

# Case of Benefits – Latvian experiences

Balancing nature protection and tourism development interests



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Latvian Country Tourism Association



POLPROP-NATURA  
Nr. LIFE07ENV/LV/000981

# Latvian Country Tourism Association

**Legal form:** NGO

**Founded:** 1993

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

**Staff:** ~14

**Office:** in Riga



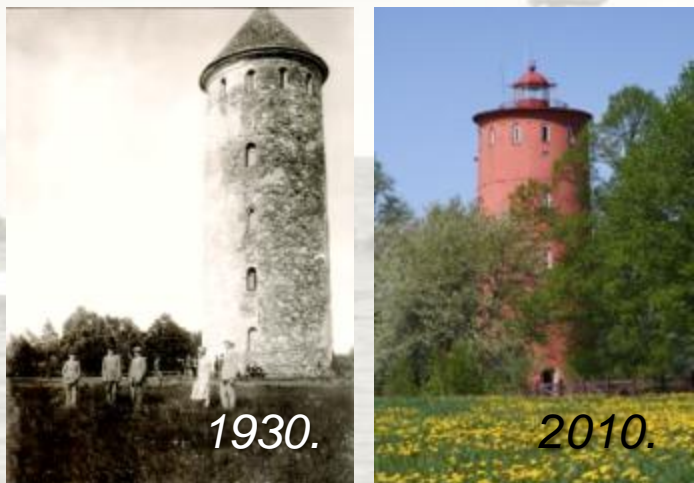
Functions:

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



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# Proposals for environmental policy based on demonstration of environmental, social and economic benefits from tourism in the Slītere National Park



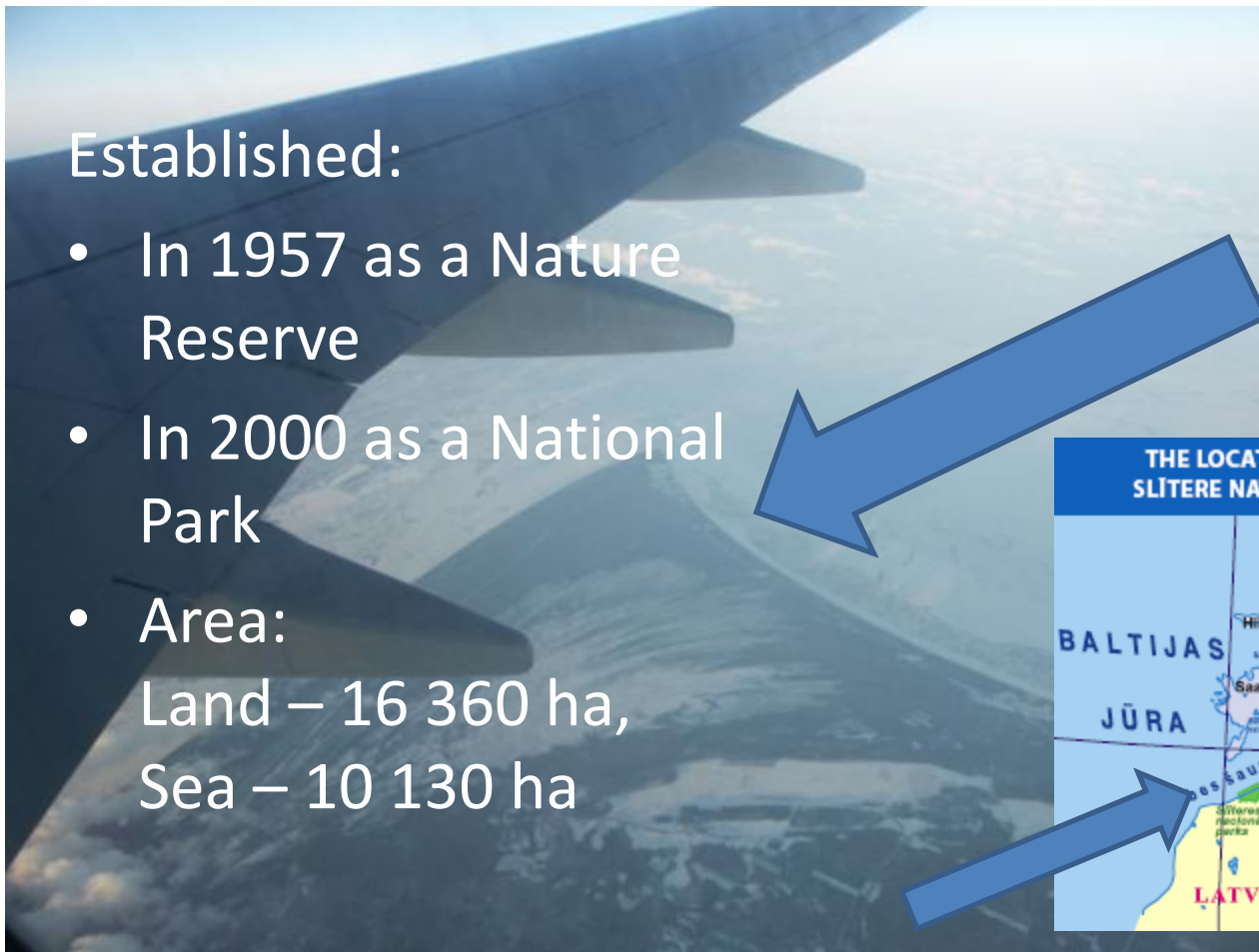
Project goal:  
To develop policy proposals on balancing tourism development and nature conservation interests in protected nature sites/NATURA 2000



