

Clean Baltic Sea Project Fund Report 2/2016 (6 October 2016)

Status as of 31 July 2016	€
Donations	MEUR 12.5
Expenditure	MEUR 10.1
Ongoing projects	MEUR 2.4

The objective of the John Nurminen Foundation's Clean Baltic Sea projects is to improve the status of the Baltic Sea with concrete measures that reduce the nutrient load and environmental risks faced by the sea.

All in all, the Foundation's Clean Baltic Sea projects and their support activities employ nine people, four of them part-time.

Project progress

The NutriTrade project, launched in 2015, will create a voluntary nutrient trading system for the Baltic area, which, in turn, will enable the identification and implementation of cost-efficient load reduction measures. At the same time, the project pilots various promising methods which in addition to reducing the nutrient load of the Baltic Sea also remove nutrients already in the sea, utilising, for example, blue mussel farming, and fish stock management in the marine area. The nutrient trading system is now being planned in cooperation with other stakeholders, and all pilot projects are already underway. Also, a study has been launched, focusing on environmental policies and the possibilities of utilising flexible and cost-efficient mechanisms, such as nutrient trading, more widely in Baltic Sea protection.

The Local Fishing project, launched by the Foundation in March 2015, seeks to move nutrients from the Archipelago Sea to land through fish stock management of cyprinid fish, which are then used for human consumption. The catch is used to prepare fish patties and other fish products. In 2016, the project's set goal for the volume of the catch was doubled, and 10 fishermen, who started working with fish stock management in April, were recruited. Fish patties will be available in 2016 in institutional kitchens of the Turku area, Espoo, and Helsinki. The target is to launch a consumer product, and to commercialise the entire production chain so that fish stock management will by the end of the project be done without paid subsidies to the fishermen.

The phosphorus removal system provided by the Foundation to the wastewater treatment plant of Gatchina, the second largest city of the Leningrad region, was deployed in November 2015. Similar equipment will also be deployed in Vyborg in October 2016. These two measures can reduce the nutrient load of the Gulf of Finland by 50 tonnes per year, equalling twice the volume of discharges from the Helsinki Viikinmäki treatment plant. The next step in the wastewater projects of northwestern Russia is improving the efficiency of phosphorus removal from the wastewaters of the city of Kingisepp: the target is to implement this in 2017. The project will cut the phosphorus load entering the sea by 13 tonnes annually.

An agreement concluded with the Belarusian city of Vitebsk states that nutrient loads leaving the treatment plant will be cut by improving treatment efficiency beyond national minimum requirements. More efficient phosphorus removal at the city wastewater treatment plant will begin in autumn 2016, and enable a reduction of nearly 50 tonnes in eutrophication-inducing load.

In connection with a project led by the Foundation and the BSAP Trust Fund, the enormous Udarnik poultry farm near Vyborg will acquire a filtering system for nutrient-rich runoff waters. A treatment system

for runoff waters from fields was installed in the autumn of 2015, and current plans also include a filtering system for manure pools.

In May 2016, the Foundation approved a new project which seeks to manage the phosphorus discharges from the biogas plant currently under construction in Lviv, Ukraine. The project can prevent a load of more than 100 tonnes of phosphorus from entering the Baltic Sea via the Poltva River.

New projects

The BEST project (Better Efficiency for Sewage Management) is currently being prepared: its goal is to reduce the load of nutrients and other harmful substances originating in industrial wastewaters and entering the Baltic Sea via municipal treatment plants. The Foundation's main partner in this project is the City of Helsinki. The project has been nominated a flagship project of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Financing for the project is sought from the EU Baltic Sea Programme, and project launch is set for autumn 2017.

In the autumn of 2016, the Foundation will launch an extensive survey on assessing the risks of nutrient discharges from biogas production in the Baltic Sea area.

Fundraising and realised objectives

Funds raised for the Clean Baltic Sea projects in 2005 - 2015 amounted to a total of approximately €12.5 million, of which roughly €10.1 million has been used in project implementation. €2.4 million has been reserved for projects that are currently ongoing or being planned.

So far, projects have been implemented in a total of 21 targets, of which 15 have been completed. As a result of the projects, annual phosphorus discharges entering the Baltic Sea have been reduced by a total of 2,100 tonnes. Moreover, the John Nurminen Foundation has provided technical expertise at two project sites, namely the Kingisepp fertilizer factory and the Warsaw wastewater treatment plant, thereby also contributing to the significant reduction of phosphorus discharges. The projects that are underway now will reduce the annual phosphorus load of the Baltic Sea by many hundreds of tonnes, and will, moreover, create new and efficient ways to reduce nutrient loads that are also applicable in Finland.

For administrative and financial reasons, separate fundraising for the Clean Sea Fund was discontinued in spring 2016. Funds that were raised for the protection of the Baltic Sea will also in the future be directed to concrete measures that improve the status of the Baltic Sea. The usage of the funds in the Clean Sea Fund will be monitored with this report for as long as the funds last. In practice, the assets in the Fund are sufficient for financing our current project portfolio.

Annamari Arrakoski-Engardt
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John Nurminen Foundation