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# **Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

Council of Europe, Palais, Room 16  
20-21 February 2024

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## **APPRAISAL REPORT RENEWAL 2024 On the spot appraisal visit Muddus/Muttos National Park Sarek & Padjelanta/Badjelánnda National Parks**

14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Mission report

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## **Introduction**

The European Diploma was awarded to the 3 parks Muddus/Muttos<sup>1</sup>, Sarek and Padjelanta/Badjelánnda<sup>2</sup> National Parks in 1967 and has been periodically renewed since then, the last time in 2012. The last expert mission, conducted by Mr Pierre Galland took place in August 2011. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the period of validity of the diplomas was extended exceptionally until 2024.

The Swedish Authorities have sent annual reports regularly for the last 10 years, and a new management structure covering the 3 parks was established after the adoption of the Laponia Management Plan in 2011.

The mission was very well prepared and organised jointly by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), the Laponia board and the County Administration Board in Norrbotten (CAB). We would like to thank in particular Ms Jenny Lindman-Komstedt, Ms Gisela Norberg, Ms Åsa Nordin Jonsson and Mr Dan Ojanlatva, as well as the whole team of the Laponia board and Naturum Laponia Visitor Center. The Swedish authorities have been particularly generous, offering a helicopter flight over both Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks, allowing us to get a global picture of this extremely vast and wild territory.

## **Progress of the mission – main events**

The detailed mission programme and the list of participants and contributors are presented in annex 1

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<sup>1</sup> For Muddus National Park Swedish authorities use the title Muddus/Muttos where Muttos represents the Sami name of the place. The word Muttos can come from the Lule Sámi word mutták or muttos which means “suitable” or “just enough”. It is interpreted as “here, one can find everything necessary for a good life”.

<sup>2</sup> Badjelánnda means "the highland" in Sami named for the land between Sarek's high mountains and Norway's fjords. Reindeers have migrated here for millennia to calve and graze who are attracted to Badjelánnda's herb-rich meadows and friendly mountains. The calcareous bedrock, the high precipitation and the late melting snow have created a unique mountain vegetation. This special flora and landscape led to Padjelanta / Badjelánnda being named a national park in 1962.

Monday 14 August: Travel from Ankara / Zurich

Flight to Stockholm and Luleå; travel by car to Jokkmokk. Meeting with the representatives of SEPA.

Tuesday 15 August: Muddus/Muttos

Muddus/Muttos National Park - 2 short hikes - and travel to Stora Sjöfallet. Short walk to the falls.

Wednesday 16 August: Naturum Laponia Visitor Center at Stora Sjöfallet

Presentation of the Laponian site and discussions of key management issues.  
Detailed discussion regarding the “new” management structure and its functioning.  
Introduction to the Sami reindeer herding tradition and its current developments in the karal by Leila Nutti, working at the Laponiatjuottjudus - Laponia management board  
Premiere of a new documentary (with English subtitles) on Laponia entitled *The Vast Home (Det Vida Hemmet)* with the director Carl-Johan Utsi  
Guided tour of the Naturum and the nature trails nearby.  
Presentation of the predators research and monitoring in Laponia (Alexander Winiger)

Thursday 17 August: Stora Sjöfallet. – Jokkmokk

Helicopter flight across Stora Sjöfallet, Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks. Travel by car to Jokkmokk  
Wrap-up at the Laponia office

Friday 18 August

Presentation about the main bird species of Laponia by Bert-Ove Lindström  
Guided tour of the Ajtte Sami Museum in Jokkmokk  
Drive back to Luleå and flight to Stockholm

Saturday 19 August

Flights back to Zurich and Ankara





## 1. The Laponia<sup>3</sup> protected areas complex

The three National Parks, together with Stora Sjöfallet National Park and the Nature Reserves Sjaunja and Stubba have been inscribed on the World Heritage List by the World Heritage Committee in 1996 under both natural and cultural criteria. The property is called Laponian Area (= Laponia), covering 940'900 ha. All protected areas were managed until 2011 by the same authority, the County Administration Board of Norrbotten, in close collaboration with and under the supervision of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, two Ramsar sites are included or adjacent to the World Heritage property: Laitaure delta, 4'316 ha at the border of Sarek National Park, and Sjaunja Nature reserve, 181'333 ha, (outside of the considered National Parks).<sup>4</sup>

Both the Council of Europe and the World Heritage Committee have repeatedly requested the preparation of Management Plans for the Diploma holding National Parks but also for the World Heritage properties as a whole. In addition, the establishment of a participative management structure involving the local Sami institutions and villages was strongly suggested. On the last day of the previous mission (2011), a ceremony took place in Stora Sjöfallet for the establishment of a new Management board, the designation of its members and the presentation of the new management plan.

The new Laponiatjuottjudus - Laponia management board, established in 2011, is covering the whole Laponian area, including all the national parks and reserves – see below. It has taken over a large part of the managerial tasks from the Norrbotten county administrative board. The protected areas complex covers the reindeer summer grazing areas and the migration routes. The surroundings of Jokkmokk, outside of the Laponian protected areas complex, constitute the winter grazing area.



Map 1. Laponian area – World Heritage site

### 1.1.Short history of the World Heritage nomination - Full text as annex 3

Extract from:

*Green, C. 2009. Managing Laponia. A World Heritage site as Arena for Sami Ethno-Politics in Sweden. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Uppsala Studies in Cultural Anthropology 47. 221*

<sup>3</sup> The **Sámi** (*/ˈsɑːmi/ SAH-mee*; also spelled **Sami** or **Saami**) are the traditionally **Sámi**-speaking people inhabiting the region of **Sápmi**, which today encompasses large northern parts of **Norway**, **Sweden**, **Finland**, and of the **Kola Peninsula** in **Russia**. The region of Sápmi was formerly known as Lapland, and the Sámi have historically been known in English as **Lapps** or **Laplanders**, but these terms are regarded as offensive by the Sámi, who prefer the area's name in their own languages, e.g. Northern Sámi *Sápmi*.<sup>[8]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Data from the Ramsar website

*pp. Uppsala. ISBN 978-91-554-7656-4.*

In the 1980s, one of the Nature reserves, Sjaunja (today included in Lapponia) was nominated by the Swedish Government to the World Heritage Committee. This nomination was based on natural criteria only. However, this application was rejected by the World Heritage Committee on the grounds that it lacked exceptionality (Dahlström 2003:243). A new draft application that included an extended natural site circulated among different authorities and other instances in 1995. Both municipalities concerned were in favor of the nomination, but were a bit concerned that it would mean restrictions on outdoor recreation for local people. Also, the Sami Parliament consented, even though it too hesitated because it might affect the future development of reindeer herding (Dahlström 2003:252).

The Sami Parliament also reacted to the proposed name for the site: “The Lapponian Wilderness Area.” In the review statement, the Parliament clearly pointed out that the area is a Sami cultural landscape that has been inhabited from time immemorial. To the Parliament representatives this was anything but a “wilderness area”. The name was later changed to simply “the Lapponian Area.”

In parallel it appears that the National Heritage Board (SNHB) considered that it was a shame that the Lapponian nomination did not include cultural criteria. The idea of SNHB was to nominate Lapponia as a Cultural Landscape, rather than a mixed site. Apparently, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), however, refused to agree to this, the reason apparently being that if Lapponia was to be a Cultural Landscape the whole process would fall under the SNHB<sup>5</sup>. This reflects the area’s previous history consisting of the oldest and largest protected areas (i.e National Parks) in Sweden, appreciated for their natural beauty and unspoiled landscape. Nonetheless, they did agree to a mixed-site application.

An application was sent to the World Heritage Committee in 1996 that sought the World Heritage status for an extended area that included many of the well-known Swedish national parks and nature reserves in the mountain area, but now on the basis of both natural and cultural criteria. A focus on intangible cultural values and “living cultures” was now developing within the World Heritage Organisation; the inclusion of the local Sami reindeer herding culture and the reason why Lapponia was being launched at all as a mixed site should be understood in relation to this shift in focus in the international arena. The justification for the nomination mentions that Lapponia meets the requirements of three natural criteria (vii)(viii)(ix) and two cultural criteria (iii)(v).

*(See also annex 2: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value – UNESCO World Heritage site)*

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<sup>5</sup> At the time of nomination, the World Heritage convention stated that “cultural landscapes are cultural properties...” (operational guidelines, § 47). OG have been modified in the recent years to include mixed sites.

*Muddus/Muttos, Sarek & Pandjelanta National Parks – Mission report  
P. Galland, Ç. Adem, 14-19.8.2023*

## **2. General presentation of the National Parks and World Heritage site Laponia**

**Muddus/Muttos National Park** was created in 1942 and expanded in 1986; it is at an altitude varying between 166 m and 611 m and today covers a territory of 493 km<sup>2</sup> consisting mainly of lakes, marshland and mixed woodland in the northern part, and a more densely wooded area stretching down to the Lulea River in the south; the latter sector includes spectacular gorges on the river Muddus/Muttos, which drains much of the protected area. Muddus/Muttos is the most visited of the 3 parks; it offers several trails, partially equipped with wooden structure allowing crossing the large bog areas, a few refuges and an observation tower for wildlife and birdwatching.

The previous expert reports provide further details of the ecological interest of the Park, which is a habitat, at certain times of the year, for three large predators - the bear (*Ursus arctos*), the lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and the wolverine (*Gulo gulo*); the wolf (*Canis lupus*) is present only in the south of the county; the policy of the Swedish government is to prevent any reproduction of wolves in the Sami reindeer herding area.

Muddus/Muttos is a key element ensuring the continuity of the Reindeers herding system. mainly during the spring and autumn migration from the mountain areas to the pine and mixed forest around Jokkmokk.

The Council of Europe Diploma was granted to the Muddus/Muttos National Park in 1967 in category A, on grounds of its scientific interest; it has been renewed six times – in 1987, 1992, 1997, 2000, 2007 and 2012.

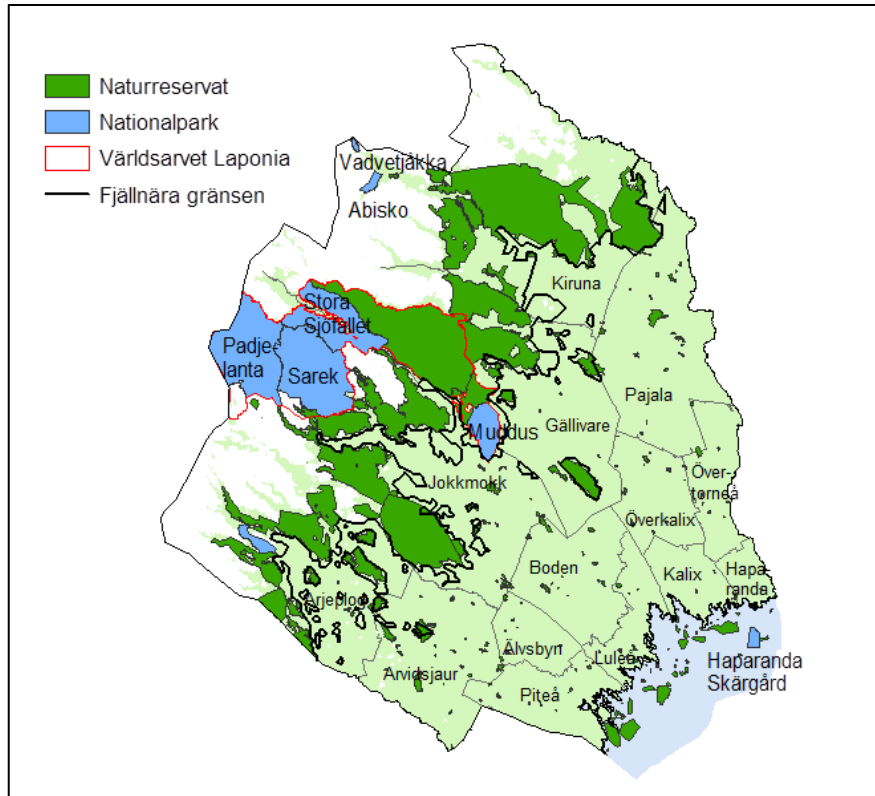
**Sarek National Park** was created in 1909. Its 1,970 km<sup>2</sup> of territory features alpine ecosystems formed of barren high plateaus and some 200 summits, some of them above 1,800 m; there are around one hundred glaciers. It is one of the very last mountain reserves in a completely natural state in Europe and, like the Rappa valley lying at its heart, it offers a landscape of a rare authenticity. Sarek has little in the way of tourist facilities and offers no accommodation; it has just one trail, crossing its southern part.

