

SÁMIRÁĐĐI

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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1. SUMMARY

The level of activities remained high throughout the year, even though the Covid-19 pandemic continued to influence the Saami Councils' activities in 2021. The organization achieved most of the year's goals, even though we had to postpone some activities until 2022, like the 22nd Saami Conference. For the Saami Council, it was essential to ensure that participants from all the four countries could meet in person in safe circumstances for the Conference, and that was the main reason for postponing it.

Of the results during the year, we would like to highlight that we, together with partners, managed to stop the Harvard-led SCoPEX project that contains scientific experiments within the solar geoengineering field. Also, many of our projects have brought outstanding achievements. One of them is the successful trainee program in the Interreg funded project Filling the EU-Sápmi knowledge gaps. Other achievements are the language learning app IndyLan that we have launched and the very concrete project on cleaning and disposal of pollution in the Sámi territory in the Murmansk region, which we run in cooperation with our member organization OOSMO. The Saami Council is also pleased with the developments in the Fosen case, where the Supreme Court of Norway in October 2021 stated that Norway violated the rights of the Saami people by permitting the construction of the wind farm in Fosen. The Saami Council has assisted the affected reindeer herding district for many years and will continue doing so until the Supreme Court judgment has complied.

This annual report gives a good overview of the Saami Council activities in 2021. We believe that all these results will benefit the Saami people in their way.



PHOTO: SAAMI COUNCIL MEETING IN OHCEJOKKA, OCTOBER 2021

2. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION



PHOTO: SAAMI COUNCIL MEETING IN OHCEJOHKA, OCTOBER 2021

The Saami Council is a non–governmental cultural and political organization with nine Saami national member organizations in Finland, Russia, Norway, and Sweden. The Saami Council was founded back in 1956 and is thus one of the oldest, still operating, Indigenous Peoples’ organizations globally. Cooperation with other Indigenous Peoples worldwide has been important since we first took part in the global indigenous movement back in the 70s. International collaboration remains an integral part of our work today.

The Saami Council’s overall aim is to safeguard the interests of the Saami as a people and strengthen the Saami people’s cohesion across national borders as one people and as an indigenous people.

The highest body of the Saami Council is the Saami Conference, arranged every four years. The Saami Conference chooses 15 council members for four years. Among these, an executive board gets elected for two years at a time. The Saami Council was supposed to arrange the 22nd Conference in Gällivare, Sweden, in October 2021 but had to postpone it until August 2022 because of the pandemic. However, the Saami Council has started planning the Conference by preparing the agenda items and appointing a steering group in which all member organizations participate.

The Saami Council has four operational thematic units: the Arctic and Environmental Unit, the Human Rights Unit, the Cultural Unit, and the EU Unit. A more detailed description of the activities of the units is listed below. The Saami Council also has a secretariat that is responsible for administrative coordination.

2.1 Political level

The following members constitute the Saami Council:

Member	Deputy member	Org.
Åsa Larsson Blind	Ella Karolina Juuso	SSR
Lea Simma	Sanna Vannar	SSR
Kristina Nordling	Margareta Påve	RSÅ
Karin Vannar	Marja Kari Omma	RÅF
Jevgenij Kirillov	Elena Jakovleva	AKS
Ivan Matrekhin	Andrej Danilov	OOSMO
Christina Henriksen	Beatrice Fløystad	NSR
Ol Johan Gaup	Beaska Niillas	NSR
Ellinor Marita Jåma	Nancy Porsanger	NRL
Ellen Inga Turi	Mattias Jåma	NRL
Björg Bonk	Henrik Kolstrøm	SFF
Áslat Holmberg	Ida-Maria Helander	SSG
Niko Valkeapää	Maaren Palismaa	SSG
Piia Nuorgam	Jouni Lukkari	SSG
Saara Alakorva	Per Oula Juuso	SSG

In October 2021, Nancy Porsanger asked to be exempted from her position as deputy member of the Saami Council. Lajla Helene Eira was elected as a new deputy member in her place.

The Saami Council had three plenary meetings in 2021. The first was online 20.02.21, the second was online 14.06.20, and the third was a hybrid meeting in Utsjoki/online. The Saami Council processed a total of 27 cases in 2021.

In 2021, the Executive Board consisted of president Christina Henriksen and vice-presidents Åsa Larsson Blind, Ivan Matrekhin, and Áslat Holmberg. The Executive Board had five meetings in 2021 and processed 27 cases. Also, the Executive Board resolved many issues between their meetings through email exchanges.

2.2 Member organizations

The Saami Council has nine member organizations:

- Reindeer Herders Association of Sweden (BEO)
- Kola Saami Association (AKS)
- Saami Association of the Murmansk Region (OOSMO)
- Reindeer Herders Association of Norway (NBR)
- Saami Association of Norway (NSR)
- National Association Sáme Átnam (RSÅ)
- Saami Peoples Union (SÁL)
- National Union of the Swedish Saami People (SSR)
- Central Saami Association (SSG) (Finland)

2.3 Staff

The Saami Council staff in 2021 have been:

- Áile Jávo, Secretary General
- Gunn-Britt Retter, Head of Arctic and Environmental Unit
- Anne Nuorgam, Head of Human Rights Unit (40% position)
- Christina Hætta, Head of Cultural Unit
- Elle Merete Omma, Head of EU Unit

- Oula-Antti Labba, lawyer in Human Rights Unit
- Tonje Johansen, adviser in Arctic and Environmental Unit
- Åsa Larsson-Blind, project leader (from 07.06.21)
- Niila Inga, project staff (50% position)
- Anna-Márjá Persson, project leader
- Lasse Eriksen Bjørn, project leader
- Enni Similä, project staff
- Kristoffer Myhre Hætta, communication and technical adviser (from 15.02.21)
- Unna-Maari Pulska, adviser in Cultural Unit (from 01.05.21)
- Anne Henriette Nilut, staff member (until 31.01.21)
- Piera Heaika Muotka, communication adviser (until 31.01.21)
- Natalia Vaskova, Russian coordinator
- Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo, trainee (from 01.01.21)
- Susanna Israelsson, trainee (from 01.01.21)
- Ida-Maria Helander, trainee (from 01.01.21, maternity leave from 14.10.21)

During the year, the Saami Council had some turnover in the staff, which required time and resources. The Saami Council also hired several new employees in 2021, which strengthened and enriched the organization. For the Saami Council, it is essential to ensure a positive working environment and that the employees can use their professional competence. The employees work from different locations, which can be challenging in order to maintain a good working environment and an adequate communication flow. However, we have established good routines and measures in this regard. In December 2021, we were able to arrange a staff gathering in Alta after a long time when the pandemic didn't allow us to meet physically.

