

Meeting of the Finnish-Norwegian Joint Working Group on Arctic Railway – 2nd Meeting

Date August 28th, 2018
Time 10:00 – 13:00 pm
Location Regional Council of Lapland (Hallituskatu 20 B), Rovaniemi, Finland

Participants

Finland:

Lindström Sabina	Director, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Vihavainen-Pitkänen Marjukka	Senior Advisor, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Niiranen Ari	Director-General, Ministry of the Environment
Noukka Mirja	Division Director, Planning and Projects, Transport Agency
Rimpiläinen Anni	Senior Adviser, Transport Agency
Suvanto Tuomo	Transportation System Specialist, Transport Agency
Ylinampa Jaakko	Director-General, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Lönström Riitta	Planning chief, Regional Council of Lapland
Lohi Timo	Development Manager, Region of Northern Lapland Municipality
Riipi Mika	County Governor, Regional Council of Lapland
Paltto Heikki	I Vice President, Sámi Parliament
Feodoroff Veikko	Skolt Sámi Elected Trustee, Skolt Sámi Village Committee
Hartikainen Pirkka	Area Manager of Lapland, Sitowise
György Bernadett	Interpreter
Rinkineva Ville	Ministry of Transport and Communications

Norway (via videoconference):

Kvalheim Eirik	Senior Advisor, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Vaage Jarle	Head of Section, Norwegian Railway Directorate
Alvheim Sturla	Senior Adviser, Norwegian Railway Directorate
Selmer Eirik	Senior Advisor, Finnmark County Municipality

Id Versionumero

Gjølme Torhild

Head of the Agricultural Department,
County Governor of Finnmark**Minutes of the Meeting on 28th August 2018**

Representatives from the Finnish and Norwegian ministries and agencies responsible for transport matters of the states, and the representatives of indigenous Sámi people met in Rovaniemi on the 28th of August 2018 to review the situation of the assignment given to the Finnish-Norwegian Joint Working Group on the Arctic Railway.

The working group's assignment is to continue the study on an Arctic railway line (Rovaniemi-Kirkenes routing) and examine the prerequisites of such a project as well as prepare a suggestion for the project's future steps. The basis of this work is the former study on the Arctic rail line, published on the 9th of March 2018.

This meeting was the second meeting of the joint working group, the first one was held in Helsinki on 30th May 2018. The Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications convened and chaired the meeting.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the welcome and opening remarks by the chair of the meeting Sabina Lindström.

Mrs. Lindström informed the group that the Minutes of the First Meeting (30th May 2018) has been sent via e-mail to the participants of the joint group. She suggested the minutes to be approved if no further comments arose. The minutes were approved with no amendments.

2. Welcome Introductions

The members of the working group present in the meeting introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda of the meeting was approved.

4. Sub-groups organization and presentation of their working plans

It was stated that this is a good time to check that the sub-groups are working towards the right direction and that their plans meet the goal of each sub-group and the joint group fully-formed.

Each of the three sub-groups introduced briefly their work so far, their plan and timeframe.

1. Permission and planning sub-group, Anni Rimpiläinen

Members of the sub-group are:

Rimpiläinen Anni Senior Adviser, Finnish Transport Agency

Vihavainen-Pitkänen

Marjukka Senior Adviser, Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications

Lindberg Jussi	Project Manager, Finnish Transport Agency
Alvheim Sturla	Senior Adviser, Norwegian Railway Directorate
Reisz Silje	Senior Adviser, Norwegian Environment Agency
Tapio Juha	Head of Unit, ELY Centre, Lapland
Pentha	
Sunna Marie	Husbandry Director, The County Governor of Finnmark
Sörensen Stian	Regional Planner, Finnmark County Municipality
Trasti Vegar	Head of Planning, Sør-Varanger Municipality
Lönnström Riitta	Planning chief, Regional Council of Lapland
Salokangas	
Annika	Consultant, Sitowise Oy
Ylinampa Jaakko	substitute, Director-General, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Kvalheim Eirik	substitute, Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications
Vaage Jarle	substitute, Head of Section, Norwegian Railway Directorate

The task of this sub-group is to focus on the design process and find out what permissions (environmental, building, etc.) are needed.

It was emphasised that the sub-group is still in a pre-phase and no real action has yet happened. According to the study by Sitowise, the railroad routing will be marked as a future reservation for the land use plan of Northern Lapland. It was emphasised that it is important to keep all planning in line and co-ordination with the land use plan. The sub-group will need some designers from Norway to consult and help to plan the Norwegian part of the railroad.

The sub-group is taking into account the opportunity of building the railroad to meet the standards of a high-speed line in the future, though building a high speed line is not specifically planned.

It was also emphasised by the participants that the joint group is not in a general planning phase and that in the time given it is only possible to achieve a list of relevant points to be taken into account as well as permissions needed.

It was noted that the railroad would be built through the Sámi home district. This will effect the reindeer herding and Sámi people in using their homeland as well as reindeer husbandry as a livelihood. A proper impact analyses study must be made during the planning process bearing in mind the Sámi culture and livelihood.

2. Environmental impacts and Sámi questions -sub-group, Jaakko Ylinampa, on behalf of Timo Jokelainen

Members of the sub-group are:

Jokelainen Timo	chairperson Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Tapio Juha	representative, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Järviluoma Eira	reserve representative, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Rimpiläinen Anni	Senior Adviser, Finnish Transport Agency
Kalske Tiia	
Henrika	Environmental protection department, The County Governor of Finnmark
Austad Nina M.	Adviser - Sámi language, culture and society, Finnmark County Municipality

Kvernstuen
 Mikkel S. Adviser - water management, Finnmark County Municipality
 Sindre Torp community planner, Sør-Varanger Municipality
 Kvalheim
 Eirik Vårdal Adviser, Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications
 Feodoroff Veikko representative, Skolt Sámi Village Committee
 Harju Terhi reserve representative, Skolt Sámi Village Committee
 The representative of the Norwegian Railway Directorate will be nominated later.