**Padjelanta National Park** was created in 1962 and extends over 1,984 km<sup>2</sup>. In terms of mean altitude, it is lower than Sarek, although its highest peak, the Jeknaffo, stands at 1,836 m. Padjelanta comprises sub-alpine lakes and grasslands forming open landscapes of great beauty. Virtually the entire park is above the tree-line. Padjelanta is more easily accessible than Sarek and offers a network of light facilities appreciated by hikers, trails, refuges and small trade outlets. Unlike Sarek, Padjelanta is occupied all year round by Sami herders and fishermen, living in several villages on the western fringe of the Park at the edge of the large lakes - from south to north - of, and Virihaure, Vastenjaure, Sallohaure (within Padjelanta National Park) and Akkajaure.

**Sarek & Padjelanta NP** form a continuous mountain protected area to which the European Diploma was awarded in category A in 1967; it has been renewed 6 times – in 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007 and 2012. The previous expert reports provide further details of the ecological interest of the Diploma area, which is a habitat, all year round, for three large predators - the bear (*Ursus arctos*), the lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and the wolverine (*Gulo gulo*). Sarek and Padjelanta constitute the main summer reindeer grazing area.

Sarek, Padjelanta and Muddus/Muttos National Park are included in Laponia, the immense 9,400 km<sup>2</sup> territory inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in December 1996; currently Sarek and Padjelanta constitute one Diploma holding area, while Muddus/Muttos, separated geographically, forms another Diploma holding area. The Laponia property includes also the National Park Stora Sjöfallet and other nature reserves.





**2.1 Laponian Area – Short description from the UNESCO World Heritage List** See the full OUV Statement in annex 2.

The Arctic Circle region of northern Sweden is the home of the Saami people. It is the largest area in the world (and one of the last) with an ancestral way of life based on the seasonal movement of livestock. Every summer, the Saami lead their huge herds of reindeer towards the mountains through a natural landscape hitherto preserved, but now threatened by modern way of life requirements and infrastructure (electricity production, mining, use of helicopters and ground motor vehicles, etc.) the advent of motor vehicles. Historical and ongoing geological processes can be seen in the glacial moraines and changing water courses.

*It is strongly advisable to re-asses the current Diploma attribution and to declare the whole territory of the Laponia area World Heritage site as one Diploma holding area.*



Sarek & Pandjelanta



Muddus/Muttos,

### **3. Management structure of the National Parks and World Heritage Laponia property**

Important note: the same management, management plan and management structure adopted for the Laponia World Heritage site is applied to all protected areas (National Parks, Nature Reserves) included into it.

#### **3.1 History of the management – The Laponian process**

The inscription on the World Heritage List in 1996 included the obligation for the Swedish State party to prepare a management plan for the area. It brought to the surface the long-lasting tensions between the national authorities, the local communities and the Sami people.

The area of Laponia in northern Sweden, consisting of previously well-known national parks such as Stora Sjöfallet, Sarek, Padjelanta and Muddus, obtained its World Heritage status as a mixed site in 1996. Both the biological and geological significance of the area and the local Sami reindeer herding culture are included in the justification for World Heritage status. The nomination, and the required management structure became an arena for the long-standing Sami ethno-political struggle for increased self-governance and autonomy. In many other parts of the world, various joint management schemes between indigenous groups and national environmental protection agencies are more and more common, but in Sweden no such agreements between the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the Sami community had been tested. The local Sami demanded to have a significant influence, not to say control, over the future management of Laponia. These were demands that were not initially acknowledged by the local and national authorities, and the negotiations about the management of Laponia continued over a period of ten years.

The Swedish Government had managed the nature reserves and national parks that constitute Laponia since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Sami in the area have never been asked to have a role in the administration or in the practical management of the area. There was no constituted consultation practice, and there have, up to now, been no attempts of co-management. A seemingly endless stream of management proposals, review reports, interrupted negotiations, restarted negotiations, and writings to both the Government and to UNESCO were made over a period of approximately ten years. The atmosphere among the local actors can only be described as “heated”. Three main parties were involved: the governmental agencies, represented by the Norrbotten County Administrative Board, the 2 local municipalities (Jokkmokk and Gällivare) and the Sami people (or Sameby<sup>6</sup>). But, also, there were some disagreements within the different groups, namely between SEPA and SNHB, and also among Sami themselves (different Sami parties and even members of the Sami Parliament). Finally, there had been a consensus among the leading Sami politicians to “speak with one voice” in regards to the Laponian issue. Even though the main polarisation was between the samebys’ representatives and the local authorities, there was also a split between the County Administration and the two other local actors. The samebys and the municipalities would claim that they had a more progressive approach toward local participation in conservancy and an ability to make the necessary link between natural and cultural protection which, ultimately, was one of the main arguments for the appointment of Laponia as a World Heritage site in the first place.

The samebys said that: *...in the end it is the members of the samebys who, through their individual and shared activities, will determine the future of the Sami cultural landscape in Laponia.*

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<sup>6</sup> Sameby means Sami village in Swedish; however, it is not a village but it is much more complex. A sameby is both an economic association and a specific geographical area used by a family. (<https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/sameby>)

After the samebys' petition to the Government in 2001 the County Administrative Board began to work on a revised management proposal for Lapponia. In September 2003, the samebys replied to a draft version of a management plan for Lapponia. They accused the County Administrative Board of not taking the Sami culture into consideration at all in regards to the future management of the World Heritage site. They reminded that the SEPA and the County Administrative Board did not want the Sami culture to be part of the World Heritage nomination at all, but that they now had an obligation to recognise the value of Sami culture as part of Lapponia's status as a World Heritage site since both the Swedish Government and UNESCO have decided upon the importance of making this a mixed site.

In the summer of 2005, the samebys were called to a meeting by the County governor (appointed in 2003) to discuss the future of Lapponia. The samebys' position was that they would attend the meeting only if the management question and a Sami majority representation in a future board were to be put at the top of the agenda. This was agreed, providing that they also agreed to discuss the possibilities of building a visitor's center (naturum) with information about the area. The County Administrative Board was eager to start making this idea a reality, and talks among the three local actors resumed. The talks resulted in a joint proposal on how to go forward with the plans, and this proposal was presented to the Government (County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2006), The Government instructed the County Administrative Board to set up a working committee that would produce an organisational structure according to the intentions in the proposition (Ministry of Environment 2006, reg. no. M2006/5999/A).

The new Lapponia delegation was given three years to produce a management organisation (which had been actually launched in August 2011). A coordinator was appointed and was the driving force behind designing the new management structure.

The new management plan was launched in 2011 and a management structure was established in 2012. It is in place today but with a temporary status; it should be definitely confirmed in the coming years, together with the preparation of a revised management plan.

### **3.2 The reindeer herding system – a key management issue**

The tensions between the governments (Sweden and Norway) and the Sami people goes back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the establishment of borders between Norway and Sweden. Sami families were strongly encouraged, and even forced, to move from the coastal area in Norway (Tromsø) south to the Norrbotten county, and subsequently to modify their Reindeer herding practices. Their integration in the Jokkmokk area was not easy and has led to a long conflictual period.<sup>7</sup>

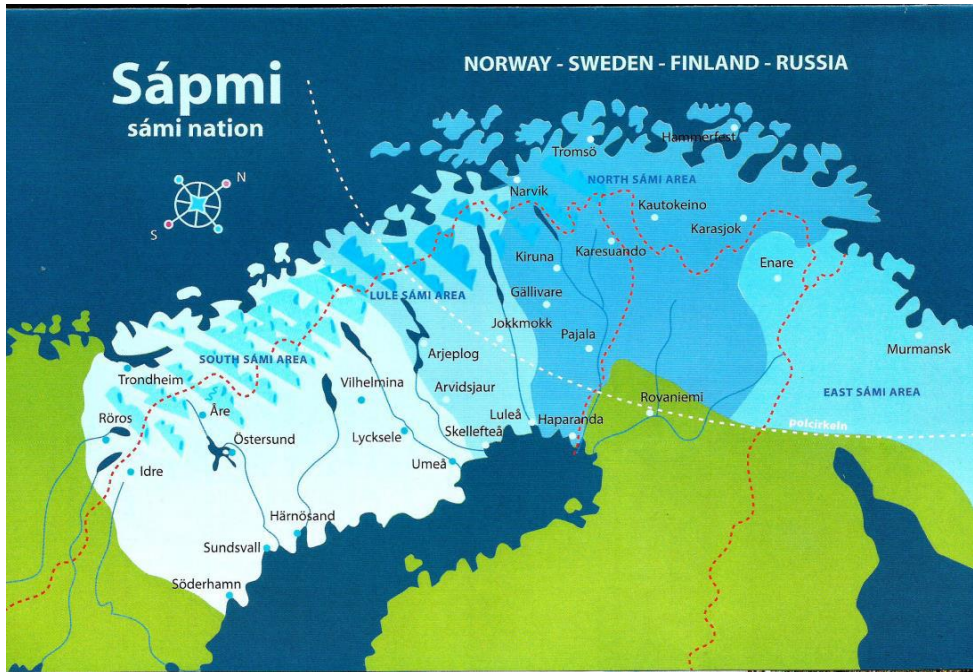
Nowadays, the parties of the Lapponia Process have agreed to depict the values of the World Heritage within three pillars. These three pillars are:

- the natural environment and its high values;
- the living Sámi culture and reindeer industry;
- The historical heritage arising from previous usage of land.

