



Latvian experiences in managing lakes & protected areas & building local partnerships.

Case study of Burtnieks, Engure and Liepaja lakes

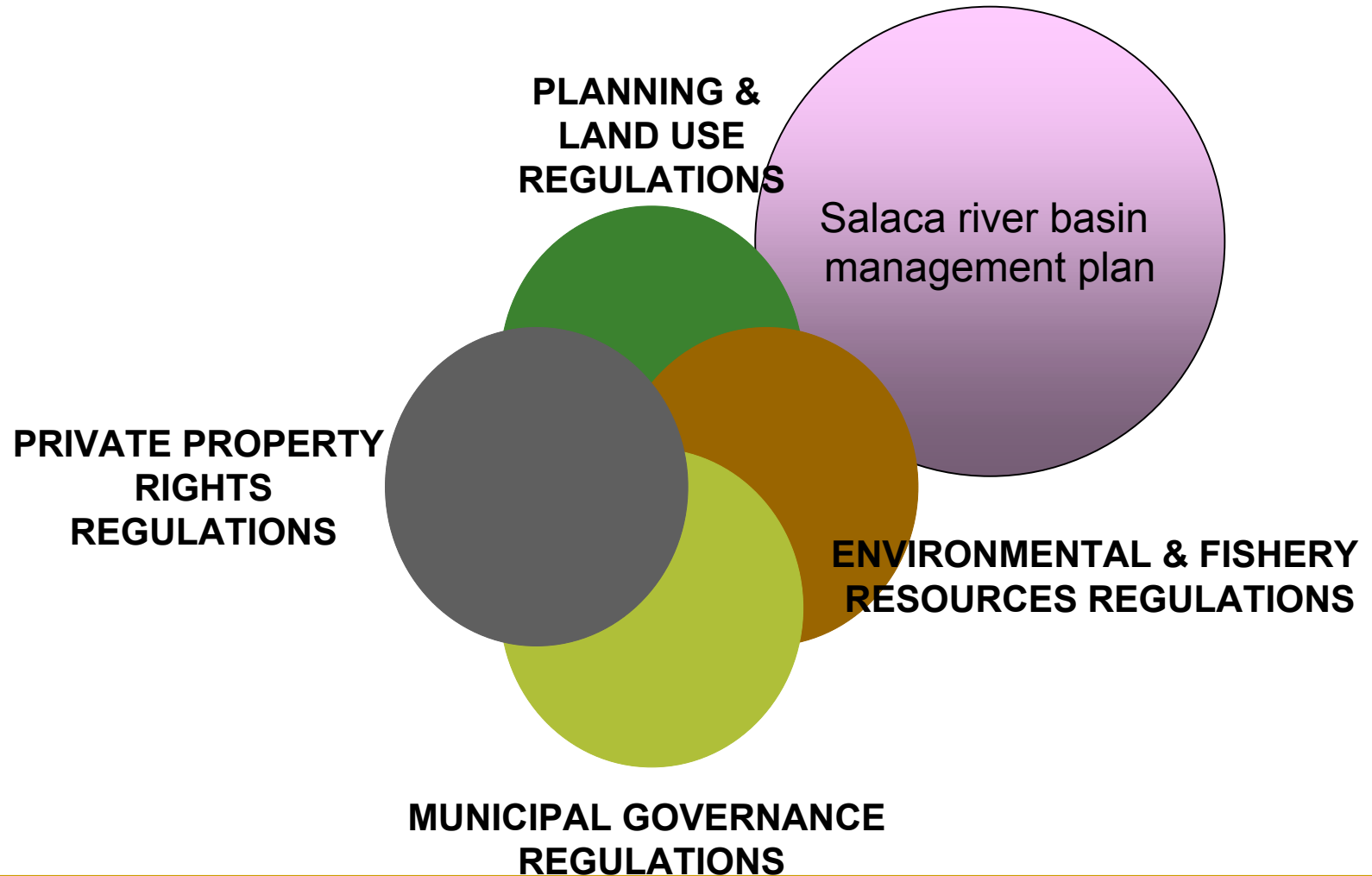
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Plan of presentation

1. What regulates lakes management in Latvia
 2. Case-study lakes brief description
 3. Examples of successful lakes management and planning experience
 4. Environmental communication and tourism opportunities
 5. Examples of stake-holders and partnership building experience
 6. Final conclusions
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Complexity of regulatory framework for lakes management



Sectoral legislation affecting lakes management

Nature protection

- Law On Specially protected nature territories (1993...)
 - Nature protection plans for protected territories
 - Individual protection and management regulations
 - Regulations on nature sanctuaries (1999..)
- Law On Protected belts (1997...)
- Law On Species and Biotopes protection (2000)
- Regulations on agricultural land transformations etc.