2.4 Economy

In 2021, the Saami Council had a stable economy, and liquidity has also been adequate. However, several grantors have signaled that we can expect less funding in the future. The main financiers in 2021 have been the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden, and the Tamalpais Trust. The Saami Council has also had several projects running. Many of these projects will continue in 2022. In total, the organization had NOK 12.239.048 in revenue. The revenue is approximately 500,000 NOK more than the year before. The organization had a deficit of NOK 181,680. One can find exact sums of expenses and income in the accounts for 2021.



3. CULTURAL UNIT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant obstacle for the market possibilities for Saami art and culture, which operates borderless between Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The closed borders have also hindered artistic and cultural cooperation and production, thus having a significant adverse effect on the field's economic development. To work together as one field is also crucial for strengthening the Saami's cohesion across national borders. The aim of publishing the report "Kultur-Sápmi in times of COVID-19" and establishing the pan-Saami cultural think tank has been to increase knowledge about the effects of the pandemic and how the Saami cultural fields ecosystem works. We also wanted to examine its development premises and relevance in national cultural policy.

The Saami Council has also continued to contribute to the pan-Saami work of protecting cultural heritage. We are happy to see a better understanding emerging in the Nordic countries.

3.1 Joint Saami cultural policy

The Saami Council has taken a more active role in promoting and developing a cross-border Saami cultural policy and discourse. Even though most of the activity this year has been digital, we have attended several conferences, meetings, and processes;

- **Cooperation in planning the Nordic Bridges events.**
- **Arctic Art Summit; took part in planning and coordination.**
- **Cooperation with the Sámi institutional network Viermie-K, and attended a panel during their Cultural policy summit.**
- **Attended panels and conversations with the Norwegian Art Council about their work on diversity and gender equality in the cultural sector.**
- **Attended the Norwegian Art Councils' Committee for cultural institutions and promoted the economic opportunities in the cross borders Saami art field. The report was also translated into northern Sámi.**

3.1.1 Kultur-Sápmi think tank

In the spring of 2020, the Saami Council established the pan-Saami cultural think tank “Kultur-Sápmi jurddabeassi” consisting of 14 experts: Anne Lajla Utsi, Áilu Valle, Dávvet Bruun-Solbakk, Jenni Laiti, Lea Simma, Maria Utsi, Milana Sapelnikova, Niillas Somby, Nils-Johan Labba, Oskar Östergren Njajta, Ol Johan Gaup, Patricia Fjellgren, Pirita Näkkäljärvi and Siljá Somby. The mandate of the think tank was to describe the current situation for Saami culture and form new thoughts and ideas for the coming ten years. The think tank had several digital meetings throughout the year on various topics such as support schemes, artistic freedom, power of definition, quality, and relevance.

The think tank finalized their work during 2021, resulting in the report «About the Sámi cultural field today, and thoughts about a strengthened self-determination in the future Sámi art and culture field». The report will be published in early 2022.

3.1.2 Knowledge, statistics, and research on Saami art and culture

Since there is currently no coordinated collection of statistics, data, and research from the Saami art and cultural field, the Saami Council sees it as important to contribute to the development of this knowledge. The Saami art and cultural field is a minority in national contexts. It is rarely made visible in national research and statistics, resulting in cultural policy strategies and instruments being adapted to the needs of the majority. There is little information on how these meet the challenges and premises of Sápmi.

In 2021 The Saami Council published the report “Kultur-Sápmi in times of COVID-19.” In collaboration with the International Saami Film Institute, the Saami Artists’ Council, and the Saami Parliament in Norway. The report aimed to advise policymakers on how they can organize Saami cultural policy instruments according to the Saami art and cultural field’s own needs. The results show that closed borders have significant financial consequences for individual cultural workers, artists, Saami festivals, and other cultural institutions. The Saami Council has used the report actively in meetings with national policymakers.

In 2019 the Saami Council initiated the research project OKTA with the Universities of Tromsø, Helsinki, and Copenhagen. The project examines how art is included in and works between the Saami and the Nordic majority populations. Based on analyses of the role and function of art at cultural festivals in Sápmi, the project seeks to develop new knowledge on how art can create friction and cracks that allow Saami cultural knowledge and artistic expression to be articulated and negotiated in public. In 2021 the project finalized one article to be published by the Art Councils in Norway and Denmark. The project will run until 2022.



3.1.3 Truth and Reconciliation

The Saami Council has seen a need to activate the Saami art field parallel with the Norwegian Truth and Reconciliation Committee’s work within the Saami community in Norway. Therefore, we were delighted to be invited into a collaboration with The Office for Contemporary Art Norway and KORO (Public Art Norway) to facilitate a Saami monument. The project, “Art, Colonialism, Indigeneity. A Time for Truth and Reconciliation?” will reflect upon the shortfalls and opportunities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission model and its ability to counter the experience of colonialism past and present by the Saami people. Truth and Reconciliation Committees have also been established on the Finnish side of Sápmi, and the Saami Council sees potential in developing this project in the coming years.

3.1.4 Saami Curatorial

As part of strengthening the Saami self-determination and artistic freedom in the Saami cultural field, there is a great need for more educated peers. Since 2020, the Saami Council has investigated how to facilitate such a development in the Saami society and increase the professional recruitment to the Saami art field. The collaborative partners have been the Saami Art Centre, The Saami Parliament in Norway, and the Office for Contemporary Art.

3.2 Cultural grant scheme

The Saami Council cultural grant scheme is an annual and Saami-driven funding possibility for all Saamis across national borders. Saami artists and culture workers can apply for project grants and travel and work grants. For 2021 the Saami Council also established a home residency working grant, "Ruoktu Residency," to facilitate digital meeting places in times of pandemic where Saami artists across borders could work together in progress.

The Saami Council established the residency grant because we expected fewer project and travel grant applications. We also assumed that the field had a greater need for work grants due to the pandemic, and this was an assumption that turned out to be correct.

In 2021, the Saami Council received 83 project applications and 62 work and residency grant applications for a total of 14,000,000 from Saami artists and cultural workers from all over Sápmi. For 2021 we allocated NOK 955.000 to 42 projects, NOK 830.000 for three working and five residency grants, and NOK 15.000 for the Walt Disney Animation Studios internship travel grant. When allocating, the Cultural Committee is conscious of geographical and genre balance. A complete list of the grants is published online .