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<sup>7</sup> "Herrarna satte oss hit. Om tvångsförflyttningarna i Sverige" – "The gentlemen put us here. On forced displacement in Sweden". Elin Anna Labba, Norstedts, 2020. Trad. française : « Vies de Samis, les déplacements forcés des éleveurs de rennes ». CNRS, 2022

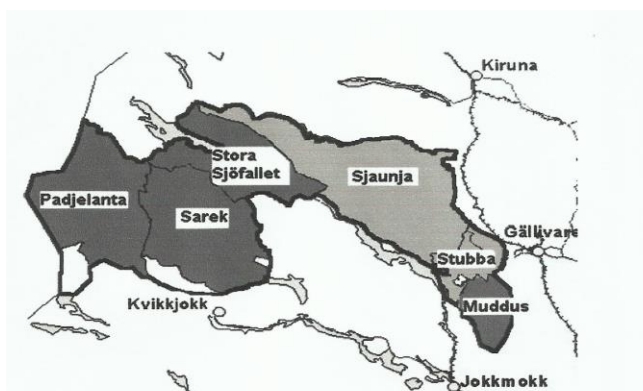
*Muddus/Muttos, Sarek & Pandjelanta National Parks – Mission report*  
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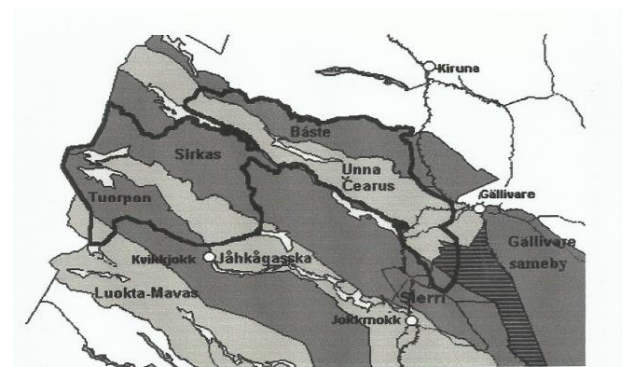
Distribution of the 3 different Sami population in Sweden, Norway, Finland and the Russian Federation

### 3.3 Sameby and Sami people

A sameby is both an economic association and a specific geographical area. Members of a sameby can engage in reindeer husbandry within the specific area. A board that is elected at an annual meeting runs the sameby and each sameby consists of several different reindeer herding companies with one or more owners. It must be underlined that the territories attributed to the different Sami families (sameby) are not aligned at all with the boundaries of the protected areas – see maps.



Map 2.17 The nature reserves and national parks that constitute Lapponia, and the two adjacent municipalities of Jokkmokk and Gällivare.



Map 3.18 The samebys involved in the Laponian process. Udja sameby, however, is not marked, but is situated south of Jokkmokk, right outside this map.

The Management Plan of 2012 agreed that Lapponia is an entity where the significant relationship between people and their surroundings is underlined. This holistic approach is a priceless legacy that should be passed over to future generations. Reindeer husbandry has socio-cultural importance on the Sámi people and they have land use rights. Consequently, new Sámi businesses are managed in alignment with the natural and cultural conservation values that are the basis of the World Heritage designation.

The National Park management is intertwined with the reindeer herding system<sup>8</sup>. For instance, according to the Swedish Reindeer Husbandry Act, within national parks and also outside protected areas, it is forbidden to intentionally disturb grazing reindeers and the gathering and moving of the reindeers. Regarding reindeer herding in Padjelanta National Park, members of Sami village organizations may fish and hunt, use motorboats, motorized off-road vehicles and aircrafts, bring along dogs, take wood for handicrafts and fuel wood, whereas these activities are prohibited for all other people.

The renewed regulations of the National Park management state that reindeer husbandry rights can be practiced within Lapponia. However, various tools such as requirement of permits, exemptions and notifications are introduced to provide the National Park management a comprehensive understanding of ongoing and planned work. These tools are introduced to manage Lapponia in the long term.

The rights of the Sámi people have arisen over their use of land and water for reindeer herding, hunting, fishing and other activities over a very long period of time. This is called immemorial usage and through its acceptance the Sami population have a special status in law. Hence, the reindeer husbandry rights are based on the traditional use of land. What is distinct about reindeer husbandry rights is that they are held by individuals (a Sámi who is member of a Sámi village organisation) or sameby, but must be managed collectively (through a Sámi village organisation) and cannot be transferred to another individual.

### **3.4 The New Lapponia Management – Laponiatjuottjudus**

***NB:** National parks, nature reserves and the Lapponia World Heritage site are managed by the same entity. The Director is de facto the National Parks Director.*

The new management plan was launched in 2011 and a management structure was established in 2012.



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<sup>8</sup> Reindeer husbandry areas cover 50% of the total land area of Sweden.

Laponiatjuottjudus is the association that administrates the Laponia World Heritage site. The special government regulation<sup>9</sup> about the management organization Laponiatjuttjudus was renewed in 2014, 2016, 2018, and in 2022, the latter because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The regulation is extended until July 2026. These short-term renewals effect the staff members because it is uncertain how long they will continue to be recruited.

Laponiatjuottjudus is the Sámi word for the Laponia Administration. It took over responsibility for the World Heritage site from the County Administrative Board in Norrbotten County on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013. Tjuottjodit is the Lule Sámi verb “to take care of something, to administrate”. It is a locally based organisation with its head office in Jåhkåmåhkke/Jokkmokk. It is now developing new methods to manage the World Heritage site together with the people living in and around the area.

The Sámi delegates represent the majority in the committee, but all decisions are to be made with the consent of all parties, which are

- The Sámi communities in Laponia: Baste čearru, Sirges, Tuorpon, Unna tjerusj, Jåhkågaska tjiellde, Gällivare Forest Sámi community, Luokta Mávas, Slakka and Udtja
- Jåhkåmåhkke/Jokkmokk and Jiellevárre/Gällivare municipalities
- The County Administrative Board in Norrbotten County
- The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

Laponiatjuottjudus considers itself a tentative management, trying out new ways to ensure parties take ownership of the decisions, in close collaboration with those it may concern. It is a management based on local participation and a shared responsibility for the World Heritage site. During the work to develop modern management of Laponia it was emphasised that Laponia should be managed with a holistic perspective, a sustainable perspective and a developmental perspective. **Laponiatjuottjudus manages Laponia until 2026. The long-term ambition is to make Laponiatjuottjudus a more permanent entity.**

The management of the whole Laponia area, and thus the 3 National Parks Muddus/Muttos, Sarek, Padjelanta (as well as Stora Sjöfallet), was until 2011 fully in the hand of the County Administration board of Norrbotten, under the overall supervision of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Its field unit is still in charge of 8 National Parks, as well as ca 350 Nature reserves and 268 Natura 2000 sites. It is efficient despite, limited human resources for such a large territory.



#### **4. Specific management issues of the National Parks**

<sup>9</sup> The regulation: SFS nr 2011:840 Laponiaförordning

The Reindeer Herding Act includes an article to conserve the biodiversity and sustainability of the grazing land. Accordingly, reindeer herding is to be managed to maintain the long-term capacity of the natural grazing land. Reindeer migration should be carried out with as little damage as possible. The Sami reindeer herders are allowed to travel by boat on the lakes, to use snowmobiles, motorbikes and drones to monitor their reindeers. They also sometimes use the helicopter to bring the reindeer together for the marking of the calves. There are between 100 000 and 120 000 reindeers and 1 000 reindeer herders across Lapponia, not necessarily fully depending on reindeer herding, but having constitutional rights related to reindeer herding.

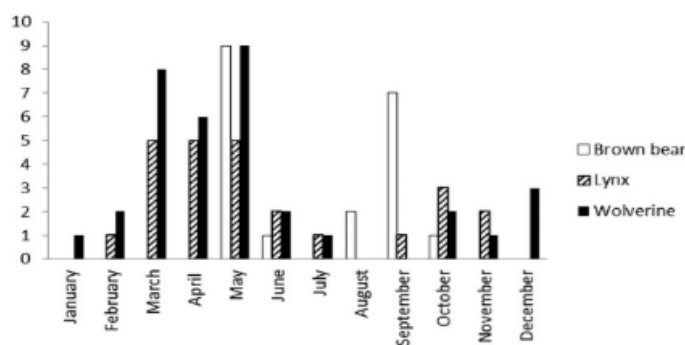
Combination of logging, changes in land use such as hydropower construction, mining, wind turbine construction, climate change and predators constitute threats for reindeers. Further, intensive form of reindeer herding from a distance, namely, not being there in person but herding by using drones or helicopters, makes the system more vulnerable.

#### **4.1 Predators inventory and control**

The monitoring of predators is significant and a challenge due to harsh winter conditions, low accessibility of the land, vast area, low human density. However, 4-5 large carnivore managers working in the Norrbotten county are well equipped. European lynx, brown bears, wolverines, golden eagles and wolves exist as large carnivore. There are no established wolves in the Norrbotten county but wolves are crossing it, coming from Finland and Norway. Collecting more DNA samples are necessary to monitor brown bear population. It is essential to balance wilderness conservation and Sami reindeer herding interests in the National Parks. Through hunting permits the predator population is controlled. Brown bear and moose hunting season starts on 21 August.

Lynx and wolverine are relatively frequent in the Diploma holding sites; brown bear occurs only in Muddus/Muttos and passing wolves are mainly observed in the southern part of the Norrbotten county. There is collaboration between reindeer herders and rangers for collecting data on the Eurasian lynx and wolverine populations. There exists a high density of golden eagle breeding.

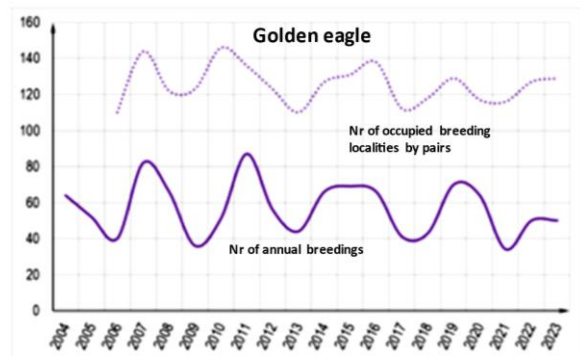
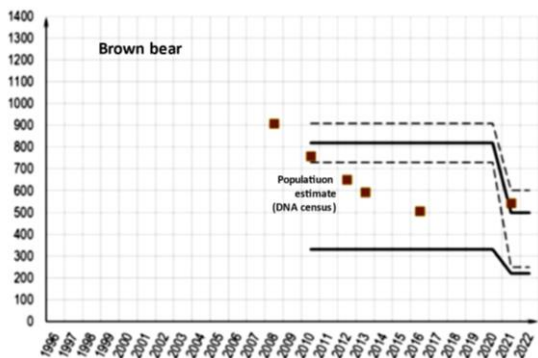
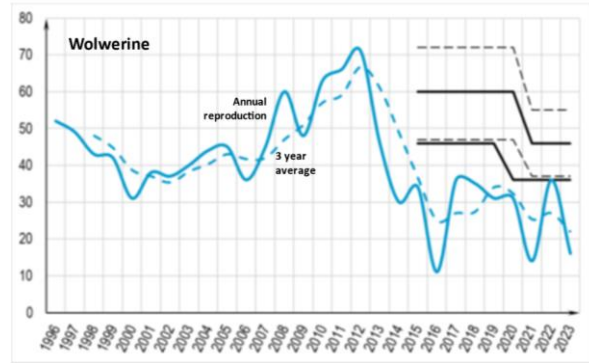
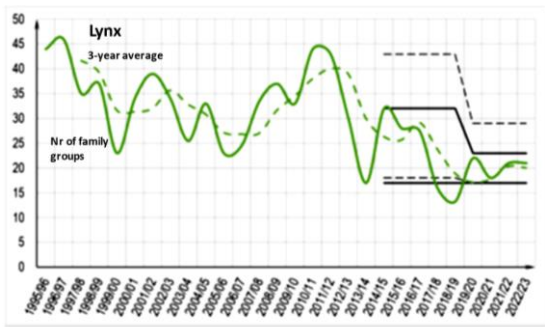
Illegal hunting of large carnivores continues in protected areas in Northern Sweden. The risk for large carnivores to be hunted illegally inside protected areas is higher than outside according to the research carried out in 2015 which covers the data period from 1984 to 2010 (Rauset et al., 2015).



