



Dear Friend of the Baltic Green Belt,

in the twenty years of reunification something unique and wonderful has developed at the former Iron Curtain. What is known as the European Green Belt is evolving to become the first and largest transborder network of natural habitats, an important retreat for many animals and plants. It connects people beyond national boundaries and reveals that Europe has a common natural heritage – that urgently needs our protection. The Baltic Green Belt is closing the last gap in this chain of a European ecological network and enriches it with exceptional habitats all along its coasts and coastal waters. The Baltic Sea is threatened – by overfishing, industry, agriculture and increasing tourism. The Baltic Green Belt is a crucial opportunity not only to call attention to this threat but also to develop sustainable conceptions for conservation which can be used to implement this model in the bordering states. This project has – in accordance with the European Green Belt – our full political support.

Undine Kurth,

MoP of the German Bundestag for the Green party (Bündnis90/ Die Grünen)



Photo: V. Kühne (2009)

Snapshots from the Baltic Green Belt

2nd Baltic Green Belt Forum: Call for contributions

The Coastal Research and Planning Institute (CORPI) invites coastal stakeholders of the Baltic to present their findings concerning integrated development of the Baltic Sea region on April 14th-16th, 2010 in Palanga. Lithuania. scientific institutions, environmental NGOs, governmental agencies and other interested stake-holders will discuss current problems and appropriate solutions of the Baltic coast in the light of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and visit the Seaside Regional Park close to Kleipeda. The conference contributions will be published in a conference proceedings of Kleipeda University press.

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Impressions from Baltic Green Belt exchange



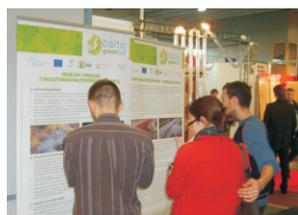
Photos: Stefania Maack, Andra Ratkevica, Michael Schultz (2009)

New German government officially adopts Green Belt

The coalition agreement of the new German government consisting of CDU/CSU (conservatives) and FDP (liberals) states that "We safeguard the German Green Belt along the former inner German border as Natural Monument and encourage the development of the European Green Belt." This example shows that policy makers take interest in the Green Belt, but that continuous efforts are still needed in order to further specify how the European Green Belt shall be protected in the long run.

Sustainable animal farming: Polish training exhibition

As the first step in their training campaign for more sustainable animal farming in Poland, the Green Federation GAJA, has developed a set of training and awareness raising materials. Topics include the EU Agri-environment programme, problems of large-scale farms and alternatives to industrial style farming. The material was presented at several occasions, e.g. at the



Interested audience at the ORGANICA fair in Nov. 2009 (Photo: Jakub Skorupski (2009))

4th German-Polish Farmer Day on October 21st in Pasewalk, Germany, the Westpomeranian governor's office and Szczecin schools.

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Green Belt & Iron Curtain Trail: common perspectives

During an International Iron Curtain Trail (ICT) Awareness Raising Workshop, BUND Schleswig-Holstein (German Friends of the Earth) called for intense communication and cooperation between the ICT and European Green Belt. The ICT develops sustainable tourist trails but nature conservation is under represented. Only combined forces can assure for conservation and sustainable development along the former Iron Curtain. The event initiated by Michael Cramer (MEP) took place in Warsaw, Nov. 19th, 2009.

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Military heritage tourism: Latvian data base online

The Latvian Rural Tourism Organisation Lauku Celotajs has put online a multi-lingual data base of military heritage sites along the Latvian coast for tourists. Next to practical information, it contains real contemporary witnesses' stories. The data base is the first part of a new tourism product which aims at soft tourism along the Latvian coast to experience natural & cultural heritage without harming nature.



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News from the European Green Belt

IUCN appoints new coordinator

In October 2009 Lee Dudley took the position of the IUCN European Green Belt Coordinator. IUCN is an international NGO working in nature protection for 61 years. Since 2004, IUCN has been officially hosting the European Green Belt (EuGB) initiative. IUCN will provide support in creating the European Green Belt as an ecological network, running from the Barents to the Black Sea now including the Baltic Sea coastline. The key tasks for Lee within the Baltic Green Belt include raising funds and providing support that enables enhancement of the



Lee Dudley

common natural and cultural heritage of this unique coast. One possibility would be to add value to marketing efforts in developing an EuGB brand „The opportunities are immense and anyone involved in the EuGB is aware of the potential future activities ahead of us“, says Lee about the challenges ahead.

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Book publication: Borders. Wilderness. Future

The latest book publication about the European Green Belt „Borders.Wilderness.Future“ by Thomas Wrbka and colleagues, was released this summer. It includes an article from the Baltic Green Belt by Prof. Kalev Sepp from the Estonian University of Life Sciences about the Estonian island of Saa-reema.



The book was published as the catalogue for an exhibition in Linz, Austria, running until January 2010.

ISBN 978-3-900000-16-5

Prof. Horst Sterr about coordination and networking in the Baltic Green Belt



Horst Sterr

Prof. Sterr, since January 2009 you have been heading the transnational project “Baltic Green Belt” funded by the European Union. Which role does your working group at Kiel University play in it?

HS: The Coastal Geography group on the one hand takes the lead partner’s role, coordinating the group of about fifty persons currently involved. On the other hand, we provide scientific expertise concerning integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) and use the project to study practical ICZM implementation.

How did you go about the coordination?

HS: First, we had to establish a functioning partner consortium. Next to the regular meetings, we organised a lead partner tour to the Baltic States where we visited each partner individually. This was an ideal way of intensive personal exchange which helped to adjust our coordination approaches. We are happy to be able to state that we have very active partners who have already produced first results, initiated joint activities and got on the right track of communication.

What is the project’s relation to the European Green Belt?

HS: The European Green Belt is an initiative carried by externally funded projects - up to now some 20 individual ones. It unites several hundred people. Baltic Green Belt is currently one of the largest projects within the initiative. Therefore we try to give input to the initiative in the form of communication tools, event organisation and information exchange. In the long run, the Baltic Green Belt will have to find a permanent role within the initiative and follow-up funding from which both the Baltic and the overall European Green Belt can profit.



What are the next steps?

HS: Primarily, we want to establish a platform for transnational cooperation between stakeholders working in nature conservation and sustainable development of the southern and eastern Baltic Sea coast. We are seeking cooperation, e.g. in the form of event participation, joint publications and mutual exchange of expertise. Next year, we will have two international events: the 2nd Baltic Green Belt Forum focusing on coastal science and practice and an international workshop on sustainable agriculture.

Please continue the following sentence: In my eyes the Baltic Green Belt is...

HS: ... a great chance to make the coastal regions along the southern Baltic coast aware of common perspectives and of options that the future has for them. If we make a great effort to conserve the natural assets, we give a very high value to the coast - environmentally and economically.

Thank you for this interview.

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News from the Baltic Sea Region

Baltic tourism stakeholders - get involved

The coordinator of the EU-Baltic Sea Action Plan Priority "Tourism" cordially invites stakeholders to share their experience and to give input to the implementation process of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The State Chancellery of the German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has taken the first steps to initiate the implementation process. If you are a tourism stakeholder of the Baltic and want to contribute, click „get involved“ on the website below.

www.baltic-sea-strategy-tourism.eu
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