

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION  
FOR BIODIVERSITY AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE &  
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Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych  
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BRAMA NA BAGNA



## Table of contents:

International Projects of Zawady Municipality and LOT Wetland's Gate: unexpected success and failures. Case-Study. Abstract , Paweł Pogorzelski

5

EU founded aid instruments for grassroot projects & local actions in Belarus. Toolkit overview. NSA-LA focus, Wojciech Szpociński

10

Cross border co-operation for sustainable development, Margit Säre

23

Sustainable Development Models: Overview of Structural Issues. Abstract, Grzegorz Kacewicz

31

Striking the right balance between the development of agriculture, tourism and environment protection & wide-life preservation: a case of Maliszewskie Lake, Biebrza & Narew, North-Eastern Poland, Renata Zakrzewska

37

Tourist Potential and Biodiversity & Nature Assets,  
Sustainable development and usage perspective: case of Narew and Biebrza Valley.  
Abstract. Grzegorz Kacewicz

43

Sustainable development of rural territories in Belarus. Promotion of multi-stakeholder participatory cooperation for sustainable development, Galina Verbovskaya

45

Projects by Tartu County Tourism Foundation, Silvia Varik

51

Community engagement project case study: sustainable consumption to improve the quality of life, Anastasia Ivanova

55

Cooperation between IPO "Ecoproject Partnership" and Children's Center "Hope" as an example of joint projects on the separate waste collection and composting, Elena Atomashko

59

Belarus based pilot projects on organic wastes composting. Project Case Study Sustainable waste water treatment in rural areas in Belarus, Irina Lastovka 62  
EDEN: European Destinations of Excellence; Case of Lake Võrtsjärv, Estonia Silvia Varik 64

Tourism development and marketing in Estonia: Enterprise Estonia, Katrin Loss 80

Sustainable development in international perspective, Sylwia Szparkowska 89

Cross border cooperation projects – the best practices of Interreg and CBC program, Sylwia Szparkowska 97

How to write a successful ENPI CBC proposal. Belarus Focus, Wojciech Szpocinski 105

# **International Projects of Zawady Municipality and LOT Wetland's Gate: unexpected success and failures.**

## **Case-Study. Abstract**

### **Paweł Pogorzelski**

Zawady Municipality as a local government is carrying out projects that satisfies inhabitant's needs. These are mainly communal problems like education, social welfare, culture, public order and the local law. Our local government also takes part in a number of extra activities, pursuing projects, also international ones. The Municipality is the member of the Tourist Local Organization „**Wetland's Gate**” - LOT „*Brama na Bagna*”. The organization that was established to support ecological development and to acquire funds for investments and trainings for inhabitants of rural areas in Central & North - Eastern Podlasie, Poland.

The aim of the paper is to introduce two international projects, which are or been implemented on the area of Zawady Municipality. The first one is the project of the Tourist Local Organization „Wetland's "Gate" (LOT „Brama na Bagna”): „Ecological Development of Agro-tourist Farms in Podlasie”. It is supported Island, Lichtenstein and Norway by co-financing from „Europe Finance Mechanism”, „Norway Finance Mechanizm” and also from the Polish funds, within the framework of „Fund for Non-governmental Organizations”. Budget of the Project is over two hundred thousand euro. Its aim is to bring in old fibrous plants sorts, characteristic for Podlasie, to agro-tourist farms. Those are flax and hemp. It could be another tourist attraction for this region. In today's position of agriculture, we have to promote various activities that could help and improve the economical situation and promote cultivation of native plants. Globalization causes that the world market is filled with Chinese cotton. However with agro touristic farms, it is possible to show principles of growth and methods of transforming both fibers and seeds of those plants.

Flax was mainly used to process yarn for material, but also to press oil, to produce grits, creams and some medical ointment. The waste was used as isolation. Cultivation of Indian hemp, that is marihuana, is abandoned in Poland. Long procedures required to get a permit ion for hemp plantation, discouraged farmers. Implementing the Project, we want to convince government, people, farmers. Hemp can be transformed not only into material. It's also transformed into fodder, fertilizer. We can get similar things from flex and hemp. However hemp has bigger meaning for industries, especially for chemistry. Mixed oil, constitute diesel fuel oil. Hemp has also a huge importance in agriculture, specifically in fighting with insects and leads.

Project also promotes the cultivation of coloring plants as marigold, velvet, indigo, henna, mimosa, saffron, mignonette, St John's wort, nettle, or chamomile. Apart from their beauty, those flowers was used to color materials for example from flex or hemp and after that, clothes or other staff was produced. Colouring shrub are: elder, indigo and many others. And finally coloring trees are: birch, oak-tree. There is a workshop organized where everyone can learn how to use the stock from these plants to color materials and so on. In the first year to cultivate those plants there was only five agro tourist farms and Agriculture Consultancy Center in Podlasie responsible for agriculture development for the whole region. Currently there are ten farmers and still more want to join the Project next years. Increasing interest is another success.

The Project caused many other positive effects. First of all one 100 of co-financed activities connected within the Project provide a quite easy account of impact and scale. Another benefit is that farmers have discovered the possibility to use those cultivations in agriculture. For example as a rotation of crops. This cultivations will knock over the monopoly for corn on the agriculture parts. Moreover one businessman invested in pressing oil from seed of oil plants. First experimental fields appeared. It is unquestionably a big and unexpected success. There will be around thirty new jobs available in small community and it's a chance for economical growth in agriculture. Acceptance among people was also positive. „LOT **Wetland's Gate**” received third price in fair in Warsaw summer 2010 for „Flex and Hemp Trail” („Szlak lnu i konopi”). This price certainly helped to promote our Project and raised interest of tourists, inhabitants and politics.

Obvious consequence of the huge popularity of the Project and its effects were inspections. of anti-drug department, Police and supervisory institution. They all observed plantations. Also local people, mainly older people, accused us of teaching the youth bad behavior and deprave. It's an absolute nonsense. We are teaching how to distinguish positive and negative stereotype aspects and how to see a difference between hemp and marihuana. We of course warn about how dangerous drugs are.

Stereotyped behavior about hemp plantation which a lot of young people have, we could also overcome in parties or some other events organized in Zawady Municipality. Without any doubt the Flex-hemp Project, influenced the attendance on those parties: „The Rock Festival“ on Wetlands and „Herring Day“. People were approaching to hemp plantation and were amazed. Hemp was everywhere. It was sowed all around: in parking, camping, concert field, exhibition place... They were taking photos of it, picked it, smelled, chew, made wreath and many other things.

Apart from those two event which already mentioned and described, the LOT BNB implemented one more interesting international project: „ Rivers Valley, Culture Wilderness“ („Dolinami rzek, Bezdrożami kultury“). This Project is implemented by Zawady Municipality in cooperation with the Gimnazium in Soleczniki and it is financed from the European Fund for Regional Development under the Lithuania-Poland Cross-border Cooperation 2007-2013. Within the project, we show common features for both countries like architecture, landscape, culture, cuisine. Our youth band has began the project by their participation in Soleczniki in Zapusty. The celebrations that end carnival season in catholic church. Youth also joined photographic workshop and they have task to imprinted architectural details of some old, wooden buildings. For example: richly decorated houses, religious objects, wayside crosses and agriculture buildings in both regions. The effects were amazing: youth was totally committed to the project. They combined today's digital technology with the past tradition, history, culture, wooden architecture. This kind of approach, makes me feel calm about my future retirement and life. Another activity of the project, one already mentioned, is the Rock Festival on Wetlands: the international three-days concert of rock music, punk, mixed. Thanks to this, we could introduce polish rock fans to Lithuanian rock



music and vice versa. Unexpectedly, we saw that this kind of music exist and create mass culture in both countries. Another surprise was that a lot of Lithuanian youth came to the concert. Concert was divided into three separate days with three differed kinds of music. Punk Day, Mixed Music Day and Rock Day. Every each Day attracted different people, that's why the rotation of people was so huge. And that helped to fight some bad groups of fans. Lithuanian youth has joined the whole festival.

„Herring Day” is a very different event. It has a folk character, promotes local dialect, called „her ringing” and folk art and works: forming, hand-woven, ceramic, local cuisine and of course local music. It's not the first time that the festival takes place. But thanks to the funds from the project, it was possible to expand our activities and show folk culture of the „Wileńszczyzna” region. The „Solczanie” band from Soleczniki, presented songs and dances typical for Lithuanian folk and also presented local cuisine: traditional brown bread, potato dumpling (made from grated raw potatoes) called zeppelin and smoked fish. There were also folk bands from Podlasie that encouraged to use honey, local cuisine and handmade things. On the „Herling Day” took place a competition for the best herring dish, liqueur and home-made wine. Jury chose herring cake, wine from this year's strawberries and hemp liqueur. There were some other competitions connected with herring, that has it's own monument in the abode of our headquarter in Strękowa Góra. The positive aspect about realization this project is getting know more and more about culture, neighbors regions lifestyle, big commitment and creative young people's thinking. Project has also stimulated inhabitants in cuisine field. Baking own bread which is good to consume for several days, came back from the past now. We have a lot of fish in Ślina and Narew river, small breeding and in Maliszewskie Lake. Those fish are processed by inhabitants of our commune. People noticed a chance for some extra job and financial benefits. The negative thing about it is that there is no previous financing for The Project. We have to finance all those activities for our own resources and than compete for re- foundation that last about six months. It blocks funds and makes impossible to realize such project for non-governmental organizations that doesn't have proper funds.

Both projects are creating the new opportunities to earn: cultivation, selling ready and hand made products that are very precious nowadays. The only problem is the small scale

in that kind of producing and preserves, but the same it gives this local character. The realization of the Project makes inhabitants, Local authorities and non-governmental organizations, work together, plan and realize operations.

# EU founded aid instruments for grassroots projects & local actions in Belarus. Toolkit overview. NSA-LA focus

## Wojciech Szpociński

The paper takes into account the recent developments in Belarus and the envisaged Donors' Conference - *Solidarity with Belarus*, to be hosted by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early February 2011. Major donors, including EU, the EU MS, amongst other Poland, further the US are to pledge to increase significantly its assistance envelopes for the Belorussian civil society. The donors committed themselves to address its short-term, prompt needs in post-election reality as well as supporting medium & long term development of grass-rooted, constituency based civil society. The local, non -metropolitan CSOs, NGOs and "community based organizations" should necessarily be part of this aid equation. They are the avenue for demand-driven, genuine community mobilization, one that could be a harbinger of democratization in Belarus.

Couple of donors, including Poland and the US amongst other, **already delivered** on their promises to boost support to the Belorussian III sector. Poland via its Polish Aid & Public Diplomacy tool-kits was quick to embark on the new Belorussian CSOs dedicated calls with considerable amounts made available: approximately \$14m, from which approximately \$3,5m already disbursed to the grant beneficiaries, being under final stage of scrutiny or just about the submission deadline. The US, from its part, has extended its rolling based Small Grants Facility managed by the US embassy in Minsk.

The EU is about to follow suite. The EU as a multilateral donor (excluding the MS contribution) pledged to quadruple its aid to \$21.5m (Apart from this, €1,7 mln was collected for urgent help to the victims of repressions), while due to its complex decision

making process, systemic (the new born EEAS, accompanied by new division of labour in terms of aid delivery) as well as programming constrains it shall take some time to see its disbursed. All in all the committed money are only the outset of turning them into viable tool for democratisation, while recent decisions by the Belorussian authorities to tighten grip on donors' support could make even more cumbersome.

Commentators rightly stress the need to prevent foreign aid to Belarus from slipping into "africanization path<sup>1</sup>", securing possibly wide and sustainable impact of aid flows (via flexibility, coordination, consistency and clear division of labor, principally in line with the ECD), minimizing the risks of abuses, eschew supporting briefcase NGOs or GNGOs, ensuring the relevance of means, being tailored to the post election context, up-coming restrictions on foreign grants. Analysts emphasize the need to ensure demand-driven aid formula and guarantee its cost effectiveness. The end recipe is to make the aid reaching right beneficiaries, addressing the real needs, assisting the fine-tuned project, serving communities and people, while steering clear of activities, that could be counterproductive or even straightforwardly bring risk on its beneficiaries or participants.

Having said that, it's important to recognize the fact that achieving these objectives is conditional to an effective extension of the pool of potential & final aid beneficiaries, especially in case of EC/EU assistance, which till now remained relatively narrow in terms of recipients both project's leaders and local partners of the EU based applicants: almost exclusively big, metropolitan NGOs/institutions. Focus on established, mostly Minsk based institutions can be regarded as a risk aversion policy, partly understood given the alleged instances of *aid hijacking* by the Belorussian state<sup>2</sup>. Besides, cases of misuse or embezzlement by various level public actors taking advantage of the office to partly size or redesign the grants for private ends should not be excluded. Notwithstanding such malpractices a risk aversion should not be the only guiding principle of the EU/EC assistance strategy for Belarus. Local, grass-root NGOs/CSOs & institutions shall necessarily be a part of the EC/EU assistance equation in Belarus, while their peculiar needs shall be taken into account when designing & implementing the EC/EU renewed civil

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<sup>1</sup><http://belarusdigest.com/2011/02/07/preventing-africanization-of-foreign-aid-to-belarus/>

<sup>2</sup><http://belsat.eu/en/wiadomosci/a,2049,kgb-attempts-to-seize-foreign-grants-from-belarusian-ngos.html>

society oriented aid strategy. Moreover, given Belarus limited participation formula under **the ENPI on the outset and its current reorientation toward the civil society the new CSOs focused effective consultation & involvement mechanism should be put in place as soon as possible.** Such up-to dated i.e. accommodated to the political landscape as well as the new assistance strategy and its pledged aid envelopes shall be necessarily much more inclusive and pro-active, entailing meaningful, wider-scope involvement of Belorussian civil society representatives going beyond priority-setting to affect the more operational aspects of assistance. Currently the NIP & AAPs consultations are almost exclusively focused on the flagship, Minsk-based NGOs and institutions, while consultation entry points are few and far between and those that do exist are often underexploited by Belorussian NSAs/NGOs/CSOs, mostly due to lack of capacity and awareness both in terms of the EC/EU programming procedures & time-lines as well as the general know-how on needs identification/assessment & its structured communication with the donors community, provided scar resources and repressive environment.

The paper struggles to narrow this gap and provides concise overview of EU/EC assistance tool-kits designed to address needs & support the Belarus civil society. Therefore the present overview focuses exclusively on the civil society oriented instruments leaving behind its scope tools designed to support other classes of NSAs, non-public & private actors, SMEs in Belarus and beyond in the ENPI & EP area. The paper takes due account of the EC/EU programming cycle. The so-called thematic instrument – NSA/LA & CBC (non changes are envisaged due to its multi country formula) & EIDHR (partly) discuss in this volume plausibly will stay mostly unchanged in terms of the overall objectives as well as the respective delivery rules, despite changes in a political context, CSOs & NGOs environment in particular. The overarching objectives and the accompanying implementation procedures are enshrined within so-called Strategy Papers for both NSA/LA & EIDHR, being a fruit of multi-level, lengthy intra EC&EU wrangling. Though the respective Strategy Paper 2011-2013 for NSA/LA has not been finalized, yet any serious modification to accommodate the reality on the ground in Belarus should not be expected.

The paper is structured as follows: the first part offers brief overview of the EC/EU aid (NSA/LA & EIDHR) instruments, while the second aims to make recommendation on

desirable modifications to these: in terms of both priorities & delivery formulas to tailor the EC/EU assistance to the needs on the ground, making it more effective and sustainable.

The thematic programme Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development (NSA&LA Programme), was introduced by the EC/EU in only 2007.

In line with the Strategic Programme the NSA-LA facility is designed to **support to development actions, to be implemented by Non-State-Actors (NSA) or Local Authorities (LA), in close cooperation with the local communities and the most vulnerable population groups, aiming at promoting an inclusive and empowered society in partner countries. The overview provided below combines priorities and objectives from all past Belarus oriented calls.**

The NSA & LA Programme covers the following three main components<sup>3</sup>:

Support to development actions, to be implemented by NSA or LA, in close cooperation with the local communities and the most vulnerable population groups, aiming at promoting an inclusive and empowered society in partner countries.

Support to actions in the EU and acceding countries aiming at raising public awareness of development issues and promoting education for development, to mobilise greater support for actions against poverty and fairer relations between developed and developing countries.

Support to actions aiming at achieving more efficient cooperation, foster synergies and facilitate a structured dialogue in the area of development between civil society networks and local authorities associations from the EU and acceding countries, within their organisations and with EU based institutions.

What is advisable, at the same time feasible under the present rules (does not require any revolutionary changes: being a subject of simple EC decision /with plausible EEAS endorsement/, as the Thematic Programmes remain within the EC competences) the next

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<sup>3</sup>Regulation (EC) n° 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council ((OJ L 378, 27 December 2006), establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, and more specifically its article 14 constitute the legal basis for NSA-LA Thematic Programme.

and further calls for Belarus shall duly emphasise the NSA component/NSA LOT. Such adjustment in terms of overall framework were already successfully tested in other countries. Independently, alignment of the respective specific objectives to the unfolding severe socio-economic crisis should be regarded natural and necessary, while not undermining overall "limited agenda", in line with the EU post-election policy goals toward Belarus.

Since its inception three NSA& LA calls for Belarus were launched: in 2008, 2009, 2010 respectively. The calls are administrated by the EU Delegation in Kiev, while the information events for the potential beneficiaries were held in Minsk. The calls were routinely launched in so-called restricted , two-steps procedure: in a first step only Concept Notes were submitted and evaluated, while only the selected applicant were invited to submit the Full Application. Given demanding EC/EU grant-making procedures such approach tends to be regarded as a very positive development, especially by the Belarus & new MS based, not so resourceful NGOs/applicants.

The primary and overarching objective of NSA & LA programme is poverty reduction in the context of sustainable development, including the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and other internationally agreed targets, being social, economic or environmental (for details see below).

The NSA-LA programme tends to be so-called actor-oriented programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations and local authorities as a pre-condition for a more equitable, open and democratic society through support to these actors' "own initiatives". Actor-oriented formula leaves certain ***safety margin enabling quasi ad-hoc reorientation of the programmes for the benefit of NSA or LA, depending on the changing needs & context in the beneficiary country. This window of opportunity shall be sized in favour of Belorussian NSAs.***

The global objective of NSA- LA Programme is to support actions presented by Non-State Actors and Local Authorities which aim at promoting an inclusive and empowered society

in Belarus in order to: benefit populations out of reach of mainstream services and resources and excluded from policy making processes; strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and local authorities with a view to facilitating their participation in defining and implementing poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies; and facilitate interaction between state and non-state actors in different contexts. The Programme shall emphasise the improvement of populations' and communities access to social services, the development of poverty reduction strategies and sustainable development strategies.

**The general conceptual framework of NSA-LA Programme is the promotion of an inclusive and empowered society in Belarus. Thematic priorities are necessarily broad, in keeping with the actor-oriented approach of the Programme. The interaction and effective job sharing between NSAs and LAs remain at the core of the Programme, through such core objectives shall be fittingly accommodated to the changing reality on the ground via tailored, while not limiting, wording of the specific goals and objectives in line with overall NSA emphasis, as indicated above.**

The **specific objectives** of the Programme are: to facilitate equal participation of non-state actors and local authorities in policy dialogue and partnership in policy formulation processes, to build capacity of non-state actors to represent their target groups and engage in local and national decision making processes, to engage in decision making, increase own recognition as partners in local development and provide innovative service delivery, to strengthen citizens' capacity to engage in discussion and decision-making process at local level through awareness-raising, advocacy and development of campaigns, eventually to develop equal, transparent and long-term partnerships between Belarus and EU partner organisations.