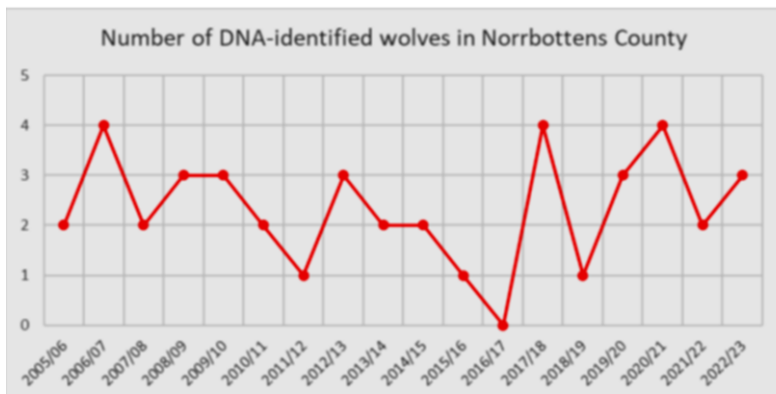
Monthly distribution of illegally killed radio-marked brown bears, Eurasian lynx, and wolverines in Northern Sweden, 1984–2010 (Rauset et al, 2015<sup>10</sup>).

<sup>10</sup> Rauset, G.N., Andren, H., Swenson, J.E., Samelius, G., Segerström, P., Zedrosser, A., Persson, J. (2015), National Parks in Northern Sweden as Refuges for Illegal Killing of Large Carnivores. Conservation Letters. Vol. 9 (5). <https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12226>

**Census results of large carnivores for Norrbotten County over time**



The legend on the side explains the management goal set by the Wildlife Management Delegation (WLMD) in Norrbotten County. In Sweden, large carnivore management fluctuates around the management goal within the upper and lower management intervals. The minimum level is determined by SEPA following the consultation of the three large carnivore management regions. The sum of minimum level of all counties makes up the reference value for Sweden, which is the smallest number of individuals of large carnivore species. (This coincides with wolf: 300; wolverine: 600; lynx: 870; brown bear: 1 400; golden eagle: 150 successful breeding per year).



Lynx



The census results are kept well annually and it is possible to observe the change in lynx population in the long term for the last 28 years. In the graph, the straight line depicts number of family groups and the dotted line explains 3- year average. There is a decreasing trend of the population size and reproductive area in the lynx population over the last 10-12 years. This is primarily due to legal control by license or hunting protection in addition to illegal hunting or disease to some extent. The high number of licenses for lynx hunting in Sweden is criticised by conservationists <sup>11</sup>. In the last two years, the population is relatively steady.

### Wolverine

The census results for wolverine population starts from 1996 which is relatively long term. The straight line explains the annual reproduction of the wolverine and the dotted line depicts 3-year average. There is a decline of wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) population according to census results and there exist notable cases of illegal hunting of wolverines. Variations are parallel to the Eurasian Lynx. The decreasing trend continues in the last 10-12 years. This coincides with the date of the formation of WLMD. The decline of wolverine population is also caused by the legal control by license or hunting protection. Illegal hunting or disease can be other factors to a lesser extent. In the recent years, the fluctuation of wolverine population is rather high. The monitoring of wolverine will switch to DNA analysis which is also discussed and agreed with the Sami reindeer herders.

### Golden

### Eagle

The upper graph indicates the number of occupied breeding localities and the lower graph explains the number of annual breeding in Norrbotten County. In both graphs, the fluctuation is rather high which is due to the abundance of the food supply such as mountain hares, grouse and ptarmigan for breeding golden eagle pairs. Counties do not have regulating minimum levels or management goals for golden eagles.

### Brown bear

The census has started in 1996. The dots in the graph show the population estimate based on DNA census. The data starts from 2008. The population size of brown bears in Norrbotten County is rather steady since 2010, but there is a slight decrease in the recent years.

### Grey Wolf

There is a decline in the number of DNA grey wolf population between 2009 and 2016 where an increase can be observed in 2017. The dataset is relatively new, starting from 2005. In recent years, the population size is relatively steady and fluctuates between 4 and 3.

### Reindeer losses compensation

The habitat of large carnivores overlaps with the grazing land of reindeers. Thus, the Swedish Government compensates reindeer losses due to large carnivore depredation based on payment for the risk linked with the presence of large carnivores rather than on the number of reindeers killed<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/mar/02/hundreds-of-lynx-to-be-hunted-in-sweden-following-biggest-ever-wolf-cull>

<sup>12</sup> Linnell, J. D. C. & Cretois, B. (2018), Research for AGRI Committee – The revival of wolves and other large predators and its impact on farmers and their livelihood in rural regions of Europe, European Parliament, Policy

Hence, no data exists on losses. In 1996, the conventional compensation policy was replaced by the mentioned performance payment system<sup>13</sup>. As a result, looking for the carcass of a reindeer killed by a carnivore is not necessary. Instead, an inventory for the large carnivores is carried out as mentioned in 4.1. The existing policy grants permits for confined ‘protection hunt’ as well. The Sami villages have the right to apply for permission to hunt large carnivores that generate extreme damage. The compensation rate is decided not to exceed 10% of the reindeer losses caused by large carnivores since 2012 and the compensations are paid accordingly since then. This is causing conflict with the reindeer herders and it is not aligned with the existing law. Consequently, the trust in the compensation system is rather low. Reindeer herding law states that the compensation should be calculated according to the meat prices and inflation rate. Both meat prices and the inflation rate have increased. The Swedish inflation rate is 6.3% and the cost of food increased by 7.67% in Sweden (as of October 2023)<sup>14</sup>. Reindeer herders claim that only 50% of their losses are currently covered.

### Regionalised Large Carnivore Management Structure

The structure is based on 3 units: the Field unit, the Wildlife Management Delegation (WLMD), and the Natural Resource and Reindeer Husbandry (NRR) unit. The operational field work consists of collecting data on large carnivores (LC) excluding the brown bear, depredation inspection, practical work of LC hunt and supervision of illegal killing of LC. The management of large carnivore population in Norrbotten County aims at controlling the population size around a specific level. The management goal is determined by the WLMD. WLMD is composed of various relevant stakeholders that represent diverse interests such as hunting, conservation and it develops guidelines. It should be noted that WLMD also consists of local politicians.

### 4.2 Bird inventory

Gyrfalcon	3 pairs
Peregrin Falcon	250 pairs
White-tailed Eagle	100-110 pairs
Tengmalm’s owl	30-40% decrease in population
Snow owl	Last observed in 2015
Lesser white-fronted goose	150-160 pairs in Sweden

Gyrfalcon inventory is carried out since 1976 and between 10 000-15000 pairs have been recorded. Since 1996 gyrfalcon inventories are carried out in 30 locations and at 50 breeding places. 3 pairs have been monitored in 2023 versus 8-14 pairs in 2000. The loss in gyrfalcon is 30-40% due to climate change, habitat loss and changes in food supply.<sup>15</sup> Climate change includes alterations in weather systems that has a potential to influence breeding phenology and achievement. Climate change has

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Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels  
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/617488/IPOL\\_STU\(2018\)617488\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/617488/IPOL_STU(2018)617488_EN.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Zabel, A., Bostedt G., Engel, S., (2014). Performance Payments for Groups : The Case of Carnivore Conservation in Northern Sweden, *Environmental and Resource Economics*. Vol. 59, pp. 613-631.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10640-013-9752-x>

<sup>14</sup> <https://tradingeconomics.com/sweden/food-inflation>

<sup>15</sup> Franke, A., Falk, K., Hawkshaw, K. *et al.* Status and Trends of Circumpolar Peregrine Falcon and Gyrfalcon Populations. *Ambio* 49, 762–783 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-019-01300-z>

been described being a primary driver that influence the biodiversity of Arctic ecosystems<sup>16</sup>. Across whole of Arctic gyrfalcon population is declining. There are 100-110 pairs of white-tailed eagles. 20-25 pairs of white-tailed eagles got avian pox virus. Peregrin falcon population decreased from 500 pairs to 250 pairs. 10 Peregrin Falcons died from bird flu in 2023. Tengmalm's owl population decreased by 30-40% in 2023. In Lapponia 200 boxes exist for breeding. 2015 was the last time as snow owl was observed. 23 breeding pairs were observed close to the Norwegian border. Snow owls need lemmings to feed on and the lemming population decreased a lot because of high fluctuations in the climate. The construction of the hydro power plant in Lapponia affected the snow owl population negatively. In 1974, there were around 340 old nests according to the inventory. Since then, the population decreased by around 40-50%. The inventory of the lesser white-fronted goose is carried out by the Swedish hunting organisation. The population in Sweden is around 150-160.

Major threats are:

1. Climate change
2. Bird flu
3. Forest logging
4. Mining
5. Increasing construction of wind turbines

The biggest threat for the bird population in Lapponia is climate change. With the climate change the amount of rain, snow and wind increased which makes it difficult to adapt especially for mountain species although birds are quick to respond to changes. Bird flu (H5N8.H5 N5) is another threat and for white-tailed eagle it continued for the last three years. There exist 100-110 pairs of white-tailed eagles in Lapponia and they all have bird flu. 10 Peregrin falcons died from bird flu in 2023 according to the bird inventory. The increasing construction of wind turbines create threat to the birds of Lapponia as well. The ponds, store houses used as repositories and power lines to be constructed with the planned mining will also bring new threats to the Lapponian bird population. The construction of a wind farm of 24 wind turbines is planned in the next 25 years.

Birdlife Sweden and WWF Sweden carry out the bird inventory since 1976 and since then 100 million Swedish Kroner are allocated to this inventory. Birdlife Sweden received 5 million Swedish Kroner from the national lottery. There is no funding available this year to carry out the bird inventory and no funding is allocated by the government. The sustainability of bird inventories depends on funding. The bird inventory database is neither accessible by SEPA nor by the Lapponia board. Since the Lapponia board is not an authority they have no rights to access databases.

### **4.3 Forest fires**

In summer 2006, approximately 300 ha of forest burnt in Muddus/Muttos National Park. The summer 2006 was exceptionally warm and dry. The fire was very well documented and further studies have permitted to collect more information on the history of forest fires but also on the ecological impact and potential for regeneration. The plant and lichen regeneration is very slow; fires are therefore a problem in reindeers winter grazing areas, because lichens are the principal source of food and take a long time to grow again. However, the lichen- rich forests have emerged in the aftermath of forest fires. In the long term, SEPA argues that the fire is a significant process that promotes the existence of lichen-rich forests.

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<sup>16</sup> Christensen, T., J. Payne, M. Doyle, G. Ibarguchi, J. Taylor, N. M. Schmidt, M. Gill, M. Svoboda, et al. 2013. The Arctic terrestrial biodiversity monitoring plan. CAFF Monitoring Series Report Nr. 7. CAFF International Secretariat, Akureyri, Iceland.

