



Center for  
Transboundary  
Cooperation

## Activities Report 1999

### Peipsi – Чудское

*The lake which unites Estonia and Russia*



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## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dear reader of this report!

Our Center for Transboundary Cooperation – CTC was established as Lake Peipsi Project yet at the beginning of the 1990s in order to support sustainable development in the Lake Peipsi region. Researchers and students, journalists, social workers and teachers, engineers and tourist consultants by background, we all work today at the Center because we all live around Lake Peipsi and we share the same concerns about how the economic and social development in this region will take place. It is important for us, as this will affect us, our children and our neighbours – all people living in this region.

There are many social, economic and environmental problems and challenges in the Lake Peipsi region that we all face: lack of jobs, especially in rural areas; health protection problems; insufficient water quality; weak infrastructure for tourism and recreation around the lake etc. Often it is not easy to find right and the most effective solutions to the problems in the rapidly changing social and economic situation in the region; – today the Lake Peipsi region is not just one of many lake basin - it is a future external border of the European Union. Estonia and Latvia that share the Lake Peipsi basin make intensive preparations to enter the EU in several years. To find the right solutions to the problems, we develop cooperation with authorities and specialists in the Lake Peipsi region, as well as with experts from all over Europe and America, who have own experience of addressing local social and economic problems in lake regions in a transboundary context. We are very grateful to our partner organizations in the Lake Peipsi region as well as to our partner organizations internationally who help us a lot to understand roots of specific social, economic and environmental problems and to develop innovative solutions to these problems.

Center for Transboundary Cooperation – CTC works continuously to become an innovative organization that offers solutions to the problems identified in the EU external border area by the European Union and other international and national institutions through implementation of specific projects, consultations and research, assisting organizations in the region in project development training and cross-border communication. These activities we believe will promote implementation of human sustainable development principles and increase quality of life of people living in the Lake Peipsi basin.

Gulnara Roll

*Gulnara Roll*



## NARVA AND DAUGAVPILS LOCAL AGENDA 21: IMPLEMENTATION OF BALTIC AGENDA 21 THROUGH NGO COOPERATION OF THE BORDER CITIES OF ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Funding:

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (REC).

By Andrei Pershin

**The elaboration of Agenda 21 for the sustainable development of the Baltic Sea area has been initiated by the decision of the heads of Baltic governments and by the decision of the foreign ministers made at the meeting of the Council of Baltic Sea States and the EU countries.**

The development of local Agenda 21 has been already launched on the official level in many cities and regions of Eastern Europe, including the Narva area (Ida-Virumaa, Estonia) and the Daugavpils area (Latgale, Latvia).

The cities of Narva and Daugavpils are rather similar. Both Narva, with the population of about 73,000, and Daugavpils, with about 120,000, are the cities with rich history. In the middle of the last century, both of them were turned into large national industrial centers with many polluting enterprises.

Today both cities are located on the periphery of their countries, in border areas. Furthermore, 95% of Narva's residents are non-Estonians, and 87% of Daugavpils's non-Latvians. Consequently, the situation there is characterized by isolation from national life due to regional inactivity, high unemployment and a low percentage of people with citizenship status.

In these conditions, increased public awareness about environmental issues and the growth of public involvement in their solutions become issues of high priority.

The project is focused on NGOs' participation in local Agenda 21 and cross-border cooperation. Narva and Daugavpils NGO representatives participate in workshops to study the possibilities of contributing to local Agenda 21 and developing concrete cooperation projects. Narva and Daugavpils NGOs, with the support of local NGO resource centers, are able to exchange their experiences. The project includes parallel sessions of two workshops in both cities and two conferences devoted to youth involvement and to the NGO role in cross-border cooperation. An informal NGO cooperation network of Estonia and Latvia is also established.

The project's aim is to implement the principles of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea area and to involve both local authorities and NGOs in local Agenda 21 in Narva and Daugavpils.

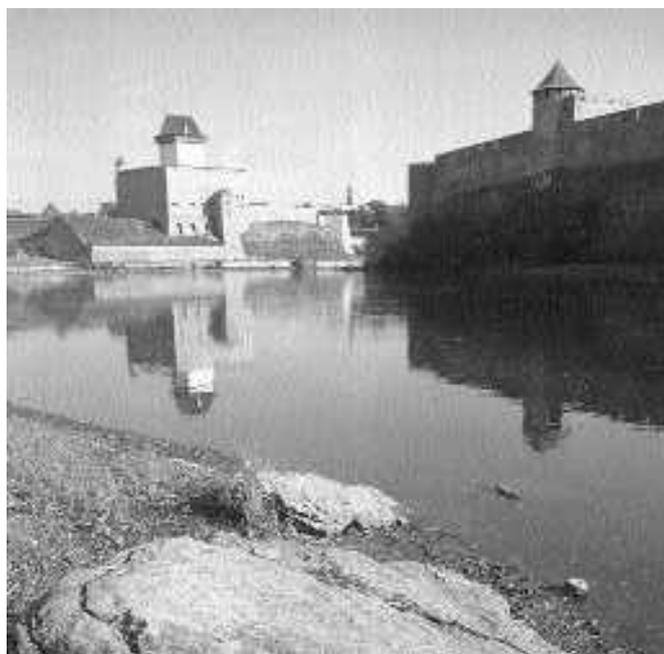
Both cities have already hosted two workshops:

- "Sustainable Development and Agenda 21"
- "Public Involvement in Local Agenda 21: Cooperation between Local Authorities and Cross-Border Cooperation"

The goal of the workshops was to inform NGO leaders on the issues of sustainable development, as well as to exchange experiences and to study the possibilities of new cooperation projects on the local level.

The program for the year 2000 also includes the Baltic Youth Workshop in Narva, which is supposed to consolidate the efforts of young people from Narva and their peers from other Estonian regions in solving common environmental problems. The workshop will help to establish new contacts, facilitate communication in the Estonian language and overcome ethnic barriers. In autumn 2000, Daugavpils will host the Daugava Forum, which is aimed at the development of cooperation between NGOs and local authorities in the Latvian-Belarusian border area on the basis of the sustainable development concept.

The participants of the project are the Daugavpils NGO Support Center, which was established on the basis of the Center for Nature Studies and Environmental Education of the Daugavpils Pedagogical University (DPU DIVIC), and the Center for Transboundary Cooperation together with its Narva office, which have extensive experience in developing joint projects with participants of different levels from both countries as well as experience in coordinating cross-border programs.



## NGO SUPPORT PROJECT FOR IDA-VIRUMAA COUNTY

Funding:  
PHARE DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME

By Andrei Pershin

Ida-Virumaa region has a social, economic and political situation that is unique for Estonia. Furthermore, public participation in third sector activities is lower in the region than in the rest of the country. Narva's position on the border between Russia and Estonia has brought attention to Narva from both national governments and international organizations monitoring ethnic integration issues in Estonia. Narva has 73,500 inhabitants. About 96% of the population of Narva is so-called "Russian-speaking" while only 4% of the town's population is Estonian. Approximately 80% of Narva inhabitants do not speak Estonian.

The Narva NGO sector is quite undeveloped, which is a heritage of Soviet times. Most of the NGO activists do not speak Estonian and English and thus are cut off from information and funding sources, and from training available for NGOs in Estonia. People of the region have less understanding about civil society in Estonia as a whole. Addressing the general problems and development of grass root NGO organizations is an integral part of the social and civic integration of the Russian-speaking population into Estonian society.

NGOs in Narva and Ida-Virumaa are interested in strengthening their democratic and organizational structures, but weakness of the organizations and lack of information are great impediments to this process.

The overall long-term objective is to promote democratic order, transparency in decision-making, and involvement of community members and NGOs in decision-making on a local level through setting up and developing the administrative capacity of a regional NGO Support Center.

The main purpose of the Center is to train leaders of grass root NGOs in leading their organizations professionally and efficiently, and to maintain effective cooperation between the community groups and local governments.

The objective of this project is to transfer skills from the national NGO Center to the regional NGO center by training the proposed director of the Narva NGO Center in management and other NGO-related skills. In addition, a comprehensive library in Russian, including information on NGO development and management, was established.

Technical support at the center provides an opportunity for NGO and community groups' representatives to use the computer, Internet, e-mail, telephone and fax, and use rooms for small meetings and seminars.

There were also free advisory sessions without preliminary registration. The questions asked during these advisory sessions concerned:

- Technical support (computer, e-mail, Internet)
- Project writing
- Funding
- Strategic planning

The Center recorded 153 NGO representatives who took part in seminars and consultations.

There were also five seminars held for representatives of local NGOs:

- 1) What is the role of NGOs in a democratic society?
- 2) Management of public business in NGOs. Mission and goal of NGOs and Agenda 21.
- 3) How to write good project proposals. How to implement a project efficiently.
- 4) Cooperation of NGOs with government agencies and businesses.
- 5) How to make the work of NGO effective.

