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Tourism Quality and Sustainability Programmes, Labels and Criteria in the Barents Region



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Abstract	<p>The Barents Euro-Arctic Region has a great potential to be even more attractive destination for international tourism, since tourism industry keeps growing despite the economic difficulties. Joint Working Group on Tourism of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council promotes tourism in the area. The Barents Interregional Tourism Action Plan (2013) highlighted the need to develop sustainability and quality of tourism. The Multidimensional Tourism Institute, Finland conducted a study on tourism quality and sustainability programmes, labels and criteria in the Barents region. The study was financed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (The Baltic Sea, Barents and Arctic region instrument).</p> <p>The practices of international and national quality systems, programmes, labels and criteria vary from one country to another in the Barents region. The research suggests that the national programmes, labels and certificates with sustainability as a part of quality development are most extensively used in Finland from the Barents region states. Certificates pertaining to sustainability are more frequently used in Sweden and Norway. On the other hand, quality can be seen as a component of sustainability. More emphasis is put on environment protection in the certificates of sustainable tourism in Sweden, Norway and Finland. Contrary to international certificates, the national certificates of sustainable tourism used in the Barents region (Finland, Sweden, Norway) have been developed in concordance with the needs of tourism companies. Tourism sector standards and certificates is a topic that has received little attention in the development of business in Russia. According to the Russian documents, among others, legislation and instructions, quality is acknowledged to be a central component in tourism service provision, but the role of environment and sustainability in quality is still undefined.</p> <p>On the basis of the analysis and other materials three recommendations were drawn up to develop tourism in the Barents region; to create and launch a Nordic umbrella label, to explain the significance of Nordic certifications and criteria as well as promoting their awareness and introduction in Russia and to recognize, implement and inform of common measures in the Barents region.</p>			
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Tiivistelmä	<p>Barentsin euroarktisella alueella on hyvät mahdollisuudet kehittyä entistäkin houkuttelevammaksi kansainväliseksi matkailukohteeksi matkailualan kasvaessa taloudellisista vaikeuksista huolimatta. Barentsin euroarktisen neuvoston yhdistetty matkailuyöryhmä edistää matkailua alueella. Barentsin alueidenvälisen matkailun toimintaohjelmassa (2013) korostettiin tarvetta kehittää matkailun kestävyttä ja laatua. Suomen Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti tutki Barentsin alueelle suuntautuvan matkailun laatuun ja kestävyteen liittyviä ohjelmia, merkkejä ja kriteereitä. Tutkimuksen rahoittaja oli Suomen ulkoministeriö (Itämeren, Barentsin ja arktisen alueen yhteistyön rahoitusinstrumentti).</p> <p>Kansainvälisten ja kansallisten laatujärjestelmien, ohjelmien, merkkien ja kriteerien käytännöt Barentsin alueella vaihtelevat maasta toiseen. Tutkimustulosten perusteella kansallisia ohjelmia, merkkejä ja sertifikaatteja, joissa kestävyys on osa laadun kehittämistä, käytetään Barentsin alueen valtioista laajimmin Suomessa. Ruotsissa ja Norjassa käytetään useammin kestävyteen liittyviä sertifikaatteja. Laatu voidaan toisaalta nähdä kestävyden osana. Ruotsissa, Norjassa ja Suomessa kestävä matkailun sertifikaateissa kiinnitetään enemmän huomiota ympäristönsuojeluun. Toisin kuin kansainvälisessä sertifikaatiossa, Barentsin alueella (Suomi, Ruotsi, Norja) käytettyjen kestävä matkailun sertifikaattien kehittämisessä on otettu huomioon matkailuyritysten tarpeet. Venäjällä matkailualan standardeihin ja sertifikaatteihin ei ole juuri kiinnitetty huomiota osana alan kehittämistä. Venäläisten asiakirjojen, mm. lainsäädännön ja ohjeistuksen, perusteella laatu tunnustetaan keskeiseksi osaksi matkailupalvelujen tuottamista, mutta ympäristön ja kestävyden osuutta laatuun ei ole määritetty.</p> <p>Analyyysin ja muiden materiaalien perusteella muotoiltiin kolme suositusta matkailun kehittämiseksi Barentsin alueella: yhteispohjoismaisen merkin luominen ja lanseeraaminen, pohjoismaisia sertifikaatteja ja kriteerejä koskevan tiedon ja tietoisuuden levittäminen ja sertifikaattien ja kriteerien käyttöönoton edistäminen Venäjällä sekä Barentsin aluetta koskevien yhteisten toimien tunnistaminen ja toteuttaminen sekä näistä toimista tiedottaminen.</p>			
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Referat	<p>Den euro-arktiska Barentsregionen har stor potential för att bli ett ännu mer attraktivt resmål för internationell turism, eftersom turistnäringen fortsätter att växa trots ekonomiska svårigheter. Barents euro-arktiska råd har satt ihop en arbetsgrupp för att främja ökad turism i området. I åtgärdsplanen för ökad turism i Barentsregionen (2013) betonades behovet av att utveckla hållbarhet och kvalitet. Multidimensional Tourism Institute i Finland genomförde en undersökning av kvalitets- och hållbarhetsprogram, märkningar och kriterier för turism i Barentsregionen. Studien finansierades av finska utrikesministeriet (instrument för Östersjö-, Barents- och arktiska regionen).</p> <p>Rutiner och metoder i nationella och internationella kvalitetssystem, program, märkningar och kriterier varierar mellan länderna i Barentsregionen. Undersökningen visar att nationella program, märkningar och certifieringar där hållbarhet är en del av kvalitetsutvecklingen, är vanligast förekommande i Finland, av de olika länderna i Barentsområdet. Hållbarhetscertifieringar är vanligare i Sverige och Norge. Å andra sidan kan kvalitet betraktas som en komponent inom hållbarhet. I Sverige, Norge och Finland har certifieringarna för hållbar turism ett starkare fokus på miljöskydd. I motsats till de internationella certifieringarna, har de nationella hållbarhetscertifieringarna (för turistnäringen) i Barentsregionen (Finland, Sverige, Norge) utvecklats i enlighet med turistföretagens behov. Standarder och certifieringar för turismsektorn har varit ett relativt förbiset ämne under branschens utveckling i Ryssland. Enligt rysk dokumentation – exempelvis lagstiftning och instruktioner – betraktas kvalitet som en central del av turistnäringens serviceleveranser, men miljö- och hållbarhetsaspekten av kvalitet är inte definierad.</p> <p>Med utgångspunkt i analysen och annat material, har man ställt upp tre rekommendationer för att skapa och etablera en nordisk "paraplymärkning" som betonar de specifika dragen i de nordiska certifieringarna och kriterierna. Syftet är att öka medvetenheten och främja etableringen i Ryssland, och att implementera och informera om gemensamma åtgärder i Barentsregionen.</p>			
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1 OVERVIEW OF TOURISM QUALITY CERTIFICATIONS IN THE BARENTS REGION

1.1 Main Principles of International Tourism Quality Certifications

To understand the significance and use of tourism quality systems, programs, labels and criteria, it is necessary to look into the most common quality definitions and international quality management systems. Furthermore, it is necessary to create a comprehensive overview of UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organisation) and EU comments on tourism quality and such concrete development programmes and criteria that aim at developing the competitiveness of the international tourism industry. It is worth noticing that the UNWTO and the EU have for long developed tourism from the viewpoint of sustainability and destinations. In the Barents region only Russia is a member of the UNWTO. The Integrated Quality Management in Destinations (IQM) model is in worldwide use (UNWTO 2016a). In the EU programmes and criteria supporting destination development have been created on the basis of IQM researches and best practices, such as [EDEN – European Destination of Excellence](#) and [ETIS – European Tourism Indicator System](#). (EU 2000; EU 2016a; EU 2016b.)

The UNWTO Quality Standards in Tourism Services programme aims to “improve the quality of products and services within the tourism industry” along the whole tourism service chain. The objective is to create such quality criteria for different services and products that meet the customers’ expectations and needs. This is done in cooperation with the various stakeholders. An integral part of this development programme is to systematically control quality on the basis of these criteria. The programme can be adjusted, which might require national or regional cooperation and implementation due to its fairly high costs. (UNWTO 2016b.)

Sustainability is part of total quality concept in international total quality management systems. An example of this is the ISO 9000 family of quality systems, which is in worldwide use (ISO 2015a). The EFQM Excellence Model in Europe and the Malcolm Baldrige (MB) Business Excellence Model in North America are both based on total quality management. The MB model was the first self-assessment tool for rating business quality that was based on excellence and quality awards. This is the reason why for example the self-assessment criteria of the Q1000 Diploma (Laatutonni) used in Finland is based on the MB model instead of the EFQM Excellent Model (Visit Finland 2016a).