There were no forest fires since the last renewal of the Diploma. Prescribed burning with careful planning is advocated by SEPA across Sweden and there is research supporting this policy. No plans of prescribed burning exist for the 3 Diploma holding sites. However, there are plans on how to handle natural forest fires.

#### **4.4 Guarding and daily maintenance of infrastructures**

The maintenance of infrastructures (entrances, information points, bird watching towers, camp sites, new trails, bridges, refuges) is a significant but time and resource consuming task. In addition, the tracks of ATVs, snow mobiles, motor bikes of reindeer herders and other vehicles are monitored. For many years two-wheel off-road bikes were used for reindeer herding purposes. 6-wheel drive ATVs are used for hunting. It is possible to drive 6 and 4-wheel ATVs on softer grounds (wetlands). Consequently, 6 and 4-wheel drive ATVs become more prevalent in the recent years among the Sami people for reindeer herding, hunting and fishing. The tracks of 2-wheel bikes were narrower and less visible in the terrain than the wider tracks of 6 and 4-wheel ATVs. High resolution drone pictures are used to identify the damages, to understand how tracks are evolving and to have a baseline information. Snow mobiles, used in winter, and the limited number of boats, have a negligible effect on the landscape.

These off-road vehicles damage the soil especially during the summer season. The vehicle tracks erase the reindeer tracks. The top soil has evolved in the last 10 000 years. Further, in the last 30 years, precipitation in Sweden has risen throughout the year with the highest increase observed in summer<sup>17</sup>. Increased precipitation combined with the damage on the soil may cause problems for the wildlife and the landscape.

In two Sami villages, reindeer herders use drones complementing helicopters (see also chapter 4.7). Apart from that, drones are not allowed in Lapponia and Sami villages disapprove their use as well. There are cases of illegal use of drones (tourists filming ski trips or taking aerial pictures of mountains) in the National Parks due to the lack of information. either. The aim of banning drones is that they scare the reindeers. There is little or no research on the use of drones and the disturbances on wildlife, large carnivores, birds and reindeers. Research on this could be significant for the management of the protected area.

The potential emergence of new tourism activities such as paragliding, base jumping, ice climbing and heli skiing bring new management challenges for the National Parks. At the moment, there is no regulation developed for this purpose; only paragliding is forbidden.

The World Heritage site includes in total 440 km +- 10% trails. Summer trails represent about 310 km and the rest consist of winter trails. Most of the winter trails are a combination of snowmobile and cross-country ski trails. 19 suspension bridges exist within the National Parks and 2 more bridges are located at the border between the management areas of the County board of Norrbotten and Lapponia. 2 more bridges within the World Heritage site are maintained by the Sami villages. 50 bridges and the rest of the infrastructure are managed by the Lapponia board. 24 of the bridges are large metal suspension bridges. Wooden beam and metal bridges remain as well.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.klimatanpassning.se/en/climate-change-in-sweden/climate-effects/precipitation-1.97807#:~:text=During%20the%20last%20thirty%20years,of%20the%20country%20is%20studied>



SEPA provides funding for the entire management of Lapponia. It solely provides direct funding for the trails that belong to the governmental mountain trail network which is called the Blue Book and was established in 1976. There exists approximately 210 km of summer trails and 100 km of winter trails that belong to this mountain network. This mountain trail network excludes the trails in Muddus/Muttos National Park. The funding of the trails that are not included in the network is taken from the funding allocated to the protected areas, which includes management actions and the staff within the protected areas. Consequently, the more resources are allocated for the maintenance of the trails and the less funding remains available for nature management.

The costs vary from year to year.

Year	Costs for Summer Trails	Costs for Winter Trails	Muddus National Park trails
2019	64 000 €	0	29 000 €
2020	147 000 €	52 000 €	51 000 €
2021	485 000 €	32 000 €	158 000 €

This includes bridge reparations, and/or replacements, but not the maintenance of the properties along the trails (signs, cabins, firewood or garbage and toilets).

With 7-9 staff members at the Lapponia management and 4-5 large carnivore managers in CAB, the number is exceptionally low for such a large area with high protection status. However, the management problems seem to be limited and the number of staff seems to be sufficient.

#### **4.5 Tourism, tourism infrastructures and transportation**

According to the counters placed in Sarek National Park there are 10 000-15 000 visitors each year. 9 000-10 000 visitors visit the Naturum Lapponia Visitor Center. During the Covid-19 pandemic the number of visitors increased. The increase of visitors continued after the end of the pandemic. Sarek National Park, which has the toughest but unmarked trails got popular in the recent years thanks to social media. Hence, the number of visitors increased. The new entrance at the Muddus/Muttos National Park can be accessed by disabled people.

Name of National Park	Size of the NP [ha]	Visitors in 2015	Visitors in 2016	Visitors in 2017	Visitors in 2018	Visitors in 2019	Visitors in 2020	Visitors in 2021	Visitors in 2022
Muddos /Muttos	49 000	4 500	5 000	5 000	5 000	6 000	6 000	8 000	8 500
Padjelanta	198 400	5 000	5 000	5 500	5 500	5 500	3 500	4 500	5 000
Sarek	197 000	6 500	5 500	6 500	7 500	7 500	7 500	9 500	10 000

(From the Lapponia Visitors Report (Rapport *besökare Lapponia*) 2022 provided by the Lapponia board.)

Public transportation to commute to National Parks is not frequent. In the summer season, there exists one bus commuting to and from Gällivare train station to Ritsem, the main entrance of the National Parks. In addition, travelling by car is cheaper than travelling by bus. The bus trip costs 1 000 SEK (100 €) for 220 km. The remaining 17 km to the entrance requires additional drive by taxi which increases the cost. Incentives can be explored to improve public transportation to reduce the carbon footprint. No bus service exists during the winter period during which visitors are quite rare due to harsh weather conditions.

There is currently a request from the reindeer herders to close some large areas of the National Parks to tourists to avoid disturbing the reindeers that graze freely, without guarding. To limit the access to areas, the reindeer herders decided to remove a bridge.

#### 4.6 Information and communication

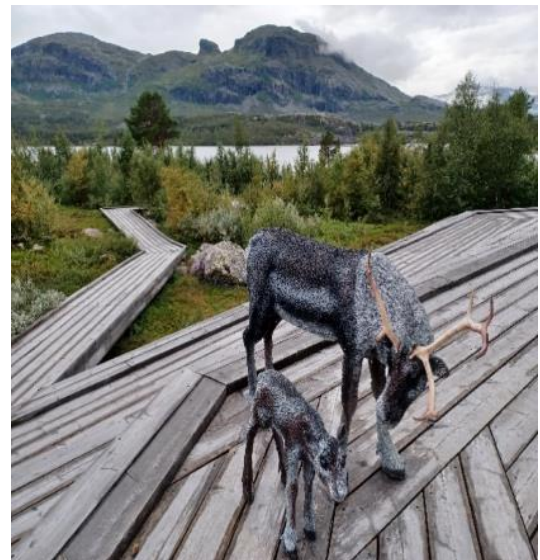
Copies of Laponia World Heritage Diploma are displayed both at Naturum Laponia Visitor Center and at the Ajtte Sami culture museum. Naturum and Muddus/Muttos National Park also display information on the World Heritage and the Ramsar site. The European Diploma for Protected Areas is not displayed in any of these places. Only information panels at the entrance of Muddus/Muttos National Park include the logo of European Diploma at the very end, following the logos of Laponia World Heritage, UNESCO and Laponia Board. The logo reads as the European Diploma for Protected Areas and Council of Europe. Without any explanation, it is difficult for visitors to understand the relation of the logo of the European Diploma and the National Parks.



Definitely, there is need to promote and include more information on the Diploma at the entrance of Muddus/Muttos National Park, at the Naturum Laponia Visitor Center and at the Ajtte Sami culture museum. The European Diploma itself needs to be displayed as well. Other communication channels such as social media could promote and provide information on the European Diploma as well. The existing signs and information on the website are insufficient to deter tourists not to camp at reindeer herding sites. Short informative videos could be used on the social media channels to display information on the visitor rules. Existing social media channels could be used more effectively.

Naturum Laponia Visitor Centre, located in Stora Sjöfallet/Stuor Muorcke by Lake Langas, is designed as a circular building. Exhibitions are well designed and appealing. Facilities exist to show films and documentaries. The entrance requires taking off shoes and slippers are provided. Sufficient information is provided on the UNESCO World Heritage, Ramsar site, National Parks, Natura 2000, the landscape, flora, fauna, reindeers, reindeer herding and the Sami culture. It is possible to listen to stories of Sami people. Guided tours and children's activities are organised by the centre. It is possible to borrow binoculars daily. Free parking lot is provided. Guided tours include a nearby walking trail

where exemplary information is provided on the flora and the fauna. A model bear cup placed on a tree, signs in English and Swedish that provide information on the birds of the primeval forest, the role and functioning of the slow growing lichens, the landscape including the mountain Juobmotjahkka and others are placed in the trail to help explain the flora and fauna. The trail is well designed, well-thought by paying attention to details. The guide was extremely knowledgeable. Both the visitor centre and the nearby trails could serve as sources of inspiration and good practices for other Diploma holding sites and National Parks.



#### **4.7 Relation with the Sami communities and reindeer herding**

Reindeer herding is the main industry of Lapponia which encompasses social, cultural and economic values. The right to seek reindeer herding is exclusive to the Sami people according to the Reindeer Herding Act. Reindeer herding can be carried out on both private and public land. Reindeer herders have rights to graze reindeers at private lands and forests<sup>18</sup>. Blocking a Sami village organisation from reindeer herding has punishable consequences. The environment law regulates permits for environmentally hazardous activities and the developers must obtain a permit via an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA must explain the effects of the planned activities on reindeer herding. The Norrbotten County Administrative Board decides on granting the permits. Reindeer herding requires access to vast and uninterrupted land areas throughout the year. Mining, hydro power plant, logging, wind power turbines are potential threats to reindeer herding in and around the 3 Diploma holding sites. A mining site is planned outside the 3 Diploma holding sites. However, the infrastructure such as pipelines, powerlines to be constructed will pass through the Muddus/Muttos National Park. This will have a possible negative impact on the reindeer population, flora and the fauna.

