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Hopealition Clean Baltic

At the COP15 Summit in Copenhagen everybody's eyes were directed towards China and the USA. Thereby financial considerations were given priority to environmental issues. The climate negotiations ended in an unambitious accord between tiger economies, frustrated underdeveloped countries, China and the USA, the bear. Between the tigers and the bear is Europe - a diligent squirrel, pushing ahead the environmental goals of the world. In the very frontline are the Scandinavian countries to be found. And in the middle is 'Hopenhagen'. Outside Hopenhagen the Sound is connected to the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea is surrounded by squirrels, united in a 'Hopealition' for a cleaner Baltic. In the sea there are still a few native cods, struggling for survival, even though it is not the best time of the year to survive as it is an ancient Scandinavian tradition to have steamed cod with mustard sauce in winter evenings, and lots of it. Cods need cold water and go up. Farmers need money and go down. Shares in industrial farming have lost a third of their value in 2009. The only branch of

farming which has shown a steady growth throughout 2009 is organic farming. The National Ecological Association in Denmark has registered growing sales of organic products in 2009 compared to 2008¹. Sociologist Birthe Linddal Hansen claims that people do not change values just because a financial crisis is ruling the present moment².

North of the Baltic Sea human life expectancy at birth is some 10 years more than south-east of the Baltic Sea. There are probably many reasons for this among which is a shadow of Baltic hardships before 1989. Out of the shadow grew a hopealition of environmentalists sharing a common interest in the protection of the Baltic Sea.

Do they have any friends, the cods? Most certainly, yes. Do they have any friends, the farmers? It depends!

Henrik Butze, Editor of the CCB Newsletter

¹ Søndagsavisen. 15.-17. Januar 2010

² Søndagsavisen. 15.-17. Januar 2010.

CCB joins the alliance OCEAN2012

CCB has joined the OCEAN2012 alliance dedicated to the reform of the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), a reform that should be finalized before the end of 2012. As of 31 December 2009 the OCEAN group consists of 43 organizations. The alliance has a mission statement that reads: "Our mission is to ensure that the 2012 reform of the EU Common Fisheries Policy stops overfishing, ends destructive fishing practices and delivers fair and equitable use of healthy fish stocks."

The OCEAN group has made a joint statement to the consultation process of the CFP reform that CCB supports. All documents and details about OCEAN2012 can be found at their website: www.ocean2012.eu

During the coming year the alliance will try to attract more members to gain strength and to lift the issues

connected to the CFP for the future survival of the sea around the UE, and also around the world since the impact of the European fishing fleet reaches far beyond Europe. CCB will together with other member organizations try to organize meetings and seminars to discuss the Baltic situation and what is needed here. Hopefully CCB organizations can get involved and help set up seminars and be part of coming campaigns. Any organization within CCB can become a member on their own and it does not cost anything. If your organization is interested, please contact Nils Höglund at the CCB secretariat for more information.



Decrease of anthropogenic influence in coastal zones of the Western Bug river estuary, Ukraine

One of the projects which received financial support from SIDA through Coalition Clean Baltic during 2009 is the project "Decrease of anthropogenic influence in coastal zones of the Western Bug river estuary, in Ukraine, performed by the NGO Ecoterra.

It is known that the Western Bug river belongs to the Baltic sea basin. A part of the river is a natural border between Poland, Ukraine and Byelorussia. On the territory of Poland, following the junction with the river Narev, the Western Bug flows into Vistula river. In order to decrease the anthropogenic influence in coastal waters of the Western Bug river estuary, NGO "Ecoterra", carried out a project in

Socal and Kamyanka-Busk districts of Lviv region.

The above mentioned districts have major agricultural productions, as well as many industrial and mining objects, with negative influence on surface waters of the Western Bug river.

The purpose of the Project was to attract wide public attention to anthropogenic influence on the water resources and ecosystem of the river Western Bug, to disseminate the information about alternative methods of farming, organic farming in particular. In addition, the purpose was to encourage the population towards a more careful attitude to the natural resources, available in these areas.

Analysis of surface waters of the Western Bug river in Kamyanka-Busk and Socal districts were conducted. Members of NGO "Ecoterra" together with specialists of the laboratory of state ecological inspection, in Lviv region, organized samplings of surface waters in 7 places of the Western Bug river. Analyses were conducted according to 35 indicators. The processed data showed the exceeding of maximum permissible concentration of such indices: suspended substances, ammonia, nitrates, biochemical consumption of oxygen, chemical consumption of oxygen, iron, copper, manganese, cobalt and nickel.

Within the Project, three information/educational seminars were organized, in the villages Stenyatyn and Silets of Socal district and the village Zhovtantsi in Kamyanka-Busk district. The theme was "Decrease of negative influence on surface waters of the Western Bug river by introduction of alternative methods of farming", where specialist on organic production of the farm "Yukhym L.G." was invited to make a speech on technologies of organic farming. Farmers, agricultural enterprise specialists, local administration workers (village chiefs), and local inhabitants were invited to the seminars. The overall number of participants at the seminars was 102 people. In addition to the seminars, ecological lessons in 4 secondary schools of these districts, embracing senior pupils, were organized. The overall number of pupils involved in the seminars was 230 persons.