This report discussed not only quality and sustainability certification systems, but also various labels, programmes and tools. In this context, the term “certificate” refers to any award that is directed at companies and usable in marketing, received by the company aimed meets certain requirements. Tourism certificates provide the consumer with the possibility to recognize the companies that follow the principles of quality criteria and sustainability. (Karlsson & Dolcinar, 2016; Synergy, 2000.)

Table 1. Examples of Both General Definitions for Quality and Those Linked with International Quality Systems, Programmes, Labels and Criteria

Quality System/ Operations Model	Definition for Quality	Source
General:	<p>There is no single definition for quality. Below are listed some of them.</p> <p>Quality as a technical factor of production can easily be diminished to reducing errors and incurred costs. However, there is also a more positive, cheerful aspect to quality. A well planned and efficiently produced product solves customers' problems, brings added value to their lives and justifies the price as well as continuity of business relations, which are cornerstones of successful operations.</p> <p>Other quality definitions drawn up by quality gurus such as J.M. Juran and W.E. Deming can be found at skymark.com.</p>	<p>Paul Lillrank https://people.aalto.fi/index.html?profilepage=isfor#!paul_lillrank http://www.skymark.com/resources/leaders/biomain.asp</p>
Total Quality Management (TQM)	<p>"TQM is an approach to improving the effectiveness and flexibility of organizations as a whole. It is essentially a way of organizing and involving the whole organization; every department, every activity, every single person at every level. For an organization to be truly effective, each part of it must work properly together, recognizing that every person and every activity affects, and in turn is affected by, others. TQM is a method for ridding people's lives of wasted effort by involving everyone in the processes of improvement; improving the effectiveness of work so that the results are achieved in less time."</p> <p>Oakland 1989</p>	<p>Miller, W.J. 1996. A Working Definition for Total Quality Management (TQM) for Researchers. Journal of Quality Management, Vol. 1, Issue 2, 149–160.</p>
European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)	<p>Quality equals excellence, which has been defined as follows: "excellence is about doing your best ..."</p> <p>"The EFQM Excellence Model provides a tool for conceiving which level we need to reach in order to achieve the results we want." "It helps us understand the role each part of our organisation needs to play in effectively implementing our strategy; whether that is an SME, a school or a global company." "And because what is considered excellent today will only be considered as adequate tomorrow, there is a continual improvement loop, feeding back the learning from the results achieved and using creativity and innovation to drive increased value for all the stakeholders."</p>	<p>EFQM 2016a. What is excellence. http://www.efqm.org/efqm-model/what-is-excellence</p>

ISO 9000:2015	<p>Fundamental concepts and principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sustained success through the implementation of a quality management system - ability to consistently provide products and services conforming to customers' requirements - confidence in the supply chain that the product and service requirements will be met - improving communication among interested parties through a common understanding of the vocabulary used in quality management - performance of assessments against the requirements of ISO 9001 - provision of training, assessment or advice in quality management - development of related standards 	ISO 2015a.
UNWTO		
Quality Standards in Tourism Services	<p>Overall quality of products and services within the tourism industry value chain to promote competitiveness within the industry. Quality is based on criteria and standards conforming to the needs and expectations of stakeholders and customers in particular. Quality is to be monitored and managed.</p>	<p>UNWTO 2016. Quality standards in tourism services. http://www2.unwto.org/technical-product/quality-standards-tourism-services</p>
EU		
Integrated Quality Management in Destinations (IQM)	<p>IQM is "... an approach to managing a tourism destination, which focuses on an ongoing process of improving visitor satisfaction while seeking to improve the local economy, the environment and the quality of life of the local community".</p>	<p>EU 2000: Towards Quality Rural Tourism - report</p>
European Tourism Indicators System	<p>ETIS encourages tourist destinations to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning. ETIS is a management tool supporting the sustainable approach to destination management, a monitoring system that is easy to use for collecting data and detailed information as well as an information tool for policy makers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders. <i>Note that there is no label or certificate for ETIS users.</i></p>	<p>UNWTO 2016. European Tourism Indicators System. http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators_fi</p>

Sustainability dimensions are economic, ecological, social and cultural. The economic dimension is especially strong in all international total quality management systems. It varies though how the other dimensions of sustainability (ecological, social and cultural) have been taken into account, if at all. The common TQM definition does not specify sustainability as such, but if it is a significant key process in business operations, it is taken into account from the viewpoint of processes. Sustainability is not emphasized in the ISO 9000 family quality systems or in the ISO 9001 certificate (ISO 2015a). The ISO system has separate environmental standards

ISO 14000 and the certificate ISO 14001 as well as social responsibility recommendations to be found in ISO 26000 (ISO 2015b; ISO 2016). On the other hand, one part of the EFQM Excellence strategy is creating a sustainable future, which means that unlike in 2003, social responsibility is no longer enough to reach excellence (Laatukeskus 2015). When striving for excellency, sustainability should be strongly included in all its dimensions.

The UNWTO Quality Standards in Tourism Services programme and, for example, the IQM programme as well as ETIS criteria are based on destination sustainability where all dimensions of sustainability have been taken into account comprehensively and quality is seen as part of sustainability.

Table 2. Dimensions of Sustainability in Universal Quality Definitions and Systems as well as in UNWTO and EU Quality Development Programmes and Criteria

	Economic	Ecological	Social	Cultural
General Definitions for Quality	☺	☹	☹	☹
Total Quality Management (TQM)	☺	☹	☹	☹
EFQM	☺	☺	☺	☺
ISO 9000:2015	☺	☹	☺	☹
Quality Standards in Tourism Services	☺	☹	☺	☹
Integrated Quality Management in Destinations (IQM)	☺	☺	☺	☺
European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS)	☺	☺	☺	☺

1.2 Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian Quality Certifications Used in Tourism

1.2.1 National Destination Marketing Organization Views on Quality

Table 3. National Destination Marketing Organizations' Views to Quality

National Organization	Views to Quality	Source
Visit Finland	"BtoB: Common, internationally acknowledged quality system or certificate for business to business operations and a sign of quality for business customers. The common system helps build mutual trust. BtoC: Quality and excellent customer service guarantee the success of your business in today's challenges. To	Visit Finland 2015; 2016c.

	<p>communicate the quality to customers. Social media channels such as reviews, 'third-party independent experiences work as quality assurance for the traveller.'</p> <p>"Visit Finland aims to ensure that the products and services found by visitors to Finland meet their expectations and quality requirements. The tourism companies are responsible for the product itself and its development, but Visit Finland aims to help companies with this work by providing information and developing tools."</p> <p>"Quality is an essential factor in product development. Visit Finland has created internationalization criteria as a tool for product development and to improve product competitiveness in the international market."</p>	
Visit Sweden	In Sweden quality is understood as sustainability.	Visit Sweden 2016. Hållbarhet. http://corporate.visitsweden.com/vart-ansvar/
Visit Norway & Innovation Norway	Norway's tourism strategy for years 2014–2020 emphasizes sustainability as a basis when taking the strategy into practice and concentrating on competitiveness, development and marketing when aspiring to become a competitive destination. The strategy does not mention quality development as such.	Innovation Norway 2016. http://www.innovasjon Norge.no/globalassets/reiseliv/tourism-strategy-innovation-norway-2014-2020.pdf

1.2.2 Tourism Quality Certificates Used in Finland, Sweden and Norway

The practices of international and national quality systems, programmes, labels and criteria vary from one country to another in the Barents region. In Finland especially such quality systems are used that are tailored for the tourism industry to develop overall quality and sustainability as part of it. In Sweden and Norway the sustainability viewpoint seems to be priority number one in developing tourism products and destinations. Quality in turn is developed as part of sustainability (see Chapter 3.2 for systems and labels connected with sustainability), for Sweden and Norway have relatively more systems, programs, labels and criteria connected with sustainability than Finland has (Tourism Ecolabels in the Nordics).

Quality systems based on quality award models, such as EFQM Business Excellence and Malcolm Baldrige (MB) Performance Excellence models, are used most in Finland. In Finland as early as in the late 1990s, self-assessment criteria and tourism quality award competition were developed on the basis of the MB model, to support tourism business in developing overall quality. Furthermore, destination-specific Destination Quality Net (DQN) and Destination Management Net (DMN) development programmes were launched. (Tekoniemi-Selkälä 2016.)

In 2001, on the initiative of the Finnish Tourism Board (today's Visit Finland) National tourism quality policy was developed and a result was the so-called Q1000 Diploma, which is mainly based on the tourism quality self-assessment criteria consistent with the previously mentioned MB. The Q1000 Diploma is extensively used all over Finland, and it includes in-company training and self-assessment tools. To support it, QualityNet is a system for the comparison of key figures, tailored for companies to compare their own results with those of their competitors. In Finnish Lapland, 45 hospitality and tourism companies have developed their business with the help of Q1000 Diploma. (Laatutonna 2016a; Laatutonna 2016b.) In Kainuu, Idän Taiga ry. organizes Wild Taiga Laatu Start Up quality trainings that have been tailored on the basis of the Q1000 Diploma to answer to the needs of the companies in the region (Wild Taiga 2016).

