



The Baltic University Programme NEWSLETTER

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Issue # 30

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Midsummer bonfire, Mäntsälä, Finland. Photo: Janne Karaste.

In May this year Baltic University Programme and Åbo Akademi University organized a one week long sailing course for students and teachers on board STS Fryderyk Chopin. Lectures and sailing were combined with participation in the EU Maritime Days and conference in Gothenburg. This sailing tour was also part of the planning process for the new courses on Maritime Spatial Planning. The surrounding provided by the ship and by the tour was more than excellent. This year is the fourteenth summer we have a sailing course, SAIL, and based on the good experiences from this course we are now looking forward to expanding the concept to other activities of the network. The excellent cooperation with the owner of STS Fryderyk Chopin is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

Another EU related meeting was held in the end of May in Hamburg, which specifically focused on the role of education in the region. The role and ways of cooperation between educational institutions and private companies were discussed, and the dual model which is well established in Germany was shown as a good example. Networking and mobility were also two themes of current interest in the Baltic Sea region, and Baltic University Programme was presented as the good example for both mobility and for networking in higher education.

In June we have the Annual forum for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Copenhagen. I am looking forward to further discussions on the important role of education in the region, on networking and mobility, all to make our region a common learning and educational region and to strengthen the regional identity.

With my best wishes for a great summer and looking forward to meeting you again in the new academic year!

On the way to Copenhagen,

Paula Lindroos
Director

Editor of this issue:

[Christian Andersson](#)

Contributions, ideas, suggestions
and even criticisms are welcome!
Please contact the editor.



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Upcoming Events

June

- 3—6 EHSa Teachers conference, Rogów, Poland
- 5—6 World Symposium on Sustainable Development at Universities, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- 20 – 22 BUP Centres Meeting, Kaliningrad, Russia.
- 26 New Project Application, Jurmala, Latvia.
- 27—30 Integrative Approaches Towards Sustainability, Riga, Latvia.

July

- 8—28 Summer Academy "Challenges of Sustainable Development in Poland", Kartuzy, Poland

August

- 1—5 Baltic Artek, Kaliningrad, Russia

September

- 10—27 SAIL, the Baltic Sea, start in Gdynia, Poland.
- 11—15 Students Summer Course, Zittau/Görlitz, Germany.
- 16—18 Students Seminar: Environmental Protection, Legnica, Poland.

October

November

- 7—10 ESD for Teachers, Kazimierz Dolny, Poland
- 14 MSP 3rd Planning Meeting, Szczecin, Poland
- 15—18 Students Conference, Szczecin, Poland

December

- 12—14 Center Directors Meeting, Hamburg, Germany.

Note: The dates for the events may change.

For further and latest information on the upcoming events please see the [BUP Calendar](#) and [List of Events](#). The latter list now also includes an archive with [Past Events](#). The entries in this list contains not only information about the event but also programmes, presentations and other materials.

BUP Sailing to European Maritime Day Blue Growth

In the very last minute and with short notice a cruise for students and teachers was organised on board the Polish sailing training ship STS Fryderyk Chopin. The cruise was a joint (ad)venture for students from a maritime spatial planning course at Åbo Akademi University and Turku University and some students from the Szczecin Maritime University and some other BUP students. Chopin sailed from Szczecin, Poland 18th of May heading for Gothenburg, Sweden. In Gothenburg the students were to participate in the European Maritime Day (EMD) conference 20–22 May. The theme of the conference "Sustainable growth from the oceans, seas and coasts: Blue growth" fitted very well with the students diverse interests.

On the way to Gothenburg all students and teachers onboard got a hands on lesson on the necessity of cooperation to manage a sailing ship. Hands on meaning pulling or coiling a large number of ropes, climbing the masts and the bowsprit to or furl or unfurl a large number of sails, scrubbing the deck and peeling potatoes in the galley. But most of all it perhaps meant the signal "All hands on deck!" which means that one should gather on deck as quickly as possible to shift the sails. A signal also heard at night.



Christina Dahl-Pommer and Andrea Morf on board Chopin in Gothenburg. For some more photos from the cruise see the [BUP web site](#).