According to the planned activities, the poster "Does the Western Bug river have a future?" was developed and published. It was spread during the seminars and ecological lessons. The poster depicts the territory, where the Western Bug river flows, and shows different types of anthropogenic influence and their consequences. To disseminate the information about fulfillment of the Project a press

conference was held on the topic: "Organic farming and eco-toilets – effective means of the Western Bug river rescue". Together with the project described in this article, another project in Ukraine called, "Reconstruction and setting up of an eco-toilet with separate accumulation of urine in the village Zabuzhya of Socal district", executed by the Western center of the Ukrainian department of World Laboratory, were presented at the conference. LMPO "Ecoterra", the farm "Yukhym L.G.", specialized in organic production, State department of environmental protection, in Lviv region, Lviv region production department of water resources, State ecological inspection in Lviv oblast, Ukrainian ecological association "Green world" and local mass media, participated at the press-conference.

Nataliya Cholovska, Project leader, Ecoterra



Nataliya Cholovska informs Nina Ljungquist, from the CCB Secretariat, about the project at a follow-up meeting in Ukraine.

Water Alive in Belarus

Another project supported by SIDA through CCB, during 2009, is the APB-BirdLife Belarus project **Water Alive** (Development of River Watch Network in Belarus).

The project has been going on for four years in Belarus. We have achieved positive results. 30 school clubs from 4 districts of Vitebsk oblast and Ostrovec district took part in the program of rivers monitoring. We regularly conduct seminars on exchanging experience for school teachers and organize summer camps for school children. We try to include various activities, like expeditions, walking tours, catamaran trips. This year a seminar for teachers was conducted at the biological research station Naroch and before of that we went to the Sporovski reserve.

A summer camp was also organized this year. So many children wanted to participate in the event that we had to organize a competition to select the participants. The children had many things and activities to do. Every day they took river water samples and carried out analysis, they learned to give a visual appraisal of anthropogenic impact on the shore. The children conducted surveys among the local population representatives, as well as practical activities on shore zone recovery. In order to add some entertaining moments to the program our volunteers organized various games

and teaching activities within the programs Ecologic and Energizer. For the second time this year we took part in the World Water Monitoring Day, International Jump Day. The children enjoyed the International Jump Day most of all. It is traditional for Belarusian people to go swimming in rivers and lakes in summer, and everyone enjoyed the water games we organized. A Body-Art competition was organized and after it all the children jumped into the water.

Many people took interest in the festival "**Water Alive**" conducted on the 22th of March, 2009. Each school presented its school year achievements. The children took part in the quick and smart competition and resolved brain storm tasks.

We believe that the project has been successfully implemented with all the set goals achieved. A public network of small rivers ecological monitoring has been created in Belarus and it is functioning on a regular basis. New schools join us each year, the participants gain new skills and knowledge and this means that they work more effectively. We are very grateful to CCB for the provided support and look forward to fruitful cooperation in the future!

*Natallia Parechyna, Project Leader,
BirdLife Belarus (APB)*

Awareness raising activities on the values of the sea environment, in Latvia

The Latvian Environmental Protection Club (VAK) in collaboration with the Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) arranged an action in December, 2009,

which was aimed to enhance the knowledge of Latvian residents about their impact on the Baltic Sea pollution and threats of environmental pollution.

The project was produced and directed in accordance with the general requirements of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. VAK believes that an important reason, why every Latvian must be aware of the Marine environment strategy, is that we live ashore the Baltic Sea, and each of our river flows into the Sea. The campaign consisted of two activities - an essay contest and an educational seminar. Hereinafter in the text we set out information regarding both events - information distribution methods, the public response and lessons learned.

The task for the authors in the **essay contest** was to describe an occurrence in the Baltic Sea, reflecting a problem they experience, and finally offer a solution to this problem. The aim of the project was to raise public awareness about the existing problems in the marine environment, and what each member of the society can do to reduce pollution. Residents of Latvia, who learned about the contest, saw that the Baltic Sea environment has a number of problems and understood that each resident can do at least one thing to reduce pollution. This conclusion derives from comments in internet portals and forums, where people talked about the competition and the submitted essays. The prize-winning essays showed that participants care about the problems of the Baltic Sea and that they think about how every Latvian citizen can participate in protecting the marine environment. For example, in assessing each of our purchases - where it will go when it will become unnecessary and how it will affect the environment and groundwater. Our conclusion is that the project roused some interest in the society about marine issues, and at least participants of the contest and seminar, as well as part of those, who learned about the project, will join the "green thinking" people.

