

Coastal Conservation and Local Agenda 21

- A Pilot Project for Russia



Coastal protection and coastal zone management as well as Local Agenda 21 activities are being developed in the St Petersburg region, in an 18 month pilot project. It aims at linking Russia to the establishment of a European network of protected areas, Natura 2000 and the Local Agenda 21 process, the Baltic Sea Agenda 21 in particular.

The Russian coastline of the Gulf of Finland is of great environmental importance. It boasts the industrial City of St. Petersburg with over five million inhabitants as well as the surrounding Leningrad Oblast and Karelia regions which have a considerable impact on the environment. This pilot project aims at testing two new environmental concepts in the Russian Gulf of Finland thereby linking Russia to two major international activities: the establishment of a European network of protected areas, Natura 2000, and the Local Agenda 21 process, the Baltic Sea Agenda 21 in particular.

FOCUS

This 18 month project was started last year. It is divided into two parts: 1) a framework project which aims at drafting regional legislation for coastal protection and an overall integrated coastal zone management plan and action programme for the region, 2) two demonstration projects to test the implementation of integrated coastal zone management and planning as well as to build Local Agenda 21 activities. The project is financed by various authorities in Russia, Finland, Sweden, Holland, Germany and the EU Life fund.

The management plan for natural areas analyses major environmental threats and establishes a plan of action for better protection and sustainable development of the area. It can also serve as a starting point for the Local Agenda 21 process in Russia. In addition, this local experience with Agenda 21 development could provide valuable input in regard to the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region.

ACTIVITIES STARTED

The part dealing with Local Agenda 21 started with two seminars. The first one was held in Kingisepp last November and the second in Primorsky in February. Kingisepp is a town with 50 000 inhabitants in the south-west part of the Leningrad Region close to the Gulf of Finland the border of Estonia. Primorsky is a part of the City of St Petersburg with 400 000 inhabitants.

Both seminars focused on water protection, nature conservation, waste management, air pollution and ecological education. Both local specialists and people with experience of Local Agenda 21 - projects from Finland (City of Lahti) and Sweden (Cities of Norrtälje and Nacka) participated in the seminars.

Further Information:

Ms Tatiana Chernisova, St Petersburg
email: eco@cape.nw.ru
fax: +7 812 213 7175

Mr Magnus Bergström, Norrtälje
email: magnus.bergstrom@norrtalje.se

RESULTS

The main goal of the seminars - creation of conditions for the initiation of the Local Agenda 21 process in Kingisepp and Primorsky districts - was achieved. As a result, the Kingisepp environmental forum is already working actively and its different working groups meet regularly. The aim is to have a draft of Kingisepp Local Agenda 21 ready by the end of this year. In Primorsky district working plan for environmental forum groups will be worked out in the very near future.