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
Complexity of regulatory framework for lakes management

- Salaca river basin management plan
- Planning & Land Use Regulations
- Environmental & Fishery Resources Regulations
- Municipal Governance Regulations
- Private Property Rights Regulations
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
- Law On Protected belts (1997…)
- Law On Species and Biotopes protection (2000)
- Regulations on agricultural land transformations etc.

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

- Law On rights of **land owners** to receive compensations for restrictions of activities in protected territories (2005)
- Latvian **Rural development** plan
- **Tourism** Law (2003)
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),
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 3rd 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 meadow incl.), Natura 2000 site
  - Administrative belonging: 1 Liepaja city + 3 rural communities
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
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 documentary 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

  - Partners: Nature Protection Board, North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve, Latvian Ornithological Society and local municipalities

  - Implemented by 2 NGOs: Latvian Fund for Nature & Lake Engure Nature Park Fund
  - results in previous slide
Environmental communication opportunities around lakes

- **Environmental Education** activities
  - Nature trails and bird watch towers
  - Educational boat trips,
  - Environmental interpreters movement
  - Bio-monitoring activities

- **Environmental Information**
  - Signs, stands, leaflets, websites
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 stakeholders *

- 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
    - District 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
Thank you for attention!