**Additionally to the specific or thematic priorities listed above formal preference in the past calls for proposals was given to:** actions that emphasise activities that establish and develop partnerships between non-state actors and local authorities,



including to implement joint initiatives, actions which reach rural and/or remote areas and envisage wider coverage of the Belorussian territory (outreach and local & non-metropolitan or rural scope was typically secured via re/sub-granting schemes, while routinely not so open, competitive and transparent, especially given the requirement/preference to actions involving LAs; Unclear re-granting procedures under the Programme are also to be blamed), eventually actions presented by applicants with previous experience of project implementation in Belarus. Whenever possible, particular attention should be paid to so-called cross-cutting issues contributing to the achievement of the global programme objective in the context of sustainable development, such as the promotion of human rights, gender equality, rights of children and elderly people, rights of persons with disabilities, environment and climate change, as well as fight against social & civilisation diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Note that capacity building among Non State Actors (NSAs) for an improved access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care in the ENPI-East region, including Belarus is being addressed independently via DCI and other thematic instrument Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI): Investing in People, wherein the separated call was held in 2010.

Financial allocation for the individual NSA-LA call varied over the last three editions (2008, 2009, 2010) from 1.000.000 in 2008 and 2009 **to increase twofold in 2010: it should expected to multiply further, even by a larger margin in 2011. The total allocation for each call was indicatively divided into two lots: NSA and LA. The balance between these two financial envelopes was routinely established as follows: two-thirds of the global allocation assigned for NSA and one-third for LA. Crucially** when the financial envelopes indicated above couldn't be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the EC/EU reserved the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another LOT.

Grants awarded under these the calls must have fallen between the following minimum and maximum amounts: for **NSA** minimum ceiling/amount was established at 100 000 EURO, while maximum amount should not exceed 250 000 EURO, for LA falling between 100 000 and 200 000 EURO accordingly. A grant may not be less than 50% of the total eligible cost of the proposed action. Importantly for proposals submitted by NSA and LA

from Belarus, the grant may not exceed 90% of the total eligible costs of the action. The balance must have been financed from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget. Meanwhile, for proposals submitted by NSA and LA from the EU, the grant might not exceed 75% of the total eligible costs of the action. Again the balance must have been covered from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget.

To eligible for grant under the NSA- LA Programme criteria applicants **must::** be legal persons **and** be non profit making entity **and** be nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of the Republic of Belarus **and** be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary. Note that all these criteria are to be satisfied jointly. NSA applicants shall be constituted in accordance with the legislation in force of the country concerned. NSA from a Member State of the European Union must have been registered for at least three years at the time of the submission of an application. **Significantly NSA from Belarus must have been registered for at least two years at the time of the submission of an application.** Moreover in each case both EU and Belarus based NSA must be able to demonstrate having regularly carried out activities in the field of development of the kind covered by this programme. NSA from a Member State of the European Union must have carried out such development activities at least during the last three years at the time of the submission of an application. For NSA from the Republic of Belarus this requirement is limited to the last year. Interestingly the past experience requirements are absent in case of LA, both EU and Belarus based. This can be explained on a general public policy ground, while minimal & flexible threshold could be envisaged.

Furthermore, in an obvious way, NSA from a Member State of the European Union which propose an action must demonstrate an established and effective partnership with NSA from the Republic of Belarus. Applicants from an EU Member State must act with partner organisations as specified hereafter.

For projects submitted by NSA or LA from a Member State of the European Union, a partnership with one or several Belarusian actors (NSA or/and LA) is obligatory and projects shall respond to an initiative emanating from the local partner(s) in Belarus.

All actions should be based on an initiative of Belarusian actors (NSA or/and LA) and should ensure their involvement during all stages of the implementation of the action.

Belarusian applicants (NSA or LA) may act individually or with partner organisations. Belarusian actors are also encouraged to participate as partners in the actions submitted by NSA or LA from a Member State of the European Union.

Partners participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable on the grant beneficiary himself. The planned duration of an action may not be lower than 18 months nor exceed 36 months. Actions must take place in Belarus. However, if duly justified, certain activities such as the exchange of knowledge, capacity building, coordination and networking may take place in other countries provided that these activities constitute only a minor part of the action and that they contribute directly to the objectives of the Action. In its wording the EC encourages applicants to submit their proposals which reach rural and/or remote areas and envisage wider coverage of the Belorussian territory.

**Crucially the European Commission expects its beneficiaries, their partners and subcontractors/sub-beneficiaries to respect the relevant Belarusian legislation. While partly understood, it may happen to be serious obstacle, especially for Belarusian NSAs, when announced further restriction on foreign financing will fully materialize.**

Eligible types of activities include: training, exchanges, conferences, round tables and other public and awareness raising events., publications, studies, research, organisation of community groups or initiatives, TV and radio programming, online publications. Above list shall not considered as limiting or exhaustive, while EC/EU tends to prioritize soft & TA & know-how exchange leaned projects.

Sub-granting is an open option under the NSA-LA, while the procedure are not always clear to the applicants, besides serious restrictions on in-country sub-granting by the local

NGOs do exist. Accordingly specific forms of project partnerships should be developed to support local, grass-root CSOs & NGOs. The guideline reads: in order to support the achievement of the objectives of the action, and in particular where the implementation of the action proposed by the applicant requires financial support to be given to third parties, the applicant may propose awarding sub-grants. Although, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the action and it must be duly justified. In case where the Applicant foresees to award sub-grants, it has to specify in its application the total amount of the grant which may be used for awarding sub-grants as well as the minimum and maximum amount per sub-grant a list with the types of activity which may be eligible for sub-grants must be included in the application, together with the criteria for the selection of the beneficiaries of these sub-grants. The maximum amount of a sub-grant is limited to EUR 10.000 per third party while the total amount which can be awarded as sub-grants to third parties is limited to EUR 100.000.

Micro-finance as well as the Revolving Funds/RF are open & plausibly and at least in theoretical perspective highly promising, while still a complex option in Belarus (see also below for ineligible activities). The RF are tested and useful funding sources e.g. for historic preservation projects or any activities that envisage purchase or rent of property for further sustainable income generation schemes. NSA would establish a fund to receive donations and other capital which is used by the organization to purchase property (possibly endangered or other) which could be resold or optimally partly rented, including for granting or micro-credit initiatives. The solution could be truly needs tailored & attractive (even in Belarus, given unfolding extended options for property rent or purchase), while still in Belarus it may be slightly risky too (therefore flexible, though in depth scrutiny is always advisable): it may unintentionally promote semi or just GNOGs (having all options open, being able to submit the outwardly attractive proposals), by the same token in some cases could hinder independent & foreign NSAs position.

Note that additional conditions are to be applied to actions in the field of micro-finance which can be found in so called Annex H (imposing relatively complex requirements). With regard to micro-credit initiatives including Revolving Funds please note that an end-of-

project strategy must be presented. The additional conditions relating to micro-finance activities will be applied in order to ensure more professional and sustainable delivery of micro-finance interventions (in line with the EC Guidelines for Support to Micro-finance). They aim at achieving professionalism and sustainability through introduction of minimum requirements as regards the applicant's expertise (i.e. the capacity to provide financial services according to agreed international standards of good practice) and experience (track record in the micro-finance field), application of selection criteria on the type and design of the actions, and inclusion of performance measuring and monitoring system concerning the micro-finance activities. All in all the procedures tend to be perceived as complex and cumbersome.

The following types of action are **ineligible in line with the guidelines**: actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congress; actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses; actions in the formal education sector (apart from primary and vocational education), except in special circumstances; one-off conferences: conferences can only be funded if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented in the life-time of the action. For these purposes, preparatory activities for a conference and the publication of the proceedings of the conference do not, in themselves, constitute such "wider activities"; actions which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g. land, buildings, equipment and vehicles, except in special circumstances; actions which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of their gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or lack of them, or their ethnic origin; actions supporting political parties; actions including proselytism.

In terms of submission & general budgeting rules and procedures the wording is clear and concise: an applicant may submit more than one application under each call for proposals, an applicant may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this call for proposals, an applicant may at the same time be partner in another application, partners may take part in more than one application. The indirect costs - overheads - incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at not more than 7% of the total eligible

direct costs. Obviously, if the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the EU budget no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the action. Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Beneficiary. The cost of staff assigned to the Action is not a contribution in kind and may be considered as co-financing in the Budget of the Action when paid by the Beneficiary or his partners. Prior registration in PADOR is obligatory as a rule. Could optional only in first Concept Note stage and exclusively for applicants with grants of 25000 EURO or lower and its partners. **Eventually, importantly, applicants must apply in English.** Accordingly EIDHR CBC overviews are to be found in separated parts of this volume.

**Conclusions and remarks in terms of assistance optimisation, beneficiaries pool extensions and further impact, scope and sustainability boost.** The provided remarks are mostly in line, or largely overlapping, with the previous CONCORD and PASOS findings.

**Belarus & New MS NGOs seriously under-represented.** The beneficiaries are mostly big old EU-based NGOs or international organisations with a substantive track record. The grant applications of NGOs based in Belarus or the new EU MS have been less successful so far, allegedly due to the lower quality of their proposals, questions over their organisations' management capacities or ostensibly due to proposed activities that were considered politically sensitive. This record tends to be worrisome, as no major breakthrough has been observed since 2004 accession. See the CONCORD recommendations on ring-fencing for New MS NGOs for details.

**Technical Leaning of NSA-LA and EIDHR.** EU Delegation programme officers take a technical approach and tend to see NSA/LA or EIDHR as standard, slightly technical assistance instruments - rather than a policy tools with the potential to support or promote democratic transition.

**The quality of applications should be improved through provision of additional**

**training and capacity building to local NGOs. Such can be supported from the 3 % budget for TA & implementation measures in disposal of EC/EU & Delegation.** The consultations and information events shall be necessarily held & conducted in Russian & Belorussian. Calls' documentation shall be translated into Russian (possibly Belarusian also) at full length (here some progress has been achieved. Large part of application package is being translated).

**Tediously protracted/ slow assessment cycle.** The process of project selection, contract negotiation and the award of contracts have to be completed according to the n + 1 rule. It means that contracts must be awarded by the end of the year following the publication of the call. The Commission is still living with the reputation for being very slow in its grant-making, and the selection process cannot be closed in less than six months in case of one step calls, and in the case of restricted calls in less than nine months.

**Complex & Time-consuming Application Process.** CSOs and NGOs, especially new MS and Belarus based, consider the applications difficult and a major workload. Given the lack of spare administrative capacity of most NGOs, the completion of an application usually necessitates a curtailing of regular activities. **Wider employment of the restricted calls was prized as lessening of the bureaucratic burden.** The overwhelming majority of the organisations welcome the restricted, two-step calls.

**As the application process for EU funding is considered very demanding, and a possibility to submit a short concept note is seen as a major improvement. Besides, there is also a lack of understanding of *Brussels English*, although the situation is much better than in the past.** Simplified calls for proposal for low value grants should be put in place. Separately EC/EU should investigate a possibility of a shorter application format for calls for proposals when the total allocation available is less than €200,000 or so. This mechanism could be particularly relevant for small local structures. However, allowing simplified calls for proposals for low value grants has risks: danger to over-stretch the EU Delegations' capacities by asking them to administer many small calls for proposals and need for intensive monitoring (alternatives might be re-granting / block grants/core-funding or direct support facilities); risk of lack of connection between small projects; risk to support 'briefcase NGOs' instead of supporting small, local

organisations.



# **Cross border co-operation for sustainable development**

## **Margit Säre**

### **Introduction**

The process of political change in Europe in last decades poses quite new challenges to regional and cross border cooperation in general and to cooperation on security, environmental, trafficking issues in particular.

Many states face the serious concerns, how to achieve sustainable development of peripheral regions of their countries; how to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come. The same time in several countries it has been understood, that cross border cooperation could be one of the engines in local sustainable development, making a valuable contribution to the promotion of peace, security and stability of states.

### **Sustainability as a tool for regional development**

Finding a balance between development and conservation of natural resources is one of the central dilemma of today's communities, whether one considers the global or the very local scale. When communities directly depend on natural systems that are shared by two or more countries the issue becomes even more complicated, and cooperation among different sides of the border becomes an additional factor of key importance. On the other hand cooperation on the topic of natural resources` use – one that is rather neutral still essential for all – can bring local communities together, increase internal coherence and actually lead to the formation of new trans-boundary communities.

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come (Wikipedia).

There are three challenges facing humanity: economic growth, social equity and the

carrying capacity of natural systems.

## **Cross border cooperation and local development**

Traditionally, frontiers were meant to project national interest and they have been barriers of free movement of people and goods. On the other hand they also give reason to come together, to exchange goods, to learn each other language and culture which further brings to mutual trust and understanding. This makes co-operation across national borders an important mechanism of European integration.<sup>4</sup> It is a common trend in many countries that economic activities, commerce and population have tended to drift to the national centers, leaving border regions to be peripheries of the countries, economically underdeveloped, environmentally polluted and sparsely populated. Addition to that, there are different policies on either side of the border, particularly in the areas of administration, economics, culture and social affairs. However, many regions have realized that cross border cooperation could be one of the engines in development of local life and also making a valuable contribution to the promotion of peace, security and stability of states.

## **Cross-Border Cooperation within the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)**

Cross Border Cooperation is a key priority also for the European Union. Its European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument ENPI<sup>5</sup> aims at reinforcing cooperation between member states and partner countries along the external border of the European Union. The CBC strategy of the instrument has four key objectives:

- I. Promote economic and social development in border areas
- II. Address common challenges
- III. Ensure efficient and secure borders
- IV. Promote people-to-people cooperation

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<sup>4</sup>Birte Jorgensen (2002) Cross-border Cooperation and EU enlargement, in the N EBI Yearbook 2001/2002; pp 198-200

<sup>5</sup><http://ec.europa.eu/>

15 CBC programmes (9 land borders, 3 sea crossings and 3 sea basin programmes) have been established along the Eastern and Southern external borders of the European Union with a total funding of 1,118,434 million EUR for the 7-year period 2007-2013. The cross border cooperation will be also financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It is the task of the regional and local partners on both sides of the border to analyze their common needs and to identify priorities and actions that are most relevant to their local situation. The management of the programmes is entrusted to a local or national authority jointly selected by all participating countries in a programme.

CBC uses an approach largely modeled on 'Structural Funds' principles such as multiannual programming, partnership and co-financing, adapted to take into account the specificity of the EC's external relations rules and regulation. One major innovation of the ENPI CBC can be seen in the fact that the programmes involving regions on both sides of the EU's border share one single budget, common management structures, a common legal framework and implementation rules giving the programmes a fully balanced partnership between the participating countries.

### **Environmental cross border cooperation on EU external borders**

Today, there are appr. 150 major transboundary rivers in Europe, some 25 major transboundary and international lakes and some 100 transboundary aquifers<sup>6</sup> - these are the areas where transboundary water management cooperation takes place on daily basis.

Generally speaking, transboundary environmental management is faced with the task of successfully solving complicated problems dependent on the specific conditions created by the interaction of two or more political systems. Within the EU, these differences in the political systems between the member states are not as dramatic as they are on the external EU borders. EU internal borders serve multiple integration purposes including an intensification of economic networking, enhanced regional participation in policy-making,

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<sup>6</sup>Proceedings of the 2nd international conference "Sustainable management of transboundary waters in Europe"; Miedzzydroje, Poland; 21-24 April 2002, pp 15.

greater responsiveness to local interests in spatial planning and regional development.<sup>7</sup>

Transboundary cooperation regimes on the EU external border have besides their direct functions – economic development (trade regimes, management of shared resources – energy, forest, oil) or environmental protection (water, biodiversity protection) – always a function of ensuring security of the EU as well as bordering states both from its Western and Eastern sides. <sup>8</sup>

As some recent environmental tragedies (Tisza river spill in 2000; disappearance of Aral Sea; nuclear waste dumps in Kola peninsula/Barents Sea area, Toxic red sludge release in Hungary, 2010 ec); show very clearly that talking about natural disasters state border play no role and cross border cooperation becomes of utmost importance.

For example, Aral sea, lying between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, used to be one of the four largest lakes in the world with an area of 68,000 square kilometres. <sup>9</sup>Sadly, the Aral Sea has been steadily shrinking since the 1960s after the rivers that fed it were diverted by Soviet Union irrigation projects. By 2007 it had declined to 10% of its original size, splitting into four lakes– the North Aral Sea and the eastern and western basins of the once far larger South Aral Sea and one smaller lake between North and South Aral Sea. By 2009, the south-eastern lake had disappeared and the south-western lake retreated to a thin strip at the extreme west of the former southern sea.

Another important feature of transboundary areas on the European external borders is a growing gap in socio – economic development and living standards on different sides of the EU external borders. In the case of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe - situating in the Estonian-Russian border - on the Russian side, there is much less of the local funding as well as international funding available to support implementation of environmental protection measures and therefore economic basis of water protection is much more poor

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<sup>7</sup>Gooch, Geoffrey D.; Höglund, Pär; Roll, Gulnara; Lopman, Evelin; Alekseyeva, Natalia. 2002. Review of existing structures, models and practices for transboundary water management. MANTRA East project working paper, February 2002.

<sup>8</sup>Gooch, Geoffrey D.; Höglund, Pär; Roll, Gulnara; Lopman, Evelin; Alekseyeva, Natalia. 2002. Review of existing structures, models and practices for transboundary water management. MANTRA East project working paper, February 2002.

<sup>9</sup>[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

than on the Estonian side of the border. If this gap between the two sides of the border area grows very high, it is likely there will be little mutual understanding between the organizations and stakeholders on different sides of the border and as a result trust and cooperation across the border can decrease.

It is of utmost importance, that transboundary water basins located on the EU external borders should be managed interactively, i.e. through regular communication and consultation among all major stakeholder groups in these basins as neighboring countries sharing these water basin have lots of differences between each other in the institutions, social and economic development.

### **EU Water Framework Directive (EU WFD)**

Facing the need to better manage water with the EU and to response to the increasing threat of pollution and the demand from the public for cleaner rivers, lakes and beaches, the Water Framework Directive came into force on 2000. EU WFD established a new, integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of Europe's rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater. This Directive is unique in that, for the first time, it establishes a framework for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater, and their dependent wildlife/habitats under one piece of environmental legislation. Its objectives are to prevent and reduce pollution, promote sustainable water usage, environmental protection, improve aquatic ecosystems and mitigate the effects of floods and droughts.

### **Estonian-Russian border region: case study**

The Estonian – Russian border area is mostly rural area with total population of under one million people. Estonia shares with Russia today a border line of a total length 460.6 km. 122,0 km of the border (26 %) goes through the sea; 200,6 km (or 49,3%) through large surface water bodies, including Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe and Narva River; and 138 km on land (29,9%).

The Estonian – Russian border has become an external border of the European Union in

May 2004 .

## **Dynamics of the cross-border cooperation in the Estonian – Russian border area; regional development of the Eastern Estonian periphery**

The cross-border cooperation with Russia was historically an important resource for the economic development of the Estonian eastern peripheries. Before beginning of the 1990s when the borderline between Estonia and Russia was re-established, Estonian and Russian fishermen fished together on the whole lake of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe shared by the two countries (the lake is the fourth largest in terms of its surface area in Europe). Today when the lake is divided by the border; it is not profitable anymore to fish on a half of the lake; a number of professional fishermen on the Estonian side decreased in dozens of times. Estonian farmers also have taken their products to the St. Petersburg markets when Estonia was part of the Soviet Union, today that market is closed for Estonian farmers. Double taxes imposed in 1990s at the Estonian goods exported to Russia; a need to have expensive visas, made that trade impossible. As the main sources of income (agriculture, fishing) dried up in the Eastern Estonian border regions, almost no new economic development activities came into their places. As a result, most of young people left to work not just to Tallinn, but to Norway, Finland or UK; high unemployment and poor infrastructure remain to be major challenges for the region. What concerns the economic development policies in Estonia, they rely mostly on market forces and there are few mechanisms for promoting development in disadvantaged regions; as a result, multiple shops, schools were closed and public transportation routes were canceled in peripheral areas of Estonia since re-establishment of Estonian independence.

## **The EU policy to support the cross-border cooperation on its external borders**

The cross-border cooperation on the Estonian border with Russia is at the other side promoted by the European Union through implementation of the European Neighbourhood

Policy (ENP), a policy for the EU cooperation with the neighboring countries<sup>10</sup> that is aimed at „avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours“ (European Commission ENP website)<sup>11</sup>. Russia is not an ENP target country but the EU „strategic partner“<sup>12</sup> however implementation of the EU – Russia strategic partnership agreement is supported by the same EU Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument. For the period of 2007 – 2013, an overall budget of a programme supporting the cross-border cooperation between Estonia and Latvia with Russia (Pskov and Leningrad regions) is 746,3 million EURO.

