

CCB Baltic 09 Conference
Vihterpalu, Pedase, Estonia 9 May 2009
Summary of Conference

On Saturday May 9, 2009, around fifty participants gathered for the CCB Baltic 09 Conference. The event was held in Estonia, at Pedase Hotel and Guesthouse, on the Baltic coast approximately 60 km west of Tallinn. The topic of this years Conference was "*Eutrophication and the Baltic Sea - challenges for environmental NGOs*". Nine speakers from eight different countries were invited to give their views on this topic from different perspectives. The welcoming words were given by Maret Merisaar from the Parliament of Estonia, Estonian Greens.

Gunnar Norén, Executive Secretary to CCB, gave an introductory presentation on the eutrophication processes and also explained why the Baltic Sea is particularly sensitive to eutrophication. He also presented some points about HELCOM's eutrophication assessment.

Mikhail Durkin, HELCOM Professional Secretary, gave a presentation on the Implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, with focus on eutrophication. He gave the basis on eutrophication, the work of HELCOM as well as the Baltic Sea Action Plan. He also talked about prospects and actions to curb eutrophication, concluding that eutrophication is a key point for an environmentally sustainable Baltic Sea Region.

Maria Staniszewska, from Polish Ecological Club, then presented some information on the Baltic Sea Action Plan and Agriculture, with focus on nutrient run-off and the Rural Development Plan. She presented numbers on sources of P and N from agriculture in the Baltic Sea countries, explaining what has been done and what needs to be done to reach the reduction targets.

Olga Senova, from Friends of the Baltic in Russia, talked about tendencies and opportunities for utilization of farm waste for production of clean energy (biogas), in Leningrad Oblast, Russia. She also presented positive examples as well as barriers and challenges connected to this.

Jakub Skorupski from Green Federation GAJA, Poland, made a presentation on Industrial Animal Farms as a main environmental problem in the Baltic Sea Region. He presented the problems connected with industrial animal farming, divided between the environmental problems, socio-economic problems and legal problems. He also gave some ideas on counteractions to the negative impact of Industrial farming.

Lana Semenas from Ecohome, Belarus, presented some information on sustainable agriculture and eutrophication in Belarus. She explained about the state of agriculture in Belarus and presented barriers for development of organic agriculture in the country. She presented the good examples and the work of the organic movement, with the working group Agracultura, in Belarus, as well as the plans and long term goals for the future.

Petro Hrytsyshyn, from World Lab, Ukraine, gave a presentation on Sustainable farming in Lviv Oblast (the Zakhidnyi Buh river basin). He presented the state of agriculture management in the region and different ways to minimize the impact from agriculture on nature. He said that development of organic farming in Ukraine proceeds without any formulated legal framework.

Werner Reh, from BUND in Germany, gave a presentation on “NGO activities to get sea vessels clean – A strategy to reduce NOx emissions from shipping.” He presented the interlinked problems and impacts of pollutants as well as solutions for reduction. At the end of his presentation he pointed out necessary activities that NGOs such as CCB can do to support reduction of emissions during the next months e.g. demand coastal states for introduction of ECAs for Nitrogen Oxide in Baltic Sea, including ports.

Finally Henrik Butze-Ruhnstjerne, from DN's agricultural network in Denmark, gave his presentation on the DN vision for future farming in Denmark. He presented a vision with farming on nature's condition, that leaves space for connected nature reserves and with optimal living conditions for animals and plants, etc. Visions that are most easily met by the development of organic farming. Henrik said that statutory practices instead of voluntary agreements would be the way forward, and the wish of DN is to have Denmark organic by the year 2050.

Gunnar Norén made some concluding remarks at the end of the conference saying that Baltic agriculture contributes with approximately 50% of the nutrient load to the Baltic Sea. Unfortunately the development of Baltic agriculture tends to go in the wrong direction with a development of industrial/intensive farming in Baltic sea countries such as Poland and Estonia. Changes that old EU member states have already made. Instead, an increased trend towards organic farming would be the way forward, and a future vision should be

- Nutrient Balanced Recycling of all nutrients in agriculture production
- All farms in a local region are independent from imported fertilizers and fodder
- Application of CAP subsidies in Baltic catchment that favour nutrient-balanced production
- Tax system is favouring environmentally friendly agriculture
- Only low nutrient-leakage agriculture, e.g. extensive/organic farming allowed in coastal zones/areas