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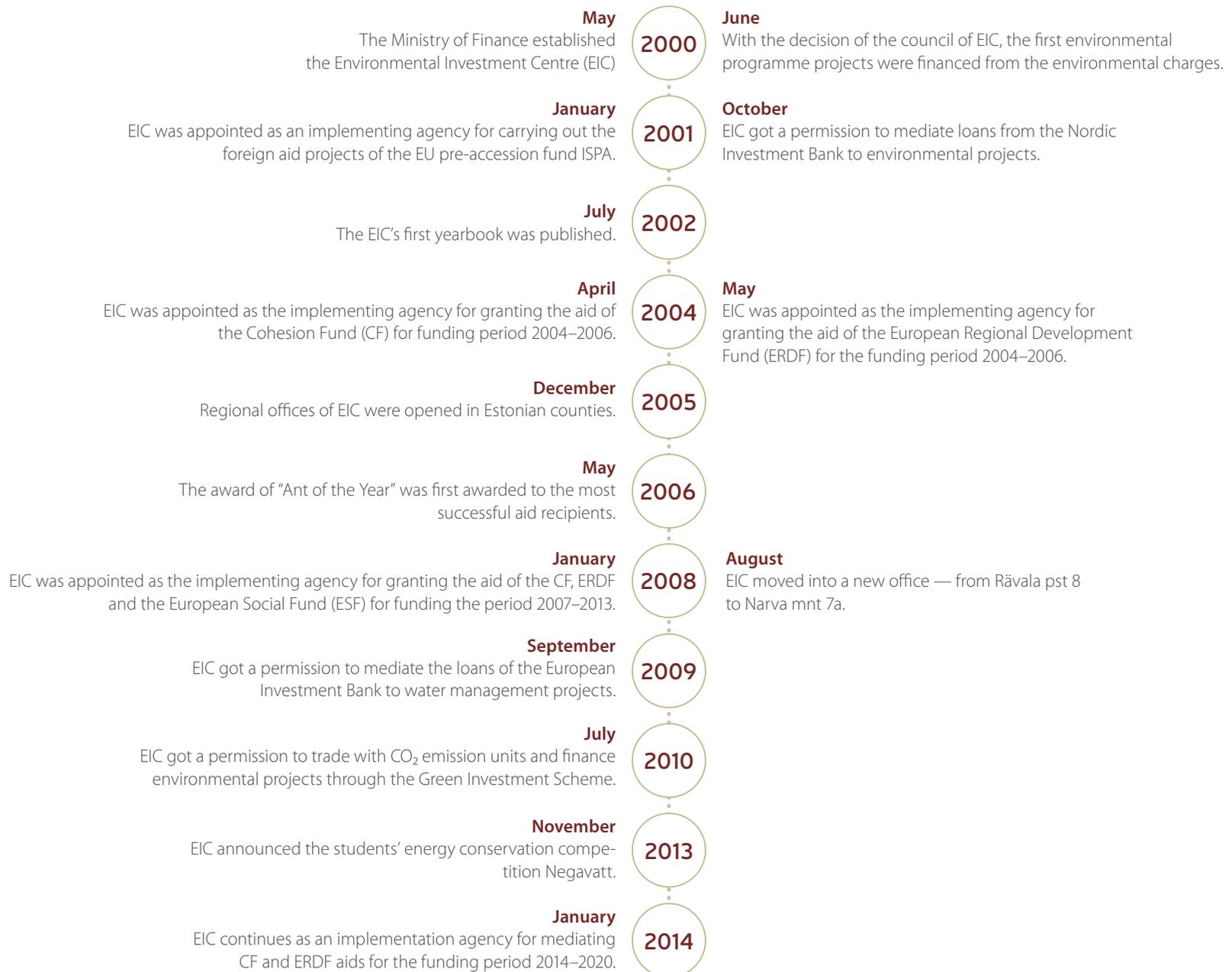
ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENT
CENTRE

Yearbook 2014

Yearbook 2014

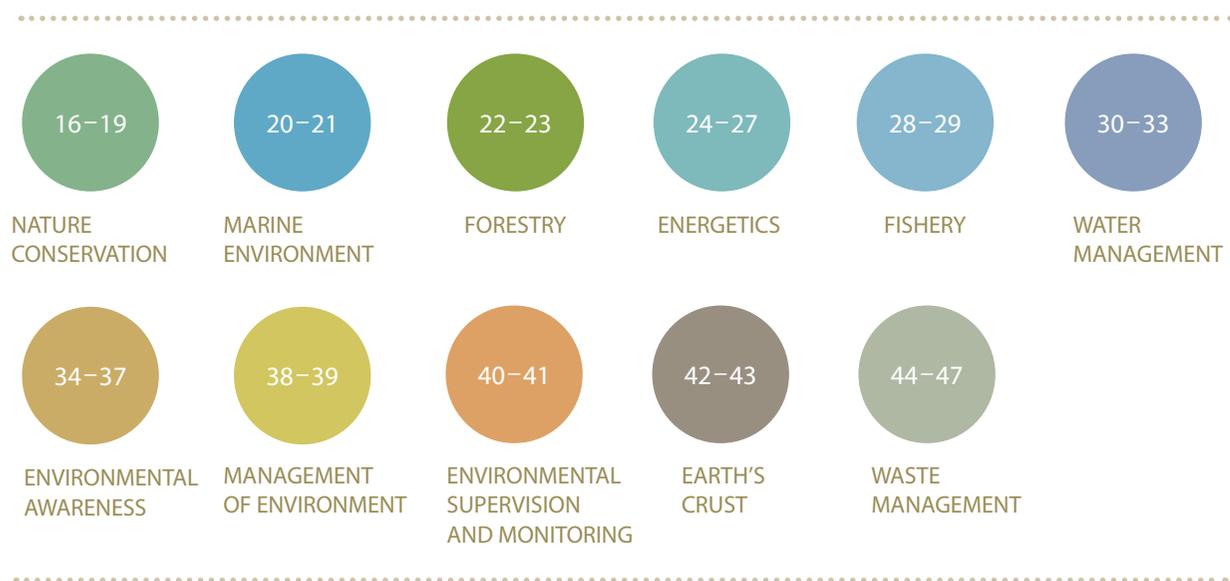
Tallinn 2015

EIC's Timeline



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Grants for Environmental Projects with the Best Impact



"2014 was an active and busy year for making every allocated euro count to the maximum towards a wholesome living environment," says **Veiko Kaufmann**, the Chairman of the Board of EIC, who is also responsible for grants of the Environmental Programme funded by environmental fees.

How would you describe the year 2014 as the Chairman of the Board of EIC?

The year was active and busy. This was also confirmed by the Supervisory Board of EIC, which thought that EIC achieved its goals extremely well. An important activity for our internal work processes was the analysis of the impact of projects in the Environmental Programme; the greatest value created is, in my opinion, the greater cooperative synergy established with the Ministry of the Environment. As a result, EIC understands the creators of environmental policies better, and they comprehend our problems with implementation. We expressed our opinion in the development plan for 2013 that our practical value could be included in the creation of environmental policy; today, we can state that this has been attained – all to achieve the maximum positive environmental effect of granted funds.

How does EIC guarantee that grants are allocated to projects with a maximum positive impact to the environment?

The results of the projects that have been supported must be the best possible ones for the environment. Our experienced employees, who review hundreds of projects every year, are a true asset; naturally, we are also constantly trying to improve the methods of our control mechanism. For example, in 2014, we implemented the financial analysis of sustainability for larger projects. It is important that the projects would survive and that they would have the financial capacity for implementation. The analysis proposed other

Our experienced employees are a true asset

improvements to the control mechanism as well, in order to ensure that projects that do not meet the intended goals would not pass through the cracks.

In order to prevent fraud and double funding, we meet with the heads of other implementing authorities twice a year, including KredEx, ARIB, Enterprise Estonia, Archimedes, etc.; this cooperation continues throughout the year between our specialists.

Our methods may seem too rigid to the applicants at times, but there are two sides to a coin. Those, who have passed our stringent application processes, can be certain in the future that they have not violated any rules, and there is no danger of recalling the grant.

The staff turnover of EIC is relatively small. How do you motivate your personnel?

I think that our employees are highly motivated. Maybe we are a bureaucratic machine in essence, but it still entails more creativity and thought than one might think. Our people are excited to do something for the Estonian environment. Naturally, our competitive salaries, friendly and helpful working environment, staff events and internal communication that functions properly play an important part – all of it being hard to achieve in a 100-strong team.

Which were the most important projects funded by the environmental programme in 2014?

The clean-up of Lake Mäha was pure joy – a beautiful Estonian lake was saved from pollution. This was funded with environmental fees that are imposed in order to eliminate damage to the environment. We are happy that several schools received a new heating system. The new geothermal heating system of the small school in Sauga alone reduced the amount of CO₂ waste by 63 tonnes, not to mention the warmer classrooms that the children have now. We are also glad to see the development of water management projects. These are large investments, which, on the one hand, improve the living environment of people and, on the other hand, reduce the impact of human activities on the environment.

What are the plans for the near future of EIC?

Applicants can enter their data in the updated KIKAS system during the new round of applications. KIKAS was received well by the applicants; we processed over 2000 applications a year with this, but the electronic data system that was implemented five years ago needed an overhaul. We are investing in the competence of our staff in order to be ready for the next round of EU funding that includes some new areas for us, such as energy savings and resource efficiency. We are also actively communicating on the international arena in order to find new sources of funding as alternatives to the current ones.

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Environmental programme funding decisions in 2014

Programme	Cost (EUR)	Programme	Cost (EUR)
● Water management	12,238,056	● Waste management	1,821,842
● Protection of atmospheric air	7,601,777	● Fishery	1,728,762
● Nature conservation	5,251,514	● Co- and bridge financing	1,464,022
● Forestry	3,656,543	● Earth's crust	1,279,051
● Environmental awareness	3,572,616	● Marine environment	1,009,185
● Management of environment	2,149,788	TOTAL	41,773,156

EIC in Brief

The Environmental Investment Centre (EIC) is the leading allocator of environmental aid and investments. EIC is the keeper of tomorrow that helps to implement thousands of projects each year, in order to improve and restore Estonian environmental condition, rectify environmental damage or reproduce natural resources.

