



Environmental Cooperation in the Nordic Region

Results of the Environmental Action Programme 2001-2004

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Nordic Environmental Cooperation. The objective of environmental cooperation is to improve the environment and prevent problems from arising both in the Nordic Region and internationally. A Committee of Senior Officials for Environmental Affairs (EK-M) is in charge of the work. This includes the setting of common goals in action plans, joint projects, the exchange of information, and actions, for instance, in Eastern Europe through the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO).

The Nordic Council of Ministers was established in 1971 as a body for cooperation between the governments of the Nordic countries. The Council of Ministers submits proposals to the Sessions of the Nordic Council, implements the recommendations of the Council, reports to the Nordic Council on the results of cooperation measures, and is in charge of cooperation within various sectors. The Prime Ministers have general responsibility for cooperation, which is coordinated by the Ministers for Nordic Cooperation and the Nordic Committee for Cooperation. The Council of Ministers meets in various formations depending on the issues to be treated.

The Nordic Council was established in 1952 as a body for cooperation between the parliaments and governments of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Finland joined in 1955. The delegations representing the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands form part of the Danish and Finish delegations, respectively. The Council consists of 87 elected members (parliamentarians). The Nordic Council takes initiatives and has an advisory capacity as well as supervisory and promoting functions within Nordic cooperation. The constituent bodies of the Nordic Council are the Plenary Assembly, the Presidium and the committees.

Nordic Council of Ministers

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Nordic Environmental Cooperation Yields Results

THE NORDIC COUNTRIES have a long tradition of cooperating on nature and environment protection. Together we are able to help set the agenda for the environment, not just in our own countries but also in the Adjacent Areas, in the European Union, and internationally.

The basis of Nordic environmental cooperation is an extensive network of experts. In these networks a continuous and coordinated exchange of scientific data and information takes place. This is important, especially as many Nordic members hold key position in connection with activities linked to international conventions and in the European Union. In this way, Nordic cooperation helps all the Nordic countries to benefit directly from international findings and results while, at the same time, they have a better opportunity to influence international processes.

In the last few years, environmental cooperation has been defined in a special Nordic Environmental Action Programme. The overall objective is to create a healthier environment for all Nordic citizens. This brochure is a summary of the outcome of the programme, and presents a number of results reaped from Nordic cooperation. The examples have been taken from a long list of cooperation areas, such as the environment and health, chemicals, air pollution, outdoor activities,

nature, waste management, the marine environment, climate, cleaner products and technologies. Also, cooperation with some important sectors in society such as agriculture, fisheries, the financial sector and energy is presented.



I hope you will enjoy this brochure!

PER UNCKEL

A Healthy Environment – a Right, Pure and Simple

The link between good health and the environment has been given high priority in Nordic cooperation. At the centre of attention we find such targets as reduced dissemination of hazardous chemicals and air pollution. More stringent requirements and new measuring methods for understanding and monitoring hazardous substances are examples of tools that Nordic cooperation has implemented for the benefit of a healthier environment.

Important results 2001-2004

- The development of a Nordic strategy for cost-effective monitoring of particulate volumes in air.
- The development of the database SPIN containing information on chemical substances in products available in the Nordic countries.
- New criteria for the substances that can be defined as hazardous and the database “NSDB, Nordic Substance Database” with over 18,000 presumptively hazardous substances.
- Workshop on mercury linked to the development of the EU chemicals strategy REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals).

EVERYBODY HAS A RIGHT to live in clean and healthy surroundings. This right comes with a responsibility - we are under an obligation not to reduce the quality of our natural surroundings and the environment.

The target of the Nordic Council of Ministers is to ensure that emissions of chemicals injurious to human health and the environment must cease within one generation (25 years). The road towards this goal is still long, but today’s trend does look promising. Recent decades have seen a reduction in the use of noxious substances and in some cases a complete eradication of them in the Nordic Region.

A lot of work still needs to be done before we can claim that our production of goods and services is done without any risk to human health and the environment. One reason is that our knowledge of which chemicals are harmful to health and the environment is constantly improving, and another that the substitution of dangerous substances for less dangerous ones takes time. At the same time new substances are constantly being introduced to the market.