Four additional consultation sessions were organized on the following themes:

- NGO legislation
- Funding and writing project proposals
- NGO bookkeeping
- NGOs and taxes

During the project period the number of NGOs having contacts and getting services from the Narva NGO Support Center has grown and as a result of this the general growth of activity, qualification and authority of NGOs in the region has been observed over the past two years.

Qualification of the NGO representatives has increased. This is noticeable in the questions that are asked during consultations, seminars and advisory sessions. For example, if in the beginning of the last year the main question was "Where we can get money?", now the questions asked more often concern planning, monitoring, and the strategy of development.

Local authorities' awareness of the third sector in the region has risen. The representatives of local authorities participate in our seminars. Currently, at the request of Ida-Virumaa county authorities, we are preparing a round table of NGOs from Ida-Virumaa. We are also working together with the Narva Mayor's Office to create a council of NGOs in Narva.

## CHILDREN FROM NARVA IN RÄPINA HOST FAMILIES

Funding:

ESTONIAN INTEGRATION FOUNDATION  
NETHERLANDS MATRA-KAP PROGRAM,  
ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

By Angelika Rehema

**Sixteen children from Narva (north-eastern Estonia) stayed with host families in Rääpina (south-east Estonia) from January to December 1999. Before coming to Rääpina they were all about to become street kids. Each of them had their own sad story.**

Viktoria's and Pavel's parents were divorced and their mother had a new boyfriend. All five people lived in two dormitory rooms, where alcohol and arguments were part of the daily routine. None of the grown-ups were employed.

Aleksey's and Ilya's mother was taking care of them alone. Still she was drinking daily and lost their apartment because of debts.

Maksim's father was in prison and his mother was looking after five children. Maksim was often absent from school, and due to bad company he had already started smoking.

Ulyana was taken care of by her brother as their mother was dead and their father was in prison.

Viktoria's mother left for Russia a few years ago and showed no interest towards her daughter. Her father had relationships with other women and was often drunk. Viktoria was afraid of him.

Oleg's mother was in deep depression after divorce. She lost her job and could not manage raising her son. He refused to go to school and at the age of 12 still had only a 3rd grade education.

The host families' project was founded on an initiative of people from Rääpina. As many nice and smart, but neglected children attended family stay language camps in the summer, their hosts proposed a project, which would make the children's stay with Rääpina host families possible for longer periods.

The main aims of the project were the following: 1) to guarantee proper living and developing conditions (food, clothes, school, living space) and a psychologically safe environment; 2) to teach children the Estonian language; 3) to improve the situation at children's homes in Narva to make their return possible.

Some children lived in Rääpina for the whole year, others for a few months, depending on the speed of changes at their biological families in Narva.

The first months were very difficult for the support homes. The children had to be taught elementary things like hygiene, table manners, consideration for other people, doing schoolwork, cleaning one's room, taking care of one's clothes and of course learning the Estonian language.

The results of the project were very encouraging. All the children, even those who were permanently absent from school before, started going to school and finished their grade. Aleksey used to have seven 2s on the report card, but after a year in Rääpina he had only one 2. After a few months children already understood Estonian quite well. Soon they were capable of and dared to speak Estonian in their daily lives. Their intellectual and social lag was diminishing and also their behaviour became more calm and balanced.

But what exactly had such a positive effect on the children? Here the opinions of experts and the children match: 1) the satisfaction of primary needs at home; 2) living in a small and quiet town or in the countryside instead of crime-ridden industrial town; 3) the possibility to be in nature, do gardening and take care of farm animals. All these factors together, so different from the children's usual circumstances, had a very positive impact on their development.

The project received positive feedback from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in cooperation with Fynen county from Denmark, the next project of this kind is planned. It should start in September 2000. Also, other Estonian regions have been inspired by the project. For example, in Pärnu (south-western Estonia) support homes are being trained to host non-Estonian children soon.



## FAMILY STAY LANGUAGE CAMPS FOR IDA-VIRUMAA CHILDREN

Funding:

ESTONIAN INTEGRATION FOUNDATION

NETHERLANDS MATRA-KAP PROGRAM

BRITISH EMBASSY

By Angelika Rehema

**Over the last few summers, CTC has organized family stay Estonian language camps for Russian-speaking children from Ida-Virumaa.**

**In June 1999, the first camp took place in Tartu, and 24 youngsters, who had just finished 11th grade in Narva, Narva-Jõesuu or Sillamäe secondary schools, participated.**

Every morning they had 5 hours of Estonian lessons and after dinner excursions to different Tartu high-schools and museums as well as to the botanical garden and the theatre. They also had an excursion to south-eastern Estonia.

During the family stay camps pupils lived alone or in pairs with Estonian families. Besides learning Estonian and creating new contacts, the aim of the project was to introduce to the pupils the possibilities of continuing with their studies in Estonian universities. Feedback data shows that even more than improving their Estonian language skills, participants valued highly the fresh ideas and information they got, the chance to live in a different environment and the new relationships with Estonian teenagers. Many of them admitted that the time spent in Tartu filled them with energy and made them “raise the hurdle higher for themselves”.

In July and August 1999 language camps were also held in Mustvee, Räpina, Mikitamäe and Värskä. These camps have become very popular among the youngsters from Narva and also local hosts. Still, before the first language camp in Mustvee in 1997 pupils, their parents and also hosts had hesitations about the project. By now the situation has changed and the number of participants and host candidates is bigger than can be financed. The children from Narva studied Estonian every day for two hours and then spent two hours with Estonian songs, dances and games. The main emphasis was put on everyday Estonian, and through dancing, playing and singing children learned very fast. Children were not graded and some of the lessons took place outdoors to make the learning more fun. Every language camp ended with a traditional party, where children received report cards/certificates and performed their own show.

In the host families, children found many friends of their own age with whom to organize sports competitions, bonfire nights and picnics. All the children considered that living in an Estonian-speaking environment strongly motivates them to continue with language studies. Many of them also have an Estonian pen-pal now.



## FOURTH ANNUAL CONTEST “WORLD OF WATER THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN” 1999

Funding:

NETHERLANDS MATRA-KAP PROGRAM, TARTU CITY GOVERNMENT, MUSTVEE TOWN GOVERNMENT, ESTONIAN MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, MINISTRY OF NATURE RESOURCES OF RUSSIA, THE STATE COMMITTEE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF RUSSIA, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATVIA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

By Angelika Rehema

In 1996, NGO Lake Peipsi Project (now Center For Transboundary Cooperation), Pskov Regional Government and Pskov Region Ecological-Biological Center hosted an international creative works competition “World of Water Through the Eyes of Children”. The project aims were: 1) to establish a dialogue between children and adults in Estonia, Russia, Latvia and other countries on the topic of environmental protection and sustainable development; 2) to help encourage youth to realize their creative potential; 3) to promote the notion of cooperation in the protection of natural resources; 4) to raise awareness on environmental protection issues.

The majority of works created by children depicted scenes from the shores and waters of Lake Peipsi, which forms the majority of the border between Estonia and Russia. Students were also encouraged to submit research papers and compositions on such themes as water pollution, lakes and environmental protection and cultural traditions of the people around Lake Peipsi. In 1997, 1998 and 1999 the contest expanded to include children from other countries in the Baltic Sea region and the number of participants of the contest has grown to 2000 in 1999. In 1998 Latvia was also involved in organizing the contest and the Vänern Museum in Sweden has also expressed interest to join it.

The contest includes three categories: research works, art works and literary works, divided into two age-groups. The project coordinators collect children’s works from Estonia, Russia, Latvia and other countries, the International Jury examines creative works to determine the winners in categories and age-groups. The best works are to be exhibited in different towns of Estonia, Latvia as well as in Pskov, Russia. Contest winners are brought to one of the organizing countries to participate in the international environmental camp. Postcards of the winners’ artworks are printed for publicity. During the contest awards ceremony, representatives of state and local governments meet to discuss cooperation on local sustainable development in the Lake Peipsi basin.

The Awards Ceremony of the 1999 Children’s Contest was organized in Tartu. The winners from different countries had excursions in Tartu and interesting activities in the evening in Voore and on the next day in Mustvee. Exhibitions of the winners’ art works were organized in the Gallery of Tartu Children’s Art School and in the Estonian Nature Museum in Tallinn. A roundtable to discuss the issues of environmental education, further cooperation and the future of the contest was also organized in Tartu. The concept of the Local Agenda 21 for the Lake Peipsi watershed was presented at the roundtable. The representatives of the local governments of Estonia and Russia, the representatives of the Environmental

Ministries of Estonia and Latvia and the representatives of UNDP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia participated.

The international competition provided an excellent opportunity for youth of different countries to gain a greater understanding of the importance of protecting water resources. Winners of the contest – children from Estonia, Russia and Latvia – had a chance to meet each other at the awards ceremonies to share their ideas about the environment and life in different states around Lake Peipsi and the Baltic Sea as a whole. The contest also helped to promote the idea of cooperation in the protection of natural resources.