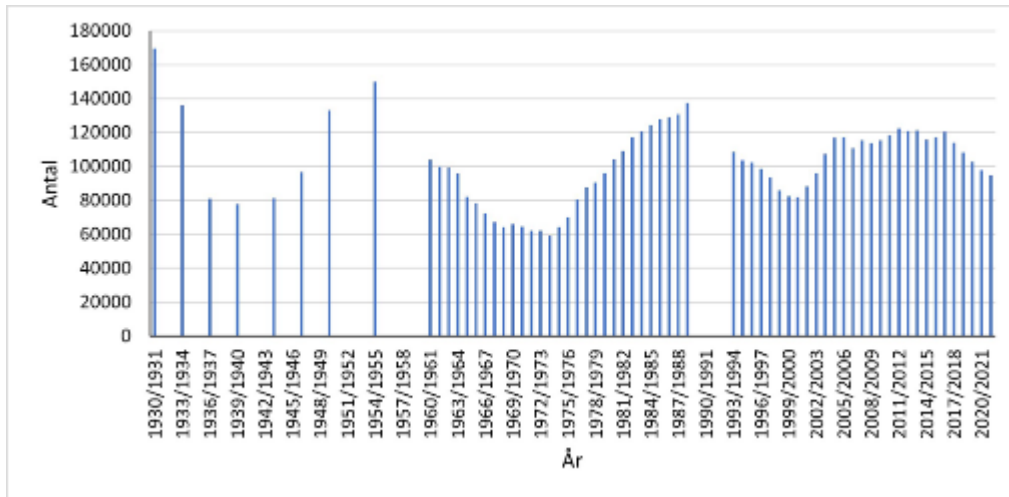
Apparently, young people seem enthusiastic to maintain the traditions such as wearing traditional clothes (see the Ajtte museum for details) and continue with reindeer herding. However, it is accepted that some traditions get modernised. Many reindeer herders, in recent years, get further education and merge reindeer herding with other skills such as economics or IT. The Sami population is relatively less nomadic in the recent years. They use four-wheelers, six-wheelers, motorcycles, and other “bare ground” off-road vehicles snowmobiles, helicopters and drones for herding reindeers. In addition, the reindeers are not kept for their milk but solely for their meat. Income is generated from bones, skins and horns as well. Previously, the reindeer herders used to produce and sell cheese made from reindeer milk. The reindeer herding and production changed form and became more intensive.



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<sup>18</sup> Zabel, A., Bostedt G., Engel, S., (2013). Performance Payments for Groups : The Case of Carnivore Conservation in Northern Sweden, *Environmental and Resource Economics*. Vol. 59, pp. 613-631. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10640-013-9752-x>





Number of reindeer in winter within the Norrbotten county's mountain Sami villages from 1931 to 2022. Source: <https://catalog.lansstyrelsen.se/store/31/resource/425>

The number of reindeer within the Norrbotten county's mountain Sami villages in winter is declining since 2017. The report mentions that a similar trend is observed in various reindeer populations in the Arctic and subarctic region. According to the research by Beer et al., (2020), increasing the population density of big herbivores in northern high-latitude ecosystems will boost snow density and consequently reduce the insulation perseverance of snow during winter<sup>19</sup>. The researchers suggest that such ecosystem management practices will be a vital climate change mitigation strategy. Hence, monitoring the reindeer population and analyzing the reasons of its decline in the 3 National Parks is essential.

It should be noted that the Swedish Environmental Code, along with its underlying regulations, provides opportunities, following a balance of interests, to restrict the reindeer husbandry right to the extent necessary to fulfil the purpose of protection of areas in individual cases. It seems the Reindeer Husbandry Act has an impact on the management of Diploma holding sites. For instance, the management plan mentions that reindeer herding rights include, among other things, "the right to:

- let reindeer graze from the ground as well as from trees,
- move reindeer between different parts of the grazing area, gather reindeer and watch over reindeer, as well as travel through the area on foot and by auxiliary means,
- build facilities, cabins and similar constructions needed for reindeer husbandry,
- cut trees for the construction of facilities, cabins or such as mentioned above,
- take firewood and wood for handicraft for personal use,
- use dry trees, windfalls, forest residues and such,
- cut trees with tree lichens if it is inevitably necessary for providing fodder for the reindeer,
- dig gravel pits and other quarries for household needs,
- haying and other pasturage than reindeer pasture, hunt and fish for household needs and for selling.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Beer, C., Zimov, N., Olofsson, J., Porada, P., Zimov, S., (2020), Protection of Permafrost Soils from Thawing by Increasing Herbivore Density, *Scientific Reports*, 10(1). doi: 10.1038/s41598-020-60938-y.

<sup>20</sup> Laponia Management Plan, Regulations and the Maintenance Plan for the National Parks and the Nature Reserves *Muddus/Muttos, Sarek & Pandjelanta National Parks – Mission report*  
P. Galland, Ç. Adem, 14-19.8.2023

#### **4.8 Scientific research**

The Laponia board deals with the applications for research in the three National Parks and sets time limits and limits on the geographic location based on the existing reindeer herding areas. All the results of the researches are available; however, they are not put together in a common database. With the development of the new management and the implementation of the management plan, it might be suitable to establish for the Laponia area or for the whole Norrbotten County a database linked to the GIS. 3D GIS analysis is carried out by the municipalities.

Scientific research is conducted in the park by different institutions, in particular the University for Agriculture. The park does not have a budget for research, with the exception of the predators' inventories, directly connected to the management. The research on the intensity of grazing and the food availability (lichens) in winter is especially important. The global warming is influencing the structure of the snow and thus the food supply for the reindeers.



## **5 Review of the 2011 Recommendations**

Following the previous on-the-spot appraisal visit (2011), a set of recommendations was adopted in 2012. They are essentially similar for the 2 Diploma holding areas. The Swedish authorities have been regularly sending their annual reports, demonstrating a careful follow-up of the recommendations.

### **5.1 Sarek and Padjelanta NPs**

Detailed information can be found in the 2022 Annual report (CM(2003)... / meeting n° / full document title (coe.int))

*1 provide sufficient financial and human resources, including field staff, to the “Laponiatjouttjudus” (management board) in order to implement the new management plan and ensure a smooth transition from the former county management structure to the new board; and provide as soon as possible an English translation of the management plan;*

Done; however, a new Management Plan has still to be prepared. The special government regulation<sup>21</sup> about the management organisation of Laponiatjuttjudus was renewed in 2014, 2016, 2018, and in 2022, the latter because of the Covid-19 pandemic. These short-term renewals have a negative impact on the staff recruitment (job security). The current regulation is extended until July 2026.

*2 continue the predators' inventories and use the results in order to help conserve the exceptional predator populations while allowing the Sami population to continue their traditional reindeer herding activities;*

Done. Inventories continue with good results. The decline of the wolverine and Eurasian lynx populations has to be monitored and restricting the number of hunting licenses for lynx should be taken into consideration as necessary. In addition, a restructuring of the Wildlife Management Delegation (WLMD) should be considered.

*3 establish a centralized research database linked to a GIS for the whole Lapponia area and make the results of the research widely available for scientists and visitors;*

Ongoing. Still some difficulties to have access to the data collected by different organisations. Since the Lapponia board is not an authority it has difficulty in accessing various data such as bird inventories. Need to develop innovative mechanisms to improve the access of data and information by the Lapponia board.

*4 closely monitor the use of snowmobile, motor boats and other off-road vehicles, particularly in view of controlling illegal hunting and fishing;*

Regularly done. The impact of snowmobile, motor boats and off-road vehicles is monitored closely by the National Park management and the damages are repaired periodically; the relation to illegal hunting is only very marginal. The main problem is four-wheelers, six-wheelers, motorcycles, and other “bare ground” off-road vehicles used particularly by reindeer herders. This

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<sup>21</sup> The regulation: SFS nr 2011:840 Lapponiaförordning

problem has increased in the recent years and the risk of damage might raise with climate change (increased precipitation). However, snowmobiles and motorboats don't damage the vegetation, wetlands and soil/ground.

Encourage research on the use of helicopters and drones and their impact on reindeers and wildlife and decide on restrictions, if necessary. Reconsider the frequency of the use of 6 and 4-wheel drive ATVs.

- 5 *set up a system for estimating the number of visitors, their profile and distribution over the years and initiate a research programme on the long-term impact of the different human activities (e.g. reindeer herding, fishing and tourism) on the landscape, and design a programme to monitor the effects of the climatic change;*

Largely done. Data on the number of tourists is available since 2015 (see above). Counters are placed at certain points such as bridges to monitor visitor numbers annually. Impact of tourism on the landscape is rather low although the number of visitors increased during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Public transportation offer to the 3 National Parks is still very limited. Survey should continue and possible emergence of new tourism activities such as paragliding, base jumping, ice climbing and heli skiing should be taken into account.

- 6 *build and equip as soon as possible the visitor information centre in Stora Sjöfallet for the Lapponia World Heritage site and provide specific information on the different National Parks; establish a network of smaller information points at strategic entrances into the parks and communicate about the different categories of international designations;*

The Lapponia Visitor Center called "Naturum" (2014), is very well built and equipped (see above). It offers very good information and services to the visitors. Naturum is open for a brief period in the summer and autumn; between 14 June- 1<sup>st</sup> October every year. Due to the harsh winter conditions the number of visitors in the winter are rather low. Information on various National Parks is provided in detail and it is well displayed. Communication about the different categories of international designations is sufficient except for European Diploma. Information on European Diploma at entrances and at the visitor center is needed and the diploma needs to be displayed.

- 7 *consider linking the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks with the Muddus/Muttos National Park and other conservation areas so that the Lapponia World Heritage site becomes a single European Diploma site;*

Ongoing; the process should be accelerated. It would strongly simplify the management, the reporting and the communication.

- 8 *reflects on the use of the different national and international designations for the area; organize a workshop with the relevant international organizations (e.g. Council of Europe, World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, and National Park Service) with a view to harmonizing the reporting and monitoring requirements and the respective perimeters.*

Interest for working more closely on the international designation exists. Such a workshop could be organised within the frame of the new management plan preparation.

## **5.2 Muddus/Muttos National Park**

Detailed information can be found in the 2022 Annual report

- 1 *provide sufficient financial and human resources, including field staff, to the new “Laponiatjouttjudus” (management board) in order to implement the new management plan and ensure a smooth transition from the former county management structure to the new board; and provide as soon as possible an English translation of the management plan;*

See above

- 2 *continue the predators' inventories and use the results in order to help conserve the exceptional predator populations while allowing the Sami population to continue their traditional reindeer herding activities;*

See above

- 3 *establish a centralised research database linked to a GIS for the whole Lapponia area and make the results of the research widely available for scientist and visitors;*

See above

- 4 *continue the monitoring of the fire areas including the natural regeneration processes and design a programme to monitor the effects of climatic change;*

Regularly done. Ongoing reflections on prescribed fires

- 5 *assess the visitor flows and their impact both within and outside the park (ecological and economic impact);*

See above

- 6 *consider linking the Muddus/Muttos National Park with the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks and other conservation areas so that the Lapponia World Heritage Site becomes a single European Diploma site;*

See above

- 7 *reflect on the use of the different national and international designations for the area; organise a workshop with the relevant international organisations (e.g. Council of Europe, World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention and National Park Service) with a view to harmonising the reporting and monitoring requirements and the respective perimeters.*

See above

## **6. Conclusions**

The 3 parks are very well managed by highly competent people and the new management system appears to be efficient and well accepted locally. They are not currently facing major issues. However, it is important to remain vigilant; climate change, changes in the socio-economic conditions and pressure from outside the protected territory (mining, hydropower, urbanisation) might have significant impacts on the so far well-preserved ecosystems. *See also annex 4.*

The centuries old balance between nature and human activities is fragile; boreal ecosystems are at the same time very resilient but also fragile, their potential for regeneration being limited due to the harsh winter climate, the short summer season and the average low temperature.

The new the management structure recently established for Lapponia is very promising and the efficiency and acceptance of the new management system deserves to be carefully monitored. It could be a source of inspiration for the establishment of participatory management in other large protected areas.