In order to eradicate the use of hazardous chemicals within one generation, cooperation is aimed at the following both internationally and nationally:

- Improving the basis for describing the connection between emissions, environmental quality and environmental impact.
- Crating more stringent rules concerning the duty of producers and sellers to inform of the chemicals content of their products.
- Supervising and monitoring compliance with international and national chemicals legislation.
- Informing of the extent of and risk associated with the use of chemicals.

Improved knowledge of the importance of recreation and outdoor life for the promotion of good health has provided a new dimension to issues related to the protection of and access to nature.



Steps towards Sustainability in Outdoor Life

Nature holds unending possibilities for varied and wonderful experiences. A source of inspiration and recreation to be enjoyed by all of us, and at the same time the basis for vigorous outdoor activity. Provided, of course, that nature is enjoyed in a sustainable way.

RESPECT AND CAUTION must be central to the way we enjoy nature and to outdoor activities in our natural environments. This is the fundamental idea behind the endeavours to improve the conditions for outdoor life and recreation included in the Environmental Action Programme 2001-2004.

The path towards developing outdoor life without harmful effects to nature and local populations leads through dialogue with outdoor life organisations. Activities have, therefore, been designed to improve contacts and pursue better-targeted dialogue between the authorities and organised outdoor life. Joint seminars on sustainability in outdoor life have become an important link in this cooperation.

Education and training, advice and information have all been applied so as to increase knowledge about rights and duties in the natural world, particularly in the Nordic coastal areas. These activities have laid the foundation for future emphasis on the right of common access as the model for outdoor life in the Nordic countries.

In the Nordic Region nature is a valuable resource, which must be used with care. The objectives of the Nordic Council of Ministers are

- To ensure that outdoor life is based on the principles of sustainable development and on protecting nature for the benefit of human health and wellbeing.
- To promote free access to nature with special emphasis on traditional Nordic outdoor activities based on the right of common access.



Important results 2001-2004

- Recommendation to outdoor life organisations in the field of sustainable outdoor life.
- Information about the right of common access in Nordic coastal areas.
- The projects “Sustainable Outdoor Life” and “Environmental Considerations in the Tourism Sector”. These projects aim at establishing criteria for the environmental labelling of organised ecotourism and at international classification systems.
- Seminars on the protection and safeguarding of natural environments and on the link between natural resources and the economic interests of local communities.
- Consultation of NGOs on the development of practical advice and models for solving conflicts about the use of land.

Nature not only provides us with recreation. Access to Nordic natural areas in all their many forms is often fundamental to our identity and to insight into ecological connections.

Safeguarding Nature's Treasures

Future generations have just as much right to enjoy our unique natural treasures as today's. Within the framework of Nordic cooperation extensive efforts have been made to improve our insight into nature and to strengthen and develop the protection of Nordic nature.



WETLANDS, VIRGIN MOUNTAIN AREAS, hill pastures, hardwood forests, coral reefs and marshes are home to numerous endangered bird and animal species. Nordic environmental cooperation is aimed at reversing the negative trend for biodiversity by 2010. During the period under review some of the cooperation activities have been aimed at

- Improving the protection of Nordic nature, its different types, and of endangered plant and animal species.
- Recreating ecological balance in the Baltic Sea and the North Sea.
- Safeguarding the diversity of Nordic landscapes as well as our citizens' opportunities of enjoying them.

Action areas and activities cover the whole spectrum from publishing information material to insightful initiatives to ensure the implementation of international conventions on the protection of nature.

Cooperation with the Baltic States has been intensified and networks against environmental crime have been established between the responsible authorities. One task for these networks is to step up measures to combat illegal trade in protected birds and birds' eggs.

Guardians of Wetlands

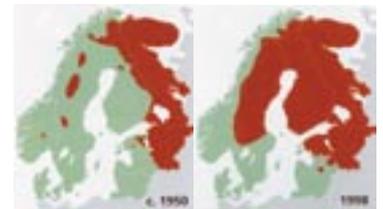
By presenting reports in international fora on the state of the Nordic wetlands and on their need for further protective measures, Nordic cooperation has directed more attention to Nordic wetlands internationally. Activities have also been aimed at producing documentation and good examples of what the Nordic countries are doing to implement the international Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The fight against environmental crime such as illegal trade in protected birds is to be promoted through a new Nordic network.