In Gothenburg Chopin's berthing place was next to the Swedish East Indiaman Götheborg and only a few minutes walk from the EMD conference area in the former Eriksberg wharf. The conference with about 1000 participants from all over the world dealt with many different aspects of sustainability applied in the maritime environment not only in Sweden but in the whole of Europe. Words as co-operation, competitiveness, sustainability and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) were often used in addition to blue growth. BUP

had a presentation of the plans for MSP education in one of the many parallel workshops. In the morning of the second day of the conference the teachers and experts gathered on board Chopin together with some colleagues from Gothenburg. Under the leadership of director Paula Lindroos this was the 2nd meeting on the planned Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) BUP course. It was her pleasure to inform that the Swedish Institute had granted seed money to the project to prepare an application for funding of an MSP course. It was decided to write a draft application before the next MSP planning meeting in November.

The cruise back to Szczecin was characterized by continuous nice weather, only one or two incidents of seasickness, and after conference discussions.

In the afternoon the 25 May more than 30 happy and sun tanned students and teachers were seen leaving the STS Fryderyk Chopin, her captain Malgorzata Czarnomska and crew, bringing home many new experiences and friendships.

Christian Andersson and Sinikka Suomalainen



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A New Baltic University Course on Sustainable Development

A year ago the work to update the A Sustainable Baltic Region (SBR) course material began. Now the first phase of this work has been completed. The starting point was the old SBR course but the new material is so different that we may talk about a new course.

At a small starting workshop at Hel Marine Station in Poland the participants agreed that we need 12 session or chapters rather than the 10 as in the SBR. Each of these has in turn been subdivided into 3 or 4 parts. The new material together consists of 40 such parts. Each part has an introductory text and then

links to book chapters, power point presentations, small films etc. In connection with the project all BUP published material, many thousand pages, has been made available on the BUP webpage and many chapters etc in are linked to.



From the first Rio meeting 20 years ago

The intention is that the introductory texts together give "the map" of sustainable development, an overview of the whole field. The links provides the material needed to learn more about each topic. As an example: the session last to be put together number 6 (out of the 12) is called *Life and Land, Food and Fibres*. The first subpart is called *The Living World* and focus on biodiversity; the second called *Land and Water* includes for example desertification and deforestation, overuse of water, etc. but also means of improved land management; third is *Agriculture and food*, and finally the fourth subpart is called *Forests and fibres* and focus and wood and its use as energy, material etc. (This corresponds to book 4 in the old course.)

The material will now be subject to editing as suggested by a reference group. After that it will be available on the BUP web site for everyone to use, as "version 1", around September 1st. It will thus be ready for courses next academic year.

Many proposals have been made how to develop the new material. One is to have a *news section*, a sort of blog, in which relevant new publications etc in the field may be listed, commented on etc. A second is to have a section on *matters to be discussed*. As we all know there are many aspects of sustainable development which are controversial and one may have different positions. More proposals for how to develop the material are welcome. Send it to lars.ryden@csduppsala.uu.se.

The new material is less focussed on the Baltic Sea region, not surprising since so much has happened since the SBR course was introduced in 1997. But even leaving that aside and looking on the Internet as a whole it is still it appears rather unique. I did not find any similar basic material on sustainability, only more specified for example for those working with urban development, or for some schools, at least not in English language.

The new material is so different from the old course I think it should also have new name. What do you propose? Proposals are welcome.

Lars Rydén



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Completing the Book Series on Ecosystems Health and Sustainable Agriculture

The brave project to develop and launch a new master level course and material on Ecosystems Health and Sustainable Agriculture (EHSA) was initiated by former BUP director Christine Jakobsson already in 2005. With great enthusiasm she was able to involve US partners University of Illinois and a Baltic Sea region network of veterinary schools, not to talk about a long series of older colleagues in the BUP network and some new, to contribute to the project.