Mission

To ensure maximum efficiency in channelling every euro for the benefit of the Estonian people, a healthy living environment, and resource-efficient development of the country.

Vision

Efficient cooperation between EIC and its partners has reduced Estonia's ecological footprint.

Main values

EXPERTISE

We know our field. We operate using the best knowledge, skills, and experience available. We are constantly improving ourselves, to become better and more knowledgeable.

OPENNESS

We acknowledge and value the diversity of ideas and solutions, and appreciate simplicity and transparency. We are happy to introduce our principles. We are open to new ideas. We are tolerant.

HONESTY

We are honest and loyal to our organisation, and value certain principles. We do not tolerate misuse of funds. We value cooperation with partners who share our views.

DETERMINATION

We know our goals. We operate in a dedicated and efficient manner in order to achieve them.

COOPERATION

We value and establish cooperation that supports environmentally aware behaviour and ensures the best positive impact of environmental investments.

EIC's sources of financing are:



Environmental fees of the Republic of Estonia



European Union structural funds



Revenue from the sale of Estonia's CO₂ allowances

In addition to financing environmental projects, EIC offers the possibility to apply for a special purpose loan for their implementation.

EIC was founded in 2000 by the Ministry of Finance. Due to the wide spectrum of its activities, EIC currently operates within the domains of the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, and the Ministry of the Interior.

Facts about EIC and the previous year





New Energy-efficiency Grants for Companies

“In the new Euro grant funding period, new energy and resource efficiency grants for companies have been added to the already familiar areas of support” says **Andrus Kimber**, a Member of the Board of EIC, who is responsible for EU structural funding, the Green Investment Scheme funded from the sale of CO₂ emission quotas, and loans.

Which project grants are the most memorable for you from 2014?

We made the biggest effort on a project that equips seven Estonian towns with street lighting based on LED technology. The 15-million-euro project will result in great savings on resources, and is innovative, because such extensive solutions covering the whole city are rare in the world. Another extensive project is the renovation of Tallinn tramways, which receives 25 million euros from European funds. Both projects will close in 2015. In the recent years, we have supported updating water resource management around Estonia, and continued to do so last year. In the previous funding period, it was the most extensive activity – 470 million euros or 64% of Euro grants we mediated targeted improving potable water quality and renovation of wastewater systems.

Will the funding of water resource management also continue in the new funding period?

In the new EU funding period, i.e. in 2014–2020, another 144 million euros are intended for water resource management. Overall, the Estonian infrastructure of water resource management will be in full order and meet the EU directives.

Is it already possible to draw conclusions from the previous funding period (2007–2013)?

We distributed 788 million euros in grants from EU funds and quota sales. The implementation of this money is decided to the extent of 99%, and we will pay the last tenth of the sum by the end of 2015. After that, we can finally draw a line under this

period, and it is good to know that foreign funding was used wisely. In 2015, the use of money earned from quota sales will end; the last task here is the street lighting project in seven Estonian towns.

How well has EIC managed the EU grants?

We are proud of the fact that fault rate (i.e. rate of errors discovered during later audits) has been zero for several years in a row. We have been able to prevent making errors. For example, we discovered violations in 60 projects out of 500 over the previous period. We spotted most violations before we had paid out the money to the beneficiary. Such a good result demonstrates the strength of the EIC system, and helps to prevent later reclaims of grant money.

The new Euro grant period has begun. Which areas are in focus this time?

For EIC, one new important area is the energy and resource efficiency measure that is more directly aimed at the company sector than earlier measures. The aim of this grant is to save resources; in addition, it helps to raise the companies' competitiveness. The measure foresees the distribution of 109 million euros to fund approximately 500 projects. We are hoping that this measure to be launched in 2016 will turn out popular.

We will also continue renewing street lighting, this time from Euro grants of 43 million euros, i.e. 3 times more than the 7-town project underway as we speak. Thus, a major part of Estonian towns will receive renewed street lighting.

In addition to the already mentioned water resource management, we will continue distributing grants in the energy sector, incl. renovation of boiler plants and heating systems, replacing heat pipelines, etc. For this purpose, we will distribute 77.5 million euros.

Major part of Estonian towns will receive renewed street lighting

In addition to awarding grants, EIC has also played the role of a lender. Is this option available in the future as well?

In the previous grant period, we granted loans to water companies to cover self-financing in the amount of over 100 million euros. Our focus is on long-term loans, because banks do not issue loans with such a long, 25-year term. We wish to continue granting loans, which will become necessary in the companies' resource saving measure, for example, where we hope to offer complex solutions.

Payments from external funds in 2014

Field of activity	Cost EUR
● Water management (CF)	67,680,450
● Waste management (CF)	18,037,039
● Nature protection (ERF)	3,456,334
● Energetics (ERF, GIS)	25,004,845
● Environmental education (ESF, ERF)	6,379,202
● Environmental supervision and monitoring (ERF)	1,911,471
TOTAL	122,469,341

Abbreviations used:

CF – Cohesion Fund
ERF – European Regional Development Fund
ESF – European Social Fund
GIS – Green Investment Scheme



Idea Contest for Students Encourages Change

“The success of Negavatt, a student contest for energy savings, can encourage the society as a whole to solve environmental problems,” says **Lauri Tammiste**, a Member of the Board of EIC, who is responsible for strategic planning, development and communication.

What were the most influential topics in your work in 2014?

We had a mid-term review of the results of the projects that EIC has supported. We completed the analysis of the first 5 areas, and out of 71 recommendations, 53 have already been implemented, demonstrating that we are self-critical and open to the necessary changes. Among all else, we simplified the application process of smaller environmental awareness projects, reducing the administrative burden for the applicants, as well as ourselves. We are going to simplify the application processes of other areas as well in the future.

We are working on making the information about the recipients of grants available to all authorities under the administration of the Ministry of the Environment. Naturally, this is an extensive project that requires time. At first, this would mean that the

applicants have to fill in simplified application forms where it is easier to enter data; this way, the applications can be evaluated faster. In the longer perspective, this might mean to an applicant that applications for various grants are already filled in, based on the information that he or she has previously submitted to the different authorities of the Ministry. This type of a reliable database would raise the quality of evaluation and simplify the process for applicants.

We also contribute greatly towards public awareness – the amount of media coverage of EIC grew 34% in 2014, reaching about 10 mentions each day. We have worked hard to show our appreciation

We contributed greatly towards public awareness

of the best applicants and to demonstrate to the wider public the good that can be achieved with environmental funding. We also had a lot of media coverage due to our cooperation with the recipients of grants by planning collaborative activities, issuing joint press releases, etc.

How successful was Negavatt, the first energy and resource savings contest for students?

In our opinion, Negavatt was a great success. This is more than a contest of ideas; this is a contest of implementing those ideas. We received 40 ideas and awarded 4 main prizes. The prize money has helped to install heat exchangers that help to cut the cost of hot water, as well as tap seals that reduce the amount of water used at the Tallinn University of Technology; a café at the Estonian University of Life Sciences now serves organic meals in addition to regular meals. Negavatt is going to continue in 2015, and I think that this model can be applied to solve other problems as well.

In 2015, EIC turns 15. How would you evaluate the environmental awareness of Estonians today?

Estonians consider clean nature important; however, we should ask ourselves, whether we are friendly to the environment in our daily lives and to what extent. In my opinion, being environmentally friendly does not mean admiring a Lady's Slipper in a forest, while leaving the garbage created by your picnic behind; instead, it means responsible living. Greener trams or buses using bio-methane are examples of a significant change in our daily lives.

In case of Negavatt, we told the students that their idea must be implementable on their campuses. If you see that something is wrong at your university, make a suggestion for improvement. People around us could do the same – if something is wrong in the environment, do not complain to a friend and leave it at that; instead, create a project and solve the problem.

What are the worst environmental problems in Estonia today that EIC would like to help solve in the course of the next few years?

Environmental problems do not change overnight, so we are going to continue with our current priorities while adopting a couple of new ones. For example, grants for resource and energy efficiency in companies and switching to bio-methane in transportation. There are other challenges, too; for example, fishing: we have valuable rivers, but the fish do not have access to certain places to spawn. In waste management, we have established an excellent infrastructure for waste collection and storage; the true challenge, however, is preventing the waste from being created.

The higher the environmental awareness of our people, the less we need to allocate funds for solving problems, because there are less problems. Still, awareness alone is not enough – we need means to offer alternatives to the current habitual and wasteful behavioural patterns. It is possible to apply for grants from EIC for implementing change.



Common Values for the Benefit of the Environment

Kaido Floren, the lawyer of EIC, is one of the employees of EIC who has worked here the longest — for 15 years. **Krisli Natka**, on the other hand, is one of the newest members of the EIC staff — she started as a trainee in EIC in the summer of 2013 and is now working as a project coordinator of structural funds. The two ‘generations’ meet in the library of EIC and discover sharing several common values.

Krisli Natka (KN): How did you come to work for EIC?

Kaido Floren (KF): It was a sort of coincidence, although the field of environment was important for me. It was a time when EIC started its activities, and therefore, this job seemed as an interesting challenge. What’s your story? Unlike 15 years ago, EIC now has a human resources department and the recruitment procedure was probably a lot different than it was for me –

I just had an interview with the head of the institution and I think it was also my previous job in the state control authority, which counted as an advantage.

KN: As a student of a specialty related to environment, I received information that EIC is looking for trainees for the summer. I wanted to see how work was done in the public sector. I sent my CV and wrote a motivation letter, where I pointed out that “happiness lies in the ability to grow”. Recently, I have started to realise that this is what EIC is continuously striving for: to make the financing of environmental projects more effective and the positive impact of the projects more extensive. Therefore, I find that I am exactly in the right place and growing together with the organisation. The recruitment procedure was as usual: I applied for the position and to my great surprise, already on the same day, I received a call from the Human Resources department, and was invited for an interview. This was just before Midsummer Day, which is why my holidays were filled with anxiety. In the summer of 2013, EIC cooperated with five trainees in order to get all the necessary environmental data inserted. This work was part of a larger analysis and it is

great to see that as the result of this work, for instance, the project application forms are being simplified now.