# Demonstration site – Slītere National Park. Why?

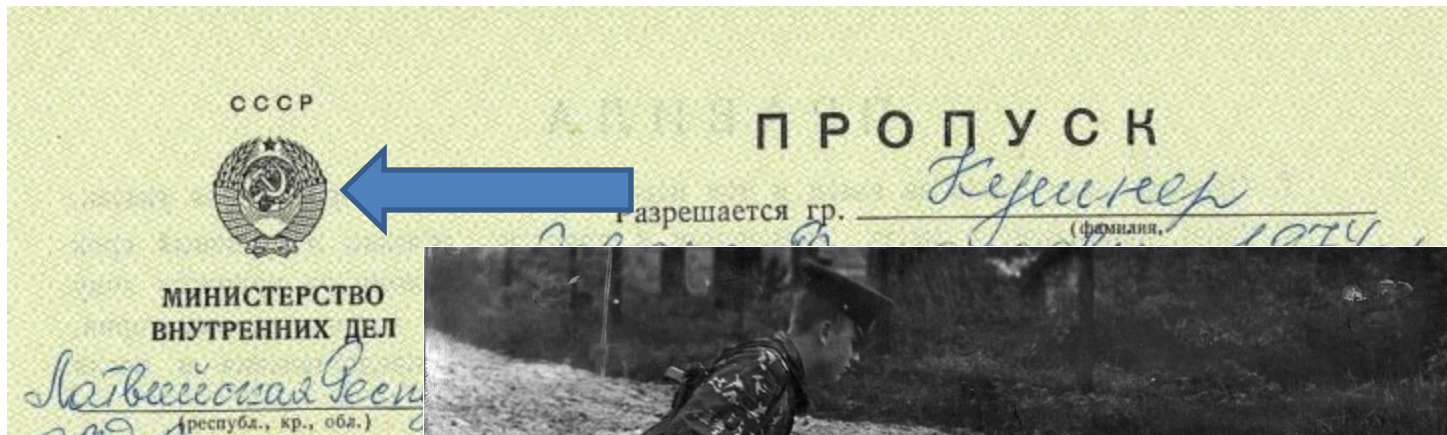
Established:

- In 1957 as a Nature Reserve
- In 2000 as a National Park
- Area:  
Land – 16 360 ha,  
Sea – 10 130 ha



# 1945 – 1993

## Border regime, Nature Reserve



Latvijas  
vides  
aizsardzības  
fonds



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# COOPERATION at all levels involved – the key of success

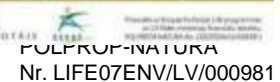


- SNP administration
- Local municipality
- local NGOs
- Tourism entrepreneurs
- Other active local people



# New tourism products/routes

- 3 hiking routes
- 2 cycling routes
- 1 canoeing route
- 1 self-drive route
- 2 nature watching products (birds and animals)