A seminar called "*Values of Sea's environment*" was held to raise public awareness about the marine ecosystem interactions and to inform about marine protected areas. The lecture on the marine ecosystem interactions was delivered by the head of Marine Ecology Laboratory of LU Institute of Hydroecology, Dr. biol Elmīra Boikova. Then the expert Anda Ruskule, from Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF), used this seminar to start to inform the society about protected areas of Baltic Sea, which is novelty in the environmental field. Previously there was no knowledge about those sites in the Latvian society. As the marine *Natura 2000* sites are important in the marine ecosystem, these areas are protected at European level. As an important gain of the seminar we consider the achieved goal of promoting public awareness about the existing problems in the marine environment, and the role of each member of the society in reducing pollution. The objective was achieved through the specialist knowledge about the water ecology, eutrophication, sustainable fishery and the impact of maritime transport on the Baltic Sea. Materials from the lectures can be found on the VAK website www.vak.lv. We conclude that the seminar was successful and at least a small section of the public was educated through this seminar. Consequently, these issues are more likely to be spread, since hopefully the more educated will pass information to family members, friends and acquaintances. It is also important that the information obtained from the workshop will encourage participants to think about their actions and their impact on the environment.

The workshop in the second part of the seminar was used for discussions among the participants about different ways to address the society and how to spread information about problems of the marine's environment. The participants immediately engaged in

the work and came up with about thirty types of threats. A main lesson learned in the seminar is that people do not connect their everyday environmentally unfriendly behavior with the pollution of the sea. That's why they don't see, how they can help the sea. Consequently, attempts to address the public with a single call to come to the rescue to the sea, is doomed to fail because one message can not reach people, who think they are not damaging the environment. The participants of the workshop expressed the belief that the informational campaigns, ads and various actions must be arranged, to build public awareness of the environmental issues. One of the workshop working groups came to the conclusion that the most effective method for getting the message across is a network marketing model. Namely, transfer of knowledge from one person to another. At first, persuading opinion leaders about the importance of the problems and asking them to spread the message. The working group believes that this model allows a choice of argument, which seems important to directly addressing. Think globally, act locally, was the general conclusion for all project participants. The project involved various social groups of society, which had not entered into issues of the Baltic Sea environment

until now. Since the scientists were also involved, we consider the opportunity to bring these different social groups together with scientists as a valuable benefit.

The logic continuation of the project would involve the people involved in the project working groups, who will form a network marketing to continue to work on public education on issues of marine ecosystems. It's important to emphasize, that both seminar working groups selected the lack of information and understanding in the society as one of greatest challenges. Overall, the project rolled down effectively. It reached new groups of people, who have not inquired specifically about environmental issues so far. This is a very good, if we look from the perspective of *Agenda 21*. During this project VAK acquainted new group of people with which to work, learned new views on the marine environmental problems, and added some new activists, who wants to participate in protection of Baltic Sea. VAK intends to use the lessons learned in future projects and the seminar presentations will be developed in a useful tool for further educating the general public.

Dace Jansone, Project Leader, Latvian Environmental Protection Club (VAK)



CCB is a project partner in the Baltic Green Belt Project.

The Baltic Green Belt project wants to conserve, use and develop the common natural and cultural heritage of the coastal border areas formerly dividing east and west. To this end, the project establishes a platform for transnational cooperation between

stakeholders working in nature conservation and sustainable development of the southern and eastern Baltic Sea coast. Within several pilot studies, the Baltic Green Belt project demonstrates good practice in sustainable tourism, extensive animal farming, coastal and marine conservation, integrated regional planning and public participation.

The project community led by the University of Kiel (CAU) unites the Baltic NGO network Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) with the IUCN (World Conservation Union) as well as a

number of national institutions from all countries along the Baltic coast from Lübeck to St. Petersburg. Altogether, 22 partners – among them NGOs, universities and state agencies - have developed the Baltic Sea Region Programme/Interreg IVB project Baltic Green Belt. The project started in January 2009 will run until January 2012 and has a budget of more than 2 Mio €.

The goals of the Baltic Green Belt Project

- development of an ecological network under the umbrella of the European Green Belt following the Green Belt vision
- collaboration of environmental NGOs, universities and authorities for a sustainable development of the coast
- protection of the environment and natural resources; improvement of the ecological status of the marine and terrestrial Baltic Sea area (eutrophication, waste water, agriculture, tourism)
- supporting the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea

- action plan for the protection of the Baltic
- evaluation of the implementation of international agreements for coastal protection along the Baltic Green Belt
- identification of barriers and success factors/indicators of sustainable coastal development
- contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea by preserving natural zones and biodiversity

On **14 April 2010**, a **CCB workshop on “Inventory of the need for proper protection of the coastal zone”** will be organized during the 2nd Baltic Green Belt Forum, in Palanga, Lithuania, 14-16 April.

For more information, see the Baltic Green Belt website (<http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/>) or contact the Baltic Green Belt coordinator at CCB, Nina Ljungquist (nina.ljungquist@ccb.se)

CCB Annual Conference and General Meeting

Mark your calendar!

The **CCB Annual Conference Baltic 10** and **CCB General Meeting** will take place in **Lithuania** from **7-9 May, 2010**.

The topic of the conference this year will be biodiversity.

Further details will come soon.

Sunset, Vihterpalu, Pedase, Estonia, at last CCB Annual Conference 2009, Photo: Elke Körner