Kaido, you have stayed here for so long – what keeps you here?

KF: For some miraculous reason, the atmosphere here has remained reasonable. People are nice, there are no intrigues. The decision-making process is relatively flexible and fast, although it has become somewhat rigid during the years. The fact that the



work is varied is also very important – I get to do many different things.

KN: We also have many joyful joint events. The environmental aspect was important to me too. I like that, with my work, I can influence the state of environment in Estonia. My friends and family sometimes even call me the saviour of the world as a joke. If some of them do not sort their waste, I always try to convince them to do this, because all the changes start from people themselves!

KF: We are the institution of the environmental sector, although people erroneously tend to think that we are just a bunch of tree huggers here. The nature of our work is more similar to a financial institution – we assess projects, supervise them.

KN: In the sense of everyday work, EIC is really rather bureaucratic, but you must try to see the positive impact of each specific project for the environment.

KF: How were you received here in EIC?

KN: Since our work desks were in the hallway, we got so say “good morning” to everybody every single day. When the employees went for a lunch break, they often came to ask what we were doing there and how did we like it here. It was a very warm welcome. It was also surprising that although all the trainees were employed temporarily, we were already invited to all the joint events. Quite quickly, we realised that in the long run, there are many people here from whom there is a lot to learn. Therefore, I had to show my best sides to be able to stay here.

KF: How did you learn your tasks and activities?

KN: At first, there was much confusion, because you just do not get the big picture at first. You sit behind your numbers and you have to be very active yourself, investigate the background and communicate with your colleagues, in order to understand how extensive the impacts of everyday bureaucratic activities on a larger scale are. Or what do you think?

KF: My advantage is that I have been here since the creation of the institution and I know why things are arranged as they are. Outsiders may really perceive EIC as not the simplest and the most logical system. It is a relatively unique institution, there is no other such organisation – at least in the field of national environmental programme.

KN: Within two years, I have worked on two different positions and this helps to perceive the big picture better, however, there

are certainly things I do not comprehend just yet. I currently work in the structural funds department and I get to see the other side of EIC. You have worked here for 15 years? How has EIC changed during that time?

KF: It has changed quite a lot. There are many new employees; by today, there are approximately 100 of us. New fields have been added as well: at first, it was loans, then pre-accession funds (ISPA) and now, we are about to see the third structural funding period already. We have also developed the existing fields and changed together with them. Do you feel that anything has changed during the past two years?

KN: I think the work we performed during our traineeship – assessing the environmental impacts of projects – will change EIC in itself. The environmental impact of projects will continue to grow. During the last two years, the Green Office project has been launched and through that, we try to keep our office more environmentally friendly. The most successful event of the past year was the implementation of garbage sorting.

KF: I wonder why we did not implement the Green Office policy earlier. It has always been disturbing for me to see how lights are lit in offices on a sunny day. I always switch unnecessary lights off and I cycle to work for years already. Maybe this is the reason why in 2013, I was selected as the Ecological Guru by the employees of EIC (*a title, which, is given to most active environmentally aware employee – ed.*). You were given the title a year later?

KN: Yes, I was quite surprised, because I had not been in EIC for long. I guess they chose me because I drew my colleagues' attention to garbage sorting every day. My motto in this process was always to highlight the problems and help people to solve them. What do you think, what else could be done in the framework of Green Office?

KF: I believe that it is certainly possible to print less on paper and make an effort towards a paperless office. Personally, I try to print as little as possible – I keep documents as computer files to the last opportunity. I prefer having lunch on a plate, which seems much more nature-friendly than buying packed lunches from the supermarket. Small things make a big change in the end.

EIC is unique –
a financial
institution by
nature, whose
work assists
environmental
protection

Experience of Rõuge Rural Municipality: 15 years and 42 projects

“Rõuge rural municipality has cooperated with EIC since 2001, and this has greatly benefited the local living and natural environment,” says **Tiit Toots**, the Rural Municipality Mayor of Rõuge.

How would you describe the cooperation between Rõuge Rural Municipality and EIC?

The cooperation began in 2001 with the reconstruction of two bore wells. Over the past 15 years, we have received support for 42 projects in the sum of 2.2 million euros. To date, the largest project has been the water and sewerage network reconstruction, including the establishment of a water treatment plant in the small town of Rõuge. Never before has such a big factory-based sequencing batch reactor been installed in Estonia. One important grant was the one received for transferring the heating systems of Viitina apartment buildings to geothermal energy, which provided the community with a more affordable and environmentally friendly heating solution. In regard to waste, the Rõuge waste management facility built with EIC funding deserves a mention, because this keeps the forests of our rural municipality cleaner, as people now have an opportunity to bring their waste to the waste management facility for free. In addition, we have received a grant for the demolition of two ugly buildings, and there are also several projects of the „softer“ kind; our basic school and kindergarten apply for grants actively – they have organised several nature study programmes and children’s camps with EIC support.

Do you apply for grants from environmental programmes or also from EU funds?

So far, we have applied for grants from the environmental programme. For example, in case of water and sewerage networks, the EU supports communities with at least 2,000 residents, however, the largest community in Rõuge rural municipality, the small town of Rõuge, has only 450 residents, meaning that we do not meet the criteria for EU funding. In 2015, we submitted two applications to an EU fund as well.

How would you assess your cooperation with EIC?

Our cooperation has been very good; a great advantage of EIC is that it has county representatives with whom you can interact personally or solve any issues quickly by a phone or e-mail. We would really like to express our gratitude to Reet Utsu, the representative in Võru County, who puts her heart and soul into her work, thinks along with you and helps with any problems.

How has EIC changed over the last 15 years?

Today, all applications and reports are submitted via the electronic KIKAS system that is excellent and really fast. Compared to 2001, this has been a big step forward. We are also delighted that there are new areas that are supported, such as demolishing ugly buildings. At times, we are concerned about the changes in the terms and conditions of application rounds. For example, one year, we received a grant for the design work for a building; however, next year the conditions for the application round stated that now we needed a technical drawing. Such changes should be announced earlier.

Today, all applications and reports are submitted via the electronic KIKAS system that is excellent and really fast

Would you recommend cooperation with EIC, to whom and why?

You should always try to apply for a grant. First, we recommend you visit the local county representative of EIC and discuss your idea. In Rõuge, we have been able to achieve great things in order to improve the living and natural environment of the local municipality with the grants from EIC. The application process is not very complicated, and depending on the project, some can receive support with a 0% own contribution.

Experience of MTÜ Niidiotsa: a clean coastal meadow

People living in the Rahuste nature protection area in Saaremaa were able to clean a seaside coastal meadow with the help of EU funding. **Johannes Usin**, Member of the Board of MTÜ Niidiotsa, encourages others to undertake such projects as citizens' initiative as well.

How did the Rahuste coastal meadow project come into being?

Near our home, there is a former pasture, where the state farm's cattle used to graze. When the state farm was closed down, the pasture started to grow in. We discussed it with the neighbouring farm and decided that it is not reasonable to leave the pasture without care. We heard that there is the EIC Nature Conservation Programme, and that we could apply for funds there to clear up the coastal meadow. MTÜ Niidiotsa was established as a joint initiative to do so.

How successful was the project, what tasks did you complete?

It was great success. We cleared the land of thickets, and let loose the animals. From near Tartu, we bought 15 Highland cattle that, unlike the modern livestock, also eat reed. They are well-suited for the soft ground of the seaside, they are lightweight, and when they tread, they do not leave behind many trails. We also looked for others' experience and discovered that these animals suit the best. In addition, we build an enclosure and a feeding area for the animals. The project cost 37,000 euros of European funding in total.

You completed the larger works already in 2011–2012. What is the current situation there?

By today, the waterline is visible and reed is starting to withdraw. Naturally, the area needs to be maintained every year. The cattle has grown to 36 Highlanders. This is optimal and there is enough room for pasturing, but there is always a worry about acquiring the winter hay.



Photo: Nete Tiitsaar

How do you assess your cooperation with EIC?

EIC's people were very helpful. We also received support from a representative of the Saaremaa Environmental Authority, who helped us to compile materials about dunlins, a rare and protected bird species nesting in our coastal meadow. Although we have encountered the rare dunlin ourselves, the environmental authority specialists helped us to nicely document their nests.

Preparing the application was not that difficult at all. Of course, we initially drew from our own knowledge and had to correct some things later. Your own vision may simply not always coincide with the project conditions. We also had to find the correct economic terms – sometimes, we had interpreted the terms incorrectly, for example, what is a „biological fixed asset“. We also had to do a lot of forward-thinking, which was difficult, because how would you know what will be going on in five years around here.

Do you recommend cooperation with EIC, to whom and why?

I recommend cooperation with EIC to everyone that has an idea, but lacks money to bring it to life. You also need patience, because all kinds of unexpected situations and trouble may occur. If you are not afraid of those, then go ahead! Until the nests dry on the wall, you get no fish, but once you put them in the sea, there is hope of catching something.

Nature Conservation

An overview of the previous year

270 bovines and 45 sheep were obtained for maintaining natural communities.

Parks and protected objects were maintained and tidied to the extent of 400 ha.

Half-natural communities were maintained to the extent of 1,800 ha.

Over 3,100 ha of habitats under nature conservation were recovered.

The bird watching tower of Lake Öisu and the Raiesmaa observation tower were renovated.

A mobile application was created for introducing the collections of Tallinn Botanic Garden.

A summary was prepared about the abundance and distribution of white stork and their nesting places and nesting success in Estonia.

A species test laboratory of Tallinn Zoo and Foundation Lutreola for recovering endangered species was established.

A recovery and rehabilitation centre for endangered species was established in Matsalu National Park.

Accesses was created to 382 ha of nature conservation working areas.

Nine surveys related to nature conservation were carried out.

Payments for nature conservation projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Infrastructure of nature conservation	16	241,105
Development of nature conservation	48	858,460
Implementing nature conservation	122	3,041,061
Country programme on nature conservation	3	15,302
Co-financing	14	761,197
ERDF preserving biodiversity	36	3,456,334
TOTAL	239	8,373,460



Historic Narva Pimeaed Park was Restored



Photo: Natalia Orava

At the end of December, the park of Väike Pimeaed located by the Narva River was opened to visitors after renovations made to give it a new and tidier look.

