

# A RACE TO SAVE THE BALTIC SEA

RACE FOR THE BALTIC 2013 • 3 MONTHS • 9 COUNTRIES • 3700 KM

# FOREWORD

The Baltic Sea is not regularly found on the front pages of international newspapers as a cause celebre of the marine conservation world. But the Baltic Sea is more important than many realise, for the Baltic Sea is an integral part of the lives, the economies and the culture of nine countries. It provides livelihoods for hundreds of thousands of people; it feeds the countries surrounding it; it is where people take holidays and enjoy contact with nature. It is all these things and more to the people who live around the Sea and yet it stands on a precipice.

One sixth of the Baltic Sea is dead-- an area the size of Denmark— and this area gets bigger every day. The fish that were once abundant throughout the sea are overfished and many populations are on the verge of collapse. Pollution continues to stream into the water in the form of agricultural run off, toxic chemicals and untreated waste water.

The RACE FOR THE BALTIC campaign has spent the summer travelling around the Baltic in order to see first-hand how the changing face of the Baltic is impacting the people living around it. We have heard how local fishermen worry that they and their children won't have careers if the current hoovering up of the fish stocks continue. We have seen how algal blooms have poisoned beaches and prevented families from swimming. We have also seen how one woman's determination has saved a pristine set of dunes along the coast which give shelter to a wide range of biodiversity. We have learned about new fishing techniques which minimise by-catch. We have heard plans from numerous municipalities who are taking matters into their own hands and cleaning up their harbours, beaches and waters, and from businesses working to minimise their impact on the Baltic.

What we have not seen is leadership from our national politicians in implementing commitments already made to restore the Baltic Sea to health.

RACE FOR THE BALTIC is a coalition made up of almost 100 organisations, businesses, municipalities, and NGOs all calling for concrete political action to save the Baltic Sea. We are asking for our governments to clean up our waters, protect their biodiversity and ensure the long-term economic stability of the Sea and the region. To that end, we have worked with our local partner NGOs to identify three key asks for each country that can be implemented in the near term and which will make a significant difference to the health of the Baltic Sea. We have only begun our work, and it will not end until we all know that the Baltic Sea is safe to enjoy and prosper from for generations to come. It is time to take action, for we are truly in a race to save the Baltic Sea, and it is a race that we're determined to win.

Allison Robertshaw

Director, Zennström Philanthropies & RACE FOR THE BALTIC



# **RACE FOR THE BALTIC**

RACE FOR THE BALTIC is a multi-stakeholder campaign and platform created to bring together people by providing a common space to learn, share best practices and take action in order to return the Baltic Sea to a state of environmental health.

# **THE MISSION**

RACE FOR THE BALTIC works to bring together all the stakeholders affected by the degradation of the Baltic Sea, and by doing so has created a coalition of leadership made up of NGOs, businesses, concerned citizens and forward-thinking politicians who are determined to reverse the negative trends and restore the Baltic Sea environment. By doing so they are ensuring the long-term economic viability of the region.

The intention of RACE FOR THE BALTIC is to create, over time, a stronger voice for the environmental sustainability of the Baltic Sea through more effective policy, sustainable business practices and a knowledgeable citizenry.

# THE SUMMER CAMPAIGN

During the summer of 2013, RACE FOR THE BALTIC engaged in a public awareness campaign. This campaign consisted of a 3-month, 3700 KM, 9 country cycling tour along the coastline of the Baltic Sea. During the 71 days on the road the core cycling team visited 50 towns, participated in study visits, local festivals, coastal clean-ups and group bike rides.

Meetings and events were created with local municipalities, farmers, fishermen, NGOs, marine centres, schools, and scientists – all in order to talk about the current situation of the Baltic Sea, collect and share knowledge as well as see first-hand the multitude of ways that the people around the Baltic are engaging with this precious resource. The campaign will present its findings to the Environmental Ministers in the region during the Autumn in order to push for political leadership on this issue.

# THE ASKS

The RACE FOR THE BALTIC campaign calls for action and implementation of environmentally sustainable and scientifically supported practices throughout the Baltic Sea on three key issues. In doing so, it seeks to make the Baltic Sea a model region for marine management in the EU and internationally. Below are the three actions the RACE FOR THE BALTIC campaign demand that our political leaders implement in accordance with the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

# REVIVE

Revive the biological diversity of the Baltic Sea

 Ensure the implementation of an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas by designating 30% of the Baltic Sea as Marine Protected Areas and ensure their effective management.

# RECOVER

Recover the natural wealth of the fish stocks in the Baltic Sea to ensure long-term sustainability

• Ensure that scientific advice is followed when fishing limits are set and enforced, particularly for key species such as cod.

• Set long term plans for the management of key fish stocks in the Baltic to ensure both biological and economic sustainability.

• Respect of wider ecosystem function must be a central part of Baltic Sea fisheries management.

# RESTORE

Restore the water quality of the Baltic Sea through a reduction of nutrients and pollutants flowing into the Baltic

• Reduce the amount of agricultural run-off into the Baltic Sea.

• Ensure that rules for agriculture around the Baltic Sea adhere to strict limitations of nutrient surplus per hectare.

