



## **The Baltic Green Belt Project – initial situation, application and set-up**

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### **Abstract**

This article serves as an introduction to the synthesis report of the Baltic Green Belt project presented in this volume. The article explains the initial situation, namely the choice of the project area and the situation in the project area. It gives a brief introduction to the political background in chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines the history of the project - mainly technical aspects – as project development in itself can be improved through exchange of experience. The partner consortium is presented in chapter 4, and the goals and approach are listed in chapter 5. Chapter 6 gives an introduction to each of the project themes with references to the respective articles in this volume.

### **1 Project area**

The Baltic Green Belt stretches out for about 1,700 kilometers along the southern and eastern Baltic Sea coast between Lübeck, Germany, in the south and the Finnish-Russian border in the north (Figure 1). It runs along western/ northern boundaries of Russia (Leningrad Region and Kaliningrad region), Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and (eastern) Germany – the course of the former Iron Curtain. This project area is defined by the former existence of a strict border regime between the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe (so-called Eastern bloc) and the democratic countries during the times of the Cold War – from about 1945 to 1991. Unlike the rest of the European Green Belt, which mainly covers terrestrial habitats, this Baltic Green Belt section consists of coastal land and sea areas.

During the Cold War, large parts of the Baltic Green Belt coastal areas including several islands were fully or partly closed to the public (Sepp 2011). Access was only granted by special permission, coastal fisheries were strictly limited, schools, hospitals and other social infrastructure were closed down. These social incentives urged many people to move further inland. Also, some cases of active deportation or social clean-up are documented, e.g. at the coast of the German Democratic Republic.

Today, not many people are aware that the coasts at the western borders of the Socialist countries were ruled by similar restrictions as e.g. the inner German border. Due to these restrictions, coastal build-up is up to now much less pronounced than at the western European coast (EEA 2010a), and the coastlines are therefore much more pristine habitats. These enhanced environmental conditions due to the former border situation are the common feature of all Green Belt regions. Since 1989, many protected areas have been established already. Currently, there are more than 500 protected areas within 25 kilometers of the line of mean water level, which can be used as a technical definition of the former Iron Curtain (Maack et al. 2011). Based on data for the protection status of the marine (HELCOM 2010) and the terrestrial (EEA 2010b) side of the Baltic Green Belt, we can estimate that in each country along the Baltic Green Belt about 30-40 % of the length will be formally protected once the NATURA 2000 designation process has been fully completed (Maack et al. 2011). However, financial resources for further conservation (management planning and implementation) are limited. In this situation we cannot expect more large-scale designation of protected areas in the near future.

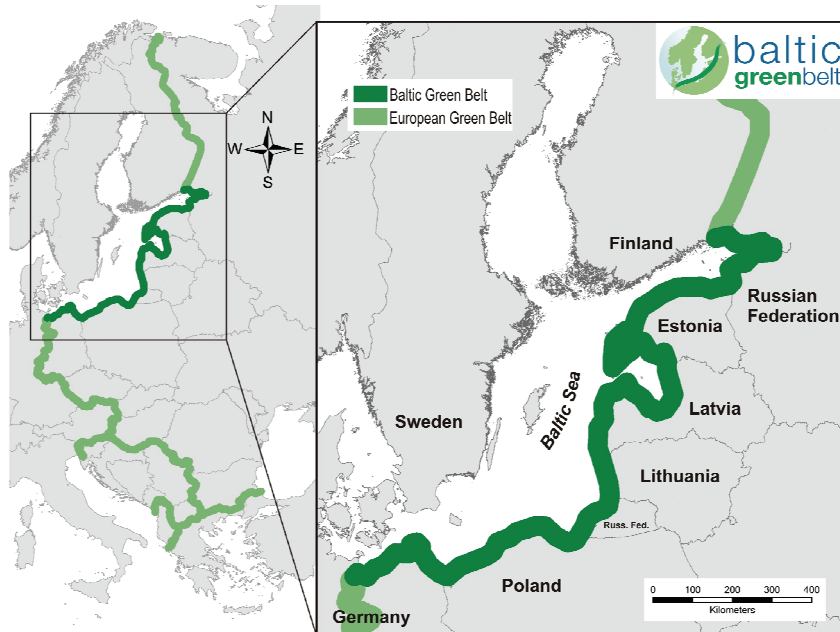


Figure 1: Map of the Baltic Green Belt area within the European Green Belt.