## LIFE IN BORDER AREAS

Funding:

JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

By Eiki Berg

**The closing of the border between Estonia and Russia has resulted in the termination of numerous family, cultural, social and economic connections. The societies of the two states are separated by both real and imaginary barriers, creating separation lines between “ours” and the “alien”. The borders can guarantee a feeling of security within some social groups and, at the same time, tear apart the others. In the case of the latter, the torn groups, transboundary factors are of relevant importance, like family connections, ethnic origin, citizenship and territory. Presumably, barriers influence the everyday life in border regions and they become evident when the need emerges to cross the border and also during the actual border-crossing.**

The current study was carried out as a joint project by the Center for Transboundary Cooperation and the Tartu University political science department in July 1999. Scientists and students from Pskov Volny University and St. Petersburg Independent Social Studies Center also participated. During the course of the survey, local border area people from Narva-Ivangorod, Mustvee-Gdov, Mehikoorma-Pnevo and Setumaa were questioned. The goal of the work was to study the perception of actual and imaginary separation lines and to find out those vital needs of the inhabitants in Peipsi-Pskov region that are substantially restricted by the difficulties at the border-crossing. The questions for which we were seeking answers during our survey were the following:

- What are the actual and imaginary borders that divide the social and physical space and that influence the actual border crossing? What kind of meaning do borders have?
- Is the Estonian-Russian border area a functionally integrated system?

The survey also studied the need of Estonian and Russian border area inhabitants for mutual contacts and for a simplified border crossing. From the applicable side, these data could be used in the development of border stations network and for the coordination of the existing plans with the needs of local people.

### Narva-Ivangorod

Narva and Ivangorod have formed, during the past 200 years, a single organic whole. Since 1991, after Estonian re-independence, we are dealing with a new social and political reality. When determining Estonian statehood, the Narva River and the former administrative border between the Estonian SSR and the Russian CIS have proved to be the factor that separates the mainly Russian-speaking town between two states. The previous close contacts (relatives and work relationships) are now dependent on the colour of the passport cover and the application of a simplified border crossing. When work connections are disappearing (for example, only 10-15 people from Narva still work in the largest employer in Narva, the “Kreenholm”) then, in contrast with this, family connections are tightening, whereas earlier, these contacts were simply not appreciated. However, the social space of an ordinary inhabitant of Narva has decreased from the 1/6th of the Earth’s area to hardly 100 km<sup>2</sup>. In the East, the state border is an impediment, and movement is possible only with the Russian passport, in the West, they feel “alien” in the Estonian-language milieu. Such life “on the border” does not instil a safe feeling or stability.

At the same time, there is nobody who would dispute the existence of the present border and getting used to the reality is becoming more and more common. At the present moment, the time spent on border crossing is a great problem. For many people, the border is a resource; due to the differences in price and in salaries, it is possible to improve one’s financial situation, or even become rich. The border has caused the creation of a new type social networks. People with social advantages, who have the right for simplified border crossing (the right passport or relevant circle of relatives), can make profit out of the existing reality. The informal transboundary cigarette and vodka business may one day be legalised and institutionalised, similar to the non-governmental organisations that have been able to effectively carry out transboundary cooperation.

The border is associated with the separation of “ours” and the “alien”. The terms “we” and “they”, “on the other side of the border”, “there, over the bridge”, have an important part in everyday rhetoric. In Ivangorod, people do not make such great distinctions, but for an inhabitant of Narva, this “other side” is understandable both orally and in writing, but still different, i.e. chaotic and unstable.

### **Mustvee-Gdov**

Between Mustvee (Estonia) and Gdov (Russia), Lake Peipsi stretches for a distance of 50 kilometres. Mustvee, with 2000 inhabitants, lies directly on the coastal area of the lake; Gdov with its 6000 inhabitants is, on the other hand, about 2-3 km inland.

Mustvee is a multicultural micro society, where Estonian and Russian communities as well as Orthodox, Old-Believers', Lutheran and Baptist congregations exist side by side. Ethnic features are not of decisive importance, as the differentiation between locals and immigrants (russmans vs sovetksie) takes place on the basis of religion. Consequently, there can be stronger barriers between local Old-believers and migrant Russians than between Estonian and Russian communities. The state border separates the local Russians from the Russians living in Russia, with whom they do not have much in common apart from the language: there are no relatives living on the other side of the lake, and there are no economic interests either (earlier cucumber consignments went directly to Leningrad/St Petersburg). The inhabitants of Gdov are almost completely Russian-speaking, although, during earlier times, a lot of Estonians lived there. Today, a few local surnames and tombstones in graveyards serve as reminders of this past. Many Gdov people have close relatives in Estonia, who were, during the Soviet period, dispatched to Tallinn or north-east Estonian working class settlements.

It is known that in 1950, there was temporary ship traffic between Mustvee and Gdov, but both parties, during the course of time, have had their interest channelled in the direction of north and south, not across the lake. In the case of Mustvee and Gdov today, we can actually talk about unilateral interest, where the relatives living in Estonia and their descriptions about the life here could inspire the inhabitants of Gdov.

### **Mehikoorma-Pnevo**

Mehikoorma (Estonia) and Pnevo (Russia) are on the opposite shores where Lake Peipsi is at its narrowest – 2km. However there are no cross-border contacts whatsoever. The separation line in the middle of the lake separates “ours” from the “alien”, the well-known regions from the ones unknown. The Samolva area on the Russian shore of the lake, which was once known under the name of “Small-Estonia”, due to the earlier settlement of the Estonians (until World War II), is now permanently deleted from the consciousness of the Estonians. However, people from Samolva used to come to buy food in Mehikoorma, before the closure of the border at the beginning of the 1990s. There are no relatives living there any more and there are no more shopping-trips made from Pnevo to Mehikoorma. The Russian community (about 20% of the inhabitants) in Mustvee also has no connection whatsoever with the Russian side of the lake, besides the Old-Believers in Piirissaar. People do not perceive the border as a material entity in their everyday lives, except the fishermen who are concerned about the separation line, which may not be crossed.

On the Russian shore of the lake, the situation is totally reversed. During the course of time people have migrated from the Samolva region to the larger centres in Estonia. At the present moment, communication with relatives is more complicated because of the border. The border is totally perceivable as a material entity, as it is not so easy to cross this when wanted and when necessary. Only the nostalgic recollection from the Soviet times has remained, referring to close contacts with the Estonians, to joint “Midsummer night bonfires” and fair days, in the style “we were all one family, on this and the other side of the lake”. Although there is only incomplete information available about life in Estonia and in the villages on the Estonian side, people are still of the opinion that everybody is “our own ” and the state border has been artificially created by higher institutions.

### **Setumaa**

According to many people, the Estonian South-East border is an artificial separation line together with its numerous anomalies, including the Dubki enclave, the “Saatse boot” and split land tenures in many other places. Local people, whose activity area is limited (due to their age or financial shortage) or who do not have the actual necessity for crossing the border, regard the existing border as something inevitable. At the same time, the topic of the Estonian south-eastern border has been made relatively political by the leaders of the Setu movement. For them, Setumaa is one and indivisible,

and therefore, it is quite unthinkable that people cannot any more visit their birthplaces, churches or graveyards as freely as they could earlier. The cultural-political mobilisation has brought along the confrontation with the Estonians, as the pressure of assimilation on their side of the border is more serious in comparison with the influences of Russian culture. At the same time, the local Setu people do not make a great distinction: people are all similar, we have been living, mixed with Estonians and Russians all the time, we have been like a smooth transitional zone between two major cultures. The meaning of homeland can also vary from an area with a 5 km diameter, to a home parish and well-known neighbouring one, or to the whole county. This means, first and foremost, familiar places and settled people. An Estonian new settler on his side of the border or a migrated Cossack on the Russian side of the border are similarly “alien”.

Five border stations out of seven in south-east Estonia are meant for servicing the local people. These local inhabitants who have the residency stamp and can prove their need for border crossing may do this in a simplified manner, on the basis of lists of names and during religious holidays. First and foremost, this concerns the areas where the church is on one side of the border and the graveyard on the other side, or when visiting relatives. According to the border guard, not everybody uses this opportunity. The few cases of illegal border crossing forces us to the conclusion that it is easier to cross the border than to find reasons for violating the existing regime.

The enforcement of the border regime has more influenced the Russian side, as they were more connected with Estonia, through road networks and social relations. It also seems, that the Russian side (Setus and Russians in Kulye and Kruppi parishes) and those Setus, who live in the larger towns of Estonia, and at the same time, are the owners of real estate and land on the Russian side of the border, are actually the part of the population which is most worried about the border regime at the present moment. Local people on the Estonian side find that the restricted freedom of movement has provided more safety.