We therefore recommend to renew the European Diploma for the 3 National Parks for a 10 years period, but it is highly advisable to extend the European Diploma the whole territory of the Lapponia World Heritage property and to re-examine the national and international designations in order to harmonise them. The current situation is quite complicated, difficult to understand and to communicate; the European Diploma is not used, partially because there is little understanding of its value and difficulties to communicate the complex situation.

In addition, a few recommendations, repeating partially those of 2011, are presented to the Swedish authorities and the National Parks managers. ***It must be underlined that all recommendations apply to the 2 European Diploma holding areas, respectively to the 3 National Parks, however with different degree of importance for some of them. Recommendations # 7 and 8 are addressed principally to Sarek and Padjelanta, and to a lesser degree to Muddus; the intensity of the threats mentioned in recommendation # 10 is significantly higher for Muddus than for the other National Parks. The 3 parks belong to the same ecosystem type, are in the same socio-economic context, have the same management plan and are under the same management authority.***

### **Recommendations**

1. Consider merging the 2 European Diploma into a larger site including to the whole territory of the World Heritage property Lapponian area.
2. Set up a coordination mechanism considering all the national and international designation (European Diploma, World Heritage, Ramsar, Natura 2000, National Parks and Reserves). Organise a joint international workshop including UNESCO and the Council of Europe as appropriate.
3. Finalise and adopt the new Lapponia management plan and take a rapid decision regarding the future of the management organization Lapponiatjuttjudus. Consider extending without time limit the special government regulation<sup>22</sup> about Lapponiatjuttjudus.
4. Continue and possibly intensify the research on the impact of climate change on food availability for reindeers, reindeer herding and predators' populations, and regulate the grazing intensity as appropriate.
5. Continue the predators' inventories and use the results in order to help conserve the exceptional predator populations. Monitor illegal hunting and increase the number of field staff for this

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<sup>22</sup> The regulation: SFS nr 2011:840 Lapponiaförordning

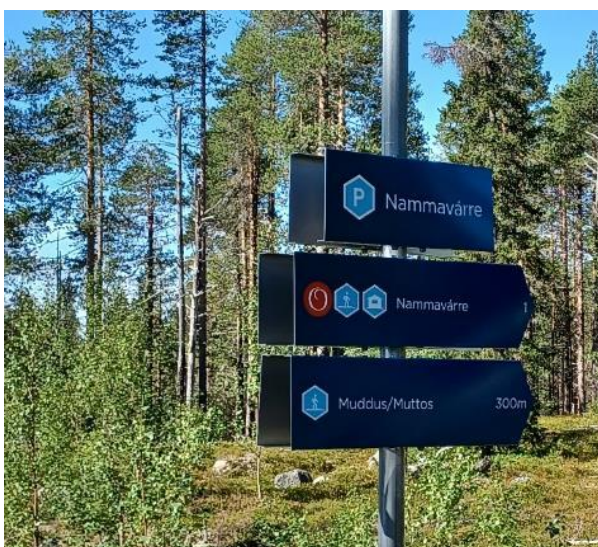
purpose accordingly. Take appropriate measures to stop the decline of the Eurasian lynx and wolverine populations.

6. Reconsider the mechanism of the compensations paid for reindeer losses caused by large carnivores; increase them according to the inflation rate and the increase in the meat prices as stated in the reindeer herding law.
7. Encourage research on the use of helicopters and drones and their impact on reindeers and wildlife, and, if appropriate, set restrictions. Reconsider the frequency of the use of 6 and 4-wheel drive ATVs.
8. Continue the visitors' survey and consider possible emergence of new tourism activities such as paragliding, base jumping, ice climbing and heli-skiing. Explore ways for improving the public transportation service to the 3 National Parks to decrease the carbon footprint of visitors.
9. Continue to build up a centralised database for the whole area, or at least ensure an easy access to the different databases.
10. Pay a special attention and, if appropriate, set restrictions to the construction of technological/energy projects outside of the protected<sup>23</sup> areas that may have a negative impact on the reindeer herding system and the fauna including birds (planned mining, existing hydro power plant, housing, wind turbines, etc.).
11. Promote the European Diploma in the information material and in particular in the Naturum exhibition and Ajtte Sami culture Museum in Jokkmokk. Improve communication for visitors to deter tourists from camping at reindeer herding sites and from disturbing grazing reindeer herds.



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<sup>23</sup> See annex 4: Report from the State party to the World Heritage Center - 2022





Annex 1: Detailed mission programme

***VISIT PROGRAMME 2023: DIPLOMA - On-the-spot appraisal – Muddus national park, Sarek & Padjelanta national parks***

14/8 Departure from Geneva

- Arrival in Lulea (Kallax airport) via Stockholm (Arlanda airport). Lulea to Jokkmokk by car (Laponiatjuottjudus will drive you).
- Dinner at the hotel with SEPA (Jenny Lindman Komstedt and Gisela Norberg)

15/8 Departure for Muddus

- Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Muddus national park.  
Park Visit: the new entrance of the park (Skájdde). Then a visit to Námmavare, the area that was burnt in 2006. Short hiking along the trails. Bengt Larsson, County Administrative Board in Norrbotten, talks about forest fires.
- Lunch and dinner out in the park.
- Drive to the hotel in Stora Sjöfallet national park.

16/8 Sarek and Padjelanta nationalpark

- Breakfast at the hotel. Guiding at the visiting center naturum. Presentation of Laponiatjuottjudus by Åsa Nordin (Operations Manager).
- Lunch outside naturum.
- Meeting with reindeer herders at Suorva (Leila Nutti).
- Guided walk in the surroundings (Amanda Tas).
- Film premiere of the film “Laponia, the vast home” (Carl-Johan Utsi).
- Presentation of predator related issues by the County Administrative Board in Norrbotten (Alexander Winegger).
- Dinner at the hotel in Stora Sjöfallet.

17/8 Sarek and Padjelanta nationalpark

- Breakfast at the hotel. Helicopter flight over Sarek and Padjelanta
- Drive to Jokkmokk. Lunch.
- In the afternoon: Discussion of management related issues at the office of Laponiatjuottjudus with SEPA (Gisela Norberg, Jenny Lindman Komstedt) and Laopina (Åsa Nordin, Dan Ojanlatva).

18/8 Departure for Jokkmokk - Luleå - Stockholm

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Bird Life (Bert Ove Lindström).
- Visit at the Ajtte museum (Leila Nutti).
- Flight to Stockholm, stay at the Arlanda airport.

19/8 Departure for Geneva (?)

- Departure for Geneva from Arlanda (Stockholm). Departure for Zürich.

***Participants***

Åsa Nordin, Laponiatjuottjudus: Operations Manager ; Dan Ojanlatva, Laponiatjuottjudus: Nature conservations officer ; Anders Sandström, Laponiatjuottjudus: Manager for technical management  
Leila Nutti, Laponiatjuottjudus: Manager for Sami culture and reindeer husbandry.

Carl-Johan Utsi, Laponiatjuottjudus: Communications Manager

Gisela Norberg and Jenny Lindman Komstedt Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Bengt Larsson, countyboard of Norrbotten; Alexander Winegger, countyboard of Norrbotten (mammals);

Bert Ove Lindström :Birdlife,

Çiğdem Adem and Pierre Galland

Annex 2:**World Heritage SOUV - Statement of Outstanding Universal Value****Brief synthesis**

The Laponian Area, located in northernmost Sweden, is a magnificent wilderness of high mountains, primeval forests, vast marshes, beautiful lakes and well-preserved river systems. It contains areas of exceptional beauty such as the snow-covered mountains of Sarek, the large alpine lakes of Padjelanta/Badjelánnda, and the extensive Siver delta in the Rapa Valley. On-going geological, biological and ecological processes have formed a variety of habitats conserving a rich biodiversity, including many species of fauna and flora typical of the northern Fennoscandian region.

The indigenous Saami people inhabit northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, close to the Arctic Circle. Within the Laponian Area, every summer, the Saami lead their herds of reindeer towards the mountains through this landscape. Pastoral transhumance landscapes of this kind were at one time common throughout the northern hemisphere. However, these ancestral ways of life, based on the seasonal movement of livestock, have been rendered obsolete or been abandoned in many parts of the world, making the property one of the last and among the largest and best preserved of those few that survive.

Archaeological remains attest to the arrival of early inhabitants to the Laponian area 6,000-7,000 years ago. The area was probably occupied towards the end of the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years BP, but no evidence of this has been found. The settlers were nomadic hunter-gatherers, subsisting principally on wild reindeer, and traces of their occupation are found in the form of hearths and house-foundations. The domestication of reindeer began about two thousand years ago. It evolved gradually, and in the 16th and 17th century the Saami migration with reindeer herds in an annual cycle was fully established.

Today, the Saami live in the mountains during the summer, especially in the western part of the property near the large lakes. Family groups occupy cabins, which have replaced the traditional dwellings. There are no summer camps in the eastern part of the property; the Saami reindeer owners there live in the neighbouring villages and municipalities.

**Criterion (iii):** The Laponian Area bears exceptional testimony to the tradition of reindeer herding, and is one of the last and unquestionably the largest and best-preserved examples of an area of transhumance, a practice once widespread in northern Europe and which dates back to an early stage in human economic and social development.

**Criterion (v):** The Laponian Area is an outstanding example of traditional land-use, a cultural landscape reflecting the ancestral way of life of the Saami people based around the seasonal herding of reindeer.

**Criterion (vii):** The property exhibits a great variety of natural phenomena of outstanding beauty. The snow-covered mountains in Sarek and Sulidälbmá are not only magnificent to see but are a textbook of glacial-related geomorphology. The large alpine lakes in Padjelanta, with the mountain backdrop on the Swedish/Norwegian border are of exceptional beauty. The extensive Rapa Valley provides a total contrast with the alpine areas. Particularly noteworthy is its very active delta area, surrounding cliffs and rocky outliers with sheer faces plunging into the delta. The existence of the Saami culture ranging from the traditional birch and turf kata to contemporary cabins adds to the aesthetic value of the property.

**Criterion (viii):** The nominated area contains all the processes associated with glacial activity such as U-shaped valleys, moraines, talus slopes, drumlins, presence of large erratics and rapidly flowing glacial streams. It has excellent examples of ice and frost action in a tundra setting including formation of polygons and an area of spectacularly collapsing and growing palsa mounds. Glacial rivers originating in the snowfields continue to cut through bedrock. Large unvegetated areas illustrate the phenomenon of weathering. The property also contains a record of humans being part of these ecosystems for seven thousand years.

**Criterion (ix):** The vast mire complex of Sjávnja/Sjaunja is the largest in Europe outside Russia. This area is virtually impenetrable by human beings except during winter. The Laponian area has primeval coniferous forest with dating indicating ages as old as 700 years. Natural succession continues here unimpaired.

### **Integrity**

The property, almost entirely state-owned and legally protected, forms a coherent entity apart from a narrow strip which has excised a river and lake system from the Stora Sjöfallet National Park for hydro-electric development and the creation of the Stora Lulevatten artificial lake. This hydro-electric system (outside the property) is not proposed for expansion and is not considered a threat to the integrity of the property. The only hydro-electric development inside the property is a much smaller-scale one with a single control structure and controlled lake near Vietas in the eastern sector of Stora Sjöfallet. This small-scale unit is not proposed for expansion. On the other hand, there is an on-going discussion about windmills just outside the Laponian area which could be a possible threat to the visual integrity of the property.