As with earlier BUP courses a first and difficult step has been to produce material for the course, now in the form of three books. The first two of these were published during the spring. They were *Sustainable Agriculture* and *Ecology and Animal Health*. The third one, on *Rural Development*, was lagging behind. In the fall of 2011 I was asked to take over as an editor of this book after Ingrid Karlsson who had left the office a little before that. The intention was to keep up with the schedule and publish the book during spring 2012. The goal was not completely reached, but in end of May, just before the first teachers' conference for the EHSA project, a draft version of the book existed. The book on Rural Development is now expected to be printed after the summer vacations, that is, early September.

The book has some 300 pages and 16 chapters. *The rural landscape* is described in 6 chapters, one of them from the Great Lakes region in the US. Topics include ecosystems services (and disservices), landscapes in Belarus and nature protection. *The Rural society* is described in six chapters, including demography, economic development and urbanization, and the section on *Forests and Energy* has five chapters. The book is concluded with a section on *Planning and Management* with four chapters, and *Policy Instruments and Governance* with five chapters.

Chapter authors come from all countries in the Baltic Sea region, and three from University of Illinois.

Magnus Lehman, who makes the lay-out of the book, has put considerable work into finding nice and interesting pictures and photos, many with their own story. Just folding the pages and enjoying pictures is worthwhile. Cases from all countries in the region, from Denmark to Ukraine and some in the Great Lakes region, are found in many chapters. It is interesting to see how much connects us, how we have to fight with similar problems and how we solve them, rather than looking at the differences.



The interface between rural and urban landscapes.

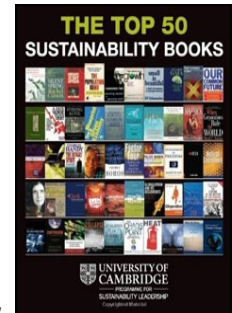
Lars Rydén



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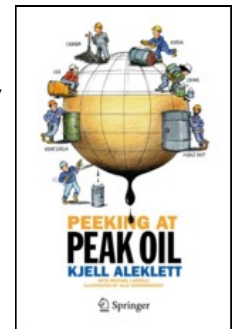
Sustainable Reading Hints

It is not easy to know what to read if you are interested in such a broad subject as sustainability and sustainable development. Fortunately there is some help to get. The Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) published in 2009 both a book and a list of books called the [Cambridge Sustainability Bookshelf](#) that contains a list called the top 50 sustainability books. This list was in 2010 followed by the [2010 Sustainability Books – CPSL's Top 40 Selection](#)



Another list of sustainability books is the [Legal Planet: Recommended Books](#) published by Legal Planet, a collaboration between UC Berkeley School of Law and UCLA School of Law.

A new book that may be of interest at least for those who attended the seminar on Energy Futures organised by BUP in Uppsala a couple of years ago is the book "[Peeking at Peak Oil](#)" by Kjell Aleklett. The book is available not only in print but could also be read online for free. In the book Professor Aleklett describes the decade-long journey of Peak Oil from extremist fringe theory to today's accepted fact: Global oil production is entering terminal decline. He explains everything you need to know about Peak Oil and its world-changing consequences from an insider's perspective. In simple steps, he tells us how oil is formed, discovered and produced. He uses science to reveal the errors and deceit of national and international oil authorities, companies and governments too terrified to admit the truth.



The BUP Newsletter publishes materials on the BUP, BUP activities and on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. The newsletter is published four times per year.

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Balancing a Regional Difference

A case study by Peter Ambros

It is late in November 2011 and I'm in the Latvian countryside, in a small community named Ergli. Ergli is in a state of winter peace. Christmas decorations still shine by their absence in the windows of the buildings and on the streets, but the snow has fallen and an absorbing peace has settled over the beautiful Latvian landscape. My good friend Lilija is making lunch; from the basement of the Soviet-built block house we have just collected root vegetables, sour cucumbers and honey. Later in the day, we are visiting Lilija's grandmother, who is now staying in the local retirement home of Ergli and in whose empty apartment we have stayed overnight. The apartment is a time capsule; the scents, the colours, the items – the whole interior radiates of times gone by.