The Nordic variety of the Brown Bear, which used to be an endangered species, is growing ever stronger and constitutes an example of how a species can be protected by means of active and combined measures. However, discrepancies in the countries' hunt and preservation laws continue to affect the range of the bear. Only environmental cooperation will secure a long-term future for the bears of Northern Europe.



A small brochure has been produced with the purpose of increasing public knowledge about the biological riches of wetlands. The brochure has been published in all the Nordic languages.

Protecting Landscape Values

The views shared by the Nordic countries about the importance of integrating cultural and natural values have considerable impact on the efforts to safeguard the character and diversity of landscapes. One objective is to achieve the goals of the European Landscape Convention.

Action plans for the protection of natural and cultural environments in the Arctic as well as criteria and principles for the management of geological formations in and the cultural heritage of Greenland, Iceland and Svalbard are good examples of efforts made in recent years to safeguard valuable landscapes.

Important results 2001-2004

- Publication of books and brochures on endangered species, types of nature, and on protected nature in the Nordic countries.
- Information material on the management and protection of wetlands in the Nordic countries in accordance with the Ramsar Convention.
- Support for the establishment of Natura 2000 areas in the Baltic States, primarily education and training and cooperation projects on the management of protected areas.
- Charting the Nordic marine areas with a view to improving our knowledge of different types of marine and maritime nature that require special protection and methods for ensuring this.
- Nordic/Baltic network on cultural environments and landscapes.

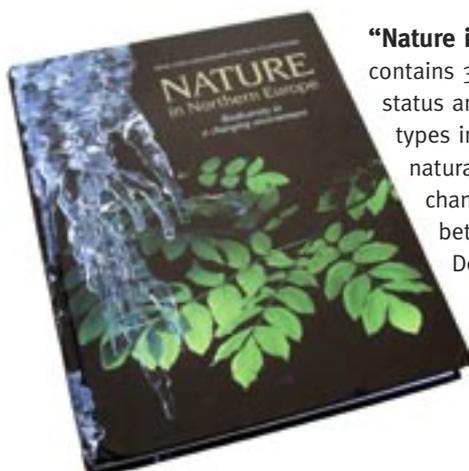
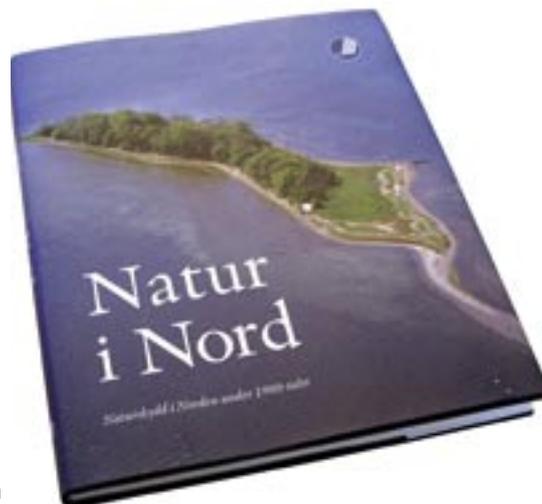
A Nordic Nature Manifesto

The book **“Nordic Scenery”** is the most extensive project in the 30-year-history of the Working Group for Nature, Outdoor Life and Cultural Environments. It is an impressive manifesto of the natural treasures, which Nordic cooperation wants to protect.

Nordic Scenery depicts the biological diversity of Nordic landscapes and presents the efforts made to protect the richness of plant and animal species. The book also describes Nordic cooperation in accordance with the Ramsar Convention and World Heritage Conventions as well as the connection with the EU Habitat Directive. The book contains several descriptions of how the individual countries are using different protective methods to maintain unique types of nature.