In 2021, five Saami festivals got support. The Saami Council experienced an increased number of applications to produce music, literature, and duodji. Fifteen grants were allocated to music and performing art productions. E.g., a new album with Ailu Valle and Amoc, Georg Buljo's concert production, the debut album of the young talent Lávre Eira, and Elle Sofe Saras project "The answer is land" which received positive reviews after its premiere.

Fifteen projects within duodji or intangible culture were granted, including sewing courses for children and young people, transferring knowledge from elder to new generations, and documentation of cultural practices.

Also, three interesting literature projects received grants, among others a Umesámi children's book. Several language courses also got grants, like a Skolt Saami language course and a project to document Saami's place names on the Russian side of the border.

Three Saami cultural workers received a work grant of NOK 200.000 each:

1. Fredrik Prost "Govadas-Goabdes-Gábdá-Gievrie" (Duodji),
2. Ánna-Katri Helander "Dánsun ja koreograferen" (Dance)
3. Anna Sapelnikova "Charr" - "Tundra" (Traditional knowledge)

Ruoktu Residency was a home residency grant given to five Saami cultural workers to support their artistic work during the covid-19 pandemic. They followed each other's creative process from March to June, supporting each other through weekly meetings and presentations. The feedback from the artists after the pilot was that it had been a positive experience. The opportunity to meet and collaborate with other Saami artists in a time when it was not possible to travel was precious to them.

These received the Ruoktu residency grant:

1. Sami Ásllat Laiti (Duodji)
2. Ingir Ane Bál (Film)
3. Carola Grahn (Art)
4. Valentina Sovkina (Traditional knowledge)
5. Vitaly Sapelnikov (Duodji)



PHOTO: "THE ANSWER IS LAND" BY ELLE SOFE SARA / ANTERO HEIN

3.2.1 The cultural Committee

In 2021 a new cultural committee (2021-2022) was elected, with Matti Aikio (Saami Art Association) as the chair of the Committee. Other members are Andrei Danilov (Saami Heritage and Development Fund), Irene Partapuoli (Bágo Writers' Association), Mary Sarre (Sámi Lávdi - performing arts association) and Niko Valkeapää (Saami Council).

The Cultural Committee is the Saami Council's cooperation body with Saami art and cultural organizations, and it ensures a Saami peer assessment in granting the Saami Council cultural funds. In 2021 the cultural Committee had three meetings.

3.3 Protection of cultural heritage

The protection and appropriation of Saami cultural heritage is a high priority of the Saami Council. We are happy to witness the development in the Nordic countries and globally, where indigenous peoples' cultural property is more recognized and respected. However, there is still a lot of work to be done. Throughout the year, we have worked for an increased understanding of the Saami community's needs by the Nordic authorities.

The Saami Council has participated in the following:

- **WIPO webinar "How to Protect and Promote Your Culture – Geographical Indications" to talk about the Saami trademarks.**
- **Participated in Norwegian Saami Parliament's project on protecting intangible cultural heritage (IMKÁS) as an expert.**
- **Panel discussion at the webinar "Intellectual property protection and the safeguarding of Nordic indigenous traditional knowledge".**
- **Planning the "Conference on protection of Nordic Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Property" in Anár in November 2021. Saami Council took part both as a keynote speaker and in the panel.**

3.3.1 Sámi trademarks

The Saami Council has dedicated time and effort to developing and strengthening the Saami trademarks. Saami products, art, and culture are gaining popularity. As a result, systems that guide consumers and retailers in identifying and selecting authentic Saami products over fake

copies that do not support Saami societies or businesses are required.

Together with the Saami duodji organizations, we have prepared a re-launch of the Sámi Duodji trademark and a launch of a new trademark, Sámi Made. The covid-19 pandemic has delayed this process since we haven't been able to organize meetings across borders and have only been working digitally together. However, much of the practical arrangements are ready; printing of new trademarks, new graphical content, a marketing video, and a new webpage. We have also prepared a 3-year project application to brand the trademarks and develop a sustainable organization for them.

The official launch of the trademarks will be in 2022.

3.3.2 Saami symbol committee and national joik

The Saami symbol committee comprises experts appointed by the Saami Council and the Saami Parliamentary Council (SPR). Since 2018, the Saami Council representatives have been OI Johan Gaup, Anna Igontova, and Lars Anders Bæhr. Deputy members are Márjá Sofe Aikio, Stefan Mikaelsson, and Domna Khomiuuk.

The Committee manages the Saami people's symbols, such as the flag and the national anthem. The Saami Conference in Tråante in 2017 decided to initiate a process to elect a Saami national joik. The Saami symbol committee has proposed the joik "Sámiid eatnan duoddariid" by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää as the Saami National Joik. The Saami Council is preparing a final decision for the Saami Conference in August 2022.



4. ARCTIC- AND ENVIRONMENTAL UNIT



Healthy and productive ecosystems, both on land and in water, sustainable development and a holistic management of natural resources in Sámi areas are the basis for Sámi culture and identity. Climate change, pollution, encroachment and land use changes are challenges for the Sámi culture.

4.1 Participation in Arctic Council cooperation

The Arctic Council Ministerial took place in Reykjavik in May 2021. The Saami Council participated with two representatives in person and 12 representatives attending online. During the first part of the year, most focus has been on finalizing projects and reports for the Ministerial and preparing for the Russian chairmanship. The Saami Council has participated in the Senior Arctic Official (SAO) and SAO executive meetings and negotiations. The Arctic Council adopted the Reykjavik declaration and its first Strategic plan 2021 - 2030. Arctic Indigenous Peoples' rights, Indigenous Knowledge, and Indigenous language initiatives have been recognized in these documents.

The Russian Federation took over the chairmanship in May 2021 and has set up an intensive program. Saami Council participated in a SAO executive meeting and the first physical in-person SAO plenary meeting in Salekhard on Yamal in November 2021.

Ellen Inga Turi has served as Saami Council's Senior Arctic Official head of delegation and Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) Board Member since 2015. For the last two years, she served as IPS chair. Turi stepped down in May 2021 and was replaced by Viktoria Guseva.

The Saami Council offers its support and competence to small ad hoc working groups as far as resources allow. We think it is an excellent way to impact the development of Arctic affairs when being involved at the outset of designing initiatives. Tonje M. W. Johansen has been nominated to the informal Project Support Instrument (PSI) working group that has the mandate to assess the enhancement of Arctic Council project financing and the future of PSI. The Saami Council aims to get the mandate of the PSI expanded to include more Permanent Participant projects in the future. Anna-Marja Persson has been appointed as Saami Council's representative on the steering committee for the Arctic Observing Summit (AOS) planned to be held in Tromsø in March 2022.