The meeting with her grandma is over pretty quickly. From one of the two beds in the small room in the retirement home, the old woman sits up and we talk for a while. She is very friendly and unobtrusive, with a clear mind and eyes peering of both joy and bated wisdom. Our conversation is overheard by another woman silently lying down in the bed next.

There is not much space in the room for anything else than the two beds; a small shelf and a few photos at the bedside and a minimal chest of drawers. The room is warm and tidy. And that's all. I leave Lilija in the small room with her grandmother. Outside the room, my thoughts travel to Sweden. Already during my first period of study, I had a job on the side in the elderly care system back home. And for some months I was even living in a retirement apartment awaiting renovation. When they renovated the apartment, the walls separating two apartments was removed, throughout the whole building two large studios were turned into one larger two-room apartment. The bathrooms were rebuilt; toilet seats were hoisted with elevations, and armrests were mounted. Doorposts were widened and doorsteps removed.

Finally security alarms and monitoring systems were installed in each corner of the apartments and our old folks were left alone in these settings – clinical and dense with technology. This formed the minimum standard for every pensioner or old aged person in Sweden.

How does the care and treatment of our elderly differ, in Sweden and Latvia? Is it sustainable?

Can the elderly care be made sustainable?

The retirement home in Ergli is still mostly and merely just a home. There are not a lot of facilities or amenities. Well, last year they got a lift between the two floors of the home, so that the staff did not have to carry the disabled or those with limited physical mobility up and down the stairs. There are not many walkers, wheelchairs, lifts or hygiene facilities around. If any at all. The public bathroom is similar to my own private one, albeit a bit larger. It serves up to 50 old people, in different ages and levels of physical mobility. Lilija says it's probably good for her grandmother to have a roommate. Though of course, it can be stressful at times, not to have any privacy at all.

My own conclusions are not based on research, but on strong and widespread impressions. It escapes no one living in Sweden that the care of the elderly has become big business here. Its no news that elderly care has gone from being a family matter to a social and institutional activity. And quite recently it has been turned into a profit-making activity, apparently often



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enough even in the hands of venture capitalists. It's an absurd development, although it is a reflection of a general trend in our society, mirroring where our modern lives are going despite our efforts to live in a sustainable manner. In Latvia, this last step has not been fully taken yet. The old folk's homes in Ergli sorts directly under the municipal leadership, who in its turn falls under the provincial leadership; our Swedish counterpart to the County Council. All is ultimately funded by the state. And the Latvian national economy is still weak, even though the curves are slowly beginning to point upwards and a recovery is in sight. While this is awaited, as much as possible of the governmental resources and funds are distributed to the more producing sectors in society, according to a more or less explicit and commonly accepted political policy. The resource consuming institutions just has to be given a lower priority. This seems to be an inevitable and commonly accepted fact across the Latvian society. And as always in the Baltic's, there is no whining or complaining! Even the old people themselves, who are able to make their voices heard, seem to refrain from lamentation. They're used to hard times and there is commonly a humble approach to the life we are given.

Sweden, January 2012

Back to school my thoughts buzz around a project. The framework is given by the Cemus course *Sustainable Development – Project Management and Communication*. I do some research. I write a project plan. I collect my arguments and begin to pull strings. With some previous experience from a company that sells all kinds of facilitation equipment for elderly care, I decide to make contact to see if they have a something to spare, that could be used at the homes in Ergli.

The privatization of the elderly care in Sweden has quite naturally resulted in the fact that care providing companies are seeking rational solutions along with care facilitation equipment that really provides an effect. A large number of companies are producing and selling care facilitation equipment to all different nursing homes and elderly care units. Their managements have become strong business partners who often buy large quantities of equipment. The supplying companies naturally want to stay ahead of their competitors with new, modern products. This results in new manufacturing and updating of equipment which is offered to the new market entrants. Walkers and wheelchairs should often enough be of the latest model of the year! Market forces reign!

This also seems to lead to a relatively large amount of equipment being replaced long before its technical life-span has been reached. And the surpluses, the phased-out equipment, is often returned to the re-sellers' storages awaiting disposal and, at best, waste sorting and part recycling.

How about in Latvia, then?

