



SWEDISH
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION
AGENCY

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Sweden's response according to the notification in accordance with article 10 in the protocol on strategic environmental assessment in a transboundary context (Espoo convention) regarding phased regional land use plan for security and transport for Lapland 2050 in Finland, SYKE/2024/2420

Sweden has been notified by Finland regarding the phased regional land use plan for security and transport for Lapland.

Sweden acknowledge that the preliminary notification has been received.

Sweden intends to take part in further consultations regarding the phased regional land use plan.

Consultation in Sweden

The document for consultation has been circulated for consideration to Swedish central government agencies, the relevant county administrative board in Norrbotten and the municipalities that borders Finland, organizations and the public during the period from 23th January 2025 until 3th of March 2025.

The Swedish EPA (SEPA) is the authority responsible for fulfilling the obligations following from, inter alia, Article 10 in the protocol (SEA) to the Espoo convention. However, SEPA does not evaluate the consultations received with a view to presenting an overall Swedish position. For a comprehensive view of the comments received during the consultations, we refer to the enclosed statements.

Consultations comments received

A brief summary of the statements with comments is provided below, please note that the summary is written by the Swedish EPA and not the referred body. All statements are attached and have to be read in full.

The Swedish Energy Agency welcomes that energy consequences have been taken into account and have no further comments.

The Swedish Maritime Administration states that the plan mainly consider land transports and have no comments.

Sámediggi / Sametinget

The phased landscape plan may affect Sami land use on the Swedish side due to changes in land use as a result of, for example, increased infrastructure projects, increased traffic flows in the border areas and the defence land use needs of the defence forces, there is a risk of disturbance to reindeer, reindeer herding and other Sami land use. The Sami Parliament has guidelines on consultation and the preparation of an environmental impact assessment in relation to Sami land use. It includes guidance regarding involvement and consultation and delimitation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) concerning Sami land use. Further information is given in the statement.

County Administrative Board of Norrbotten leaves no comments at this stage except for that they will take part in future consultations of the plan.

Comments from municipalities

Haparanda city considers it is important that, among other things, cross-border transportation and common security measures are prioritised. Haparanda would like to see further development of train network to increase opportunities for commuting and an integration of the transport system and looks forward to increased cooperation and dialogue on transports and infrastructure issues. Further comments regarding transports and infrastructure issues, request to include a section of possible needs based on planning and projects in Sweden (listed in the document), comments on change in energy system etc. are given in the statement which has to be read in full text.

Kiruna municipality leaves no comments at this stage but wish to be informed and get the possibility to leave comments in the further process.

Pajala municipality raise many issues of importance connected to infrastructure and transports such as maintain cross border infrastructure also in times of crises and the need for a railway line connecting Finland with Sweden via Pajala to Narvik in Norway. Pajala also leaves comments regarding sustainable land use among others transboundary waters, common groundwater resources including water in bedrock. The municipality also raise that dialogue between the countries are important regarding, among other things, Nature 2000-areas, areas for outdoor recreation, areas for sami interests. See the full statement for more information and details.

Övertorneå municipality states that well-functioning and secure transports across the border are very important for many reasons. Border crossings are of importance for local communities, culture, cooperation and commuting, civile defence interest etcetera. All existing border crossings should be maintained and developed in the future. See full statement for more information.

The decision has been made electronically and there is no need for signatures.

For the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Nanna Wikholm

Head of Unit

Åsa Blomster

Point of Contact for the Espoo protocol

Attachment with comments from:

Sámediggi / Sametinget

Swedish Energy Agency

Swedish Maritime Administration

County Administrative Board in Norrbotten

Haparanda City

Kiruna municipality

Pajala municipality

Övertorneå municipality

Copy

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Ulla Helminen and Wilma Poutanen, Finnish Environmental Institute