PHOTO: PICTURE FROM SAO MEETING IN SALEKHARD, YAMALO-NENETS AUTONOMOUS OKRUG, RUSSIA 30.11.-02.01.21

4.1.1 Arctic Council Working Groups

The Saami Council has representation in 5 of 6 Working Groups. Most of the work in the first half of 2021 focused on finishing the Working Groups' projects, activities, and reporting for the Ministerial meeting in May. For the second half of the year, many of the Working Groups' activities have evolved around new initiatives in the biannual work plans. One of the main focuses for the Saami Council in the Working Groups is to ensure the inclusion of Permanent Participants' interests and Indigenous knowledge in the various projects and the Working Groups' administrative work.

4.1.1.1 Arctic Contamination Action Program (ACAP)

The Saami Council has stepped up as co-chair in the Indigenous Peoples' Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) expert group under ACAP and sharing the Co-Chair position with Aleut international. The Saami Council has conducted the third phase of the project, "Cleaning of the Sámi territory in the Murmansk region," and received funding to continue the project. The project has been involved in the co-project Solid Waste management in remote Arctic communities.



4.1.1.2 Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)

AMAP has recently emphasized facilitating Permanent Participants' participation and provided small grants when undertaking AMAP activities. The Saami Council had a lot of activity with the co-produced pilot project on climate change on terrestrial ecosystems (CITE), collaborating closely with Indigenous Knowledge Holders and researchers. The Saami Council held a presentation and pitch of the pilot at the Nordic Pavilion during COP 26. The initial pilot project ended in 2021 but will continue next year with funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers Biodiversity working group.

Eli-Risten Skum has been appointed as Sámi expert to the AMAP-SDWG project on Biosecurity focusing on emerging threats, including zoonoses.

4.1.1.3 Conservation of Flora And Fauna (CAFF)

The Saami Council has focused its current activity in CAFF to support and contribute to the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) initiative of enhancing Permanent Participants engagement, supported by the CAFF Secretariat. The initiative includes an in-person training session for CAFF representatives and engaged researchers on Indigenous knowledge in August 2022.

Wetlands Sápmi project, the three-year co-produced project on the use of wetlands on Saami reindeer herding areas, has continued at the same pace throughout the year. Due to the unfortunate situation of the pandemic, we have not been able to do the planned activities with the herding communities, which is postponed to next year.

4.1.1.4 Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

The PAME Working group concluded and reported on about 20 activities at the Arctic Council Ministerial. The Saami Council contributed to three of these: the development of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in the Arctic, The Meaningful Engagement of Indigenous Peoples in Marine Activities, and the Information Brief on indigenous Food Security in the Arctic.

PAME organizes its work thematically, each theme having an expert group. Saami Council is very engaged in the Ecosystem Approach Expert Group because we believe this approach to management is more in line with the holistic view held by Indigenous Peoples. Saami Council commissioned a paper for the postponed Ecosystem values and valuation workshop to investigate the Saami value concepts.

Of new initiatives, the Saami Council prioritizes engaging in the Different Ways of Knowing initiative and Other Effective Area-based Conservation measures (OECM) in the Arctic Marine Environment. These initiatives are looking into how to apply Indigenous knowledge in conservation planning, and we will pursue that Indigenous management is recognized as an effective conservation measure.

4.1.1.5 Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

The Saami Council has supported and contributed to Gender Equality in the Arctic (GEA) III, ECONOR IV, and Arctic Resilience Forum. The new Russian chairmanship of the working group has a strong focus on Indigenous languages and cultures.

Mental and physical health is one of the main focuses for the Saami Council in the working group and has therefore stepped up as co-lead on the mental health project Local2Global. The Saami Council supports the Canadian-led project on Arctic Community Perspectives on Covid-19 and Public Health, where the Center for Sámi Health Research is involved.

The Saami Council has nominated Heidi Eriksen to the Arctic Human Health Expert Group.

4.3 UN Environmental Conventions

4.3.1 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

All the CBD negotiation has moved online. This is quite challenging for the negotiation of the new strategic plan, the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The Arctic Caucus meets regularly and has prepared positions. Some online CBD sessions were conducted in 2021, but it has been challenging to participate in a meaningful way.

4.3.2 UNFCCC

Gunn-Britt Retter, Susanna Israelsson, and Lasse Eriksen Bjørn have followed the work under the UNFCCC on behalf of the Saami Council. Saami Council participated in the regular Indigenous Peoples caucus meetings arranged under the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) and the caucus meetings of the Arctic region, together with the Sámi Parliaments and the Inuit Circumpolar Council.

4.3.2.1 COP 26

Saami Council participated in the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP) under the UNFCCC in Glasgow. Apart from following official negotiations, Saami Council arranged two side events with colleagues at the Saami Parliaments and Inuit Circumpolar Council - one on Arctic food systems and one on Arctic youth.

The Saami Council delegation also participated as a speaker in several panels at other side events.

COP26 finalized the Paris rulebook and other achievements through the Glasgow Climate Pact cover decision. In general, significant steps have been taken forward regarding recognizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous stewardship, the importance of nature and ecosystems, and the connection between the climate and biodiversity. When implementation of the Paris Agreement now starts, the content of the implementation is at the cen-

ter. Enhanced focus on, for example, nature-based solutions require the full participation of Indigenous Peoples in the design, development, and implementation of activities. Indigenous Peoples have demanded article 6 to include writings on safeguards regarding activity design and implementation in operative texts, stating that our rights must be protected and respected.

4.3.2.2 Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP)

Between 2020-2021, the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) has implemented the LCIPP initial two-year Workplan and held several activities that Saami Council has participated in after capacity.

At the FWG-6 meeting in Glasgow, the FWG agreed to a three-year Workplan for 2022–2024. The new Workplan will continue to focus on the capacity for engagement, knowledge sharing, and climate policy but will also incorporate new activities, for example, focusing on youth. It will also include activities from the previous work plan, such as regional gatherings that couldn't be arranged during 2021 due to the pandemic.

The Saami Council has coordinated the nomination of a new Arctic candidate to the FWG. The nominated Arctic representative Gunn-Britt Retter will start in 2022.

4.3.3 Agenda 2030 and the SDGs

The Saami Council has led the development of the report for the Arctic region for the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) report "Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19". The report was published in June 2021.