In Finland the official partner of EFQM is Laatukeskus Excellence Finland (brand name of the Finnish Quality Association), which organizes Excellence Finland Quality Award competitions. For instance, some hospitality and tourism businesses have achieved the 4-star EFQM Recognised for Excellence. (Laatukeskus 2016.) International quality award criteria are used less in Sweden than in Finland. Swedish Institute of Quality (SIQ) is the Swedish partner of EFQM. According to Mats Deleryd, CEO of SIQ, the EFQM model is not very widespread in Sweden. He did not specify whether any tourism businesses use the model. (Deleryd 2016.) In Norway the EFQM is not in official use at all, because the EFQM has no Norwegian partner organization that would promote the adoption of the EFQM model there. (EFQM 2016b.)

In the Barents region, ISO 9001 certificates have been awarded to companies in Finland and Norway. International ISO standards are coordinated by Finnish Standards Association (SFS), Swedish Standards Institute (SIS), Standards Norway (SN) and The Federal Agency on Technical Regulating and Metrology of Russian Federation (ROSSTANDARD). Each organization is member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). The main tasks of these standard-coordinating organizations are to draw up, ratify, publish and sell national standards and inform about them. The national standards are based on international or European standards. The certificates ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 are only awarded by certification companies, some of which have been accredited. (SIS 2016; NS 2016; SFS 2016.)

Sweden is the only country in the Barents region having a European hotel classification system. Sweden belongs to the HOTREC network, which is an umbrella association of hotels, restaurants and cafés in Europe. The Visita organization is responsible for hotel classifications in Sweden, and the inspections are conducted by Svensk Klassificering AB. (Visita 2016.) The star-classified hotels in Sweden can be found on website <http://www.hotelstars.eu/service/hotel-search/?fixedSearch=true&country=Sweden>.

Only two of the hotels have at least a five-star classification. In Norway the QualityMark system is used. On its basis the UNWTO and Norwegian Accreditation (NA) drew up a report called "Hotel Classification Systems: Recurrence of criteria in 4 and 5 stars hotels, in 2015". The report presents a thorough summary of the criteria of 4- and 5-star hotels in 30 European destinations and six destinations on global level. The report offers an overview of the existing hotel classifications as well as guidance on how to set up an official classification system. (UNWTO 2015.) The

Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries has decided not to take further steps to set up a national hotel classification system (Norwegian Accreditation 2016).

In the Barents region there are also some other national quality systems and programmes. For example camping areas have their own classification system. In Finland the quality label *Uniquely Finnish* (Maakuntien parhaat) is quite widely used as well as the National Classification of Countryside Accommodation (MALO) connected to it. *Uniquely Finnish* quality label may be applied for by small food, handicraft, rural tourism or service businesses. The companies must have a recognized quality system, high degree of domestic origin, a product/service acknowledged by an expert jury as well as a business-like method and quantity of production. (Maakuntien parhaat 2016.)

In years 2013–2015, Sweden had a quality certification system called Swedish Welcome that was aimed at accommodation and programme service companies. At the moment Swedish Welcome is a quality development tool that takes into account quality and hospitality as well as dimensions of sustainability in developing business operations. Therefore, it can also be regarded as a sustainability development tool. (Tourism Ecolabels in the Nordics.)

Since 2011 Norway has had a series of projects to create a national quality system for tourism programme services. Year 2016 has been the starting point for the main project which for instance aims at modifying and piloting the system. (Berglund 2016.)

1.3 Tourism Quality Certificates Used in Russia

The Russian tourism strategy until year 2020, approved by the Russian government, emphasizes the importance of adopting a uniform tourism destination classification system. The strategy also recognizes the need to create a classification and certification system to assure tourism service quality. Regional tourism information centres are developed with the help of standards and quality improvements. Service standardization is developed in the accommodation services, in particular. According to the Russian tourism strategy, a staff training is one of the most important measures in assuring tourism service quality. The standards may be changed yearly, wherefore it is important to follow the monthly standardization bulleting on the website of Russian Federal Agency of Technical Regulating and Metrology <http://www.gost.ru/wps/portal/en>.

In Russia legislation regulating tourism services is derived from the Federation tourism law (24.11.1994) and act (18.7.2007) as well as from the consumer act. Standardization, certificates, classifications and testimonials are used in further regulation.

The standards used in tourism are part of the state standardization system. Tourism service standardization aims to assure the notified level of requirements and quality as well as safety and security. State standards that are applied in tourism services are general requirements for tourism services (50690-2000), tourism information services, such as tourism information centres (56197-2014), tourism operators and agents (13809-2012), study and language travel (14804-2012) as well as adventure tourism (21103-2015). Further, there are about ten standards on the organization and competences of diving tourism.

Safety and security are defined by safety and security of tourism services (32611-2014), safety and security in unexpected situations (22.3.03-94), public services, definitions and terms (50646-94), planning of tourism services (50681-94) and accommodation requirements (51185-2008). The standard 50644-2009 defines safety and security in tourism services, and the main content concerns recognition of dangers and risk management. In particular the standard defines matters concerning fire safety and protection against crime, risk sources connected to toxicological, ecological, biological, military-political, and psychophysical and radiation and nuclear safety or security as well as means to reduce and eliminate risks.

Tourism operators are required to assess risks and choose the means to manage them. These include, among others, insurance, route planning, informing authorities, trip interruption, and health services as well as providing consumers with necessary, reliable and current information on the product and potential risks. Also tourists are given responsibility (following legislation, protection of nature and culture, residency regulations, insuring, health information as well as following the instructions). Russian tourism services also follow regulations on technical qualities that may apply to transportation vehicles, buildings or other devices. The technical regulations monitor for example safety and quality.

A licence is an authorization awarded to a tourism business. The licence is registered in the registry administered by Russian Federal Agency for Tourism <http://russiatourism.ru/operators/>. In the public register tourism business licences may be checked.

There are both obligatory and voluntary certifications. Obligatory ones are requirements concerning life, health and environment protections, such as certifications of excursion services and contract content of offering services (traveller's personal information, conditions, validity, insurance, force majeure, rights and obligations, etc.).

Certification may be given after obtaining the licence, i.e. authorization. In Russia the certification as proof of tourism service quality is awarded by the Ministry of Economic Development. A company may naturally also certify its operations in accordance with an ISO standard. The certification may take place through self-certification or by a consumer or a third party. In Russia the best known domestic certificates are awarded for example by National Tourism Association and National Hotel Classification System. Companies also have the quality certificate- "Best in Industry. The certificate is achieved by a company that regularly reports about its operations to statistics authorities. Several hotels have this certificate, such as the Meridian and Poljarnye Zorilla in Murmansk. The certificate is awarded by Business Rating Russia.



Figure 1. Certificate "Best in Industry"

Ministry of Culture in Russia instructs and regulates the national classification of tourism destinations (decree 11.7.2014, No. 1215 and its registration in Ministry of Justice 21.12.2015 No. 35474). The Russian hotel classification system has five levels from one to five stars. The classification criteria include hotel size, infrastructure / service level and location.

The register of licenced tourism businesses administered by the Russian Federal Agency for Tourism is an imperative source for checking whether the business is registered according to Russian legislation. The registered business meets the criteria on required capital and other prerequisites to operate (Law on tourism business prerequisites 24.11.1996). <http://russiatourism.ru/operators/>.

2 OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABILITY TOURISM CERTIFICATIONS IN THE BARENTS REGION

2.1 Main Principles of Sustainability Tourism Certifications

In order to analyse sustainability certifications used in the Barents region, it is necessary to be familiar with the understanding of sustainable tourism at both a global and national level. This helps in understanding how certifications have been developed and why some dimensions of sustainability are given more emphasis. In order to gain insights into how sustainability is understood, the concept of sustainable tourism coined by the UNWTO and the views of national tourism organizations are presented in Table 4. Environmental issues seem to take a paramount position while the cultural perspective is missing from the way sustainability is represented. Only the UNWTO concept of sustainable tourism and the view of Visit Norway refer to cultural issues by drawing attention to the host communities.

According to UNWTO, “sustainable tourism can be defined as tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”.

