



**6th Parks & Benefits Meeting in Apšuciems village / Latvia
connected to the
Baltic Nature Tourism Conference in Riga / Latvia**

(21 – 26 March 2011)

Conference Location: Radisson Blu Daugava Hotel, in Riga
Meeting Location: Hotel SPA Arkadia, in Apsuciems (Kemer National Park)

Conference & meeting time:	21 st March 2011	Arrival of conference participants
	22 nd March 2011	Conference programme
	23 rd March 2011	Conference workshops
		Departure to Kemer NP
	24 th March 2011	Excursion
		Partner meeting
	25 th March 2011	Partner meeting
	26 th March 2011	Departure

21st March 2011:

Arrival of conference participants

20:00 Informal pre-conference get-together at Beer Restaurant Merlin

22nd March 2011: Baltic Nature Tourism Conference

8:30 Registration and coffee

9:00 Welcome and opening of the Conference
(*Asnāte Ziemele, President of the Latvian Country Tourism Association*)

9:05 Facilitate tourism cooperation - The EU-Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
(*Wolf Born, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany*)



9:20 - 10:40 Panel 1: Nature protection policies - ways to impact and proposals to improve them based on experiences in grass-root level.

The panel discusses interaction between nature protection and rural development sectors, involvement of local stakeholders in aware and constructive participation to national nature protection policy building for benefit of both sectors. Case studies on how nature protection policies are implemented in protected nature areas and what is the process to improve these policies and their interpretation through local community involvement.

Keynote speech:

“Policy proposals for tourism development and nature protection balance, based on demonstration of sustainable tourism model in the Slitere national park, Latvia”, by *Juris Smalinskis, Latvian country tourism association, project POLPROP-NATURA*)

Panel discussions: Moderation: Naut Kusters, ECEAT - Netherlands

- "How a conservation organisation got involved in tourism", by *Mike Pugh, Forest of Bowland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in UK*
- *Johan Frederiksen, Ministry of Environment in Denmark*

10:40 Coffee

11:00 - 12:30 Panel 2: Nature based tourism products in protected nature areas – market demand, product, promotion & marketing.

The panel discusses methods in development of sustainable competitive nature based tourism products in protected nature areas. Case studies will be presented how development of tourism products according to the market needs, in cooperation between the local communities and professional tour operators knowing the market, facilitate solution of social and economic problems in rural areas.

Keynote speech:

“Cycling, walking, canoeing, wildlife – bird and animal watching, botanical and mushrooming tours: how to develop products demanded by the market”, by *Andris Klepers, project Sustainable use and management of nature resources in the Natura2000 sites - popular and potential tourism destinations in Latvia*



Panel discussions:

- "Evaluation, understanding and mapping of market demands, creating product involving local community", *Maarika Toomel, Heritage Tours - island of Saaremaa and Vilsandi National Park, Estonia*
- "Value creation and tourism products in Norwegian protected areas", *Odd Inge Vistad, NINA, Norway*

12:30 Lunch

13:30 – 15:30 Panel 3: European Charter parks – trends, steps, cooperation, challenges

The European Charter for Sustainable Development is a (practical management) tool that helps protected areas and their partners develop tourism sustainably. The panel discusses how to implement the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas in the Baltic Sea Region. 4 protected areas in the Baltic Sea Region are already certified Charter parks, 6 further parks are about to apply for the certificate, going through the process of setting up stakeholder forums and developing a sustainable tourism strategy together with entrepreneurs in their areas. The panel will give answers to questions like how and why to join the European Charter, how to involve local people and tourism businesses, how to develop strategies for a future sustainable development of the region and what are the steps to go through such a process. 4 protected areas will talk about their experiences and what are the costs and benefits to join the Charter.

Introduction: Olaf Ostermann, Ministry for Agriculture, Environment and Consumer Protection in Mecklenburg Western Pomerania / Lead Partner of "Parks&Benefits" project

Experience report: "European Charter parks – trends, steps, cooperation, problems", by *Lasse Loven, EUROPARC Working Group on Sustainable Tourism, Metsahallitus, Finland*

Panel discussion: led by Romy Sommer, animare tourism project management / Project Manager of the Parks&Benefits project

- Agnese Balandina, Kemer National Park, Latvia
- Klaas van Ommeren, The Dovrefjell Council, Norway
- Martin Kaiser, Müritzer National Park, Germany
- Asnate Ziemele, Latvian Country tourism association, Latvia



15:00 Coffee

15:30 – 17:00 Panel 4: European and Baltic Green belt – a product, an initiative or even potential brand in tourism?