The Saami Council contributed to the NGO network statement during the High-level Political Forum in July, where Norway and Sweden presented their Voluntary National Reviews (VNR).

4.3.4 The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

The Saami Council is now registered as an observer organization to the IPBES and attended the IPBES-8 Online in June. In February 2021, Áslat Holmberg presented to the IPBES Indigenous Peoples' dialogue facilitating Indigenous Peoples' input to the methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services. Saami Council will take the step to register as Centre of Distinction on Indigenous Knowledge to be part of the indigenous network working with IPBES assessments.



5. EU UNIT

The main objective of the EU unit is to increase awareness and knowledge about the Saami people within the EU framework as several of the EU policy areas have an impact on the Saami way of life. Monitoring the EU Commission's ongoing work is an important part of the work, which has been shown meaningful during the pandemic.

5.1 Provide premises for the EU Saami policy

In 2021, the overall work within the EU unit got hampered by the Covid pandemic. The pandemic has limited the travels and the possibility of establishing networks and finding new partnerships within the EU framework.

5.1.2 Forestry

Forestry has been one of the main focus areas that the Saami Council worked on in 2021 in an EU context. In April, the Saami Council contributed to the European Commission's open consultation on the new EU forestry strategy. The Saami Council has consulted Saami stakeholders on the topic and also informed the Saami Parliamentary Council (SPR) on the process. The Saami Council has established partnerships with European stakeholders and decision-makers on forestry issues. In the Council of the European Union's conclusions on November 5, 2021, Indigenous Peoples' full and effective participation in implementing and delivering the strategy's objective is acknowledged.

The Saami Council has been participating in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Permanent Indigenous Peoples Committee (PIPC), where the Saami Council is representing Europe. In 2021, the FSC Indigenous foundation was established. Further, safeguarding the new FSC standards in Sweden and Finland has been a priority. PIPC also wrote a letter to the FSC Board of Directors noting the increasing forestry in Sápmi and especially state-owned company SveaSkog's ways of circumventing FSC standards when logging in reindeer herding areas. It resulted in an international project on implementing the new FPIC Guidelines, where Sweden will be one of the 3-5 focus countries.

5.1.3 Sustainable investments

Sustainable corporate governance and sustainable investment regimes are essential in securing Saami peoples' rights when infrastructure projects are funded. In 2021, the Saami Council contributed to the public consultation on an EU directive on Sustainable corporate governance. The initiative aims to improve the EU regulatory framework on company law and corporate governance.

The Saami Council has contributed to the European Investment Bank (EIB) updated Environmental and Societal Sustainable Framework. EIB is the European Union's in-

vestment bank owned by the EU Member States, and it is one of the largest supranational lenders in the world.

5.1.4 The Arctic

The EU launched an updated Arctic policy in 2021. The Saami Council has contributed to the public consultation of the updated Arctic policy. The Saami Council notes with appreciation that the Saami people are mentioned in the updated policy and that the overall work of the Saami Council is noticed.

In November, a Saami Council delegation participated at the EU Arctic Forum and the EU Indigenous Peoples dialogue in Brussels. These conferences are an important venue for raising awareness about Saami issues directly with decision-makers in Brussels.

5.1.5 Fundraising

Fundraising is an important part of the work of the EU unit, as the unit lacks long-term funding. In 2021, the Saami Council submitted three research proposals, where one application received funding, one was declined, and the third is still pending. In addition, the Saami Council also submitted a project proposal to the EU Commission for 2022 that is pending.

5.2 Filling the EU-Sápmi knowledge gaps

The project period is 01.01.2020 - 30.09.2022. The project aims to strengthen the relationship between Sápmi and the EU by creating a knowledge platform on EU-Saami relevant topics and developing a more strategic approach towards the EU. The project has four main activities; a trainee program, a module-based course on relevant EU-Sápmi topics, a pilot Saami Week in Brussel in 2022, and an EU-Saami think-tank of Saami experts that will result in a Saami EU Strategy. The project is funded by Interreg Nord, Regional Council of Lapland, Saami Parliament in Norway, County Municipality of Troms and Finnmark, Region Norrbotten, and Region Västerbotten.

Several of the main activities in the project were conducted in 2021, despite the Covid-pandemic. The project was nominated to the REGIOSTAR Awards, a yearly competition organized by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. The Award aims to identify good practices in regional development and highlight innovative EU-funded projects, which could be attractive and inspiring to other regions.

5.2.1 Traineeship program

In January 2021, three trainees respectively from Norway, Sweden, and Finland were hired by the project. They have been assigned project tasks and followed the work of the



PHOTO: EU ARCTIC FORUM IN BRUSSELS 2021

different units in the Saami Council. Due to the pandemic, the Saami Council prolonged the trainee program until June 2022.

5.2.2 EU-Sápmi think-tank

The members of the EU-Sápmi think-tank have convened in four online meetings and one in-person meeting in Rovaniemi. The work of the experts was prolonged until 2022 due to the pandemic.

5.2.3 EU Courses

In 2021, the Saami Council organized two out of four EU-Sápmi courses. In March, a course on EU Market, Saami livelihoods, and Entrepreneurship was organized in collaboration with Samij Áhpadusguovdásj in Jåhkkåmåhkke, Sweden. In May, the second course, From project rookie to project pro, was co-organized with Sámi oahpa-husguovddáš (SOGSAKK). Both courses were conducted on Zoom. Due to the Covid pandemic, the third course on Sámi advocacy and diplomacy was postponed to 2022.

5.2.4 EU-Saami Week in 2022

The EU-Sámi Week (ESW) has been in the planning phase in 2021. The overall theme for the ESW is Art and Land and is scheduled for June 2022. The program is divided into different parts; a high-level opening and three sessions; "EU-Sápmi partnership", "changing Arctic - new Sápmi", and "culture". Evening activities, including concerts, networking, and dinner, are also planned. Saami Council has established partnerships with Members of the European Parliament, national states, and other institutions as participants and co-hosts for the event.

5.3 Knowledge development

In 2021, the Saami Council systematically promoted transdisciplinary research partnerships as a means to tackle the complex problems that Sápmi is facing. The framework for this work has been a transdisciplinary research group in

an informal network called CO-CREATE. The network has met weekly. The overarching topic for the network has been to identify how co-creative research approaches can be designed to be inclusive, where the focus has been on the need to re-think existing funding structures. The CO-CREATE network, including the Saami Council, published an academic paper on the topic. The paper proposes a new paradigm for the financing of Arctic research, which centers around the inclusion of Indigenous partners, researchers, and institutions from the initial planning stages of funding programs to the final stages of research projects.