Although the EU has pushed the development of the CBC between Estonia and Russia, these two countries appear to have adopted the EU policies in a rather slow manner. Due to the historically developed difficult political relations between Estonia and Russia, there is little political support from the side of the two governments to the cross-border cooperation in the Estonian – Russian border area.

### **Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe – water management issues, legal and administrative framework for the transboundary water management**

Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe is the fourth largest lake in Europe with a large drainage basin. Lake Peipsi belongs to the Republic of Estonia (44%) and the Russian Federation (56%). It is large lake - 3550 km<sup>2</sup>, and shallow - 7 m average. The water basin of Lake Peipsi is sparsely populated, total population is appr. 800 000 people. Region is underdeveloped, with problems of unemployment, depopulation. There are wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) in both sides of the lake.

During last decade, Estonia has adapted its laws and the administrative system to the

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<sup>10</sup>The ENP target countries include 16 countries - Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine. This does not include the Russian Federation government of which declined the EU proposal to join the implementation of the ENP on the same footing as the rest ENP target countries.

<sup>11</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/policy\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/policy_en.htm)

<sup>12</sup>The EU cooperation with the Russian Federation is regulated by the so named EU – Russia strategic partnership agreement and Four Common Spaces – agreements on four thematic areas of the cooperation with Russia is developed. This includes Common Spaces on 'Trade and Economic cooperation', 'Freedom, Security and Justice', 'External Security' and 'Research, Education and Culture'. The content of the EU – Russia strategic partnership reflects the common points of the cooperative areas addressed in the EU Neighborhood Policy.

requirements of the EU. As a part of this work the Estonian Water Act was revised to harmonize with the EU Water Framework Directive that defines river basins as the basic unit for all water planning and management actions.

The other half of Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe is located in the Russian Federation. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) of the European Union does not have mandatory character for Russia as far as the EU WFD is compulsory only for the members of the EU and recommended for accession-countries. Nevertheless, it could be used for transboundary water basins located on the territory of the Russian Federation because it is dealing with the questions of joint water management in the case of EU and third-countries transboundary waters. In the Russian Federation waters are managed according to the Russian Federation Water Code. Russian authorities, responsible for the water management, have accepted that principles of the EU Water Framework Directive would be applied also on the Russian side of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe basin.

In the transboundary water basins located on the EU external borders where on one side the EU legal and institutional framework is applied and on the other side Russian or other NIS country legislation is in act, there is a need in ensuring a dynamic balance between developing water protection measures on a transboundary level and nationally; the process of the planning should be organized in an interactive way providing communication between teams developing transboundary water management strategies and national water management plans.

Considerable differences in the legislation, gaps in the socio-economic development, etc. between different sides of transboundary water basins, do not allow developing only detailed transboundary water basin management plan for the whole water basin only. <sup>13</sup>Combination of preparation of national water management plans on different sides of transboundary basins in combination with umbrella transboundary water management programs focused on water management priorities important for whole transboundary basins, seems to be a good arrangement; and this model of water planning worked well in the River Danube Basin where this approach was implemented within the Danube UNDP/GEF project. There is a very big risk of not achieving objectives of the improved

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<sup>13</sup>Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation; [www.ctc.ee](http://www.ctc.ee)



water quality in a water basin, if an easier way of developing only national water management plans and in the transboundary water basin without necessary coordination is taken.

## **Sustainable Development Models: Overview of Structural Issues. Abstract**

**Grzegorz Kacewicz**

Wide-life luxuriance: **natural richness, wildlife diversity, unspoiled countrysides, abundance and variety ecosystems of Poland are highly regarded in the EU and beyond worldwide. Simultaneously overall underdevelopment of rural areas and further modernization drive to to catch-up and compete effectively on a global market substantially enhance *anthropo pressure* on the countrysides and wide-life diversity thereof. Reconciliation of growth and investments with an environmental protection & wide-life preservation arises to a major development challenge for Polish rural areas. The concept of sustainable development comes to forefront as a useful reference model. Tested sustainable development formulas from the EU and other locations could be of high value to flexibility draw on.**

Structural and theoretical approaches to rural sustainable development varies, while the differences commonly lie in emphasis on one or other aspect or component of the overall concept. Authors and institutions differ on focus & approaches: could be either straightforwardly result oriented, more structural, containing explanatory elements or factorial, less or more dynamic or practical. Some definitions are more economically oriented, recognizing the need to balance nature protection with an economic welfare. New generation approaches are even more inclusive and socially sensitive: stress the concept of equitable, inclusive social development, given widening rural-urban gap and parallel process of rural urbanization. All in all there is no unambiguous definition of sustainable development.

The most common and widely recognized (while slightly general) is the Brundtland definition: „development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs“

Being a quotation from *Our Common Future*, also known as the Brundtland Report.

Accordingly the definition contains two key concepts:

- *the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and*
- *the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."*

Routinely all definitions of sustainable development require that we see the world as a system a system that connects space; and a system that connects time.

Considering the world as a system over space, one grows to grasp that air pollution from Poland or Czech affects air quality in Slovakia, Germany, and that pesticides sprayed in Lithuania could harm fish stocks off the coast of Sweden, Estonia, Poland or even Norway.

Consequently considering the world as a system over time, one starts to realize that the decisions our grandparents made about how to farm the land continue to affect agricultural practice today; and the economic, social and spatial policies we endorse today will have an impact on urban as well as rural development in several decades.

The concept of sustainable development is rooted in this sort of systems thinking. It helps us understand ourselves and our world. The problems we face are complex and serious and we can't address them in the same way we created them.

The Brundtland statement is widely quoted plausibly because of its very general and overarching format, what can be seen as its major strong point, while a flaw too. Being an early definition the Brundtland perceptive is more inspirational that practical.

The concept of sustainable development can be interpreted and seen in many alternative ways. Here are a handful of most common alternative approaches:

Sustainable development can be defined as a task to maintain a delicate balance between the human need to improve lifestyles and feeling of well-being on one hand, and preserving natural resources and ecosystems, on which we and future generations depend on the other.

According to the WCED: sustainable development implies economic growth together with the protection of environmental quality, each reinforcing the other. The essence of this form of development is a stable relationship between human activities and the natural world, which does not diminish the prospects for future generations to enjoy a quality of life at least as good as our own. Many observers believe that participatory democracy, un-dominated or just free of vested interests, is a clear prerequisite for achieving sustainable development.

Alternatively the concept may be more participatory, joint-responsibility oriented. The sustainable development guiding rules are that people must share with each other and care for the Earth. Humanity must take no more from nature than nature can replenish. This in turn means adopting lifestyles and development paths that respect and work within nature's limits. It can be done without rejecting the many benefits that modern technology has brought, provided that technology also works within those limits. That is according to Caring for the Earth, IUCN Report. Such approach implies the need for effective ecological education for all.

Otherwise SD definition can underline the need to adequately consider the economic aspects within the terms and its definition. In such perceptive SD refers to achieving economic and social development in ways that do not exhaust a country's natural resources. (Ashford and The World Commission on Environment and Development). In the Commission's grasp: "... sustainable development is ... a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with the future as well as present needs.

The economic emphasis may go further to uphold the notion of comprehensive and

equitable balance between economic growth and sustainability: hinting as a guiding idea symmetry and proportion of efforts, while not compromising the future prospect of growth. Therefore being more pragmatic and operational.

If the notion of sustainable development tends to be overarching, topping the reflection on sustainability the term of sustainable rural development is usually slightly more ground-based, pr-axis oriented, rooted in community needs, offering more policy oriented recommendations. Again sustainable development in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors conserves land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, is environmentally non-degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable: that is the outset notion.

Sustainable Rural Development is the conceptual formula to *"attain socially cohesive and stable rural communities with viable institutions, sustainable economies and universal access to social amenities, able to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable people, who are **equipped to contribute to growth and development**"*.

Rural development itself slightly differ in emphasis and approach, being defined as a multi-facet, mulch-dimensional: a notion much broader than poverty alleviation through social programmes and transfers; it places emphasis on changing environments to enable rural communities to earn more, invest in themselves and their communities and contribute toward maintenance of key infrastructure and surrounding environment, including wide-life and biodiversity protection.

**Multi-functional approach to the development of rural areas and integrated sustainable development shall include:**

- focus on the maintenance of agricultural production by means of extensive farming and eco-farming, promotion and broad dissemination of traditional products, support to local groups of producers, eco-tourism development, preservation, revitalisation of the unique structure of rural landscape and of cultural heritage,
- focus on non-farming activities in rural areas (such as eco-tourism, recreation, traditional crafts),
- focus on multi-level, inclusive stakeholders co-operation and job sharing,

- focus on raising knowledge & awareness in terms of ecology, environment management, sustainable development, wide-life protection and local peculiarities,
- integrated action for preservation of rural habitats & ecosystems
- sustainable forestry and forest management
- retraining programmes for surplus workforce in the region (focus on rural areas with a high rate of unemployment and communes with low economic potential),
- fostering access to information and education about EU support programmes.

Essential components of successful trans-border, CBC or international cooperation for sustainable development:

- Continuity: being essential for successful cooperation in the field of spatial management. Effective action is possible only in long-term perspective. First, it will stimulate the process of mutual understanding, confidence-building and exchange of experience. Secondly, the stakeholders will be motivated to undertake joint efforts by providing long-term effects of their actions. Continuity can be achieved by supporting cross-border cooperation by relevant decisions,
- Appropriate choice of objectives and common strategies & motivation of stakeholders,
- Independent mediator. Excessive role of government representatives on entities & bodies that set up cooperation often turns out to be unfavorable,
- External financing and the contribution. Own contribution of cooperating entities is extremely important, providing for a real commitment,

General principles of good practice in the preparation, implementation and monitoring:

- Use the experience of other domestic and foreign entities carrying out similar projects,
- Use as benchmarks and examples of good practice tested in other municipalities, provinces, countries,
- Use of know-how in terms of best available practices and environmental standards and technical,

- Due verification of the project compliance with strategic planning documents (plans / strategies for urban development, village renewal plans, revitalization plans, energy saving plans, development plans),
- Accurate needs identification & assessment,
- Ensure public participation in the preparation of the project, ensuring its effective implementation and use of results (active forms of participation of local community meetings, surveys)
- Consider the degree of eco-innovation applied as a criterion for selection and evaluation of solutions.

# **Striking the right balance between the development of agriculture, tourism and environment protection & wide-life preservation: a case of Maliszewskie Lake, Biebrza & Narew, North-Eastern Poland**

**Renata Zakrzewska**

Maliszewskie Lake is the only currently existing natural water reservoir of a lake type in the valleys of Narew and Biebrza. Its origin remains unclear so far.

The Lake certainly originates from the older than the last (Baltic/Central Polish) glaciation. Currently, the Lake covers an area of about 75 hectares and has a very large bet sediment stand volume, which is a repository of knowledge about climate change over at least the past 130000 years. Most of the lakes from the glacial period, have long since overgrown and no longer exist. Maliszewskie Lake is surrounded by a wide belt of vegetation fringe and lies on the edge of the drained peat areas of the lager Wizna swamp/marshes.

Situated in a swampy meadow surrounded by an enclave of a high degree of naturalness and biodiversity, rare and endangered species of birds have found a convenient shelter in the reeds growing on its shoal or shallow waters.

In the spring Maliszewskie Lake turns into a key breeding area for wetlands' birds: mute swan, mallard, etc.. During the overflights terns, small gulls, ospreys and whooper swans appear at the Lake in relatively large number. In late autumn mute swans moult here (up to 100 birds), accompanied by geese, ducks, loons sometimes. West of Maliszewo meadows spread in regularly divided quarters. This is a perfect place for bird watching as they prey on small vertebrates. In spring and summer a large population of storks appear on marshes' fresh swaths. In winter one can watch numerous hairy buzzards, harriers, and merlins and eagles can be also observed.

Ditches and drainage jumps feed the sparrow family birds: Red-backed Shrikes, Finch,

Showers and Red-polls.

Particular attention should be paid to two valuable species of birds observed & noted in the vicinity of Maliszewskie Lake. The first is the battalions (Philomachus pugnax).

During the mating season male battalions fully deserve their name. Observers note, first of all, the unique color of the bird. Their necks are decorated with colorful feathers arranged in a so-called ruff, while the head is beset with the plume-shaped ears. Coloration is variable and the color scale of ornaments is truly wide: from white through yellow, beige and red, to black with green, blue or purple sheen. Interestingly, there is no two identical specimens with an identical coat of feathers.

Maliszewskie Lake and its surroundings find yet another very rare species of bird: the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*).

In 2009 the nationwide inventory of Aquatic Warblers was conducted within the LIFE project: *Aquatic Warbler*. The staff of the Polish Society for the Protection of Birds/OTOP held a count of this species. The inventory was conducted among others in "Wizna Swamp", which is adjacent to Maliszewskie Lake. It concluded: 58 singing males do nest here (to compare in Narwiański National Park - 38, Łomżyński Nature Park & Lower Narew - 9 were recorded). In the early twentieth century, the population was counted in the millions. Environmental changes caused that the size of the A. Warbler has fallen by 95 percent. Poland hosts about a quarter of the world population of this bird. A. Warblers compared to other songbirds are distinguished by a different yet interesting reproductive strategy. Birds of this species do not mate. In the territory of a male usually occur regularly produce good catches of several breeding females, which in turn most often associate with several males in the neighborhood (promiscuity). The very act of intercourse, which in most species of birds takes 1-2 seconds, in case of A. Warbler stretches even to 35 - 40 minutes.

Despite many efforts the world population of Aquatic Warbler is falling. Environmental changes are to blame. The development of agriculture has meant that, most European wetlands were meliorated. Abrupt withdrawal of breeding animals, consuming the excess plants, resulted in overgrowing of the wetlands with shrubs and trees. Aquatic Warbler though prefers swamps overgrown with sedges and reeds.



An important factor having an impact on the protection of Aquatic Warbler and other rare birds inhabiting meadows around the Maliszewskie Lake is a sustainable agriculture.

Sustainable agriculture is an activity conducted in accordance with the principles of environmental protection, having a positive impact on biodiversity and preservation of traditional rural landscapes. In the case of Maliszewskie Lake the annual skilful harvesting and mowing are necessary to preserve the natural character of wetland meadows located around the Lake and along Biebrza and Narew rivers.

Birds routinely avoid too dense reeds habitats, above all ones overgrown with bushes and young trees. Unfortunately, marshy meadows are the areas of low profitability in terms of agro-production. Hay and straw originating from such marshy meadows are of low quality: unsuitable to the modern cattle breeds. Management or recycling of such reed biomass arises to a major challenge. Methods and technologies employed shall ensure the profitability of the process and activities.

One possible solution is a usage of hay & reed biomass for energy purposes. The briquettes from compressed & processed hay and reed can be burnt in the fireplace and furnace.

An example of a farmer who has taken advantage of marshy meadows is Mr. Wojciech Zalewski from Zajki, Tykocin County, Podlaskie Region, Poland. Zajki is a village located in the buffer zone of Biebrza National Park, adjacent to an extremely valuable natural area of wetland meadows. Mr. Zalewski, demonstrating his creativity has used the advantages of the location. Obtaining grant from the European Union for the purchase of special equipment founded a company focused on the production of reed briquettes. The Polish Society for the Protection of Birds/OTOP also intends to invest. The OTOP is about to purchase the similar machinery and establish the briquette processing micro-plant.

Alternatively reed can be used in construction.

Reed is a valuable plant to be used in construction as a material with a high thermal insulation characteristics. It contains 10.8% of minerals (silica). It also includes a wax and saponins (foaming agents). Reed has a very high tolerance to fire, frost, high pH and salinity. In addition, the reed is characterized by very high thermal insulation. The heat

transfer coefficient U (k ex) of reed stands at 0.35 W/m<sup>2</sup>K (eg 30 cm thick reed roof corresponds to 100 mm mineral wool insulation).

It should be stressed that natural materials like reed or straw are characterized by the lowest thermal conductivity of all known insulating material (0,048-0,058 W/m<sup>2</sup>K). This is achieved by the naturally air filled stems, which have the lowest coefficient of thermal conductivity (0.024 W/m<sup>2</sup>K).

To compare, the rate for wood is from 0.15 to 0.3 W/m<sup>2</sup>K for ceramic bricks W/m<sup>2</sup>K 0.8 or more 33 times, for concrete 1.5-1.7 W/m<sup>2</sup>K (62-71 times more); For copper sheet the figure is up 400 W/m<sup>2</sup>K ie 16,666 times more. Sustainability of this natural roof covering material results from the fact that reed contains large amount of natural wax, in addition at the bottom of reed stem, amount of silica are naturally produced in contact with water during aging process, causing thickening and hardness of the wall, which in turn causes a high resistance to weather conditions as well as increases its natural fire resistance. Houses covered with reed are functional, healthy, environmentally sustainable and aesthetic. It's easy to blend them into the natural landscape, and with appropriate design of the roof structure (depressions and bulges), roof windows (I prefer the mesh) partially rounded and extended eaves (so-called tongues), bridges and connections, chimneys, etc. could bring almost a "fairy tale" effects.

In Biebrza and Narew region, farmers harvest reed in the winter in the so-called "winter harvest." Winter is the period for the least profitable, while the gap between tillage's. Therefore most opportune time to refill the home budget with an extra income. Monthly for manual reed harvesting is about 2500 PLN/630 EURO.

Other less common methods of reed management & purpose employment include:

- 1) usage a building material for hives in organic beekeeping,
- 2) production of *construction mat* (used in plaster & insulation techniques),
- 3) Usage as a bedding for farm animals,

An important element of the sustainable development of rural areas are rural and agricultural tourism.

Maliszewskie Lake and adjacent areas - valuable and unique in terms of bird biodiversity are often visited by ornithologists. It would be worthwhile to invest in promotion and advertising of the site.

Places such as Lake Maliszewski may *dis-burden* in terms of tourist attraction other valuable natural areas such as the Biebrza National Park or Narew National Park.

This is particularly important during the spring migration of birds, when the influx of tourists is the highest. Furthermore, tourism creates a per-conditions for income diversification. Eco and agro-tourism may directly and tangibly contribute to rising of environmental & eco awareness amongst the local populations as well as the tourists.

Good example is Paradise Pond/Rajski Staw: agro/eco farmstead, located in Zajki, at the buffer of Biebrza National Park. Key attraction of the farm is a possibility to watch a family of beavers living at the pond within the core farm area. The hosts decided to create a kind of symbiotic arrangement between wild animal and human. They created a kind of *beaver observatory point* increasing the attractiveness of the farm.

In parallel to profits arising from biomass or tourism development farmers can also benefit from the EU support. Sources from the Rural Development Programme for 2007-13 are intended to increase agricultural productivity, improving food quality and raising the living standards of the rural population in accordance with the principles of environmental protection & sustainable development. Aid & grants are envisaged to compensate farmers for losses of higher revenue: in case of abandoning intensive use of fertilizers and pesticides or due to giving up of melioration activities at the periodically flooded meadows & farmlands. Farmers can apply for extensive meadows and pastures usage as well as for running the organic farms. More and more farmers are choosing rearing and breeding of traditional & native breeds of farm animals such as the Polish primitive horse or small horses traditional breeds, Polish traditional red breed cattle or the old, traditional bread of chicken: zielononózki/green-leg chicken.

Conclusions:

- a) Lake Maliszewskie as an environmentally sensitive and valuable area particularly in relation to the birds biodiversity,
- b) Promote the unique natural areas adjacent to the Biebrza National Park like Lake Maliszewskie, partially limiting or redirecting the tourist traffic. This is particularly important during the Spring periods, when the intensification of tourism,
- c) Sustainable agriculture as an opportunity for targeted initiatives and projects, but also a chance to preserve biodiversity, nature protection and development of sustainable tourism and recreation

# **Tourist Potential and Biodiversity & Nature Assets, Sustainable development and usage perspective: case of Narew and Biebrza Valley**

## **Abstract**

**Grzegorz Kacewicz**

**Equitable, sustainable tourism and recreation are the crucial components of socio-economic development of the rural areas.**

Therefore, rural tourism shall tangibly contribute to overall regional sustainable development, ensuring maintenance of natural resources. Sustainable development of tourism requires the adoption of consistent actions in various areas of management: from planning, through development programming, implementation of action plans till individual projects in this field. Over the time practitioners and researchers have constantly added to understanding the new activities that encompass rural tourism. The list includes interest in farms, nature, wildlife adventure, health, education, arts, and heritage and experiencing living history such as rural customs, folklore, local traditions, beliefs, and common heritage, while it's not exhaustive.

