 2020 for improving connectivity and buffer zones • Centers of excellence on environmental/nature issues need to be developed • Committed partners (research institutions and administration at federal and regional levels) need to be found from the Russian side • METSO zonation analyses should be conducted in the GBF area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial planning is a key instrument for protection; cooperation with planners essential • Alien species: important to focus on species with economic importance • Improved cross-border access important; what is the future of the temporary border crossing sites? • Good links with the federal authorities important to speed up processes • Role of forestry industries essential in the sub-region (certification, 5 % protection target, ensuring access to timber); lack of ecological corridors is a key challenge
<p>Sub-regional specifics / North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest reindeer and big predators unique features of fauna in the sub-region => improved cross-border cooperation and cooperation between all stakeholders needed • GBF approach should be integrated into other processes (Natura, HKS updates, forestry management planning) • How to balance the requirements of nature tourism and forestry • Further development of twin park cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we need sub-region specific targets? Actions are specific anyway. • Unique features of the sub-region: forests, mires/bogs, big predators, Karelian culture • Twin park cooperation could be widened to cover also other parks; interest in the Russian side

	<i>essential (border crossing, permits to visit border areas, secured funding for cooperation, clear organizational setup with designated persons) => base for wider nature tourism development</i>	
Sub-regional specifics / Karelian Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data exists but is presently scattered => data needs to be summarized and developed into a GIS system</i> • <i>Revised edition of the red book of endangered species and red book of Fennoscandia could be developed within the GBF program</i> • <i>Regional spatial development plan should be developed for the Karelian Republic with all protection areas</i> • <i>Establishment (designation) of the already planned PAs a high priority (Ladoga skerries the main federal PA, also several already planned regional PAs)</i> • <i>List of potential new PAs needs to be updated and process for designation started (feasibility studies)</i> • <i>Status of water side buffer zones need to be clarified/settled to augment the protected areas => inventory of waterside buffer zones and identification of priority development sites</i> • <i>Specific status of GBF needs to be settled (legalized) with clear institutional arrangements: status, borders, institutional setup; this is essential in Russia</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Amendments to the law on buffer zones have been made, normative process now under process</i> • <i>Establishment of waterside buffer zones is a high priority: elaboration is needed to define the status and process in practice (basic procedure exists); possibility for connectivity in the Russian side good</i> • <i>Spatial zoning documents may be used for defining the GBF status</i> • <i>Red data book criteria applied in Russia is old => a seminar will be held on 9/2014 to develop the approach and criteria</i>

2. Economic Development

Scope	Objectives, targets and sub-regional specifics	Comments
GBF-level strategic objective and targets 2020	Strategic objective:	•
	Targets 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic opportunities, benefits and constraints of sustainable use of PA's in the GBF are widely known among stakeholders • The network of PAs within the GBF creates a platform for developing nature tourism; new cross-border nature tourism entities have been created and the accessibility of the PA's has been improved • The GBF has a clear, common brand that creates a platform for sustainable development of businesses and which can be used by enterprises for business development and marketing • The opportunities that the GBF provides for regional economies have been identified and concrete projects on GBF-based regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing of viable nature tourism industry is the main sector of economy for GBF-related development • In order to give local ownership to the activities the branding needs cooperation with local stakeholders • There are many on-going and planned development processes in the sub-regions; the added value of the GBF has to be concretized and coordinated with other processes • How wide could the GBF-brand be? Should it also include clean