## Conclusion

Actual and imaginary borders:

- The lake is a separation line. The way of living and people on the Russian side of the lake are “alien” and unknown to the Estonians. There are no contacts and clear necessities for transboundary communication in their everyday life. People almost do not perceive the border on the lake at all, except the fishermen of Mehikoorma and Päärissaar. On the other hand, the inhabitants of Pnevõ-Samolva, in the Russian border zone, perceive the state border in reality and in their nostalgic recollections; Estonians are similarly “our own”, together with their relatives residing in Estonia.
- The mainland border is a coherent area, or a smooth transitional zone (Setu people between the Estonian and Russian cultural space). The border is perceived clearly, as the earlier social networks and economic relationships have suffered. The cross-border communication has reinforced the beliefs regarding Russian economic miseries and has forced people to come to terms with the border, or even compelled them to seek profit from the existence of the border. The Narva inhabitants make clear distinctions between the fellow nationals who are “our own” and the ones living on the Russian side of the bridge, the Setu people and Russians, distinct between locals and immigrants. In both cases, the border provides safety. The border keeps away the smugglers, guarantees order and security in an everyday situation, but at the same time, it does not provide protection in the case of major conflicts.

## Functionally integrated space?

As the Estonian-Russian border is first and foremost the separation line rather than a connector (including the mainland border), then it is difficult to talk about a functionally operating and complete space. A sporadic social network, informal economic connections and the necessity for simplified border crossing in some stations actually indicate integration. At the same time, when the transboundary connections on the local level are weakening, it can be observed that the state border is becoming functionally more diversified. In many areas with a small population, the border guard is fulfilling other tasks in addition to state security, including the protection of law and order, rescue services, nature protection etc.

## MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION ON LAKE PEIPSI

Funding:

SWEDISH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

By Gulnara Roll

**The Swedish-Estonian-Russian environmental monitoring project, begun in 1995, was the first environmental cooperation project in the Narva River watershed. The project was supported by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA).**

The goal of the project was to strengthen the capacity of regional environmental authorities in the Estonian-Russian transboundary region for quality-assured environmental monitoring and for information exchange. The project was also aimed at developing contacts between environmental experts on both sides of the border, and establishment of a network of environmental experts for co-operation in Lake Peipsi and its catchment area.

The project consisted of three sub-projects – “Environmental Information”, “Nutrient Load Estimation to Lake Peipsi”, and “PCB, Metals and Benthic Fauna in Rivers Draining Oil Shale Mining Areas in Lake Peipsi Catchment”. CTC participated in implementation of the Environmental Information sub-project in the second phase. From 1996 to 1998, Lake Peipsi Project, now known as CTC – the Center for Transboundary Cooperation, has set up an Internet server for the project and developed a website on the Internet at the address <http://www.lake-peipus.net> devoted to environmental and economic issues of Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Region.

During 1999, CTC set up computer equipment and established e-mail connection between four environmental organizations involved in Lake Peipsi water protection. These organizations are the Department of Bilateral Relations of the State Committee of Environmental Protection in Moscow (e-mail: [skand\\_env@mail.ru](mailto:skand_env@mail.ru)), Pskov Water Management Department (e-mail: [nefedova@ellink.ru](mailto:nefedova@ellink.ru)), Pskov Hydrometeorological Service (e-mail: [pskmeteo@ellink.ru](mailto:pskmeteo@ellink.ru)) and the Estonian Executive Secretary of the Transboundary Water Commission, Mr. Ago Jaani (e-mail: [ago.jaani@neti.ee](mailto:ago.jaani@neti.ee)). Establishment of these four e-mail addresses made the Lake Peipsi management e-mail network complete. Today all agencies involved in management of the lake water and fish resources use e-mail for communication and information exchange. The new e-mail addresses will be incorporated into the “Directory of Environmental Organizations Involved in Water Management and Protection in the Lake Peipsi Basin”, which is being published by CTC as a part of a joint project with the Narva Water Management Research Program and the Swedish Institute.

During 1999, CTC specialists provided regular training and consultations on the use of e-mail to the new e-mail users. To get more involved in the e-mail communication network and to be able to read and write messages in the English language, Pskov environmental officials continued their English courses.

In addition, CTC continued its work on assisting the Environmental Monitoring project participants in facilitating communication between participants from Russia, Estonia and Sweden. Having multilingual staff in its offices, CTC organized translation of specifications of water monitoring equipment received from Sweden by Pskov environmental agencies from Swedish and English languages to Russian as well as assisted Swedish-Pskov meetings. CTC was also responsible for technical organization of project meetings that discussed the results of the project and future plans for trilateral cooperation.



## WORKSHOP

### “MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN INTERNATIONAL LAKE BASINS”

Funding:

ESTONIAN MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

FINNISH MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

SWEDISH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

By Gulnara Roll

**An International Workshop “Management and Sustainable Development in International Lake Basins” was held from 15th to 17th of December 1999, in Tartu, Estonia. The workshop organizers were the Estonian Ministry of the Environment and the Center for Transboundary Cooperation. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the Russian State Committee for Environmental Protection and the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources.**

The Workshop was a follow-up event to the first meeting of the parties of

“The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes” (2 – 4 July 1997, Helsinki), in accordance with Program Area 4 (Land-Based Pollution Control) of the approved work plan for 1997-2000, and to the international workshop “Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe” (22 – 25 September 1997, Mrzezino, Poland). The Workshop also followed recommendations made by international roundtables on Transboundary Water Management (3 – 5 March 1998, St.Petersburg/Bonn, Germany; 27 – 30 September 1998, Berlin, Germany, and 6 –9 June 1999, Vilnius, Lithuania).

More than 100 experts representing governmental agencies, research institutions, industry, and non-governmental organizations from 18 countries, mostly Parties to the Convention, participated. The following international organizations also participated: the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The following topics related to the management of transboundary lakes were discussed at the workshop:

- Joint bodies for management of international lakes: international lake basin commissions and secretariats, lake management plans and local sustainable development plans in international lake basins, public participation in the developing and implementing of lake management plans and specifically in addressing pollution problems from land based sources, combating pollution from point and non-point sources and integrating environmental concerns into sectoral policies;
- Environmental information as a tool in transboundary water management, programs for monitoring and assessment, the role of electronic communications and the Internet in the management of transboundary lakes and environmental education and public awareness;
- The UN/ECE legal framework to combat transboundary pollution and the European Union’s proposed directive establishing a framework for Community action in the

field of water policy (Water Framework Directive) and other EU policy instruments relevant to management of international lakes. In other words, how will the management of international lakes in Europe be affected by the existing and future legal framework, and particularly by EU policies?

The workshop developed conclusions on general issues of management of international lakes and more specific recommendations for actions to be taken to promote effective management and sustainable development in the Lake Peipsi Basin.

The Center for Transboundary Cooperation with the assistance of the Estonian Ministry of the Environment and the Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes at UN/ECE will issue the proceedings of the workshop and make a video about the workshop during the year 2000. The proceedings will include the presentations, workshop conclusions and recommendations. In short, these conclusions and recommendations are:

- To post the information about international lakes’ commissions and international lake basins in the UN/ECE region on the UN/ECE Web site.
- The UN/ECE Convention’s secretariat should take steps to incorporate work on international lakes by bringing together interested lake commissions. It should also promote the sharing of knowledge and experience, which can act as a catalyst for further cooperation.
- An international expert group on international lakes should be established to facilitate the sharing of information and to promote cooperation between international lake regions, lake commissions, and experts working on international lakes.
- Such an international expert group on management of international lake basins should draft a policy document (set of recommendations or guidelines) taking duly into account available information and experience gathered under international lake agreements and lake commissions and links with relevant UN/ECE Conventions and the forthcoming EU Water Framework Directive.

# THE NARVA WATERSHED RESEARCH PROGRAM: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES IN ESTONIA AND RUSSIA

Funding:

SWEDISH INSTITUTE

By Gulnara Roll

The Narva Watershed Research Program (NWRP) consists of series of seminars and meetings bringing together researchers and practitioners from Sweden, Norway, Estonia and Russia to create a network between them. The NWRP is aimed at developing a research component of the Narva River Watershed Management Program. The Narva Watershed Research Program originated in summer 1998 on the initiative of a group of Estonian and Russian environmental experts involved in the Swedish-Estonian-Russian environmental monitoring project supported by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and Swedish experts at the Swedish Water Management Research Program (VASTRA). During the period 1998 – 2000 the Swedish Institute is funding the activities of the Program.

