

# Latvian Rural Tourism in the Baltic Sea Tourism Strategy

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE BALTIC SEA STRATEGY  
May 6 - 7, 2011 The Baltic Beach Hotel, Jūrmala, Latvia



[www.celotajs.lv](http://www.celotajs.lv)



## Latvian Country Tourism Association



**Legal form:** NGO

**Founded:** 1993

**Members:** ~350 (rural tourism providers)

**Staff:** ~12

**Office:** in Riga

Functions:

- RT product development
- Quality control and labelling
- Provider training and consultations
- Promotion and marketing (brochures, maps, Internet)
- Lobbying for interests of members
- Project implementation



## Presentation contents:

- Latvian rural tourism product resources representing common values in the Baltic Sea region (nature, heritage, sustainability)
- Product and destination development within rural and regional strategies



## Baltic Nature Tourism conference

[www.conferences.countryholidays.lv](http://www.conferences.countryholidays.lv)



Information | programme | registration | speakers | venue | accommodation

### Conference Information

#### Nature Tourism Conference: Policies - Products - Practices

The conference will provide a forum bringing together nature conservation and tourism practical to unite different initiatives from the European to the local level in one eye benefit from the practical results and possibly to extend your networks for future joint

#### What are the conference topics?

The relation between nature conservation and tourism is addressed from a variety of perspectives. Keynote speeches, case presentations and discussions will range from tourism policy involvement, cooperation and partnership between tourism and nature conservation

#### Who is participating?

We expect nature tourism product providers, managers of protected nature sites, operators, municipalities, businesses, rural tourism associations, European partners create an excellent opportunity for the exchange of opinions and best practices. A belief that the event will allow a dynamic exchange among professionals

Conference working language is English with simultaneous translation to Latvian. Conference materials, posters, leaflets, documented project results and other resources they would like

For international participants please find travel information to Latvia, Riga here



### Baltic Nature Tourism conference, March 22-23, Riga

The conference brought together European practitioners in nature conservation and tourism. 258 participants from 18 countries attended the conference. The event was organised by the Latvian Country Tourism Association [www.countryholidays.lv](http://www.countryholidays.lv)

#### OPENING SPEECHES



The conference was opened by Raimonds Vilkonis, the Latvian Minister of Environmental Protection and Regional Development. He stressed that nature tourism is a strategic product promising good future prospects, and that the conference proves the cooperation potential of the Baltic Region states.



Wolfgang Bore, representing the Priority Tourism of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, said the conference addresses the issues of balancing 'nature conservation' with economic and social development. The conference was an important key event bringing together stakeholders from all over the Baltic region exchanging best practices and new approaches. He hoped it will lead to new partnerships between the Baltic states and between protectionists and those which look for economic development.

THE 1<sup>st</sup> SESSION: "NATURE PROTECTION POLICIES - WAYS TO IMPACT AND PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE BASED ON EXPERIENCES IN GRASS-ROOT LEVEL"



## Developing nature based products – bird watching

excellent resources –  
diversity of species

(example: the largest  
rutting site of Black  
Grouse in Europe)



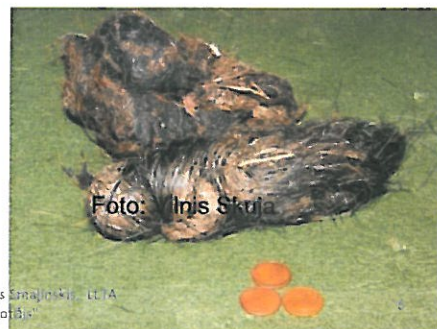
s.lv

## Animal watching

- Europe's three largest predatory animal species are present in Latvia: bear, wolf, lynx
- Europe's largest deer – moose is frequently observed in Latvia



Prezidents Foto: Juris Smalinskis, LLTA  
"Lauku celotājs"



## Insect watching



Zilēnītis



Lielais nātru raibenis



Acaīnais raibenis



More than 2400 insect species in Latvia



## Mushroom watching



Culture + nature:  
a national  
phenomenon  
turned into a  
tourism product

## Some challenges:

- Excellent resources to be protected and maintained
- Insufficient infrastructure to be improved
- Professional nature guides with good language and communication skills to be trained

While focussing on environmental, social, economic aspects of sustainable development... customer orientation should not be neglected!



## Basic principles in development of environment friendly and sustainable nature watching products:

- wildlife watching
- animal watching
- bird watching
- insect watching
- plant watching
- mushroom watching
- secular trees
- rock outcrops, caves
- 10 steps in making active tourism routes
- route marking



<http://macies.celotajs.lv>



## Culinary heritage

Current trend:  
creative combination of  
modern and traditional  
cuisine



## Role of regional tourism events in common development process

Travel Day to Slītere - **4.-5.05.2011**

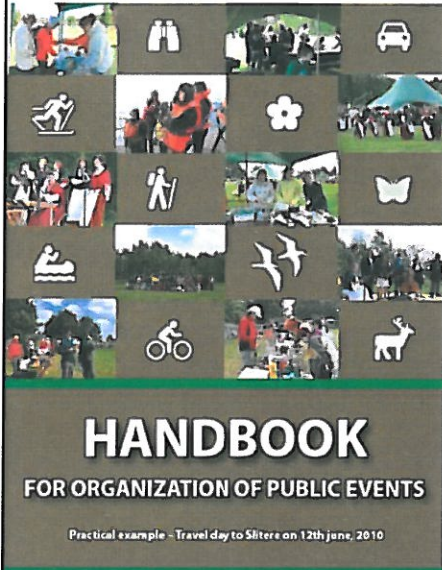
[www.celotajs.lv/sliteresdiena](http://www.celotajs.lv/sliteresdiena)

Travel Day to Kemerī - **7.05.2011**

[www.celotajs.lv/kemerudiena](http://www.celotajs.lv/kemerudiena)



## Documenting practical product development experience



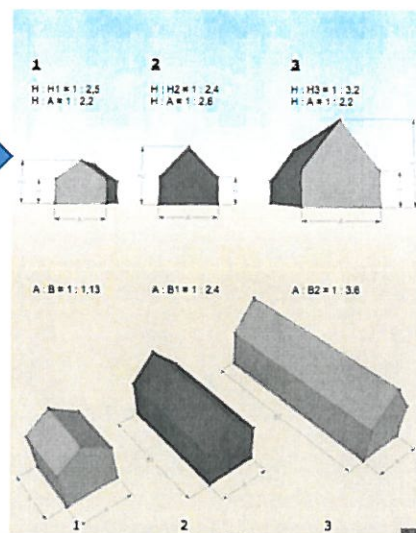
More than 1000 visitors  
(38 % first time in SNP)

- No garbage left!

- **Guidelines**

- 2011: **Travel Day to Slitere**  
(4. – 5. 06.) – succession  
(self-organisation)

## Coastal Building and Construction guidelines





## Strategical approach – practice based guidelines communicated to responsible stakeholders



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