The coasts having been outer borders of the so-called Eastern Block for more than 40 years, were however, used for military purposes including border guarding. Numerous relicts of military activities can be found at the coast, especially along the eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea. Economically, the coastline of the Baltic Sea Region is more and more turning into an important tourism, recreational and residential area. This contrasts with long stretches of the overall European Green Belt which are still remote and partly economically uninteresting (Sepp 2011). A development in the sense of the European Green Belt aims at providing a living for the residents of the Green Belt territory while minimising negative impacts of human activities on the environment.

## 2 Political background in the Baltic Sea Region

There are a number of political documents related to how and to which extent sustainable development practice shall be implemented in the project area of the Baltic Green Belt. These are on the one hand EU policy documents (e.g. Habitat Directive, Water Framework Directive, Integrated Pollution Control and Prevention Directive), on the other hand policy documents specific to the Baltic Sea Region (BSR).

The BSR, in fact, has a long tradition of intergovernmental cooperation reaching back to 1972, when the riparian states agreed on a convention for the protection of the Baltic Sea environment and established the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) for its implementation. HELCOM is nowadays a cooperation of the environmental ministers of the nine Baltic Sea riparian states and the EU. Since 1992, there is also a cooperation body of the ministers of foreign affairs, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). In addition to the riparian states, CBSS involves Norway and Iceland and deals with five priority areas: environment, economic development, energy, education and culture, as well as civil security.

In June 2009, the European Commission adopted a new type of political document to foster the joint and integrated development of macro regions BSR, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea (COM(2009)

248, EUSBSR). The EU Commission has recognized that an EU27 is too big in some cases for a “one size fits all” solution. According to CBSS, the Strategy for the BSR is an attempt to “re-regionalise” the EU. The BSR Strategy builds on four objectives, which are specified into 15 actions described in an action plan (SEC(2009) 712/2):

1. to improve the environmental state of the Baltic Sea Region and especially of the Sea;
2. to make the Baltic Sea Region a more prosperous place by supporting balanced economic development across the Region;
3. to make the Baltic Sea Region a more accessible and attractive place for both its inhabitants, for competent labour force and for tourists;
4. to make the Baltic Sea Region a safer and more secure place.

However, the EU has no mandate for operating at regional level, and hence no laws can be produced. This strategy is a statement of political will and intend, and as such is not to be underestimated although it will not be legally binding. The focus is particularly on the implementation and effective enforcement of the existing common EU law, the programming of EU funds, and the EU Integrated Maritime Policy and Action Plan. The intention is to bring already existing instruments for development, such as the INTERREG programmes and the territorial fund, together in a more coherent way. This means that all future projects in the BSR will have to show a clear contribution to the strategy. The Baltic Green Belt project contributed primarily to the following actions:

- Action 1: To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels
- Action 2: To preserve natural zones and biodiversity, including fisheries
- Action 12: To maintain and reinforce attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in particular through education and youth, tourism, culture and health

### **3 Project application**

Activities within the European Green Belt initiative, up to now completely depend on allocating funding from governmental or private donors – mainly in the form of projects. Developing cooperation projects with different partners and writing project proposals takes some experience and substantial manpower. For this reason, we summarise the application procedure of this project briefly and point out to some noteworthy experience.

The idea to set up a transnational Green Belt project for the Baltic Sea region arose in the fall of 2006 at the first regional Fennoscandian Green Belt Meeting in Laaheema National Park, Estonia, organised by the Estonian University of Life Sciences. With respect to manpower for the project preparation phase, the starting point was the regional Baltic Sea working group of Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND AG Ostsee). Driven by two members of the working group, the first step was to identify a suitable funding programme for setting up a Green Belt environmental network for the Baltic. With transboundary cooperation, regional development and sustainability being key issues of the EuGB, the Baltic Sea Region Programme (BSRP, [www.eu.baltic.net](http://www.eu.baltic.net), formerly INTERREG IVB) funded from the European Regional Development Fund seemed suitable for a project covering partners from six countries. The programme started in 2008. However, application criteria were tough and a reliable group of partners with convincing ideas needed to be gathered to meet these criteria.

The first major step was a sailing tour along the German coast carried out by the two regional Baltic branches of BUND (Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) in summer 2007 and sponsored by the German environmental lottery BinGO! The tour consisted of a number of stops in highly visited tourist areas at the German coast, accompanied by press conferences, public discussions, meetings with politicians and information events for the general public. This tour gained substantial attention among the German media and was essential to establishing contacts with and gain

support from decision makers in Germany. It furthermore confirmed that the Green Belt approach has a most promising potential.