5.3.1 Workshops and seminars

In March 2021, the Saami Council co-hosted two research workshops. During the Arctic Science Summit Week in March, the Saami Council conducted a workshop on Co-creating Arctic research with Indigenous rights holders. The workshop had over 200 participants.

In June 2021, the Saami Council co-hosted a workshop on "Co-creation of knowledge and co-design in Arctic research projects: re-thinking calls, seed money and evaluation criteria of funding organizations" during the ICASS X conference. In total, 50 participants attended the workshop.

In November, the Saami Council gave a keynote at a workshop on "Ethics and methods in Arctic transformative research" organized by IASS-Potsdam. And in December, the Saami Council moderated a session during the German Arctic Dialogue on how funding schemes can be amended to be more accessible for Indigenous Peoples.

5.3.2 Member of advisory boards for research projects

The Saami Council is a reference group member for the research project Enhancing Trust in Government for Effective Water Governance (EnTruGo), led by the Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI). Further, the Saami Council is a member of the Advisory Board to the EU-PolarNet2.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT



One can divide the work in the Human Rights Unit of the Saami Council into two major sectors. One is to further Indigenous Peoples' rights internationally, while the other is to implement Saami's rights on a national and local level.

Within the United Nations (UN) system and international human rights work, the Saami Council is the Saami civil society's voice. Throughout history, the Saami Council has represented the Saami and Indigenous Peoples in negotiations on international instruments to strengthen indigenous peoples' rights, such as the ILO Convention No. 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Saami Council has also been central to establishing indigenous instruments within the UN, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), and represented the Saami in critical international contexts. The development of international instruments on Indigenous Peoples' rights is also essential to safeguard Saami's rights at a national level, as these influence each other.

6.1 UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

The 20th session of UNPFII was held in April 2021 in a hybrid format with mostly virtual meetings. The theme was "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16".

Saami Council organized the online side event "Forestry and Indigenous Rights," focusing on forestry issues in Sápmi. Saami Council also organized an online side event with Mary Hoch Center on Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation Commissions.

6.2 Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)

The 14th session of EMRIP was held in July 2021. Four regional meetings were held to receive oral comments on EMRIP's draft reports.

Saami Council held a statement in the Arctic Regional Dialogue on the Draft report on achieving the ends of UNDRIP, with a focus on self-determination. Saami Council also held a statement in the Dialogue on Draft study and advice on the Rights of the Indigenous Child under UNDRIP. In addition, the Saami Council held a statement at the intersessional roundtable of the Human Rights Council

"On ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the Human Rights Council on issues affecting them" in July 2021.

6.2.1 Country Engagement Request

The Saami Council sent an invitation to the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) to conduct a country engagement to Norway. The aim is to discuss Norway's policy to protect the Saami people and culture against industrial projects in the Sápmi.

The outcome of the country engagement request to the EMRIP is to assist Norway and the Saami people by providing technical advice regarding the development of domestic legislation and policies relating to the rights of the Saami as an indigenous people.

The Saami Council highlighted in the request ten different land encroachment cases. The cases selected to the list are cases that Saami Council has worked on or cases that have come to Saami Council's attention in preparation for the request.

6.3 Reporting to UN treaty bodies

An essential part of Saami Council's human rights work is submitting alternative reports when the UN treaty bodies review states with Saami populations. Also, statements on plans and draft general comments of treaty bodies are given by the Saami Council.

6.3.1 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) considered the 7th periodic report of Finland in February 2021. Saami Council participated in the CSO briefing of the CESCR.

Saami Council stressed in the briefing that Finland should finally ratify ILO 169 Convention, recognize the principle of free, prior, and informed consent of the Saami in the Finnish legislation and recognize the rights of the Saami people in the Reindeer Husbandry Act of Finland.

In the Concluding Observations to Finland, the Committee urged Finland to act upon instances of infringements on the rights of the Saami to maintain their culture, way of life, and traditional livelihoods. In this regard, it recommends that Finland assess the impact of existing laws on these

rights and bring the necessary amendments, including in the context of the revision of the Reindeer Husbandry Act.

6.3.2 UN Human Rights Committee

The UN Human Rights Committee considered the 7th periodic report of Finland in its 131st session in March 2021. Saami Council participated in the briefings of the Committee in the session.

Saami Council stressed in the briefings that Finland should respect the self-determination right of the Saami people, recognize the land and water rights of the Saami and finally ratify ILO 169 Convention.

In the Concluding Observations, the Committee urged Finland to speed up the process to revise the Saami Parliament Act, on the principle of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), to respect the Saami people's right to self-determination. The Committee again urged Finland to consider ratifying the ILO Convention No. 169.

6.4 UN Food Systems Summit

In September 2021, a Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) was convened. The Summit launched new actions in the form of coalitions to deliver progress on all 17 SDGs.

Saami Council organized in June 2021 the second Arctic Indigenous Peoples Dialogue resulting in Arctic Region Declaration in Preparation for the Global Food Systems Summit. Also, the Saami Council attended in preparation for the Pre-Summit and the Pre-Summit in July 2021.

The Coalition for Indigenous Food Systems was established in 2021 to ensure understanding, respect, recognition, inclusion, and protection of Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems. The coalition was established by seven member states, which have ensured that Indigenous peoples from seven socio-cultural regions will be leading the coalition's work. The Saami Council is still considering if and how to participate in this.

6.5 Saami Rights

The Saami Council has actively supported several Saami right holders in their struggle to prevent industrial establishments in their traditional areas. Of these, we would like to highlight the following cases:

6.5.1 Rönnbäcken case

In 2020 CERD adjudged that Sweden discriminated against Vapsten Sami Reindeer Herding Community when its government granted a concession to a major mining project in the heart of the Community's traditional reindeer pasture land.

In their response to CERD, Sweden made it abundantly clear that Sweden will not end or rectify the discrimination and other human rights abuses. In this regard, the Saami Council published an Open Letter in June 2021 on Sweden ignoring the decision from the UN Treaty body regarding discrimination in Swedish legislation.

6.5.2 Jiehtačearru case

The Saami Council has assisted Ergon Siida's member Minna Näkkäljärvi in appealing a reservation permit from the Finnish Chemical Agency (Tukes) to allow mineral exploration in their reindeer pastures. The appeal did not win in the domestic courts of Finland. However, Minna Näkkäljärvi took the case herself to the UN Human Rights Committee on the reservation issue, and the case is now to be reviewed in the Committee.

