



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

# **TROMSØ DECLARATION**

**of the  
First General Assembly  
of the Northern Forum**

**Tromsø, Norway  
October 3, 1993**

## **PREAMBLE**

**In Tromsø, Norway on this day, October 3, 1993, we the duly authorized representatives for the member regions of The Northern Forum, hereby pledge to present for adoption in our regional home governments, the goals and plans for future action in the North, adopted here at the conclusion of the 1st Northern Forum Conference.**

**It is the intention of The Northern Forum to outline clearly our role regarding the Northern and Arctic regions in connection with the sustainable development strategies being developed under the United Nations Agenda 21 process.**

**This statement shall be known as the Tromsø Declaration. It is based on the belief that the people of the North, through joint knowledge and efforts, are essential partners on the local, national and international level in both the protection of the Northern environment and the sustainable development, as defined in the Brundtland Commission Report, of our regions. We are determined to shape a better future for our regions together.**

## **ECOLOGY IN THE NORTH**

**The people of the Northern regions are highly dependent upon renewable and non-renewable natural resources. The leaders of The Northern Forum share a common desire to develop and**

maintain stable and sustainable economies while protecting the flora and fauna upon which the northern peoples depend.

We, the representatives of the regional authorities of the North, hereby pledge our commitment and our will to cooperate in the work to conserve, protect and, when necessary, to restore the ecosystems of the North.

We commit to cooperate in management of our ecosystems to protect the diversity of our biological heritage, and thus to prevent the necessity of our species reaching official endangered status - a status which can cause economic as well as potential environmental damage.

This is in accordance with Principle 2 of the Rio Declaration which affirms that states have the sovereign right to develop and conserve their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of their borders.

We recognize that effective domestic environmental legislation is a prerequisite for the protection of the environment. As regional representatives, we hereby pledge to promote the legal and administrative framework required for the protection of our environment.

We believe that development in the Northern and Arctic areas must incorporate the application of precautionary approaches to development with environmental implications, including prior assessment and systematic observation of the impact of resource development and transportation systems such as the Northern Sea Route. We are confident that with proper environmental regulation, resource development can be compatible with wildlife and habitat protection.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Northern Forum gives full recognition to the fact that people are part of the natural ecosystems of the Northern region. Because some of our regions are experiencing recession in our economies, high unemployment rates, migration of young people, or a low standard of living, we are confronted with challenging developmental tasks that can be assisted through international cooperation within a framework of sustainable development.

The Northern Forum members thus declare their intention to create viable regional economies in the North and will do so with an appreciation for the lessons learned from the development of the more urban regions of the world.

Recognizing the fact that it is in the authority of the national governments, we suggest that national governments resolve problems between nations which are impeding economic development in the North.

A concern of the Northern Forum is the economic development of the people of the North. We have the right to use renewable resources responsibly for subsistence purposes, to develop an economy, and to continue our unique lifestyle.

## **CULTURE**

The Northern Forum supports the continuation of diverse cultural expressions including language, music, diet and customs. It believes that our cultural diversity is a source of creativity and strength in the development of the region's human resources, especially in the areas of health and education. The region has much to offer both future generations and those people from other areas who seek to visit and learn about the customs of our people, and our creation and adaptation of various technologies for living in the North.

The Northern Forum also encourages the participation of women and youth in the work of the forum.

We further respect the right of the people of the North to engage in the traditional trade and exchange of products from non-endangered or non-threatened species. We strive to modify laws, if any, which artificially restrict this traditional trade.

The Northern regions are culturally and racially diverse and the Northern Forum affirms the rights of all people to live in peace in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

## **SCIENCE**

The Northern Forum recognizes the value of scientific investigation and its importance in enhancing the quality of life for all Northern people.

There is a shared commitment to encourage, facilitate and promote basic and applied interdisciplinary research in the North to improve the knowledge basis for policies on the development and management of regional natural resources, and the protection of the Northern and Arctic environment.

## **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS**

The Northern Forum recognizes that its members are an integral part of our national governments and we are proud of their national heritage and citizenship.

We believe that national governments and regional governments should work together to improve decision making on environmental and development issues by strengthening the power of regional governments. Taking advantage of regional knowledge and responsiveness to local conditions is essential to fulfill the responsibility of regional and national governments to achieve sustainable economies.

## **NORTHERN FORUM PRIORITY PROJECTS**

The Northern Forum, through its priority projects or projects under development will work to enhance the long term physical, social, and economic health of the Northern regions and its people. These projects are of the utmost importance in implementing the principles stated in this document.

## **PRIORITY PROJECTS:**

Environmental Monitoring  
Wildlife Management  
Northern Sea Route  
Capital Formation in the North  
Human Ecology  
Environmental Health and Emergency Response  
East-West and Circumpolar Air Routes  
Management of Marine Resources

## **FUTURE PRIORITY PROJECTS:**

Northern Housing  
Northern Tourism  
Northern Forum Academy of Sciences  
Women in the North  
Northern Education

## **ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES**

As made clear in our Resolution No. 7 adopted at Whitehorse, in September 1992, we support the work done under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (the Rovaniemi process), especially the principles of the Nuuk Declaration adopted at the Second Ministerial Conference on 16 September 1993 and we appreciate our official designation as observers in this process.

The Northern Forum welcomes initiatives such as the Barents Euro Arctic Council and the Nordic Council's International Conference for Parliamentarians on Development and Protection of the Arctic Region.

The Northern Forum wishes to be recognized as a forum representing common objectives of the people in the North. The Northern Forum will work formally or informally with other organizations addressing issues affecting the Northern regions.