The tour was followed by numerous working trips to meet and involve partners from the neighbouring Baltic Sea countries from fall 2007 to spring 2008. For the partner search, two existing networks were used as the main basis: the environmental NGO association network Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB, [www.ccb.se](http://www.ccb.se)) and, of course, the network of the EuGB, namely regional coordinators and focal points. Additionally, the national and international contacts of partners who already joined were used. While some of the organisations contacted joined as fully financed partners, others were involved in the project as associated partners who documented their interest in the project in a written letter of intent.

Another key question concerned the lead partner for the project, as the BUND AG Ostsee is not a self-standing legal body allowed to take this role itself. Once the BSRP programme manual and the first project call were launched within the BSRP in early 2008, it was clear, that even small NGOs such as the regional branches of BUND/ Friends of the Earth were not eligible for coordinating a project. Therefore, the Coastal Geography Branch of Kiel University was asked as a potential lead partner with both experience in EU funded projects as well as strong dedication to the Baltic Sea coastal environment. Together with the Institute for Tourism Research in Northern Europe (NIT) and the project initiators, the regional BUND branches of Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the project application team was well equipped with competence in nature conservation practice, science and project management. Financially the project application was again supported by the German environmental lottery BinGO!

At that point, the application team had already found a number of suitable organisations, who were ready to contribute meaningful activities to the overall project setup. These activities needed to be combined and tuned into a useful project plan. At the same time, the rules for the funding programme were new and several partners did not have any experience with EU projects at all. Therefore, the next challenge was to explain the complex BSR programme regulations to all partners and make sure that all partners could comply with these regulations.

During this period, it was crucial to get direct personal consultations from the responsible institutions. The BSRP Joint Technical Secretariat in Rostock provided not only comprehensive documents but also valuable feedback and advice to the application team. Furthermore, the German Federal district Schleswig-Holstein supported the project application: The Ministry of Justice, Employment and European Affairs offered consultation services as a contact point for Interreg projects including the BSRP. Such contact points exist for all member states and contacting them is absolutely advisable.

The next challenge was to come up with a manageable budget. As the majority of partners are small or medium sized NGOs, the main barrier was to come up with matching funds which are required to receive co-funding at all. It was only due to a new regulation that many partners were able to participate at all: Since the start of the EU programming period 2008-2013, voluntary work is eligible as matching fund contribution. Finally, after about 9 months of intensive preparatory work, a selection of 15 partners, had managed to raise the necessary national co-financing and signed their partner declaration in time. Supporting letters of seven associated partners made the proposal even more convincing.

The project was granted by the BSRP monitoring committee in November 2008, and started in January 2009 with a project duration of 36 months and a budget of 2.1 Mio €. There were two unexpected difficulties that substantially affected the course and content of the project but did not lead to its collapse. On the one hand, two Russian partners who were supposed to be funded through the complementary European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) did not receive any funding as the contractual basis for this EU funding towards non-EU countries was not renewed in time. They were forced to drop out of the partner consortium and continue as associated partners. Secondly, the effects of the global economic crisis lead to a shortage in bank loans in some EU countries. For this reason, two partners could not come up with the pre-financing for the own activities

and retreated from the project consortium to also become an associated partner. Fortunately at least a part of planned project activities of the Russian partners could be carried out with the financial support by the Government of Schleswig-Holstein. The drop-out partner activities in the other countries were covered by the remaining partner consortium. Despite these difficulties, the project took a very good course, with rapid and numerous outcomes, effective international meetings and continuous communication work on the national and sub-national levels both with decision makers and the general public.

After this successful project application, we would like to encourage other European Green Belt activists to make more use of European funding opportunities, e.g. the regional development funding programmes. Next to the large-scale regional funding programmes, a number of smaller regional or cross-border programmes exist on EU level. These tend to be smaller with respect to the number of partners and budgets and are thus easier to manage.

#### 4 Project partners

The project partner consortium initially consisted of governmental, non-governmental and scientific institutions from all countries along the Baltic Green Belt. From the beginning on it had a strong back-up of the majority of associated partners who got actively involved in project activities such as events and publications and continuously exchanged ideas with the project partners. As several partners had to drop out of the consortium (chapter 3), a total of eleven partners continued until the end. They are presented here, while an overview of all partners, including those formally associated to the project is given in table 1.