The Swedish Water Management Research Program (VASTRA) consists of a network of environmental scientists in Sweden who work together to develop catchment-based strategies for sustainable resource use. The VASTRA network focuses its research on different aspects of development of catchment-based water management strategies that are sustainable from ecological, economic and social perspectives. The VASTRA program is being developed through a collective learning process, which aims at introducing an integrative, rather than additive, perspective and a systematic approach. In identifying the specific problems and goals, VASTRA views catchment from three partly overlapping resource perspectives. The first one takes a multiple recipient perspective on nutrient fluxes from land, via freshwater systems, to the coast. The second takes a multiple use perspective on surface water resources, and the third takes a multiple impact perspective on groundwater resources. The Narva Watershed Research Program followed the traditional organizing principles of the VASTRA program and already the implementation of the NWRP first stage showed that it was extremely beneficial to apply the scientific approaches and methodologies of the VASTRA program in the Narva River Watershed.

Work of the research program was organized in three main directions according to priority environmental issues for the Narva River and Lake Peipsi Watershed: 1) Nutrient load and eutrophication of Lake Peipsi; 2) Management of fish resources in Lake Peipsi and Narva River; 3) Groundwater extraction/pollution. Five working groups were created: “Nutrient Load and Eutrophication”, “Ground Water Management”, “Fish Resource Management”, “Environmental Policy Analysis”, and “Databases and GIS”. As a result of the first stage of the program implementation, an efficiently functioning international network of experts from Estonia, Russia and Sweden was created.

The NWRP Director is Dr. Hans Bertil Wittgren, Institute of Tema, Linköping University, Sweden (e-mail: hb.wittgren@tema.liu.se); the NWRP Coordinator is Dr. Per Stålnacke, Jordforsk – Center for Soil and Environmental Research, Norway, (e-mail: per.stalnacke@jordforsk.nlh.no); and the in-region coordinator is Dr. Gulnara Roll, the Center for Transboundary Cooperation (e-mail: gulya@tartu.lake-peipus.net).

As a result of the project, two research project proposals were submitted for funding to the European Union 5th Framework Program. The preparation of applications was conducted through “project writing meetings” in November, December 1999, and January 2000 in Tallinn and Tartu and extensive communication between partner institutions over e-mail and telephone in January and February 2000. The two projects concepts were based on the long-term Narva River Basin Research Program developed during the first stage of the NWRP. The project proposals were prepared by members of four NWRP working groups – on nutrient load, management of fish resources, databases and analytical tools, and policy analysis.

One of the two submitted project proposals, named “Integrated Strategies for the Management of Transboundary Waters on the European fringe – the pilot study of Lake Peipsi and its drainage basin” (MANTRA-East) was approved for funding from the 5th EU Research and Technical Development Program.

The aim of the MANTRA-East project is to analyse and develop strategic planning methodologies and scientific tools for the integrated water management in transboundary basins located on the existing and future borders of the European Union. The four key objectives are: 1) to evaluate the applicability of the draft EU Water Framework Directive to the new future border regions, with regard to assessing the state of eutrophication (e.g. ecological status) in lakes and river basins, and development of strategic lake and river basin tools for source apportionment, retention, and time-trends in nutrient loads, 2) to evaluate criteria for assessing the state of eutrophication in the European Water Framework Directive, and develop strategic nutrient tools for the assessment of sources and retention, all applicable at lake and river basins in the future EU-border regions, 3) to develop institutional mechanisms and policy instruments for decision making under conditions of transition and uncertainty, and 4) to develop methods for improving communication and utilization of scientific information in a transboundary policy.

The consortium of the project is headed by Dr. Per Stålnacke from Jordforsk – Center for Soil and Environmental Research in Norway, plus the in-region coordinator Dr. Gulnara Roll from the Center for Transboundary Cooperation.

## “LOCAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN MUSTVEE AND KALLASTE”

Funding:

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

By Margit Säre

The consortium includes 7 universities: Linköping University and Royal Technical Institute in Sweden; Tallinn Technical University, Tartu University and Estonian Agricultural University in Estonia; Utrecht University in the Netherlands; and Russian State Hydrological and Meteorological University in Russia. In addition, the Institute for Inland Water Management and Waste Water Treatment (RIZA) is involved in the project. The active and regular consultation of the project participants with end-user groups throughout the whole project period is an important part of the project. To ensure implementation of the research project results, the project establishes an Advisory Committee consisting of representatives of end-user institutions, such as the UN/ECE, the World Bank, HELCOM, the Estonian-Russian Transboundary Water Commission and the Lake Constance Commission.

The NWRP Nutrient Load working group, Database and Policy working groups' participants are also involved in the preparation of a project application to the UNDP Global Environmental Facility on the Lake Peipsi Nutrient Load Reduction Plan. The first reaction from the Global Environmental Facility to the draft proposal was positive.

The program's final conference is planned for August 2000, which will start planning new large scale projects and obviously this will help to strengthen and further develop the research network.



**The Center for Transboundary Cooperation (CTC), with UNDP support, is carrying out a project “Local sustainable development projects in Mustvee and Kallaste”. The project started in June 1997 and will be completed in September 2000.**

The closing of the border between Russia and Estonia has caused severe socio-economic problems in rural communities. Before the re-establishment of the border, the people along the coast of Lake Peipsi earned their living with fishing and farming and selling their agricultural products to Russia and Estonia. Now, due to the unfavorable tariff policy in Russia and changes in the Estonian economic system farmers and fishermen have lost their markets and main source of income. This problem is intensified by the Soviet history of a centralized economy in which decisions on local development were made the same for the whole country as part of an overall plan. As a result, the skills to analyze local problems and the ability to generate actions to address them were not widely developed and public participation at this level was not encouraged.

In the current situation, the Mustvee and Kallaste regions have remained peripheral parts of the country with high rates of unemployment and with severe social, economic and environmental problems.

In a democratic society, public participation plays a crucial role in local sustainable development. More than anyone else, local citizens have an understanding of and direct interest in development of their region. Local initiative can energize the process of development in these communities in the best way. In order to make it happen, the UNDP project is focusing on providing the local communities with sufficient information from all levels and sectors, and to help them clarify their local problems and what the roots of the problems are.

To support the local sustainable development process, the Center for Transboundary Cooperation started a project in June 1997 in Mustvee and Kallaste. They are located on the Estonian side of Lake Peipsi, the lake that forms two-thirds of the border between Estonia and Russia. The overall aim of the project is to promote local sustainable development and public participation in the issues of local development.

In the beginning of the project local initiative groups of active residents of both towns were established. However, there were some initial difficulties and organizers put a lot of time and energy into explaining to people their democratic basis to act and the role of the third sector in the society. In addition local NGOs were advised on project writing, on finding support for their projects and on organizational issues.

As a basic part of the project, local people hold regular meetings to discuss social, environmental and economic problems in the area. The meetings are aimed at helping people to develop ideas for improving their communities and finding ways for implementing those ideas. CTC has also organized several training programs for community leaders with the help of other specialists. Training programs on sustainable tourism, business development, and project writing, as well as the English and Estonian language courses have been especially popular.

Also, a tourist map of the Lake Peipsi region was printed in three languages. The map includes information about environmental, historical and cultural sights of the region, restaurants, accommodation, and other services for tourists. The map was prepared with the help of local governments and NGOs.

In both towns three-day brainstorming sessions on town development plans have been held with local authorities. E-mail and Internet connections in Mustvee and Kallaste community centers have also been established. As local people have little experience in e-mail and Internet use, training has been held on these topics.

One of the objectives of the UNDP program is that by the end of the project representatives of community groups and NGOs will start working out their own local development projects. Several NGOs have been established and local sustainable development projects have been started. The project staff is assisting community groups in identifying the sources of their problems, finding possible solutions, writing project proposals and monitoring the project implementation.

Local people write their own projects with the help of CTC staff and some of the projects have received funding. Among them are:

- Kallaste Ecotourism Foundation received funding from the Open Estonian Foundation to hold a training session for social workers
- Mustvee town received funding from the CREDO program to develop recreational infrastructure in the region. The project partner is Gdov town from the Russian side of the lake. As a part of the project several studies will be undertaken on the environmental situation of Lake Peipsi coast and experts will work out detailed plan of recreational and logistic infrastructure on the Lake Peipsi coast.
- The idea of printing a local newspaper grew out of the discussions of the Kallaste initiative group. The first issue of the newspaper was printed with financial support from UNDP. Support for subsequent issues was provided by other organizations. The greatest value of the newspaper

is to bring news from the town government, town events and other local news directly to the readers.

- Kallaste Ecotourism Foundation received funding from the Baltic-American Partnership Program for “Lake Peipsi Agenda” to gather together and coordinate local development plans. Other training sessions will be held for local businessmen, local government employees, plus sessions on local agenda environmental protection, social and economic issues.
- Mustvee Ecotourism Foundation received funding from the Baltic-American Partnership Program for their project “ Mustvee – capital of Lake Peipsi”. They will organize English language courses as well as training programs for entrepreneurs. Information materials and brochures about Lake Peipsi region will be published.
- Kallaste town government prepared a project proposal on establishing a Social Center for Kallaste town. The Social Center would provide social workers’ consultations, training programs and organize self-help groups. The fundraising process of the project is going on.

