

# Community Programme for Sustainable Development (CPSD)

The research and development project aimed to enhance the quality of life of local people living near conservation areas in Finland, Latvia and Lithuania. The project was based on sharing knowledge between stakeholders and participating countries and regions. After funding period (1.8.2013 – 31.12.2014), the project continues by developing research papers and future projects related to community-conservation relations and sustainable development.

The overall aim of the project is to contribute to shared stewardship of the common natural, historical and cultural heritage by carrying out the first steps towards providing demand-based learning possibilities for local communities inside protected areas of Nordic–Baltic countries. The project aims to provide possibilities for local communities to learn about natural areas management and tourism development. Learning together can promote local entrepreneurship and responsibility in resource uses, making local communities more sustainable.

The set of activities carried out to meet the educational needs of the mentioned target group will be called "Community programme" and the project aims at transferring it as a best practice example to other protected areas in Nordic–Baltic Region and beyond via EUROPARC Federation and its Nordic–Baltic Section Network. The project was funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers (NORDPLUS Adult) and the participating organisations. The areas involved in the project are Oulanka and Syöte National Parks in Finland, Kemeri National Park in Latvia and Grazute Regional Park in Lithuania. The main target group of this project were local residents living either inside or close to these protected areas regarding them as a key to both sustainable maintenance of common natural and cultural heritage and raising awareness of the broader society about the importance of these areas and nature conservation, in general.

The goals of the project were:

- Gathering scientific background for future action: implementation of the surveys of local inhabitants on different educational needs in the target protected areas.
- Analyzing survey results and planning further action: identifying needs, comparing and discussing experiences, working out action plans to address the needs in each territory.
- Creating a community programme model.

•The project is coordinated by the Directorate of Grazute Regional Park. The project partners are Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services / Ostrobothnia and the Department of Geography, University of Oulu in Finland and Kemer National Park Fund in Latvia. The Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia is also involved in the project.

#### Publications:

Pietilä, M. Saarinen, J., Virkkunen, V. & M. Kesälä. (2014). Tourism and Nature Conservation in Koillismaa Region, Northern Finland. *Nature Protection Publications of Metsähallitus. Series A:207*. Available: <http://julkaisut.metsa.fi/assets/pdf/lp/Asarja/a207.pdf>

Saarinen, J. (2014). Critical Sustainability: Setting the Limits to Growth and Responsibility in Tourism. *Sustainability* 6(11), 1–17. Available: [www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability](http://www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability)

#### Contacts:

Professor Jarkko Saarinen: +358 40 48 40777

Researcher/Doctoral Student Miisa Pietilä: +358 50 599 3709

#### Partner information:

Oulanka National Park ([www.outdoors.fi](http://www.outdoors.fi))

Syöte National Park ([www.outdoors.fi](http://www.outdoors.fi))

Kemer National Park

([www.daba.gov.lv/public/eng/visiting/zemgale/kemer\\_national\\_park1/](http://www.daba.gov.lv/public/eng/visiting/zemgale/kemer_national_park1/))

Grazute Regional Park ([www.grazute.lt](http://www.grazute.lt))

(Last updated 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015)