The book was written in the Scandinavian languages (Danish, Swedish and Norwegian), and it has been translated into English, Finnish and Icelandic. In addition to being an abundant information package, the book is useful in education and training and in the transfer of know-how in for example the Baltic States and Russia.

http://www.norden.org/pub/miljo/miljo/sk/No3_5.asp



“Nature in Northern Europe”

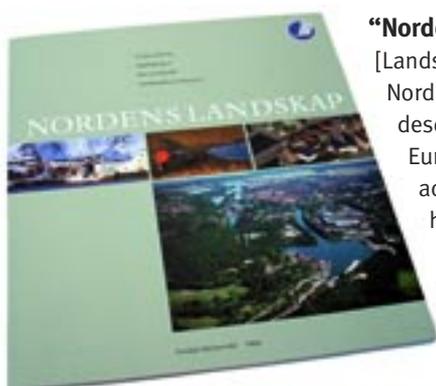
contains 300 pages of facts and analyses of the status and development of species and nature types in Northern Europe. The book describes natural biological diversity characterised by change and is the outcome of cooperation between ten countries: Iceland, Scotland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Northwest Russia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

<http://www.norden.org/pub/miljo/miljo/sk/esite.pdf>



Endangered Nature Can be Saved

With active management and protected areas endangered nature types and species can be saved. This is evident in the brochure on biological diversity in the Nordic Region that was submitted to the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002. The purpose was to give a description of the situation for the diversity of species in Nordic flora and fauna ten years after the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity. http://www.norden.org/pub/miljo/miljo/sk/ANPo2_739.asp



“Nordens landskap”

[Landscapes of the North] (2003) describes Nordic landscape types and includes several descriptions of how the objectives of the European Landscape Convention could be achieved.

<http://www.norden.org/pub/miljo/miljo/sk/TN2003550.asp>

From Waste to Resource

Slurry and compost as a fertiliser fit for living-room pot plants? The cycle has not been completed yet, but during the period under review, Nordic cooperation on waste disposal has contributed to the improvement of the treatment and monitoring of, and to more stringent thresholds for European slurry.

REDUCED WASTE QUANTITIES, waste free of harmful substances and more efficient use of resources. These are some of the objectives of Nordic cooperation in the waste disposal field.

Contributions to the EU Waste Directive and efforts to improve the efficiency of rules and regulations on waste management have characterised activities during the period. These include efforts to introduce common, more stringent thresholds for the use of slurry and compost as fertilisers. This is all done to facilitate resource utilisation development without endangering human health and our environment.

Electronic Waste on the Agenda

Measures to enhance recycling and recovery of packaging material are extensive, but far from the only action area for Nordic cooperation in the field of waste management. Other important focal areas are efforts to lower threshold values for heavy metals as well as coordination and cooperation in the implementation of the EU directive on the handling of electronic waste.

In recent years, Nordic cooperation has also mapped out and developed common methods for treating waste fractions that only occur in limited quantities in the individual countries.

Reducing the volume of environmentally harmful substances contained in waste has been given priority. Brominated flame retardants, organic toxins and infectious organisms in compost and slurry are examples of substances very much at the centre of attention for Nordic cooperation aimed at achieving “cleaner” waste.

Cleaner Products on the Shelves

- During their entire lifecycle, goods and services - from production over consumption to waste - should not have a negative impact on human health and the environment. Furthermore, the entire lifecycle of products must be characterised by the efficient use of resources. How such products are to find their way to the shelves of our shops is described in a joint Nordic Product-orientated Environmental Strategy (POMS).
- Among the tools of the Strategy to achieve cleaner and less harmful products are environmental labelling, lifecycle analysis, and the principles of “Ecodesign”. Information is another key issue. Thanks to Nordic measures consumers and professional buyers can find out about the demands that can be made and get advice and tips about alternative products over the Internet on a special Nordic website on green shopping. <http://www.norden.org/miljoe/sk/innkjop.asp>
- Efforts to reduce environmental impacts from production and consumption also include the highlighting of best available techniques (BAT). Reports have been drawn up for a number of industries like slaughterhouses, fish farms and dairies. Under the auspices of the Strategy action has been taken to improve knowledge about environmentally adjusted product development in the Baltic States.



Waste quantities as well as the content of substances harmful to health and the environment must be reduced, and the resources in such waste better utilised. Priority is given to efforts to reduce overall waste volumes in the Nordic countries.