The **Coastal Geography Group of Kiel University** ([www.kuestengeographie.de](http://www.kuestengeographie.de)) addresses major issues of coastal changes and coast-related risks both in Germany and world-wide, including reconciling conflicting uses and developments via Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), detecting impacts of climate change and sea level rise on coastal morphodynamics and stability, long-term coastal protection (defence) strategies as well as landscape and heritage interpretation in coastal regions and its value for tourism. With regard to these issues, the group has carried out a number of research projects financed by national and international programmes. Kiel University acted as the lead partner of the project with coordination support of the Institute for Tourism Research in Northern Europe (NIT, [www.nit-kiel.de](http://www.nit-kiel.de)) and financial administration located at Landgesellschaft Mecklenburg-Vorpommern ([www.lgmv.de](http://www.lgmv.de)). In particular, Kiel University was responsible for scientific research accompanying the pilot projects, internal and external project communication as well as project administration and coordination.

**BUND Schleswig-Holstein** (BUND SH; [www.bund-sh.de](http://www.bund-sh.de)) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1980 in Kiel which nowadays has about 11,000 members and supporters. The main objectives of BUND SH are a healthy environment, gentle use of means of livelihood and a protected and diverse nature. To achieve these goals, the BUND Schleswig-Holstein get's involved via political lobby work, public relations and experts reports. Besides it is purchasing areas worth of preservation and it does environmental education work for example with it's environmental centre „Umwelthaus Neustädter Bucht“. Within the Baltic Green Belt project, BUND SH was responsible for the coordination and facilitation of international political lobby work concerning the Baltic Sea environment, environmental education and information and linking Baltic Green Belt with the existing Green Belt projects.

**BUND Mecklenburg Western Pomerania** (BUND MV, [www.bund-mv.de](http://www.bund-mv.de)) is the second regional branch of BUND Germany, the national branch of Friends of the Earth actively involved in the Baltic Green Belt project. BUND MV represents the northeastern region of Germany, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, which used to be part of the GDR. BUND is active in the field of nature and environmental conservation. BUND MV initiated the Baltic Green Belt project, launching a sailing tour for awareness raising in 2007. Within the Baltic Green Belt project, the tasks were to install a coordinating office and consultancy for conservation and development of Green Belt sites along the

coast of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, to build a regional website in German, and to organise meetings and prepare information material for the presentation of the Green Belt initiative.

Table 1: Partner consortium of the Baltic Green Belt project as of the end of the project in 2012.

Organisation	Abbreviation	Type	Function	Country
BUND Mecklenburg Western-Pomerania (Friends of the Earth, regional German branch)	BUND MV	NGO	partner	DE
BUND Schleswig-Holstein (Friends of the Earth, regional German branch)	BUND SH	NGO	partner	DE
Kiel University, Department of Geography	CAU	Science	partner	DE
Estonian University of Life Sciences, Institute of Agriculture & Environmental Science	EMU	Science	partner	EE
Läänerannik		NGO	partner	EE
Coastal Research and Planning Institute, Klaipeda University	CORPI	Science	partner	LT
Zvejone (Lithuanian Green Movement)	Zvejone	NGO	partner	LT
Lauku Celotajs (Latvian Country Tourism Association)	Lauku Celotajs	NGO	partner	LV
Slitere National Park Administration, since mid. 2009: Latvian Nature Conservation Agency, Regional Admin. of Kurzeme	SNP	GO	partner	LV
Green Federation Gaja	GAJA	NGO	partner	PL
Coalition Clean Baltic	CCB	NGO	partner	SE
World Conservation Union	IUCN	NGO	associated partner	B
BUND Project Office Central European Green Belt	BN	NGO	associated partner	DE
Federal Agency for Nature Conservation	BfN	GO	associated partner	DE
State Agency for Environment and Nature Rostock	StAUN	GO	associated partner	DE
Estonian Society for Nature Conservation	ESNC	NGO	associated partner	EE
Sillamäe City administration		GO	associated partner	EE
Pajuris Seaside Regional Park administration		GO	associated partner	LT
Zachodniopomorskie (West Pomerania) Voivodeship Office, Department of Environment and Agriculture		GO	associated partner	PL
Baltic Fund for Nature	BFN	NGO	associated partner	RU
Centre for Environmental Initiatives	CEI	NGO	associated partner	RU
Committees for the development of collective gardens		NGO	associated partner	RU
Green World Russia		NGO	associated partner	RU