More and more frequently rural tourism is explicitly considered as a sub-component of either regional agricultural policy or regional environmental protection schemes. The dynamics between the pull and push factors are becoming more complicated and sophisticated. The numbers of visitors to rural areas has increased considerably. It was estimated that during the turn of the century 3% of all international tourists travel was destined for rural purposes, which is around 19 millions. This accounts for an annual growth rate of around 6%: 2% above the growth rate for the whole sector. The countryside is also increasingly being viewed as a commodity that can be successfully

marketed by the tourism industry and consumed by the tourist. The new forms of rural tourism that are getting momentum include: agri-tourism & agro - tourism, nature tourism, farm tourism, green tourism, soft tourism, alternative tourism, Eco-tourism.

**General principles of good practice in sustainable tourism and recreation shall encompass:**

- Strategic integration of tourism with all the relevant aspects of local and supra-regional development schemes and strategies.
- Effective, result-oriented cooperation between units of local government administration, central government and business entities in developing and implementing projects,
- Cross-cutting approach: inciting and integrating multifaceted & innovatory solutions,
- International & supra-regional integration of tourism products & infrastructure: trails development, regional tourism products, brands, products and initiatives, green initiatives establishment of relevant institutions & bodies & targeted initiatives providing advice to tourist operator, offering quality tourist information for visitors,
- Application of sustainable tourism development guidelines and use the principles of best practice in the area,
- Due consideration of innovative ideas in tourism management (prolonging the tourist season, encouraging traditional activities),
- Wide employment of tested tourism management tools such as: quality branding, certifications,
- Permanent identification of needs and opportunities for tourism development,
- Permanent monitoring the initiatives & activities impacts on environment (conducting environmental impact assessments),
- Mulch-stakeholders approach. Promotion of cooperation between public and private entities to ensure sustainability and profound social impact,

**Rural tourism development in accordance with the principles of sustainable development should take into account the following principles:**

- Be tailored and adapted to peculiar environmental resources & eco- balances on the

ground

- Be demand-driven and participatory: local people should participate in all initiatives,
- Be locally rooted: should be based on regional natural human and material resources,
- Be inclusive, equitable/non-discriminatory, and socially and economically beneficial for the local communities,

Prerequisites for sustainable, eco-balanced development of Maliszewskie Lake and its surrounding is: the reduction of pollution and rehabilitation of distorted water and bio-nutrients circulation cycles in the landscape. Control and regulation of bio-nutrient cycles and water circulation in the landscape shall be designed to promptly limit the negative impacts caused by anthropo-pressure and to enhance ecosystem resilience to adverse changes caused by human activities in the longer terms. Over-exploitation and degradation of the structure of the biotic changes in ecosystem processes, thus reducing the possibility of an ecosystem to provide the resources required. Application of the concept of sustainable development has the potential to reduce this risk. One of the main objectives of this idea is striking the right homeostatic balance of the Lake.

Lake's surface cover crop is one of the key factors of thermal equilibrium buffer, which stabilizes the water circulation, reduces erosion and induces a natural transfer of bio-nutrients from land to aquatic ecosystems, improving overall water quality and increasing its biodiversity.

# **Sustainable development of rural territories in Belarus. Promotion of multi-stakeholder participatory cooperation for sustainable development**

## **Galina Verbovskaya**

Sustainable development is one of the directions of work of the IPO "Ecoproject Partnership". I would like to present project "Multistakeholder LocalActionStrength" – Improvement of local sustainable strategies and local actions development and implementation in three rural communities in Belarus" implemented in this direction.

The project was fulfilled jointly by Polish Green Network and IPO Ecoproject Partnership under financial support of EU: NSA-LA.

The project contributed towards the capacity building of non-state actors (notably grass-root organisations) and local authorities as well as other stakeholders from citizens and business sector in three rural communities in Belarus to develop tools for multistakeholder participatory cooperation, planning and partnerships for the development and implementation of local sustainable development strategies and actions. The project initiated participatory processes in three rural Belarusian communities around the implementation of pilot projects for sustainable local development and poverty reduction, strengthened participation of women in this process, and tangibly improve people's lives in their local communities.

### **The following overall objectives were set up for the project:**

- Increase access to environmental information, by providing information and raising awareness of the target groups about the opportunities of sustainable development in their communities, about the operation of participatory local demonstration projects, about participatory local sustainability planning and strategies for



sustainable local development.

- Explore and experience new ways of meeting the needs of people, through participatory approaches, through their own analysis and action and to equip the stakeholders with skills necessary for involving corporate support in their communities. Promote support people-driven local strategies to create neighbourhood and community-based development in disadvantaged rural areas.
- Build partnerships on local sustainable development issues between local authorities, non-state actors, communities and the private sector to promote constructive engagement and dialogue on the local problems solutions. To help develop strategic planning tools and adapt long-term sustainability action planning at community level that is successfully implemented and periodically reviewed.
- Raise awareness about different roles of men and women in Belarusian society and contribute to improving gender mainstreaming in local policy making in Belarus.

#### **The main target groups:**

- Local people of the pilot project communities (Disna town, Ananichskiy and Dukorskiy village soviets, Belozerskiy village soviet).
- 7 project staff of Ecoproject Partnership.
- Representatives of business.
- Educational institutes.
- Non-state actors (grassroots organisations/ local society groups/ local initiatives).

#### **All the activities within the project can be divided into several stages.**

The purpose of the **first phase was to provide the foundations for good cooperation** of all the project team, and a common understanding of tasks, responsibilities, methodologies and results. During **inception meeting** the project team from "Ecoproject Partnership" was trained to improve their managerial skills for successful implementation of the project. Common working methods, communication, reporting and payment procedures was discussed and agreed. The project activities were reviewed and a

detailed plan of action was set up. The obligations and assignments of each partner were finally agreed upon. The **field visit** to three selected communities laid the same level of initial understanding of the situation in three project's communities.

The main stakeholders in the project received a **leaflet about the project**, and had a basic understanding of the project aims and expected results.

**The second phase was dedicated to capacity building, experience exchange, access to information.** This phase strengthened the capacities of the main beneficiaries to communicate and cooperate; to share information, knowledge and experiences for encouraged dialogue and partnership.

There was organized a **training "How to organize initiative groups for local development. Participatory approach"**. Experience of sustainable development of rural territories in Barycz Valley, Poland. After it there was created a Community Development Initiative (from most active people and different stakeholders) in each community. The Members of the Community Development Initiatives gained qualifications in working with large groups, handling group dynamics, communication, negotiation, public dialogue and facilitation techniques as well as new competences to facilitating participatory processes, while accessing critical needs and searching for common ground and sustainable future developments.

As for access to new information, **web page** and a new **publication** "Towards to sustainable development" was published in every community describing their activities towards sustainable development. **Study visit to Barycz Valley** (Poland) of 9 representatives of partner communities,

**Phase on implementation of pilot projects on sustainable community development.** The goal of the third phase was to "learn by doing" and to improve practical experiences to initiate visible participatory 'Local Agenda' processes. The way of organising of the pilot projects development and implementation in each community based on the participatory approach had more chances for prolongation as the participants will gain a practical experience of working altogether in self-organised manner.

There were organized three **participatory community events in an Open Space format** and Leader approach. Open space approach gives the possibility to gather all

important local stakeholders in 'one room' and to really concentrate on what is important for the local community. Leader stands for 'Links between actions of rural development'. These approaches let everybody not only express their vision, but also to find supporters and mobilize responsibilities and resources for solutions of the local problems in the community.

Every participant received a book of proceedings produced during the participatory community events/ Open Space meetings. It contained the table of content, all reports of issues worked on, and the action plan agreed upon with a detailed description of the next steps to undertake with respective time frames, contact person and the contact list of all participants.

The **implementation of the pilot projects** provided a platform for all participants to inform each other about the progress of the pilot projects and to think of further steps to realize their practical initiatives.

The **follow up sessions** assisted the communities in analysis of the pilot projects and in making the analysis clear so that future action can be taken.

**The last phase – evaluation, reporting.** The objective of this phase is to enhance the capacity of participants for effective communication of project progress, successes, and learnings for future development.

### **Results of the project:**

- Community Development Initiatives were established in all selected communities. One of their main tasks according to their statutes is mobilising of local community self-help efforts, creation of conditions for independent solving of arising local problems.
- There was built capacity of NGOs and local authority to develop and implement local sustainable development strategies in rural communities. This process promotes dialogue and cooperation between state and non state actors, improvement of accessibility and quality of basic public utilities and services. The process involves open discussion and debate about what is important for the whole community. This requires non-state actors, local government and citizens to work

together to reach a shared goal.

- There were three pilot projects implemented during the project. They included working out, description, adjustment of tourist route, organization of work on improvement of rest sites along tourist routes, collection of waste clustered on the riverside, carrying out current repair work of country roads along tourist routes, making and installation of informational stands and markers along tourist routes, publishing informational leaflets about tourist routes, opening tourist route and inviting guests.
- Local people were involved into activities on improvement territory of their communities at every stage of the pilot project development.
- Arrangement of places potentially interesting and attractive for tourists. It promoted popularization of the territory of the communities for attracting tourists.

### **Several problems we faced during project implementation:**

Low informational awareness about sustainable development strategies. It stresses weak informational work with the population and lack of participation of local initiatives while decision making process.

Authorities' ignoring the problems. In some cases the authorities hide the problem and idealize the situation. The main authorities' concern is fulfilling the plans and reporting.

Lack of necessary equipment. It is one of the most difficult problems. It is very important to have good material base for development and for project implementation in particular.

People are not ready to solve the problems. Sometimes people are not eager to solve the problems of their communities and don't care what is happening. People concentrate on their personal problems and are not involved into the process.

### **Next steps:**

- Independent work on improvement of the territory.
- Several additional pilot projects were worked out and found financing.
- Spreading information about the achieved results.
- Implementation of the new project on increasing self-government potential for sustainable tourism.

## **Projects by Tartu County Tourism Foundation**

## **Silvia Varik**

Tartu County Tourism Foundation was established in 2000. Our main purpose is to make different development projects in Tartu and Tartu County.

Our most important projects are marketing projects – in 2009 we had huge marketing project. Main activities were – commercial campaigns in target markets (Russia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Sweden).

Also making different brochures – these are a bit different in every target market, because target groups are different – swedes want to visit only a town, germans wants to go to the nature.

We also made different materials ( DVD, USB) for professionals. And one part of the project was to make press-trips to journalists.

In 2011 there is going to start new marketing project. The most important activity in this project is to renew our tourism information website – [www.visittartu.com](http://www.visittartu.com) Other activities are quite same that they were in previous project – press-trips, brochures, participating in tourims fairs, articles in newspapers. Target markets are the same too.

Imago brochure – Tartu County – only in english. Very important project, because this brochure must give the first impression about Tartu County. This is cooperational project between Tartu County Goverment and us.

One very interesting project – Creating Public Photostock – we are buying different photoes about Tartu town and county and everybody can use these for free – journalists, tourism enterpreuners, etc. Public photostock is here: <http://www.visittartu.com/81288> There is a commison, who chooses the pictures 4 times in year.

We also making outside maps. We want that there were only similar kind of maps everywhere in Tartu County, because, if tourist comes here, he can see and regognize our area in visual.

Tartu County tourism foundation also makes a Tourism newspaper. Our target groups are – professionals, other tourism foundations, our cooperational partners, tourists (incoming). In spring 2010 we had a project – Tartu Marketing in Latvian TV. In that project we had 4 TV-shows in Latvian TV. Shows divided like this: 1. River, Which Connects, Mother River (Emajõgi) 2. Active Holidays in Tartu County 3. Three Cultures, Two Nations, One Area 4. The Passion is Not Dead, the Passion is in Tartu. With those TV-shows we enlarged the number of Latvian tourists for this summer.

Our association also makes different projects to rural municipalities of Tartu County. One good example is just ended project - Making maintenance works at Kallaste sandstone outcrop. The Kallaste sandstone outcrop is one of the most representative formations of the Middle Devonian Aruküla deposit in Estonia. Here, in the central part of the deposit, fine-grained sandstone in shades of pink, yellow and reddish brown is exposed. In this project we made different maintenance works – removing bushes in the outcrop, new trashcans and benches, new outside map. And in this project we made a little stairs to protect the ground. Most important activity was starting the common works – trash removing, this activity should be as a tradition for every spring.

### **Tourism Development in Jõgeva County**

Jõgeva county is the neighbour of Tartu county. It divides for three areas. First – Põltsamaa area, it includes Põltsamaa town and some rural municipalities. Põltsamaa area is famous for wine and canoe-trips. The Põltsamaa river - goes through 3 counties in Estonia. There are small guesthouses in the shore of river – the guesthouses, which distance from each-other is about 50 km. There is a web between those guesthouses to accommodate canoe-hikers.

The second area is Middle-area. It consists 5 rural municipalities. This is place for historical, cultural and very beautiful and interesting landscape. About history – this is the place, where Estonian epic hero Kalevipoeg (Kalev's son) made his ... Things ☐ And there is also Kalevipoeg's museum in the area. About culture – there is one of the oldest schoolmuseums of Estonia in area. In Palamuse. The nature of this part of county is extremely various and beautiful. Little hills from ice age are connected with activities of Estonian epic hero – Kalevipoeg. Also there are a lot of skiing and sleighing trails in area.

As I told before, here is a web between tourism-entrepreneurs, who have made a packages for visitors.

And the third area is The coast of Lake Peipsi – Estonians calls this place as a state in state – it is so different from all other Estonia. The slogan of this area is – one area, two nations, three nations. Main habitants of are Russian old-believers who went to this area about 300 years ago, they escaped from Russia. Now they live and grow vegetables here, in Estonia. Peipsi onion is very famous ☐ Another main activity is fishing.

First I introduced areas of Jõgeva County, Now I introduce the co-operational activities. The most usual co-operation form is that local municipalities are making NGO-s what are coordinating co-operation in different fields. As the chairman of Peipsi Regional Development Association, I will tell a bit about some ideas tourism developing.

As Jõgeva County has been one quite low-level tourism target place, we needed to work very hard to make changes. Jõgeva count has connected Estonian epic hero and tourism development. This is possibility to be visible. For example – most large amount events are called with the name of Kalevipoeg (The son of Kalev). Also we have the museum of Kalevipoeg, theme park of Kalevipoeg.

In 2006 we developed the Kalevipoeg's hiking trail – the trail is 243 km, it's for car and bicycle tourist. The route goes through places, what are connected with Kalevipoeg's activities in epic. There is also developed the game for tourists, it's called „The hedgehog game“ (this name comes from epic too. Tourist has to visit some places and stay for night to some guesthouses on the route, and collect stamps, and then he gets a present.

**In small and low-rating places it's always useful to make co-operation in tourism development.**

# **Community engagement project case study: Sustainable consumption to improve the quality of life**

## **Anastasia Ivanova**

The paper struggles to present and assess the project on sustainable consumption by Eco-project – Minsk based Belarusian NGO. It all started with carrying out analysis of the situation in Belarus, we learned out that our citizens pay little attention to what they buy and eat at the same time, they would like to buy delicious, and what is most importantly healthy products that don't contain chemical additives and GMOs. Studying the situation, we learned out that there is low level of awareness on sustainable consumption among the Belarusians. It mainly happens due to the fact that the retail market offers a small number of products for sustainable consumption, and there is no labeling recognizable to the consumer. Therefore, we, together with our Belarusian and Dutch partners developed the project, the main task of which - to establish inter-sectoral cooperation in the field of sustainable consumption at the local and regional levels in the Republic of Belarus.

We had the following objectives: raise awareness of the Belarusian citizens in the field of sustainable production and consumption and the consequences of their consumer choices; increase the number of environmentally friendly produced goods and products on the market, and develop a label that will enable consumers to recognize these products; increase interest of the retailers and manufacturers to sell sustainable consumption.

We have developed an action plan that we would like to implement this project. It includes analysis of the situation of Belarusian citizens' awareness of sustainable consumption, and opening and the starting of working of the Information Centre on Sustainable Consumption, organizing workshops and excursions, preparing and dissemination of information materials, as well as carrying out meetings of working groups and marketing



teams, meetings and training with the producers and sellers.

The target group of this project were: business organizations, including local manufacturers and trade organizations, agricultural sector both local and regional (regional government); local partners, the ecological network of "Green Partnership", Belarusian Society of Consumer Protection, as well as consumers in general.

As a result, we would get the following results: Belarusian citizens are aware of the consequences of their consumer choices and buy the products of sustainable consumption; production of sustainable consumption is presented on the market and has a recognizable label for consumers; retail sellers and manufacturers recognize the opportunities in selling products of sustainable consumption; capacity of local partners in the sustainable production and consumption increases, cross-sectoral cooperation strengthens.

We have already achieved some results. Firstly, we have opened an information center on sustainable consumption, there was information about the opening and operation in Mass Media, by means of publications in local and national publications, as well as Internet portals. Also as part of the work of information center we have carried out surveys through which we learned about the level of awareness of our citizens. Media representatives have expressed interest in the received data - they applied for consultations, were interested in the results of survey conducted. As a result, at the moment we have the following results of the Information Center:

- Consulting customers on request. Consumers are applying irregularly (the highest number of complaints was observed immediately after the opening of the info-center, after the seminar and articles in press). Not so long ago, our organization has updated the website, the website presents all the directions of our activities. Users often find us through the website.
- Three thematic meetings were conducted:
- Healthy Diet: Basic Principles – 04.02.10 – 10 persons.
- Deliberate Food Choices: Case study – 25.02.10 – 8 persons.
- Sustainable consumption for preserving health and the environment 16.03.10 – 42

persons

Participants: representatives of educational establishments, public organizations, Mass Media, research institute.

At the workshop, and thematic meetings question about the term "sustainable consumption" was frequently raised. Our citizens do not perceive it properly. During the discussions, there were opinions "environmentally friendly consumption," "responsible consumption" are more acceptable.

- The Info Center published about 10 articles on sustainable consumption in newspapers and magazines of the national level.

Our information center is divided into 2 blocks – foodstuff and "green office". We are trying to spread the idea of "green office", not only among our colleagues and friendly environmental organization, but also in the places where we organize our activities. Seminar "Labeling "Natural products": experience and perspectives of using it in Belarus" was organized in October. Representatives of distribution network, which have label "Natural product", representatives of governmental establishments responsible for the working out requirements for the label and it's obtaining, took part in the seminar.

In fact, now we are carrying out extensive work on preparing an information campaign, since the main events we expect in the near future. We plan to hold campaigns in the stores, we are planning to make an animated movie that will be broadcast on the central canal, in the subway and stores, so we want to cover a large territory, to inform and attract more citizens. Certainly, the plus of our project is involvement of representatives of regional environmental organizations, so if we draw this information campaign simultaneously in all regions, then the outcome will be more efficient and effective.

During project realization interviewing was carried out. It involved several districts of Belarus. People were asked different questions and there were no ready answers, respondents answered in free format, and it made it possible to understand what people mean by this or that notion. It was found out that the first thing people pay attention to the price of the goods (60,8%), then best before date, date of issue (55,1%), composition (39,7%), 14, 9% pay attention to the absence of the additives, 6% - to the

absence of GMO, and only 0,5% pay attention to the ecological compatibility of package. 75% of the responders are not aware what is sustainable consumption, the rest 25% gave positive answer and had to explain their understanding of the notion. The majority of the respondents, who suppose they understand the notion correctly, interpret it in terms of stable consumption, it means consumption of the same products and the same quantity and the same quality (80%), almost quarter of the answers can be associated as corresponding to the notion of sustainable development in terms of consumption which doesn't harm health (14%) and environment (11%).