The task of this sub-group is to evaluate the impacts of the railroad on both nature and the indigenous peoples (Sámi).

Work will mostly be carried out as part of ordinary official duties in the ELY Centre, the office of the County Governor of Finnmark and Sámi organisations. At this point there is no need for a consultant because the scope is so wide and no specific part can be appointed to a consultant company. Communication will be organised mainly via Skype and email.

A question was asked on the differences in legislation between Norway and Finland on this field. It was stated that some differences exist. Furthermore, the international convention on environmental impacts across borders (The Espoo Convention) was mentioned.

It was emphasised by the Sámi representatives that also actual meetings should be held in addition with Skype-conferences and emails. The representatives were worried that those attending the sub-group as elected officials don't have the same time resources as those working on the project by virtue of office. It was agreed that the sub-group plans to hold a kick-off meeting and then continue work by Skype and email.

3. Financing –sub-group, Marjukka Vihavainen-Pitkänen and Tuomo Suvanto

Members of the sub-group are:

Vihavainen-Pitkänen

Marjukka	Senior Adviser, Networks department, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Suvanto Tuomo	Transportation System Specialist, Transport Agency
Toivonen Seppo	Development Manager, Transport Agency
Ylinampa Jaakko	Director General, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Tapio Juha	Project manager, Lapland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Martikainen Mikko	Ministerial Adviser, Innovations and Enterprise Financing, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
Ingman Tiina	Head of Financial and Legal Group, Innovations and Enterprise Financing, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
Lohi Timo	Development Manager, Region of Northern Lapland Municipality
Alvheim Sturla	Senior Advisor, Norwegian Railway Directorate

The sub-group has discussed the need and opportunity to use consultants. The Ministry of Transport and Communications of Finland has sent a request for a consultant company to provide with a study of the financing aspects of the project. The consultant company CAPEX Advisors has given a proposal on that work.

Capex proposes that the study would be divided into two parts. The first one is the project backgrounds and different aspects of the project that will affect the financing structure. The

second part is to evaluate different models of alternative financing. The plan is to use consultants for the material and the sub-group to approve them.

A kick-off meeting will be held soon after this meeting, date still to be announced.

It was pointed out that according to the first meeting the sub-group's task is also to evaluate the financial impacts and benefits on the area and its different players, if the railroad is built.

There was some discussion on the role of the EU in such a project. Furthermore, it was noted that also the regional evaluation on the Norwegian side must be taken into account. The Norwegians will look more closely into the material provided by CAPEX and then get back on the issue.

At this point, the chair of the meeting, Sabina Lindström, proposed that in order for the sub-groups to have time to work on their issues and the steering group to get some preliminary results from them, no meeting would be held on the 16th of October as originally planned. Instead, the next meeting will be held in Helsinki on 6th November. This was agreed upon unanimously.

5. **Presentation of the planning process of the Regional Land Use Plan of Northern Lapland, including the railway routing of the Arctic Railway**

It is the statutory task of the Council of Lapland to draw up a Regional Land Use Plan. The land use plan has legal effect and is the basis for more detailed planning. The previous land use plan came into force in 2008 and the one planned at the moment is set out to become legally effective by the end of 2020.

In 2017 the Council agreed upon the future regional structure and corridors of Lapland. The Arctic corridor is part of this plan and the Arctic Railway line is also included in the corridor. The council has approved the railroad line. It must be kept in mind that the area, which the railroad would run through, is very special in the Finnish perspective, as on one hand its nature is unique and on the other hand it passes through the Sámiland raising specific cultural and economic issues.

Sitowise has completed a study on the Arctic Railway line from Rovaniemi via Sodankylä to Kirkenes, based on the decision of the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications to examine the possibilities of building a railroad. It was noted that a western route leading from Sodankylä via Kittilä to the Swedish border is also being investigated. It has been examined that the railway line would not harm the most important nature reserves in the area, having however negative impacts on reindeer herding. The main target however is to have the railroad established on the land use plan.

Some discussion arose about the role of the land use plan. It was noted that no similar process is going on in Norway and that Norwegians cannot match the details of the land use plan, because the discussions in Norway have been on a very general level so far. Due to these facts, the Norwegians might suggest that no specific line for the railroad is drawn on the Norwegian side but instead just a corridor in which the railroad could go. Some further internal negotiations are needed.

6. **Working group's schedule and scheme for actions**

The next meeting will be held in Helsinki on 6th November 2018. A more detailed invitation to the meeting will be distributed soon. The chair of the meeting stated that some preliminary

results from the sub-groups will be presented in the next meeting.

It was noted that some hearings of interest organisations could be held. The Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications can make a proposal on this and distribute it to the participants as well as coordinate possible hearings in the 6th November meeting. It was requested that the members of the steering group let the Ministry know about any interest groups who would possibly have an interest in being heard.

7. Any other business

The documents from the meeting were requested, in addition to English, to be translated into Finnish. It was decided to translate all the relevant documents also into both Sámi languages, the North Sámi language and the Skolt Sámi language.

It was agreed that the three agreed dates for meetings should be kept reserved and that the need for further meetings would be revised in the next meeting.

8. Close of the meeting

The chair of the meeting, Sabina Lindström, closed the meeting at 12.02.