# TIME IS RUNNING OUT...

# 2013 CAMPAIGN ROUTE & ACTIVITES



# SWEDEN

NGO Partners: FISH, Coalition Clean Baltic, Oceana

# 8 June Malmö

World Ocean Day Festival with Sea U Marint Kunskapscenter & Malmö City

### 9 June Ystad

Study vist: Tullstorp Stream Pilot Project & Beach clean up with Städa Sverige in Kåseberga

# **10 June Simrishamn**

Activity with Simrishamn Marint Centrum & Municipality

# 11 June Åhus

Scuba dive Baltic Sea clean up in Harbour with Städa Sverige

# **12 June Karlshamn**

RFTB tent in main square with Karlshamn Municipality

# **15 June Ronneby**

Competed in the region's largest summer event: Sillarodden

### 16 June Karlskrona

Event at town square with Karlskrona Municipality

# 17 June Kalmar

Study visit: Kalmar Dämme & Nyttorp & lecture at Rockneby school

# **19 June Västervik** Participated in Midsummer Celebration in town square

**23-24 June Norrköping** Event with Kolmården Zoo

# **25 June Järna** Study visit, Seminar & press conference - BERAS EU Farming project

# 27-30 June Stockholm

VIP Bike Race CEO Business Round Table, Sponsored boat competed in ÅF Offshore Race & Events with Värmdö & Vaxholm Municipalities

# 30 June -7 July Visby

Participated in seminars related to the Baltic Sea during Almedalsveckan

# FINLAND/ÅLAND

NGO Partners: Natur & Miljö, DODO

# **1 July Åland** Panal Debate with local polticians & activities for kids

# 4 July Seili Island

Study visit: Seili Research Center & Museum

# **5-8 July Hanko** RFTB tent at The EVLI Hangöregattan

# 9 July Helsinki

Visit to Kääntöpöytä Urban Gardening Project & Helsinki bike ride & Visit to HELCOM HQ

# RUSSIA

NGO Partners/CO-Organiser: Friends of the Baltic, Green World

### 30 June Vyborg

Russian leg start & public event in Vyborg

### **4 July Sestroretsk**

Public event in Sestroretsk

#### **5** July St. Petersburg

Meeting at St.Petersburg Legislative Assembly & Press Conference

### 6 July Lomonosov

Outdoor seminar & round table at Lomonosov

# **SWEDEN & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

#### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Designate new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), including offshore sites such as the central part of the Bothnian Sea, the Bothnian Bay deep, Klints Bank and the north east of Gotland, central part of Kattegat and the Middle Bank, and ensure that practices which have negative environmental impacts on the sea-floor and marine biodiversity are outlawed. Also, larger MPAs along the coast should be established, such as the northern part of the Sound and the archipelago west of Gothenburg.

#### **FISHERIES**

Sweden has one of the highest eel fishing mortalities in Europe and must put an end to eel fishing in order to prevent their extinction.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Reintroduce a tax on artificial fertilisers and develop requirements for low surplus limits of nitrogen and phosphorus per hectare in order to reduce the amount of nutrients reaching the Baltic Sea.

# **OVERVIEW**

Sweden is an important actor in the Baltic Sea, with a long tradition of supporting environmental sustainability. This tradition can be seen, for instance, through consumer interest in environmentally friendly food products. One in five Swedes is actively trying to buy more organic food products and the organic market is significant and growing; over 14% of the country's agricultural land is certified organic. Despite having a coastline of over 3200km, most of which is on the Baltic Sea, Sweden has increasingly taken action to address issues of wastewater from both industrial sources and local homes. Whilst the citizens of Sweden are increasingly calling for sustainably produced food, the country's agricultural industry is still overloading the Baltic Sea with nutrients from fertilisers and manure, contributing to the algal blooms that blight its coasts each summer.

The record with Sweden's approach to fisheries is similarly mixed. With the second largest number of fishing vessels in the Baltic Sea and a greater relative reliance on larger vessels, Sweden has a sizeable impact on fishing in the Baltic Sea. Food retailers have taken steps in recent years to increase the proportion of KRAV and MSC-labelled fish being sold, yet coastal fishermen complain about small catches.



View of the beach recently cleaned by Städa Sverige and RFTB

# DAY 2 | JUNE 9 | SUNDAY

Throughout the cycling journey in Sweden, the team visited various community-based projects that work to restore the Baltic Sea in an effort to learn how local communities and civil society can contribute to solving the environmental pressures on the Baltic Sea.

The Tullstorp Stream Pilot Project, located in southern Sweden, outside of Trelleborg, was one of the stops on the tour. In an area of 7 000 hectares, the community works together to restore water quality, as well as the habitat - all in order to meet new demands under the EU Water Framework Directive.

Since 2009, the community has created over 30 new wetlands, with 30 more planned. They have also physically removed large quantities of nitrogen and phosphorus from the stream which would otherwise have run into the Baltic Sea. Their goal is to reduce the nutrient run-off from the stream from 250 tonnes

of nitrogen and 4 tonnes of phosphorus to 170 tonnes of nitrogen and 1.9 tonnes of phosphorus per year before the water in the stream reaches the sea.

The results of projects like this have been noteworthy due to the impact they've had both in restoring the natural balance of the ecosystem as well as engaging the community. In Tullstorp, they have seen species such as trout, Baltic salmon, eel and Northern pike return to the stream in greater numbers. RACE FOR THE BALTIC visited similar community projects such as Kalmar Damme, Nyttorp and a BERAS (Baltic Ecological Recycling Agriculture and Society) farm in Järna. These projects have the potential to serve as models for water management and citizen-driven marine management, and can be replicated across the region.

# FINLAND & THE BALTIC SEA

# POLITICAL ASKS

### MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Implement new offshore MPA's, such as Ulkokrunni and Merikalla in the Bothnian Bay and Bogskär in the northern Baltic proper. Establish larger coastal sites, in areas such as south of Hanko Peninsula, the Quark and south of Åland islands. Doing so will bind together a number of smaller existing MPAs and enforce proper management, including the abandoning of destructive practices like bottom sea trawling.

#### **FISHERIES**

Securing the migration of fish must be a mandatory requirement for building and maintaining dams in rivers.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Nutrient-balanced fertilization based on bookkeeping on the level of specific fields must be introduced by 2014.

# **OVERVIEW**

Finland is the seventh largest country in Europe, yet home to just over 5.3m people. Traditionally, the country has faced problems addressing pollution issues from its industrial production, although in recent years this has been drastically reduced. Whilst nutrient levels/loads coming from agriculture and domestic use have been slower to drop, Finland has managed to ensure that nine of the ten original HELCOM hot spots in their country have been addressed and removed from the list, leaving only an area of farmland in the southwest.

