The Murmansk Region is an ideal destination for hikers and nature lovers. Its many different landscapes include areas that are critical for the ecological balance of the region, such as old growth forests and large moraine complexes, spring fens and slope bogs, coastal meadows, mountain tundra, ravines and rocks. Its coastal areas as well as its bird colonies and Atlantic salmon spawning areas are unique. The Murmansk Region features important bird areas as well as habitats of red-listed species in Russia and the Murmansk Region.

Welcome to Kola Peninsula!

When travelling around the Murmansk Region you will come across both regional and federal protected areas. The network of protected areas includes nine nature reserves, 10 nature monuments and one nature park. In addition to their nature conservation values, these areas have great potential for ecotourism, including:

- **Experiencing untouched nature**: There is an opportunity to experience nature that is practically untouched. The human activities in the tundra of Lake Lovozero are minimal. Lake Seydozero, as well as in the Vartanga, Korsa and Penys river basins.
- **Navigating waterways**: The waterways of the Kostovo and Vartanga nature reserves are popular with tourists.
- **Geotourism**: In addition to ecological nature monuments, important geological sites can be found in the nature reserves of Seydozero (valuable varieties of the Lephtite), and Kots (rock crystal deposits of Navolgorodskaya, magnetic spinels and rare metal deposits of Tulskoye, magnetite-mix of Pytza, as well as the planned Khibiny National Park (Dvorovy Mountain, Halkarayskiy gorge etc.).
- **Wildlife and bird watching**: There is great potential for amateur and professional bird watching in the Murmansk Region. The region is home to over 370 bird species, most of which migrate through the area during spring and autumn migrations. The Penys and Korsa Nature Reserve as well as the Kolka-Nikki Nature Reserve play a key role in the lives of many bird species.

### Protected areas cover

- **12.5 %** of the Kola Peninsula

#### Botanical excursions

- **Nature reserves** of Lovozero and Khibiny: A range of vegetation from northern boreal forests to mountain tundras. Their visits tend to include shrub and forest ecosystems. 
- **Nature monuments** of Lovozero and Lake Seydozero: Other impressive waterfalls can be found in the river Chapoma and Shveikozi, which are designated nature monuments. In addition, there is a beautiful waterfall on the river Katsyshki in the Kanta Nature Reserve.

**Historical and ethnographic excursions**

- The Lovozero area offers an opportunity to experience Sami cultural heritage. One of the most interesting sites is the sacred figure of Katsa the Giant, improved on a rock on the northeastern shore of Lake Seydozero. There are also cultural heritage sites, demonstrating the life of Finnish peasants on the coast of the White Sea. The Kanta Nature Reserve and the Rybachy and Sredni Peninsulas Nature Park are place to go to relive the history of the Second World War. In the Khibiny Nature Reserve, signs of the Gulag past are still present.

This information leaflet includes a map and a list of regional protected areas in the Murmansk Region. We hope that our list not only presents also planned protected areas. The boundaries of the planned protected areas are provisional and likely to change when final decisions are made. For the general public, perhaps the most interesting perspectives are offered by the Khibiny National Park and the Party Les Nature Reserve, as well as the possible establishment of an extension of the Partyleski National Park in the Murmansk Region, which would also include the Kanta Nature Reserve.

Another planned protected area, Jons-Spygg Nature Reserve, aims at protecting one of the last northern European old-growth pine forests, formed by the pine forest belt. The Rizh-Guba Nature Reserve is a pilot site within the international BPNAT project.