Pimeaed, founded in the 19th century, is the oldest park in the city of Narva; it is located on the western bank of the River Narva. Väike Pimeaed, a historically and culturally significant park, is a popular leisure spot for the locals and an important tourist attraction. A tidy park increases the opportunities for exploring its nature and history. Pimeaed is under protection, being a habitat for various protected species of bats: pond bats, long-eared bats, Northern bats and Daubenton's bats. The work done in the park helps to preserve its historical design, overall landscape and

its protected species. Additionally, the repaired infrastructure of the park helps to reduce the disturbance caused by visitors.

During the renovations that started in 2011, the infrastructure of the park was updated, its landscaping was restored and utility constructions were repaired. Tidying the park was complicated, because the requests, opinions and needs of all interested parties had to be taken into account. The final solution takes into consideration the nature, as well as the humans who visit the park.

The European Regional Development Fund supported the reconstruction of the protected park by EIC's mediation with 258,000 euros and the Narva City Government contributed the remaining amount needed to complete the activities.

Highland Cattle Help to Restore Coastal Meadows on the Ruhnu Island



Photo: Priit Kapsta

Restoration and maintenance of a 150-hectare nature conservation area on the Ruhnu Island was started with the help of 50 Highlanders.

The Holma and Sjustaka coastal meadows were left unmaintained for years and had overgrown with reed, but the meadows, located in the Natura 2000 nature protection area, will be restored with the help of herding Highland cattle. Restoration of meadows is essential for the rare frogs (natterjack toad), flora and dunlin birds at risk of extinction.

Restoration of meadows is essential for the rare frogs (natterjack toad), flora and dunlin birds at risk of extinction

The Highland cattle brought to Ruhnu originate in Jutland, Denmark, in a family enterprise that has exported Highland cattle to Estonia before as well. Jüri Keskaik, a resident of Ruhnu, got the idea to raise Highland cattle, and this grew into a bigger project that MTÜ Seos carried out by support from EIC (90% of the project cost), but also the Environmental Board and Estonian Fund for Nature.

The initiative involved establishing the infrastructure needed for restoring coastal meadows and semi-natural habitats, including kilometres of fences with environmental value and three shelters for the cattle. In addition to cattle, purchases included three horses and a set of forks for gathering winter hay. To prepare the area for Highland cattle, the residents of Ruhnu, volunteers from the Estonian Fund for Nature, and several other volunteers from Estonia and Finland mowed the reed and cut down some of the thicket.

Lake Ball Received Better Living Conditions in Viljandi

The beach area of Lake Viljandi is inhabited by Lake Ball, which is rare all over the world. In order to enhance the living conditions of the green algae, the City of Viljandi decided to remove mud from the habitat of Lake Balls.

To thrive, Lake Ball requires a gravel and sand lake bottom, but since the lake bottom had become increasingly muddy, it had started threatening Lake Ball's growth conditions. Cleaning up an area of approximately 3,000 square metres was quite complicated, because the aim was to damage the health of the water body entered in the Natura 2000 register as little as possible. The site was separated with a protective screen to prevent suspended solids from moving to the adjoining area with an extensive and strong green algae population. The works cost approximately 94,000 euros, which was funded from the EIC environmental project to the extent of 78% and the remaining part was paid by the City of Viljandi.

Lake Ball has a characteristic spherical shape – the Lake Balls found in Lake Viljandi are 2–3 cm in diameter. The Marimos found in Japan, however, are the largest in the world, with a diameter of up to 30 cm. According to the data of the Non-Profit Organisation Loodusajakiri, Lake Ball is listed in the Red List of Threatened Species in several countries, e.g. Germany, Belarus, Russia, Japan, and Sweden. In the Estonian red book, Lake Ball belongs in the category "Near-threatened species", and it can be found in only about 5–6 lakes.



Photo: Inga Nõmmik

Lake Ball has a characteristic spherical shape – the Lake Balls found in Lake Viljandi are 2–3 cm in diameter. In the Estonian red book, Lake Ball belongs in the category "Near-threatened species"



Marine Environment

An overview of the previous year

Spatial planning of the sea area was conducted in Hiiu County.

A three-day marine pollution study camp was organised for voluntary sea rescuers. The participants included 47 sea rescuers and 15 volunteers.

5 research projects were carried out, which included a total of 26,356 km² of sea and coastline areas.

The Marine Systems Institute of Tallinn University of Technology obtained a device for collecting samples from the near-bottom boundary stone and soft sediments.

Payments for marine environment projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Marine environment since 2011	18	574,128
Marine environment, co-financing	7	115,126
TOTAL	25	689,255

Haapsalu Tagalaht Bay is Now Cleaner



Photo: Krista Vilta

In autumn, aquatic plants were mowed in Haapsalu Tagalaht in order to reduce the infilling of the shallow bay.

The depth of Haapsalu Tagalaht Bay reduces every year. A significant cause of this change is the proliferation of aquatic plants that causes the deterioration of the water environment, due to which the bay accumulates large quantities of mud sediments. When degrading, mud sediments consume oxygen, causing the oxygen regime in the shallow end of the bay to degenerate even further. One of the most efficient measures to combat this is to remove the vegetation.

The city of Haapsalu lead the mowing of the aquatic plants at a depth of up to 1.5 metres on a planned area of 12 hectares. The mowed vegetation was collected and stored on the shore; from

there, it was transported to a composting field. This operation was conducted in autumn after the nesting period of birds was over.

Although it did not noticeably improve the bad state of the entire shallow bay, the side of the Haapsalu promenade was cleaned up. Mowing the aquatic plants is also good for marine traffic. Most of the cost of the work, 9,700 euros, was covered by EIC. The area of Tagalaht bay needs mowing every year according to the assessment of experts.

The city of Haapsalu lead the mowing of the aquatic plants at a depth of up to 1.5 metres on a planned area of 12 hectares

Forestry

An overview of the previous year

Approximately 3 million euros were spent on supporting the joint activities of private forest owners and private forestry.

Forestry-related digital ortophotos of an area with the size of 1,055,000 ha were prepared.

Forest study camps were held for preparing the participants for international competitions.

A special issue "Wooden Architecture and Design" was published.

A study movie "Collection of observation of game and hunted biomaterials" was completed.

Additional training for hunters were held, in the framework of which 2,000 publications were issued.

The study rooms of hunting training were updated.

Hunting-related e-study and e-examination systems were implemented.

8 scientific studies and 3 instruction manuals related to forestry were prepared.

Payments for forestry projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Forestry	43	3,871,905
Game management	13	359,579
TOTAL	56	4,231,484

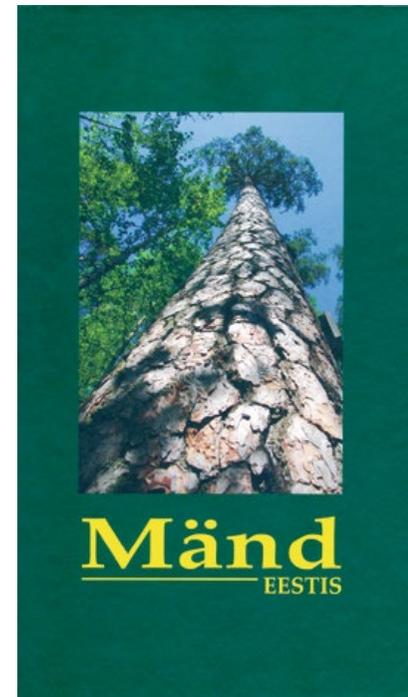
The First In-depth Book on Pines Published

By the initiative of the Institute of Forestry and Rural Engineering of Estonian University of Life Sciences, "Pines in Estonia" (Mänd Eestis) was published in June, being the first in-depth overview of the most abundant tree species of our forests, namely Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*).

Several studies on the Scots pine have been conducted in Estonia, but to date, the data were fragmented and ungeneralised. Therefore, the aim of the monograph was to gather the results of several generations' worth of pine research in one book.

The pine monograph covers practically all issues related to growing pines, protecting pine stands and managing pine forests. The 521-page volume includes analyses of different maintenance and shelterwood cutting strategies in pine forests, as well as of the ecological effect of forest fires on pines. The book also explains the characteristics of pinewood and the patterns of growth and structure of pine stands, gives an overview of the status of pine stands, and discusses pine-related diseases. Each chapter ends with a summary in English. Malle Kurm, scientist of forestry with the Estonian University of Life Sciences, compiled the monograph.

The pine monograph covers practically all issues related to growing pines, protecting pine stands and managing pine forests



The published pine book develops Estonian forestry education and is intended for scientists, students and other nature enthusiasts. The book funded by EIC is available at libraries, institutes of the University of Life Sciences, the Estonian Nature Fund, the State Forest Management Centre, the Estonian Environment Agency, etc.

Energetics

An overview of the previous year

A permanent monitoring station of ambient air was installed in the industrial region of Sillamäe.

Meteorological monitoring station was established in Narva.

Measuring technology was updated in the meteorological stations of Tõravere, Võru and Vilsandi.

Altogether 41 boiler plants were transferred to renewable fuel and 31 km of heat pipeline was reconstructed, as a result of which, CO₂ emission will reduce by approximately 45,000 tonnes per year.

18 sensors for measuring the thickness of snow were obtained.

470 LED street lights were installed in Tartu and 259 in Kõrveküla and Vahi small towns.

11 surveys related to ambient air sub-programme were carried out.

Payments for renewable energy and protection of ambient air projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Renewable energy	24	1,994,834
Ambient air	41	2,841,760
Co-financing	2	16,282
CF sustainable transportation development	1	15,385,184
ERDF extended use of renewable energy sources for the generation of energy	3	398,675
GIS extended use of renewable energy sources for the generation of energy and reconstruction of district heating networks	32	6,845,731
GIS supporting investments of the enterprises for the application of wind energy in electricity generation	1	1,455,875
GIS constructing energy-efficient street lightning	7	919,381
TOTAL	111	29,857,723

A Boiler Plant Working on Biofuel was Completed in Kohila

A building of cultural and environmental value, the mechanics workshop of the former Kohila paper factory, was rebuilt into a boiler plant working on wood chip heating that will reduce both CO₂ emission and heating costs for residents.