The 1250 km of Finnish coastline borders a number of areas in the Baltic Sea, including the Bothnian Bay and Sea, as well as the Gulf of Finland, which gives rise to a variety of environments that are particularly sensitive to ecological imbalance. The success that Finland has had with addressing their pollution problem hasn't been quite matched by similar success in their fishing industry. Despite only 3000 people within the country being employed by the fishing industry in one form or another, Finland has yet to stop illegal fishing nor put in comprehensive management plans for its fisheries or marine protected areas.



RFTB visits the EVLI Hangöregattan to collect signatures

# DAY 32 | JULY 9 | TUESDAY

The RACE FOR THE BALTIC cycling route guided the team not only through fishing communities, farms, local shipping ports and rural countryside but also to the Headquarters of HELCOM, otherwise known as the Helsinki Commission, a regional policy body working to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea.

In the lead up to the cycling campaign RFTB developed three specific policy demands (asks) around the regional framework of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, which HELCOM and all its member states signed in 2007. The hope was that by highlighting the sea's most pressing problems it would give the people around the Baltic Sea a way to engage with issues that affect the sea that they live next to, but which are often presented in technical terms with little relevance to their daily lives and choices.

The team's visit to HELCOM headquarters in Helsinki came early in the campaign's summer tour but it was a good opportunity for them to learn more about how HELCOM works and talk to staff there about what they were hoping to accomplish. It was also an opportunity to share their success in bringing together almost 100 organisations and to support the RFTB campaign and show their commitment to a clean and sustainable Baltic Sea.

The two groups will reunite on the 3rd of October, 2013 when the RTFB team presents its findings and experiences at the HELCOM's Environmental Ministerial meeting. Hopefully this sort of ongoing engagement can serve as an example of how working together politicians and the people they represent can work together to affect positive change and ensure that the voices of the people impacted by policies are heard.

# **RUSSIA & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

### MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Finalize, after more than 10 years, the designation of the Ingermandlandsky Nature Reserve in the Russian part of Gulf of Finland, including management plans to secure the protection of marine biodiversity.

### **FISHERIES**

Support the programme for the recovery of salmon in the Luga River and recovery of smolt in the Gulf of Finland basin.

### **EUTROPHICATION**

Install pilot demonstration models of small-scale wastewater treatment facilities in each constituent unit of the Russian Federation in the Baltic Sea basin in order to ensure that the most ecologically effective technologies are adopted in order to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus pollution.

# **OVERVIEW**

Russia is the only non-EU country to border the Baltic Sea and shares two distinct coastlines with the sea: along the Gulf of Finland and along the coast of Leningrad in the Baltic proper. Whilst the Russian fishing industry is not one of the largest in the region, there are still problems that have yet to be addressed in terms of setting management plans for fisheries and putting an end to illegal fishing and by-catch.

However, it is the issue of wastewater which is of primary importance when looking at Russia's impact on the Baltic Sea. Unlike other countries bordering on the Baltic Sea, Russia does not treat the vast majority of its agricultural, industrial and urban wastewater. Twenty-five percent of the water coming of out of St Petersburg is completely untreated before it reaches the Baltic Sea and in most small cities in Leningrad there is no wastewater treatment at all. Additionally, the growth in Russia's oil traffic and terminals further threatens the sea with regular oil spills and chemical pollution.



RACE FOR THE BALTIC goes the distance to save the Baltic Sea

# DAY 27 | JULY 4 | THURSDAY

As part of the RACE FOR THE BALTIC campaign, a group from *Friends of the Baltic* and *Green World*, joined the campaign to cycle the coastline of the Baltic Sea from Vyborg to the Estonian border. During this leg of the campaign, a number of press conferences, roundtables and workshops were held along with various conversations with politicians, sailors, fishermen and concerned citizens about the need for immediate action implementing the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

On July 4th, RACE FOR THE BALTIC and *Friends of the Baltic* staged an important meeting to present the campaign and its goals to various politicians in St. Petersburg. Amongst those present were the Chairperson of the Environmental Commission of the St Petersburg city Legislative Assembly, and a representative from the Environmental Commission of Leningrad region Legislative Assembly. The conclusion of this meeting was an important one, as the St. Petersburg Environmental Commission decided to start a working group to handle wastewater management from small settlements and singlefamily homes in Leningrad region. This is particularly noteworthy as until now there was little discussion on how to tackle this problem, let alone a plan put into place to start working on a solution.

This is a huge success for the campaign and its partners, and demonstrates the importance of shining a public spotlight on environmental issues as well as bringing concerned stakeholders together to work on solving them in a non-adversarial way. Whilst it will not address all of Russia's issues with regards to the Baltic Sea, it is an important step forward and proof that RFTB's multi-stakeholder approach can change attitudes and lead to action.

# 2013 CAMPAIGN ROUTE & ACTIVITES



# ESTONIA

NGO Partner: Estonian Green Movement

#### 10 July Tallinn

RFTB Tent at Freedom Square & Tallinn Bike ride

#### 11 July Haapsalu

RFTB Tent in main square, visit to wastewater treatment plant & meeting with Haapsalu town Mayor

#### 12 July Õstamaa

Study visit: Matsalu National Park

#### 13-14 July Kihnu

Participation in Kihnu Summer Sea Festival

#### 15-16 July Pärnu

RFTB tent in main shopping square & various study visits

#### 17 July Häädemeeste

Study visit: Local wastewater treatment plant

# LATVIA

NGO Partners: Environmental Protection Club of Latvia (VAK) & The Foundation for Environmental Education Latvia (FEE Latvia)

#### **18 July Salacgrīvas** Team clean up activity of

Salaca river

#### 19-20 July Salacgrīvas

RFTB tent at Positivus Music Festival & discussions with former Minister of Environment/ Prime Minister of Latvia.

