



ABCGheritage project - promoting geotourism in northern Finland, northern Norway and the Kola Peninsula

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Nature tourism has been a growing business sector in the Barents area during the recent decades. With the purpose to develop nature tourism in a sustainable way, a cooperation project ABCGheritage - Arctic Biological, Cultural and Geological Heritage has been carried out. Project has received partial funding from the EU Kolarctic ENPI program. In the geoheritage part of the project the main activities were aimed to develop pro-environmental ways of geotourism in the area. The three main participants in the geoheritage part of the project are the Geological Survey of Finland, Northern Finland Office, the Geological Institute of the Kola Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Bioforsk Soil and Environment from northeastern Norway. The duration of the project is 2012-2014 and most of the work has already been completed even if most of the results are not published yet. Totally ten different tasks have been implemented in the geological part of the project. The largest task has been the preparation of a geological outdoor map and guide book of the Khibiny Tundra locating in the central part of the Kola Peninsula. In Finland already 11 such maps have been published, and the experiences gained during their production have been used in this project, too. Geological heritage trails to the Khibiny Tundra have also been created and they will be drawn on the map.

The second concrete result is the Barents Tour for Geotourist –guide, which will be published as a guide book, web pages and an exhibition. The route comprises ca 35 best geological demonstration sites along the circle route from northern Finland to northeastern Norway, from there to Kola Peninsula and then back to Finland. Information of the route will be available for all interested travelers.

In addition to the geological outdoor map of the Khibiny Tundra and “Barents Tour for Geotourists”-guide, the primary outputs of the project are the geological nature trails on the field, geological demonstration sites with uniform signposts and educational data packages on geological heritage. The main target groups are pupils and teachers at schools, especially on elementary stage. Tourists and locals visiting protected and recreational areas and other heritage sites will also benefit from the results. Personnel working in education and tourism will get new targets and background data for their clients. Final beneficiaries are local inhabitants, entrepreneurs and companies through positive impact to local economy and communities.