Success Requires Cooperation

Today we more or less know what environmental problems we are facing and what needs doing. But without the cooperation of the people who have the key to reducing environmental impacts we run the risk of getting nowhere. Cooperation with the agricultural and forestry sectors and the fisheries sector is, consequently, of central importance to Nordic environmental cooperation.

NORDIC COOPERATION is aimed at protecting natural and cultural values as well as biodiversity in agriculture and forestry. The importance of forests and woods to outdoor activities must be factored in, and the impact of industries reduced.

In the agricultural sector one of the results of cooperation is an inventory of how the countries on the Baltic Rim have implemented international agreements and directives on the emission of pesticides and nutrients.

Efforts to enhance environmental considerations in forestry have been aimed at ensuring diversity of forest and nature types, and at safeguarding biodiversity as well as the landscape value of forests and woods. Internationally, Nordic working groups have been actively working to ensure a sustainable use of the world's forests in various fora.

Forests are an important resource in many respects. They are rich in biodiversity, important for outdoor activities and possess special landscape values.

With Sustainable Fisheries in Mind

In the fisheries sector various environmental considerations require information on and insight into the environmental impact of fisheries, by-catches and endangered stocks, but also methods for preventing and



resolving conflicts of interest between the protection of species and the fisheries industries. A new method for placing local emphasis and for creating dialogue between the different players is among the most important results of the programme period.

Experience gathered in the fisheries sector has also been used in drawing up a Nordic proposal for an EU fisheries policy Green Book. Special emphasis has been put on the usefulness of regional fisheries management. In parallel mention should be made of Nordic efforts in the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) for common standards and treatment methods for ballast water.



Important results 2001-2004

- Inventory of how the countries in the Baltic Sea Area implement their international commitments in respect of the emission of nutrients and use of pesticides in agriculture.
- Workshops and seminars with Nordic participants on subjects such as GMO and pesticide control.
- Consultancy service to agricultural producers to protect cultural environmental values in agricultural landscapes.
- Nordic researchers' network in the field of lifecycle analysis for fish.
- Input to the IMO concerning problems linked to the handling of ballast water as well as to the need for common standards and treatment methods.

Nordic cooperation on marine environments has included efforts to influence the EU fisheries policy and to promote international rules for local management of natural resources.

Nordic Influence on the International Agenda

Air pollution, the dissemination of chemicals, climate impact as well as efforts to improve marine environments are all examples of areas on which Nordic environmental cooperation has left a clear imprint in an international context. Through input such as databases and various tools for environmental improvement the Nordic countries try to influence international decisions benefiting the environment in the entire region.



INTERNATIONAL RULES and regulations affect the environment in the Nordic Region as well as the conditions for efficient regional and national environmental action. Consequently, high priority is given to international activities. And the preconditions for acting effectively are in place. Shared problems, similar administrative and management systems and rules form a stable Nordic platform on which to take vigorous international action.

During the period under review, a big steps forward in the field of international activities has been the development of a new model for describing the link between pollutant emissions, environmental impacts and the effect on human health both as regards ozone close to the ground and particles (IAM, the "Integrated Assessment Model").

Intensive Chemicals Activities

In order to attain a reduction in the use of chemicals Nordic experts have been active primarily in the context of the EU, UNEP and OECD as well as under the HELCOM and OSPAR Conventions.

The findings of Nordic cooperation on chemicals have, for example, been taken on board in the EU classification directive and in the EU chemicals strategy REACH. Several carcinogenic, mutagenic and reproduction toxic substances have been moved to a more hazardous category at the initiative of Nordic working groups.

Efforts have also been made in connection with the EU network of protected areas, Natura 2000, particularly as regards the implementation of the Habitat Directive in the Baltic States. Also, the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands has been given priority by the gathering of information in the Nordic countries and the Baltic States.

In 2001-2004 Nordic cooperation has contributed new knowledge about the link between long-range pollution and environmental quality and impacts both as regards ozone close to the ground and particles harmful to human health.





Nordic cooperation is aimed at safeguarding unique Nordic nature and at improving the environmental quality for today's and tomorrow's generations. A challenge that relies heavily on international agreements.