#### 21 July Riga

RFTB Bike Ride through Riga with local residents

#### 22 July Jurmala

RFTB tent in main square & evening dinner with local & national policians

#### 24 July Kuldīga

Discussions & evening activity with national Baltic Sea campaign, "Mana Jura". Meeting with Kuldiga Town Mayor

#### 25-28 July Riga

RFTB Event at The Tall Ship Races 2013

#### 25 July Pāvilosta

Study visit: Met with local activist who fought five years for protection of unique Gray Dunes

#### 26 July Rucava

Tour highlight: Greeted by Town Mayor with performance by local musicians in town square

#### 27 July Karklė

Study visit & educational activities Dinner with local Fisherman & Meeting with Vice Minister of Environment

# LITHUANA

NGO Partner: Lithuanian Fund for Nature

**28 July Klaipėda** RFTB Tent at Klaipėda Sea Festival

**29 July Klaipėda** Press Conference

**27 July Hel** Day of the Fish with Hel Marine Station & Klub Gaja

# POLAND

NGO Partners: Our Earth Foundation, WWF, Aquarius, TRIPPIG

2-3 August Krynica Morska & Gdynia Beach Clean up action & Event together with Our Earth Fundation

**3-6 August Szczecin** Tall Ship Race

# 4 August Starogard Gdanski Study visit: Plotta Eco-Farm

(BERAS) 5 August Slupsk

#### Study Visit: Slupia River Walley Park Headquarters & visit to Slowinski National Park together

#### 6-7 August Kolobzreg

Discussions with WWF Poland, Activitites in town square & Press Conference

#### 8 August Miedzyzdroje

Study visit: Miedzyzdroje Marine Center - part of Szczecin University

# GERMANY

NGO Partner: Friends of the Earth (BUND) Germany

9-11 August Rostock RFTB Bike ride hosted by

Senator & Event during Hanse Sail

#### 12-15 August Berlin

Local residents bike for the Baltic Sea

# DENMARK

NGO Partner: Oceana

#### 4-7 July Aarhus

RFTB Event at The Tall Ship Races 2013

#### 15 August Stubbekoping

Study Visit to local nonorganic pig farm

#### 16 August Fjenneslev

Study visit: Krogagergard Eco-Farm (BERAS)

#### 17 August Copenhagen

Final RFTB bike ride through Copenhagen. RFTB tent at Nyhavn & #BEERSFORBALTIC celebrations

# **ESTONIA & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

#### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Ensure more effective management of the existing network of MPAs, particularly the larger Väinameri protected area located between Hiumaa, Saaremaa and the Estonian mainland.

### **FISHERIES**

Shift government funding towards supporting small scale, artisanal fishing in coastal waters and away from industrial fishing in order to ensure the Estonian fishing fleet is more environmentally sustainable.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Move towards more sustainable agricultural practices including a shift towards no-till agriculture and an elimination of fertiliser leakage from farms.

# **OVERVIEW**

Whilst Estonia only has slightly more than 1.3 million people, it shares 3,794km of coastline with the Baltic Sea. Its historical focus on agriculture would suggest that the issue of most concern to the Estonians with regards to the Baltic Sea would in fact be eutrophication.

However, the country is on target to meet its commitments in all but two of the areas of the Baltic Sea Action Plan which relate to agriculture and eutrophication.

The current threat to the Baltic Sea in Estonian waters comes mainly from the legacy of Soviet occupation. Discarded weapons and explosives from the period were dumped in Estonia's coastal waters and these are now leaking toxic chemicals into the sea, putting further pressure on water quality.



RFTB cyclist, Sten Oja, arrange a bike ride through his home city of Tallinn

# DAY 32 | JULY 9 | TUESDAY

In the city of Tallinn, citizens from across Estonia gathered for a community bike ride to publicly state the need for politicians to prioritize the environmental sustainability of the Baltic Sea. The meetup point proved to be an interesting one as all of the riders were immediately struck by the smell of decaying macro-algae nearby. Like many of the stops the RFTB team made, the impact of the region's ongoing mistreatment of the Baltic Sea was made apparent to both the campaigners and to local people.

After visiting Tallinn and other cities along the coast, the team reached the tourist area of Pärnu. The resort town offers white sandy beaches for swimming and other recreational activities, as well as large mud spas using Baltic Sea mud, and is almost solely dependent on a healthy state of the Baltic Sea. Unfortunately, RACE FOR THE BALTIC learned that its pristine beaches are currently under threat due to the impact of eutrophication caused mostly by run-off of tons of phosphorus and nitrogen from the Pärnu River, which finds it's way into the Parnü Bay and results in algal blooms and polluted water.

The tourism industry offers great potential for economic development in towns like Pärnu and others, but is threatened by agricultural and industrial practices across the region. By highlighting such local problems, the RFTB campaign hopes to help give people a way to engage and influence the bigger problem of the Baltic Sea's sustainability whilst encouraging dialogue on local concerns and solutions.

# LATVIA & THE BALTIC SEA

# POLITICAL ASKS

#### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Establish effective management plans for its existing MPA network. Important habitats in these areas include rocky reefs and sandy bottoms which host a wide variety of species such as sea weed, which form dense meadows and serve as spawning grounds for a large range of organisms, including fish such as herring.

### **FISHERIES**

Preserve Latvia's position as home to the Baltic's greatest number of wild salmon rivers by addressing the issues facing salmonid rivers including pollution, overgrowth, the lack of regulation by private river owners and the loss of spawning grounds in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the country's salmon populations.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Establish minimum requirements for manure storage facilities for all farms with more than 5 units of animal nitrate in vulnerable zones, and more than 10 animal units in other areas within the country.

# **OVERVIEW**

Latvia is one of the smaller countries bordering the Baltic Sea, with only 2 million people and approximately 500 km of coastline. Like Lithuania and Estonia, Latvia's time under Soviet rule resulted in a poor environmental legacy. Recent changes in the economy towards a more service-oriented economy have resulted in a significant decrease in industrial pollution affecting the land and the water. However, water quality and wastewater treatment remain serious issues for the country. Soviet rule also left another legacy which Latvia is still trying to grapple with: sunken chemical weapons, which continue to sit at the bottom of the Baltic threatening to lead to additional environmental disasters. History plays a role in Latvia's fishing industry as well, as fish processing has traditionally been an important part of the country's economy bringing in much needed foreign currency. Despite the interest in ensuring the long term sustainability of fish stocks in the Baltic Sea, Latvia still has a long way to go to meet BSAP goals, since they have yet to fully develop their fisheries management plans, and by-catch remains a problem.