From this development there is not yet much to be seen. And in Ergli, the staff of the old folk's home has turned an old desk chair to a jerry chair, or a hygiene chair, as it would be referred to here in Sweden, by some inventive carpentry. In Latvia the resources are still managed in a completely different way – a much more sustainable way. But in order to address a lack of equipment and the current need that has emerged – how about if I managed to persuade some Swedish companies to donate some of their surplus to Latvia? A temporary transfer of resources and excess production, while awaiting the same assumed development in Latvia? A transfer that would balance a regional difference of available resources? Sounds like an idea to me. Certainly the transport would produce CO2 emissions, but in the relative sense, in very limited amounts. Especially in relation to what destruction of the used equip-



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ment, along with new production of these high-tech materials, would generate.

In an equation of this kind it evidently becomes an environmental win-win situation, where people find use for the equipment until its technical life-span is reached, instead of a far too early breaking it apart, to a cost our environment has to pay by new production and the emissions generated by premature destruction. Would someone do the math on this, it would appear that our global environment would be better off. But then again, it's just about common sense. Isn't it? And about the old folk's in Ergli.

So is the project idea really worth the efforts?

Already my first tries give unexpectedly positive results. The willingness to help often enough proves so big that I almost get moved. I get an external partner in my former contact at a company that sells this equipment. In their storage there are already a large number of different facilitation aids that has been lying there, waiting for someone to come and buy them. But by some time passing, the more likely alternative points to destruction, as everyone seems to want the newest models!

With the well meaning hearts of the company's management, the stretch to a decision is short; it's – come and get it! In addition, the company has a broad network of suppliers. The message is suddenly spreading in the market community, and also several re-sellers find non-utilized materials at their own disposal. Now the message is spreading even to customers and clients, such as municipalities and private care providers.

The snowball is rolling!

On March the 20th, 28 hospital beds from the retirement home of Hagaborg in Norrköping, are dismantled and dispatched with destination to Ergli! Beds that have not even reached half of their technical life-span are provided, each with three motors for position adjustments and with mattresses and lateral support. Several companies follow and start to donate: I receive crutches, walkers, ergonomic pads, pressure relieving dressings and over 60 air cell pressure wound preventing mattresses along with some electrical pumps for maintaining their air pressure. Another company donated sheets, duvet covers and pillow cases – about one hundred of each! I receive a mobile floor lift, an investment worth 15 000 Swedish crowns! A well known shipping company part-funds the transportations. And already, the total value of the donated equipment is approaching a quarter of a million Swedish crowns!

A new problem arises: the framework of this project within Cemus' course is suddenly not big enough to accommodate the project! This project can be developed to any length! But with results achieved, we address the retirement home in Ergli, leaving the equipment to them with nothing more than the words: Please accept our gifts!

It came as a surprise to me that the will to help can be awakened by such fairly moderate efforts. It shows that there is good in us. And we always have the potential to act upon it. And the times will always be uncertain.

Thank you fellow donors and project partners!
It is a privilege to be able to help your fellow.



The moment the collected equipment was handed over to the retirement home in Ergli.



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Note 1: Gaida Marija Vekmane, Lilijs grandmother, who unknowingly initiated this project by our meeting, passed away on December 30, 2011, 88 years old. I dedicate this project to her.

Note 2: This case study has also been published in the CEMUS publication *Glimpsing Path: Being and Acting in Times of (Un)certainty* (ed. Markus Nyström, in press).

Peter Ambros

lives in Stockholm and is a part time marketing consultant and part time student. The numerous BUP courses he has taken has inspired him to live sustainably and provided the ground for his thinking behind this project. He grew up in Sweden to Finnish and Estonian parents, and this multicultural upbringing has made him identify with the Baltic region as a whole instead of any one particular country. His parents' struggles, having grown up in times of war, have instilled in Peter a humility and appreciation of his own life.

As he shows in this article about his innovative project, acting on injustices and problems is important to Peter. In these times he thinks "it would be nothing less than a crime to stay indifferent". Sometimes indifference can be even worse than the injustices themselves.

