

Guidelines for the planning and communication of Green Belt Projects



greenbelt
of Fennoscandia



Ympäristöministeriö
Miljöministeriet
Ministry of the Environment



Background for the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia

What is it?

Green Belt of Fennoscandia is...

- ◆ unique boreal forests, tundras, mires, water areas and other nature sites near the borders shared by Finland, Russia and Norway,
- ◆ an important ecological network supporting species in the adaptation to climate change,
- ◆ a network of internationally significant nature tourism destinations near the borders,
- ◆ cross-border cooperation on sustainable development and reconciliation of nature conservation and other activities benefiting both the people and nature,
- ◆ the most northern section of the European Green Belt stretching from the Barents to the Black Sea.

Why?

Biodiversity is essential to life. Nature in the Green Belt knows no borders. Green Belt is one of the most significant ecological corridors in the whole Europe. Nature in the area gives also rise to the region's vitality and to the well-being of its inhabitants.

The decline in biodiversity has been recognized as a future threat equal to climate change. Pressures directed at biodiversity can be reduced by effective conservation actions complemented with sustainable use of natural resources and increasing awareness on the value of the biodiversity.

What is it based on?

Cooperation between Finland, Russia and Norway is based on Memorandum of Understanding on the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia. The MoU was signed in 2010.

The cooperation implements also the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity and its Aichi Targets aiming for halting biodiversity loss by 2020.

What are we aiming for?

The trilateral cooperation aims for developing the Green Belt of Fennoscandia into a widely acknowledged transboundary model area for biodiversity conservation, bioeconomy, social well-being, and environmentally sustainable economic growth generated by the region's unique biological and geological diversity and cultural heritage.

Green Belt is developed with activities focusing on...

- ◆ biodiversity conservation and safeguarding of the connectivity of ecological network,
- ◆ applying scientific knowledge on the nature of the Green Belt and sustainable use of it,
- ◆ promoting sustainable use of natural resources and reconciliation of activities, cross border interaction, livelihoods and protection of the cultural heritage and
- ◆ increasing awareness on the values of the Green Belt.

Strategy for the development of the Green Belt has been prepared in trilateral cooperation and accepted in 2016.

How is it developed?

Green Belt is developed *in projects* based on or aiming for biodiversity conservation or sustainable use of natural resources.

Besides projects, Green Belt is developed also by *integrating its objectives into existing activities* like land use planning or forestry. In land use planning the values and connectivity of the Green Belt nature sites can be taken into account.

Who acts?

Local actors are of key importance in developing the Green Belt and increasing awareness of its values. Nature is a significant strength and resource for the Green Belt area in the future.

Everyone can participate in increasing awareness on the Green Belt, its values and opportunities.

How is it financed?

- ◆ CBC Programmes Kolarctic, Karelia and South-East Finland – Russia 2014-2020 finance cross-border projects in the field of environment
- ◆ Other financial opportunities are:
 - EU LIFE Programme
 - EU Interreg Programmes
 - Regional Councils: Nordic Council of Ministers and Arctic Council
 - National financing instruments
- ◆ Many existing activities at various levels support the implementation of the Green Belt objectives.

Green Belt Communication and Increasing Awareness

Why?

- ◆ For the future of the Green Belt it is crucial that its value and opportunities are well known in the society.
- ◆ Meaning which encourages people to take actions on biodiversity conservation or sustainable use of natural resources is generated by the value and opportunities of the nature.
- ◆ The better the Green Belt is known, the better it attracts tourists. Virtuous circle creates new business opportunities.
- ◆ It is important that the local people are aware of the opportunities on how to influence in developing the Green Belt. New people are welcome to join the cooperation and spread the good practices for wider use.

How?

- ◆ By referring to the Green Belt, its values and opportunities in all on-going activities and projects supporting the implementation of Green Belt objectives.
- ◆ It is encouraged to include activities aiming for increasing awareness on the values and opportunities of the Green Belt to each new Green Belt project.
- ◆ Green Belt is a vital area where people live and reside. We are interested in listening how the local experience the nature and what meanings they have for it. Let's welcome everybody to join!
- ◆ Youth are the future! Different kinds of environmental education activities are essential for the Green Belt.

How it is supported?

- ◆ Strategy for the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia defines the concept and the objectives of the cooperation.
- ◆ Green Belt logo and a map illustrating the Green Belt cooperation can be used for communication activities. The map has several language versions.
- ◆ Information about the Green Belt is available in the website of the Ministry of the Environment of Finland www.ym.fi/greenbelt.