RFTB cleans out Salaca River to allow for salmon spawning

# DAY 48 | JULY 25 | THURSDAY

During the trip to Latvia, RACE FOR THE BALTIC learned about the potential of the eco-tourism industry to contribute to Latvia's economy should they take steps to protect their coastal land and salmon population. Latvia has an immense amount of wild salmon rivers that could provide ample opportunities for recreational and sport fishing, as well as kilometer after kilometer of pristine landscape that remains untouched thanks to restrictions put in place during Soviet rule. The landscape could be used to attract nature lovers to the region, and along with the wild salmon rivers, offer Latvia tremendous potential when it comes to eco-tourism travel - yet both are threatened if the country doesn't act soon.

The team visited the Great Gray Dunes in the small town of Pavilosta, where after a 6 year struggle activist Guna Grimsta and a group of volunteers managed to secure 42 hectares of protected land with the status of Nature Reservation. Today, however, this beautiful area is once again threatened by development, and with that the future ability of the town to attract tourists and provide a space for local residents to interact with nature is in question.

The team were also able to get their hands dirty by helping to cut down the overgrowth of reeds in the Salaca River in order to give salmon the opportunity to reach their spawning grounds. According to regional scientists the overgrowth of reeds is due to phosphorous and nitrate runoff from private households, agriculture industries and the timber industry, and is threatening salmon across the entire country.

It became apparent that Latvia stands at the crossroads and must make a choice between preserving their natural heritage and building an economy based on sustainable development, or watching their unique environment disappear forever.

# LITHUANIA & THE BALTIC SEA 🔳

# POLITICAL ASKS

#### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Designate new, biologically important offshore areas and ensure effective management of existing unique habitats which include the reefs of the moraine ridges, as well as patches of stones, gravel and sandy bottoms of the coast and parts of the deeper waters that host a special diversified sea bottom community dominated by blue mussels.

#### **FISHERIES**

Ensure that the recent recovery of the Baltic grey seal in Lithuania is sustained whilst working with smallscale fishermen to identify areas of cooperation between the conservation movement and the local fishing communities.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Work to set up efficient water cleaning technologies to prevent nutrients from leaking into the Baltic Sea through water run off whilst also promoting phosphate-free detergents.

# **OVERVIEW**

Lithuania, like its Baltic neighbours, is still working to clean up the environmental mess caused during the Soviet occupation. With over 3.3 million people, Lithuania has an impact on both the eutrophication and fisheries challenges facing the Baltic Sea.

Whilst there has been a five-fold decline in the use of pesticides over the last decade, and the use of mineral fertilisers has also decreased, both continue to seep into the groundwater and the Baltic.

The government has however, started supporting the organic farming movement in the country which will

hopefully further address the pressure put on the Sea through bad agricultural practices.

Although there has been movement towards sustainability on the agriculture front, Lithuania still faces a number of challenges related to biodiversity and fisheries. Lithuania is one of the worst countries in terms of meeting its biodiversity targets under the Baltic Sea Action Plan with little progress made on its fisheries management plans and illegal fishing remains a significant problem.



Ghost net bicycle in Klaipeda, Lithuania

# DAY 51 | JULY 28 | SUNDAY

When RACE FOR THE BALTIC reached Lithuania the country had just started their EU Presidency. This was an excellent opportunity for the team to learn about the intersection between the local concerns for the Baltic Sea and how it tied into the broader marine issues such as subsidies, catch limits and water quality - all of which were being debated both in the region and in Brussels. It was also the first time the team had the chance to speak directly with the policy makers who they were looking to influence - the team met with the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environment in Lithuania who, convinced by the team's work, signed the RFTB campaign petition.

In addition to reaching out to policy makers in Lithuania, the campaign also, through its local partners, met with local fisherman, amber collectors, and nature conservation organisations to better understand the concerns of the local population. As two local fishermen prepared a fish stew for the team over an open fire on the beach, a translator helped the team to understand the stories and concerns of the fishermen. The team heard that fishing used to be a way to make a living in this part of the country, but small-scale fisheries have more or less disappeared due to trawling and large scale fishing tactics. This has meant that the younger generation is moving away from their hometowns in search of work abroad. According to the fishermen, this has resulted in Lithuania not only losing its young people but also its history and traditions.

The concerns of this one fisherman are not unique. Along the coast of the Baltic Sea, environmental degradation threatens local communities' way of life and if policy makers do not enforce tougher regulations on overfishing and protect sustainable, small scale fisheries, the future of region's coastal towns is bleak.

# WHAT LEGACY WILL WE LEAVE?

"The time to act is running out and we are truly in a race to save the Baltic Sea."

- RACE FOR THE BALTIC

THE REPORT

# **POLAND & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Designate the offshore area Middle Bank, which is believed to be a nursery area for cod, as a marine protected area and secure the proper management of existing protected areas by phasing-out of bottom-trawling and other harmful activities that can destroy the biodiversity in these areas.

### **FISHERIES**

Establish a project for reintroduction of naturally spawning salmon in former salmon rivers in Poland; restore river connectivity and develop a comprehensive salmon management plan by 2014 to secure the establishment of at least one naturally spawning salmon population.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Introduce mandatory nutrient bookkeeping on farmland and nutrient-balanced fertilization practices on farmland by 2014.

# OVERVIEW

Although Poland's coastline along the Baltic, at just over 400 km, is relatively small, the country contains 50 per cent of the people living in the Baltic Sea drainage basin. This means Poland has an enormous impact on the water quality of the Baltic Sea — between 25-50 per cent of the nitrogen and phosphorus that reaches the Baltic Sea comes from Polish rivers.