During the last year cooperation and communication ties between local communities situated on the Lake Peipsi coast (Mustvee, Kallaste, Alatskivi, R pina) improved a lot. A big step forward was made with the Gdov region on the Russian side of the lake.

During the project CTC has seen how important it is to establish the cooperation network between all stakeholders in the community – entrepreneurs, local governments, NGOs, schools, experts etc. We have learned that it is impossible to talk about cooperation between different community groups if there is no trust between the partners; trust and communication are extremely important when talking about transboundary cooperation projects.

We have seen a growing interest among people living in Mustvee and Kallaste areas to establish their own NGOs and solve local problems as a result of our project. We can see that local people have begun to understand what they can do themselves to solve these problems and what are the possible instruments that can help. We believe that the UNDP project has helped local people to better understand their problems and plan their own actions to address them.

## “COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE ESTONIAN-RUSSIAN BORDER AREA”

Funding:

DANISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

By Margit Säre

**The Center for Transboundary Cooperation and Funen County in cooperation with the Danish Institute for Border Regions Studies, Frederiksborg and Aarhus Counties and the Association of County Councils in Denmark carried out a project “Community Development and Cross-Border Cooperation in the Estonian/Russian Border Area”. The project timeframe was January – December 1999.**

The project aimed at strengthening the network of representatives of local governments and local Estonian and Russian specialists involved in joint projects and developing an atmosphere of trust and cooperation between them. Special focus was put on expanding the skills of project development and management on cross-border cooperation issues, preparing a range of concrete cross-border cooperation projects and encouraging a process in which sustainable development and environmental considerations are included in the cooperation model to be developed.

The Danish-Estonian-Russian cooperation project started in the beginning of 1999 at a time when Estonian and Russian local authorities had great difficulties in communicating across the border. A lack of trust between Estonian and Russian partner communities, a lack of information about the situation on the other side of the border, problems with obtaining visas for a trip to the other side of the border, and difficulties financing any joint meetings together or even complicated telephone communication with a partner community were serious impediments to cooperation. Therefore the representatives of the local authorities stressed at the first project meeting that they were very much interested in cooperation since they believed it would help them to overcome many local problems.

Most of the problems that the local authorities in the Estonian-Russian border region faced were new. They resulted from the dramatic political and economic changes that took place in this region in the beginning of the 1990s. Communities that had had stable economic, cultural, and family connections to cross-border regions were suddenly cut off from those connections. The economic and social situation in the region, especially on the Estonian side, changed so much, that it also required new knowledge, new experiences and skills to tackle the multiple local problems.

To reach the goals of the project three seminars were held: on objectives and perspectives of cross-border cooperation; on cross-border cooperation structures; and on project planning, management and funding possibilities from the European Union and Denmark. Around 10 smaller twin communities meetings and consultations by Danish, Estonian and Russian experts were organized in order to help find the sources of local problems and possible solutions to them.

As a result of the seminars and consultations, fifteen specific project proposals were prepared with the assistance of the Danish and CTC experts. Six of them have been submitted for possible funding. The project also facilitated the process of developing new initiatives and projects between Estonian and Russian local authorities in the border zone and gave the project participants skills for their future work on cooperative projects. The informal channels for communication created by the project facilitated formal cooperation between neighboring local authorities. It can hardly be considered a coincidence that during the year 1999, municipalities of Narva, Tartu, Mustvee, Kallaste and Tartu County signed or renewed their cooperation agreements with their partner authorities on the Russian side.

After seminars and training conducted for the local authorities, their attitude towards preparation of international projects has changed. The representatives of the rural municipalities, especially the smaller ones, did not understand in the beginning of the project the idea of preparing projects, project planning, submitting proposals to local and international funders. At the end of the project, they already started developing their overall strategies for the local development and were confident in working on the preparation of their specific projects.

On 11 – 12 November 1999, the project’s last major event – an international conference called Peipsi Forum – took place to discuss plans for further cooperation. Economic and environmental cooperation were determined to be the priority directions for cooperation between the local authorities. These proposals for the future cooperation between the local authorities received political support from both Estonian and Russian governments. Valuable comments on the project proposal for our activities for the next three years were received from the high Estonian, Russian and Danish government officials who participated in the meeting.

An important outcome of the project is increased awareness among the Estonian state and Russian federal and regional authorities on the problems of communities in the border regions and on the importance of cross-border cooperation between the local authorities. The process of institutionalization of the cooperation between local authorities in border regions ensures a long-term positive impact on the local development of the border regions and the sustainable use of financial resources kindly provided by national and international funders. The project activities were incorporated into the 1999 – 2000 working plans of the Estonian-Russian Intergovernmental Transboundary Water Commission, as well as into the work of Estonian and Russian ministries and agencies dealing with regional social and economic development and environmental protection in the Estonian-Russian border zone on the national/federal, regional and local levels.

## THE SUPPORT CENTER FOR TARTU AND JÕGEVA COUNTY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Funding:

BALTIC-AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION

By Margit Säre

**In the democratic society we can talk about three sectors: the governmental-, profit- and non-profit sectors. After independence, the private sector in Estonia has developed very rapidly: it is based on liberal economic policy, fostering competition and openness of the economy. In Estonia, the non-profit sector only started to develop in the early 90s. Unfortunately the development of the third sector has not been so fast.**

Non-profit associations offering new development energy and cohesion are still in the process of forming. A strong third sector can be based on the local governments' support. At the moment the local municipalities do not fully understand the importance of the non-profit sector and the need to promote and support it.

Estonia's development depends on whether Estonia can create a mechanism that will deepen the communicative aspect in the society, to link economic and common interests, the provision of services and civic initiative, solidarity and private initiative.

Unemployment in the Estonian peripheries on the coast of Lake Peipsi is much higher than the average of the country. According to the Estonian Human Development Report problems of poverty are especially acute in Eastern Estonia. Local people are increasingly frustrated by the difficulty and complexity of the social problems they face. As the research work of the Center for Transboundary Cooperation has shown, public information and promotion of public participation in decision-making plays a crucial role in overall development. Nobody else but local citizens have a direct interest in sustainable development of their region; nobody besides them will actually care about local development. Other actors like regional and state governments and researchers can be allies of the process.

In order to make it happen, it is important to promote the development of the non-profit sector in the region. It is necessary to provide local communities with sufficient information, training programs etc.

To promote establishment of civil society, the Support Center of Tartu and Jõgeva County Non-governmental organizations was opened on December 15, 1999 in Tartu. The NGO Support Center is situated in the same rooms as the CTC at 69 Veski Street, 3rd floor. The NGO Center was opened under the umbrella of the international NGO Center for Transboundary Cooperation in cooperation with the Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations (NENO) and with the support of the Baltic-American Partnership Foundation.

The Center for Tartu and Jõgeva County Non-profit Organizations is organizing training courses and consultations

for the representatives of the third sector, which consists of 1500 officially registered non-profit organizations in Tartu and Jõgeva counties. The local organizations themselves are deciding what kind of training they do need. So far consultations on financial and juridical issues and training on project writing and project development have been of great interest. It is also possible to use the center's library and technical facilities.

We hope that after five years of effective work with NGOs and local people in the region, more and more people will understand the role of public participation and NGOs in society. We hope that local citizens understand that also they are behind the development of the region and that only local initiative can actually energize the process of local development. In order to allow this to occur, it is important to promote development of the non-profit sector in the region.

After five years we will concentrate on more specific issues of NGO development like the legal and financial aspects. Within the next five years we also hope to be more involved in the process of working out legislative acts about non-governmental organizations and local development issues.



## COMPARATIVE BORDER RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

Funding:

JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

By Jevgenia Viktorova

**The Working Group is an informal group of researchers located in universities and institutes in Europe, North and South America, Asia and Africa. The purpose of the Comparative Border Regions Working Group is to share information and engage in discussion about border regions around the world.**

One activity of the Working Group has been to assist in organizing a series of conferences on comparative border analysis. Considering the particularities of border regions, each conference involves a field trip to the local border region and emphasizes interactions with local government officials and relevant non-governmental organisations.

- The 1st conference, organized by the Institute for Regional Development and the Science Centre in Berlin in 1994, "Borders and Border Regions: New Roles in a Changing Global Context" focused on the German-Polish border region. The resulting book, *Borders and Border Regions in Europe and North America* was co-edited by Paul Ganster, Alan Sweedler, James Scott and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, and published by the San Diego State University Press in 1997.
- The 2nd conference "Border Regions in Transition", organized by the University of Joensuu in 1997, focused on the Finnish-Russian border area. The proceedings were published as a book *Curtains of Iron and Gold: Reconstructing Borders and Scales of Interaction* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 1999), co-edited by Heikki Eskelinen, Ilkka Liikanen and Jukka Oksa.
- The 3rd conference, organized by San Diego State University in 1999, "Transboundary Cooperation and Sustainable Development in a Comparative Context", looked at the US-Mexican border region and addressed environment, development and security issues in border regions (the proceedings will be published by the end of this year).
- The 4th conference "Rethinking Boundaries: Geopolitics, Identities and Sustainability" organized by the Centre for the Study of Geopolitics at Punjab University on February 20-26, 2000 was held in Chandigarh, India near the Indian-Pakistani border.