	<p>development (e.g. service concepts with networks) have been launched</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential of GBF has been recognized on both national and regional level development plans and programs (strategic objectives, targeting of funding, mainstreaming in development programs) • Functional service chains have been established for GBF-related economic development, obstacles for cross border business activities have been decreased (border crossing , language problems) and accessibility of the nature sites has been improved 	tech?
Sub-regional specifics / Northern sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GBF could be a base for setting sustainable management practices for specific northern nature-based livelihoods (reindeer herding, fishing, berry picking, etc.)</i> • <i>GBF may form a brand for businesses based on common northern heritage (cross-border nature and culture tourism, cross-border trails, local products)</i> • <i>Tourism with Kola region should be strengthened under the GBF-umbrella</i> • <i>Simplified procedures need to be developed for border crossing related to nature tourism (e.g. visiting parks in the Russian side and vice versa)</i> • <i>Network of huts, camping sites, etc. need to be strengthened to facilitate development of nature tourism</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainability of all economic activities has to be emphasised to ensure that the image of Northern clean nature remains true.</i> • <i>Jointly shared "Northern pride / self-esteem" may strengthen joint cooperation between three countries for sustainable economic development (e.g. GBF and northern culture – based tourism, production, services)</i>
Sub-regional specifics / S-E Finland sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GBF brand could also include clean tech (bio-economy); S-E Finland could be a model area for clean tech (especially for sustainable water management; clean water could be part of the sub-region's GBF brand and is a corner stone for tourism development)</i> • <i>Twin park cooperation could be started also in S-E Finland (Repovesi, Linnansaari, Kolovesi and Ladoga archipelago; Eastern Gulf of Finland PAs) => development of joint nature tourism products in both sides of the border</i> • <i>Bottle necks of the cross-border water routes should be removed to enable easier travel (e.g. visa formalities)</i> • <i>A clear concept and development program for ecosystem services could be developed under the GBF brand; the sub-region could be a model for ecosystem service development</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clean water and sustainable water resources management are key image factors in the area</i> • <i>Ongoing spatial planning of sea areas provides a base for protection and sustainable management of sea area</i> • <i>Cross-border water route (Saimaa – channel – Gulf of Finland) is a unique potential for the sub-region</i> • <i>Do we have a reliable method for assessing cost-benefits of ecosystem services?</i> • <i>The value added of GBF may mainly be indirect in the sub-region</i>
Sub-regional specifics / North-Karelia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High need to dismantle obstacles for tourism (restricted areas, border crossing, visa, infrastructure); concrete actions and projects</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Analyses of ENPI projects may provide several starting points for new projects (best</i>

<p>and Ostrobothnia sub-region</p>	<p>for 2015-2020 should be developed based on the already known obstacles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive analysis on the economy of nature/culture tourism is needed for targeted funding • The GBF brand needs to highlight sub-regions uniqueness (forest, Karelian culture, traditional usage of nature (berries, mushrooms, hunting, fishin) and link it to the wider European brand • Several possibilities to develop cross-border tourism, combining nature and culture; networking essential • GBF brand may be used also for development of clean products from the nature (e.g. berry and mushroom products, well-being services) • GBF should facilitate also cross-regional cooperation; many of the opportunities need wider approach than the sub-region's borders. 	<p>practices for replication and constraints to tackle them)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Taiga is an example of an existing tourism network • A study on hunting in Northern Karelia is under preparation and may provide interesting ideas for further development of hunting tourism
<p>Sub-regional specifics / Karelian Republic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal and regional PAs have very different situations and possibilities for funding (regional PAs suffer from shortage of resources) => a program needs to be established for sustaining the resourcing of regional PAs • A program for development of regional tourism routes needs to be developed (nature objects and infrastructure) • GBF brand should be integrated to the regional brand • Regional spatial development plan needs to be updated with GBF considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is available on economic and socio-economic aspects of the region (demography, socio-economic factors, enterprises, etc.) • Do we need a common brand or should the brand be integrated with wider regional brand?