Kohila used to be heated with gas, requiring 700,000 cubic metres of natural gas per year. Transition to biofuel has reduced CO₂ emissions by 1,300 tonnes per year. The old gas boiler was left in reserve and is used only as a peak boiler in very cold weather. The capacity of the wood chip boiler device is 3,000 kW and its energy conversion efficiency is 85%. The boiler operations are automated and do not require the permanent presence of staff. A wood chip storage facility was established next to the boiler plant as well. Both facilities were redesigned characteristically of Kohila during the reconstruction works.

The new boiler plant that launched its operation in November also lowered district heating price for the local heat consumers.

Transition to biofuel has reduced CO₂ emissions by 1,300 tonnes per year



Photo: Ain Tõnts

While with the gas boiler, heat price was 73 euros/MWh, in January 2015, it had dropped to 66 euros/MWh (prices including value added tax). The boiler plant construction cost nearly a million euros, 40% of which was support from EIC, earned by selling CO₂ quotas to Austria. SW Energia OÜ funded the remaining part of the boiler plant construction cost.



Aive Haavel,
Project Coordinator at EIC:

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Implementing the transfer project of the Kohila boiler plant to biofuel encountered several obstacles. Still, it is a good example of how these were resolved in cooperation of the beneficiary and the rural municipality, and as a result, a project was launched with which all parties can be pleased. A modern boiler plant which fits well in the Kohila area of cultural and environmental value.

Sadala School Received a More Efficient Heating System

Pupils of Sadala Basic School located in Jõgeva County can now study in a warmer school building, since a new heating system based on pellet heating was built with support from EIC.

The former electric-heating boiler plant of Sadala School was in place for 15 years, it was depreciated, and took up great volumes of resources. The boiler plant was located in a low basement with difficult work conditions, and was not moisture resistant. Electric heating was replaced with a more economical wood pellet heating, and the outhouse of the school was rearranged into a boiler room and a heating material storage. In addition, a 25-metre heat line was established with funding from the rural municipality between the two buildings that joined the investment into a whole.

The new boiler plant enabled saving 25–30% on expenses during the first winter. The warm school building and opting for a more environmentally sustainable type of heating facilitate the restructuring of the local field of education: as of August 2015, a nursery school group will open in the premises of Sadala School as well. Another important fact is that the school has become more open and attractive for the community.

The total cost of the initiative was 34,000 euros, whereof 11,000 was received from EIC as support.

The new boiler plant enabled saving 25–30% on expenses during the first winter



Photos: Age Aruste

Sauga School Switched to Geothermal Heating

This summer, the Sauga school building located in Pärnu County switched to geothermal heating system from its previous oil-based heating system, reducing the heating costs of the school and pollution caused by the heating system.

Sauga Basic School used to have its own oil-based (a non-renewable energy source) heating system that was used to heat classrooms, as well as water for consumption. Installing a geothermal heating system reduced the amount of energy needed to produce heat; the calculated savings of using this system are 154,300 kWh annually. It also produces significantly less environmental pollution – the amount of CO₂ waste reduced by 63 tonnes, a reduction of 67% over the previous heating system.

Moreover, the upkeep of the new heating system is considerably cheaper compared to the old one; this, in turn, allows making supplementary investments into improving the school amenities for students. The cost of maintenance was reduced by almost a half according to the initial estimate.

The total cost of the geothermal heating system was 62,000 euros, half of which was received from the Environmental Programme of EIC.

The amount of CO₂ waste decreased by 63 tonnes, a reduction of 67% over the previous heating system



Photo: Sauga Põhikool

Fishery

An overview of the previous year

A world cup stage in casting (spin-fishing and fly-fishing rod throwing) and pre-contests of spin-fishing World Championships were held.

The Lake Vörtsjärv camp and father-son fishing camp were supported.

The information brochure of recreational fishing was updated.

66 fishing related trainings were held.

2 piers, 12 footbridges and 3 slips were installed and renovated.

Two joint operations of fishing supervision were organised on the Gulf of Riga and on Lake Peipus.

567 gillnets and 10,308 lamprey cones were removed from Lake Peipus and the lower course of the Narva River during the removal operation of illegal catching devices.

In order to recover the population of Atlantic sturgeon, 400 sturgeons were released into the Narva River.

4 spawning areas of trout were established in the Vodja River and 5 in the Peedi and Vahujõe Rivers.

14 surveys related to fishery were carried out.

Payments for fishery projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Fishery development projects	19	165,612
Fishery scientific researches	19	1,216,505
Conservation and control of fish resources	12	569,772
Improvement of the ecological condition of water fauna and flora	7	320,807
TOTAL	57	2,272,696

Record Number of Elvers in Estonian Lakes

In 2014, fishermen populated Lake Võrtsjärv and other Estonian lakes with a record number of glass eels.

Estonian lakes need to be populated with eels artificially, because since the construction of the dam on the hydropower plant in Ivangorod (Narva) in 1956, these fish are unable to breed by natural means.

Since 1994, eel restocking has been carried out on an annual basis, and each year, elvers have been bought from England or France in the value of 120,000 to 146,000 euros. From 2001 to 2010, only farmed eels were introduced in lakes, but during the past four years, both pre-farmed eels and glass eels have been released in our lakes. In 2014, eel prices had dropped to such an extent that instead of the regular 1 million elvers, the same sum allowed buying approximately 2.8 million elvers. In 2014, eels were populated primarily into Lake Võrtsjärv, but the Kuremaa, Saadjärv, Kaiavere and Vagula lakes also received fish.

Elvers are purchased at the beginning of glass eel fishing period, i.e. in February–March. This ensures high-quality fish, since the fished glass eels lose weight and vitality as the fishing season



Photo: MTÜ Võrtsjärve Kalanduspiirkond

progresses. Fish are transported by plane – fast delivery is required to keep elvers alive. Fish are marked before they are released into water.



Kristjan Kalda,
representative of EIC in Viljandi County:

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Eels are valuable fish for catching by both professional fishermen and amateurs. The eel fishery catch of Lake Võrtsjärv has remained between 10 to 13 tonnes over the last few years, which falls behind the best catch years (1980s) by 5 to 6 times. Thanks to the price drop, the amount of glass eels we have managed to purchase was three times the usual in 2014 and two times the usual in 2015. This sparks hope that in the future, the eel stock will grow. Researchers are keeping an eye on the fish fauna of Lake Võrtsjärv, and fishing volumes are determined according to their recommendations.

Water Management

An overview of the previous year

52,550 m³ of sediments were removed from lakes.

Altogether 8.8 ha of the shores of water bodies were cleaned.

The situation of salmonidae was improved by establishing fish passes in 12 rivers and a creek, the Vöhandu, Elva, Pölsamaa and Leevi rivers.

More voluminous water resource management works for ensuring clean drinking water were completed in Pärnu, Saku and Rakvere.

Over 602 km of potable water pipelines were either established or reconstructed.

Over 634 km of sewage pipelines were either established or reconstructed.

55 potable water pump stations and 316 sewage water pump stations were either built or restored.

11 surveys related to water management were carried out.

Payments for water management projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Rehabilitation of water bodies	5	124,613
Drinking water supply	43	3,009,888
Residual pollution	6	124,895
Non-technical work	33	1,792,082
Waste water treatment	60	6,421,162
Water management, co-financing	4	266,821
Country programme on water management	3	35,645
CF development of the infrastructure of water supply systems and water management	61	60,210,190
CF improvement of the state of watercourses	39	4,269,057
Inventorying of CF stoppage facilities on watercourses for improvement of the migration conditions for fish	1	26,644
CF disposal of residual pollution on former military and industrial areas	2	3,174,559
TOTAL	257	79,455,556

Seven Local Governments from Järva County Launched a Joint Water Project

Ambla, Imavere, Kareda, Koigi, Paide and Roosna-Alliku rural municipalities and the city of Paide brought their public water supply and sewerage systems up to date as a joint project, and are now providing their residents with high-quality water service.

To achieve this, almost 29 km of sewer lines and an equal amount of potable water lines were established and put in order. In addition, bore wells and water treatment plants were reconstructed; in order to supply clean drinking water, water treatment facilities were installed. The initiative cost 20 million euros in total, whereof 15 million euros were received from the EU funds with support from EIC, and AS Paide Vesi, the provider of water services that carried out the works provided the remaining funding.

The reorganised pipelines and sewage treatment plants reduced the risk of environmental pollution. When residents joined the public sewerage system network, the consumers' existing wastewater collection systems that were depreciated and caused soil and groundwater pollution were removed from use. By establishing new pipelines, residents were ensured an opportunity to direct wastewater in the water treatment facility.



Photo: AS Paide Vesi

Nearly 29 km of sewage pipes and the same amount of potable water pipelines were established and reconditioned



Kai Helm,
Project Coordinator with EIC:

The water project of Järva County's local governments was special, because it involved as much as seven local governments. This demonstrated good cooperation on the local level, and a considerate attitude towards the neighbouring rural municipality. I would like to emphasise separately that the newly established small sewage treatment plants no longer endanger Pandivere groundwater that is an essential water source for entire Estonia.

Local Residents saved Lake Mäha



Photo: Jüri Kork

Lake Mäha, which is part of the Otepää Nature Park, was saved from filling in by the initiative of local residents, who also removed residual pollution from decades before.

Residual pollution from the manure storage of the former collective farm, and lake's own pollution due to low water level caused by an old outlet ditch, had reached Lake Mäha. Overgrowth of flora caused shortage of oxygen in the lake; the bottom of the 13-hectare lake was muddy, and many fish died.

According to the assessment ordered from environmental expert Nikolai Laanetu, the ecological condition of the lake could be improved by pumping mud out from four regions of the lake; restricting shoreline vegetation; and lift the embankment zone partly with gravel and sand. A larger sludge pond and a barrage regulator had to be established to reduce the effects of the lake's

fluid residual pollution and to regulate the lake's water level, respectively.