Most of this impact comes from agricultural practices that prioritise factory farms and intensive rearing of livestock, both of which can result in nutrient runoff into the Baltic Sea, giving rise to problems related to eutrophication such as excessive algal blooms. Additionally, whilst the country has made progress in addressing the legacy of the communist period, they are still struggling to address hazardous substances and pollution from industrial sources, which seep into their waters.

Poland's impact on the region's biodiversity, whilst less significant in terms of magnitude, is still a concern for the long-term sustainability of the fish population in the Baltic Sea. Issues such as illegal fishing, bycatch and the management of their fish stocks have yet to be addressed fully.



RFTB event together with Fundacja Nasza Ziemia

# DAY 58 | AUGUST 4 | SUNDAY

Over the course of the RFTB journey, one of the main insights the team gained was the negative impact which industrial animal farming has on the Baltic Sea. Fifty percent of the total pollution load that seeps into the Sea comes from the agricultural sector. Neglecting to tackle the issue of too much fertiliser being spread on farms it will be impossible to solve the eutrophication problem facing the Baltic Sea. Despite these challenges, the team sought out positive examples of eco-farms that are promoting ecologically sound practices and benefitting local ecosystems. They found a BERAS farm based in Poland, Plotta Farm, which focuses on pig farming and is currently investigating the possibility of GMOfree soy production.

In comparison to the intensive-scale farms the team had experienced elsewhere in Poland and other Baltic countries, this type of eco-farm is a positive example of an agricultural system minimizing its impact on the Baltic Sea. The forest acts as a buffer zone, as tree and plant roots help filter run-off water from the farm which would otherwise flow into the groundwater and eventually into the Baltic sea. As a result there are 50 per cent less nutrients coming off the farm fields and reaching the water system. These types of actions could be a solution to reducing eutrophication in the Baltic Sea.

The RFTB team was really inspired after the visit, having seen how concrete action was having a positive impact on the problems they had witnessed throughout their trip. The water quality of the Baltic Sea will only be restored if we have not only regulatory enforcement but more people like Jacek Plotto who not only want to learn about promoting good farming techniques but begin implementing them.

# **GERMANY & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

### MARINE PROTECTED AREAS ASK

Effectively monitor and manage the diverse ecological habitats and communities found in Germany's waters. These include reefs, mussel banks and sandy bottoms, as well as large quantities of red algae and kelp offering shelter and food for many threatened small organisms, fish and marine mammal species, such as the harbour porpoise.

#### **FISHERIES**

Ensure the country's abundant marine biodiversity is protected, particularly in light of increased resource exploration and extraction, and erection of offshore installations.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Ensure that agricultural practices such as the intensive rearing of livestock do not threaten Germany's progress on reducing nutrient runoff into the Baltic Sea.

# **OVERVIEW**

Germany is home to over 82 million people and has a strong environmental movement both at the political and grassroots level. Despite the fact that over 53 per cent of the land in Germany is devoted to agriculture, the country is only one of two on target to meet their obligations on eutrophication under the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan.

One of the reasons for their success can be laid at the door of the organic movement in Germany. Germany has the largest organic food market in Europe, worth over  $\in 6.1$  billion (second only to the US globally), and has devoted over 6% of their agricultural land to organic farming.

Fishing has long been a part of the German culture and whilst Germany has made strong progress on the agriculture front, they have a mixed record in addressing obligations on the fisheries front. As of yet they have still not completed their long-term management plans for commercially exploited fish species, nor have they eliminated illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing from their waters. However, with over 45 per cent of its waters designated as Marine Protected Areas, the country is leading the way in providing havens for marine life to recover in.



Community bike ride in Rostock led by Rostock's Deputy Mayor

# DAY 64 | AUGUST 10 | SATURDAY

Towards the end of the cycle tour, the RACE FOR THE BALTIC team made a stop in the coastal town of Rostock to learn more about the relationship between northern Germany and the Baltic Sea. The team arrived just in time for the Hanse Sail, which brings a million visitors to Rostock each year.

Rostock is one of the many cities along the Baltic dependent upon the health of the sea for its economic livelihood. Its tourism industry is directly affected by the state of the Baltic Sea from year to year, whilst other areas such as its ability to attract academics to its historical educational institutions, along with highly skilled labour for its booming wind turbine manufacturing industry are dependent upon Rostock's ability to maintain a high quality of life.

During its stay, RFTB met with the local Senator, Holger Matthäus, who relayed several of his concerns about current practices that put the Baltic Sea at risk. According to the Senator, heavy agricultural practices and traffic along the many rivers that flow into the Baltic are increasingly resulting in major blue-green algae outbreaks. The lack of regulation around foreign cargo ships that ply the Baltic Sea also threaten the water quality. Whilst the Senator has been vocal in trying to get these issues addressed, he worries that his voice will not carry the weight of those from Stockholm, Copenhagen and Helsinki. The need for a pan-Baltic approach to the issues such as the ones the Mayor has highlighted is critical. Without such a cooperative approach, the work done by individual leaders pushing for environmental safeguards in their cities and regions could be undermined and the economic health of cities like Rostock put at risk.

# **DENMARK & THE BALTIC SEA**

# POLITICAL ASKS

#### **MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Protect the critical benthic communities of Haploops, horse mussels, sea pens, and sponge aggregations, by establishing a larger MPA in the central Kattegat. Additionally, larger coastal marine protected areas, such as the northern part of the Sound and Little Belt, should be established, and existing MPAs should be better protected and managed.

#### **FISHERIES**

Together with Sweden, Denmark should work to enforce stricter rules and regulations to ensure that the cod population in the Kattegat recovers to sustainable levels.

#### **EUTROPHICATION**

Ensure that Denmark's experience in addressing environmental issues related to intensive arable farming and high animal densities, organic farming and nutrient bookkeeping is shared with the other countries surrounding the Baltic Sea.