<p>3. Social and cultural development</p>		
<p>Scope</p>	<p>Objectives, targets and sub-regional specifics</p>	<p>Comments</p>
<p>GBF-level strategic objective and targets 2020</p>	<p>Strategic objective:</p> <p>Targets 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special features and needs of local communities have been identified and they are integrated to the GBF concept • GBF creates a platform for sustainable development of local communities: it secures that traditional usage of nature and natural resources is sustainable, enables allocation of funding to the development of communities and strengthens regional and local identities • Cross-border activities, interaction of people and sustaining of cultural heritage are strongly promoted in the GBF approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Development of nature tourism is a practical way to create job opportunities for local people and improve cross-border contacts; GBF may bring substance to nature tourism • Development of the GBF has to be cooperative and participatory to ensure ownership and benefits also at community level and to avoid conflicts

<p>Sub-regional specifics / Northern sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBF brand should increase Northern pride/self-esteem; highlight “what we are, where we came from and where are we developing”; common heritage of the three countries and sustainable usage of nature should be the base for all GBF actions • GBF provides a platform for new research on the common Northern cultural heritage and traditional knowledge between the three countries => concepts for joint economic development benefiting local people • Constraints for cross-border cooperation and mobility of Saami people need to be decreased • Cultural heritage sites in the whole region (three countries) should be mapped and integrated to GBF data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-governmental organisations and associations are important partners for all GBF actions
<p>Sub-regional specifics / S-E Finland sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active working concept should be developed for the sub-region for GBF-related environmental education (nature education, awareness raising) • GBF should be a mechanism for targeted funding for border cross-border community development projects • Culture and history issues need to be integrated to the GBF-concept (e.g. integrated cross-border nature-history-culture tourism packages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO cooperation is a key mechanism for environmental education and awareness raising and for community development • Orthodoxy and Karelian culture provide opportunities for combined nature-culture tourism
<p>Sub-regional specifics / North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sub-region has several possibilities to combine nature tourism and culture (e.g. music festivals and nearby PAs) • GBF should enable targeted funding to preserve and develop local culture (Karelian culture and traditions, historic places, runo-villages, etc.) • GBF data could include data and stories on local history; nature’s role in people’s life essential in the sub-region’s culture • GBF may also strengthen environmental awareness • All GBF actions should create local benefits (community development, local identity, job opportunities, interaction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could war history be a part of GBF tourism?
<p>Sub-regional specifics / Karelian Republic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livelihood opportunities/needs could be identified and analysed within the GBF program, providing information for spatial planning for territories with development potential • Protection and strengthening of traditional livelihoods important for the sub-region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region suffers from negative demographic trends; villages are dying and active population leaving to urban centers

4. Development of GBF-based research

Scope	Objectives, targets and sub-regional specifics	Comments
GBF-level strategic objective and targets 2020	Strategic objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	Targets 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs for research that support developing the GBF have been identified • GBF has become an effective framework for international research cooperation (nature research, research related to regional economies and regional planning, cultural research, climate change research); several research programs are implemented under the GBF framework • The GBF is used for allocating research funding and is integrated into all key funding programs relevant to the region • Research within the GBF is efficiently coordinated on international, national and regional level through a common research strategy and comprehensive networks • Research information has been widely disseminated (including popularized information to public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The region has a rather good research infrastructure in all three countries which forms a good framework for GBF related research • GBF-related research has already a long history between Finland and Russia and caters for a good network of researchers; the political GBF process should utilize this experience in the further development of the GBF
Sub-regional specifics / Northern sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Economic instruments need to be developed to encourage research in the GBF area</i> • <i>Trilateral and cross-sectoral cooperative structures need to be established/strengthened</i> • <i>Cultural heritage of the sub-region needs to be identified and mapped (GIS information)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The whole GBF area should be in the focus of the research</i> • <i>Resources needed; if resources are made available, research groups exist and are able to decide the research questions</i>
Sub-regional specifics / S-E Finland sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The sub-region could be recognized as a model area for clean tech and water development and research</i> • <i>Active knowledge sharing on renewable energy could be part of the GBF research in the sub-region</i> • <i>In nature research, holistic analyses on connectivity is a priority in the sub-region</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research needs of nature tourism operators should be studied. This would support bottom-up branding.</i> • <i>Several important research institutions active in the sub-region (Research centers and universities of St. Petersburg, LUT, etc.)</i>
Sub-regional specifics / North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A holistic (cross-sectoral and regionally wide) GBF research strategy needs to be developed, linking also locally specific research to wider research</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Several important research institutions active in the sub-region (Eastern Finland University, METLA, University of Oulu, EFI, SYKE, RKTL); good linkages to the Karelian institutions (especially KRC)</i>
Sub-regional specifics / Karelian Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GBF may be the platform for inventories and monitoring for the new red data book</i> • <i>GBF-research needs to be included in all programming documents (Russian and international); this would enable targeted</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is important that research results are taken into account in decision making</i> • <i>PA establishment processes include research as such</i>