**Green Federation GAJA** ([www.gajanet.pl](http://www.gajanet.pl)) is a Polish NGO working in the field of active nature conservation, environment protection and civil society awareness rising since 1993. The organization is a member group of the Union of Associations “Polish Green Network” and Coalition Clean Baltic. Green Federation GAJA focuses their efforts on prevention of the loss and restoration of what seems to be lost: rare, endangered species, traditional landscapes, respect for the Earth. Its work include research studies, educational campaigns, watchdog monitoring, raising society’s awareness on the problem of pollution of the Baltic Sea and environmental policy development, especially in terms of lobbying work.

**Žvejone** ([www.zvejone.lt](http://www.zvejone.lt)) is an environmental club established in 1988 in Klaipeda on the Lithuanian Baltic Sea Coast. The basic aim is a balanced development of Klaipeda city and the coastal areas of Lithuania. The main activities are Natura 2000 site conservation and, to take care of water resources, and EU volunteering through environmental education courses, organizing and taking part in local, national and international seminars, independent environmental monitoring and researches, information and campaigning. The Environmental club “Zvejone” is a member of the Lithuanian Green movement and collaborates with international organizations such as CCB (Coalition Clean Baltic). The aim for the Baltic Green Belt project was to improve public awareness and involve politicians and decision makers in roundtables and seminars about protected Natura 2000 areas at the Baltic Green Belt, such as the Lithuanian Seaside Regional Park.

The **Coastal Research and Planning Institute (CORPI)** is a research and education unit within Klaipeda University, Lithuania ([www.corpi.ku.lt](http://www.corpi.ku.lt)). It focuses on fundamental and applied scientific research and supports PhD studies. The main fields of the Institute’s scientific activities are experimental analysis and modelling of the coastal ecosystems, environmental impact assessment, environmental monitoring, development of scientific background for sustainable development, land planning and ecosystem remediation. Within the Baltic Green Belt project, CORPI will give scientific expertise and identify the common stand and existing strategies of coastal protection, evaluate positive and negative influence and develop recommendations for good practice coastal protection and conservation.

**Kurzeme Regional Administration (KRA)**, (<http://slitere.lv>) of the Latvian Nature Conservation Agency (NCA) ensures the implementation of the unified Latvian nature protection policy in western Latvia. KRA evolved after an administrative reform from the Slītere National Park Administration, and is now one of four regional administrations of the NCA in Latvia. The main functions of the NCA KRA are the management of all protected areas in the western part of Latvia; carrying out cooperations with local authorities, tourism entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations and education institutions to promote nature conservation; Educate and inform the society about nature conservation. Within the Baltic Green Belt project, KRA implemented educational projects (Discover the nature, See for yourself) and a sustainable tourism project dedicated to turning a narrow-gauge railway into a bike trail.

The Latvian Country Tourism Association "**Lauku ceļotājs**" ([www.celotajs.lv](http://www.celotajs.lv)) is a non-governmental organization established in 1993 in Riga. It unites owners of rural tourism accommodations and other tourism stakeholders in Latvia with some 350 members at the beginning of 2009. The main goal for the association is to develop well balanced and environmentally friendly tourism in the countryside of Latvia. Its functions are rural tourism product development, quality control and labeling, provider training and consultations, promotion and marketing of its products in brochures, maps and Internet, lobbying for interests of members and project activities. Within the Baltic Green Belt project Lauku ceļotājs’ tasks were to study what the Soviet military left behind in the region, tested ways in which that heritage can be put to use for tourism purposes and ensured the sustainability of the territory’s social and economic aspects.

**Läänerannik** is a local environmental NGO rooted in the West Coast of Estonia with its home base on the island of Vormsi. Its strength for the project was the closeness to the local people perspective

combined with long year experience in international nature conservation projects (e.g. funded by Life nature). The task for Läänerannik was to help the Baltic Green Belt network not to lose contact to practise when discussing comprehensive action plans for ICZM and sustainable coastal development.