# **OVERVIEW**

Denmark's influence on the Baltic Sea is significant both in terms of water quality and fisheries. Whilst the country has just over 5.5 million people, it has a massive coastline of 7,314km and one of the largest fishing fleets in the EU. The very size of its fleet means that Denmark's impact on biodiversity and fish stocks in the Baltic Sea is significant. Denmark has introduced the privatisation of fishing quotas which has led to a steady decline in small scale and coastal fishermen. Environmental organisations and coastal fishermen are currently trying to persuade the government to give fisheries with a lower impact on the environment priority access to Danish fisheries resources. With 62 per cent of Denmark's land allocated for agriculture, the country's contribution to eutrophication in the Baltic Sea is as important as their impact on fisheries in the region.

With a focus on large scale, industrial agriculture, Denmark's farms have become increasingly specialised and consolidated. This, combined with the scale of the country's pig production, threatens water quality both within Denmark and in the Baltic Sea as agricultural practices have resulted in excess animal waste and fertilisers contaminating rivers, water tables and the Baltic.



RFTB final bike ride into Copenhagen

# DAY 71 | AUGUST 17 | SATURDAY

RACE FOR THE BALTIC's campaign team ended their summer of cycling in Copenhagen, just a few months before the HELCOM Ministerial meeting, which takes place a few streets away, on 3 October. It would be the last opportunity for the the group of cyclists, NGOs, and myriad supporters to directly reach out to the people living along the coast and engage them on the issues of marine protected areas, fisheries and eutrophication. Whilst the campaign will continue in the upcoming months and years, it was a poignant moment for everyone who had been involved in the campaign since its inception almost nine months earlier.

The day began with a public bike ride through the city where over 30 cyclists took over the streets in their RFTB T-shirts that read "Sign the Petition Now." The spectacle of so many riders advertising a cause quickly turned into a shared experience as many of Copenhagen's numerous cyclists joined the team spontaneously along route. When the team arrived at Nyhavn in the centre of the city, where the RACE FOR THE BALTIC tent was located, the cyclists were greeted by a representative from the NORDEN Council of Ministers, Lone Loklindt, a Member of the Danish Parliament, TV2 (Denmark's national TV Station) and hundreds of people.

By the end of the day, the team reached out to hundreds of people and collected over 1000 signatures to support a immediate implementation of the BSAP. Our international team of volunteers, ranging in age from 12 to 65, once again joined the RACE FOR THE BALTIC campaign team in spreading the word across Copenhagen that the Baltic is in danger and the time to take action is now. The response and feedback was overwhelming.





The Baltic is dying from lack of oxygen. Let's help it catch its breath.





We want to Restore, Recover and Revive the Baltic Sea. Please sign petition, to be delivered to Helcom in October ww.raceforthebaltic.com



Currently there are 59 species considered under threat/declining in #BalticSea including harbour porpoise & ringed seals





tsJyVI8G9F







Yesterday's #raceforthebaltic business roundtable gave a sense of how business need to engage in Baltic Sea, topic for #Almadalen







#RacefortheBaltic Russia update – more than 25% wastewater in St.Petersburg city is released into environment untreated #icareaboutthebaltic







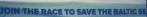


RT @CCBnetwork: Summer 2013 #eutrophication has already started in #Balticsea. 1 month earlier than in 2012.





RT @CCBnetwork #Latvia has the most #wildsalmon rivers in #balticsea region. #Latvia has to lead the region towards active protection



















#Germany has missed the deadline & is behind schedule in designation of **Baltic Sea Protected Areas** #BSAP #HELCOM #MPAs #wwf



Thank you @RyszardKalisz for supporting #raceforthbaltic http://t.co/StYh0IAR9t we are reaching Poland July 28th!



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#### **SWEDEN**

Affärsvärlden Blekinge Länstidningen Camino Magasine Dagensindustri **Dagens Nyheter** Kristianstadbladet Länstidningen Malmö Nation Radio Miljöaktuellt P4 Swedish Radio **Radio Sweden International** Skärgårdsradion Svenska Dagbladet **Sveriges Radio** Sydöstran Sydsvenska Dagbladet Trelleborgs Allahanda **TV4** Sweden Vad Händer WebFinanser Your Living City Ystad Allehanda Ystad Lokal Radio Österlen Magasin Ålandstidningen

### FINLAND/ÅLAND

STT YLE YLE Radio Vega Nya Åland Nyan Ålands TV & Radio Ålandstidningen

### RUSSIA

47news.ru Regnum (Russian edition) Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti Terijoki.spb.ru

#### **ESTONIA**

Pärnupostimees Radio Kuku Lääne Elu Bioneer

### LATVIA

Latvias Radio One Prog 1 Latvijas Avize Radio SWH Tukuma Zinas

#### LITHUANIA

The Lithuania Tribune Vakarua Ekspresas Balticum Televiiziya

#### POLAND

Informacje Poland Kurer Szcezecinski PR1 Poland PR4 Poland Radio Kampus Radio Kaszebe Radio Kolobrzeg Telewizja Polska Gazeta Kolobrzeska

#### GERMANY

Arcor Das Ist Focus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Meinstadt Nachrichten Ostee Zeitung Osteewelle Hit Radio Ostsee Zeitung Radio Lohro SVZ

### DENMARK

METRO DR P4 Bornholm TV2 DK Nyhederne Ritzau

#### INTERNATIONAL

Regnum-Belarus (Belarus edition) Blackstone Valley Tribune IUCN Hanse Sail Magazine

# **BUSINESS ROUND TABLES**

# **OVERVIEW**

The problems facing the Baltic Sea will require action from all parts of society. Traditionally, environmental issues were the concern of NGOs and policy makers, but there is an increasing realisation that the business community can play a positive role in addressing today's sustainability issues through innovation, improved processes and the ability to reach out to their consumers.

RACE FOR THE BALTIC believes that harnessing this energy is crucial to returning the Baltic Sea to environmental health and has organised a series of business roundtables to bring together likeminded businesses to share experience and identify opportunities for action.

Following the Swedish roundtable in June the RFTB campaign announced the formation of the Baltic Sea Business Leadership Group, which will continue to bring together businesses to explore how they can contribute to the sustainability of the Baltic Sea and identify areas of concrete action - and ensure the future economic and business development of the Baltic Sea region, which is dependent upon the health of the sea.

