

### 3.5. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Murmansk Oblast is the region, where international contacts are actively developed. International cooperation in the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic region is being actively developed with European countries and USA. Numerous joint projects are realized in the spheres of transport, ecology, in natural resources usage, in humanitarian sphere, in agricultural production sphere, in border-zone cooperation.

Murmansk Oblast is actively participating in the various forms of international cooperation in the framework of following programs:

- The program of cooperation of EU and Russia (TACIS, InterReg IIIA North, Good Neighborhood KolArctic, InterReg IIIB Baltic Sea)
- Intergovernmental working group for the development of the cooperation of Murmansk Oblast with the contiguous regions of Finland
- Bilateral agreements on cooperation with the regions of the neighboring countries
- The cooperation in the framework of BEAR
- The cooperation in the framework of Northern Dimension (ND) and ecological direction of ND

#### 3.5.1 The cooperation of Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) countries

One of the important directions of the international politics of Russian in the North-East is the participation of Murmansk Oblast in the cooperation of Barents Euro-Arctic region (BEAR) countries.

The government of Murmansk Oblast highly estimates the cooperation with Northern Norway. During 1998-2002 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway granted more than 18 millions of Norwegian crowns for the continuation of construction and reconstruction of the highway Prirechie - Nickel - MAPP "Borisoglebsk" for ensuring reliable transportation.

The new border-crossing point "Borisoglebsk" was enacted at Russian - Norwegian border, which cost 22 millions Norwegian crowns. The opening ceremony in January 2003 was attended by the prime ministers of Russian and Norway.

The cooperation is successfully continuing on the issues of nuclear and radiation safety. During the last two years the projects with the total cost of 60 million Norwegian crowns were realized at the territory of Oblast.

Norwegian partners participate in the energy-saving programs. With the support of Norwegian power center in Oslo two centers for efficient power usage were created in Murmansk and Kirovsk, participating in the realization of the projects aimed on the reconstruction of the systems of heat and power supply for the buildings belonging to social sphere.

The cooperation in the fishery complex is being actively developed. Two new joint Russian-Norwegian enterprises were created "Gigante Pecenga" and "Gigante Murmansk". With the financial support of Norwegian government the program of the modernization of the production process of the industrial complex "Pechenga Nickel" is carried out with the purpose to reduce hazardous atmospheric emission.

The Swedish Center was opened in Murmansk with the purpose to support entrepreneurial activity and to represent the interests of the Swedish Union of Employers and Northern provinces chamber of commerce and industry. In turn Russian center was opened in Lulea, which main purpose is to represent the interests of Murmansk Oblast in the northern provinces of Sweden. One of the results of this cooperation is the project for the cooperation in electronic industry, which is jointly realized by the firm "Micro-Macarna" from Payola and public company "Microtekh" from Murmansk. This kind of manufacturing cooperation helped Russian company to retain jobs and Swedish company to modernize its manufacturing process and to increase competitiveness.

Russian-Swedish enterprise "Norfruze-Lovozero" successfully operates affiliated with deer farming enterprise "Tundra". The modern slaughter house operating at this enterprise uses Swedish technology and is the only one in Russian, which was certified by European Union and can export its production into EU countries.

Swedish partners are actively participating in the introduction of the power-saving technologies in the region. Since 1993 the projects are successfully implemented in Oblast financed by EU program for technological aid TACIS. TACIS provided more than 30 millions euros for the realization of the more than 30 project. Currently 13 projects are realized in Oblast, including 6 large-scale (with financing up to 3 millions euros) and 7 small-scale (with financing up to 200 thousand euros). The spectrum of the directions of the projects is quite wide: power-saving, health care, preservation of the environment, nuclear safety, tourism, education, and the projects in social sphere. The majority of the projects are partially financed by Finnish companies.

In the framework of the project "Northern Dimension" the Fund for the Support of Ecological Partnership was created and the long-term plan for the recovery of the ecology of the North-Western regions of Russia was approved in total amount of 1.3 billions euros, including 500 millions euros for the utilization of nuclear waste.