But of course we faced with some difficulties in working on this project. In our country, citizens are accustomed to solve their problems in public organizations, so it is unusual to apply to public organizations. Citizens believe that public organizations can not solve their problems and do not fully trust them. In some cases, to overcome these difficulties, we are helped by the fact that our partner is the Belarusian Society of Consumer Protection, which is the most authoritative and influential organization representing consumers' interests on national level. BSCP also has some authority to handle and work with manufacturers and are able to form a definite opinion among consumers and producers and has influence on adoption of certain specific decisions.

While preparing informational campaign we have found out that the production which is marked by the label "Natural product" is the production of the higher quality, but not the organic production. There are no agreements with Europe and CIS, which makes it difficult to obtain the sign for some producers who use imported materials (cacao beans). we recognize it is necessary to work more on improvement of the sign, it should be perfected so that it could be admitted both in Europe and Russia, and it should be stressed that label "Natural product" is a great step towards clean, natural production.

We faced with the fact that some manufacturers are not interested in getting the sign "Natural product", others would like to receive this mark, but they have some barriers while obtaining this sign, others have products with this mark and are not interested in issuing of additional line of natural products. Therefore, we are working to interest the producer in getting this sign, so we want to create Eco-nomination at the annual award "Brand of the Year."

Also, another problem in the dissemination of this project was the fact that our population

is poorly informed about sustainable consumption, many would also like to buy healthy food, but they believe that it is too expensive. For example, after fulfilled questioning, we found out that first of all people pay attention to price, manufacturer, expiration date and after that to the composition, the absence of GMOs. Via this survey, we learned that many (about 24% of respondents) - do not even think about what labels are on the product. So now we are planning activities that will be aimed at informing the citizens, and above all at transforming their established opinion proclaiming that "Natural - always cheaper!" And we want to issue cards with information about prohibited additives, which are relatively safe, as well as cards that will contain information about environmental labeling.

At the moment we are planning the largest and, we hope, productive actions. We really would like to draw attention to the issue of sustainable consumption, awake interest, and change the situation in our country so that our stores offered healthy and natural products as much as possible and that offices could be called "green". I would like sustainable consumption to improve life quality, and decrease harm caused to environment and humans.

## **Cooperation between IPO "Ecoproject Partnership" and Children's Center "Hope" as an example of joint projects on the separate waste collection and composting**

### **Elena Atomashko**

Children's Rehabilitation and Wellness Center, "Hope" – sanatorium and spa treatment establishment, which was created as part of the Belarusian-German project for year-round health improvement of children, living in areas contaminated with radionuclide after the Chernobyl accident. Children arrive to the center with school groups, and are accompanied by teachers. The period of staying in the center is 24 days. Center "Hope" is located in a picturesque area near the Vileika reservoir and at present is a demonstration object of energy efficiency and renewable energy resources, organic agriculture, environmental education and training.

Thanks to cooperation with IPO "Ecoproject Partnership" project "Work with staff and children on separate waste collection and composting of organic waste in the rehabilitation center "Hope" was implemented.

In 2008, by the time the project began one of the main problems in the children's center "Hope" was the need to improve waste management system - although there was organized separate collection of waste paper, plastic and partial composting of organic waste, but in practice there was lack of some equipment, better organization of the system and additional informational work, both with the center's employees, and children who come to rehabilitation center.

For solving this problem, a working group, which consisted of an expert in public

relations, the leaders of the general service department, department of nonschool education and the representatives of the canteen. Initially, information about the quantity and kind of waste produced in different parts of the center was collected, it was necessary to find out who collects waste and where it is stored, what equipment is necessary to broaden and improve the system of separate waste collection and recycling. Taking into consideration the significant amount of biodegradable waste in the canteen, children's buildings and waste appeared while cleaning-up, weeding flower beds, and the need for compost material to fertilize agricultural area, it was decided to focus on composting of organic waste.

In the network of the project bins for separate collection of organic waste in the children's buildings, large plastic containers for composting, watering device and chopper of the branches were installed. Head of general service department was trained composting of organic waste during the workshop organized by IPO "Ecoproject Partnership" for further training other employees of the center.

To attract staff to work on the separate collection of organic waste, meetings with staff of the general service department, the department of nutrition and out-of-school education were held. Experience has shown that informational work and joint discussion of the problem increase staff motivation and contribute to a more thorough separate waste collection, it was decided to discuss issues of waste management at the meetings on the environmental management system established in rehabilitation center "Hope". As center staff noted, the installation of containers is not enough for efficient operation of the system of separate waste collection and recycling. Constant education of staff and vacationers is very important as well – such work forwards separate waste collection and further recycling.

Upon arrival of new groups of children training on separate waste collection and composting of organic matter is carried out both for the accompanying teachers and children. Children are provided with colorful informational booklets about waste. During the stay in the center "Hope" vacationers take part in the separation of waste and throw recycling material in special containers. It helps to support waste management system in the center and spreads experience in all regions of Belarus, from which children come to

the center "Hope."

Improving waste management in the rehabilitation center "Hope" has increased the proportion of recyclable waste to those that are stored on the polygons. Agricultural Branch of Children's Center gets an environmentally friendly compost for seedlings from biodegradable waste of the canteen, fruit rests and fruit peelings, leaves and plants. Parallel to this, there is increase of ecological consciousness and environmental awareness of children and adults. It makes it possible to multiply the positive experience in other communities as children spread the obtained skills and knowledge in their families and local schools.

Thus, the rehabilitation center "Hope" became demonstrational object for exchanging experiences in waste management – people apply to the center for consultations and representatives from other communities come on excursions.

# **Belarus based pilot projects on organic wastes composting Project Case Study Sustainable waste water treatment in rural areas in Belarus**

## **Irina Lastovka**

**The main aim of the project** was protection of transboundary waters of Belarusian-Baltic watershed through teaching ecosanitation in educational establishments in Vilejskiy region. Actions implemented within the project included:

Need assessment study tour on monitoring water quality in the river Vilia and wells in Vilejskiy region. The study was carried out by pupils and tutors of the children's tourist club "Tortoises", which functions on the basis of Vilejskiy center of nonschool education. The age of the pupils is 12-18 years (55 persons in total). The study consisted of 6 stages and the following targets were defined:

- examining the river and finding out the main sources of its pollution;
- testing water from wells in the village placed along the river;
- informing population about the ways of prevention pollution of underground water and surface waters.

For the monitoring water quality the part of the river Vilia was chosen. The water was tested on content of ammonium nitrogen, phosphates and dissolved oxygen. Water was examined with the help of test-set consisting of several chemical substances, necessary equipment and instruction how to use it. The comparison of the enumerated indicators defined in different places of the selected part of the river helped to identify the canals and inflows which worsen water quality.

Water in village wells was tested on nitrates and nitrites content with help of test-stripe Nitrat-Test, Merckoquant®, Germany. The water tests were made with consent of the owners of the wells and with their participation. While monitoring the participants



commented on the results of the tests, explained the possible reasons for the pollution, and gave information about the wells treatment. 110 wells were examined. The condition of 44 of them was in norm – the nitrates content was lower than the norm or was missing at all. The nitrates content considerably exceeded the norms in 44 wells. The main reason for the pollution – breaking of the first zone of sanitary control: there are constructions, vegetable gardens and fields. Local people are not aware of the elementary methods of treating the wells: improvement of stinking fund, appropriate arrangement of wells, its cleaning. Informational corner in CRHC “Nadezhda” for promotion of ecosanitation. Informational corner consisted of:

- Plastic seat for ecosan toilet as a sample.
- 3 posters on ecosanitation: “Ecological waste water treatment”, “Toilets with urine take-off – demonstrational platform”, “It is waterless ecological toilet with urine take-off ».
- Informational materials about ecosanitary

Conference “Water resources and ecosanitation”: 24 persons took part in the conference. Among them: representatives of educational establishments, regional nature protection inspection, regional sanitary services, children’s centre “Nadezhda”, Mogilevskiy regional centre of hydrometeorology, public organizations, Mass Media.

- Got new knowledge and skills in water quality testing with the help of Merck test-ledge (determination of nitrates content in water from well), and using methods for defining content of oxygen, phosphates and ammonium in river water.
- Got to know ecological advantages of Ecosan toilets in comparison with traditional pit latrine, their ecological and domestic advantages and international experience in this sphere.
- Got new information about influence of water quality on people’s health and environment, water monitoring methods used by sanitation services – their advantages and disadvantages.
- Got ideas of possible ways of involving pupils into joint work on water monitoring and influence of this work on village inhabitants’ opinion of the problem of drinking water quality, improvement of the wells, household influence on ground and surface water.
- Pupils got new knowledge in possible ways of water quality testing, got new skills in

the mentioned methods. Participation in examining water from wells and river influenced their ecological consciousness; they changed their attitude to the question of water quality influence on person's health and water pollution in the river.

- Got acquainted with possibilities of cooperation among educational establishments, public organizations, local authorities, sanitation services, nature protection organizations and other organizations working in the sphere of protection of water resources and ecosanitation.
- Get to know the methods of sustainable waste water treatment, their ecological and domestic advantages and international experience in this sphere.

### **Project results:**

- The project evoked response at the local level – it is not people's indifference to the question of water quality. This question wasn't touched upon before, and there wasn't enough information. Most people were sure about safety of the situation. Rural families as well as families from the towns who have dachas in rural areas became interested in the possibilities of the proper ways of arrangement of the wells and construction of ecosan toilets.
  - Local people are interested in continuation of monitoring water in the wells.
- Village inhabitants show interest in improvement private and public wells, centralization of water supply in order to have good water quality. Inhabitants are becoming interested in the methods of sustainable waste water treatment for protecting ground waters from pollution.
- Having test results and getting information about nitrates influence on people's health, children who participated in the project shared this information with their parents, grandparents and relatives who live in rural areas and use wells, children insisted on testing water and improving village toilets.
  - Teachers, who were informed at the conference, organize work on ecosanitation in schools at the lessons and out-of-class activities.
- Representative of sanitary services took the results of the tests made during the expedition in order to point out problematic places.

### **Difficulties faced during the project implementation**

- Some elderly owners of the wells, who are alone, refused to test water, saying that they didn't want to know possible negative results in order not to think about it. Such people made approximately 7%.
- During the expedition there were places where it was impossible to come closer to water to take samples. It was caused by watery near shore-zone, other physical obstacles and long distance between road and stream canal. Conclusion: it is better to carry out expedition during warm period, when it is possible to go by kayak and float.
- Regional executive committees were not so interested in project results as sanitation services were, though it is executive committee who must solve the problem.

# **EDEN: European Destinations of Excellence; Case of Lake Võrtsjärv, Estonia**

## **Silvia Varik**

EDEN is the acronym for European Destinations of Excellence, a project promoting sustainable tourism development models across the European Union. The project is based on national competitions that take place every year and result in the selection of a tourist “destination of excellence” for each participating country. Through the selection of destinations, EDEN effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations. It enhances the visibility of emerging European destinations, creates a platform for sharing good practices across Europe and promotes networking between awarded destinations. This European quest for excellence in tourism is developed around an annual theme, chosen by the Commission together with the relevant national tourism bodies. This theme functions as a leitmotif: so far, rural tourism, intangible heritage and protected areas have been the main EDEN themes.

The key feature of the selected destinations is their commitment to social, cultural and environmental sustainability. The recipients of the award are emerging, little known European destinations located in the 27 Member States and candidate countries. The EDEN project helps to spread the sustainable practices used in the chosen destinations across the Union and to turn these places into all-year-round venues. The process thus aims to help de-congest over-visited tourist destinations.

The development of this project is backed by the European Commission which launched the project in 2006 and still plays a crucial coordinating role. Its tasks include encouraging dialogue among stakeholders, co-financing the selection procedures, organising the award ceremony (in the first two years, during the European Tourism Forum) and coordinating a comprehensive communication campaign.

([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/eden/what-is-eden/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/eden/what-is-eden/index_en.htm))

## **Lake Võrtsjärv region declared the best EDEN destination in Estonia for aquatic tourism in 2010**

The Võrtsjärv region centred on Estonia's second "great lake" was today declared the winner of the Estonia's Hidden Treasures 2010's Aquatic tourism competition. Võrtsjärv won over the jury with its strong, diverse tourist products, well-functioning cooperative networks and preservation of rich traditions. The winner will present its attractions in September at the European Tourism Forum. The final selection, which was made at a aquatic tourism seminar held at the Museum of Coastal Folk, was very close.

The head of Estonian national jury, deputy director of the Estonian Tourist Board Marje Braunbrück said that the strength of the Võrtsjärv region was its „very well-organized cooperation network, which spans the entire region and is expressed in real terms in municipal development plans and investments into tourism“As a result of the investments, Võrtsjärv today has five primary gateways, all of which are tourist destinations in their own right,” says Braunbrück. She also emphasized the diversity of the tourist products of the Võrtsjärv region and the fact that they are orientated to people with different interests “Võrtsjärv offers recreational opportunities for people seeking cultural, nature and active holidays and its tourist products succeed in uniting history and the present-day in superb fashion,” said Braunbrück.

Director of the Võrtsjärv Foundation Jaanika Kaljuvee says the Võrtsjärv region is characterized by three major strengths. First of all, Võrtsjärv is itself a unique natural resource, being a Natura 2000 bird and nature reserve area and home to hundreds of plant and animal species of interest. Second, Kaljuvee highlights the region's rich historical and cultural tradition and sustainability of these traditions. And third, high-quality and multifaceted tourist packages are available, which were developed as a result of effective cooperation between all parties in the region – rural municipalities, non-profit associations and local firms in the tourism sector

The Võrtsjärv region is home to ancient fishing villages, and has a historical fishing vessel endemic to the region – the kalepurjekas. The lake, which is rich in eel, carp bream and pike-perch, also features Estonia's only freshwater fish museum. There is also a vernacular bagpipe tradition which dates back many centuries. Tourists can get the best preview of

the sights and activities in the Võrtsjärv region online at [www.vortsjarv.ee](http://www.vortsjarv.ee) or on location at the Võrtsjärv visitor centre in at Jõesuu – at the mouth of the Suur Emajõgi. The competition international jury comprised renowned nature and tourism experts from Estonia and abroad. The jury was led by Gerald Broddelez, a nature expert who works for the internationally well-known travel firm Naturetrack and has experience from 160 countries on all of the world's continents.

Three destinations reached the final round the island of Muhu (nominated by MTÜ Väinamere Uisk) the Peipsiveere Sibulatee ("onion road" along the shores of Lake Peipus (nominated by MTÜ Sibulatee) and the Võrtsjärv region (nominated by Võrtsjärve SA) □ The destinations were each vying for the honour with three different tourist products, which were rated on a five-point scale. Criteria included the authenticity of the region and its tourist products, the appeal of the products for domestic and foreign tourists, the sustainability of the destination and the extent of the planning for at least the next three years. An additional important criterion was the thoroughness of marketing and the infrastructure.

The "Estonia's Hidden Treasures 2010. Aquatic tourism" competition was announced by Enterprise Estonia in early March and took place in the framework of the project "European Destinations of Excellence" (EDEN) initiated by the European Commission. The aim was to recognize tourism destinations on coasts, lakes and rivers that embody innovative approaches and provide water tourism services in a way that leads to the development of a higher-quality environment while coping with problems of seasonality. Read more [www.edenineurope.eu](http://www.edenineurope.eu)

A total of nine destinations were entered in the competition: the island of Muhu (MTÜ Väinamere Uisk), Vilsandi National Park, the island of Saaremaa (MTÜ Meremaa), the coastal villages and manors of Lahemaa National Park – the settlements of Käsmu and Vergi and the Sagadi, Palmse and Vihula manors (MTÜ Lääne-Viru Turismiklubi), Peipsiveere Sibulatee (MTÜ Sibulatee), the Võrtsjärv region (Võrtsjärve SA), Otepää (Otepää Municipality Government), Romantic Beach Byway in Pärnu County (MTÜ Pärnu Lahe Partnerluskogu), the village of Ruhnu, and Ruhnu municipality on the island of the same name (MTÜ Ruhnu Kultuurielu) and the River Emajõgi-Lake Peipus-Võrtsjärv region

(MTÜ Emajõe Lodjaselts). Find more about Estonia: [www.vistiestonia.com](http://www.vistiestonia.com) Welcome to Estonia!

## **Lake Võrtsjärv**

Võrtsjarv is the largest lake within the boundaries of Estonia □ Not considering Lake Peipsi on the Russian border, it surpasses all other Estonian lakes together by the surface area. The few islands are mostly located in the southern part of the lake. Tondisaar and Pähksaar are permanent islands while Ainsaar turns into a peninsula during low water, and Heinassaar is flooded in high water periods. The shores of Võrtsjarv are mostly low swampy in the southern part, and sandy in the northern part the eastern shore is higher. Despite its large surface area, the lake is shallow. The deepest place lies between the eastern shore and the island of Tondisaar along the submerged elongation of the riverbed of the Väike Emajõgi River. The lake depression is of preglacial origin but has somewhat been influenced by glaciers. On the eastern shore the Devonian sandstone bedrock is denuded along a stretch of several kilometres.

This abrasion shore at Tamme is 3 - 8 m high and subjected to protection as a famous finding-place of fossil placoderm fishes. In the southern part the lake bottom is covered with a mud layer up to 5.5 m thick which is gradually being replaced by sandy mud and sand in the direction of north; the mud is lying on the marl. The total thickness of sediments increases southwards, up to 7.6 m.

Võrtsjärv has tens of inflows collecting their water in three counties, on a catchment area exceeding the lake surface twelve times □ Väike Emajõgi, Öhne, Tarvastu, and Tännasilma rivers are the largest inflows. Suur Emajõgi is the single outlet □ however at times in spring when dammed up by a mighty flood from the Pede River 5 km downstream, the river starts flowing back towards the lake. During such a period (on the average two weeks a year) Lake Võrtsjarv is devoid of any outflow. As a result, the high waterlevel usually lasts for several months in spring, while even the rise in autumn can be noticeable. The mean annual difference in the lake volume between the high and low water level can be threefold. A permanent current system in the lake is lacking.

The lake is covered with ice on the average for 135 days a year, from the end of

November till the end of April. The average water temperature rises up to 17-21°C in July. No permanent stratification occurs in summer.

Vörtsjärv is a strongly eutrophic lake. The nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus issue from the surrounding arable lands and, with sewage, from several small towns (Valga, Viljandi, Tõrva) and villages. The fast expansion of reed thickets and the deterioration of biological diversity are a clear evidence of the eutrophication of the lake during the last decades. However, the high carbonate content of water protects the lake against acid rains.

Due to the prevalence of western winds, the reed belt is continuous and lush on the sheltered western shore, and broken at the open eastern shore. The narrow southern end, especially beginning from Pähksaar Island is totally overgrown with yellow and white lilies, pondweeds, milfoil, arrowhead, bulrush, and other water plants.

The amount of planktonic algae can reach 30 g per cubic metre, with blue-green algae prevailing in summer. Water is turbid, yellowish-green or greenish yellow, with a transparency of about 1 m.

Mud particles stirred up by the wave action contribute to turbidity. The zooplankton of the lake consists of smaller animals building up the summer biomass of about 1-2 g/m<sup>3</sup>. The amount of bottom animals is low but variable in different years; the average biomass is 5-7 g/m<sup>2</sup>, with chironomid larvae being the dominating group.

35 fish species occur in Lake Vörtsjärv. Pike-perch, eel, bream, and pike are the most important commercial fishes while perch and roach are also abundant. In the fifties and sixties Vörtsjärv was known as a ruff lake since inferior fish prevailed in catches. After the application of measures proposed by scientists of the Limnological Station (ban on trawling, strict fish protection, introduction of glass eels), big and valuable fish species became dominating. The negligible natural eel have been caught in some years. The total yearly fish catch averages over 400 tons in Lake Vörtsjärv, with the share of valuable fish 60-70%. The value of fish catches has grown 6-8 –fold. (<http://vortsjarv.ee/vortsjarv-eng>)

### **Lake Vörtsjärv Foundation**

The Lake Vörtsjärv region is made up of seven communes bordering on the lake. The communes are situated on the territory of three different counties: Rannu and Rõngu



communes in Tartu County Puka and Põdrala communes in Valga County, and Tarvastu, Viiratsi and Kolga-Jaani communes in Viljandi County. The above-mentioned communes are the subjects of the development of the Lake Võrtsjärv region. The decisions of their governments are crucial to the future of the region. The communes are united by their location in the immediate vicinity of the lake and the traditions of cooperation.