Table 4. Sustainability According to Marketing Messages of National Tourism Organizations

Sustainability according to the marketing messages of national tourism organizations	Source
(UNWTO)	http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5
"The Finns have always considered nature to be a caretaker and a provider that must be respected. Therefore these are aspects taken in consideration in everything – also in traveling. Once on the road, why not favour local products and services, use the public transportation or choose a hotel and restaurant that have been awarded with an ecolabel?" (Visit Finland)	http://www.visitfinland.com/article/sustainable-traveling-in-finland-x-5-2/
"Norway is a country of outstanding natural beauty, with dramatic waterfalls, crystal clear fjords, majestic mountains, and spectacular glaciers. Preserving this landscape, its communities, and their way of life is essential for locals and visitors alike."	https://www.visitnorway.com/about/sustainability/
"Swedes have an affinity with nature, probably because most have access to a countryside cottage and spend as much time there as they can foraging for mushrooms and berries, taking a dip in a lake, relaxing with family and friends and enjoying an unspoiled environment. Being sustainable in other words. This might be the reason that they are such avid recyclers and that sorting household waste in Sweden gives you bragging rights."	http://www.visitsweden.com/Things-to-do/Green-Sweden/

In Sweden, the concept of sustainable tourism is based on the UNWTO definition. Furthermore, the concepts of *ansvarsfull turism* (Responsible Tourism) and *ansvarsfullt resande* (Responsible Travel) are used in Sweden. Earlier the best known concept was *ekoturism* (Ecotourism). According to Visit Sweden's annual report on sustainable tourism (in Swedish only), tourism is characterized by openness and respect towards tourists, partners, owners and employees as well as the rest of society. ("Vårt arbete ska präglas av öppenhet och respekt mot besökare, partners, ägare och medarbetare, men också mot övriga samhället"). The sustainability image is based on the Brundtland Commission's and UNWTO definitions on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

An internet-based survey was conducted among tourism entrepreneurs and developers during the research. The Finnish survey respondents understood sustainability to be multidimensional, economic, social and ecological. Environment protection was the most common theme, although other dimensions received several mentions, too. For example, companies try to use local employees and producers as much as possible. Some Norwegian responses proposed different views to sustainability. It was seen that sustainability can be implemented for example with the use of an enterprise resource planning system. The concept of sustainable tourism was also questioned, because primarily tourism was seen to put a strain on the environment or because the term seemed unfamiliar in practice.

In the Barents region, a wide variety of certifications are used to identify and acknowledge tourism services and companies that perform according to sustainability principles. The Swedish Ecotourism certificate, "Nature's Best", for example, accredits single tourism services rather than whole companies. At the same time, the Nordic Ecolabel is awarded not to single tourism services, but to hotels and restaurants that are able to fulfil specific criteria set by the certification itself. Certifications such as ISO14001 are awarded on the basis of the objectives set by the company, but don't demand companies to meet established criteria. Rather they ask companies to make a commitment to gradually reducing their impact on the natural environment by setting their own environmental policy and objectives. As a result, the sustainability certifications used in the Barents region are diverse in nature – they can be awarded to a single service or an entire company. To be awarded a sustainability certification, companies need to meet the given criteria or develop their own sustainability policy which defines their own objectives and criteria.

Despite the variety and diverse nature of the certifications, there are also some issues in common:

- They include a log that can be used by the company in their communication with customers and other relevant stakeholders
- Local regulations and legislation are viewed as a minimum requirement for accreditation
- Certain criteria or requirements that need to be met by the companies being accredited
- An auditing or monitoring system that guarantees that the criteria or requirements of the certification are met
- An organization responsible for awarding and monitoring the certification
- There is a fee structure that is used to maintain the certification system.

2.2 International Sustainability Tourism Standards and Certifications in the Barents Region

Table 5 shows to which extent the four dimensions of sustainability (economic, environmental, social and cultural) are addressed by international certifications. A clear emphasis on the environmental dimension can be seen. Special attention is given to four main focus areas: waste management, transportation, and both water and energy efficiency. Other areas addressed are environmental education, use of recycling material, environmentally friendly food ingredients and animal welfare. The economic dimension is the second most important aspect addressed in the international sustainability certifications used in the Barents region. Nevertheless, there are big differences in how this dimension has been addressed. For example, ISO 14001, EMAS, EU-Ecolabel, Forum Anders Reisen and Nordic Ecolabel make very explicit the link between environmental issues and the economic objectives of the company. These certificates provide detailed information on how the minimization of environmental impacts contributes to promoting competitive advantage, reputation, cost reductions and customer satisfaction. While Blue Flag, Green Key, ECEAT and Travelife offer brief insights about the economic impact of the certification, TripAdvisor GreenLeaders and Mush with PRIDE do not address economic issues at all.

The social dimension of sustainability is only addressed by six international sustainability certifications: Blue Flag, Forum Anders Reisen, Green Key, Travelife, Responsible Travel and TripAdvisor GreenLeaders. While Blue Flag, Green Key and Travelife include criteria aiming to promote good community relations, good labour practices, health and safety, accessible services and ethical conduct towards customer. TripAdvisor GreenLeaders only includes one criterion that refers to the use of local food in the restaurant services of the accredited hotels.

The cultural dimension is clearly missing in the criteria used by the majority of international sustainability certificates. Only five out of thirteen certificates include criteria focusing on cultural responsibility. While ECEAT, Responsible Travel and Travelife briefly mention the protection of cultural heritage, Green Key and Forum Anders Reisen are the only certificates that are more specific about cultural sustainability. For example, Green Key requires companies not only to respect local culture, but also develop a code of conduct that helps them to work closely with indigenous communities and to maintain local historical sites and traditions. Forum Anders Reisen has several criteria dealing with cultural issues.

International sustainability certificates also differ in the area of applicability. For example, ISO 14001 and EMAS were developed for companies operating in different sectors and, as a result, can be used by any kind of tourism companies. Although the EU-Ecolabel and Nordic Ecolabel were developed for services and products belonging to different sectors, they offer a special set of criteria for accommodation and restaurant services. TripAdvisor GreenLeaders and Green Key were specially developed for the needs of accommodation and restaurant services. In addition to accommodation services, Travelife is also awarded to tour operators. Forum Anders Reisen was developed for certifying tour operators. ECEAT is a certification aimed at any kind of tourism companies operating in rural areas. A different target group is approached by Blue Flag and Mush with PRIDE. While the former is awarded to marines and boat tour operators, the latter is directed to tourism companies working with sledge dogs. Finally, Airport Carbon Accreditation was created for promoting the reduction of carbon emissions at airports.

There is a general agreement that sustainability and quality are closely interrelated. Although most of the international sustainability certificates used in the Barents region recognize it, few are explicit about their impact on service quality. ISO 14001, EMAS, Green Key and ECEAT are the only certificates that draw attention to the relationships between sustainability dimensions and quality.

Table 5. Coverage of Sustainability Dimensions by International Certification

	Economic	Environmental	Social	Cultural
ISO 14001	😊	😊	😞	😞
EMAS	😊	😊	😞	😞
EU-Ecolabel	😊	😊	😞	😞
Forum Anders Reisen	😊	😊	😊	😊
Airport Carbon Accreditation	😞	😊	😞	😞
Nordic Ecolabel	😊	😊	😞	😞
Blue Flag	😐	😊	😊	😞
TripAdvisor GreenLeaders	😞	😊	😐	😞
Green Key	😐	😊	😊	😊
ECEAT	😐	😊	😞	😐
Travelife	😐	😊	😊	😐
Responsible Travel	😊	😊	😊	😐
Mush with PRIDE	😞	😐	😞	😞

2.3 Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish Tourism Sustainability Certifications

This section discusses certifications from Finland, Sweden and Norway that are used in the Barents region (see Table 6). Some of these certifications were exclusively developed for the tourism sector, while others are more general in terms of their scope of applicability. In Finland, five national sustainability certifications used in tourism were identified: Green Tourism of Finland (GTF), EcoCompass, Priimatalli, Green Start and Green DQN. Similar to the international certification, it can be confirmed that the Finnish sustainability certifications used in the Barents Region put emphasis on the environmental dimension. Also these certifications focus specially

on areas such as waste management, transportation, and both water and energy efficiency. While Priimatalli's main focus is animal welfare, one of Green Tourism of Finland (GTF) environmental criteria is the offering of non-motorized service activities. The environmental dimension was also well covered by the two Norwegian (Ecotourism in Norway and Eco-lighthouse) and four Swedish certifications (Bra miljöval, KRAV, Nature's Best and Sapmi Experience Quality Mark) identified in this study.

As in the international sustainability certifications, the economic dimension continues to be the second most important aspect addressed in Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish sustainability certifications used in the Barents Region. Nevertheless, while all certifications draw attention to the economic aspect, Norwegian and Swedish certifications seem to be more explicit about their implications for a better reputation, competitive advantage and cost reduction through eco-efficiency. EcoCompass is the only Finnish sustainability certification that addresses the economic dimension of sustainability in the same way as Norwegian and Swedish sustainability certifications do. In the same way, Bra miljöval (Good Environmental Choice) is the only certification that focuses mainly on environmental uses while neglecting other dimensions of sustainability. The social dimension of sustainability is only addressed by some Finnish sustainability certifications.

