

## **LAKE PEIPSI PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 1996**

**LAKE PEIPSI PROJECT (LPP)** - is a regional non-profit non-governmental organization. LPP was registered in Tartu, Estonia in 1994. The LPP Tartu office is a coordination center for programs run in municipalities around Lake Peipsi. LPP also has its field offices in Mustvee, Estonia; Pskov and St. Petersburg, Russia.

### **THE MISSION OF LPP**

- To promote sustainable development in the transboundary region of Estonia and Russia - the Lake Peipsi (Pskovsko-Chudskoe) watershed. We especially emphasize the human aspect of sustainable development.
- LPP supports municipal projects to build the local capacity through the organization of community centers, strengthening grassroot NGOs, developing communication infrastructure on the municipal level. We expect that after a limited period of time, the local NGOs will be able to support their own activities without the assistance of LPP.
- LPP works to promote regional cooperation between municipalities, NGOs, and research and educational institutions in the transborder zone of Estonia and Russia.
- LPP is also a regional research center producing expert assessments and reports for international organizations on issues of transboundary environmental management, and on local social, economic and cultural development in the transboundary context.

### **GOALS OF LPP**

- To contribute to the development of communications, mutual understanding, and cooperation on issues of sustainable development among the communities divided by the border as well as among the local communities and the governments;
- To promote public participation in decision-making and strengthen NGOs through education and training;
- To work to higher quality of the environment in the Lake Peipsi watershed and promote better understanding of local environmental issues by people living in the area;
- To promote preservation of cultural and natural heritage of the region.

### **OUR VISION OF THE FUTURE**

LPP should become a foundation supporting regional cooperative projects between municipalities, NGOs, and research and educational organizations in the Estonian-Russian border region.

### **Partner organisations**

**In Estonia:** Estonian Green Movement, Estonian Meteorological and Hydrological Institute of the Estonian Ministry of the Environment, United Nations Development Program office in Estonia, Social Studies Department of Tartu University, Võrtsjärve

Limnological Station of Institute of Zoology and Botany, Võru Institute, Stockholm Environment Institute – Tallinn office

**In Russia:** Pskov NGOs - Fond ECO, Ecowave; Pskov Regional Administration and Pskov Regional Committee on Nature Protection, Pskov Independent University, Pskov Department of the Russian Geographical Society, NGO “Transboundary Environmental Information Agency”, St Petersburg State University, Socio-Ecological Union

**In USA:** University of Virginia Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction, Institute for Arctic Studies of Dartmouth College, NGOs “Lake Michigan Federation”, Sacred Earth Network, Center for International Environmental Law

**In Sweden:** Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

**The lake - in Russian, Chudskoe; in Estonian, Peipsi** - occupies two-thirds of the Russian-Estonian border region and is the fourth largest lake system in Europe. Recreation and commercial fishing play an important role in the economic and social life, not only of the Lake Peipsi Region, but of Estonia and Northwestern Russia as a whole. The region is unusual in its flora and fauna as well as its rich culture and history. Its inhabitants are a mix of ethnic origins and cultures - Estonian, Russian, Setu, Russian Old Believers. The small Setu nation has a unique culture that bridges Estonian and Russian. Although the Setu speak an Estonian dialect, they are Christian Orthodox like the Russians. Currently, the Russian-Estonian border divides Setu villages, often making it impossible for them to visit the churches, schools and graveyards of their relatives. Estonia and Russia are now trying to solve this problem on the intergovernmental level.

Political and economic changes of the last decade interrupted contacts and information exchange between enterprises, government agencies and communities on both sides. As a result, unemployment and a low level of social and economic development are major problems in the region. Earlier, the two sides of the lake region were economically connected and interdependent. Now it has become difficult for fishermen to rely on fishing as a source of income when they are not permitted to cross the border and can fish only half of the lake. Estonian farmers lost the market for their agricultural products: traditionally they were selling their onions and other vegetables to Russia, St. Petersburg and Pskov. Similarly, environmental monitoring, environmental information exchange and regulation of shared natural resource use of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Watershed have also been disrupted by the re-establishment of the Estonian-Russian border.