On May 3, 2000, the above-mentioned local governments established an organization for planning the joint development of the Lake Võrtsjärv region – The Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation.

The wider aims of the foundation:

Raising the environmental awareness of the public, developing unified views on the balanced development of the Lake Võrtsjärv region, preserving and protecting Lake Võrtsjärv as a sensitive body of water, and promoting the image of Lake Võrtsjärv as a rapidly developing recreational region both in Estonia and beyond. (<http://vortsjarv.ee/lake-vortsjarv-foundation>). Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation has developed the region 10 years by now. The result of that is 5 gateways to Lake Võrtsjärv, different annual events like Lake Võrtsjärv Fish and Handicraft market, Lake Võrtsjärv Folk festival - Tondisaare simman, Bicycle Tours etc. Cooperation between different sectors is very strong in Lake Võrtsjärv region, there are different tourism packages offered by local entrepreneurs and NGO-s.

### **Gates of the Lake Võrtsjärv**

Lake Võrtsjärv has enormous potential for the formation of an attractive tourism region, which would lead to further economic development in the region. Lake Võrtsjärv Development Plan has brought out the so-called "Võrtsjärv Gates" in different lake areas. "Võrtsjärv Gates" are information and visitor centers, and recreational areas, which operate as different attractions in the region and as tourism network within the region, which provide visitors the best possible quality and diverse tourism services. (<http://vortsjarv.ee/gates-of-the-lakevortsjarv>).

#### **1st Gate: Lake Võrtsjärv Visitor Centre**

Rannu-Jõesuu, situated beside the Viljandi-Tartu highway, is the virtual calling card of the

Võrtsjärv area. It contains a purpose-built rest and recreation zone, next to which begins the sole Lake Võrtsjärv outflow - the Suur Emajõgi River.

The hundred -kilometre route of the Suur Emajõgi River towards Lake Peipus commences from the north-eastern corner of Lake Võrtsjärv. The river flows through the Alam-Pedja Nature Reserve that begins on the other side of the Jõesuu bridge and spans 342 square kilometres.

**2nd Gate: Valma Fisherman Village** Valma is probably the oldest fishermen's village on the shores of Lake Võrtsjärv. 75-80% of the fish caught in the lake is brought ashore via the village harbour. Results of archaeological excavations confirm that people resided in the Valma area as early as 3,500 BC. Many visitors enjoy such attractive features of Valma as the small and cosy information centre and the fishing sailboat Paula that can take you on a lake pleasure ride. Such wooden vessels with clinker planking were used in the early years of the previous century for fishing, pleasure rides and even racing.

### **3rd Gate: Tarvastu Polder Recreational Area**

The Tarvastu Polder is situated to the north-east of Mustla and it is all that is left of the drainage system used to gain arable land from the low shores of Lake Võrtsjärv in the Soviet times. Not far from the pumping station is one of the most popular beaches of the Tarvastu rural municipality. Next to the sandy beach strip is a harbour channel and a camping site with a campfire spot. This rest and recreation zone has earned prominence with its sailing camps.

### **4th Gate: Vooremäe Recreational Area**

Vooremägi, situated near the southern end of Lake Võrtsjärv, is a historically valuable ancient fortified settlement site. The relative height of the hill is 10-11 metres, length - up to 44 metres, width - 34 metres.

Vooremägi is part of the Puka rural municipality and was a favourite location for joint parties of people from Valga, Tartu and Viljandi counties during the first period of national independence and after the Second World War, in the collective farm years.

Vooremägi today is a picturesque place of rest and a protected archaeological monument.

### **5th Gate: Lake Museum**

The Lake Museum on the eastern shore of Lake Võrtsjärv displays many fish species that

inhabit the lake. The museum contains large aquariums with numerous fish, aquatic plant, and animal plankton species found in Estonian rivers and lakes. You can even view the smallest organisms found in the plankton using a microscope.

The museum also contains materials and exhibitions dedicated to the lake's nature, its management and research activities. Training events and conferences are held at the seminar hall. Next to the Lake Museum entrance is an information kiosk and cafe.

### **Lake Võrtsjärv traditional sailing boat - KALE**

In 2005 the tradition of lake Võrtsjärv sailing boat kale was reborn. Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation and local fisherman wrote a project for kaleship building courses.

Kale is a traditional clinker-planked wooden trawler-sailer used in Võrtsjärve region. Because of its slender appearance it was often used for regattas and leisure cruises as well. This graceful ship has two triangular sails –bigger main sail and smaller jib sail in the fore. When trawling kale sailed down the wind towing a 3-4 meter wide funnel-like trawling net with 4-5 meter wings behind it. The name of the ship kale itself comes from the name of the large-meshed trawling net or kale. During the high times in the 1930ies to 1970ies there were more than 70 kaleships on Lake Võrtsjärv, but due to the change of fishing methods all of them were destroyed during the Soviet times. Kaleship "Paula", built according to the instructions of the last surviving shipwright Väino Leiaru in 2005, is the only one of its kind and now offers study and pleasure cruises to people interested in historic wooden vessels and traditional fishing on Lake Võrtsjärv and its islands.

### **Technical information and construction**

Sailer "Paula", the one-masted kaleboat is 12 meters long, the mast reaching 15 meters in height. It has a shallow draught, but in addition kale has a centreboard that can be lifted up when landing, which reaches only meter and twenty centimetres below the surface. The gaffsails on kaleboat enable it to be maneuvered at a 45 degree angle against the wind. Like Peipsi barge the hull of kale was clinkerbuilt according to archaic methods.

### **Interesting facts and stories**

The only existing kaleship was built in 2005 according to the instructions of the last surviving shipwrights, who passed the knowledge learned during his childhood on to the

fishermen of Valma village during the building of "Paula". When the modernisation of fishing methods left the kaleships unused local people decided to hold sailing competitions – that is how the famous Võrtsjärve Regatta started (<http://vortsjarv.ee/tourism/kale>).

### **Packages for Water Tourism**

(<http://vortsjarv.ee/tourism/packages-for-watertourism>)

Entrepreneurs and NGO-s of the Lake Võrtsjärv region offers different tourism packages. There are three main packages, but in most cases visitors but together their own package from these three.

### **Listen to Lake Võrtsjärv**

(2-day, the product package is offered during the summer season from 1st June to 31st August). DESCRIPTION: On the first day a group (an optimum number of 15-30 people) will arrive at the Võrtsjärve Visiting Centre in Rannu-Jõesuu. On arrival a short overview on the activities of the visiting centre and the area as a whole will be given by a tourism organiser from Võrtsjärve SA, coffee-tea and snacks will be served. After becoming acquainted with the visiting centre, the Lake Museum situated in Vehendi Village will follow, where Estonian freshwater fish, including also rare and protected species, can be seen. A model of the biggest fish ever caught from Lake Võrtsjärv – a Grass Carp – is displayed in an aquarium without water. To see the inhabitants of the pool through a magnifying glass will surely be of interest.

A kale sailboat with its jolly two-man crew will be waiting for the seafarers at the jetty of the Centre for Limnology. The kale sailboat will offer a genuine experience in its traditional way. Eel soup will be eaten, stories of bygone fishing methods and fishermen traditions and the life of the Lake Võrtsjärv area in the modern times will be told.

A kale is a traditional wooden trawling sailboat used on Lake Võrtsjärv, which, owing to its graceful appearance, was often used also on cruises and regattas. A kale sailboat with a slim hull has two triangular sails – a large main sail attached to the mast and a small jib sail in front of it. When trawling, the sailboat would always move leeward, side ahead, pulling a kale (trawl) on the side of the sailboat. The name kale comes from a large-mesh net, or kale, used when trawling. In better times, which were between the 1930s-1970s,

70 kale sailboats altogether could have been observed on Lake Võrtsjärv. At the end of the 1960s, introducing baby eels in Lake Võrtsjärv was started, as a result of which trap fishing was beginning to be used more widely. One fishing method would start to interfere with the other, and trawling with a kale would finally be prohibited. After the ban the idea behind kales would be lost, and they would perish little by little. In 1985 the last sailboat of Valma Village was burned in the Midsummer Eve bonfire.

In order to revive the traditions of the building of kale sailboats, MTÜ Kaleselts was established in 2007, where both kales and rowboats are built, and it is possible to become acquainted with their activities both on their homepage [www.kaleselts.ee](http://www.kaleselts.ee) and in Valma Village on the spot. The first modern kale sailboat on Lake Võrtsjärv was completed with help by Võrtsjärve SA in 2005.

The kale sailboat will take the travellers to the Port of Pikasilla, where a bus will be waiting and taking the visitors to the Bagpipe Farm situated in Riidaja Village. Where else could one get a better overview of bagpipe music and traditions than on the Bagpipe Farm established by the legendary Tauls, at only 10 kilometres from Lake Võrtsjärv. On the Bagpipe Farm the visitors will be welcomed by the master, Ants Taul, who will introduce bagpipe music and the traditions of instrument making as an important part of the cultural life of the people of the Võrtsjärv area. The master's hobby is aviation, owing to which it is possible to have a quick look also at topics related to aviation, in addition to the bagpipe music.

Dinner will be eaten, the sauna visited, the night spent on the Bagpipe Farm.

In the evening the visitors will have a chance to listen to a performance of authorial songs by Anu and Triinu Taul inspired by traditional music.

On the second day, after breakfast on the Bagpipe Farm, the Tarvastu handicraft workshop will be visited, where the mistress will introduce local handicraft and Mulgi culture from a wider perspective. In the handicraft workshop everyone will get a chance to make a worsted ribbon (red ribbon decorating a Mulgi coat) for themselves. Estonian national foods will be introduced and tasted, which is also the last and conclusive activity of the product package. The group will be taken to the next destination desired, if need be.

PROVIDERS Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation, Bagpipe Farm, Anutar Ltd, Tarvastu Handicraft

## Workshop

### **See Lake Võrtsjärv**

(3-day, the product package is offered during the spring and autumn seasons from 20th April to 20<sup>th</sup> day and from 25th September to 5th November)

DESCRIPTION: A group (an optimum number of 10-15 people) will arrive at the Võrtsjärve Visiting Centre in Rannu-Jõesuu, where they will be welcomed by a representative of Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation (Mrs Maret Kallejärv) and the trip leader of a birdwatching trip (Natourest Ltd, Triin Ivandi). The options of the visiting centre and the area as a whole will be introduced, a short overview of bird species in transmigration (Anseriformes, Charadriiformes, Anatidae, etc) given. Light lunch will be served in the café of the visiting centre. Birdwatching will be conducted at Lake Võrtsjärv on 1st day and in the Alam-Pedja Nature Reserve on 2nd and 3rd day within a gigantic canoe trip.

The most representative bird location at Lake Võrtsjärv is the Väike-Rakke Polder, especially in the migration periods and at a high water level. The Anseriformes and Charadriiformes feed in fields between Tamme and Sangla and rest on the flooded polder. Up to 35,000 individuals of geese (mostly the Greater White-fronted Goose) have been counted here in spring, while even up to 50,000 individuals in autumn; also rarities have been encountered among geese – the Red-Breasted Goose, for instance. The Wigeon, Shoveler and Garganey, Goldeneye and Pochard rest in great numbers on the polder, while the Smew, Great Crested Grebe and Red-necked Grebe and other aquatic birds may be encountered here too. Of the Charadriiformes, the Curlew, Ruff, Wood Sandpiper and Spotted Redshank rest on the polder in the largest numbers. Also such rarities, as the Marsh Sandpiper, Little Crake and Citrine Wagtail, have been spotted in Väike-Rakke. The large number of resting aquatic birds will also attract a large number of birds of prey. A number of the Bittern, Marsh Harrier, European and Great Reed Warbler nest in the thickets of reeds of Lake Võrtsjärv. During the autumn migration, a peculiarity of Lake Võrtsjärv is massive transmigration of the Smew (in addition to the large flocks of geese).

The Tamme Outcrop Landscape Protection Area is situated on the east shore of Lake Võrtsjärv, in an area between Tamme and Neemisküla Villages of Rannu Rural Municipality. The sandstone of the Aruküla bed is exposed here. The Tamme outcrop is known as a

deposit of the Placodermi. Here and there a good view on the lake opens from the high outcrop. After an interesting birdwatching day full of impressions, the people will be taken to Vaibla to the Veldeman Guesthouse, where they will have dinner and stay for the night. The sauna will be heated for the visitors too.

In addition to the birdwatching in the outdoors, we offer a magnificent slideshow, "Birds-eye view of the River Emajõgi", presented by the nature photographer Arne Ader, who is one of the authors of the said show. If a more general overview of Estonian nature is desired, it is possible to order another slideshow from the collection of Arne Ader. Arne Ader is also a great storyteller and will surely add extra value to the photos with his talk.

In the morning of the second day breakfast will be eaten in the Veldemam Guesthouse and then the people will head for Rannu-Jõesuu, where the group will be welcomed by the guide of a canoe trip (hiking guide of 360 Kraadi Ltd, Bert Rähni), who will introduce the itinerary, give an overview of the trip planned, speak about safety and make sure that all the members of the group are equipped with lifejackets.

The main themes of the canoe trip on the River Alam-Pedja are the nature and diverse network of the inland waters of one of the largest and most difficultly accessible protection areas of Estonia. We will row on the Rivers Emajõgi, Pede, Põltsamaa, make a tour around Lake Võrtsjärv, see the beavers, listen to the birds and howl the wolves out of the woods. The people will canoe from Jõesuu to Palupõhja Village, leave their belongings in the nature school and eat hiking dinner.

Before the sunset they will return to the river, since only then it becomes really exciting there. The old rivers of the River Emajõgi serve as an ideal habitat for beavers. We will row quietly to a beaver lodge, where we will probably be lucky enough to observe an animal. As it is getting dark, we will be going downstream quietly and trying to hear the howl of the wolves. The wolves are very keen on communicating, especially in autumn, as cubs are being taught wolf life. The roe deer, pigs and moose will come to feed in the meadows followed by a pack of wolves. We may be lucky to happen to be in the same area with the wolves in that very evening; In the evening the sauna will be heated and impressions exchanged before a fireplace. On the second day of the hike the people will row to the mouth of the River Pede and on to the River Põltsamaa.

The hike will end at the Laashoone Bridge. During the day we will see a wide variety of river landscapes – first the powerful and rapid Suur-Emajõgi, then the quiet, wide, straight and darkwatered Pede, and finally the narrow and winding Põltsamaa.

The group will be taken to the next destination desired, if need be.

PROVIDERS. Lake Võrtsjärv Foundation, Natourest Ltd, 360 Kraadi Ltd, Veldemani Guesthouse, Loodusemees Ltd.

### **Taste Lake Võrtsjärv**

(2-day, the product is offered during the winter season, the dates depending on the weather conditions)

DESCRIPTION: A group (an optimum number of 10-15 people) will arrive in Valma Village, where they will be welcomed by a representative of Kaleselts NGO, Marko Vaher. Under the leadership of Valma fishermen, bygone fishermen traditions will be introduced, fishing under ice will be conducted on the lake. In the course of lunch local fish prepared by the fishermen of Lake Võrtsjärv can be tasted. Lake Võrtsjärv has been a body of water rich in fish throughout the centuries. 36 species of fish have been caught from Lake Võrtsjärv and its inflows. The main industrial fish are the zander, eel, bream and pike. The perch and roach are numerous, with permanent inhabitants being the vendace, European smelt, ide. In the fifties and sixties Lake Võrtsjärv was accompanied by the sad repute of a lake of the ruffe, since the majority of the fishery catch was the small fry of low value. Owing to the implementation of the proposals by the research fellows of the Centre for Limnology (quitting trawl fishing, intensifying fish protection, regular introduction of baby eels), large and valued fish prevail in the catch these days. The mean fishery catch of Lake Võrtsjärv is over 400 tons a year, 60-70% out of which is good foodstuff fish. The minute natural population of the eel in Lake Võrtsjärv has been replenished on a continuous basis since 1956, by introducing tiny glasseels into the lake every year.

After lunch the group will be accepted by a game instructor of 360 Kraadi Ltd., who will conduct a hiking game, in order to introduce the fishermen traditions and natural value of the area. After the hiking game the people will drive to the Järveveere Holiday Centre in Valma, where they will have dinner and stay for the night, while those desiring will have a



chance to go to the sauna. We offer an opportunity to watch slideshows by Arne Ader or order a performance by Anu Taul as an evening activity.

On the second day the people will have breakfast in the Järveveere Holiday Centre, from where they will move on to a kicksled hike. The kicksled hike with a picnic in nature will be conducted by Imre Arro from Väikse-Viselä Ltd. A nice experience in nature and active participation in the charms of the area to all participants will be guaranteed.

As an afternoon and summarising activity at the same time, we offer the visiting of the Valma fishermen'ss mini-exhibition, where Angela Leiaru (Lake Võrtsjärv Fisheries Development Agency NGO) will give an overview of the fishing equipment used on Lake Võrtsjärv and the life of the coastal fishermen, and the local artist. Antu Ott will introduce unique handicraft products made of fish skin; the visitors will have an opportunity to make a souvenir themselves or buy one. Taking of the group to the next destination desired.

PROVIDERS: Kaleselts NGO, Lake Võrtsjärv Fisheries Development Agency NGO; Find out more about Lake Võrtsjärv region: [www.vortsjarv.ee](http://www.vortsjarv.ee)

# Tourism development and marketing in Estonia: Enterprise Estonia

## Katrin Loss

Enterprise Estonia (EAS), established in 2000, promotes business and regional development in Estonia. Enterprise Estonia is one of the largest institutions within the national support system for entrepreneurship, providing financial assistance, advisory, cooperation opportunities and training for entrepreneurs, research establishments, public and third sector.

**Enterprise Estonia** operates in the following areas:

- \* Increased sustainability and accelerated growth of startup companies;
- \* Improved export and product development capability of Estonian companies;
- \* Greater impact of foreign direct investments on the Estonian economy;
- \* Increased tourism export and the development of domestic tourism.
- \* Promotion of regional development and civil society.

Pursuant to the accession of Estonia to the European Union, Enterprise Estonia became one of the implementing units of the European Union structural funds in Estonia. Today, most of the EAS programs and grants offered are co-financed from the EU structural funds. In the 2007-2013 financing period of the European Union, 13 billion kroons, out of more than 53 billion kroons of structural assistance for Estonia, will be applied by Enterprise Estonia. (<http://eas.ee/index.php/about-enterprise-estonia/overview>)

Estonian Tourist Board (ETB) is responsible for implementing Estonian national tourism policy. As travel industry support body, ETB is part of the Enterprise Estonia network and contributes to achieving its goals by implementing business and regional development policies and, in close cooperation with its partners and clients, increase the competitiveness of Estonian business environment.

Main Activities:

- \* Marketing Estonia as a tourism destination

- \* Coordination of tourism development programmes
- \* Coordination of tourism research and analysis
- \* Business consulting in tourism research, marketing, product development and training
- \* Development and coordination of Estonian tourism information system
- \* Development of international cooperation

On the government level, tourism policy development in Estonia is in the domain of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. Estonian Tourist Board works closely with business enterprises and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as with a number of administrative bodies, foundations and inspectorates to ensure a supportive environment for tourism development in Estonia. On the NGO-level, tourism development is primarily in the domain of the Estonian.

Association of Travel Agencies, Estonian Hotel and Restaurant Association, Estonian SPA Association, and Estonian Rural Tourism Association.

(<http://www.visitestonia.com/en/additionalnavigation/travel-trade>)

### **Marketing Destination Estonia**

The programme aims to increase the awareness of potential target market tourists regarding the possibilities and tourism products of Estonia as a tourism destination, and create purchasing desire; increase the incoming information queries from foreign markets regarding Estonia as a tourism destination and tourism products; inform the target market travel agencies about the possibilities of Estonia as a tourism destination and tourism products.

