

Finnish-Swedish Transboundary River Commission



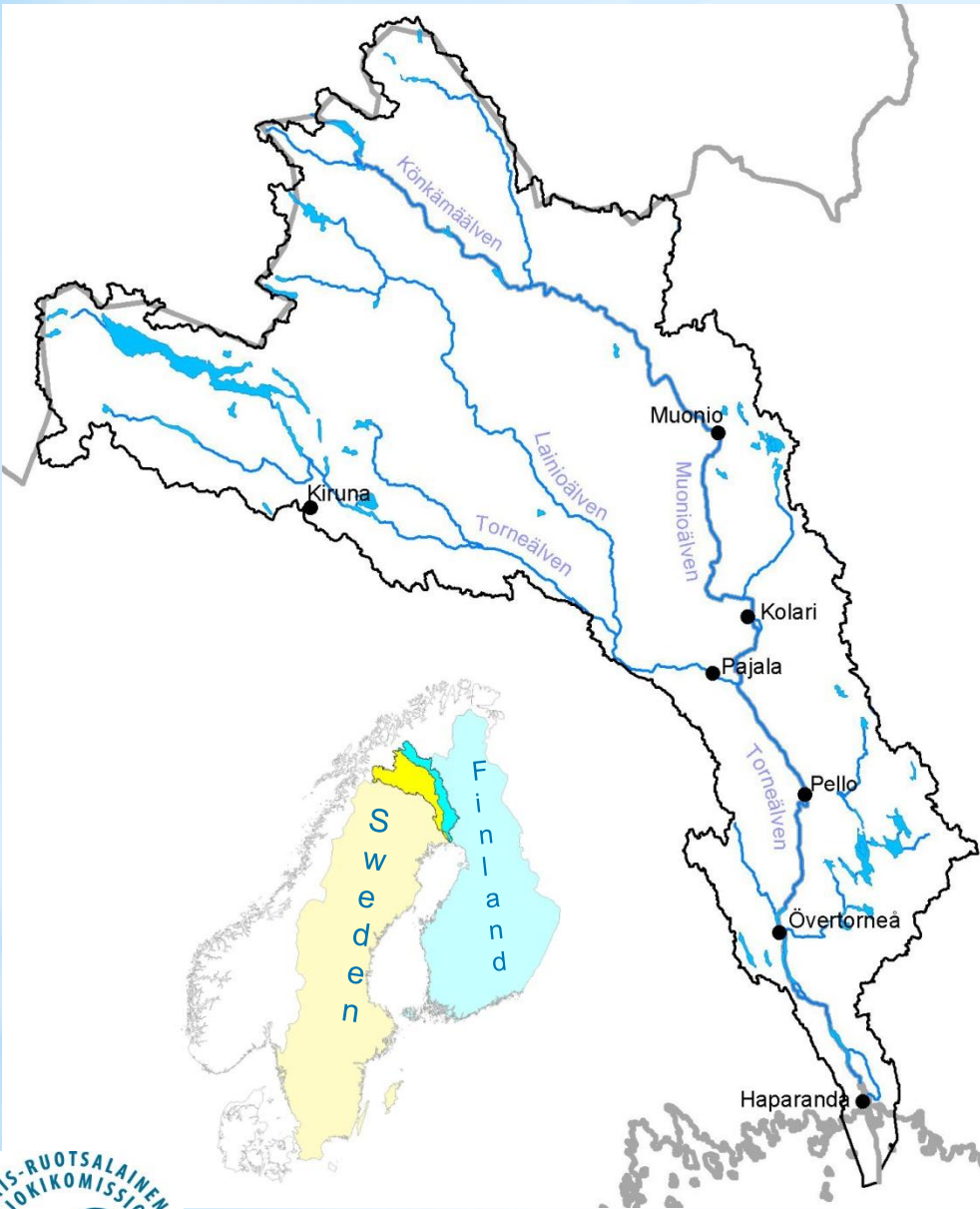
SUOMALAIS-RUOTSALAINEN
RAJAJOKIKOMISSIO



FINSK-SVENSKA
GRÄNSÄLVSKOMMISSIONEN

Torne River Watershed

- 40 157 km², significant part in the Arctic
- From alpine to coast – climate gradient
- Fragile environment
- 60% in Sweden, the rest in Finland, a small fraction in Norway
- Unregulated, no significant structures in the main channel Könkämäeno, Muonio and Torne Rivers
- Flooding normally in two stages (May, Midsummer)
- Average flow 380 m³/s & bifurcation in Tärendö, Pajala
- Natural habitat for wild Baltic salmon and sea trout
- NATURA2000 area
- National landscape, significant cultural environment
- Home to 77 000 people



A (very) short historical overview

- Peace treaties of Frederikshavn (Hamnia) in 1809-1810 which ended the "Finnish War" between Sweden and Russia
- Salmon Fishing Agreement 1927
- Log Rafting Agreements 1917 and 1947
- Transboundary Agreement of 1971, founding the first formal Finnish-Swedish Transboundary Commission
- Transboundary Agreement of 2009, setting the standards for today's Commission

A new Commission – why?

- Basic conditions same as the 1971 Agreement;
 - use of water for mutual benefit
 - support development of local society
 - protect nature and fish resources
 - prevent water pollution

New conditions for the 2009 Agreement;

- no decision making powers (environmental, fishing etc.)
- support cooperation in the border area
- adjustment to EU legislation, directives etc.
- defines new fishing rules

Purpose of the Agreement and tasks for the new Commission

- Secure the use of water for mutual benefit promoting common interests
- Promote work against flood risks and environmental accidents
- Support harmonizing programs, plans and actions needed to secure a sustainable use of land and water
- Nature conservation, cultural heritage and environmental protection should be targeted
- Monitoring the implementation of the Agreement itself, and how the authorities are securing a fulfillment of the fundamental thoughts in the Agreement
- Enhance local and regional cooperation to promote the above

How the work is conducted

- The Commission consists of representatives from regional (water) authorities, municipalities and local business communities
- The Commission is an independent body, reporting directly to the Ministries (not “through” regional authorities)
- Working “between the meetings”
- Supporting cooperation between the parties on nation, regional and local level – functioning as a “bridge” between the countries and the different traditions
- Targeting cooperation between regional and local civic organizations (“people-to-people”)
- Focus on building relations to local organizations by promoting cultural and environmental cooperation
- Issues regarding fishing (i.e. salmon management) is still a major concern for the Commission

Kiitos - Tack - Giitu - Thank you

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