The cultural dimension is clearly missing in the criteria used by the majority of Finnish and Norwegian sustainability certifications with the exception of Green Tourism of Finland (GTF). The criterion concerning location promotes the integration of local knowledge, culture and stories as part of services, awareness of local culture and traditions and menus based on local ingredients and traditional recipes. Thus Green Tourism of Finland (GTF) addresses the cultural dimension of sustainability. Swedish sustainability certifications are better at including the cultural dimension as an essential part of the sustainability criteria. Indeed, Nature's Best and Sapmi Experience Quality Mark not only emphasize the relationship between tourism and the Sami culture, but also show a good balance between the various sustainability dimensions. One reason for this is the fact that Nature's Best was used as a point of departure for the development of the Sapmi Experience Quality Mark.

In contrast to international sustainability certificates, national sustainability certificates used in the Barents region have been developed according to the needs of tourism companies. From the eleven national sustainability certifications that were identified, only five came from outside the tourism context. The Swedish Bra miljöval focuses on transportation and KRAV is used by companies using organic food. While the Finnish EcoCompass and Norwegian Eco-Lighthouse were developed for companies operating in different areas, Priimatalli is a Finnish certification awarded to horse stables offering trail riding services. Also it can be noted that national sustainability certifications can be awarded to any kind of tourism company, with the exception of Green DQN, which is directed at destinations, and Priimatalli, which is only awarded to horse stables. In comparison to international sustainability certifications, it seems that the relationship between quality and sustainability is clearly addressed and highlighted in the Finnish and Swedish certifications. In Sweden, the word quality is clearly emphasized in the name of one of the certifications: the Sapmi Quality Experience Mark. The Norwegian sustainability certifications are less explicit about how sustainability contributes to service quality.

Table 6. Coverage of Sustainability Dimensions by Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish Certifications

	Economic	Environmental	Social	Cultural
FINLAND				
Green Tourism of Finland (GTF)	☹	😊	😊	😊
EcoCompass	😊	😊	☹	☹
Priimatalli (stable classification of Trail Riding Union of Finland)	☹	☹	😊	☹
Green Start				
Green DQN®	☹	😊	☹	☹
NORWAY				
Ecotourism Norway				
Eco-Lighthouse	😊	😊	☹	☹
Sustainable Destination	In case of some certifications, precise information was not available on the internet.			
SWEDEN				
Bra miljöval (Good Environmental Choice)	☹	😊	☹	☹
KRAV	☹	😊	😊	☹
Nature's Best	😊	😊	😊	☹
Sapmi Experience Quality Mark	☹	😊	😊	😊

This report discusses both own and international tourism quality and environmental management systems, programmes and labels that are either *in use or under development*. In Norway Green Travel was introduced as an umbrella of labels which included certifications such as Ecotourism Norway, Nordic Swan Ecolabel, Green Key, ISO14001 and Blue Flag. The use of Green Travel should simplify marketing communication. A company awarded with Green Travel has one or several of the certifications mentioned before.

Green Start is a responsibility training for the tourism industry, developed by Visit Finland and Haaga-Perho. Green DQN® is an environmental quality assurance programme for Finnish tourism centres and destinations. ECEAT Finland (European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism) has a sustainability label, which may be received by meeting certain criteria. ISO 14001 is the world's best known environmental management system that can be applied by different organizations. The Green Key eco-label for sustainable tourism has been awarded to more than 2 200 accommodation companies in 45 countries. The companies with the Green Tourism of Finland® (GTF) Ecolabel have committed to adhering to the principles of sustainability and improving operations concerning environmental issues. GTF is an individual ecolabel and quality criteria registered by the Finnish Patent and Registration Office. Metsähallitus, Finland's State Forest Enterprise requires that all

companies operating in protected areas need to sign a cooperation agreement covering nine principles of sustainable nature tourism. TripAdvisor GreenLeaders Program is a badge awarded to hotels and B&Bs that have committed to green practices like recycling, water efficiency and favouring alternative fuels. The Responsible Travel U.K. travel portal markets and sells responsible and ecological holidays. The company has its own criteria of responsible tourism (Visit Finland). Barents Protected Area Network has, for example, produced recommendations concerning protected areas.

2.4 Russian Sustainability Certifications Used in Tourism

Sustainable Tourism is a fairly new concept in Russia and its scope is rather narrow. In practice it means ecotourism. Khoroshavina (2010) has stated that the use of sustainable tourism as a term and definition has become more general mostly among researchers and in administration, no so much in industry. In the 2010s the term was rarely used by tourism companies or travel agencies in Russia. The Federal Agency for Tourism (Rosturizm) website refers directly to the UNWTO definition <http://www.russiatourism.ru/en/contents/deyatelnost/international-activities/cooperation-in-international-organizations/international-organizations/the-world-tourism-organization-unwto/>.

In western countries much more attention is paid to sustainable tourism than in Russia (Khoroshavina 2010). The use of the term and its Russian translation refer to economic sustainability and continuity of industry, which does not correspond to the western content of the term. In Russia sustainable tourism has not developed in the same way as in the west. In some regions in Russia single sustainable tourism projects have been implemented (for example in the Republic of Karelia), but they have been politically directed and administrative decisions.

Russian tourism destination classification includes no criteria on environment protection or sustainable use of materials. Instead, there are several criteria concerning safety and security. In Russia hotels, beaches and routes are classified in accordance with the decree 25.1.2011, No. 35 of Ministry of Sport. Neither do these criteria include environmental indicators.

According to Russian-German Environmental Information Bureau (Bobilev & Perelet, 2013), for Russian consumers the best known environmental labels are German Blue Angel, European EU-Ecolabel (EU), the Nordic Ecolabel Swan, Ecologo (Canada), Green Seal (USA) and EcoMark (Japan).

The small number of non-governmental organizations and businesses' resource problems slow down tourism development. Khoroshavina (2010) says that international cooperation and project work promote the sustainable use of natural resources in Russia. His research mentions the examples of Tolvajärvi, Koitajoki and North Karelia.

3 VIEWS OF TOURISM ENTREPRENEURS AND DEVELOPERS ON PROGRAMMES, LABELS AND CRITERIA ON QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE BARENTS REGION

An internet-based survey was conducted among tourism entrepreneurs and developers during the research. The purpose of survey was to scrutinize programmes, labels and criteria that are used by companies in the advancement of sustainable development and quality. Additionally, the opinions of corporate directors on quality and sustainable development were addressed in the survey. The survey was conducted by using a questionnaire that was forwarded via contact persons of the JWGT. Out of the respondents, 22 were from Finland, four from Sweden and Norway, and one from Russia. Due to the low response rate, particularly in Sweden, Norway and Russia, the responses merely supply a qualitative contribution to the research to be used in a complementary manner.

Half of the Finnish respondents stated that they use an international programme, label or criteria in the advancement of sustainable development and quality. Nearly half of the respondents told that they apply a national program, label or criteria in their operations. TripAdvisor GreenLeaders was most frequently used in the category of international programs, labels and criteria, respectively the Q1000 Diploma in the national ones. The development of own operations was a dominant reason for the use of programmes and labels, although requirements from, for example, tourists were also mentioned by the respondents. Some respondents used none of the programmes or labels in the advancement of sustainable development. The reasons for non-usage were the excessive workload and expensiveness that the implementer would bear. Furthermore, the programmes were not considered to bring any additional value, yet their potential use was in the planning phase among many respondents.

The respondents gave an array of definitions for quality. Quality was attributed, among others, to sustainable development as represented by successful service processes, clean premises, customer satisfaction and use of local food. One of the most common definitions in the answers of Finnish respondents pertained to fluency and success of customer service, and, through this, satisfying customer expectations. Sustainability on the other hand was understood from an ecological viewpoint, but other dimensions were taken up as well. This gives an impression that the respondents are well aware of the objectives of sustainability.

4 ANALYSIS ON QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION IN BARENTS TOURISM

The research suggests that the national programmes, labels and certificates with sustainability as a part of quality development are most extensively used in Finland from the Barents region states. Certificates pertaining to sustainability are more frequently used in Sweden and Norway. On the other hand, quality can be seen as a component of sustainability. More emphasis is put on environment protection in the certificates of sustainable tourism in Sweden, Norway and Finland. In many certificates, attention has been paid to economic sustainability and linkage between environmental issues and economic objectives of companies, whereas social and cultural sustainability have been paid attention to only in some certificates. Contrary to international certificates, the national certificates of sustainable tourism used in the Barents region (Finland, Sweden, and Norway) have been developed in concordance with the needs of tourism companies. Tourism sector standards and certificates is a topic that has received little attention in the development of business in Russia. There are discrepancies in joint understanding of the contents and definitions. Sustainable tourism as a definition has remained relatively unknown and narrow among tourism operators. According to the Russian documents, among others, legislation and instructions, quality is acknowledged to be a central component in tourism service provision, but the role of environment and sustainability in quality is still undefined.