As a result of a public procurement, works were carried out by OÜ Saaretu that removed the main pollution sources from the lake, lifted the lake surface up to 142 metres, and increased the water volume in the lake above 70,000 cubic metres. More than 50,000 cubic metres of mud was pumped out from the lake, using an innovative bucket and mud pump technology, the advantage of which is the low dispersal of sludge into the water. Clearing of the forest stand on the embankment opened the lake to winds, which improved oxygen content in the water. The chemical and biological indicators of the water have also improved, and now, the lake affords a view with cultural and environmental value.

EIC funded the initiative of the foundation Mäha Küla Arendus from the Environmental Programme to the extent of 405,000 euros; land owners paid 25,000 euros as cost-sharing.

Barrage of the Aarna Watermill Received a Fish Pass

The fish pass installed on the barrage of the Aarna watermill in Põlva County helps to improve the ecological status of the Ahja River in terms of the fish fauna, because since then, fish are able to move between the different living and breeding areas.

An artificial rapid was built on the barrage located 76 km from the estuary of the Ahja River. The rapid is 80 metres long and 4–5 metres wide depending on the flow rate. The fish pass can be crossed without problems by all fish species inhabiting the Ahja River, and their freer movement than before should increase their numbers and variety. For several flow-loving species (life stages of young trout, grayling, bullhead, loach and brook lamprey),

the fish pass is also suitable for living and breeding. In addition, 6,000 cubic metres of sludge was removed from the river, and the overflow of the right embankment was rebuilt into an emergency overflow to lower the water level of the reservoir and direct water past the rapid, if necessary.

For several flow-loving species, the fish pass is also suitable for living and breeding

The works, which lasted for 2.5 years and were completed at the end of October, were supported by EIC from the EU funds for more than 258,000 euros. Presently, EIC has supported fish pass / spawning ground projects from the open rounds in the sum of approximately 21 million euros.



Before

Photos: Janek Lõhmus



After

Environmental Awareness

An overview of the previous year

Altogether 5,349 publications were prepared in the framework of projects.

More than 4,300 events and campaigns were held for young people and children with over 143,000 participants.

In the framework of the projects, approximately 1,500 events were held for adults, which were related to more than 470,000 people directly or indirectly.

182 trips of Nature Bus were supported.

Several TV and radio shows were supported, e.g., TV series "Osoon" on ETV, "Ilmaparandaja" on Radio Kuku and "Elukeskkond" on Radio4.

Information fairs, bees, festivals and nature evenings were supported, including the Matsalu Nature Movie Festival, Viru Folk, ELF bees and the nature evenings of the Environmental Board.

The organisation of environment-related study camps was supported.

Five environmental education centres with studying opportunities for 1,326 pupils were established or renovated.

Payments for environmental awareness projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Active learning in environmental awareness	303	1,503,816
Activities, research and campaigns aimed to increase environmental awareness	167	2,270,259
Environmental awareness regional programme	39	92,036
Co-financing	4	17,327
Environmental awareness regional programme	7	4,617,518
ESF development of environmental education	2	1,761,685
TOTAL	528	10,298,508



Environmental Education Centre of Tallinn Zoo Opens Doors



Photo: Olev Mihkelmaa

Tallinn Zoo opened its Environmental Education Centre in July, filling the gap in environmental education for its visitors, as well as the pupils of hobby groups, primarily in Tallinn.

The new centre has helped increase the number of children participating in hobby groups to two hundred. The work takes place in Estonian and Russian; the programme covers a range of topics, such as pets, aquarium fish, zoology, ornithology, survival in the wild, sculpture, animal art, and nature's laboratory. The new centre has classrooms for studying the living nature and artwork, a room for exhibitions, a library, a lab, and an auditorium for 149 people.

The number of children going to hobby schools has increased to 200

The zoological programme meant for schools offers teachers materials for classes prepared by the zoo and even a possibility to order a complete programme. The school programmes are meant for all age groups and include exciting practical lessons, outdoor sessions and research conducted by pupils. Interactive discovery trails that have been adapted to smart devices start at the centre.

Special events, film nights, exhibitions and lectures are also going to be offered to adults, pensioners and tourists. The children's zoo is open throughout the year, welcoming families and small children to explore domestic animals and pets.

Constructing and refurbishing the 2,800 m² building cost a total of 4.7 million euros, of which 3.8 million euros came from the European Regional Development Fund through EIC; the rest was allocated by the city of Tallinn.

Counted Bumblebees Became More Familiar

On the initiative of the Nature Calendar and with support from EIC, Estonians counted bumblebees to find out more about the well-being of insects and their favourite plants.

"Ethnological bumblebee survey 2014" was an endeavour that raised people's awareness on the life cycle and importance of bumblebees in our everyday lives and taught nature enthusiasts to notice and identify their local bumblebees. Altogether, 40 articles, which were also translated into English and German, were published over the year in the Nature Calendar portal at www.looduskalender.ee.



Photo: Inga Ilves

In order to facilitate the identification of bumblebees, identification sheets to be taken along in the wild were prepared. While before, only half of all bumblebees had Estonian names of species, this project gave the experts a reason to name the rest as well. In a Facebook group called "Our bumblebees" (Meie kimalased), the members are still sharing news and photos and learning how to identify bumblebees. The photo gallery of that group contains over 700 photographs with 20 species, including several species that had never been caught on film before in Estonia.

With the help of voluntary bumblebee watchers, new knowledge was gathered on the spread and honey plant preferences of bumblebee species in Estonia. The counters observed a total of 22 species of bumblebees over the year, which makes 2/3 of all bumblebees that inhabit Estonia. During the observations, bumblebees were seen to frequent 149 varieties of plants. The biggest bumblebee magnets turned out to be lamium and centaury, with the most popular garden plants being dahlia and hyssop.

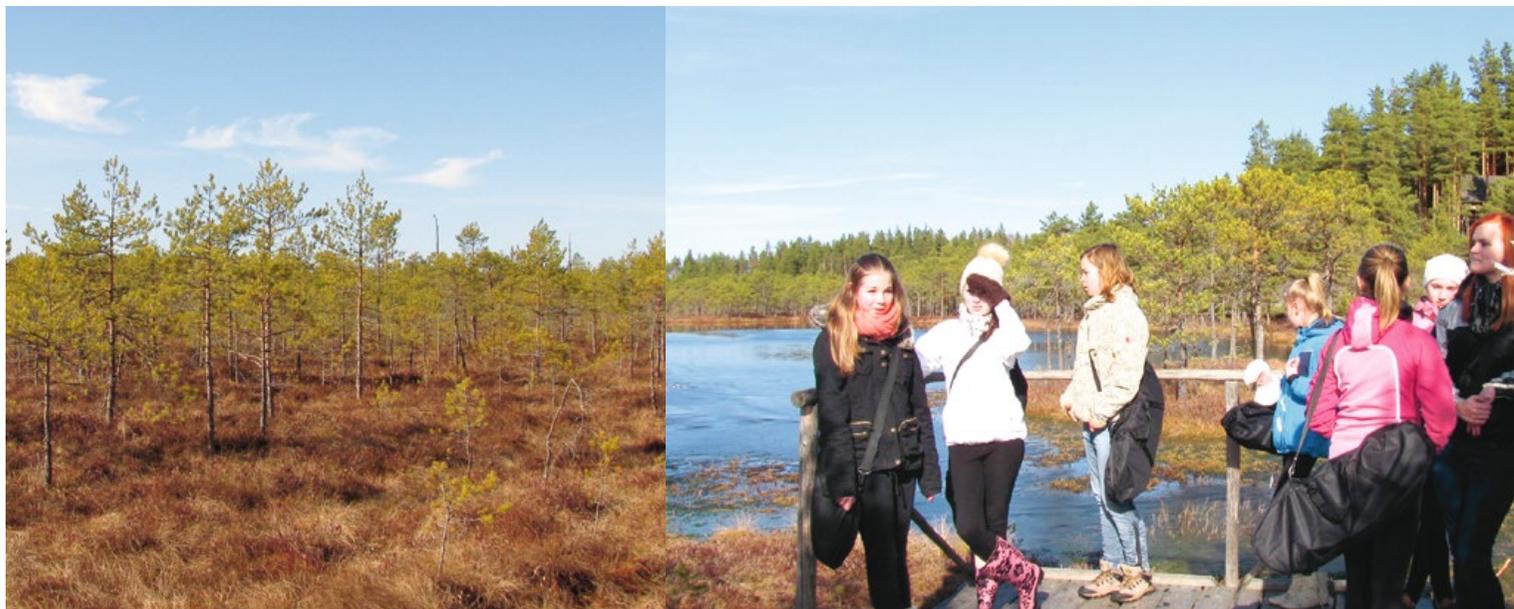


Ulvi Tuisk,
Programme Specialist at EIC:

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In the wild, bumblebees are an excellent indicator species and their importance as pollinating honeybees is great. Although, at first sight, different species of bumblebee may seem similar, each species has its own specific and distinctive traits. The bumblebee identification form available in the portal looduskalender.ee is of great help in identifying the species. I hope that people are willing to get to know bumblebees better, as well as protect them.

Children from Võru and Põlva Counties were Educated on Environmental Topics



Photos: Ülle Tamm

Võru County Vocational Training Centre in cooperation with Non-Profit Organisation Looduskool carried out a comprehensive environmental study programme with more than 5,000 schoolchildren from the general education schools in Võru and Põlva counties.

The idea for the endeavour grew out from the roundtable discussions on environmental education in Põlva and Võru counties, where it was agreed that organising free-of-charge outdoor study programmes would be more successful namely through this kind of cooperation.

With the support of 10 institutions related to environmental studies, 30 study programmes were prepared for the outdoor

study of pupils from classes 1–9. For example, the programme, “Where and how does that bird live?” for classes 5–9 included a lecture by an amateur ornithologist, followed by building a nest box that was later also set up. “Ant Ferda cuts waste” taught pupils from classes 1–3 how to prevent waste production. The Sühavavva Nature Farm with its “Nature’s pharmacy” introduced local medical, poisonous and eatable herbs, and showed how to pick herbs without damaging the nature. Altogether, 200 study programmes were organised.