# CALENDER OF EVENTS

# May 7 | Gdansk, Poland

Barriers to innovative water quality development in Poland and what are the opportunities.

# May 28 | Vilnius, Lithuania

In what ways can supply chain process reduce impact on the Baltic Sea.

# June 27th | Stockholm, Sweden

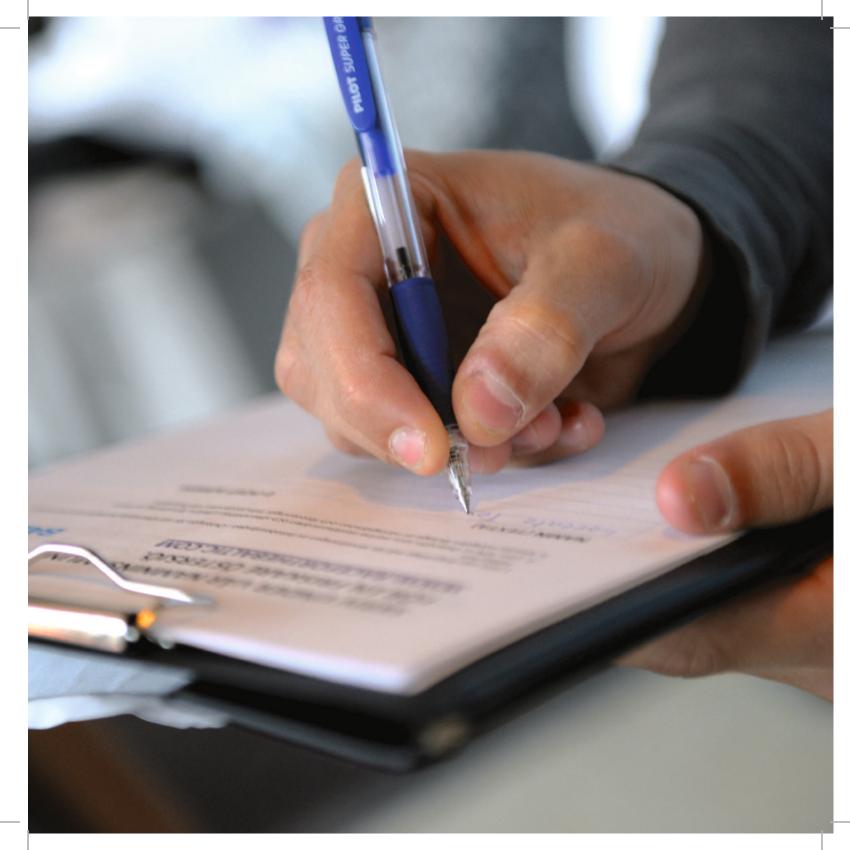
How can your company engage customers and their staff in sustainability issues and the Baltic Sea.

# Autumn 2013 | Rostock, Germany

Identifying new criteria for sustainable cruise shipping in the Baltic Sea.

# Autumn 2013 | Copenhagen, Denmark

Accessibility to new financial support mechanisms for the sustainability of the Baltic Sea.



# DEAR MINISTERS OF ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES,

As legislators from the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea we are looking forward to the upcoming HELCOM Ministerial meeting in October.

As you know, the Baltic Sea is at a critical juncture. The recent common fisheries policy reforms at the European level and past work have given hope that in the not too distant future that the Baltic Sea will once again be home to an economically and environmentally sustainable fishing industry.

Yet whilst there is reason to be optimistic on the fisheries management front, there are still formidable environmental challenges facing the Baltic Sea that require urgent action. Pollution from agricultural practices, remaining problems with waste water management and emissions from traffic in several of our countries continue to raise the nutrients levels of the Baltic beyond sustainable thresholds. A fragilised Baltic Sea will also be less able to adapt to climate change.

The vulnerable state of the Baltic Sea has not gone unnoticed by the people who live in the region. The 21st Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference from 26th to 28th August 2012 in St. Petersburg unanimously adopted a resolution containing recommendations regarding environmental health as well as integrated maritime policy. Over the past few months we have seen just how much the people who live around the Baltic value its environmental health. The Baltic Stern report made it clear that there was an economic value to a clean Baltic that the people who live around it are willing to support. This summer the Race for the Baltic campaign has engaged thousands of people across every country bordering on the Baltic Sea to show their support for a more environmentally sustainable Baltic.

As legislators we look forward to an ambitious outcome from the upcoming HELCOM meeting in October. We stand ready to support this outcome within our Parliaments and legislative bodies.

Generations from now will look back on today and we hope that they will be able to point to the work done in the next few years as the time when the Baltic Sea was preserved for those who lived around it for decades to come.

# SINCERELY

# Linas Balsys

MP, Vice-President of the European Affairs Committee, Lithuanian Seimas

# Jens Holm

MP, Member of the Environment Committee of the Swedish Riksdagen

Lars Tysklind

MP, Member of the Environment Committee of the Swedish Riksdagen

# Rainer Vakra

MP, Member of the Committee on Environment of the Estonian Riigikogu

# Michael Kauch

MdB, FDP Spokesman on the Environment, German Bundestag

# Satu Hassi

MEP, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, European Parliament, Finland

# Isabella Lövin

MEP, Member of the Committee on Fisheries, European Parliament, Sweden

*Sirpa Pietikäinen* MEP, Member of the Committee on Economic Affairs, European Parliament, Finland

Steen Gade

MP, President of the Climate and Energy Committee of the Danish Folketing

# Anna Grodzka

MP, Member of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Polish Sejm

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MP, Member Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Polish Sejm

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MP, Member of the Environment Subcommittee of the Economic, Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Policy Committee of the Latvian Saeima and President of the Baltic Assembly

# Robert Biedron

MP, Member of the Polish Parliament and Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe

Lone Loklint

MP, Chairman for the Environmental Group in Danish Parliament

# **PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS**