The most commonly used instruments in quality assurance are linked with the classification of infrastructure in destinations. The Tourism Strategy for year 2020, adopted by the Russian government in May 2014, highlights the importance of introducing a coherent classification system for destinations. It extends mainly to hotels, other accommodation, downhill ski pistes and beaches. Furthermore, the strategy indicates needs for the development of a transparent classification and certification system for the quality assurance of tourism services. There is an aspiration to unification of tourism service quality to meet international requirements. Standardization of services is advanced particularly in the accommodation sector (hotels).

The following observations, usable in developing certifications and criteria, concern social media review sites.

- Social media is a powerful channel. Does it grow further? One example of statements concerning responsible operations is TripAdvisor, world's leading travel website that bans tourism destinations that are harmful to wildlife. This is a "significant step toward ending of atrocities" (HS 12.10.2016).
- Social media networks, communication and visibility have a strong linkage to the theme. An example of this is the social group "A VISION for Sustainable Tourism" in LinkedIn, composed of tourism experts (12 734 members) who aim at a comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism and who promote its advantages.
- Responsible Tourism Communication (RESPONDECO) assists companies and destinations in their communication of sustainable operations with the focus on marketing communication in networks. The organization offers education, training and development services, such as a development toolkit, analysis tools for internet sites, and implementation plan training.

- The International Ecotourism Society is a trainer organisation that offers online learning (15 \$ /course). The Value of Ecotourism is an online learning concept that includes, for example, calculating the ROI (Return on Investment) of Going Green and Social Media Marketing for Sustainable Destinations.
- Complex and multilevel quality and environment systems are highlighted in the operations of the international inbound organisations in the Barents region (travel agencies, tour operators). National and international associations and regulations direct the operations, examples are the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) and The Travel Foundation. The Association of Finnish Travel Agents AFTA connects Finnish travel agencies and functions.
- Social responsibility rises strongly to the surface. There is a desire to contribute to the sustainability of tourism and improve the well-being of children and young people in the different parts of the world (TUI).
- The changing nature of tourism brings about new focal points to the content and approaches to sustainability and quality. In Airbnb, for example, this underlines norms as quality factors that improve the transparency of the activities of both hosts and guests (hospitality norms, accommodation norms).
- Regional networks and good practices are factors that support the everyday business (the Travius ERP system, among others)

5 DEFINING STEPS/RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEVELOP TOURISM IN THE BARENTS REGION

Conclusion

The general conclusion on the basis of this research is that quality and environment management systems can be international, national and regional/local. It was difficult to reach a certainty on for example which certificates are used in specific areas such as Lapland, Northern Ostrobothnia and/or Kainuu, i.e. in the Finnish part of the Barents. The challenge was equally great in case of the other research countries. The survey conducted in connection with this research aimed to create a holistic image of the use of systems. The purpose of the company surveys conducted for this report was to supply complementary data. Thus the survey alone did not supply enough information on the basis of which conclusions could be made about which certifications companies actually use due to the low number of Swedish, Norwegian and Russian respondents.

On the basis of the survey it can be stated that, in the Barents region, the situation between Russia and other countries is different. In Nordic countries, the significance of sustainable tourism and quality certifications and criteria is recognized and quite a variety of them are in use. In Russia, however, the use and awareness of certifications and criteria are only just emerging. Therefore, it is necessary to make separate development recommendations and steps separately for the Nordic Countries (Finland, Sweden and Norway) and Russia. Furthermore, in Russia the different (administrative) approach to quality and thus to promotion of sustainability causes another challenge for unifying practices in the Barents region. A quality system ought to be credible in central market areas, also. The sources used in the report give a fairly comprehensive picture of what tourism certifications are in use in the Barents region.

However, it is not possible to give a precise outlook for how many users of various certifications there are or whether all certifications are applied in the Barents region.

The third, central observation is that the variety of quality certifications and criteria is fairly wide. There are separate certifications and criteria for quality and sustainable development, and in some of them these aspects overlap and cross. This observation leads to the recommendation to develop a Nordic umbrella certificate that would combine the existing quality and sustainable tourism programmes and labels under the same criteria. For example, Norway is using a certification "Green Travel" which covers different schemes and labels. The same procedure is done by Slovenia with the certification "Slovenia Green". It is a trend in the market. We know that there are a lot of different labels, schemes and certifications. By grouping them under one label it simplifies the message to the customer. It would be easier for the customer to identify green choices.

The project Visit Arctic Europe (VAE) and its actors have been a rather successful Nordic model of tourism (Sweden, Finland and Norway) cooperation. Thus it is appropriate to integrate certification development to the VAE operations. Furthermore, the need for and significance of certification has emerged during the VAE project, which is one more reason to combine these two in future.

Recommendations and steps

On the basis of the analysis and other materials the following steps/recommendations were drawn up to develop tourism in the Barents region.

1. To create and launch a Nordic umbrella label

Steps

1. Approve the used certifications under the umbrella label
 - Agree on minimum criteria
 - Agree on certifications that are approved under the umbrella label
2. Design a common Nordic umbrella label
 - Agree on a logo / word to be used for the umbrella label
3. Introduce the common Nordic umbrella label
 - Communication plan
 - Agree on schedule to introduce the umbrella label
4. Monitor the use of common Nordic umbrella label
 - Monitor the use of common umbrella label
 - When necessary choose other certifications under the umbrella label

2. To explain the significance of Nordic certifications and criteria as well as promoting their awareness and introduction in Russia

Steps

1. More explicit situation analysis in the target area (survey)
 - Research the companies' objectives and wishes to create an umbrella certificate.
2. Interviews with tourism information centres and regional administration
 - Method to survey the need for a common and national certification in the Barents region.
 - Negotiations with Russian Federal Agency for Tourism on the needs and possibilities concerning tourism sustainability and quality and their certifications in the Barents region
3. Draw up an implementation/communications plan (what, to whom, how and when)
 - Draw up a communication plan on the common certification and its implementation together with regional administration and tourism industry representatives.

Separate funding will be applied for the (e.g. EU)

3. To recognize, implement and inform of common measures in the Barents region.

Step

1. JWGT – monitors and directs the implementation
 - Participation in JWGT meetings and agreement on measures

2. Nordic measures are implemented in Russia where applicable
 - Negotiations with Russian representatives for example on the application of the Nordic umbrella label in Russia.
3. Increase in general awareness through induction and training
 - Briefings, seminars, research papers, website for certificate administrator.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM	TARGET GROUP	OBJECTIVE	CONTENT / CRITERIA	PRICE	EXECUTOR	REGIONS WHERE IN USE *BARENTS
International						
Blue Flag http://www.blueflag.global/	Beaches and marinas	Protection of environment, in particular water quality.	Criteria concerning environment, education and safety. Educational programmes, reducing environmental impact. Social responsibility taken into account. No direct references to quality.		Foundation for Environmental Education and national organizations	Norway, Sweden, total 49 countries *
European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) http://ec.europa.eu/gr_owth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators_fi	Tourist destinations	More intelligent approach to tourism planning, promotion of sustainability	A management, monitoring and information tool		Developed by European Commission	Europe Not in the Barents region or in countries of the Barents region
Earth Check https://earthcheck.org/	Leading destinations, companies to local	Benchmarking, certification and performance improvement system	Solutions for problems such as climate change, waste reduction and non-renewable resource management	-	Earth Check Advisory Group	Apparently not in the Barents region, otherwise significant Number of companies: -
ECEAT quality label http://www.eceat.org/index.php/public/en/10	Tourist service providers investing in environment protection and local culture	Supporting traditional rural culture and environmental protection.	Meeting the criteria, environmentally friendly practices, environmental information services for guests	In Finland joining fee 70 € and NGO membership fee 80 €/ year	In Finland Suomen luomutus matkailuyhdistys ECEAT (European Centre for	European network, in 20 countries, e.g. Finland and Sweden. * Number of companies: Sweden 9 Finland 29