The 5th conference in the series will be held in Tartu, Estonia in the Estonian-Russian border region in the end of June 2001, organized by the Center for Transboundary Cooperation and the University of Tartu. Besides continuing the tradition of theoretical discussions in multidisciplinary border studies, the conference will focus on the border issues related to the EU enlargement, comparing existing, former and coming external borders of the European Union and evaluating the impact of enlargement to the new EU border regions.

Another activity of the Group has now been embodied in an e-mail bulletin. Its purpose is to help the Working Group to stay in touch between the conferences, exchange information on on-going and planned border research or development projects and facilitate contacts with possible research partners and experts. In addition to the bulletin, we plan to create a database of publications on border studies, related news and events. The service is also open to everybody interested in comparative border research and border region development studies. Please contact CTC for more detailed information on the bulletin and the upcoming conference.



## ACTIVITIES OF THE PSKOV REGIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION “LAKE PEIPSI PROJECT” IN 1999

By Semyon Nikonov

**In 1999 the organization did not have independent projects; therefore the main activities were confined to the coordination of international projects on the Russian side, development of new independent projects and establishment of fresh contacts.**

The organization coordinated a number of international projects in various spheres: cross-border cooperation, environmental protection, and sociological research, as well as educational and children's programs.

One of the most significant projects was the Danish project “Community Development and Cross-Border Cooperation in the Estonian-Russian Border Area”. The Russian side arranged the following project activities: the kick-off conference in Krivsk, the environmental conference in Ivangorod and the visits of Danish experts to Pskov, Gdov, Pechory and Ivangorod. The Russian participants of the project visited the Tartu conference and the Danish-German border area for experience exchange. They also took part in the concluding conference of the project, Peipsi Forum, which summarized the results of the project activities in 1999.

These meetings and actions were very useful as they allowed us to reveal a number of problems and to find ways to attract foreign funds to resolve them. The staff of the organization, in cooperation with local authorities of border areas, is presently engaged in developing and writing projects for local self-governments. Their main focus is environmental problems since they are the most acute in the region. The following projects have been already prepared for application: “Improvement of Water Supply in Pechory”, “Complex System of Water Supply and Sewage Purification in Gdov”, and “Development of the Common Strategy for Nature Use in the Northern Part of the Estonian-Russian Border Area”.

In the sphere of environmental protection, the organization coordinated two significant international projects: the Lake Peipsi monitoring project sponsored by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, and the research program in the Narva River basin sponsored by the Swedish Water Agency.

The monitoring project included the following activities on the Russian side: the organization of the English language courses for the Pskov Region Environmental Protection Committee, installation of computer facilities and computer training courses, as well as Internet and e-mail training courses.

The Narva basin research program included the following activities: visits of Russian experts to the Tallinn conference, coordination of GIS work on the project (plotting of point pollution sources and fish stocks), and the work of Russian experts in the international network of project researchers.

Lake Peipsi Project also coordinated the sociological research in the Estonian-Russian border area funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in Moscow. We organized

both visits of Estonian colleagues to Russia and visits of Russian researchers to Estonia. The project activities include the publication of a book with project results and articles of the participants. In July Pskov hosted a workshop, “Aspects of Regional Security in Border Areas of North-East Europe and CIS Countries”, held within the framework of the project. The workshop was attended by scientists from the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Belarus and Russia.

In 1999 we participated in the organization of the annual children's contest of creative works “The World of Water through the Eyes of Children”. About 2000 children from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, the Netherlands and Russia took part in the contest. The awarding ceremony was held in the Tartu Town Hall on August 24.

In 1999 Lake Peipsi Project developed and submitted for funding a number of projects, such as a project on the creation of a resource center for local self-governments, the Russian-Estonian-Swedish project “Exchange of School Students between Schools from the Lake Peipsi Area, the Lake Vanern Area in Sweden and the Lake Paianne Area in Finland”, the project “Improvement of Water Supply in Pechory”, the project “Complex System of Water Supply and Sewage Purification in Gdov”, and the project “Development of the Common Strategy for Nature Use in the Northern Part of the Estonian-Russian Border Area”. Some of them have already been approved for funding.

The members of the organization participated in a number of international workshops and conferences in Russia, Estonia, the Netherlands, Lithuania and the Ukraine. The conference list includes such events as the Third International Symposium on Lake Ladoga (Petrozavodsk), Workshop on Public Involvement in the Development and Implementation of Regional Development Programs (Moscow), International Workshop on Management of River Basins (Hague, Netherlands), Seventh Conference on Sub-Regional Cooperation between Baltic Sea States (Kaunas, Lithuania), and Conference on Management of Strategic Changes in Local Self-Government on the Way Towards Civic Society (Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine).

The organization's Plan-2000 includes, first of all, the work on the on-going projects, such as the Danish project “Community Development and Cross-Border Cooperation in the Estonian-Russian Border Area”, the research program in the Narva River basin sponsored by the Swedish Water Agency, the sociological research in the Estonian-Russian border area funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the contest “The World of Water through the Eyes of Children”. We have already received funds for the establishment of a resource center for local self-governments, and are currently waiting for the approval of the project on the establishment of the Pskov Center of Environmental Information.

## CTC SUPPORTERS

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION DELEGATION IN ESTONIA  
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COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)  
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ESTONIAN ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION  
MUSTVEE TOWN GOVERNMENT  
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## CTC PARTNERS

### International

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GOVERNMENTS

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NARVA, KALLASTE, MUSTVEE AND RÄPINA  
TOWN GOVERNMENTS

NGO CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
OLD BELIEVERS IN TARTU COUNTY

NGO HOME FOR EVERY CHILD

NGO MUSTVEE ECOTOURISM

NGO TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF THE LAKE PEIPSI REGION

NGO UNION OF SINGLE MOTHERS 'EMME' (NARVA)

NGO YOUTH UNION 'NEW GENERATION' (NARVA)

RÄPINA AND MIKITAMÄE PARISH GOVERNMENTS

RÄPINA CO-EDUCATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

RÄPINA SCHOOL

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TALLINN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY,  
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TARTU CITY GOVERNMENT

TARTU CITY GOVERNMENT YOUTH POLICY SERVICE

TARTU ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LTD.

TARTU CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATION

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU, NARVA COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU, POLITICAL SCIENCE  
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THE 1ST & 2ND SECONDARY SCHOOL OF MUSTVEE

VÕRTSJÄRVE LIMNOLOGICAL STATION

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### Finland

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HEDMARK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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KINGISEPP TOWN GOVERNMENT

MINISTRY OF NATURE RESOURCES OF RUSSIA

PSKOV FISHERIES INSTITUTE

PSKOV REGION ADMINISTRATION,  
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PSKOV REGION ADMINISTRATION,  
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PSKOV REGION ECOLOGICAL-BIOLOGICAL CENTER

PSKOV REGIONAL WATER COMMITTEE

PSKOV TOWN GOVERNMENT

STATE REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR  
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TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION AGENCY  
(TEIA)

### Sweden

STOCKHOLM ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTE TALLINN CENTRE  
(SEIT)