	<p><i>funding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scientific tourism could be developed within the PAs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subjects of research should cover nature, culture and livelihood issues</i> • <i>Research units at PAs suffer from lack of resources; sufficient resource base is essential to ensure continuous monitoring and research</i>
5. Institutional development		
Scope	Objectives, targets and sub-regional specifics	Comments
GBF-level strategic objective and targets 2020	Strategic objective:	•
	Targets 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of the GBF has been clearly defined • The GBF has been organized into a functional cooperation forum which creates framework for active regional development and cooperation at international, national and regional level as well as thematically • Effective network of GBF-based cooperation arrangements and forums with clear agreements has been established to ensure continuity of cooperation (e.g. Twin Parks, long-term cross-border monitoring programs) • The GBF has become an active partner in the European Green Belt and acts as a model of a good practice to other areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wide extent of the GBF is a challenge, it requires several working groups at various levels and with various thematic issues • What are the institutional arrangements if a GBF brand is developed? • Experiences of the European Green Belt may provide relevant models for the development of the GBF
Sub-regional specifics / Northern sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GBF needs to be made widely well-known among all stakeholders and its value-added needs to be concretized</i> • <i>Regular contacts between partners (cross-border, cross-sector) are essential when developing GBF in the sub-region</i> • <i>Common strategy with clear objectives and simple organization needs to be developed for the whole GBF region and a specific strategy for the sub-region under the connective umbrella</i> • <i>Regional programs/plans form the base for GBF-linked implementation; GBF needs to be included in the sub-regional plans and programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EGB should be a strong European brand in order to promote nature tourism in regions</i> • <i>Organizing trilateral meetings is not easy, Pasvik-Inari a good example: action plan, on which one or two actions are picked for implementation; reporting in advance to the Steering Group</i>
Sub-regional specifics / S-E Finland sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Border crossing at Parikkala-Syvöoro a priority for improvement => strengthened cooperation possibilities</i> • <i>GBF could be a model area for European cooperation; differences are recognized as strength factors</i> • <i>Successful best practices in nature and culture tourism need to be developed into models for</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In this sub-region, cooperation in nature tourism is based on lakes and water courses, forests and local food</i> • <i>Cooperation networks need bottom-up approach which is clearly beneficial for rural SMEs</i> • <i>Sub-region's cooperation under</i>

	<p>wider replication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation networks between communities may be strengthened under the GBF concept • GBF provides a platform for cooperation on environmental awareness, including youth cooperation/exchange • Data on all key locations of the BF area need to be compiled to facilitate networking (GBF-level data and sub-region specific data) • Twin park cooperation could include also lake district PAs 	<p>the common GBF brand requires clear status definition for the brand; the brand must bring real value added to participating stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is language a real constraint? • Linnansaari is a good best practice example for Russian partners
<p>Sub-regional specifics / North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important the the European Green Belt brand would be available also for sub-regional stakeholders • Borderless nature could be a key theme in the GBF brand • Obstacles of twin park cooperation need to be abolished (area restrictions and permits, long-term funding) • The GBF website(s) need to include information on all stakeholders (administrative organizations, research institutions and researchers, relevant businesses, NGOs, key contact persons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A network of designated contact persons is a prerequisite for active cooperation • The borders should be flexible as natural, administrative and functional (e.g. businesses) borders differ from each other • Approach should be bottom-up as far as possible; without real commitment for cooperation nothing is achieved (e.g. nature tourism based on interests of tourists and targets of entrepreneurs) • Target setting should concretize the benefits and value added to motivate participants
<p>Sub-regional specifics / Karelian Republic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries of GBF need to be defined clearly in the Russian side (all levels of administration) due to the administrative approach in Russia • All regional, district and community development and spatial plans should recognize the GBF • Cooperation needs to be activated also at municipality level; municipalities need to be involved as partners • GBF provides platforms for local participation; e.g. joint planning and solving possible conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Finnish-Russian cooperation networks exist in nature research; these may be used as models for other types of cooperation