In some respects, the on-going practice of reindeer herding has adjusted to modern techniques, but it is still the main source of livelihood in this area. The crucial factor in terms of the area's integrity is the impact of reindeer husbandry, which, by Swedish law, is a right, guaranteed to the Saami people. The Saami retain their traditional rights relating to pasturage, felling, fishing, and hunting and to the introduction of dogs into the protected areas. The possibility of creating a transboundary property with the addition of the adjoining Tysfjord/Hellemo fjord landscape in Norway (thus adding marine connection and significant lower elevation features) has been discussed. Norwegian conservation authorities have been studying the possibility of forming a national park of the region in question.

### **Authenticity**

The authenticity of the property is expressed by and maintained through the continuing Saami practice of reindeer herding and the seasonal movement of the herds to the mountain grazing pastures in summer. The existence and development of reindeer herding is a fundamental condition for the survival of the Saami culture.

The authenticity of the landscape itself and the overall economic process of transhumance and seasonal reindeer grazing is largely maintained. The use of motorized transport by Saami herders is, however, a more recent phenomenon. It can be argued that this is no more than an application of technological developments for a traditional purpose, but it does have a potentially deleterious and irreversible impact on the natural environment and needs to be addressed through management actions.

The buildings of the Saami culture are visible evidence of the continuing presence of reindeer herding activities in the area. They range from the traditional birch and turf dwellings, called *goahte*, to contemporary cabins.

The archaeological remains in the property attest to human use of the landscape around 6,000-7,000 years ago, and evidence of the move from reindeer hunting to reindeer herding is spread throughout the area. Overall, they are in good condition, however only one third of the property has been the subject of systematic archaeological survey, with only 300 remains having been documented that can be monitored regarding status and damage. It is essential that the remaining areas be surveyed to assess the extent of preservation of other archaeological remains and identify appropriate conservation and management measures.

### **Protection and management requirements**

The property is 99% state-owned and composed of four national parks and two nature reserves. The legal status of the protected areas and management regimes aim toward a strict level of wilderness protection, while at the same time guaranteeing the rights of native people. Other areas are partly protected by the *Environmental Code* and the Historic Environment Act (1988:950). Archaeological remains and cultural sites connected with the Saami are strictly protected under the provisions of the Historic Environment Act (1988:950). The importance of the mire complex of Sjávnja has been recognized by its Ramsar site designation. Customary law and the *Reindeer Husbandry Act* protect the right of the Saami people to practise reindeer herding in the property and their traditional rights relating to pasturage, felling, fishing, and hunting.

The Swedish National Heritage Board has overall responsibility for World Heritage implementation, and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) is responsible for natural heritage. Since 2011 the “Laponiatjuottjudus Association”, including representatives from all concerned parties (which have an agreed common statement of the values of the Laponian Area) is legally responsible for joint management of the property. This non-profit, locally based association with a Saami majority includes two municipalities, nine Saami communities (through Mijà Ednam, which in Saami means “our land”), the Norrbotten County Administrative Board (CAB) and the SEPA. Created to ensure that the Saami are involved in decision making at all stages in management planning and implementation, consensus must be reached in all major decisions. A regulatory framework that takes into consideration local development and a management plan for the entire area has been established. As part of the process, the parties agreed upon new regulations that no longer limit reindeer herding rights. Infrastructure, including a Laponia visitor centre at Stora Sjöfallet/Stuor Muorkke, Naturum (2014), to support presentation of the property, is in place.

Biodiversity conservation in the property has included studies on high-profile species such as a population study of the threatened gyrfalcon in the mountain regions of Laponia, and annual surveys of breeding peregrine falcons and white-tailed sea eagles. Inventories of large predators (such as brown bear, wolverine, lynx and golden eagle) are conducted in cooperation with the local Saami villages and the CAB. Population densities of small mammals in parts of Laponia are monitored on a biannual basis, and an environmental monitoring programme for rare alpine plants in the Padjelanta/Badjelánnda part of Laponia has been initiated.

## Annex 3

### **History of the WH nomination**

#### Extract from:

Green, C. 2009. Manging Laponia. A World Heritage Site as Arena for Sami Ethno-Politics in Sweden. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. *Uppsala Studies in Cultural Anthropology* 47. 221pp. Uppsala. ISBN 978-91-554-7656-4.

The story of the Laponian World Heritage site begins as early as the 1980s, when one of the Nature reserves, Sjaunja (today included in Laponia) was nominated by the Swedish Government to the World Heritage Committee. This nomination was based on natural criteria only. However this application was rejected by the World Heritage Committee on the grounds that it lacked exceptionality (Dahlström 2003:243). The preparations to improve and geographically extend the application began. At this stage, the basis for a nomination was still meant to rely on natural criteria only. A new application draft that included an extended natural site circulated among different authorities and other instances in 1995. Both municipalities were in favor of the nomination, but were a bit concerned that it would mean restrictions on outdoor recreation for local people. Also the Sami Parliament consented, even though it too hesitated. Its main concern was that a World Heritage appointment would lead to stricter regulations in the area and that this would effect the future development of reindeer herding (Dahlström 2003:252). The Sami Parliament also reacted to the proposed name for the site: “The Lapponian Wilderness Area.” In the review statement, the Parliament clearly pointed out that the area is a Sami cultural landscape that has been inhabited from time immemorial. To the Parliament representatives this was anything but a “wilderness area” and suggested a name for the site that would acknowledge the Sami history and presence there (Sami Parliament reg. no. 49/95 quoted in Dahlström 2003:253). The name was later changed to simply “the Laponian Area.” Again, the name discussion illustrates a discrepancy in attitude and expectations concerning the suggested World Heritage site, a discrepancy that became more evident as time went by. According to an informant at the National heritage Board (SNHB), an official at the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture<sup>101</sup> contacted the person responsible for the cultural World Heritage nominations at the SNHB to say that it was really a shame that the Laponian nomination did not include cultural criteria, and was only being launched as a natural site. The responsible officer at the SNHB agreed and immediately contacted the head of Ájtte, the mountain and Sami museum in Jokkmokk to see if there was any interest on their part in including Sami culture in the application. This official also called the Chairperson for the Sami Parliament to discuss the matter. He was supposedly very enthusiastic. A formal Sami cultural inclusion would resolve many of the issues he had with the nomi-nation in the first place.<sup>102</sup> I have also been told from informants at the SNHB, that their idea at the time was to nominate Laponia as a Cultural Landscape, rather than a mixed site.<sup>103</sup> Apparently this was also recommended to the SNHB in their talks with the World Heritage secretariat and with the IUCN and ICCOMOS. According to SNHB informants, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), however, refused to agree to this, the reason apparently being that if Laponia were to be a Cultural Landscape the whole process would fall under the SNHB jurisdiction and the SEPA would lose its influence and control over it. The people in charge there were not prepared to do that after all the work they had put into the nomination so far.

The SEPA (and its regional authority, the County Administration) has seen the appointment of Laponia as mainly their responsibility. This reflects the area’s previous history as consisting of the oldest and largest protected areas in Sweden, appreciated for their natural beauty and unspoiled landscape. On these grounds, according to my informants, it was not easy, and apparently not possible, for the SEPA to turn over the responsibility of the new World Heritage site to the SNHB. Nonetheless, they did agree to a mixed-site application. Therefore, after many twists and turns, an

application was sent in to the World Heritage Committee in 1996 that sought World Heritage status for an extended area that included many of the well-known Swedish national parks and nature reserves in the mountain area, but now on the basis of both natural and cultural criteria. A focus on intangible cultural values and “living cultures” was now developing within the World Heritage Organization, and the idea of including Sami culture in the nomination must have been thought of as something that enhanced the possibilities of a positive outcome for the application this time. The inclusion of the local Sami reindeer herding culture and the reason why Lapponia was being launched at all as a mixed site must be understood in relation to this shift in focus in the international arena. The justification above mentions that Lapponia meets the requirements of three natural criteria and two cultural criteria from the set of criteria presented earlier in chapter 3. Lapponia was found to be:

Natural criteria:

- (i) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ii) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (iii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

Cultural criteria:

- (iii) Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (v) Be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable or under the impact of irreversible change.

Annex 4: Report from the State party to the World Heritage Center - 2022

Unesco Ref: CLT/WHC/EUR/22/13714

**Name of World Heritage property: Laponian Area**

**1. Executive Summary of the report**

Not applicable.

**2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee**

No current decision, see point 3.

**3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value**

**Exploitation concession examination under the Swedish Minerals Act in Gállok/Kallak**

The recommendation to conduct a revised and extended impact assessment

Jokkmokk Iron Mines AB has requested a mining exploitation concession in Kallak (Gállok in Sami). It concerns a dossier that is currently under preparation before a forthcoming Government decision. Thus, it is not possible to pre-empt the decision that may be taken, nor comment on the specific circumstances under review. It should be emphasised, however, that the Government has taken careful note of the comments and recommendations received from the joint Technical Review Report by ICOMOS and IUCN.

An exploitation concession does not equate to a general approval – for the mining right to be exploited, the enterprise must also be granted the permits and exemptions required under the Swedish Environmental Code. A rejection of this kind of permit or exemption application therefore means that the mining right under an issued exploitation concession may not be used.

After the report was submitted, the Government Offices referred the report, as well as other relevant documentation, to the Sami Parliament, the National Union of the Swedish Sami People, affected property owners and reindeer herding communities (Jåhkågasska Tjiellde, Sirges, Tuorpon and Unna Tjerusj) for consultation.

The most recent administrative measure taken by the Government Offices, on 2–3 February 2022, was to provide Jokkmokk Iron Mines AB with an opportunity to submit a response to comments received from the Sami Parliament, property owners, Tuorpon reindeer herding community, the National Union of the Swedish Sami People, Jåhkågasska Tjiellde reindeer herding community, Sirges reindeer herding community and Unna Tjerusj reindeer herding community.

State of conservation of the Laponia World Heritage Site

At the moment, to the Government's knowledge, no activities are taking place on the Kallak site (not situated inside the borders of Laponia) other than possible investigative activities.

With regard to the existing protection of the natural environment, the following can be said:

In the Laponia World Heritage Site, there are various overlapping forms of protection. There are four national parks within Laponia. The 'national park' designation is a strong form of protection for an area and aims to preserve a large contiguous area of a certain type of landscape in its natural state or in substantially unchanged state (Chapter 7, Section 2 of the Swedish Environmental Code). There are also two areas within Laponia that are protected as nature reserves (Chapter 7, Section 4 of the Swedish Environmental Code). There are also large nature reserves beyond the Laponia borders, such as Kvikkjok-Kabla. In addition, almost all of Laponia is made up of sites protected as Natura 2000 sites (a special conservation area under

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora). These Natura 2000 sites have conservation plans in accordance with the Section 17 of the Ordinance (1998:1252) on site protection under the Swedish Environmental Code, etc. In Laponia, three sites are also protected by the provisions in Chapter 4, Section 5 of the Swedish Environmental Code, which state that buildings and facilities may only be constructed if necessary for the reindeer industry, the resident population, scientific research or mobile outdoor pursuits and that other measures may only be taken if this can be done without affecting the character of the areas.

**4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.**

Not applicable.

**5. Public access to the state of conservation report**

**6. Signature of the Authority**

  
Fredric Gemsjö  
Deputy Director