### **History of the Lake Peipsi Project**

The first working meeting of the participants of the Lake Peipsi Project was held in St. Petersburg, Russia. In August 1993 at the meeting, for the first time since the border regime had been reestablished between Estonia and Russia, Russian and Estonian scientists and other experts discussed environmental, social, and economic problems of the Lake Peipsi region. During the next two years the Lake Peipsi Project directed its efforts toward the organization of an exchange of information and

opinions between specialists and regional and local authorities of the two countries in the field of environmental protection, and in the regulation of the use of natural resources of Lake Peipsi and its watershed. For instance, when a conflict on the regulation of the catch quota of perch on the lake arose, one of the first meetings where the problem was discussed between Estonian and Russian fishermen and fish researchers in March 1994, was organized by the Lake Peipsi Project.

From March to May of the same year, the LPP organized and sponsored trips of two researchers of the Vörtsjärve Limnological Station to Pskov, Russia, and then a trip of the Director of the Pskov Department of the State Institute for Lakes and Rivers Fish Research, Mr. E. Afanasjev, to Estonia to discuss the "fish" conflict and organization of hydrobiological studies on the lake. Because there were no intergovernmental agreements signed between Estonia and Russia on the environmental protection and regulation of use of natural resources, there were no official channels for the information exchange on environmental protection matters. We considered it important to support the contacts on the level of experts and in this way to prevent or at least to dispel conflicts which were arising between the two parties due to the lack of information on the activities of each other on the lake.

In 1994 Estonia and Russia signed an intergovernmental agreement on the protection and regulation of use of fish resources of Lake Peipsi. As the agreement planned, a fish commission and its working groups were created, including Estonian and Russian officials such as Mr. Toivo Orgusaar of the Fisheries department of Estonian Republic, Mr. Nikolai Mazlov of the Russian State Committee on Fisheries. Fish researchers and fishermen have strived to make the work of the fisheries commission constructive and to resolve the existing conflicts connected with the use of the shared fish resources. The work of the commission can be considered successful: Estonian and Russian representatives were able to overcome distrust for each other and to start to work together on the resolution of the common problems; however, it is still impossible to resolve a number of problems connected with the fish monitoring and catch due to the absence of an intergovernmental border agreement between Estonia and Russia.

### **Executive Director's Report**

In January 1996 Russia and Estonia signed their framework agreement on cooperation in the field of environmental protection. In April 1996, a Russian-Estonian working group discussed implementation of the framework agreement. Regrettably, this was to be the first and the last discussion of implementation of the agreement on the intergovernmental level during the year: environmental issues remained to be out of the focus of the discussions between Estonian and Russian politicians and top officials. The work on implementation of the framework environmental agreement was initiated and organized by NGOs as well as international organizations and experts. The Lake Peipsi Project in cooperation with the Pskov Regional Ecological and Biological Center organized children's contest "World of Water in the Eyes of Children", seminars, conferences and joint publications by Estonian and Russian researchers. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency initiated an environmental monitoring project on Lake Peipsi which has been approved by the Russian and Estonian governments. Environmental

officials, scientists and NGO representatives of the Älvsborg region of Sweden, Tartu county of Estonia and Pskov region of Russia are working together to implement the project. LPP is also a part of the Swedish-Estonian-Russian environmental monitoring project.

In April 1996 experts of the Estonian Ministry of the Environment and the Russian Committee on Water Management prepared text of the second bilateral agreement - on protection and use of resources of the transboundary waterways, Narva River and Lake Peipsi and their ecosystems. Proposals of the LPP were incorporated into the text of the draft agreement. Until now this draft agreement has never been signed.