Annex D: Comments on the vision

Green Belt of Fennoscandia – Comments on the Vision

Four sub-regional workshops on development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF) were held during May –June 2014 in Inari, Lappeenranta, Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. Three working sessions were held in each workshop: Identification of development opportunities based on GBF, elaboration of the GBF vision and targets for 2020, and identification of high priority actions.

Underneath are compiled the key findings of the sessions for commenting the initial GBF vision.

- GBF should be a **framework for holistic development from South to North** (vertical corridor with strong East-West cross-border elements); a base for research, awareness raising, and development of services and products (cross-border, covering whole GBF area and localized actions)
- A **clear image/brand** should be developed for “marketing” of the GBF and for establishing platforms for concrete development work; clear scope and criteria, widely known and highly respected, providing value-added to sustainable businesses, enabling wider research, guiding spatial planning. **Linkage to the European GB** is important
- The approach should be **networking and cooperative**: joint projects with wider scopes, cross-border cooperation, working over administrative and sector boundaries. Not only cooperation between protected areas (e.g. twin parks) but also with/between other stakeholders and sectors (forestry, industries, services, local enterprises, communities, NGOs). **Unique nature and cultural heritage** are backbones for all GBF development. Ensuring continuity of cooperation is important.
- GBF should be a platform **for piloting of new innovative approaches** => identification of best practices => wider replication
- Focus should be **on concrete actions**: GBF should strengthen and/or continue already implemented and effective projects as well as be a programmatic platform for new projects
- **Biodiversity considerations** should be taken into account also outside the PAs; GBF should be a framework for development of buffer zones and ecological corridors (including voluntary protection by land owners and industries) and address environmental impacts of all industries
- GBF should be a method for increasing **awareness on biodiversity and sustainable development**; target groups including region’s population (youth a specific group), visitors as well as businesses. High awareness is a prerequisite for commitment.
- Green Belt covers also **water bodies and courses** and its Southern sub-region could be a model area for water protection
- GBF could **promote sustainable development** widely (biodiversity protection, sustainable production, clean water, energy efficiency etc.)
- GBF should provide a **platform for systematic and holistic data management** (nature, cultural heritage, institutions, projects, contacts, etc.); GIS-based data management important
- Economic development should be widened into socio-economic development; promotion of **livelihoods** of local people important
- GBF is closely related to the **biosphere reserve concept**; should the vision include the statements on the biosphere concept?
- **Strict borders or flexible spatial scope?**
 - Areas of various economic activities differ from administrative boundaries which differ from ecosystem boundaries
 - Decisions by authorities are made based on clear boundaries (especially in Russia) whereby clear spatial definition is important. Boundaries may be subject to further development
 - Differences between Russian and European biosphere reserve concepts (biosphere reserve = national park in Russia); concepts need to be clarified

Annex E: Development priorities and proposed actions

Green Belt of Fennoscandia – Opportunities for Development

Four sub-regional workshops on development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia (GBF) were held during May –June 2014 in Inari, Lappeenranta, Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. Three working sessions were held in each workshop: Identification of development opportunities based on GBF, elaboration of the GBF vision and targets for 2020, and identification of high priority actions.

Underneath are compiled the findings of the sessions on priority development needs and potential actions.