6.5.3 Øyfjellet case

The Saami Council has assisted Jillen-Njaarke reindeer herding district in writing a communication to the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples Rights (UNSRIP). The objective was to inform UNSRIP that the wind power plant project violates the international human rights conventions and the rights of the Saami people. Saami Council has updated the communication several times in the year 2021.

6.5.4 Fosen case

The Saami Council has assisted the members of the Fovsen-Njaarke reindeer herding district on an individual communication to CERD on the wind power plant construction in the area. In October 2021, the Supreme Court of Norway stated that Norway violated the rights of the Saami people by permitting the construction of the gigantic wind farm in Fovsen Njaarke, the Storheia, and the Roan wind farm. The Saami Council made a press release in October 2021. It welcomed the Supreme Court decision and expects Norway to follow up on their human rights obligations and when they are at stake within Norwegian borders.

6.5.5 Ráidná case

The Saami Council assisted members of the Ráidná reindeer herding district on their communications in 2021 to the Human Rights Committee regarding the Langsundforbindelsen project. The adopted project would have severe consequences for the reindeer husbandry in the Ráidná island area. For example, the ferry landing included in the project is planned on the only area on the island suitable for calving and spring pasture.

6.6 Indigenous Navigator Sápmi

The Indigenous Navigator is a framework and set of tools for and by indigenous peoples to systematically monitor the level of recognition and implementation of their rights, the UNDRIP, and other human rights instruments. It has been developed in response to the need for quality data to feed into existing human rights and sustainable development monitoring processes at local, national, regional, and international levels. The tools facilitate indigenous communities' own generation of quality data on their situation and simultaneously enhance their awareness of their rights. The data is gathered and owned by the Indigenous communities themselves.

The Saami Council is now implementing the Navigator in Sápmi in cooperation with IWGIA and Sámi Allaskuvla, with funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers' Arctic Cooperation Program.

7. OTHER ACTIVITIES

7.1 Cooperation and Partnership

The Saami Council has a broad network both in Sápmi and internationally. Cooperation, diplomacy, and partnership are important for achieving our goals.

In 2021, the Saami Council had three coordinating meetings with the Saami Parliamentarian Council. These regular meetings are important for information exchange and for coordinating our efforts in the international work. The Saami Council has also participated in the official opening ceremonies of the Saami Parliaments in Sweden and Norway.

The Saami Council also have close cooperation with other Indigenous Peoples, and especially with organizations and institutions representing indigenous peoples of the Arctic, such as Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), Greenland Home rule Government, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), the Arctic Athabaskan Council, Aleut International Council, and Gwich'in Council International. The Saami Council is planning, together with ICC and IWGIA, for an Arctic Conference in 2023.

The Saami Council and the Saami Norwegian Advisory Unit on Mental Health and Substance Use (SANKS) have continued their partnership on suicide prevention in Sápmi as a follow-up of the "Plan for suicide prevention among the Saami people in Norway, Sweden, and Finland" from 2017. In April, an online workshop on the topic was arranged. Unfortunately, the work is currently on hold because of limited capacity in SANKS.

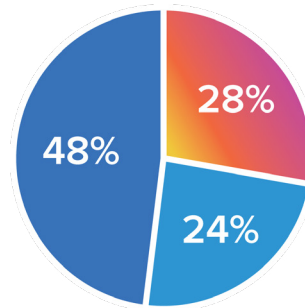
7.2 Communication

Through our communication, the Saami Council wishes to contribute to a greater understanding and awareness in the Saami community and society in general concerning cross-border Saami cooperation and international Indigenous Peoples' work.

Until mid-February 2021, the Saami Council hired Kristoffer Hætta as a communication and IT consultant. Hætta has taken over the responsibility for the website and social media platforms and IT-related issues.

7.2.1 Social Media

The Saami Council actively uses all the popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and VKontakte. Facebook is the platform with the most followers of 5156, up from 4858 last year. On Instagram, the Saami Council raised the follower count to 3020 followers from 1943. On Twitter, the follower count is 2598, up from 1954 last year. On VKontakte the follower count raised to 324 this year, up from around 200 last year.



7.2.2 Website

The Saami Council published 88 news articles on our website in 2021. Of these, 21 articles were in Northern Saami, 28 in English, 14 in Swedish / Norwegian, 13 in Russian, and 12 in Finnish. The website had 33,000 unique visitors and 88,000 page views during 2021.



7.2.3 Arctic Indigenous Peoples publication

In a collaboration project, the Saami Council and German Arctic Office released the publication Arctic Indigenous Peoples that depicts the ways of life Indigenous Peoples lead in the Arctic.



The publication describes how Arctic Indigenous Peoples use Indigenous Knowledge as a generationally refined way of knowing to ensure the vivid development of cultures and livelihoods.

7.2.4 Podcasts

We have published three podcast conversations during 2021. One of them was about Kultur-Sápmi and the Covid-19 pandemics, produced by Sunna Nousuniemi. The second podcast was a conversation between Aslak Holmberg and Jávrrí Juhán Niillas, where Niillas talks about his documentation of Sámi stories from World War 2. Our cultural funds funded this project.



In 2021 the Arctic Council's Permanent Participants' Youth Network worked on our Arctic Presence's podcast project. Iida-Maria Helander and Natalia Vaskova have been working on a podcast episode about the Saami Council.

7.2.5 10 Ways to support Sápmi

We have compiled a list of 10 Ways to Support Sápmi, including a possibility for donations. The reason is that many people reach out to us and ask us how they can support the Saami Council or Sápmi in general. Information like this is hard to find anywhere, so we felt compelled to do something about it.

Our goal is to keep updating the list and continually improve it.

7.3 Youth involvement

Youth involvement is a high priority for the Saami Council. Through the project "Filling the EU-Sápmi knowledge gaps", the Saami Council has hired three trainees to work with the organization. Each trainee has an appointed mentor to support and guide them in their work. The goal of the trainee program is that young Saami people should acquire relevant working life experience in a Saami environment. Participants will understand how the Saami Council is working towards the various EU institutions for the promotion of Saami interests but also gain insight into the job opportunities in Sápmi related to cross-border and international cooperation. The traineeship has worked out very well and will continue until June 2022.