- Law On rights of **land owners** to receive compensations for restrictions of activities in protected territories (2005)

- Latvian **Rural development** plan

- **Tourism** Law (2003)

Fishery/angling/hunting

- Angling general regulations (2006)
- Licenced angling regulations
- Hunting law

Forest

- Forest Law (2000..)
- Nature protection regulations in forest management

Land use planning

- Regulations on territory planning (2000)
- Nature protection regulations in forest management

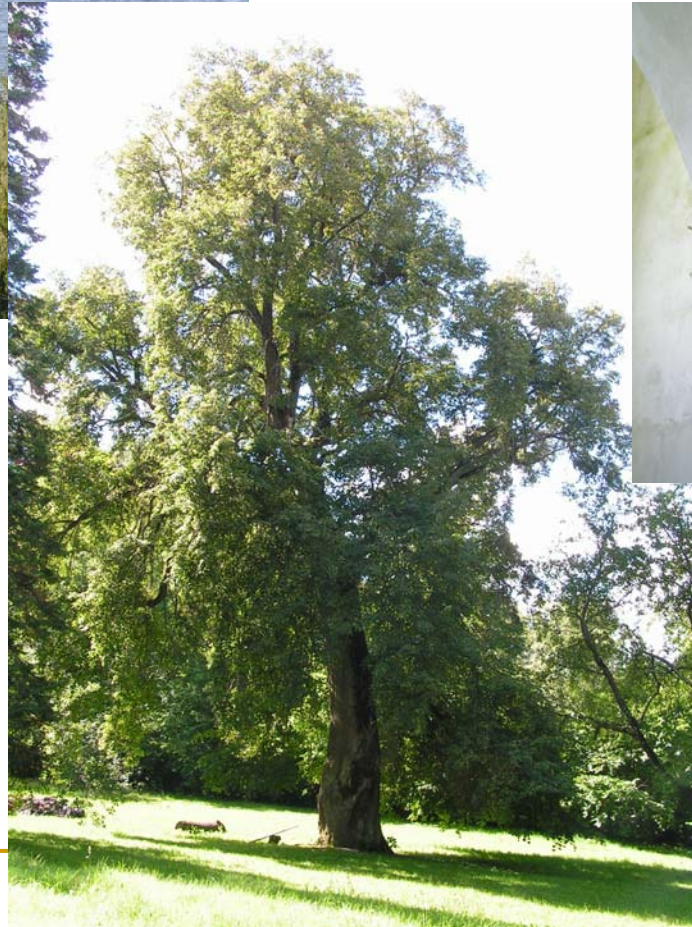
Use and management of lakes:

status, problems and challenges for selected 3 cases

- **Burtnieks lake**
 - 40 km² , aver.depth- 2,2 m, 4th largest lake, public lake
 - 60% of Salaca river catchment area, 4+ 19 rivers inflow, 1 Salaca- outflow,
 - North Vidzeme biosphere reserve(1997.),
 - valuable landscape and culture elements,
 - protected area- Nature Sanctuary of Burtnieku lake floodplain meadows (year 2004, terr.=432 ha) with important biotopes covered in the EU Biotope directive , Natura 2000 site
 - Administrative belonging: 2 local governments, 1 district (Valmiera),



BURTNIIEKS



Use and management of lakes:

status, problems and challenges for selected 3 cases

- Engure lake
 - 1957, terr.= 19992 ha Ramsar site (186 bird species) + Nature 200 site (844 vascular plant species),
 - 15 species and 23 habitats (8 of them priority) of Community importance listed in Bird and Habitat Directives, as well as 18 species of Bern Convention
 - largest in Latvia coastal lake 3 rd largest lake , very shallow
 - Administrative belonging: 4 rural communities, 2 districts (Talsi, Tukums)

Use and management of lakes:

status, problems and challenges for selected 3 cases

■ Liepaja lake

- 3715 ha, aver.depth- 3 m, 6th largest lake in Latvia
 - Internationally important place for birds, protection status as ornithological sanctuary since 1977., potentially Ramsar site,
 - established Liepaja lake Nature sanctuary 4544 ha (floodplain and sea coast meadows incl.), Natura 2000 site
 - Administrative belonging: 1 Liepaja city + 3 rural communities
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Management of lakes: case of Engure lake