Development priorities / Northern sub-region of the GBF		
Priority development needs	Potential actions	Responsibilities
<p>Strengthening of the twin-park cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content based on the specific twin-park situations (promoting biodiversity) • Preparation of an action plan for the whole area (horizontal (twin-park specific) based on vertical vision + holistic plan for the whole area) • Strengthening of the specific features of twin parks based on the holistic (vertical) approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the “vertical” action plan for the whole set of twin parks => establishing the base for further development of the twin-park specific plans (horizontal) • Preparation of a communication strategy/plan, based on the action plan • Preparation of projects based on the plans => funding => implementation that ensures vertical cooperation 	<p>Twin park managements</p> <p>Regional authorities</p>
<p>Development of the GBF concept</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jointly shared concrete vision, strategy and action plan • Institutionalising of the GBF development and networking (defining roles and responsibilities trilaterally, nationally and sub-regionally) • Creating ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the vision, strategy and action plans are ready, active “marketing” is needed within stakeholders • Ensure that work based on the resolution of the GBF forum (Petrozavodsk) is continued • “Road shows” to market the concept widely among potential partners and public (timing important!) 	<p>Regional and trilateral working groups (organizational set-up is already established)</p>
<p>Development of the GBF brand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative process with key stakeholders to develop the brand (criteria, procedures), using the EGB as a starting point • Establishing the “branding project” 	<p>Branding expert needs to be hired to facilitate the work</p>
<p>Development of communication for wide awareness about GBF and its benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic approach covering all sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the Communication Strategy and Plan • Dissemination of information, based on the plan 	<p>Administrative structures of the GBF</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor-made targeting to all stakeholders (messages, methods and communication channels) • Communication that motivates people/stakeholders and creates ownership 		
<p>Development of land use planning to ensure protection of biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corridors and buffer zones to ensure connectivity of habitats; north-south and east-west • Improved management in the corridors and buffer zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of critical corridors and buffer zones (north-south and east-west + cross-border) • Initiation of practical cooperation to enhance communication with land use planning authorities (there are more red listed species outside the protected areas) • Development of buffer zones and corridors with forestry organizations 	
<p>Nature tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved border crossings (more crossing places, easier permits and visa practices for twin park –based tourism) • Definition of the destination points of GBF (Pyhä-Luosto, Oulanka - Paanajärvi etc.) • Systems of updated information (where to see certain species etc.) • Specialization in different attractions (GBF champions, other attractions like mining history, cultural heritage, also “damage areas”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying for eased border crossing and access to border zone PAs (examples “Green card” arrangement between Norway and Russia, cruises to St. Petersburg) • Identification and mapping of GBF sites/attractions • Projects 	<p>Ministries and regional authorities Regional working group Projects</p>
<p>Strengthening local economy through local products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding ways how to best support local products • Products based on traditional knowledge • Enhance the local traditions, taking into account their variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of relevant products (services and products) and preparation of development plans • Projects 	<p>Regional working group</p>
<p>Improvement of connectivity (ecological corridors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on connectivity and GAP analysis, Green Belt mapping 	<p>Trilateral GBF group SYKE, Metsähallitus</p>
<p>Defining common species that are critical and need special attention in the whole GBF area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying the differences and the reasons for the differences (arctic fox, trout, fresh water pearl mussel and bear) • Monitoring the genetic level: (migrating predators, salmon), identifying best practices • Assessment of the impacts of the climate change for arctic species • Priority project: Restoration of 	<p>Research institutions</p>

	Tuloma River (salmon)	
Continuing tourism cooperation and environmental education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of geological tourism • Elaboration of practices for benchmarks to other regions: Nature centers and Geo parks • Development of socially responsible tourism: more local products and local employment • Preparation of a Green Belt Tourism pilot projects 	Tourism stakeholders
Setting up a simple organization and clear common objectives	Strategic planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining strategic objectives • Preparation of a regional action plan • Preparation of project portfolio 	All GBF stakeholders