Marine Environments a Major Challenge

Eutrophication as well as the dissemination of pollutants and harmful substances have been central issues in Nordic cooperation on marine environments. Efforts have primarily been focused on the implementation and follow-up of the objectives in the HELCOM and OSPAR marine environment conventions. The aim continues to be the objective of the OSPAR Convention, i.e. to totally stop the input of hazardous chemical substances into the marine environment by 2020.

Clean Air and Particles

Diffusion models for pollution are a key to understanding large-scale environmental problems and their impacts. They are important signposts when it comes to selecting measures and can be used for following up and evaluating efforts. During the period, special attention has been paid to the development of a new diffusion model for airborne particles within the framework of the EU programme "Clean Air for Europe" (CAFÉ). Within Nordic cooperation a new model for assessing the dissemination of nutrient salts and their eutrophication impact on marine environments has also been produced.

Important to know about Chemicals

Establishing criteria for substances regarded as hazardous is an important component in Nordic cooperation on chemicals. During the programme period, a database (NSDB) containing approximately 18,000 presumptively hazardous chemicals has been set up. A number of the substances in the database have also been included in the "List of Substances of Possible Concern" in the OSPAR Convention.

Another Nordic database (SPIN) collects information on chemicals in circulation in the Nordic countries and provides decision makers with a basis for risk assessment for instance in connection with authorisation tests for new industries.



A garden centre's shelves with weed killers and pesticides reveal some of the challenges in reviewing, controlling and phasing out among the thousands of harmful chemicals and hazardous substances that we encounter in our daily lives.

Read more about Nordic cooperation on chemicals in: "Nordisk samarbejde giver bedre resultater, seks historier om farlige kemikalier" [Nordic Cooperation Yields Better Results, Six Stories about Hazardous Chemicals], Nordic Council of Ministers, 2002.



Additional measures are required to combat the eutrophication of Nordic marine areas. Follow-up measures to the Environmental Action Programme show that the input of nutritional salts to Nordic marine areas has been reduced, but it is estimated that the target of halving emissions by 2005 (compared to 1985) will only be reached for phosphorus.

Common Testing Methods

Nordic cooperation has also contributed actively to the development of two databases for classifying substances that are hazardous to the environment and human health (H-Class and N-Class). The N-Class database is used by authorities, producers and importers to identify substances hazardous to the environment. (N-Class on the Internet: www.kemi.se/nclass/default.asp)

There is also cooperation on joint methods for testing the hazardousness of various chemicals. The methods form the basis for the classification of the chemicals and for risk assessment. Nordic cooperation has also made proposals to and supported the OECD work with chemicals – work that is deemed to have great impact on the control of chemicals around the world.

Groundbreaking Climate Cooperation

Vigorous climate action has high priority. After several years of preparation, an important milestone was reached in Nordic cooperation on climate on 20 November 2002. Following an agreement between the Nordic countries, the Baltic States, Poland, Russia, and Germany it was decided to establish cooperation on emission reductions in the Baltic Sea Region in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol rules.

The decision to initiate experimental projects in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol rules on Joint Implementation (JI) includes both a political framework agreement and a joint investment fund aimed at facilitating implementation. Activities will encompass comprehensive competence and capacity building in the recipient countries.

Examples of International Rules as the Focal Point of Nordic Environmental Cooperation

- The Climate Convention (reduced emissions of greenhouse gases)
- The Basel Convention (handling of waste and hazardous waste)
- OSPAR (Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic)
- HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment Commission)
- The CLRTAP Convention, the EU ceiling directive and the Gothenburg Protocol (long-range transboundary air pollution)
- CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)
- The Stockholm Convention (cessation of emissions of Persistent Organic Pollutants)
- The Ramsar Convention (wetlands)
- The Habitat Directive/Natura 2000 (EU legislation and network for the protection of endangered nature and species)
- The Montreal Protocol (phasing out ozone depleting substances)
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (protection of biodiversity)
- The Water Directive (EU legislation on the protection of groundwater, lakes, coastal waters, etc.)