- **Planning experience**

- Lake protection and management plan (first developed in 1998-1999)
- Individual protection and management regulations (April, 2004)

- **Main environmental threats:**

- Overgrowing of the lake by reeds
 - Loss of meadow habitats and overgrowing of calcareous fens
 - Uncontrolled, illegal and increasing rate of forest cutting
 - violation of the nature protection regime fishing and hunting regulations
 - Uncontrolled tourism and visitor activities along the sea
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Management of lakes: case of Engure lake

■ Unique management solutions

- 1st project in Latvia introducing the system of semi-natural grazing approach - breeding meat cattle for nature conservation purposes , combined with support to farmers (specific - *Latvian Blue cow*) since 2002
- Reeds cutting (goal - 330 ha per year)
- Establishment of forest sanctuaries as protected areas
- **Tourism infrastructure**
 - nature trail “Orchid trail” , Information signs, 3 bird watching towers, summer lecture house , advertisement documental film “Lake Engure. The Gift from Sea”

ENGURE LAKE

SEE THE BEST PICTURES IN THEIR WEBSITE

<http://www.eedp.lv>

Use of EU Life-Nature funding for lakes management

- ❑ **Restoration of Latvian floodplains for EU priority species and habitats (2004-2008)**
 - ❑ Other financers: UNDP Latvia/GEF, The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Latvia
 - ❑ Partners: Nature Protection Board, North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve, Latvian Ornithological Society and local municipalities
 - ❑ One of results: Nature protection plan for Burtnieki lake floodplains 2005-2015 (Latvia Nature Fund, 2006)

 - ❑ **Implementation Management Plan for the Lake Engure Nature Park (2001 – 2004)**
 - ❑ Implemented by 2 NGOs : Latvian Fund for Nature & Lake Engure Nature Park Fund
 - results in previous slide
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Environmental communication opportunities around lakes

- **Environmental Education** activities
 - Nature trails and bird watch towers
 - educational boat trips,
 - environmental interpretors movement
 - bio-monitoring activities
 - **Environmental Information**
 - Signs, stands, leaflets, websites
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Tourism opportunities around lakes

■ Sustainable tourism

- Rural livelihood, traditional lifestyles
- Cultural heritage
- Green or ecotourism
 - Boating, camping, adventure tourism
 - recreation, leisure , sports, fishing
 - Experiential learning by doing (“experience economy”)

■ Infrastructure

- Visitors centers
- Behaviour code

Who is interested in the lake ?

Example of Burtnieki lake stake- holders *

- North Vidzeme biosphere reserve administration
- Burtnieki lake management authority
- NGO “Burtnieki environmental protection club”

- Valmiera district local authorities (1st level self-governments) in the lake basin area
- NGO “Matisi development”
- Tourists/visitors of lake and waters in the area
- NGO “Burtnieki lake fishermen society”
- Valmiera district council (2nd level self-government)

- Fish farms
- Local citizens of rural communities
- Valmiera Regional environmental board
- Vidzeme Regional development agency (3rd level self-government)

- Surrounding towns citizens
- State environmental and health agencies
- Unorganized other single fishermen

* Set in prioritized groups as identified by local respondents in the survey performed by A.Senkans during his master thesis, **2005**)