Development priorities / South-East Finland, LenOblast and St.Petersburg sub-region of the GBF		
Priority development needs	Potential actions	Responsibilities
Survey on the European Green Belt – concept: development process, situation analysis, possibilities to link the GBF with the wider European GB (GBE)	Small survey project	MoE
Review of former and present programs and processes => identification of lessons learnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of past and present programs and processes 	Regional groups
Branding of the GBF (brand that creates real value added; in S-E Finland focus on “Blue belt”) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of GBF brand (what activities it may cover, regional boundaries, etc.) • Criteria of the GBF brand • Modalities (e.g. who may use the brand and how, responsibilities) • Communication strategy • Note: This is a marketing project; contents fulfilling criteria must be ensured beforehand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a plan for the branding process as part of the present project (in autumn 2014) • Ensuring that key stakeholders are ready to participate • Development of the brand concept, criteria and visual look; process requires support from a brand expert • Communication (marketing) to stakeholders 	GBF working group(s)
Preparation of sub-regional GBF action plans (key themes in S-E Finland water and clean tech (biotech) and definition/development of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the action plans • Ensuring that funding instruments include GBF 	Regional working group (työvaliokunta); Is a hired facilitator

mechanisms		needed?
Development of the twin park concept in the S-E Finland / Russia region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a joint working group => development of the twin park concept for the region (lake region and Gulf of Finland parks => preparation of action plans 	Initiated by Metsähallitus => practical work by twin parks
Development of a project portfolio for GBF projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that GBF is included in regional development programs and funding instruments from 2015 onwards Channeling support to project preparation 	Ministries Regional administrations Funding agencies
Protection of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of the protection areas in the planned locations Defining indicators for biodiversity targets 	SYKE, METLA – linkage to normal work
Development of the GBF concept and management structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and organizing of the network based on wide approach for development (e.g. not only tourism as forestry is a key sector in the sub-region's economy and needs to be taken into account) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact persons from the S-E region Partners from the Russian side (e.g. EUREGIO) Compiling data (data bank, web pages)? 	MoE coordinates the whole process Metsähallitus – dvl. of twin park cooperation
Improving the accessibility of GBF locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiating road improvements Cooperation with MEK ("Santa Claus -belt") 	Regional working group
Creating ownership among stakeholders (wide group of stakeholders including different branches of economy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal participation (Finland, Russia, Norway; all parties provide resources) Regular reporting and sharing information with stakeholders 	Trilateral working group Regional working group
Development of connectivity (ecological corridors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of the locations which may be important for BD protection and ecosystem services (biodiversity hotspots, sceneries) to ensure that these locations are taken into account in land use planning, METSO program etc. Review of regional development programs and spatial plans; analysis of the connectivity => identification of gaps => plans to improve connectivity 	SYKE (?) Regional administrations
Development of the sustainable usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory process with sectors 	

of natural resources; multiple usage of forests while protecting environment, protection combined with softer measures Note! Mining is a challenge for GBF	of industry (especially forestry)	
Coordination of GBF with other processes (land use planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in regional planning and programs (development areas, regional structures, border crossing points) • Identification/dvl of funding mechanisms (including rural dvl funding, funding for fishery and tourism, METSO, etc.) 	Regional administrations ELY-centers
Development of border crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of the Parikkala-Syvääro border crossing point (status, facilities and services); gvt decisions, inclusion in ENI CBC LSP – projects) 	Working groups for border crossing
Development of environmental education based on the GBF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising for businesses • Env. education for children and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of potential actors => support to planning 	Regional working group, environmental education institutions
Communication on GBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the value added => informing about the possibilities and best practise examples 	MoE, Metsähallitus, national working group
Establishing relationships with the EBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the best practices • Putting focus on future (youth): what GB could be after 2020? • Development of networking with European partners (NGOs, schools, SMEs) 	MoE, Ministry of education, educational institutes

Development priorities / North-Karelia and Ostrobothnia sub-region of the GBF		
Priority development needs	Potential actions	Responsibilities
Concretizing the GBF vision and concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on the European GB (opportunities, modalities, best practices, organization) => clarifying the GBF vision and concept in autumn 2014 • Official establishment of the GBF (concept, borders, institutional setup and organizing GBF development) 	GBF working groups (trilateral, national and sub-regional) Ministries Metsähallitus