SWEDISH WATER MANAGEMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM

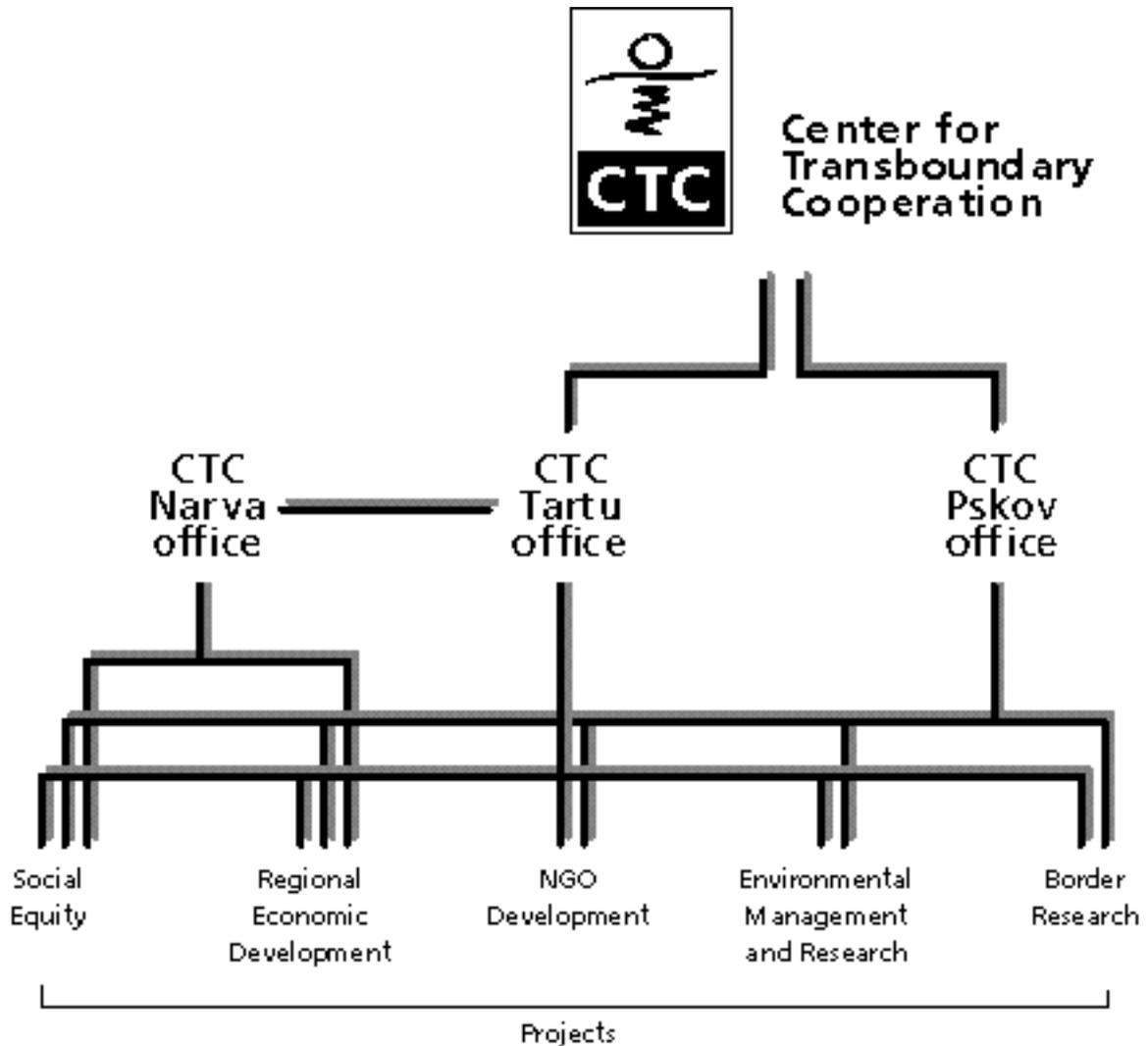
VÄNERN LAKE MUSEUM

### United States

INSTITUTE OF ARCTIC STUDIES, DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF CTC

### AVAILABLE IN THE OFFICES OF CTC IN ENGLISH, ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN

#### Newsletters:

- Local Sustainable Development Projects in Mustvee and Kallaste, August 2000
- Local Agenda 21 in Narva and Daugavpils – Experience and Recommendations, July 2000
- The Narva Watershed Research Program, March 2000
- Community Development and Cross-Border Co-operation in the Estonian-Russian Border Area, November 1999
- Environmental Program, October 1999

#### Lake Peipsi Quarterly:

- Cross-Border Co-operation, Winter 2000
- Management and Sustainable Development in International Lake Basins, Autumn 1999

#### Step-by-Step Project Development Process, 2000

A simplified system intended to assist people in designing a workable project in an analytical and systematic way.

#### Daugava Directory, 2000

A directory that covers organisations and institutions operating along the Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina River in Belarus, Latvia, and Russia. The Directory contains information about the work of different organizations and institutions, contact persons, and addresses.

#### Narva River and Water Reservoir, 2000

The first book dedicated to the issue; 21 articles on the Narva River and Reservoir, covering topics such as the ecological situation, hydrology, fishing, among others.

#### Tourist Area of Lake Peipsi, 2000

Provides basic information about Lake Peipsi, Mustvee and Kallaste towns and other localities on the shore; identifies first aid stations, post offices, accommodations, cafes, camping places, beaches, harbours, churches, cemeteries, monuments etc.

#### Map of Lake Peipsi, 2000

### AVAILABLE FROM THE WEBSITE OF CTC IN ENGLISH, ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN

Electronic copies of following publications can be accessed on the website of the Center for Transboundary Cooperation at [www.lake-peipus.net](http://www.lake-peipus.net):

#### Newsletters

- The Narva Watershed Research Program, March 2000
- Community Development and Cross-Border Cooperation in the Estonian-Russian Border Area, November 1999
- Environmental Program, October 1999
- Local Sustainable Development Projects in Mustvee and Kallaste, August 1999
- Community Development And Cross-Border Co-Operation In The Estonian-Russian Border Area, April 1999

#### Lake Peipsi Quarterly:

- Winter 2000
- Volume V, No. 2
- Volume V, No. 1

#### Activities reports

- CTC Activities report 1997-1998
- LPP Annual report 1996

#### Books

- Common Border, Shared Problems, Research reports on the Estonian-Russian border

Also available CTC press releases.

#### Coming soon:

The Daugava Directory

Newsletter: Local Sustainable Development Projects in Mustvee and Kallaste, August 2000

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ESTONIAN–RUSSIAN BORDER AREA

- The total length of the **Estonian–Russian border** is **277 km** where approximately two-thirds of the border goes through Lake Peipsi (in Russian the lake is named Pskovsko – Chudskoe) and the Narva River. In addition, **12 km of sea border** goes from the mouth of the Narva River to the neutral waters of the Gulf of Finland.
- The population of the coast of Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe is rather diverse in its origin and cultures. The Lake Peipsi coast was **historically inhabited by Finno-Ugric tribes** of Chud and Vod that were involved in fishing and hunting. The name of the Lake in Russian–Chudskoe–still reminds us about the tribe that lived in the area. The lake was a natural border between people who inhabited territories around Lake Peipsi and resulted in the different cultural composition of the Eastern (Russian) and Western (Estonian) periferies of the Lake Peipsi watershed. At the same time, to the south of the lake, in the current land border area of modern Estonia and Russia, the **Finno-Ugric ethnic group of Setu people** lives. This group is probably a remnant of the Finno-Ugric people with whom Slavic tribes met when they were migrating into the region in the 5th century from the east. As a cultural shatter belt it has had Russian influences like the Orthodox religion and several features in material culture, but the people have preserved their **own language, Setu, a dialect of Estonian**. Thus they remained in the middle of these two cultures, having much in common both with Estonians and Russians but never totally assimilating into either of them. Today, the historic **Setumaa is divided administratively between Estonia and Russia**. There were 20000 Setu at the beginning of this century which was the largest population in recent history. Setu lived more inland dealing with agriculture, crafts, and trade; they considered fishing as a dangerous enterprise. This is why the **coastal areas of the lake became inhabited by Russian fishermen**.
- Five administrative regions – the Eastern Estonian counties of Ida-Virumaa, Jõgevamaa, Tartumaa, Põlvamaa and Võrumaa – have a border with the Russian Federation. On the Russian side, the Leningrad and Pskov regions are located on the border with Estonian Republic.
- Both sides of the Estonian-Russian border zone are mostly agricultural regions of their countries. **Arable lands; milk and cattle farms, small-scale fishery, timber enterprises and food processing factories** are located in this area; however, rural areas, especially on the Russian side, are rather scarcely populated. Most of the population is urban and living in the two largest towns – Tartu in Estonia with about 100000 inhabitants and Pskov on the Russian side with 300000 inhabitants. There are quite clear regional differences in economic development patterns in different parts of the Estonian-Russian border zone.
- Lake Peipsi is the **fourth largest lake in Europe** after Ladoga, Onega, and Vänern with respect to surface area and is located in the Baltic Sea water basin. The surface area is 3,550 km<sup>2</sup>; its average depth is 7.1 meters and the maximum depth is 15 meters. Of the total lake surface area, 1,550 sq. km or 44% is located in Estonian territory; the remaining 56% is in Russian Federation territory. Thirty islands are situated on Lake Peipsi; the largest is Piirisaar, which belongs to Estonia. The lake consists of three unequal parts: the largest northern Lake Peipsi with area 2,613 km<sup>2</sup>, maximum depth 12,9 at water level 30.01 m above sea level, water capacity 21,79 km<sup>3</sup>; the southern Lake Pihkva/Chudskoe with an area of 709 km<sup>2</sup>, water level 5,3 m, and water capacity 2,68 km<sup>3</sup>; and the narrow strait-like Lake Lämmijärv/Tjoploe connecting them with area of 236 km<sup>2</sup>, water level 15,3 m, and water capacity 0,60 km<sup>3</sup>.





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The international non-governmental organization Center for Transboundary Cooperation has developed from the NGO Lake Peipsi Project, established in 1993.

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