The panel discusses management opportunities of heritage sites in protected nature areas, their use in tourism and the potential to develop Green Belt products as a brand in tourism. The European Green Belt initiative unites countries along the former Iron Curtain, where the former restricted, often also military areas offer well preserved nature values and cultural heritage sites. Their common vision is to create the backbone of an ecological network, running from the Barents to the Black Sea that is a global symbol for transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and sustainable development.

Keynote speech:

"The European Green Belt: history of the initiative and examples of Green Belt tourism", by *Dr. Karin Ullrich, German Federal Agency of Nature Conservation*

Panel discussions: Moderation: Wolfgang Gunther (Institute for Tourism and Recreational Research in Northern Europe (N.I.T.) and Stefanie Maack (Kiel University)

- Latvian Green Belt: Asnate Ziemele "Lauku Celotajs", Latvia
- Austrian Green Belt: Alois Lang, Nationalpark Neusiedler See - Seewinkel, Austria
- Slovenian Green Belt: Implementation in 3-lateral park Goričko-Raab-Örseg (SLO-AT-HU), Stanka Desnik, Goricko Nature Park, Slovenia

20:00 Dinner

22:00 End of conference day



23rd March 2011: Baltic Nature Tourism Conference - Workshops

Open workshops (Working language is English).

The workshops will discuss the progress and results of projects and organizations described below. The projects address issues of nature protection in the context of rural development, their progress and results are relevant and of interest to large audience apart from the project partnership. Workshops are open to general public as parallel discussion sessions. The participants can freely move between rooms. However, for organisation purposes, please register for a particular workshop you would join first.

1. workshop: The Benefits of Protected Areas
2. workshop: Tourism as a Part of the EU Strategy for the BSR
3. workshop: "Dimensions of sustainability in tourism at the Green Belt: nature protection, mobility and beyond"

1st workshop: The Benefits of Protected Areas

Project "Parks & Benefits", <http://www.parksandbenefits.net> and EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section <http://europarc-nb.org> joint workshop, chaired by the project lead partner, *Olaf Ostermann*:

- 09:00 - 10:00** "How to measure carrying capacity in 8 protected areas of the Baltic Sea Region – results of a comparative analysis", *Jesper Brandt, Roskilde University*
- 10:00 – 10:40** "Carrying capacity in protected areas – local experiences & strategies" *Martin Kaiser, Müritz National Park & Klaas v. Ommereen, Dovrefjell National Park*
- 10:40 – 13:00** "Benefit Monitor – Measuring economic and social benefits of tourism in protected areas. Method & Outcomes", *Prof. Wilhelm Steingrube, University of Greifswald*
(11:00 – 11:20 coffee break)
- 13:00 – 14:00** Lunch



Internal workshop with the Parks & Benefits project partners and the EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section Members, plus invited guests:

- 14:00 – 15:00** Workshop on How to promote the European Charter for Protected Areas in the Baltic Sea Region (<http://www.european-charter.org/home/>)
- What's the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas all about? (*input from Diana Gallrap, Europarc Federation*)
 - General overview about the situation of sustainable tourism certificates in BSR protected areas (*input from Martin Kaiser, Müritz National Park, GER*)
 - Open Space Discussion on the status of sustainable tourism development in protected areas and the ECST

15:00 – 16:00 Coffee and discussion on establishment a Baltic Sea Platform for Charter parks

16:30 Departure to Kemer National Park for 6th partner meeting

19:00 Dinner

21:00 End of conference day

2nd workshop: Tourism as a Part of the EU Strategy for the BSR

With this workshop, the lead partners of the tourism related flagship projects in the EU-Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region present their projects and related work. <http://www.baltic-sea-strategy-tourism.eu>

Steps towards a common Baltic Sea Region, chaired by Greifswald University (<http://www.agora2tourism.net/>)

- 09:00 - 09:15** "FP 12.10 – Strategies for sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region", *Betina Meliss, University of Greifswald, Institute of Geography*
- 09:15 - 09:50** "What do we have in common in the whole Baltic Sea Region?", *Prof. Wilhelm Steingrube, University of Greifswald, Institute of Geography*
- 09:50 - 10:25** "Branding the Baltic Sea Region", *Marcus Andersson, Baltic Development Forum*
- 10:25 - 11:00** "The Six Baltic Sea Wonders", *Prof. Przemyslaw Kulawczuk, Gdansk University*
- 11:00** Coffee break





11.30 – 13:00 "Rural and heritage tourism in the EU-Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region".
Presentation and discussion of the Flagship Projects 12.7 and 12.9