In 1996, the Council of Border Territories was also established. The Council includes representatives of local authorities of the border zones of Estonia, Latvia, and Russia. The Council organizes regular meetings of representatives of the local authorities to discuss problems of the local population living on the border, specifically problems with crossing and working through the border. Unfortunately, many problems of local people living in the border zone have not been resolved since the local authorities are not able to resolve them without involvement of national governments. However, there is not as yet enough interest in Tallinn and Moscow to deal with the local social and economic problems of the border zone; the local governments in turn do not have sufficient resources to lobby resolution of the local problems since every day they have to deal with the striking problems of poverty and unemployment.

In a situation of expanding contacts between Estonia and Russia on the governmental level, it is important that non-governmental organizations do not duplicate the activities of governmental agencies. In 1996, new contacts between Russian and Estonian government officials, parliamentarians, researchers, and businesses came into place; the intergovernmental relations between the two countries improved. However, many problems in the border zone of Russia and Estonia remain which are connected with the everyday life of people in the border area such as having secure sources of income, working through the border, visiting families and graveyards on the other side of the border.

In this situation, we see our role as NGO, first of all, in supporting local initiatives of grassroot NGOs, activists and self-governments, that is aimed at sustainable development of the local communities through bringing necessary information, training, and other needed resources to the communities. We devote special attention to the organization of projects on the municipal level. The LPP municipal projects aimed to develop the local capacity to resolve social and environmental problems. We are convinced that it is of great importance to work on the local (municipal) level: this is the level where environmental problems such as dumping of polluted wastewater, cutting of forest, and overfishing occur. It is also the level on which it is possible to resolve the existing and to prevent potential social and environmental problems.

Secondly, NGOs should continue supporting transborder contacts between local governments, students, researchers, and children to promote public diplomacy. The LPP currently is coordinating a number of Russian-Estonian transboundary

educational and research programs that are mentioned in greater detail in this report. Organization of these programs has become much easier during the last three years. Russia and Estonia have signed a number of international conventions and agreements which have put responsibilities on both countries to cooperate on the economic, social, environmental problems of common interest.

Through the organization of local and transborder projects, conferences and publications, we are trying to attract the attention of the national authorities as well as international organizations to local problems and to prepare recommendations for possible future programs aimed at resolution of the problems of the border zone. Recommendations developed by the Lake Peipsi Project were used in the planning process of the Swedish-Estonian-Russian environmental monitoring project, and were included into the text of the Estonian-Russian framework environmental agreement. To develop a mechanism of resolution of the local problems of the border area, NGOs should work to strengthen cooperation between especially rural communities of the border zone, on one hand, and their national governments and international organizations, on the other.

### **Public Forum on Poverty**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1996, the Lake Peipsi Project with the financial assistance of the United Nations Development Program organized a public forum "Poverty in Estonia: where is the way out?", in Võru, a small town in Southern Estonia. The problem of poverty is especially acute in the Southern and Southwestern regions of Estonia, as well as in border areas where there is unsatisfactory regional policy. This was held in mind while choosing the place to hold the forum. The aim of the forum was to give the possibility for people of different professional background to come together and discuss the reasons for and the ways of resolving the problem of poverty. Special attention was paid to the role of local initiative in resolving the named problem. Representatives of NGOs, local governments, the women's movement, journalists, the church and the United Nations Development Program took part in the 2-day forum.

The forum was organized according to the concrete methodology of public forums which has been used in many parts of the world. Initially all participants contributed to the making of a list of activities that would help to resolve the poverty problems in Estonia. These activities were divided into three main groups, according to the organizational level from which they stemmed. These levels were the state, local government and the individual. Then after the activities were grouped according to the sphere of life, which were legislative & sociopolitical activities and taxation politics: social work and aid; entrepreneurship; education, infrastructures - roads, transport, communications, information and counseling. Finally, participants of the forum were asked to evaluate all the activities.

Throughout December and January 1997, Indrek Kärner (Institute of Estonian Rural Development) and Toomas Gross worked on the forum materials and the expressed ideas of the participants, which finally, grouped and reworked, were gathered into a special theme book. Besides the materials of the forum, this theme book also contains information about the problem of poverty in the global context, trends in world

economy, statistics about poverty and regional inequality in Estonia, Estonia geopolitical environment and the role of education in the resolution of the poverty problem. This theme book would be the basis for other public forums and discussions on poverty issues that the Lake Peipsi Project intends to organize in the countries near Lake Peipsi and in Southern Estonia.