# Botanical Guide, Plant Finder



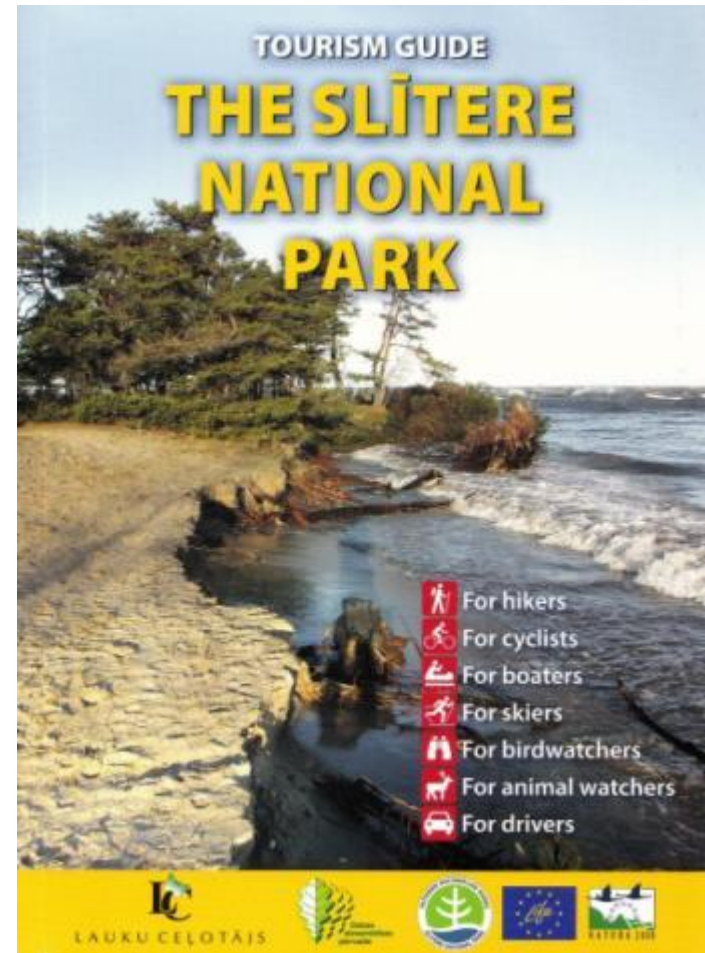
- The Slītere experience transferred to other places in Latvia
- The “most ordinary” species (> 400)
- Different plant groups together
- Rich visual material
- Attractive stories in everyday language



# The Slītere NP Tourism guide

## + guidelines how to develop a guide of a national park


- Based on local stories (> 30 interviews)
- The first tourism guide of a NP in Latvia (developed together with the Slītere people)
- History interacts with life today
- Stories of the Liv minority
- Services and facilities
- Tour Maps



# 5 outdoor panels in Slītere NP


Guidelines for interpretation based on practical experience in the Slītere National Park

## The content of the outdoor information stand



Lauku Ceļotājs, ECEAT  
-2010-

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## NACIONĀLAIS PARKS

NACIONĀLAIS PARKS

### MAZIRBE (IRAI)



Mazirbe, kas vēsturiskajos avotos minēta jau 1387. g., bija latviešu baltiešu zvejnieku ciematā. Vēl neviena pagalba - arī dzīvnieku aizsardzības un iedzīvotāju veselība. Mazirbe ir vienīgā vietējie ar Līvoniem saistīti mūsu un Eiropas šķirņu cilvēki.

The name of Mazirbe appears in historical documents dating back as far as 1387. At one time it was the largest Latvian fishing village on the Kuronian shore. It now serves as a resort town, it has been an important centre for fishing and shipping. Today Mazirbe is home to the Latvian, Curonian and an island Livonian.