Within the project, both the programmes and transport were completely free of charge; no schools had to pay any extra fees. The feedback given by schools showed that organising outdoor studies was convenient for them, because otherwise, the organisation would require each school to write separate projects for receiving additional funding, or collecting money for study trips from the pupils. The schools were very interested in participating, and encouraged the organisers to continue the project in the future.

Management of Environment

An overview of the previous year

An ex-post evaluation system for assessing environmental impact was developed.

A control system, which helps to assess the productivity of technical measures for reducing sulfur and nitrogen compounds in shipping, was developed.

The noise level of Pärnu County Vocational Education Centre was reduced and the workshop was made more energy efficient.

8 aspiration systems were installed.

6 surveys related to fishery were carried out.

Payments for environmental supervision projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Payments for environmental supervision project (since 2011)	26	1,190,473
Environmental supervision, co-financing	9	246,747
TOTAL	35	1,437,221

Quantities of Wastewater Directed to the Kunda River Decreased



Photo: Ülari Pai

Kunda Nordic Tsement AS established a cooling water re-use system that decreased the quantity of cooling water taken from and directed to the Kunda River, thus improving the environmental condition of the river.

The company built a spacer and a pumping station for the technological cooling water system to re-use cooling water taken from the Kunda River, and reconstructed the water treatment

plant, also known as an oil trap, for water redirected in the Kunda River. In addition to decreasing the quantity of water taken from and directed to the river, the new system also decreased the possible water pollution risk caused by emergencies.

Thanks to the system launched in October, only rainwater from the plant territory now passes through the purifier and in case of dry weather, the drain is dry. In the winter, the company allows a small amount of water to pass through the purifier to prevent it from freezing. The cost of the investment was 424,700 euros, whereof EIC support amounted to 40%.



Joel Randveer,
Representative of EIC in Lääne-Viru County:

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The benefit of the project to Estonian environment is quite extensive, since the established system facilitates environmentally friendly use of water. It must be emphasised that the burden on the Kunda River is decreased significantly. The project is a good example of the fact that our entrepreneurs care about the environment, especially about our highly important water environment.

Environmental Supervision and Monitoring

An overview of the previous year

Environmental Inspectorate obtained passenger vehicles necessary for the performance of their duties.

3 small vessels were obtained for the surveillance of fishing on Lake Peipus.

Payments for environmental supervision and monitoring and emergency preparedness projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
ERDF development of environmental supervision	5	1,668,402
ERDF development of environmental monitoring	1	243,069
TOTAL	6	1,911,471

New Small Vessels for Environmental Inspection of Lake Peipus



Photo: Environmental Inspectorate

Under the aegis of the Environmental Inspectorate, three new small vessels were bought with all the necessary equipment in order to improve the environmental inspection activities on Lake Peipus.

The new small vessels are replacing the currently used, depreciated ships that are 10 years old. The idea of the project was inspired by the fact that over the recent years, the Environmental Inspectorate has registered the highest number of violations in fishing, but the perpetrators often remain unidentified. In order to change this, the inspection of fisheries had to be made swifter and the inspectors provided with the best equipment and technology.

When acquiring new ships, their speed and safety was taken into consideration. RIB-type vessels have better sailing properties compared to the old ships, and they are equipped with contemporary navigation technology. The vessels were specially fitted with net haulers and winches because a large number of fishing nets without a clear owner has to be lifted out of water during the inspections. Therefore, the new ships ensure a fast and efficient response to environmental violations. The small vessels were purchased from the company, Ridas Yacht & Composites OÜ in the course of a public procurement; the ships cost 618,840 euros which was entirely covered by the EU funding allocated by EIC.

The Environmental Inspectorate has said that the user feedback has been positive – compared to the old vessels, the new ships are faster and with better sailing properties. When boarding another vessel, their rubber sides allow for safer inspections than before.

Earth's Crust

An overview of the previous year

Aero controls of mining activities were performed in 200 quarries.

Magazine Eesti Põlevloodusvarad ja -jäätmed was published.

The impact of peat deposits and mining fields on mire environment was investigated.

2 conferences with 262 participants were held.

Payments for Earth's crust projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Earth's crust-related information (since 2011)	21	1,075,959
Landscape rehabilitation (since 2011)	3	75,160
TOTAL	24	1,151,119

Quarries Ruined by Mining are Reclaimed



Photos: Geological Survey of Estonia

Under the aegis of the Ministry of the Environment, an overview of West Estonian quarries that have been ruined by mining was prepared in order to start reclaiming those based on the report.

In Hiiu, Lääne, Pärnu, Rapla, Saare and Viljandi Counties, the EIC grant allowed inspecting 63 abandoned quarries that once were used for mining sand, gravel, limestone, dolomite and clay.

The inspection carried out by OÜ Eesti Geoloogiakeskus revealed that despite the overall satisfactory state, some quarries are in a better and some in a worse state. The main issues requiring attention are the extremely steep slopes of the quarries, uneven areas with excessive humidity, and rubbish dump sites.

In the first stage, the quarries that are in a poor state (the ones that are dangerous or where the natural state has not restored itself and which are clearly stripped of natural resources) are reclaimed. For this purpose, the necessary projects are prepared. The other quarries must be stripped of their natural resources first, before any reclamation can begin.

In 2015, abandoned quarries are inspected in Harju, Järva, Lääne-Viru and Ida-Viru Counties. As a result, all abandoned quarries in Estonia should eventually be reclaimed.

In Hiiu, Lääne, Pärnu, Rapla, Saare and Viljandi Counties, the EIC grant allowed inspecting 63 abandoned quarries

Waste Management

An overview of the previous year

With the organisation of collection rounds of hazardous waste in Estonia, a total of 606 tonnes of hazardous waste were collected and handled.

New waste management plants were established in Kukruse, Ahja and Kabelimetsa.

A new waste management centre and 2 package waste sorting centres were established in Aardlapalu.

A collection point for large waste was established at the Koigi environmental monitoring station.

Bio-waste collection sites were built for Väike-Maarja and Simuna waste management plants.

A total of 173 buildings, which were damaging the view of landscape, were demolished; 143,000 tonnes of waste created in the process were recycled.

Kergu, Kaisma and Sillamäe landfills were closed.

Kiviõli and Kohtla-Järve semi-coke landfills were closed.

Deposition site of Ahtme Power Plant was closed.

Payments for waste management projects

2014	Projects	Payments EUR
Hazardous waste management	49	519,903
Non-hazardous waste management	6	195,173
Country programme on waste management	6	34,129
Demolition of a building that impairs landscape view	43	772,295
CF management and development of waste collection, sorting and recycling	15	7,860,665
CF objects of residual pollution were entered in the inventory	1	1,597
CF closure of non-conforming non-hazardous waste landfills	1	1,012,442
CF closure and redevelopment of non-conforming oil-shale industry landfills	5	9,162,335
TOTAL	126	19,558,539

Hazardous Waste in Hiiu County to be Collected



Photos: Anu Pielberg

The Association of Local Authorities of Hiiu County and EIC are organising the collection of hazardous waste from the residents of the Hiiu Island for the tenth year in a row already. This helps to prevent polluting the pure nature of the Hiiu Island and reduce risk for human health.

Every local authority of Hiiu County has collection points for hazardous waste that are emptied according to need 3–4 times a year. In addition, collection rounds of hazardous waste are made every spring, offering people the opportunity to give away hazardous waste from their homes. The collection rounds are popular among the residents, because many do not have the means to transport hazardous waste to collection points.

Before collection rounds, there is pre-booking that involves notifying people of exact locations and waste quantities. Most frequent items to be handed over are old paints and packages soiled with hazardous waste. Less popular items include old oils, pesticides, fluorescent lamps, absorbent substances, oil filters and acids.

Waste collected on the rounds and from the collection points of hazardous waste is packaged, labelled, and transported to final handlers of hazardous waste Tallinn to be rendered harmless.

The collection rounds are popular among the residents, because many do not have the means to transport hazardous waste to collection points

BLRT Refonda Purchased a Cable Shredder for Recycling Cable Waste

In Estonia, hundreds of tonnes of cable waste are created every year and this is the reason why scrap metal company BLRT Refonda Baltic OÜ has obtained a cable shredder – to recycle and recover this cable waste.

In order to recover cable waste, metal and plastic components need to be separated from cables. Since these are extremely fibrous materials, a special cable shredder is required for that job, which helps to separate the clean materials suitable for recovery.

Together with the acquisition of a cable shredder, the handling of metal waste has become much more effective, and therefore, the recovery of metal waste in Estonia has increased as well

Together with the acquisition of a cable shredder, the handling of metal waste has become much more effective, and therefore, the recovery of metal waste in Estonia has increased as well. Due to the rise in handling efficiency in the branches of BLRT Refonda Baltic OÜ, the company can accept more waste from its customers and thereby reduce the amount of metal waste in Estonia. Also, BLRT Refonda OÜ can now pay a substantially higher price for cable waste. Hence, the project has increased the recycling of cable waste.

The cable shredder cost 109,000 euros; EIC supported the project through EU support funds to the extent of 40%. BLRT Refonda Baltic OÜ is one of the largest scrap metal waste handlers in Estonia, having a collection network all over Estonia.



Photo: Helina Puuorg



Helina Puuorg,
Project Coordinator with EIC:

The carrying out of the project has increased the possibility of recycling and recovering cables in Estonia. By using a cable recycling device, valuable materials (copper and aluminium) can be separated from the cable waste. These are valuable materials, and therefore, the company can start paying fair price for the parties offering cable waste, which in turn promotes the recovery of cable waste and reduces the amount of metal waste in Estonia.

Hundreds of Tonnes of Eternit Waste Collected in Valga County

By the initiative of the Valga County Association of Local Authorities, the residents of Valga County were able to give away eternit waste free of charge. The initiative helps to reduce landscape pollution and development of illnesses caused by asbestos dust.

Usually, fees are charged for delivering eternit waste to waste management plants, whereas all waste management plants do not accept this type of waste at all. In Valga County, residents deliver around 36 tonnes of eternit to waste management plants per year.

