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Espoo Convention Point of Contact  
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**Consultation in accordance with Articles 4 and 5 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) for the planned 400 kV powerline between Messaure and Keminmaa, Aurora Line.**

In a letter dated 30 March 2020, Sweden notified Finland according to article 3 of the Espoo Convention of the Swedish part of the planned 400 kV powerline between Messaure and Keminmaa. In its answer to the notification, the Ministry of the Environment stated that Finland would participate in the EIA. Finland also stressed that the Swedish EIA report should include a clear and credible justification of the screening procedure of the crossing point of the Tornionjoki River and its alternatives. The Messaure-Keminmaa EIA report should also include an overall assessment of the impacts of the crossing on landscape, cultural environment, land ownership, housing and wellbeing within the Tornionjoki valley on the Finnish side.

Sweden has sent Finland the EIA report in accordance with Articles 4 and 5 of the Espoo Convention in a letter dated 4 April 2022. The Ministry of the Environment has distributed the consultation material to several authorities, NGOs and affected private persons. The period for collecting comments was arranged from 20 April to 20 May 2022. The public has also had the opportunity to comment on the material.

The Ministry of the Environment received statements from the Reindeer Herders' Association, Tornionlaakso museum, Regional Council of Lapland, private persons and Fingrid Oyj,. The statements are in Finnish and are enclosed. A brief summary of comments received is given below.

*Regional Council of Lapland.* Crossing the Tornionjoki River in accordance with the expropriation permit application causes undue inconvenience to the landowner on the Finnish side. The implementation of the power transmission connection can also be achieved by selecting an alternative route to cross the Tornionjoki River through several technically and economically feasible routes.

*Tornionlaakso museum.* The observation material presented to support the EIA report is scarce. The material should include more detailed maps showing the sites, areas and landscape areas of the built cultural environment relative to the power line. The impacts on intangible cultural heritage have not been duly identified or assessed. The Tornionlaakso museum supports the decision to select the same corridor for the planned powerline as the current power line at the crossing point of the Tornionjoki River at Vuennonkoski. Placing the power line in the new corridor would double the adverse effects on cultural landscapes and cultural heritage in the Vuennonkoski region.

*Reindeer Herders' Association.* The project has a minor impact on reindeer husbandry on the Finnish side of the border. The reindeer-herding cooperative of Lohijärvi should be involved in the further stages of the project planning and its opinions should be taken into account in the planning and implementation of the project. The construction schedules should also be coordinated so that the work does not disturb reindeer breeding or grazing. Building a power line on the Swedish side may have minor impacts on Finnish reindeer husbandry if it results in Swedish reindeer crossing the border more than usual. This causes additional work and costs in gathering and transporting reindeer. Disturbance of reindeer must be prevented by scheduling of the ground clearing and construction work. Dialogue and negotiations between the party responsible for the project and the Sameby are important. Other means of mitigating the negative impacts on reindeer husbandry should also be implemented.

*Private persons.* Other options for crossing the Tornionjoki River have not been duly investigated. The planned power line does not take into account the landscape values referred to in the Finnish Nature Conservation Act insofar as the routing crosses the Tornionjoki River inside the area of the Törmä farm. There are no grounds for the proposed location of the power line through the Törmä farm. The new power line is an obstacle to the development of tourism in the area. The power line destroys natural values, comfort and leisure activities. The area has also been designated as a traditional landscape. In addition the EIA report does not constitute the grounds referred to in the Act on the Redemption of Immoveable Property and Special Rights for granting an expropriation permit.

*Fingrid Oyj.* Fingrid had no comments on the EIA report.

Based on the EIA report, the comments received, and reflecting its own views, the Ministry of the Environment considers that the transboundary environmental impact assessment does not correspond to all our request in the notification phase and is too general to be adequate. The EIA report does not present site-specific information on the current state of the environment in the impact area on the Finnish side. This is a fundamental starting point in the EIA to be able to assess the impacts. The material does not mention nor have maps to show the relation of the planned powerline and its alternatives to the nationally important landscape area of Southern Tornio valley (Government principal decision 1995: [link](#)), the content of the regional plan (important area for culture environment and landscape, ma 6098: [link](#)), the content of the municipal level land-use planning, including housing. The impact assessment is very descriptive as it does not include corroborating information and holds no visualization of the planned river crossing to the Finnish side. As a consequence, Finland wishes to have a supplement to the EIA report that contains the information stated above, including detailed enough assessment of impacts to Finland.

Finland also proposes to have a general discussion with Sweden how to develop the transboundary impact assessment to the direction where the environmental impact assessment is better oriented to the impacts of the affected Party.

Permanent Secretary

Juhani Damski

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**Enclosure**

Statements and opinions given in Finland