As a follow-up on the Arctic Youth Leader's Summit (2019), the Saami Council has actively supported the Arctic Indigenous Youth's cooperation and has nominated Enni Similä to the Arctic Council's Permanent Participants' Youth

Network. The aim is to allow young people to strengthen their collaboration and make contacts throughout the Arctic. The Youth Network has become self-driven, assisted by the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat. The Saami Council has contributed to the Permanent Participants' Youth Declaration to be launched in early 2022. The Youth Network initiated the declaration at the Arctic Council Ministerial to highlight youth's perspectives.

The Saami Council also had a middle school student working for us through a school project to gain work experience. It is nice to offer young Saami students this opportunity.

The Saami Council hosted three webinars as Capacity building for Saami youth in Environmental issues. The clear message from the participants was that they want to meet across borders more often but that it's hard for them to organize it themselves because of the lack of resources. To reach new Saami youth groups and spark their interest in environmental issues, the Saami Council arranged a photo competition through social media. The aim was to encourage young Saami to post pictures and speak up publicly about their environmental concerns.

7.4 Knowledge and research

The Saami Council has, through its engagement in the Arctic Council and Convention on Biological Biodiversity for many decades, called for greater recognition of Indigenous Peoples Traditional Knowledge, in particular Indigenous Knowledge related to nature, nature use, and management of living resources. The long-lasting focus on Indigenous knowledge has steadily expanded and deepened our understanding of our own knowledge systems and Western Science systems. We have recently seen increased recognition of Indigenous Knowledge in Science programs, science support mechanisms, and among individual scientists and students looking to the Arctic. While the interest in our knowledge systems is growing, there is a risk of seeing more misinterpretation of Indigenous Peoples' Knowledge. We are even at the edge of experiencing knowledge extraction.

The Saami Council engaged Aslak Holmberg to write a report including an analysis of the current situation regarding ethical guidelines for research both in Sápmi and in the Indigenous world and a short plan on how the Saami Council should continue the work towards ethical guidelines for research involving the Saami. Holmberg delivered the report in December 2021, and a follow-up will continue in 2022.

Our continuous promotion and focus on Indigenous Knowledge systems combined with the increased recognition by the outside world has led to many invitations to establish partnerships with researchers in knowledge co-production processes or to provide Indigenous Knowledge holders as speakers at science conferences. Our engagement has established the Saami Council as an attractive partner internationally, as speakers at Science network conferences and among various research con-

sortia as partners, and as members of different steering and advisory boards. The Saami Council has identified a need to work more systematically with knowledge and research. Therefore, we have hired a senior adviser to work on the topic, starting from January 2022.

The Saami Council has also registered as a stakeholder to the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and joined the Global Indigenous Network as a Sápmi Indigenous and Local Knowledge Center of Distinction.

7.5 Strengthened organization

The Saami Council aims to be an attractive Sámi workplace. In 2021 we offered all staff members internal training on technical and communication issues. We have also provided technical assistance to our member organizations.

The 22nd Saami Conference was supposed to be held in October 2021. Due to the ongoing pandemic, it is postponed until 2022. However, the preparation has continued as usual, and the organization is ready to arrange the Conference when the situation allows.

In December 2021, we managed to have a physical staff gathering. The staff highly appreciated the gathering after a long time when we could not meet in person due to the pandemic. The focus at the staff gathering was planning activities and preparing for the Saami Conference.

The Saami Council Headquarters moved to a new office, with better space and meeting facilities. In collaboration with the Saami Archive in Kautokeino, we have started a process of digitalizing the Saami Council archive, stretching back to 1956. The first documents to be digitalized are the Saami Conference reports. All digitalized documents will be made publicly available online.

7.6 IndyLan app

With the support of a grant from the EU programme Erasmus +, the Saami Council has together with project partners Heriot-Watt University, Learnmera Oy, Cornwall Council and Asociación Moviéndote por la Integración y la Participación Ciudadana, developed a gamified language-learning app called IndyLan. Through the app, English, Spanish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish speakers can learn Gaelic, Scots, Cornish, Basque, Galician, and Northern Saami. The app is now live and can be downloaded for free from AppStore and Google Play.

7.7 Solar geoengineering technology

In early 2021, the Saami Council was notified about the SCoPEX (Stratospheric Controlled Perturbation Experiment) project based at Harvard University. The SCoPEX project contains scientific experiments within the field of solar geoengineering, aiming to advance understanding of stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) and how to artificially lower the planet's temperature as a means to tackle global warming. The Saami Council was notified that the project was moved to Sweden after protests in the U.S,

collaborating with the Swedish Space Corporation (Esrange) in Kiruna. Together with Swedish environmental organizations, Saami Council sent an open letter to the SCoPEX Advisory Committee demanding a cancellation of the planned balloon test flight. We underlined that there are no acceptable reasons for allowing the SCoPEX project to be conducted in Sweden or elsewhere. The Saami Council also addressed the Swedish government with a letter to the three ministries responsible for environment, research, and enterprise. At the end of March 2021, the Swedish Space Corporation announced that they, in a joint decision together with Harvard University, had decided not to carry out the planned test-flight in Kiruna and postponed any developments within the project to 2022.

In June, Saami Council gathered support in a joint protest letter opposing the technology to be further developed. The Saami Council later sent the letter signed by 37 Indigenous Peoples organizations from all seven socio-cultural regions to Harvard University. Saami Council also initiated a petition against the content of the SCoPEX project on our webpage, signed by over 300 persons.

The issue received a lot of media attention, and the Saami Council has participated in several interviews and panel discussions regarding this issue. This and similar developments need to be monitored also in the future. We have established a network of allies that can be mobilized if needed, and the Saami Council ought to stand ready to support other regions in similar cases.

7.8 Jevgenij Jushkov memorial fund

Our long-time colleague, Jevgenij Jushkov, passed away tragically on November 29, 2020. He was employed by the Saami Council and contributed with interpretation and translations for the Saami Council and other Sámi cooperation for over 25 years. He was one of very few interpreters who could interpret between Russian and Northern Saami. In addition, he made a solid contribution to strengthening contact between the Saami on the Russian and Nordic sides of Sápmi.

Following Jevgenij's death, the Saami Council has written words of remembrance, spoken in the media, and tried to support the bereaved family, among other things, through a fundraising campaign. The Saami Council also decided to establish Jevgenij Jushkov's Memorial Fund, which aims to support Saami persons from the Russian side of Sápmi taking Saami language education. The Saami Council will officially launch the memorial fund during the 22nd Saami Conference. The Saami Council has allocated NOK 300,000 to the fund, and the life of the fund will be ten years.