

Resolution

Experts of species conservation assessment and nature protection from Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom as well as entities of the Russian Federation: the Republic of Komi, Arkhangelsk Oblast, Murmansk Oblast, the Republic of Karelia, Leningrad Oblast, Yaroslavl Oblast, City of Moscow, Moscow Oblast, Perm Krai, Vologda Oblast and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra assembled for a workshop in Syktyvkar, the Republic of Komi, on 29 September — 4 October 2014. Altogether 69 participants attended the meeting (Annex 1). The main aims of the workshop were to (i) facilitate the exchange of experience and best practice in species assessments between Finland and entities of the Russian Federation in the Barents Region and its adjacent areas, and (ii) provide an introduction to the application of criteria and categories developed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for regional extinction risk assessment of species. These tasks were among the recommendations of the first international meeting focusing on Red Books of Northern Europe, i.e. «International Workshop on the Red Data Books of eastern Fennoscandia – perspectives for the next decade», held in Friendship Park Research Centre, Kuhmo, Finland, 1–2 November 2011. In the framework of the present workshop, a mini-symposium on the results of the Barents Protected Area Network (BPAN) project was also held, and possibilities to utilise distribution data on red-listed species in establishing new protected areas were discussed.

The participants of the present workshop adopted the following recommendations:

1. There is an urgent need to obtain reliable estimates on extinction risk of species in entities of the Russian Federation for the use of decision makers, nature conservation administration and scientists. Such extinction risk estimates need to be made by using an objective, scientifically sound methodology shared among all experts involved.
2. The IUCN Categories and Criteria are widely used throughout the world, they provide a powerful tool for estimating extinction risk of species at the global, regional, national as well as sub-national level, regional assessment results are readily comparable between regions and estimates from adjacent regions are vital in order to accurately estimate extinction risk within regions; for all these reasons the adoption of the systematic use of

the IUCN Categories and Criteria in both regional and national level extinction risk assessments in Russia is highly recommended.

3. Estimating extinction risk of species *per se* needs to be clearly separated from considerations of species protection and other legislative ramifications. Therefore it is recommended that the IUCN Categories and Criteria would only be used in a context of assessing extinction risk of species. This would serve as an additional tool for monitoring the status of species within Russia.
4. Extinction risk assessment using the IUCN system is not meant to replace the present Russian practice of producing regional and national Red Books. In turn, we believe that IUCN assessments provide a solid scientific basis which can contribute to the compilation of Red Books.
5. The implementation of the IUCN system in Russia will require intensive training of assessors as well as trainers nationwide; therefore the establishment of a regular training programme for both assessors and trainers, following the curriculum set out by the IUCN, and aided by the IUCN and its partner organisations, is highly recommended.
6. Participants of the present workshop stress the importance of establishing Expert Groups on higher taxa of organisms (e.g. mammals, birds, beetles, vascular plants, bryophytes, fungi, etc.) over larger areas. For instance, entities of the Russian Federation included in the Barents Region would greatly benefit from cooperation in assessments of extinction risk of species. The establishment of Expert Groups would not mean changes to the extent of current areas for which assessment are made but rather it would (i) facilitate communication between experts, (ii) provide locally missing expertise allowing elevated species coverage of regional assessments, and (iii) increase awareness of shared patterns in regional species trends.
7. To allow an efficient workflow in the Expert Groups, a Steering Committee overseeing Expert Groups needs to be established. The main responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to (i) develop refined guidelines for assessments of groups of taxa and/or regions, (ii) supervise the assessments ensuring that they are performed following the standards of the IUCN system and (iii) oversee the implementation of the training programme and drive additional capacity building as required for the assessment of species.
8. Participants of the workshop recommend utilising the potential of international aid in the work of Expert Groups.
9. Conference participants thanked the Institute of Biology Komi Science Centre (Syktyvkar) for the high level of organization and holding of the conference.

Annex 1: List of participants

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Annex 2: Plea to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation by the participants of the workshop

1. Participants of the international workshop draw attention to the high scientific and nature conservation value of activities under initiatives for maintaining the regional Red Data Books of Barents Euro-Arctic region and neighbouring entities of the Russian Federation as well as the progress achieved in the field of studying plant and animal species included in the Red Books, that were presented in the scientific reports during the workshop.
2. Participants of the workshop point out that regional lists of rare and threatened plant and animal species and the related Red Data Books have to be an effective tool for biodiversity conservation in order to maintain a healthy environment by protecting its most vulnerable components.
3. Participants of the international workshop consider it appropriate to apply the species extinction risk assessment developed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) version 3.1 (2001) in addition to accepted categories used in the Red Book of the Russian Federation when preparing the Red Data Books of RF entities. Participants of the workshop agreed that it is necessary to organise special training on assessment of species extinction risk, as developed by the IUCN (version 3.1, 2001), in order for the methodology to be correctly applied in the entities of the Russian Federation belonging to the Barents Euro-Arctic region and adjacent regions.
4. Participants of the workshop emphasize that monitoring of rare and threatened species is a necessary prerequisite of the preparation of the Red Data Books of the entities of the Russian Federation. Therefore, attention must be paid to increase the volume of funding given to work on regional Red Books including development and implementation of programs on surveying and monitoring of rare and threatened species as well as those species that do not have enough data to determine their status reliably.
5. Participants suggest to put into practice the initiative of organizing regular workshops on the topics of maintaining the regional Red Data Books and they propose to organize the next meeting in Perm Krai, Russian Federation, in 2015.
6. Participants of the workshop note that it is necessary to create and develop a unified inter-regional open database on rare and threatened species supplied with georeferenced occurrence and habitat data. A unified basis for such a database has to be developed and maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation within a framework of its subordinate institutions.