
Ecotourism certification system in the Baltic Sea region Seminar no. 1



Riga, 18-19 June 2013

Seminar agenda

- **Presentations, workshop**

- 18/06/2013 – 10.00-16.30

- **Trip to Gauja National Park**

- 19/06/2013 – 9.00-15.00

INTRODUCTION

Certification system for ecotourism in the Baltic Sea region

Project overview

- ❑ The project idea came up in the Interreg IVC project Business to Nature (B2N) which aimed at improving the situation for SME's in valuable natural areas.
- ❑ One suggestion was to develop an international credible certification system for ecotourism.
- ❑ A common certification system for ecotourism is lacking in Europe and around the Baltic Sea.
- ❑ This is an obstacle in the development of high quality ecotourism as well as a difficulty to assess the sustainability of the business.
- ❑ A certification system would improve the marketing possibilities around the Baltic Sea as well as being valuable for consumers.

Project aims and main activities

Aims

- To develop a **partnership**
- that **identifies strengths and weaknesses** in existing ecotourism certification systems in Europe
- and **prepares for a project** that develops a credible certification system adopted to the Baltic Sea region.

Activities

- 3 seminars
- Short reports
- Promotion

Partnership

□ Estonia

- Estonian Ecotourism Association
- Estonian Tourist Board
- Baltic Environmental Forum, Estonia
- Estonian Rural Tourism Organisation

□ Latvia

- Latvian Rural Tourism Association
- Baltic Environmental Forum, Latvia
- Latvian Fund for Nature
- Latvian Ecotourism Association
- University of Latvia, Research Centre on Economics and Management

□ Lithuania

- Baltic Environmental Forum, Lithuania
- Dzukija National Park
- Aukstaitija National Park
- State Protected Areas Services
- Lithuanian Countryside Tourism Association

□ Poland

- Polish Tourism Development Agency (PART)
- Institute for Sustainable Development

□ Sweden

- Swedish Ecotourism Society/Nature's Best
- County Administrative Board, Östergötland, Sweden

Baltic Sea trip conclusions

- ❑ A few certification systems existing in the Baltic States (Estonian Ecotourism Label/Estonia, Green Certificate/Latvia, Certification system for high quality nature tourism/Lithuania), all of them relate in some way to Nature's Best
- ❑ Need for certification on a big scale
- ❑ Worries about competition between certification systems
- ❑ Sceptical attitude of entrepreneurs
- ❑ Consciousness of tourists
- ❑ Idea of networking systems

Seminar's goals

- ❑ Strengthening the partnership
- ❑ Defining the boundary conditions for the ecocertification system
- ❑ Defining the project background
- ❑ Describing the circumstances (possibilities and obstacles)

Practical matters

- Seminar no. 1 costs – please follow the mail instructions
 - Remember to specify costs of transport and costs of accomodation (separately)

- Seminar no. 2 – 3-4 September + content?
 - Current situation in the countries (short report to use in the application)
Could every country prepare such short (!) report?
 - Framework and activities in the project
 - EU financing possibilities in 2014 -2020

- Seminar no. 3 – beginning of November

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