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of the strategic development processes (scopes, objectives, institutional setups) 	
Development of a project portfolio and funding => concrete projects with good effectiveness and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey on already implemented projects (2007-2014) => data bank and identification of best practices for future development • Wide dissemination (marketing): what, for whom, how, benefits, etc. • Establishment of a funding mechanism for preparation of GBF-projects • Organizing of GBF project clinics for match making and elaboration of project ideas • Ensuring that GBF is included in development plans and funding instruments 	<p>Regional working group</p> <p>Ministries</p> <p>Regional administrations</p>
Development of the GBF brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic definition of the brand (scope, criteria) => assessment of the potential value added => branding project • Wide “marketing” of the brand 	Trilateral working group
Development of GBF tourism that enhances local businesses and supports community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop(s) with key stakeholders (associations representing potential clients + tourism organisations) => elaboration of ideas for innovative new tourism products • Preparation of projects for implementation • Wide marketing under the GBF umbrella (with innovative approaches, including SOME) 	<p>“GBF tourism forum”</p> <p>Regional administrations</p> <p>Tourist operators</p>
Cooperation on protection and monitoring of species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plans for species (cross-border approach with national specifics) 	Ministries, regional administrations
Improving PA management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation analyses on Natura areas, management plans 	Ministries, regional administrations
Improving connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP assessment within the GBF area (cross-border approach) => planning of actions for improving connectivity • Ensuring that regional spatial and development plans include connectivity analyses (over regional borders) 	Ministries, regional administrations, SYKE, Metsähallitus

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing connectivity in voluntary protection programs (e.g. Metso) 	
Awareness raising and communication on GBF (mainstreaming and getting GBF rooted in relevant organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing (wide dissemination of information) Workshop(s) for stakeholders Ensuring that GBF is included in regional/sectoral planning processes and strategies Development of the GBF portal Targeted communication with stakeholders 	Regional working group All stakeholders Projects
Strengthening of the sustainability of the usage of nature resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating GBF into spatial planning Development of sustainability criteria for economic activities within critical areas of GBF; connectivity essential 	Ministries, regional administrations
GBF-related applied research for creating basis for development work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey on present situation and opportunities / threats (cross-border approach): pressures on land use, business opportunities provided by nature Definition of key research themes (based on GBF strategy) => project development Development of linkages to the European wide GB research programs Wide dissemination of research data (e.g. RUNAT-project, using research for development) Improvement of access to Russian research data 	Kuka ottaa vetovastuun?
Improving border crossing for easier cooperation and enabling business development (especially nature tourism within the border areas); eased visa and permit processes, border crossing sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open discussions for lobbying with ministries and border authorities Pilot project on simplified visa formalities for nature tourism (e.g. cross-border skiing and twin park –visits) Enhancing youth cooperation 	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Regional and municipal administrations Karelian republic Border cooperation committee Business associations

Development priorities / Karelian republic sub-region of the GBF		
Priority development needs	Potential actions	Responsibilities
Preparation of a concrete action plan for GBF development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaboration within the trilateral working group 	Trilateral working group
Designation of the Ladoga Skerries PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying for the designation; media and politicians / decision makers • Promotion of public support 	GBF working group of Karelia
Preparations for new PAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalisation of the Feasibility Studies 	Karelian research centre (KRC)
Development of nature conservation / water buffer zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of the buffer zone concept • Development of regulations for buffer zones 	GBF working group of Karelia KRC
Improving cross-border access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying for easier cross-border transaction (permits, formalities, visa) • Promoting additional border crossing sites 	GBF working group for Karelia Rep. of Karelia administration
Logging in protective forest areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation on the loggings and their impacts 	Rep. of Karelia administration KRC
Boundaries of the GBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the GBF area through common criteria (Ru, Fi, No) • Analyses of existing data => identification of gaps => preparation of research/monitoring plans 	Trilateral working group
Environmental monitoring within the GBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the monitoring system (indicators and methods) for the GBF; trilateral approach • Specific studies on critical sites (PAs and critical ecological corridors) => setting the baselines for monitoring 	Trilateral working group KRC, SYKE