- several hundreds of stands analysed
- all players involved – local ownership
- focus on practical information

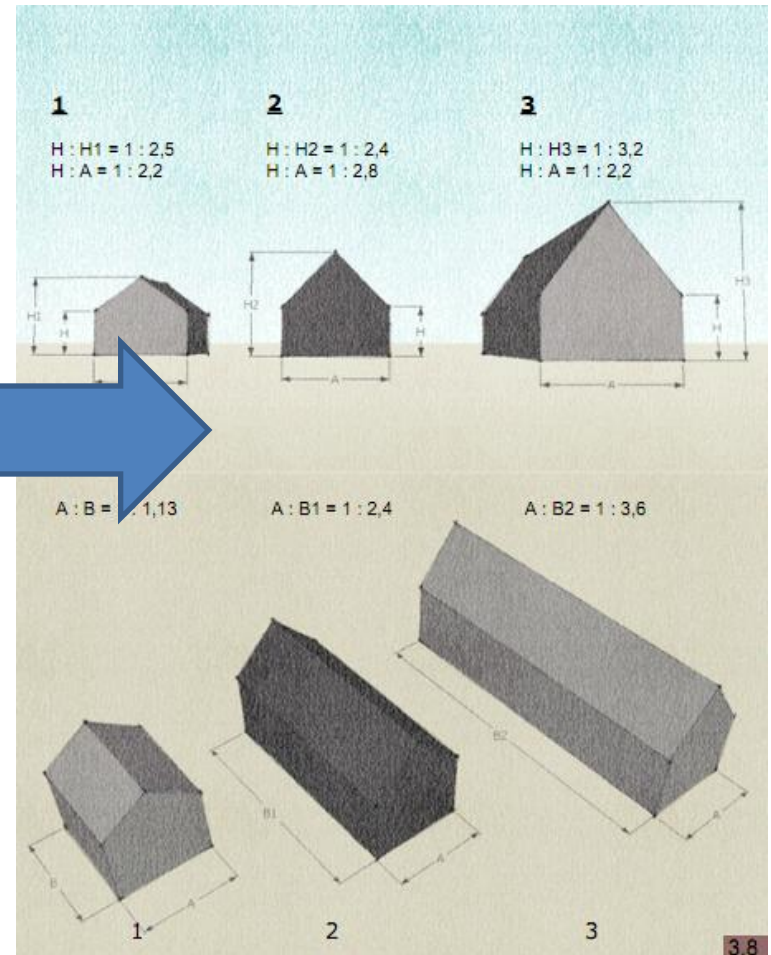


# Guidelines for marking/ signposting the trails



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# Coastal Building and Construction guidelines





# Travel Day to Slītere

- Initiative from the local people
- All players around the negotiation table



*Kalā Pivād*



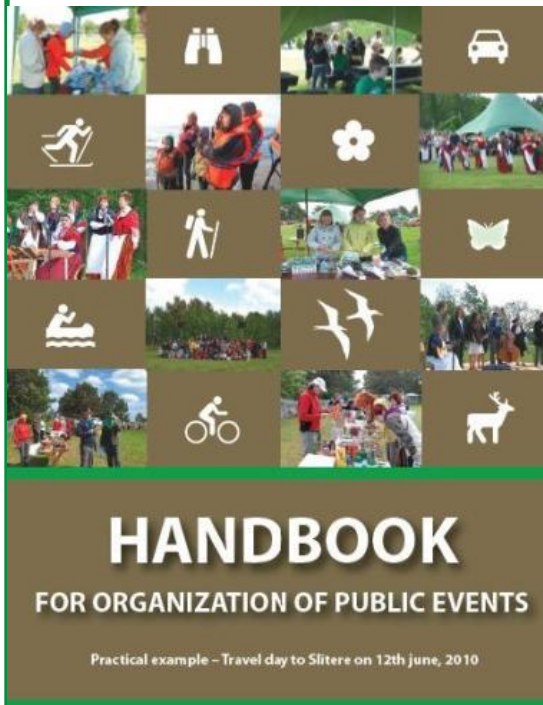
# Free excursions, events



# Some Facts ...

## 2010

- More than 1000 visitors (38 % first time in SNP)
- No garbage left!
- High local involvement
- **Guidelines**



## 2011

- More than 2000 visitors
- 23 routes and itineraries
- 100% local initiative
- Cooperation on all levels