Ideas for activities promoting Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness in the Green Belt

Communication

- ◆ Slogan and key messages
- ◆ Website
- ◆ Social media (Instagram, FB, Vkontakte, Twitter)
- ◆ Hashtags
- ◆ Brochures, fact sheets, infographics, publications and presentations
- ◆ Photos
- ◆ Info signs, roll ups, libraries
- ◆ Recommendations for the decision makers
- ◆ Cooperation with bloggers
- ◆ Fairs
- ◆ Media connections
- ◆ Media visits, excursions and presentations
- ◆ Press releases and brochures

Education

- ◆ Increasing awareness among teachers and trainers
- ◆ Developing and sharing tools for networking
- ◆ Methodological development of environmental education
- ◆ Stories and storytelling training
- ◆ Education materials
- ◆ International exchange of experts
- ◆ Coordination of responsibilities
- ◆ Training for guides and entrepreneurs
- ◆ Courses for e.g. using natural products
- ◆ Libraries
- ◆ International camps
- ◆ Exhibitions
- ◆ Movies and games

Participation

- ◆ Transparency and openness
- ◆ Participatory planning
- ◆ Experience and knowledge exchange
- ◆ Knowledge co-production
- ◆ Networks and round table discussions between entrepreneurs and other stakeholders
- ◆ Collecting and analysing feedback and developing targeted actions for different groups
- ◆ Workshops
- ◆ Seminars and conferences
- ◆ Visit and meetings
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Methodological development and training (facilitation methods, gamification etc.)

Increasing awareness

- ◆ Science and art
- ◆ Collecting, producing and publishing information on the values and key benefits of nature and nature sites
- ◆ Green Belt Ambassadors and sponsors
- ◆ Green Belt routes and maps
- ◆ Guided Green Belt tours
- ◆ Green Belt Day or Week
- ◆ Info desks and centers
- ◆ Green Belt events
- ◆ Competitions (e.g. photo competition, skiing competition)
- ◆ 10 years anniversary of the Green Belt MoU (2020)
- ◆ Exhibitions
- ◆ Virtual tours
- ◆ Courses
- ◆ Movies and games
- ◆ Applications and software

Checklist for the Green Belt Projects and activities

Green Belt actions encompass environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable activities near the border area in following themes:

- ◆ sustainable use and management of protected areas
- ◆ species or habitat conservation
- ◆ developing and promoting sustainable use of natural resources and practices for reconciliation in forestry and other businesses
- ◆ planning and building functional blue and green infrastructure between valuable nature destinations
- ◆ safeguarding cultural heritage and increasing awareness on it
- ◆ nature tourism and marketing
- ◆ communication, education and training on values of the nature and opportunities for promoting local well-being
- ◆ cross-border nature-related cooperation

Strategy for developing the Green Belt defines the main objectives for the Green Belt actions. It also includes definition for the Green Belt area. Strategy is available at www.ym.fi/greenbelt -website. There are several language versions of the strategy (Finnish, English, Russian. Coming in spring 2017: Norwegian, Inari Sámi, North Sámi and Skolt Sámi).

If you are planning a project or think about joining cooperation by promoting development of the Green Belt with your organisations, check the following questions:

- 1) Are the actions of your project or organisation environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable?
 - ◆ Green Belt actions have to be based on sustainable practices and principles.
- 2) Is your project or your organisation performing actions which implement one or several objectives defined in the Green Belt Strategy? If yes, define which development objectives of the strategy your project or organisation is promoting?
 - ◆ Strategy defines the main priorities for the cooperation. Actions implementing them should be prioritized.
- 3) Are local stakeholders taking part to the activities of your project or organization or are you cooperating with them?
 - ◆ Local perspective and participation are essential for the development of the Green Belt.
- 4) How will the actions of your project or organisation promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of natural resources or awareness on them? How is your project or organisation monitoring the impacts on biodiversity or increasing awareness? How is your project or organization communicating the biodiversity impacts to the Green Belt coordinators in the area/country?
- 5) How is your project or organisation communicating, educating, promoting participation or increasing awareness on the values of the Green Belt or on opportunities for the sustainable use of its nature?

If your project is implementing Green Belt development objectives, bring out your answers to the checklist questions in your project and activity descriptions of your organization.

Logo of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia

Green Belt of Fennoscandia has its own visual image, which the stakeholders can use when they are communicating the Green Belt. Projects implementing the Green Belt Strategy or CEPA Plan are encouraged to use the Green Belt logo.

While using the regional brand, the “European Green Belt”-trademark should be used at least once on the main information media and printed products (homepage, brochures etc.). It is prohibited to use the European Green Belt logo in general communication without direct relationship to the Green Belt.

According to a licensing agreement regarding the European Green Belt –trademark it is required that every partner using European Green Belt –trademark has made a contract to it with the Ministry of the Environment of Finland which holds the license.

Rights to the logo of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia is owned by the Ministry of the Environment of Finland.



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Illustrative map on the Green Belt

An illustrative map on the Green Belt, its idea and activities along it has been produced for the stakeholders to use when communicating and promoting the Green Belt.

The map is available at the www.ym.fi/greenbelt. Only original versions downloaded from the website should be used.

There are several language versions available of the map (Finnish, English, Russian, Norwegian, Inari Sámi. COMING 2017: North Sámi and Skolt Sámi).

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