<p>ISO 14000 http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/management-standards/iso14000.htm</p>	<p>Companies and organizations of all kinds</p>	<p>Standards provide practical tools to manage environmental responsibilities</p>	<p>Environmental management system with 30 standards and publications. Content e.g. Environmental management policy, education and auditing. Strong emphasis on improvement of competitiveness, e.g. through resource use. One objective to improve company image. Environmental issues are seen as part of quality improvement.</p>	<p>E.g. ISO 14000 publication 164 € + VAT. Certification case-specific</p>	<p>Ecological and Agricultural Tourism)</p>	<p>International * Number of companies: -</p>
<p>Green Key ecolabel http://greenkey.fi/ http://www.hsr.se/det-har-gor-vi/land/green-key-miljomarkt-logi-och-konferens</p>	<p>Accommodation enterprises, attractions, restaurants</p>	<p>Raise environmental awareness and create behavioural changes in operations.</p>	<p>Sustainable tourism award, the business adheres to strict criteria rigorous documentation. Hotel supports development of local business life. Versatile sustainability</p>	<p>-1350 € + VAT/year -auditing (1st, 2nd and every 3rd year) 500 € + VAT + travel expenses</p>	<p>Foundation for Environmental Education/ FEE Finland</p>	<p>45 countries * Number of companies: Finland 48 Sweden 150 Norway 24 Russia 26</p>

http://fee.no/?pages!ug=hva-er-green-key-15108			programme, concerning e.g. use of resources and waste management. Social responsibility taken into account.			
KRAV http://www.krav.se/english	Companies from different fields	Promotion of sound, natural environment, solid care for animals, good health and social responsibility.	Organic production criteria		Krav association	Sweden, Norway About 4 000 farms and about 2 000 companies *
TripAdvisor GreenLeaders Program [®] Green Leaders TripAdvisor, Inc. (TripAdvisor GreenPartner) https://www.tripadvisor.com/GreenLeaders	Eco-friendly hotels and B&Bs	Commitment to green practices like recycling, local and organic food, and electric car charging stations.. Strategic partners: UNEP , energystar.gov , USGBC ,	The certificate has four statuses: bronze, silver, gold and platinum. No direct references to quality. In addition to tourist reviews occasional auditing.		Trip Advisor, Inc.	FIN, NO, SWE, global * Number of companies: -
Mush with Pride http://www.mushwithpride.org/index.html	Sled dog companies	Supports responsible care and humane treatment of dogs	A membership is open for everybody. Members receive education, such as a guide and newsletter.	15 \$/ person 100 \$/ company	Mush with Pride organization	International * Number of companies -
Travelife https://www.travelife.info/index_new.php?menu=home&lang=en	Tour operators and travel agents, accommodation	Promotion of sustainable practices	Certificates	Joining fee 70 € company membership fee 80 €/ year.	ABTA Ltd.	International * Number of companies: Finland 2,

Airport Carbon Accreditation http://www.airportcarbonaccredited.org/			Reducing carbon, aiming at carbon neutrality.						Sweden 5, international * Kiruna Airport
The Long Run http://www.thelongrun.com/			Pursuit of a balance of Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce					Zeit Foundation	Southern Sweden
Forum anders reisen https://forumandersreisen.de/startseite/aktuelles/	Tour operators		Criteria concerning local community, environment, customer service and quality					Forum anders reisen	international 100 member *
National									
Green Start http://www.laatutonn.fi/node/201 http://www.laatutonn.fi/en/node/202	Tourism companies		Launch a practical environmental programme and proceed towards sustainable tourism	Various themes on responsible development areas that the company starts to implement	1300 €/ day. + Travel expenses.			Haaga-Perho	Finland Number of companies: 37
Green DQN® https://www.haagaapeho.fi/	Tourism destination Tourism region		Strengthens the tourism region image on responsibility, better understanding of customer needs, use current green products and develop new ones	Environmental quality programme, training, logo. Model for training seasonal staff. Responsible tourism tools for enterprises. Better communication on responsible tourism to customers and interest groups. Environmental issues seen as part of quality.	From 15 000 € + VAT 24 %. Price varies e.g. according to scope of content. May be formulated as a project and funding received e.g. from ELY Centres			Haaga-Helia UAS	Finland * Number of companies: 2 tourism regions

<p>Green DMIN® http://webd.savonia.fi/laatusavo/ajankohtaiset_files/Green%20DQNA_28%2010_Tahko%200%282%29.pdf https://www.laatuson.fi/haaga-perho/testimonialit/dqn%C2%AE-ja-dmn%C2%AE-ohjelmat-suomessa</p>	<p>Tourism destination Tourism region</p>	<p>During DMN programme networks expand and quality team size increases. Closer regional cooperation with environmental experts</p>	<p>After DQN programme training concentrates on building environmental programmes and – if needed – an environmental system. With new companies the 1Q000 training process for creating the company a quality system that follows sustainable development criteria. Regional quality handbook is supplemented with a comprehensive environmental section.</p>	<p>Haaga-Helia UAS</p>	<p>Finland* Number of companies: 3 regions</p>
<p>Green Tourism of Finland® (GTF) http://www.greentourism.fi/</p>	<p>Small and medium sized tourism companies</p>	<p>Sustainable development, Continual improvement in environmental issues. Efficient use of resources and reducing environmental load. Social responsibility. Responsibility is seen as part of quality.</p>	<p>Ecolabels: Accommodation, food and meeting, Experience the nature, and wellness and culture programs. Quality criteria and auditing. Training, principles on egg. employment of local people</p>	<p>Green Tourism of Finland.</p>	<p>Finland* Number of companies: 16</p>
<p>Metsähallitus (State Forest Enterprise) Agreement on activities in protected areas</p>	<p>Companies cooperating with Metsähallitus</p>	<p>Criteria that is used when negotiating about the use of protected areas</p>	<p>Compliance with the nine principles</p>	<p>Metsähallitus / State Forest Enterprise</p>	<p>Finland More than 400 companies have signed the cooperation agreement</p>

http://www.metsa.fi/web/en/sustainablenturetourism									
EcoCompass http://www.ekokompassi.fi/ http://www.ekokompassi.fi/en/	Small and medium sized enterprises, events	Demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement. Reduce environmental load. Improve staff's environmental awareness. Improve competitiveness through better reputation and eco-efficiency.	Initial survey, assessment of environmental impacts, identification of legal requirements, environmental policy, environmental goals and measures, external assessment or auditing, annual monitoring and reporting. Based on e.g. ISO 14001 standard and EMAS.	Setup fee from 200 €. Annual fee from 350 €.	Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen, HSY, HSL and Helen.	Finland * Number of companies: 160 places of business from different fields			
Priimatali and Vaellustalli https://www.vaellustaalit.fi/ratsastajaisentalleilla/priimatalili-luokitukset/	Stables with tourist visitors	Marketing, horse welfare. The company may emphasize special expertise in marketing.	Four classifications. Quality connected to customer service, safety and clean stables.		Suomen vaellustalli ry / Trail riding union of Finland	Finland * Number of companies: About 40 stables			
Bra miljöverket (Good Environmental Choice) http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/bra-miljoverket/	Companies from different fields	Help the consumer find the least environmentally harmful products	Criteria		Swedish Society for Nature Conservation	Sweden * Number of companies: more than 700 products and services from different fields			
KLEF (Kiruna Lapland Sustainability Eco-Label) https://www.linkedin.com/company/klef/					Rogers & Co, Sustainable Travel International,	Sweden * Number of companies: -			

<p>com/pulse/kiruna-laplands-sustainable-management-monitoring-system-neil-rogers?forceNoSplash=true</p>					<p>Hållbar Destinationsutveckling (HDU) – project</p>	
<p>Nature 's Best http://www.naturesbestsweden.com/</p>	<p>Nature tourism companies</p>	<p>Help the customer select a quality ecotourism service. Acts as a marketing tool for the company and improves competitiveness. Efficiency in use of resources and reduction of environmental load. Supporting local business</p>	<p>Criteria connected with quality and environment as well as cultural and social responsibility. Quality is seen as responsibility for environment and culture.</p>		<p>The Ecotourism Society of Sweden</p>	<p>Sweden * Number of companies: 77</p>
<p>Swedish Welcome http://www.swedishwelcome.se/</p>	<p>Tourism operators</p>	<p>Acting sustainably, a better guest experience.</p>	<p>Advisor visit and analysis with improvement suggestions. Networking opportunity, usage right to development materials.</p>		<p>Swedish Association Welcome</p>	<p>Sweden Not in the Barents region Number of companies: about 250</p>
<p>Sapmi Experience Quality Mark https://eng.visitsapmi.org/s-pmi-experience.html</p>	<p>Tourism companies</p>	<p>Respect and sustainable use of the Sámi culture. Respect of nature, minimising environmental load. Quality is part of the certificate.</p>	<p>Certification, with ethical, service and sustainability criteria</p>		<p>Visit Sapmi and Swedish Sami Association.</p>	<p>Sweden, 14 companies. *</p>