Institutionalisation of partnership – case of Burtnieki lake

■ History

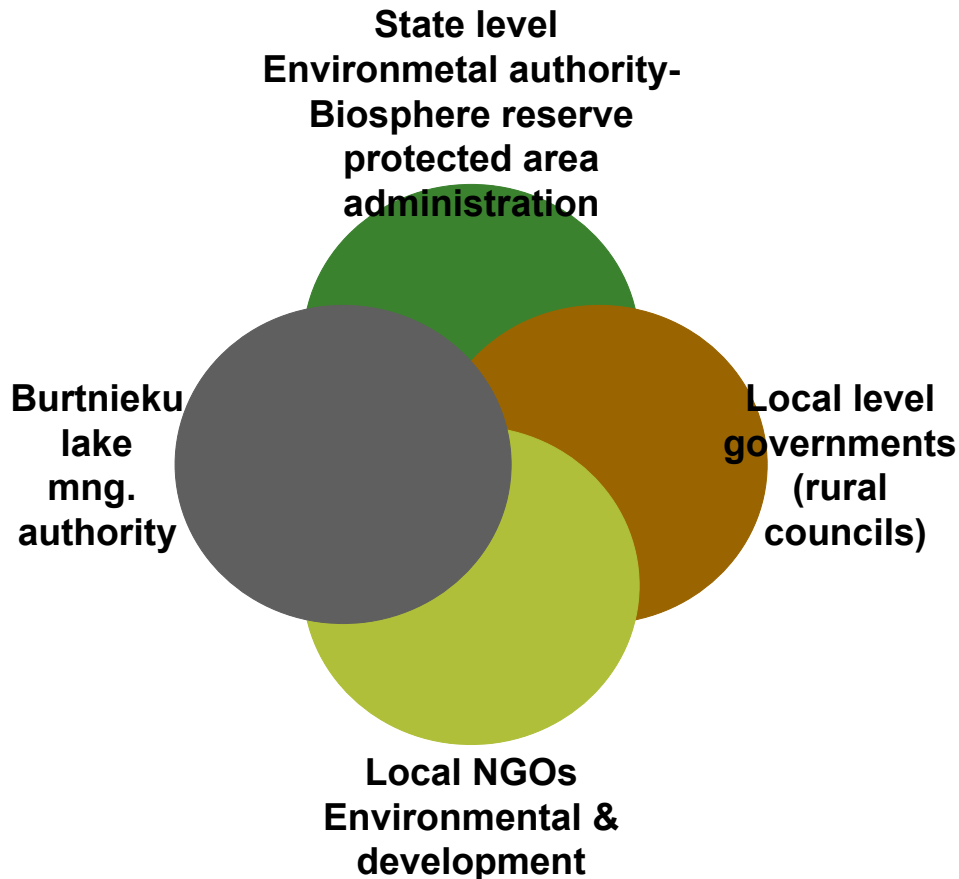
- Dec, 1991- decision to establish **Burtnieki lake administration** (BLA) taken by the Valmiera district elected deputies – first case in independent Latvia
- Jan, 1992 - approved operational programme, budget and organizational statutes
- **Main goal** –coordination of **interests of 3 coastal rural communities** of Matisi, Vecate, Burtnieki for joint approach of lake management
- Activities focused on fish resources management, incl. licenced angling since 1992, fish stock resources replenishing (living 16 species)
- **Public Council for BLA :**
 - Valmiera Regional env. board – 1 state inspector- ihtiolog ; Valmiera district fishermen society head' 1 representative form each of 3 rural communities
- Reorganizations in 2002 and Oct. 2006 (latter after territorial reform)

Institutionalisation of partnership – case of Burtnieki lake

■ **Current status**

- Valmiera district council establishes company limited SIA "Burtnieki lake administration" registered in State Commercial register in Dec, 2006. 100 % share-holder
- **Goals:**
 - protection of eco-system and biological diversit
 - Public involvement
 - Sustainable development of territory
 - Fish resources vise use,,protection , replenishing
- **Resources** : budget dotations, projects, linencing
 - 70 % from income generated by selling fish licences go for fish resources management in Burtnieki lake, 30 %- for national Fish Fund

Partnership models -Burtnieki case



Burtnieki lake management authority. Ltd.(2006)

- Statutory rights to manage fish resources is delegated from Burtnieki parish and Burtnieki novads (2 local authorities, after administrative reform)

- Included in BLA board
 - local council representatives
 - Distric council
 - Biosphere reserve
 - Regional environmental board

Model 1 as seen by survey participants in 2005- high integration

Partnership building for lakes management – other examples

- Engure fund (1998), NGO
 - Engure lake nature park's Consultative Board
 - Representatives from 4 surrounding local governments (parishes)
 - Latvian State forests, 1 national 2 regional institutions
 - National Fishery management authority
 - University of Latvia/Institute of Biology/ Ornithological laboratory
- Liepaja Lakes, NGO
 - Liepaja city and 3 adjacent rural communities

Final conclusions

- Lakes has enormous **potential** for local development
 - **Nature** protection and Natura 2000 provisions shall be perceived as additional opportunity for local development and funding
 - **Participatory governance** and administration of protected areas territory improves efficiency of lakes management
 - To have sustainable and successful process all interested parties or **stake-holders** shall be involved in planning, administration and results+benefits sharing
 - The **awareness** of society about lakes as resource is increasing due to environmental communication activities of those involved in lakes protection (information, education, participation , behaviour models)
 - In Latvia significant is **NGOs role** in nature values protection in lakes basins
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Thank you for attention !