### 3.5.2. Neogborhood program KolArctic

INTERREG III A North is a program of European Union, assisting the development of cooperation in the northern areas of Sweden, Finland and Norway and also in the north-western region of Russia. This program provides financing for the projects, assisting the development of the across-border cooperation. European Union provides financial support for the program INTERREG III A North in amount of 47.6 millions euros.

Subprogram KolArctic of the program INTERREG III A North, the program TACIS CBC for the small-scale projects, and the program TACIS CBS for micro-projects are integrated into the good neighbors program KolArctic according to the existing legal and financial norms.

Green - Region of activities of the program KolArctic

Light green - Ajacent regions

**Diagram. 3.18. The region of operation of the program KolArctic**



In the framework of the Program of Good Neighbors KolArctic the financial support is provided for the projects of the across-border cooperation, assisting the development of business cooperation, advancement of competence and welfare and cooperation of Northern **Kalott** and participating regions of Russian Federation: Murmansk and Archangelsk oblasts and Nenets autonomous district.

The regions of operation of the program KolArctic (diagram 3.18):

- Lapland in Finland and the province Norrbotten in Sweden
- The provinces Finnmark, Troms and

- Norland in Norway
- Murmansk Oblast and Archangelsk Oblast and also Nenets autonomous region.
- Adjacent regions (in the projects InterReg): province Northern Ostrobothnia (Finland), province Vaster Botten (Sweden)
- Republic of Karelia, Leningrad Oblast and St. Petersburg in the framework of the projects of the entrepreneurs' cooperation

### Directions of activity and complexes of actions

- Entrepreneurs' cooperation
  - Production cooperation and networks of cooperation

- Competence enhancement at the enterprise
- **Competence and welfare**
  - Education
  - Research and development
  - Culture and welfare
- **Internal environment of regions**
  - Infrastructure and communications
  - Informational technologies and communication of information

### 3.5.3. Participation of Murmansk Oblast in Baltic Sea Region Neighborhood Program 2004-2006

The purpose of the Program is to increase the degree of the spatial integration and competitiveness of Baltic Sea Region by means of enhancing regional, economic, and social interaction and development. In the framework of Baltic Sea Region Neighborhood Program the project were implemented in following spheres:

- Developing joint strategies and realizing various activities for the macro-region;
- Assisting sustainable spatial development of certain sectors;
- Sustained and integrated development of the coastal zones, islands and other specific territories;
- Assisting balanced development of polycentric residential areas;
- Creating sustained system of communications for the improvement of the spatial integration;
- Improving the management of the cultural and natural heritage, unique landscapes and natural resources;
- Transnational measures of institutional building and increasing potential of organizations

Following regions and countries are participating in the Program:

- Denmark, Sweden, Finland
- Germany (North-East)
- Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Poland, Norway
- Belarus: Minsk, Grodno, Brest and Vitebsk oblasts
- Russia: St. Petersburg, Murmansk, Leningrad, Pskov, Novgorod, Kaliningrad, and Archangelsk oblasts, Republic of Karelia, Nenets autonomous district.

In the framework of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> calls of proposals of Baltic Sea Region Neighborhood Program 3 projects with the participation of Murmansk Oblast were approved:

Title of the project	Partner from Murmansk Oblast	The lead partner	Budget in euros
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT IN THE BARENTS REGION - PHASE II (STBR II)	Murmansk Regional Administration	County Administrative Board of Norrbotten (Sweden)	1,335,000
Forests as a resource for sustainable development and spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region - BALTIC FOREST (BALTIC FOREST)	Murmansk Regional Agency of Forestry; Kovdozersky leskhoz - forestry unit of Murmansk Regional Agency of Forestry	The County Administrative Board of Västernorrland (Sweden)	2,273,092
Baltic Euroregional Network-EAST (BEN-EAST)	Murmansk Regional Board for Youth Affairs	Nordic Council of Ministers Information Office in Saint-Petersburg (Denmark)	508,693