The overall objective of Nordic cooperation on climate is linked to the objectives of the Climate Convention: greenhouse gases in the atmosphere must be stabilised at a level where human impact on the climatic system is not hazardous to human health and ecosystems.



The Adjacent Areas – a Shared Responsibility

Mass tourism, defective purification technologies and waste handling, and the destruction of environments are still serious threats to natural environments in large parts of the areas adjacent to the Nordic Region. Consequently, in recent years Nordic cooperation has concentrated its efforts on increasing environmental aid for measures primarily taken in the Baltic States and Russia.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR environmental remedial action in the Adjacent Areas calls for measures in the countries affected, but also for active international efforts. Nordic cooperation includes bilateral cooperation as well as financing through investment bodies such as the NIB and NEFCO.

Know-how and technology transfers are important components in this context. Two seminars have been held (Tallinn in 2002 and St Petersburg in 2003) on the EU Northern Dimension and on environmental cooperation in the Adjacent Areas. At the centre was the planning of joint projects in fields such as water, health, chemicals, nature protection and biodiversity, the eutrophication of marine environments as well as clean technologies and environment management. It was decided to initiate cooperation with Russia in several areas

A special Action Programme for the EU Northern Dimension was discussed at a ministerial conference (Ministers of the Environment, the Barents Ministers and the Council of the Baltic Sea States) in Luleå in 2003. The Nordic cooperation partners actively took part in the conference. At the conference it was decided to together take up all the urgent environmental issues within the EU Northern Dimension with the European Commission.

Operation Arctic Region – a Future Challenge

- The days when lone adventurers trekked to our northernmost latitudes are over. Today the Arctic is an exotic tourist destination for groups of curious travellers. To sustain increasing impacts on sensitive ecosystems, environmental measures in the region have been given a high priority.
- Environment protection, climate change and the participation of the local population are central to Nordic cooperation on development in the Arctic.
- The action plan formulated for the region encompasses ten different projects including,
 - criteria for nature protection and the description of the status of individual species,
 - environmental monitoring,
 - local Agenda 21, and
 - increased considerations for biodiversity in view of growing tourism.
- The challenge of safeguarding the environmental quality of the Arctic has only just started. In 2001-2004 Nordic efforts for the benefit of this icy kingdom have, however, pinpointed a number of important problems that need to be solved to ensure sustainable development in the Arctic Region.

Important results 2001-2004

- The creation of a local Agenda 21 for the Arctic including strategies for the involvement of the local population in development matters.
- Information and knowledge build-up to enhance environmental considerations in the tourism sector.
- Studies of the impact of trawling and dredging in Arctic waters.
- Initiation of a seabird database.
- Action plan including, for instance, new protection criteria for geological formations in and for the cultural heritage of the Arctic (Greenland, Iceland, and Svalbard).
- Education and training for nature guides and the preparation of teaching material on Arctic nature.



Nordic cooperation on the Arctic includes activities in Greenland, Iceland and Svalbard – islands with much in common, but also major differences as regards types of nature and environmental problems.



THE HEALTH OF THE CITIZENS AND THEIR OPPORTUNITIES to enjoy Nordic nature are at the centre of attention in Nordic cooperation on the environment. In recent years this cooperation has been concentrating on implementing a special Environmental Action Programme (2001-2004).

Programme evaluation shows that environmental cooperation in the Nordic countries is important – not only to the Nordic countries themselves, but also for international endeavours to improve the environment. Today we have many examples of how Nordic cooperation has left its imprint on international fora. Concerning the transboundary diffusion of harmful particles and chemicals, Nordic cooperation has been able to contribute much new and important knowledge. In the Baltic Sea Area, regional cooperation is breaking new ground following a decision to test the tools of the Kyoto Protocol for the reduction of climate gas emissions.

This brochure is a summary of the evaluation of the Environmental Action Programme. Read more about Nordic environmental cooperation and the Environmental Action Programme at www.norden.org/miljoe.



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Nordic Council of Ministers

The Nordic Council of Ministers is a body for cooperation between the governments and the ministers of the Nordic countries. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands participate in Nordic cooperation. The region has approximately 24 million inhabitants and seven official languages.