The target markets with the greatest potential to generate an attractive return on marketing investment have been prioritised taking account of their Market Size, the number of trips made to Estonia, and the general attractiveness of Estonia For Estonia as a tourism destination, mainly the residents of fellow EU Member States, especially nearby markets, including Finland, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, Latvia, Spain, Italy, are of great potential and are a priority, which also includes the Estonian domestic tourist, etc. The priority of the target market and the potential result are the basis for determining the volume of activities implemented on the target market.

The target markets with the greatest potential to generate an attractive return on marketing investments can be defined in five categories:

1. Primary markets: Finland, Russia, Germany, Sweden.
2. Secondary markets: Norway, Great Britain, Latvia.
3. Domestic tourism
4. Tertiary markets: Poland, Italy, France, Lithuania, Spain.
5. Developing markets: Japan, USA.

Estonian tourism services and products have been divided into five main themes: touring around the cities; countryside tourism; health tourism; nature tourism and the promotion of knowledge. For every priority target market a set of themes and product groups have been chosen for promotion in the coming years. The action strategy and trends related to the promotion of knowledge (incentive and conference tourism) are additionally developed in cooperation with the Estonian Conference Bureau. The awareness activities of the end consumers only aim to promote Estonia as a tourism destination and introduce Estonia's tourism offers where the decisions in favour of different tourism destinations are made. To that end, marketing channels are used where the target market population mainly plans travelling and searches for travel-related information. Campaigns and advertisements introducing attractive tourism products and PR will be geared towards the public in the target market in order to increase awareness of and reinforce the reputation of Estonia as a suitable tourism destination on important target markets. With regard to activities, the main marketing channels include Internet environments, premier travel books, offering of Estonian package tours by target market tour operators or target market journalistic publications.

The aim is to extend the length-of-stay in Estonia, favour first-time visits from remote markets and repeat visits from near markets and visits outside the peak season, and to expand the customer base to different age groups.

The potential consumer will be directed to the Estonian Tourist Board website ([visitestonia.com](http://visitestonia.com)). The main communication channel of the campaign therefore constitutes different web environments and activities directly referring to webs. Different media channels are additionally used in order to create interest. There will be constant occupation with the key words used on web pages, page headers and other information,

so that the web pages might be more easily found with search engines.

The introduction of the possibilities of domestic tourism for Estonian residents will continue the current trend, launching seasonal product campaigns in the puhkaeestis.ee environment.

The introduction of Estonia as a tourism destination will continue to use in the design language the results of the Brand Estonia project for visual solutions. No separate messages will be developed from the Brand Estonia project, since each market will be approached individually and according to a product group / theme. The theme phrase "Nordic with a Twist" will continue to be used as the main summarising name, which the tourists believe better characterises Estonia. With the continuation of Brand Estonia and with the development of innovations this phrase is also adopted by the promotion of Destination Estonia.

At the same time, the Estonian Tourist Board constantly continues to implement target market research and concept development in order to complement the content and volume of the services provided on the target markets as appropriate, or to commence activities on new emerging target markets.

### **Cooperation models for implementing activities on target markets**

As a rule, the general impact of the target market on the consumer is the combined result of the marketing activities of a state-financed tourism organisation and local authorities and tourism enterprises themselves. Therefore it is useful to coordinate the activities of Marketing Destination Estonia with the marketing plans of as many other stakeholders as possible. Working in partnership implies that both parties reap some rewards, and as a result, the partners in combination can achieve certain goals which would otherwise be much harder or impossible to achieve. The marketing strategy emphasises the development of a strong marketing partnership; the incorporation of both air and sea carriers, target market tour operators, Estonian incoming travel trade, service providers and representatives of Estonian regions. The main elements of partnership tourism are coordinated activity and cooperation.

The main cooperation partners for the Estonian Tourist Board in implementing the Marketing.

Destination Estonia Programme include:

- Sea and air carriers
- Target market tour operators
- Service providers – nationwide associations, hotel chains, individual entrepreneurs
- Regional stakeholders – city and county governments, regions
- Estonian incoming travel agents and tour operators.

Local governments and their associations play an important role, being ready not only to improve their region, but also uniting the efforts of several small tourism enterprises in their region.

Destination Estonia activities mainly aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. Increase the awareness of potential target market tourists of the possibilities and tourism products of Estonia as a tourism destination, and create purchasing desire;
2. Increase the incoming information queries from foreign markets regarding Estonia as a tourism destination and the tourism products;
3. Inform the target market tour operators about the possibilities and tourism products of Estonia as a tourism destination.

### **Result indicators 2008-2010**

Average share of potential visitors from priority target markets (considers a visit to Estonia in the next 3 years likely) (share) initial level

2007 15%

2010: 20%

The number of incoming information queries regarding Estonia as a tourism destination and the tourism products (foreign visitors and domestic tourism) – the Internet and Tourist Information Centres (number)

2008: 1 370 000

2009: 1 500 000

2010: 1 650 000

Marketing Destination Estonia Action Strategy 2008-2010 serves as the basis for drawing up an annual action plan for the Marketing Destination Estonia. Marketing Destination Estonia activities are carried out by the marketing team of Enterprise Estonia, Estonian

Tourist Board: [marketing@visitestonia.com](mailto:marketing@visitestonia.com)

Marketing Destination Estonia is supported by the European Union Regional Development Fund. (<http://www.visitestonia.com/en/additional-navigation/traveltrade/marketing-destination-estonia>)

## **Marketing Concept for Estonia**

Marketing Concept for Estonia is an integrated system bringing us to a better understanding of ourselves, hence helping to introduce us to others.

Introduce Estonia is the second coming of brand Estonia. It is part of natural evolution, the second step in a process that was started in 2002. While the previous platform Positively Transforming introduced the main pillars of Estonia as a brand, the Positively Surprising elaborates, modernises and systemises them, bringing the brand significantly closer to practical communication. Read more about the history of brand Estonia.

Marketing Concept for Estonia was developed to promote Estonia abroad, enabling the country to achieve greater success in expanding its tourist base, to attract foreign direct investments, to broaden the markets for Estonian exports, and to show Estonia as the best environment for living, learning and working.

## **The System of Marketing Concept for Estonia**

Marketing Concept for Estonia consists of several different interconnected parts:

- \* Positioning of Brand Estonia
- \* Four Cornerstones of Brand Estonia
- \* Key Topics of Brand Estonia
- \* Visual Identity of Brand Estonia

Why does Estonia need a unified marketing concept?

A unified marketing concept is necessary for three main reasons:

- \* Distinctiveness – in order to make a brand attractive it has to stand out and be distinguishable from others. Distinctiveness develops with skills, reliability and communication.
- \* Visual considerations – distinguishable visual language helps to instantaneously recognise a specific country in any context, thus increasing recognition and reliability. A picture is worth a thousand words.

\* Essential considerations – it is difficult to say something about oneself and one's country, especially for northerners. We need a system that:

speaks to us about ourselves

helps us understand our essence

helps us understand why we are special and what we are truly good at

Who may use the Marketing Concept?

The Marketing Concept for Estonia is meant for everyone willing to introduce Estonia. It is an attempt to harmonize the manner and style of what we say about our home to the world. It is neither propaganda nor rocket science. Instead, it is a document gathering and systemising ideas and proposals.

(<http://tutvustaeestit.eas.ee/en/brand-estonia-and-terms-of-use/brand-estonia/marketing-conceptfor-estonia>)

### **Positioning – Positively Surprising**

Positively Surprising is the basic idea and message of the brand Estonia Marketing Concept. The platform Positively Surprising helps more easily to create clearly distinctive messages for both people abroad and locals, using a simple and inspiring system. The essence of systems for both target audiences has been determined in the Introduce Estonia and I Love Estonia brand manuals. 5 important values that make Estonia a positively surprising country:

\* Full in contrasts – plentiful, diverse, positively contradictory

\* Clean, Nordic – clear, high-quality, rough, environmentally friendly

\* First and fast – modern, inventive and adaptable

\* Romantic – natural, heroic, exotic, deep

\* Accessible – compact, close, warm, dream-fulfilling

(<http://tutvustaeestit.eas.ee/en/brand-estonia-and-terms-of-use/brand-estonia/positioning>)

History

(<http://tutvustaeestit.eas.ee/en/brand-estonia-and-terms-of-use/brand-estonia/history>)

In 2002 the marketing concept for Estonia was established. Objective of the marketing concept was to increase the number of tourists, to involve foreign investments and to create favourable basis for the Estonian export products. The marketing concept describing Estonia as a positively transforming country enabled us to show ourselves both



verbally and visually just as we were and as we were seen in 2002.

The second coming of Brand Estonia – Marketing Concept Introduce Estonia. In 2008 we started to redevelop the Estonian marketing concept. The Estonian marketing concept created in 2001 had a very strong foundation. It was based on thorough surveys and world-level professional know-how.

But seven years had passed and it was time to update the brand Estonia concept. Based on gathered information, work of an expert workgroup and findings of a workshop with international consultants, a new brand positioning Positively Surprising was developed.

While the platform Positively Transforming introduced the main pillars of Estonia as a brand, the Positively Surprising elaborates, modernises and systemises them, bringing the brand significantly closer to practical communication.

### **More information**

Leitti Mändmets, Brand Manager [tutvustaeestit@eas.ee](mailto:tutvustaeestit@eas.ee)

### **Tartu County**

[www.visittartu.com](http://www.visittartu.com)

Tartu County is situated between two big lakes - Lake Peipsi and Lake Võrtsjärv, connected by River Emajõgi. Here you can find wavy plains crossed by valleys and meandering rivers, lakes between drumlins, and vast wetlands, which cover nearly one quarter of the county's territory.

The City of Tartu is sometimes called "Athens on the Emajõgi" - a reference to the classical architecture of the city as well as its academic traditions. Its citizens take pride in this charming old university city with numerous historical monuments and yet a youthful spirit. In addition to Tartu's museums, parks, cafés and clubs, the visitors of Tartu County may choose hiking trails to discover our picturesque wetlands and virgin forests in the nature preserves, which take up more than a tenth of the county's territory.

The culturally unique villages of the Russian Old Believers on the shore of Lake Peipsi are definitely worth a visit. For tourists Tartu County is also a gateway further to South Estonia.

Tartu County:

- Area 3089 sq km

- Population 149 605
- 22 local governments - 3 towns and 19 rural municipalities
- Administrative centre - City of Tartu (100,000 inhabitants)
- Regional centres - Elva, Nõo, Kallaste

#### Tartu County Tourism Foundaton

- Founded 1999
- Founders and finance: City of Tartu and Association of Local Authorities of Tartu County
- The main objective of Fndn Tartu County Tourism is tourism marketing of Tartu County, development of tourism products in the region, and motivation of companies that offer tourism services, participation at tourism fairs, initiating tourism-related projects and taking part in them as well as gathering and disseminating tourist information.

### **Structure**

#### Tartu County Tourism Foundation (6,75)

Tartu County marketing, development of tourism products in the region, participation at tourism fairs, initiating tourism-related projects and taking part in them, gathering and disseminating tourist information.

#### Tartu Convention Bureau (0,5)

TCB aim is to promote activities of acquainting and developing Tartu as a conference city.

#### Tartu Visitor Centre (2,75)

Gathering and disseminating tourist information Tartu County Tourism Foundation participates on nine international tourism fairs, also takes part in seminars for travel agents and journalists. We also have many FAM and press trips, we host about 200-250 journalists and travel agents every year.

Tartu Visitor Centre has about 15 000 – 20 000 customers in a year from different countries all over the world. Tartu Convention Bureau started Tartu Ambassadors program in 2009 and today Tartu has 64 Tartu Conference Ambassadors.

Examples of marketing materials (find some materials here: <http://www.visittartu.com/in-depth-forprofessionals-tartu/marketing-materials>)

# **Sustainable development in international perspective**

## **Sylwia Szparkowska**

The article analyses and disseminates successful solutions to key sustainable development problems. Its goal is to make these solutions available to as broad an audience as possible, with a view to avoiding re-invention and ultimately promoting sustainable development, describe ways and means to implement proven solutions for a range of topics.

### **What is sustainable development?**

Sustainable development means meeting the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In other words, it is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come – as official EU documents says. In 2006 EU adopted a renewed Sustainable Development Strategy, which is an overarching strategy for all EU policies, aiming to achieve continuous improvement of quality of life for future and current generations. It deals with social, environmental and economic issues and takes into account key challenges like sustainable consumption and production; clean energy and climate change; management of natural resources; as well as social inclusion, demography and migration.

While there is agreement replicating "successful practices" is an effective way to advance, in particular, environmental goals, little has been done to pursue this goal in a systematic manner. However, there are some sources initiatives to promote best sustainable development practices accessible in the Internet – like <http://bpn.ew.eea.europa.eu>, a Web-site of a network working for dissemination of best practices of this area in Europe – but, that has to be mentioned – absolutely useless in the essential sense (there is no examples mentioned in the part of the web "identifying and

documenting “successful practices”).

Much better source of best practices is the official European Economic and Social Committee web site <http://www.eesc.europa.eu>, where it’s possible to find best practices categorized in following groups (fields of interest):

- Climate Change and Energy
- Local Sustainability
- Sustainable Urban Development
- Sustainable Transport
- Waste Management
- Sustainable Buildings
- General Sustainable Development

Which are the most interesting practices? Let’s follow the framework given by the EESC.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

The best mentioned practices includes Solar Photovoltaic Projects, Windfarms, Hydroelectric Power Plants, wave power, biomass, geothermal energy, etc.

As an initiative deserving for attention we consider the Renewable Energy House, an office building of 2800m<sup>2</sup> in Brussels, Belgium, which is a perfect showcase for integration of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in a 120 year-old building. The energy concept was designed to reach a 50% energy savings while supplying a 100% renewable energy for heating, cooling and electricity. using a combination of biomass (wood pellets), solar thermal and geothermal energy, the heating, cooling and ventilation system. Green electricity is partly produced on site by a wide range of PV technologies and partly bought from renewable energy installations, which is an assumption to promote it as a first 100 % Renewable Energy Building.

And another interesting example: heating network of Orly (Paris region, France) with geothermal energy. Between the depths of 1500 and 1800 meters, the temperature of the aquifer Dogger is between 60 and 80°C. The "OPAC du Val de Marne" uses this aquifer through a heating network of 18 km and two pairs of drilling. In 2005, after a technical incident, the doublet ORLY II has been closed. The OPAC then decided to drill two new wells, extraction and reinvention, in the city centre on the super-market parking.

The flow wells is 300 m<sup>3</sup> / h at 76 ° C. Geothermal drilling is like oil drilling: the techniques and materials are similar.

And another project: Offshore Wind in Denmark, built in 2003 in Nysted, features 72 wind turbines that can generate an output of 2.3 MW each. With a total capacity of 165.5 MW, the wind park is one of the largest in the world. The wind turbine towers are approximately 70 meters tall and the rotor blades 40 meters long. The offshore wind farm is owned by DONG Energy (80%) and E.ON Sweden (20%). The transformer station and cable to shore is owned by SEAS-NVE Transmission; approximately 48 km of cabling connects the offshore wind farm and the substation. (read more at: <http://www.energyblueprint.info/>)

## **Local Sustainability**

One of the interesting initiatives is C 40 cities: climate leadership group of cities all around the world, but specially in the United States. More about that initiative you can find at <http://www.c40cities.org> in the part "best practices" describing local (urban) initiatives in the areas of buildings, ports, lightning, energy, renewable, transport, waste and water – between them Barcelona's solar hot water ordinance, Austin renewable energy program of reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, Southern hemisphere largest solar project (Melbourn, Australia).

Between interesting transport initiatives there is the Seoul car free days that have reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 10 % annually. Seoul's Weekly No Driving Day program A voluntary program where people choose one day a week (Monday to Friday) as a no driving day. Participants are given incentives, which are provided by public organizations and private companies, such as discounted petrol, free parking and car washing, to use alternate modes of transport of the selected days. Participants are encouraged to take part

as often as they can. Those participating just three times a year, for example, will have their incentives removed or diminished.

The program is improving air quality, congestion and saving energy. Every year, two million cars stay off the road – decreasing traffic volume by 3.7%. CO2 vehicle emissions are being reduced by 10% - a total of 2 million tons of CO2, delivering annual savings of \$50 million USD in fuel costs. The improved air quality is also improving the health of residents, saving the City millions annually. The program works because it is applied during weekdays, which encourages people to use alternate modes of transport to and from work.

To find more about how the program works go to [www.no-driving.seoul.go.kr](http://www.no-driving.seoul.go.kr)

If you need more information about European urban perspective go to <http://www.communities.gov.uk>. Or <http://www.iclei-europe.org>.

## **Sustainable Urban Development**

Of course some of already mentioned best practices could be mentioned also in this part of the study. To find more interesting cases go to <http://www.energy-cities.eu/> (in French and English). Between interesting initiatives, an purely educative, awareness rising program: The Display Campaign is the first and most widespread European Campaign to encourage municipalities to publicly display environmental performances of their municipal buildings. More than 13 000 buildings are labeled with the Display poster showing their energy and water performances as well as green house gas emissions.

On <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk> a 50 or so case studies demonstrating various aspects of sustainability in the built environment (for example: Lyon urban mobility master plan; The reorganization of the railway system in the Florentine metropolitan).

## **Sustainable Transport**

Between others has to be mentioned European Platform on Mobility Management

(EPOMM), a network of governments in European countries that are engaged in Mobility Management– see at [www.epomm.eu](http://www.epomm.eu). The main aims of EPOMM are:

- To promote and further develop Mobility Management in Europe
- To support active information exchange and learning on Mobility Management between European countries

Another one, that has to be provided is Eltis – the urban mobility portal ([www.eltis.org](http://www.eltis.org)): promoting interesting, urban initiatives like Bike repairing day in Graz (Austria) - In Graz a local bicycle shop initiated a project which offers a mobile bicycle repair service at companies- “Bike repair days”. Employees bring their bike to the workplace and small defects are repaired while the owners are working. Between others you can read about second hand bike fair (Austria); bio-diesel of used cooking oil for the municipal truck fleet in Rovigo (Italy), parking meters recharge e-vehicles (Germany) - The Frankfurt Model is the first open system for charging electric vehicles in public places based on the development of parking ticket machines into parking and charging stations. To recharge an electric vehicle, space is required for several hours. In inner-cities this space cannot be provided free of charge. Thus identification is required.

## **Waste Management**

Interesting source of information is <http://caddet.org/> with a good explanation about the theory of renewable energy, good database and interesting examples, among them an detailed explanation of using the agriculture waste (in biomass) and it's benefit's.

See also at <http://www.eaue.de> (in English) to find Surban – the database on sustainable urban development in Europe. Including them a lot of English and German good practices in town planning, linking energy saving policy and green employment scheme (project realized in Berlin); ecological building renovation of a pre-fabricated housing complex, the experience of Salzburg introducing a city-wide bio-waste collection system; town and countryside in partnership – Ystad (Sweden) Ecological cycles or renovation of pre-fabricated buildings in Mustamae district (Tallin, Estonia) and in Natolin Wyzyny (Warsaw, Poland) – one of the few that presents Eastern European good practice.

More theory about waste and material resources (articles, publications, indicators, etc), but less good practices, but always useful information you can find also at <http://www.eea.europa.eu>

## **Sustainable buildings**

An extensive background research into existing government renewable energy projects was carried out as part of Enthuse project ([www.enthuse.info](http://www.enthuse.info)) Between them an interesting project from Ireland Passive Design in Local Government Offices.

The design of Findgal County Hall, completed in 2000, incorporates passive design principles including optimized day lighting, passive heating, natural ventilation and passive cooling as well as ground source heat pump technology. The design of the building was taken from the winning entry of an architectural competition – the competition specified, that the building should demonstrate low energy consumption and be responsive to the environment. A building of this type would generally rely on mechanical ventilation and air conditioning, but by using passive techniques these services have been minimized.

Daylight involves the use of devices to capture and direct light into the building. Thanks to combination of orientation, shallow building plan, light shelves and curved profile of the ceiling a typical office building can account for 20 % total energy consumption .

Passive heating involves the collection, retention, storage and distribution of heat, and also avoiding overheating. Natural ventilation, for indoor air quality control and passive cooling, involves the use of wind-driven ventilation strategies. The lights above each desk group are switched on by occupants using their telephone, whilst the lighting control system can switch the lights off when the offices are unoccupied.