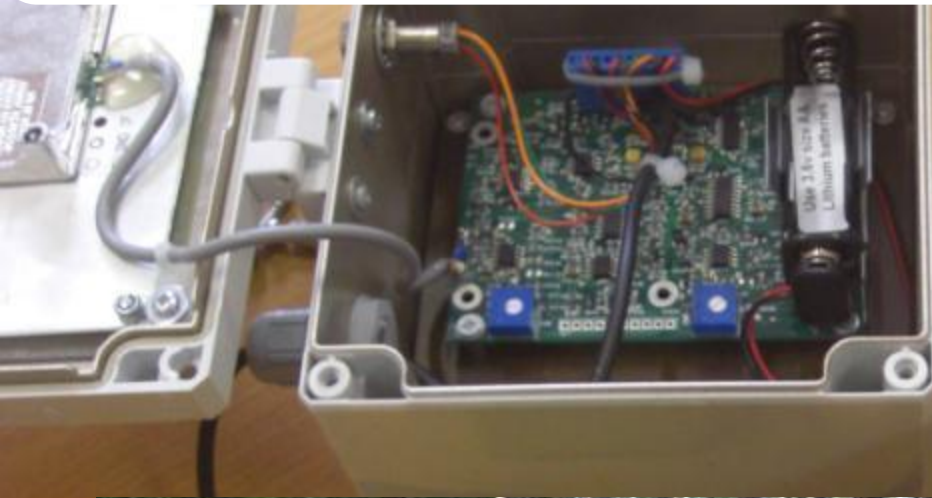
# Guidelines for Tourist Monitoring Methodology in the SNP



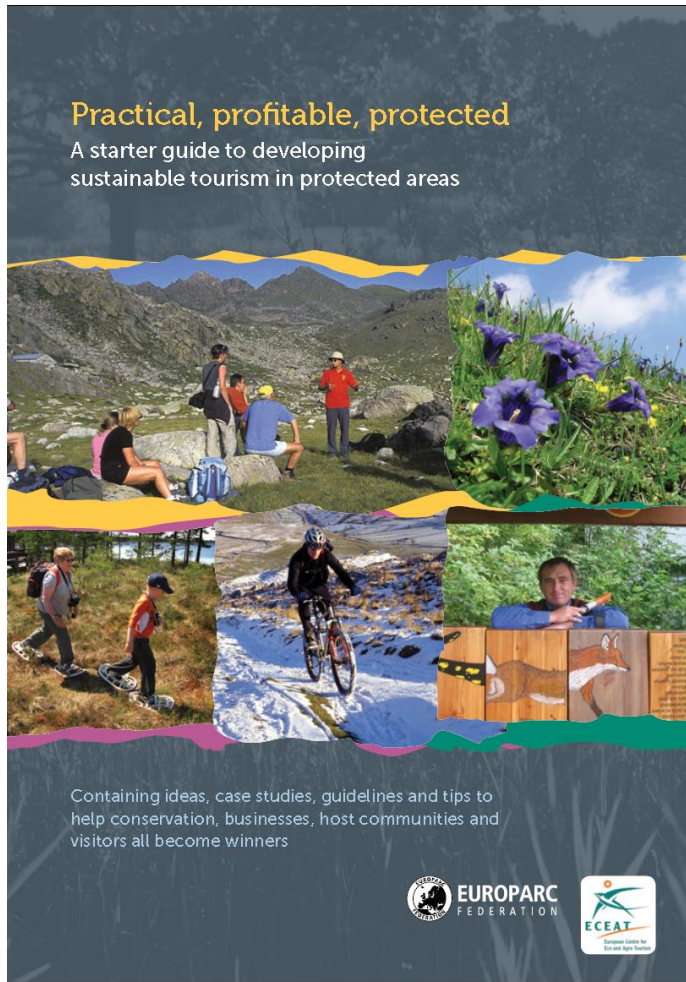
- Visual monitoring
- Photo monitoring
- Questionnaires
- Electronic visitor counting – first time in Latvia



# Electronic visitor counting



# A starter guide to developing sustainable tourism in protected areas



- ECEAT & Europarc federation
- A starter manual
- Based on lessons learned in Latvia and other countries
- Checklist, best practices & case studies
- 120 pages
- Online library and toolbox





# Benefits

- Local conflict management
- Succession of activities – continue paralel to/after the project
- New tourism products develop
- Documentation – guidelines, based on practical experience
- Increased number of visitors = more local income

# Thank you!



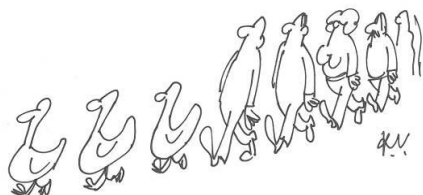
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