The **Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (IAES) of the Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMU, [www.emu.ee](http://www.emu.ee))** is a leading institution for research, survey, monitoring, teaching and training for agricultural and environmental sciences in the Baltic. The Institute currently employs around 300 staff in total and is responsible for training more than 800 undergraduate, about 250 master degree and 90 PhD students. EMU-IAES provides independent research to inform governmental institutions on agriculture, natural resource management, environmental protection, limnology and water management, and biodiversity. EMU's expertise is widely used by European and international organisations and in collaborative projects. Prof. Kalev Sepp of IAES has been appointed as the Estonian National Focal Point for the European Green Belt. IAES' tasks within the project were to develop a methodology for evaluating and inventorising the landscape values of coastal areas, preparing a book and film about Estonian Green Belt and providing recommendations for good practice coastal protection.

**Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)** is a non-profit association founded in 1990 which unites 27 member organizations in the Baltic Sea Region. The main goal of CCB is to promote the protection and improvement of the Baltic Sea environment and natural resources.

## 5 Project goals and approach

The project followed two major goals which relate to a medium-term time scale: (1) to develop a **network of active stakeholders** from NGOs, universities and authorities in the Baltic Green Belt countries who are interested in collaborations to promote a sustainable development of the coast and (2) to contribute to the development of an **ecological network** under the umbrella of the European Green Belt following the Green Belt vision. From these overall goals, we derived a number of more specific goals for the project lifetime:

- evaluation of the implementation of international agreements for coastal nature protection along the Baltic Green Belt
- identification of barriers and success factors/indicators of sustainable coastal development
- delivery of regional Green Belt pilot projects for different themes (agriculture & eutrophication, heritage & spatial planning, sustainable tourism, conservation & awareness) which can serve as blue prints for other regions
- enhance the awareness about the European Green Belt among stakeholders

As a whole, the project activities aimed at contributing to the long-term political goals formulated on the scale of the Baltic Sea Region, namely the protection of the environment and natural resources; the improvement of the ecological status of the marine and terrestrial Baltic Sea area, support to the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea action plan for the protection of the Baltic and support to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea by preserving natural zones and biodiversity.

The project consisted on the one hand of geographically overarching assessments (e.g. environmental values & threats) carried out by the universities, on the other hand of specific regional pilot projects in the countries dealing with different themes. The pilot projects' outcomes were documented, accompanied by research and widely communicated in order to stimulate a cross border transfer of the results. They are meant to be taken up by project partners or other organisations outside the project. The transnational component of the project cooperation furthermore was expressed in the cooperation and exchange on the Green Belt idea. It involved on the one hand the joint communication of the European Green Belt vision to international and national stakeholders and on the other hand the discussion of the vision for the Baltic Green Belt to be established as a permanent component within the European Green Belt initiative.



## **6 Project themes**

### **Eutrophication and sustainable agriculture**

Eutrophication was identified as the number one environmental problem of the Baltic Sea more than 20 years ago. Numerous measures have been taken on the political level to reduce nutrient inputs, including HELCOM's Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme for the removal of pollution hot spots and the EU's Water Framework and other Nutrient related Directives. The success of these top-down measures was measurable in the Baltic Sea but limited mainly to a decrease in phosphorous input. Negative impacts are becoming more and more evident, such as the second largest anoxic bottom water zone world wide in the Central Baltic. Next to the deep open water basins, the coastal lagoons suffer mostly from the high nutrient concentrations and their effects on the local ecosystems. As these marine territories are part of the Baltic Green Belt, the European Green Belt environment is directly threatened by poor water quality of the Baltic Sea. The water quality problem is created to the extent of 99% by inland activities, particularly agriculture. The majority of nutrient pollution to the Baltic Sea stems from Polish territories, as agriculture plays a major role for Polish economy. Against this background, eutrophication is tackled within the Baltic Green Belt project with a new bottom-up approach implemented primarily by an NGO, however, in direct contact with authorities and scientific institutions. There are about 2.6 million farms, 18.5 million hectares of agricultural land, over 14 millions pigs, 5.6 million cattle and 150.6 million poultry in Poland. Within the Polish pilot project, the impact of industrial animal farming on the pollution of the Baltic Sea shall be reduced by a training and motivation programme for farmers to carry out diverse, environmentally friendly agriculture (see Skorupski, pp. 45-55).

### **Sustainable tourism based on cultural heritage and using sound spatial planning**

Sustainable tourism being one of the major economical development chances for protected areas, was an important topic throughout the project and touched within different contexts, mainly related to cultural heritage development and spatial planning.