<p>Green Travel https://www.visitnorway.com/about/sustainability/</p>	Tourism companies	Facilitating customers' "Green choices"	The company has one of these: Ecotourism Norway Nordic Swan Green Key ISO 14001 Blue Flag	Visit Norway	Norway * Number of companies: 1 235
<p>Ecotourism Norway https://www.visitnorway.com/about/sustainability/</p>	Tourism companies	Reducing ecological footprint	Criteria with 100 points.	Innovation Norway	Norway * Number of companies: -
<p>Eco-Lighthouse http://eco-lighthouse.org/</p>	Companies from different fields	Demonstrating social and ecological responsibility.	Requirements: Energy use, waste management, transportation, acquisitions and working environment. Quality is part of environmental efficiency. Valid for 3 years, then new certification.	Eco-Lighthouse Foundation	Norway * Number of companies: 5 000 from different lines of business, 273 in tourism
<p>Sustainable destination https://www.visitnorway.com/about/sustainability/</p>	Tourism destinations	Providing the best possible experience for the guest while keeping the negative impact of tourism to a minimum	Certificate, continual improvement following sustainable principles	Innovation Norway	Norway Number of companies: 8 regions
<p>Norsk økoturisme http://www.hanen.no/en/norsk-okoturisme</p>	Tourism companies			Ecotourism Society of Norway	Norway * About 400 companies
<p>Fjord Norway http://www.fjordnorway.com/be-inspired/sustainable-</p>	Destination awarded with GSTC.			Fjord Norge AS	Norway Number of companies: -

			governmental organisations in order to deliver sustainable tourism. In particular, we actively support and engage in the work of the Federation of Tour Operators and the Travel Foundation	we aim to build a tourism industry which brings pleasure to those who travel with it, a future to the places and the people who provide it, as well as a profit to all those who are involved in supplying it.			
TUI Care Foundation	Tour operator	Supports and creates projects that promote sustainable tourism and improve the welfare of children and the youth all over the world					

QUALITY SYSTEM	TARGET GROUP	OBJECTIVE	CONTENT / CRITERIA	PRICE	EXECUTOR	REGIONS WHERE IN USE * Barents
ISO 9000 http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_9000	Various organizations	To assure that products and services meet customers' requirements. Continual quality improvement.	Quality Management standard	Laatukskus / Finnish Quality Association ISO 9000 -training 710 € + VAT	Finnish Standards Association SFS, Swedish Standards Institute SIS, Standards Norway controls and coordinates	International * Number of companies: -
International						

<p>EFQM In Finland Excellence Finland http://www.laatu.keskus.fi/ http://www.laatu.keskus.fi/suomen - http://www.laatuhydistys/laatu.keskus-english http://www.efqm.org/the-efqm-excellence-model</p>	<p>Various organizations</p>	<p>Improving competitiveness Implement strategy, clarify objectives, guide development, and give examples on excellence.</p>	<p>Assessment and development tool Training and tools for self-assessment</p>	<p>Training 1 180 €.</p>	<p>Accredited auditors issue certificates. FINAS-accredited certification companies</p>	<p>international Number of companies: -</p>
<p>Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence model http://www.baldrige.org/</p>	<p>Various organizations</p>	<p>Improving organization's performance, achieving sustainable results</p>	<p>Self-assessment Basis of 1Q00</p>	<p>The Baldrige Foundation</p>	<p>international Number of companies –</p>	
<p>White Guide http://www.whiteguide-nordic.com/</p>	<p>Restaurants</p>	<p>Develop gastronomy and restaurant culture</p>	<p>Customer feedback system and classification</p>	<p>White Guides</p>	<p>Nordic countries, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania * Number of companies: total 325</p>	
<p>i –Sign Tourist information</p>	<p>Tourist information</p>	<p>Criteria. Classification 1-5 based on service level</p>	<p>DMOs/ Tourist</p>	<p>Suoma ry. in Finland</p>	<p>International *</p>	

http://www.suoma.fi/Suomeksi/Palvelevat-matkailutoimistot	offices			destinations 750 €/ year. Tourist Information offices 490 €/ year.		Number of companies: 114 travel agencies
National						
MALO – National Classification of Countryside Accommodation https://www.majakotitalousnaiset.fi/	Countryside accommodation companies	Assessment of service offering, quality assurance for customer, facilitates selling, instructions on accommodation premises planning and building	Classification of accommodation premises and assessment of general impression. classification 1–5		Rural Women's Advisory Organisation responsible for auditing and awards the quality label	Finland * Number of companies -
Maakuntien parhaat (The Uniquely Finnish) http://www.maakuntienparhaat.fi/en/	Rural tourism, service, food and crafts companies	Benefit from the added value brought by the label, joint marketing. Networking and cooperation across different lines of business.	Quality label, awarded on the base of auditing. Requires a quality system - auditing every 3 years - , high degree of domestic origin, product approved by a panel of expert	-joining fee 105 € + VAT. -usage right 130–210 € + VAT. -auditing every 3 years 440 € + VAT + Travel expenses, quality training fee separately	Association of ProAgria Centres is responsible for auditing and awards the quality label	Finland * Number of companies: 394
Lomarengas quality classification http://www.loma	Cottages, villas, apartments	Classification helps customers to choose a suitable holiday accommodation	Classifications 1–5 mainly based on technical requirements, furnishings. Also,	No separate fee	Lomarengas ltd	Finland * Number of companies: 3 900 accommodations in Finland

rengas.fi/info/In-English/FAQ/Quality-classification												
Lauttoni Q1000 http://www.lauttoni.fi/en	Tourism and service companies and organizations	Recognition of development targets, development plans, ability to develop quality independently	Self-assessment/ structures internal auditing, company training, using the method of 1Q00 workbook, expert training	1 day-1,5 yr. 3 day training 300€ + VAT 4 day training 480 € + VAT	Haaga-Perho and trainers of cooperation network	Finland *	Number of companies: 1 002					
Lautuverkko QualityNet http://www.lauttoni.fi/en/qualitynet	Tourism and service companies that have taken the quality training	Monitoring quality development, listening to the customer to improve company operations	Monitoring tool, enables survey, monitoring own results, comparison to competitors	100€-1200€ + VAT/year depending on turnover or 50€/month	Haaga-Perho	Finland *	Number of companies: 300					
Camping site classification http://www.camping.fi/Leirintaalue/luokitustietoa http://www.camping-site-classification http://www.camping-site-classification	Camping sites	Internordic 5-level star classification The quality requirements take into account Nordic conformity, recognizing national features such as Finnish sauna	Auditing		Finnish Campingsite Association The National Swedish Campsite Association NHO Reiseliv							

<p>http://www.camping.se/en/Camping-International/Info -- Guestservice/Info/Classification/ http://www.camping.no/en/klasifisering/</p>						
<p>DQN and DMN https://www.laatuonni.fi/liiketoiminnan-kehittaminen/verkojen-kehittamispalvelut/dqn%2%AE-ja-dmn%2%AE-%E2%80%93-matkailukeskusteen-ia-aluej</p>	<p>Tourism destination or region</p>	<p>Quality and environmental competence become tourism region assets. Customer and personnel satisfaction are improved. Companies' processes and operating profits improve. Tourism region turnover increases.</p>	<p>Research, education, development. Model and workbook of continual improvement. Customer and personnel satisfaction are measures and developed. Work processes and environmental knowledge are improved. In DQN programme, models are learnt, in DMN further development e.g. in 1Q00 training process.</p>	<p>DQN 2,5-3 yr. and continuation to DMN programme</p>	<p>Haaga-Perho</p>	<p>Finland * Number of companies: DQN 18 regions DMN 3 regions</p>
<p>Det goda värdskapet SSQ Award http://www.vardskapet.se/SSQ+V%E4rdskap_1053.html</p>	<p>Various organizations</p>	<p>Developing hospitality</p>	<p>Trainings</p>		<p>Vårdskapet Utveckling AB</p>	<p>Sweden Number of companies: -</p>

Renlycka http://www.renlycka.se/index.html	Reindeer meat processing companies owned by Sámi	Quality and business development	Trainings, business support		Renlycka Guild	Sweden * Number of companies: 7
Svenska möten https://www.svenskamoteten.se/					Svenska-möten organization	Sweden Number of companies: -
Kvalitet reiseliv http://www.virke.no/bransjer/Document/Rapport%20forprosjekt,%20Nasjonalt%20Kvalitetssystem,%20Reiseliv.pdf	Programme service companies, attractions and museums	Development of a quality system for activity-based products, attractions and museums	Quality systems and criteria		Project	Norway * Number of companies: -
"Norwegian Foodprints" https://www.visitnorway.com/things-to-do/food-and-drink/norwegian-foodprints/	Restaurants and catering companies	Promoting the use of local food and strengthening local identity			Innovation Norway	Norway * Number of companies: - 77
Accommodation star classification	Hotels and accommodation companies	Service quality, safety and security	In the Russian hotel star classification system the criteria are 1) Size of area (site) and		National Tourism Association	Russia

			number of rooms 2) Service level 3) Location 4) Special services and infrastructure, such as gym, restaurant, pool, children's rooms.			
Leader of the Branch лидер отрасли	Any organization	Information provision / compilation of statistics				

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