### **Transformation of Regions: environmental sociological project at Kallaste**

One of the principal goals of LPP has been to promote sustainable development in the Lake Peipsi region. In order to do so most efficiently, we need knowledge about the residents' environmental perceptions, including their attitudes towards their home region. Following a theoretical body drawn from human geography, the environmental sociological project of Kallaste sought to gain such knowledge.

Kallaste is a small town in Estonia of 1250 inhabitants situated on the western coast of Lake Peipsi. This is a multiethnic, multicultural village, its population consisting of Estonians (18%) and Russians (76%), the majority of whom are Old Believers (or their descendants); among the rest, postwar immigrants are dominant.

Living in the periphery was a precondition for preserving the religion and culture of Old Believers for a long time. It has resulted in reliance on the traditional ways of subsistence (fishing, vegetables) up to the present. Now, lack of work forces the young move to the towns. The average age of Old Believers was 53 years in 1995. The number of practical followers under the age of 30 is very low. The congregation of Kallaste has not had its own *batushka* for a couple of years.

While people construct their understanding about the surrounding world, they also construct this world - including places, regions, landscapes and environments. The values and meanings of a society are manifested in the elements of the environment, which is part of the cultural practices of the society. Accordingly, environmental perceptions should be investigated through cultural analysis, and qualitative or interpretative approach was chosen for the study. To collect empirical data, Anna-Liisa Lutsar from Lake Peipsi Project lived in Kallaste for nearly three weeks in July and August 1996. She conducted 24 in-depth interviews with representatives of different generations of Old Believers. The aim of the interviews was to understand the local point of view, the feelings of the locals towards their town and changes that have taken place there. Why do they live there? What makes the identity of Kallaste? What is the relationship between their faith and the place? The analysis of data is in its final stage.

### **Video project "Ice Fishing at Lake Peipsi"**

For the last two or three centuries fishing has provided a living for many of those residing on the shores of Lake Peipsi and, as told by one of the fishermen last spring, "as long as the lake is going to exist, people will carry on fishing here". In summer 1995 LPP shot its first video at Lake Peipsi, entitled "Lake Peipsi and its Environs", highlighting the main problems connected with fishing at Lake Peipsi, and showing work with a specific fishing tackle called "mutnik". It was then that our cameraman Paul Vesik got the idea to make a film about ice fishing, and in the beginning of 1996 we were in Kallaste again. In January, the ice was as thick as 70 cm and covered with much snow. Unusually for the recent years the lake remained frozen all through the winter. The conditions favoured us and fishermen going out to the lake. The catches

they had were very small. Fishermen disliked the Estonian-Russian border which kept them from trying their luck at other fishing grounds. Today, fishing companies are the biggest employers of the region. In winter, the lake draws together men of various occupations and the unemployed in addition to professional fishermen. The film aimed at documenting different methods and devices of ice fishing, including original vehicles constructed by the local fishermen themselves to find an easier way through the difficult working conditions on the ice of Lake Peipsi.

### **A Project of Initiative-Building in the Local Population of Mustvee**

The Estonian coastal town of Mustvee has been chosen by the University of Virginia for conducting a project in developing initiative at the local level. The problems of the town have turned out to be numerous and not simple to solve. The most important problem of Mustvee, the small town in Estonia's Jõgeva County, lies in its economic underdevelopment. The project is to take place over the course of three years. Its first stage began in 1996 and consisted of monthly meetings of twenty local residents (ten Estonians and ten Russians). The discussions included study of a democratic discussion of problems, establishing a common dialogue and compromise, and the study of grant applications and projects. An initiative group is emerging which would very much like to breathe new life into a currently dying but unique town.