With regard to rural and cultural heritage tourism, essential questions will be dealt with during the workshop: How to attract tourists to rural and coastal areas in the BSR? How to create a competitive offer based on environmental and cultural recourses? How to promote sustainable joint tourism packages that possibly relate to e.g. farm, food, hiking, winter sports, nature and cultural heritage based tourism? What do customers expect and find today when they travel to rural areas? Chaired by the lead partners of the flagship projects on "Rural and coastal tourism" (FP 12.7) and "Cultural heritage and natural landscapes" (FP 12.9), practitioners will report on their experiences, followed by a discussion with the participants on what can be deduced as general answers as to the aforementioned questions. Furthermore, the next steps to be taken in the two flagship projects shall be discussed.

13:00 Lunch

3rd workshop: "Dimensions of sustainability in tourism at the Green Belt: nature protection, mobility and beyond"

Projects MobEE and "Baltic Green Belt", <http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/>, chaired by the lead partner. This workshop is meant to generate a common understanding of how sustainable tourism at the Green Belt should be defined, which aspects should be included and which standards it should follow. Based on practical examples presented, the participants will discuss good and bad practice as well as future options for the development of sustainable tourism with a focus on the area along the former Iron Curtain, nowadays perceived as the European Green Belt.

Moderation: *Wolfgang Gunther* (N.I.T.) and *Stefanie Maack* (Kiel University)

9:00 – 9:20 "Defining Sustainable Tourism - Outline on current approaches to catch a slippery eel", *Wolfgang Gunther* (N.I.T., Kiel, Germany)

9:20 – 9:40 "Combining nature protection and tourism – examples from the inner German Green Belt", *Melanie Kreutz* (Project office of the Central European Green Belt, Nurnberg, Germany)

9:40 – 11:00 Moderated discussion

11:00 Coffee break

11:30 – 11:50 "Examples of low-energy mobility in touristic areas", *Stefan Gossling* (Lund University, Lund, Sweden)



12:10 – 13:00 Moderated discussion

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Internal Baltic Green Belt project meeting of University partners (WP4)

16:00 - 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 17:30 Baltic Green Belt Project Steering Committee meeting



23rd March 2011 - continuation

- 16:30** Departure by buses from Radisson Blu Daugava hotel to Spa Hotel Arkadia
- 18:00 – 18:30** Check in at Spa Hotel Arkadia
- 19:00** Dinner
- 20:00** Informal welcome to Ķemeru National Park (incl. video film)
- 21:00 – 23:30** Owl excursions (in groups of 10-15 people)

24th March 2011 - 6th PARKS & BENEFITS project meeting

- 09:00 – 15:30** Excursion "Following the healing bonanza of Ķemeru National Park"

Some of the sites to see:

- Ķemeru historical resort (landscape park, sanatorium, sulphur spring "Little Lizard"), Administration building of Ķemeru National Park "Forest House
- Short excursions in sanatorium "Jantarnij Bereg" and rehabilitation centre "Jaunķemeru" – use of healing resources in the past and nowadays
- Lunch in holiday centre "Valguma Pasaule" with short outdoor exercise

- 16:10 – 16:30** Official Welcome of the 6th project meeting
- 16:30- 18:30** Presentation of the status quo of the Charter certification processes in the protected areas
- 16:30 - 16:50 Müritz National Park
- 16:50 – 17:10 Ķemeru National Park
- 17:10 – 17:30 Maribo Regional Park
- 17:30 – 17:50 Zemaitija National Park
- 17:50 – 18:10 Kurtuvėnai Regional Park
- 18:10 – 18:30 Discussion
- 19:00** Departure for dinner
- 19:30** Dinner
- 22:00** End of meeting day



25th March 2011 - 6th PARKS & BENEFITS project meeting

- 08:30 – 10:00** Marketing session (members of marketing group will be invited separately)
- 10:00 – 10:15** Coffee break
- 10:15 – 12:30** Workshop on development of a visitor strategy for BSR Charter Parks & its implementation at local level
- 12:30 – 13:30** Lunch
- 13:30 – 14:15** Input presentation on sustainable transport & accessibility of protected areas – status quo of comparative analysis, led by VCD
- 14:15 – 16:00** Workshop World Café – Development of strategies for an action plan for a low impact transport system network, led by VCD
- 16:00 – 16:30** Coffee break
- 16:30 – 17:00** Discussion of Workshop results
- 17:00 – 17:30** Wrapping up the meeting & next steps
- 18:30** Departure for dinner
- 19:00** Farewell dinner
- 23:00** End of meeting day