Consequently, the operational costs associated with lighting, heating, ventilating and cooling the building have been reduced. The primary barrier to increased use of passive design is lack of awareness and experience with the consequence that passive design rarely becomes an integral part of the design brief. There is also a reluctance to make investments in unfamiliar technologies. The financial cost and commercial value of employing passive design is difficult to accurately quantify at design stage. Consequently,



there is a lack of hard data to promote it's widespread application.

Another project of this field Energy Efficiency in the Home and the Fight against Poverty available at touches the problem of high cost of implementation innovative materials: to law the cost of energy is highly important for those, families, who are poor or at risk of poverty and for whom the higher energy costs constitute an above-average financial burden, restricting their quality of life and their life potential.. These people can hardly afford new, energy-efficient, environmentally friendly and responsibly priced technologies, since they have no reserves for investments. A simple solution: purchasing new windows may prove to be a problem. You can find details of this project on the website: <http://eeac.hscglab.nl>

## **General information**

**If you still need more information, please see an extinguished information below:**

**WBCSD** international business and SD news updated daily

<http://www.wbcd.org/templates/TemplateWBCSD4/layout.asp?type=p&MenuId=0DQ&doOpen=1&ClickMenu=RightMenu>

**Reuters** international environment news

<http://www.reuters.com/news/environment>

**SD Gateway** links to more SD news sites

<http://www.sdgateway.net/news.htm>

## **Cross border cooperation projects – the best practices of Interreg and CBC program**

## **Sylwia Szparkowska**

The cross border cooperation is the key instrument of the internal and external European Union Policy. The Interreg initiative is designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion throughout the European Union, by fostering the balanced development of the continent. In the internal perspective the Community initiative that aims the interregional cooperation is realized by the Interreg Programme (since 1989) and is financed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The current program is Interreg IV, covering the period 2007–2013. The Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) is also a key instrument of cooperation between member states and partner countries along the external borders of the European Union. The key objectives of the strategy is to promote economic and social development in border areas, address common challenges, promote people-to-people cooperation. It is the task of the partners on both sides of the border to analyze their common needs and to identify priorities and actions that are most relevant to their local situation.

The final beneficiaries of Interreg funds are usually public authorities, interest associations and non-profit organizations, such as chambers of commerce, employer organizations, unions or research institutes.

In the following article we want to present the most interesting EU cross border projects / best practices of cross-border cooperation.

### **PROJEKT TV8ALP**

**[http://www.alpchannel.it/tv8alp/index.php?lng=it\\_IT](http://www.alpchannel.it/tv8alp/index.php?lng=it_IT)**

The project involves the production of bilingual television programs for satellite TV 8 Mont Blanc and ALPChannel WebTV dedicated to the mountains of the Western Alps and the alpine areas of the five regions of the Mediterranean, including 17 million inhabitants . The collaboration between TV 8 Mont-Blanc, Haute Savoie channel already dedicated to the mountains, and other specialized partners makes possible to create a bilingual program promoting the economy and culture of the mountains, the sustainable

development of the area (including energy production in the Alpes) and it's European context.

The mountains at the heart of the Alps Mediterranean have a strong need to establish new communication skills, to develop better relations between otherwise separate valleys, to encourage the participation of communities, businesses and professions, and finally to propose a dynamic and quality, able to attract significant flows of tourists, even in the face of climate change, economic and social changes that are likely to further impoverish the alpine areas.

**Program:**

**Alcotra 2007-2013**

**Alpes Latines Cooperation Transfrontaliere**

**<http://www.interreg-alcotra.org/>**

**PARKS & BENEFITS**

**[www.parksandbenefits.net](http://www.parksandbenefits.net)**

Parks&Benefits is a network of protected areas, regional authorities, stakeholders in tourism & environment, and academic institutions in the BSR backed by EUROPARC Federation as European umbrella organization with 500 member parks in 38 countries.

Generating socio-economic effects by a sustainable management of protected areas for the benefit of their regions. Parks & Benefits results from an initiative of protected areas in Baltic Sea Region who share the conviction that the protection of the natural heritage must involve a sustainable management of the natural resources. Mobilizing economic instruments for protection purposes shall benefit both the protected area and the surrounding region contributing to their socio-economic development. But up to now the economic potential is widely underestimated. Common problems are: Lack of integrative & harmonized spatial planning strategies; Lack of joint actions to implement a management of natural environment on a sustainable basis and with socio-economic effects on the region; Lack of well-functioning destination marketing on its natural assets. The aim of the project is to: - implement the "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in

Protected Areas”, develop integrative & harmonized spatial planning: linking protected areas to their regions; establish PPP between protected areas, SMEs & regional authorities, increase the quality of eco-tourism offers by a BSR quality standard, promote BSR Charter Parks via European-wide EUROPARC brand & increase the identity/recognition of BSR across Europe, to provide verified arguments in policy making & secure political commitment to nature protection.

Activities consist on Management & administration; Communication & information; Sustainable management of natural resources & BSR network of regions and protected areas; Sustainable mobility concepts and transport alternatives within and to protected areas; Implementation of European visitor management standards in protected areas balancing nature protection and economic utilization.

### **Interreg IV A**

#### **Baltic Sea Region 2007-2013**

<http://eu.baltic.net>

### **MONITAMAL**

#### **[www.monitamal.net](http://www.monitamal.net)**

MoinItaMal is a project that creates a monitoring system of the sea environment quality, involving the local population, divers and local fishers in the identification, consultation and signalization of alien species in the Mediterranean Sea. During the realization of the first part of the project (Interreg III A) in the monitored area *Stephanolepis diaspros* (Monachantidae) was detected – a fish which lives originally in the Red Sea.

The project has also a component of monitoring of pollution levels of chemical and biological origin, eco-turism development, and educational components – for example an effective informational campaign : Peisci mal visti (A fish non grata) realized in the Maltese Archipelago and the Pelagio Island.

### **Interreg III A**

## **Programma di cooperazione transfrontaliera Italia – Malta**

**<http://www.italiamalta.eu/>**

### **ISLES**

#### **Irish-Scottish Links on Energy Study**

**<http://www.islesproject.eu/>**

ISLES is a collaborative project between the Scottish Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Government of Ireland. As the local press says, with the realization of the project, “efforts to build an offshore electricity transmission network linking Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland have taken a step forward”.

The target area has huge potential for capturing wind, wave and tidal energy. However, each region’s electricity network has not been developed as an offshore grid to exploit this major marine renewable resource and grid infrastructure is poor. As a result, the capacity to generate electricity is not matched by the ability to collect and transport that energy to market. As well as identifying the challenges in creating, storing and transporting the electricity created from these renewable sources.

The feasibility study will develop a business case for the construction of such a grid and will examine the following aspects: - technology and infrastructure; environment and planning; regulatory and finance; and construction and deployment. The study will also involve close co-operation with the energy industry and other stakeholders involved in grid transmission systems and renewable energy.

The results of ISLES first major initiative, a feasibility study being carried out by RPS Group, will have been disseminated to stakeholders by the end of 2011.

The project was awarded in the European Union Structural Projects Awards.

### **INTERREG IVA**

#### **Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)**

**<http://www.seupb.eu/Home.aspx>**

## **LA MAISON DES COLPORTEURS**

**[www.cipra.org](http://www.cipra.org)**

**<http://www.euralp.org>**

This project was researched in 2005 by a team of experts commissioned by CIPRA as part of the Future in the Alps Project. Was realized in the territorial limits of the Alpine Convention, in Switzerland, France and Italy between 2003 to 2005. The objective of the project realized by the EU community program Interreg III A was the integration of the Alpine region, divided by three country borders, and to build a common identification as a unique, harmonious European territory. The project was addressed to young citizens of the area, including debates about the local history, promoting local identity and the mobility of the young people (exchange programs), creating an international info-path promoting the history and the traditions of colporteurs of the mountains. One of the project products was an electronic, innovative board game, with an action taking place in the Swiss, Italian and French Alps.

The result was the exchanging of the know-how of the organizations in both, Italian and French side of the border, but also implementing an innovative technology in the historical, cross-border narrative.

### **Program:**

**Alcotra 2002-2006**

**Alpes Latines Cooperation Transfrontaliere**

**<http://www.interreg-alcotra.org/>**

## **PROMOTING PRIDE IN OUR RURAL VILLAGES**

**<http://www.eastborderregion.com/news/viewdetails.asp?newsID=83>**

The project get involved community groups, regeneration groups and business from eight

areas in northern Ireland and UK , that were participating in free training, mentoring and training programs. Two workshops for the business people were provide: seeing their business trough customers eyes and gaining practical skills to get the most from selling, customer care, merchandising and windows dressing. For the community and regeneration groups were workshops were provided in building civic and community prive and in improving the appearance of their village (landscaping, signage, street improvement). Experienced mentors has worked with business, community and regeneration groups to bring projects to life (mentoring), increase the tourism potential of villages and help develop a sustainable economic base.

### **Interreg III A**

#### **East Border Region**

**<http://www.eastborderregion.com>**

### **CROSS BORDER CRAY FISH**

**<http://www.eastborderregion.com/projects/viewdetails.asp?itemID=39>**

The project was a co-operative venture between two aquaculture farms. The two aquaculture producers to share technological know-how, share facilities, improve their competitiveness and develop new products to new markets. A central objective was to establish an innovative polyculture of two novel and emerging indigenous species in the aquaculture sector in the Island of Ireland. The crayfish in question are the native species *Austropotamobius pallipes* (*A. pallipes*). This project used crayfish from an existing licensed hatchery in Co. Down to on-grow these at a perch farm in Co. Cavan. This strategy helped maximize the efficiency of production methods in the perch farm and created an opportunity for a second cash crop of crayfish from the existing farm structures. In return the Crayfish hatchery benefited immensely from PDS's hatchery know how and up to date facilities.

### **Interreg IIIA Partnership**

#### **East Border Region**

<http://www.eastborderregion.com>

## **ULSTERS CHANGING BORDERS**

<http://www.banbridge.gov.uk/>

This project therefore resulted in the production of an attractive, full-color promotional piece, aimed at tourists, covering the archaeological and mythological expression of the East Border Region's internal border. The project was a joint cross border Heritage Tourism Marketing Initiative focusing on Pre-Christian/early Christian sites and the built heritage in settlements located on both sides of the border between The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The project focussed on the ancient Danes Cast / Dorsey / Black Pigs Dyke Border and on to the present border between Ulster and Leinster.

The project involved identifying the areas and produced a user friendly visitor publication linking the various sites together. In addition, the project also involved a marketing campaign, print support, signage and interpretive panels and a dedicated website. The tourists are attracted to the area by the intriguing idea of an enduring but constantly changing boundary, through the highlighting of its finest archaeological evidence.

## **Interreg III A**

### **East Border Region**

<http://www.eastborderregion.com>

## **BALTRAD**

[www.baltrad.eu](http://www.baltrad.eu)

### **An advanced weather radar network for the Baltic Sea Region: BALTRAD**

Weather radar systems are capable of monitoring rain, snow, hail, and wind over



large geographical areas with high resolution in both time and space. Accurate and timely weather forecasts warn of hazardous conditions e.g. snow storms, hail, freezing rain, or floods, help save lives and property. The objective of this project is thus to create a cutting-edge real-time weather radar network for the Baltic Sea Region. The method of achieving this result is through this ICT project BALTRAD. A critical element of this project will be the creation of functionality for processing data using harmonized methods throughout the Baltic Sea Region, giving each country in the region the ability to process its own and others' data according to its own needs, and mitigating regional capacity imbalances. The project partnership constitutes national weather services in Finland and Denmark, with both weather and hydrological services in Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Belarus.

User whose activities should benefit from receiving the radar-based information, in e.g. optimized traffic management, road clearing of snow (including reduced salt loads), aviation (de-icing), improved flood forecasting, and crisis management. The results of this project are an element of regional infrastructure for the BSR: an end-to-end weather radar network. These are the institutes that own and operate the radars in each country, and that will be responsible for ensuring BALTRAD's sustainability at the end of the project.

The technology upon which this ICT project will be based is networking software which is targeted as the forthcoming standard for data exchange within the World Meteorological Organization Information System (WIS).

## **Interreg IV A**

### **Baltic Sea Region 2007-2013**

<http://eu.baltic.net>

# **How to write a successful ENPI CBC proposal. Belarus**

## **Focus**

### **Wojciech Szpocinski**

The paper is an attempt to bring together a number of useful hints and tips: suggestions and concepts on what makes a good CBC project. The text, struggling to provide ready to use know-how, sticks to the standard ENPI CBC application form and follows its structure in sections and headings in line with so called PRAG (Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC External Actions).

The publication constitutes an essential part of the project: PPT/3/2009/W/52 Trans border cooperation for biodiversity and sustainable development of environmentally sensitive/protected areas implemented within Trans-border Partnership Programme by Local Tourist Organization Wetland's Gate, Poland in partnership with PEIPSI, Tartu, Estonia and Ecoproject, Minsk, Belarus. The project was supported by Norway Grants and Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Republic of Poland, being managed by the Association Eastern European Democratic Centre, Warsaw, Poland.

#### **APPROACHING ENPI CBC PROPOSAL**

##### **Guidelines**

The first and most obvious thing to do is to read carefully so-called guidelines published by Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) for each of the programmes. The guidelines should be searched for identification of right priority and measure (P&M), that fits your project idea. The choice of P&M is critical for successful application. The link or relation between chosen P&M and your project must be clear and self-evident: the project should address M&S in totality. Actually, what tends to be a definite strength is to employ or use the same wording (in description or even in the title of your project) as provided under chosen P&M. Similarly, the planned activities (the things you want to do within the project) should at

least partly overlap with the indicative list of activities, repeating them modified, extending or blending some components from the list. The reviewers do not like to see entirely new concepts: ground breaking innovations in approach, methods or activities must be tempered by EC attitude, rooted in the guidelines. A dose of routine and low-risk policy tend to be a good credo. Additionally, the guidelines should be consulted for project jargon: the project vocabulary, entailing some key terms (like direct beneficiaries, target groups, scope of the action or needs assessment), if rightly placed, add largely to your application success.

Proposal Language/Euro – Slang. The clear and concise writing may win you a grant, even though your idea seems to be just an average concept.

### **Things you should bear in mind when writing your proposal:**

1. Present your idea in clear and organized manner.

The contents is priority, the style with a sophisticated language is of secondary importance. Sentences should be shorter than in normal or academic writing, with key phrases or concepts underlined or bolded to make them stand out. The concept should be easy to understand, consequently the technical terms should be avoided. Use passive voice to make your outline concise and confident in style.

2. "Facts in brevity" tend to be rewarded.

Be possibly precise in presenting environment and things you what you want to do. Statistics (up to date!), numbers (as regards activities, direct beneficiaries and target groups in particular); Short, thought not technical quotations from documents (especially from the given ENPI CBC) and the general strategy papers (especially those produced by the EU on your topic see e.g. [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations)) are always advisable. The source of the quote must always be indicated.

3. Service attitude, instead of research endeavor.

Consider the project as a thing to be done and you know how to achieve the results, steer clear of academic narrative, discussing pros and cons, deliberating about the general ideas (the assessors know them very well, being fed-up seeing the same thing for a tenth time in row). The project is no more than your idea of how to effectively and sustainably solve

a defined problem or addressed an identified need. The problems to be addressed are routinely stated in the guidelines under each P&M, though you should always provide your understatement of the issue, emphasizing the background: factors behind it, that cause the problem persists. The proposed methodology and activities should be consisted with your definition of the problem. The idea should be sold in persuasive and personal way. Try to be possibly positive (convey liveliness and enthusiasm in your proposal), while keeping in touch with the reality.

4. Make sure that the summary chart (limited to 1 page) is well done and could stand alone as a fully-fledged resume of the entire project. Assume that assessors will get no further than the first page.

5. Before filling each row of the application form read carefully the instructions or questions provided before. Your "answer" should only address the questions you are asked to provided in given chart. Follow the instructions and your proposal will unfold well structured.

6. Wish-list is not enough. There should be significant and insightful substance to the proposal. A handful of methodology remarks is also a useful idea; while the method description does not mean complicated and confusing narrative. Remember, that peer learning, know-how or capacities polling or sharing, good practices dissemination, co-ordination, institutional partnership or twinning, networking, or just training are all recognized METHODS.

7. Invent intelligibly when you are unable to provide the necessary details. In principle nobody will be in position to verify your story, except the general, widely known phenomenon's. Be aware, that all your statements are considered as a promise to be kept. Relevance of the Action: Needs Assessment and Your Local Insight. Success of your proposal depends largely on your ability to provide as many details about the problem in micro scale as possible, offering in-depth insight into the issue from "people perspective". Persuasive, detailed local insight can win you a heart of the assessors.

When collecting data and filling "relevance of the action" chart you ought to bear in mind

that:

Your problem must be tangible and real, or at least should be presented in a way, that makes a reader feel a part of story, compelling his attention (lamenting is not a good solution). The best way to achieve it is to explain the needs following an average person perspective (step by step: showing needs unfolding in a process – as a chain of connected issues), emphasizing institutional, legal or socio-economic “obstacles” (barriers, factors or parts of the larger cross- border problem issue), focusing on those you want to address within your project. Remember: you must skillfully and cleverly prove, that on the one hand your problem is the most important “obstacle” to solve larger cross- border problem issue, while on the other hand you are able to do it: the problem is not overwhelming, you have enough of resources and expertise etc. to manage it, additionally a joint cross-border approach (co-operation or partnership of institutions from neighboring regions) is the best possible solution (as the problem has a cross-border character: it affects all parties engaged).

Check the overlaps (other project in the domain/area) and show off about your in-depth local knowledge. Learn about projects focused on similar or same problem, or implemented in the same area. The projects supported by the EC are the priority; the EC and other donors’ founded projects can be searched at NCU’s project database should be considered as a reference point for all actions. Studying the project fiches a good lesson can be learned on how to define objectives, describe activities and present products and results. Search the internet and make some phone calls, it will be good enough. Try to highlight the weak aspects of the past/other projects (for hints on common weakness of EC assistance consult discussion reports for Belarus, to be search at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs>), always explaining why they were not wholly successful (concentrate on items you are able to improve, because either you know more about the problem or you are better placed to deal with it). Keep in mind that critics can not be very harsh: it would mean the task is hard and probably you would also fail to deliver results. Smartly distinguish your project from all other activities or actions already implemented (key words to be used: complementary and added value).

Complementarity: What more you should know about other projects or initiatives to

pretend to be the EC "benefactor" ?

The assessors would appreciate your project constituting a complement or extension of other projects, undertakings, policies or wider objectives, especially those supported by the EU. You should smartly justify, that the proposed activities are in line and complementary to things already done. You should show that your project "connect" to new legal (e.g. new laws, being adopted within so-called *acquis approximation* i.e. partial implementation of Water Framework Directive), institutional or socio-economic developments, making them effectively observed or adding to their implementation effort.

Narrow focus is always rewarded. Most of the problems are multifaceted and complex, therefore it's impossible to solve them at once within just one project. You must focus on ONE ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM. When narrowing your issue try to determine: nodes (key issues or needs: "obstacles") within the larger problem and pick one that:

a. You are able to influence, delivering tangible outcomes. Results of the project must be easy to figure out and presented in a credible way. For telling example of tangible results see e.g. *Короткому викладі Проекту* at <http://www.ecbsea.org>

b. Represent an added value versus other projects or initiatives, especially those founded by the EC. Complementarity remains a key issue.

c. Have a clear cross-border dimension. For a handful of good ideas see: <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/>

d. Stand eligible for support under chosen P&M: being explicitly named in the guidelines.

Description should resemble a thorough guide (like a tourist guide with the same poetic) of institution, issue or process you want to deal with. Your story should take the assessor for a pointing and explaining all facts influencing the problem.

Even obvious and trivial facts, observations are worth to be mentioned. Showing off your knowledge is win- win opportunity for you, as the assessors in principle have no or very limited idea about the process and problems behind the general country level trends.

Be honest in presenting the issue. Do not hide the truth about the problem, even it tends embarrassing, awkward or just ridiculous.

Check the competitors. Possibly learn about the proposals are to be submitted under your P&M by all other organizations, especially from your region. Always try to be positively different, looking for added value you are able to offer.