While disclosure due to military use during Soviet times has left a green heritage in some areas, others must be considered brown heritage due to military pollution. For example, in Estonia, 87,000 hectares were designated military areas during the Soviet period, a large part of which was located on the coast. In the project, Estonia took a systematic approach to making this heritage useful: based on a methodology for evaluating landscape values of coastal areas developed by the Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (IAES) of the Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMU), an inventory of the Estonian coastline will be carried out to determine all objects of cultural heritage. The data shall serve for spatial planning in the coastal zone, and some applications were be demonstrated.

Military heritage from World War 2 and the subsequent Soviet era is a typical feature of the southern and eastern Baltic coast. Dozens of military objects such as ruins of bunkers, airplane hangars or watch towers offer a unique chance for modern touristic development following the rules of sustainability in ecological, economical and social terms and with a reference to the former division of Europe that we have nowadays overcome. One potential touristic object is the narrow-gauge railway of Nordic Courland built during the German Nazi occupation during WW2 for wood transportation. The Latvian Country Tourism Organisation (Lauku Celotajs) together with the Slitere National Park administration developed this railway as one exemplary tourist site and assessed other existing military heritage sites to compile and develop touristic products and information media. During the development, a focus was set on the stakeholder involvement process. A comprehensive description of the tourism pilot project activities including the major outcomes (e.g. data base of military objects, military heritage map, guidelines for military heritage in tourism) is given in Maack et al. (2011).

## Conservation of the marine and coastal environment

Nature conservation is the primary goal of the European Green Belt initiative. In the context of the Baltic Green Belt project, conservation was not the explicit topic of one particular pilot activity. It was rather the background for a variety of activities, such as participation in planning processes, formulation of statements concerning policy development. In Schmiedel (2012), the main natural values and threats to their existence are described from a conservation point of view. As an overall project conclusion and outlook to future activities, a Baltic Green Belt Action Plan concludes this report in the last article by Schmiedel (pp. 113-116).

## Communication & awareness rising at the Green Belt

A significant part of the project work was made up of communication and dissemination. This was on the one hand important as the Green Belt was virtually unknown in the Baltic Sea Region before the project. Its specific approach in the Baltic area - the “product“ and the idea of the Green Belt had to be intensively spread and characterized to be well understood. On the other hand, the implementation into politics, policies and programmes is crucial for a successful Green Belt performance, and so almost all project partners contributed to this activity. As there is no separate chapter in this report is dedicated to the communication activities, the most important are summarised in table 2.

Table 2: Selected results of Baltic Green Belt communication work.

Activity	Number	Target group(s)	Comments
Green Belt websites	4	Practitioners (Int, PL), interested public (DE, EE)	<a href="http://www.balticgreenbelt.net">www.balticgreenbelt.net</a> <a href="http://www.balticgreenbelt.de">www.balticgreenbelt.de</a> <a href="http://www.polishgreenbelt.org.pl">www.polishgreenbelt.org.pl</a> <a href="http://www.estoniangreenbelt.eu">www.estoniangreenbelt.eu</a>
International Baltic Green Belt Forum	3	Stakeholders of the EuGB and the Baltic Sea	Feb 2009 in Lübeck, Germany (BUND SH) Apr 2010 in Palanga, Lithuania (CORPI) Oct. 2011 in Tallinn, Estonia (EMU)
Films	3	Stakeholders & general public	The Lithuanian Green Belt (Zvejone) Discover the nature, Latvia (KRA) The Estonian Green Belt (EMU)
Baltic Green Belt Panorama Newsletter	6 issues	Stakeholders of the EuGB and the Baltic Sea	<a href="http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=panorama">http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=panorama</a>
Stakeholder workshops	> 30	Practitioners from the Baltic Sea coast	<a href="http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=events">http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=events</a>
Information events	> 70	General public	
Media articles	> 100	General public	<a href="http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=media">http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/index.php?id=media</a>
Social Media		EuGB stakeholders	Facebook group „European Green Belt“
Books			Sepp (2011): The Estonian Green Belt Zirnite (2011): Livonians in Northern Kurzeme

## Further project activities

This synthesis report cannot go into detail about every single subproject. Some very successful field activities such as an awareness raising campaign for the maintenance of the Lithuanian Seaside Regional Park, a nature guide for coastal animal and plants and photo exhibitions in Latvia are not covered. They are documented on the project website, and we encourage all readers to browse the website for more information about project outcomes.

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