The Valga County Association of Local Authorities, however, organised a campaign in 2014, where private individuals were able to give away eternit waste free of charge. In the two stages that took place over the year, 165 and 66 tonnes of eternit waste was collected, respectively. People could give away pre-booked quantities free of charge, but had to deliver the waste to collection points by their own means. All three waste management plants in Valga County accepted the eternit waste, as well as a few collection points specifically created for that purpose at the request of local authorities. The collection was organised with the tools and machines of the waste transport company, in order to reduce possible damage to health and environment when loading the eternit waste.

The first stage cost approximately 24,000 euros and the second stage approximately 9,700 euros. At both stages, EIC covered 90% of the cost, and local governments covered the remaining expenses. From the Environmental Programme 2014, EIC



Photo: Ilona Akimova

In Valga County, residents deliver around 36 tonnes of eternit to waste management plants per year

awarded 67,000 euros in total to projects related to collecting and handling of eternit waste across Estonia. The Valga County Association of Local Authorities will continue to collect eternit waste in 2015 as well.

Statement of Financial Position

in euro

	31.12.2014	31.12.2013
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	52,607,851	65,321,597
Receivables and prepayments	38,535,413	46,234,759
Total current assets	91,143,264	111,556,356
Non-current assets		
Receivables and prepayments	104,219,156	105,117,951
Property, plant and equipment	162,121	117,394
Intangible assets	153,657	147,977
Total non-current assets	104,534,934	105,383,322
TOTAL ASSETS	195,678,198	216,939,678
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Borrowings	46,770	29,517
Payables and advances received	17,918,827	34,948,940
Grants with special terms	27,099,987	38,957,467
Total current liabilities	45,065,584	73,935,924
Non-current liabilities		
Borrowings	66,767,908	66,736,547
Total non-current liabilities	66,767,908	66,736,547
TOTAL LIABILITIES	111,833,492	140,672,471
NET ASSETS		
Foundation capital	1,488,897	1,488,897
Accumulated surpluses from previous periods	74,778,310	89,672,125
Net Surplus for the period	7,577,499	-14,893,815
Total net assets	83,844,706	76,267,207
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	195,678,198	216,939,678

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

in euro

	2014	2013
INCOME		
Grants and donations	107,495,944	194,004,506
Other income	38,338,022	36,749,476
Total income	145,833,966	230,753,982
EXPENSES		
Distributed grants and donations	-133,998,312	-240,857,730
Other operating expense	-1,263,788	-1,808,825
Personnel costs	-3,802,480	-3,623,170
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment losses	-172,516	-193,903
Total expenses	-139,237,096	-246,483,628
SURPLUS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	6,596,870	-15,729,646
Financial income and expense	980,629	835,831
NET SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD	7,577,499	-14,893,815

Statement of Expenses of Grant Financed Projects

in euro

	2014	2013
1. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2014		
1.1. Water protection	1,113,486	0
1.2. Waste management	413,335	0
1.3. Nature protection	360,763	0
1.4. Forestry	201,473	0
1.5. Earth crust	115,735	0
1.6. Protection of ambient air	239,106	0
1.7. Environmental awareness	753,045	0
1.8. Fishery	472,804	0
1.9. Environmental management	253,799	0
1.10. Marine environment	57,824	0
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2014	3,981,370	0
2. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2013		
2.1. Water protection	5,694,097	1,793,797
2.2. Waste management	765,262	684,712
2.3. Nature protection	2,525,149	305,169
2.4. Forestry	1,434,963	68,399
2.5. Earth crust	518,876	22,736
2.6. Protection of ambient air	1,775,058	475,828
2.7. Environmental awareness	2,548,421	490,736
2.8. Fishery	1,262,443	202,398
2.9. Environmental management	864,481	113,469
2.10. Marine environment	190,828	2,262
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2013	17,579,578	4,159,506
3. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2012		
3.1. Water protection	2,087,496	11,526,258
3.2. Waste management	1,501	269,007
3.3. Nature protection	998,371	2,721,357
3.4. Forestry	2,239,971	1,367,907
3.5. Earth crust	101,011	478,196
3.6. Protection of ambient air	1,046,008	3,460,603
3.7. Environmental awareness	705,841	1,739,517
3.8. Fishery	216,876	677,813
3.9. County	46,966	570,638
3.10. Country environmental awareness	76,000	677,080
3.11. Environmental management	398,509	262,646
3.12. Marine environment	210,801	158,416
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2012	8,129,351	23,909,438

Statement of Expenses of Grant Financed Projects (continued)

	2014	2013
4. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2011		
4.1. Water protection	255,645	5,071,887
4.2. Waste management	0	273,287
4.3. Nature protection	17,399	862,560
4.4. Forestry	0	2,734,355
4.5. Earth crust	455,726	88,919
4.6. Protection of ambient air	1,673,531	2,475,499
4.7. Environmental awareness	128,989	1,178,086
4.8. Fishery	68,735	753,024
4.9. County	0	33,734
4.10. Country environmental awareness	0	33,001
4.11. Environmental management	0	104,776
4.12. Marine environment	76,684	447,955
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2011	2,676,710	14,057,082
5. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2010		
5.1. Water protection	242,286	1,811,374
5.2. Waste management	0	1,393,318
5.3. Nature protection	-126,702	12,028
5.4. Forestry	-670	55,617
5.5. Environmental management	-18,289	87,508
5.6. Environmental awareness	28,212	22,084
5.7. Fishery	0	15,950
5.8. County	0	25,461
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2010	124,838	3,423,340
6. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2009		
6.1. Water protection	24,289	467,305
6.2. Forestry	0	13,216
6.3. Environmental awareness	-426	0
6.4. Fishery	46,870	93,027
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2009	70,733	573,548
7. EXPENSES OF GRANT FINANCED PROJECTS 2008		
7.1. Forestry	-601	-2,592
7.2. Waste management	-979	0
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2008	-1,580	-2,592
8. Expenses of grant financed projects 2007		
8.1. Waste management	0	-613,781
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2007	0	-613,781
9. Expenses of grant financed projects 2006		
9.1. Waste management	-960	0
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2006	-960	
Total expenses of grant financed projects 2006–2014	32,560,041	45,506,541
10. 10.1. Donations, BONUS	12,908	0
Total	32,572,948	45,506,541

Statement of Expenses of Foreign Grant Financed Projects

in euro

	Fund/ measure	2014	2013
1.	INTERMEDIATION OF FOREIGN GRANTS FOR AQUISION OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
1.1.	Projects* CF period 2007–2013	71,838,837	144,635,639
1.2.	Projects* ERF period 2007–2013	5,917,173	13,977,626
1.3.	Projects* Green Investment Scheme	9,713,527	13,469,593
1.4.	Projects* ESF period 2007–2013	429,240	0
	Total intermediation of foreign grants for aquisition of property, plant and equipment	87,898,776	172,082,858
2.	CO-FINANCING OF FOREIGN GRANTS FOR AQUISION OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
2.1.	Projects* LIFE	206,208	94,206
2.2.	Projects** CF period 2007-2013	-5,279,691	2,001,030
2.3.	Läänesaarte Sub-River Water and Sewage Systems CF 2004/EE/16/C/PE/005	0	-2,597
	Total co-financing of foreign grants for aquisition of property, plant and equipment	-5,073,483	2,092,639
3.	INTERMEDIATION OF FOREIGN GRANTS FOR OPERATING EXPENSES		
3.1.	Projects* CF period 2007–2013	14,361,027	15,396,853
3.2.	Projects* ERF period 2007–2013	2,540,891	4,489,841
3.3.	Projects* ESF period 2007–2013	1,155,240	401,949
	Total intermediation of foreign grants for operating expenses	18,057,158	20,288,643
4.	CO-FINANCING OF FOREIGN GRANTS FOR OPERATING EXPENSES		
4.1.	Technical Assistance for projects preparation CF 2003/EE/16/P/PE/012	-25,958	107,223
4.1.1.	TA for Kohtla-Järve and Kiviõli, Closure of Industrial Waste and Semi-coke Landfills CF 2003/EE/16/P/PE/012	48,384	107,223
4.1.2.	TA for Põltsamaa - Pedja Water Management** CF 2003/EE/16/P/PE/012	-74,342	0
4.2.	Projects* ERF period 2007–2013	1,077	5,381
4.3.	Projects* LIFE, INTERREG	567,793	774,445
	Total co-financing of foreign grants for operating expenses	542,912	887,049
	Total expenses of foreign grants finances projects	101,425,364	195,351,189

* Reflected in summary

** Reimbursement of EIC from the Cohesion Fond



Tel: +372 627 5500
Fax: +372 627 5501
adm@bdo.ee
www.bdo.ee

A. H. Tammsaare tee 47
11316 Tallinn
ESTONIA

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Translation of the Estonian original)

To the Supervisory Board of Sihtasutus Keskkonnainvesteeringute Keskus

The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprise the balance sheet as of 31 December 2014, the statement of revenues and expenses for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial statements of Sihtasutus Keskkonnainvesteeringute Keskus for the year ended 31 December 2014. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated 16 April 2015.

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in Estonia. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of Sihtasutus Keskkonnainvesteeringute Keskus.

Management Board's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management Board is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements that are derived from the audited financial statements.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with International Standard on Auditing 810 „Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements“.

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary financial statements derived from the audited financial statements of Sihtasutus Keskkonnainvesteeringute Keskus for the year ended 31 December 2014 are consistent, in all material respects, with those financial statements.

Laile Kaasik
Auditor's Certificate No. 511

Mai Ever
Auditor's Certificate No. 202

BDO Eesti AS
Licence No. 1
A. H. Tammsaare tee 47, Tallinn 11316

28 April 2015

BDO Eesti AS
Registrikood 10309827 VAT nr EE100081343 Tegevusluba 1

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**ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENT
CENTRE**

Foundation Environmental Investments Centre

Narva mnt 7A, V floor, 10117 Tallinn, Estonia

Tel: +372 627 4171, Fax: +372 627 4170

info@kik.ee, www.kik.ee/en

Texts: Eva Pärtel

Translation and English proofreading: Avatar Translation Bureau

Theme and portrait photos: Jarek Jõepera

Design: Pult