The first meeting of the organizers and participants of the discussions took place on April 19 in Mustvee. The meeting was designed for the participants to meet with the organizers and learn about the project. In December the group of local discussion participants presented several projects to the town of Mustvee, for which \$50,000 has been contributed. The participants have decided that they want to develop ecotourism in their city and the establishment of a tourist information center is now being considered. The town's museum, although it is still being completed, is already accepting visitors. Many routes in the Lake Peipsi region from Vasknarva to Rāpina have been worked out. Three topics for tourist excursions already exist: about Mustvee, about the Old Believers, and about the ethnic history of the Lake Peipsi region.

The NGO "Lake Peipsi Project" is serving as the coordinating agency for the project in Mustvee. Besides its work with the University of Virginia, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program, LPP worked in 1996 on setting up a tourist information center in Mustvee.

### **Narva Project**

The project Narva Green Phone was begun, on the initiative of the Lake Peipsi Project, in June of 1996. By means of this green phone, city residents have been able to leave their information and opinions on the environmental condition of the city and received the evaluation of qualified environmental and legal experts.

Between September and October 1996, the LPP also organized a competition for the best idea for an environmental project for the town of Narva. People came up with many interesting ideas, which seemed to be useful for Narva - from very serious, like the construction of a waste recycling factory which would demand a lot of

investments, to very simple ideas. The winner of this competition, Vadim Iserlis, presented an idea for a brochure for people living in Narva on local environmental problems and on steps that residents can take to preserve the environment. The LPP is currently preparing this brochure which will be published in Russian and Estonian.

In the framework of the Narva Project, LPP organized several seminars with various topics. The seminar - "World Bank and other international banks of development in Estonia" - aimed to inform local communities and public servants about the situation with the loans Estonia has received since its independent and on problems which would occur while paying those loans back. The second seminar had the title "Towards Sustainable Development, Democracy and Agenda 21". This was an introductory course in Agenda 21. Local governments, NGOs and journalists were invited to the seminar and the main outcome was that Agenda 21 began to be discussed in media.

### **Civil Forum in Pskov**

The first seminar of the program "Civil Forum" of the Russian Center for Civil Education (St. Petersburg) began in Pskov in September 1996. The goal of the program is the preparation of discussion brochures of local problems for distribution among city residents. The goal of the brochure was to help citizens to formulate their own weighed evaluation of those problems.

Three possible approaches to the problems were defined as a result of the first seminar. First, it is necessary to formulate a working mechanism of cooperation between the authorities and citizens. Second, it is necessary to change how people relate to the question of civic participation, in order that they see the possibility of a solution of their own problems by influencing city management and believe in the possibility of such influence. Third, the inadequacy of information for citizens concerning the work of the city authorities and their mutual interests requires the organization of a system of informational exchange between city authorities and citizens.

In order to make a precise formulation of each approach and develop corresponding strategies, priorities, and concrete actions, discussions with four or five focus groups were conducted in Pskov in November. In a third seminar held at the end of November, seminar participants worked out a definitive selection of approaches to the problem of civic participation and discussed material to be included in the final brochure.

The brochure will be printed in the beginning of 1997 and distributed among Pskov residents. Igor Nagdasev and Irina Mirnaia, Victoria Grigorieva (Ecological-Biological Center of Pskov Oblast), Gulnara Roll (Lake Peipsi Project), Dmitri Antoniuk, Irina Korotkova, Alexander Chernov (Fond ECO), and Julia Nikiforova participated in the program and discussed material to be included in the final publication.

### **Lake Peipsi Quarterly**



The Lake Peipsi Quarterly continued to appear during 1996 as the newsletter of the Lake Peipsi Project. In addition to describing the work of the project, the Lake Peipsi Quarterly sought to inform its readers about the transboundary problems of the region, including environmental governance, community participation and the development of civil society.

The Lake Peipsi Quarterly is printed in 500 copies and is distributed to government and non-government representatives in the region. Its contents are in Estonian, English and Russian. It can also be viewed at <http://www.lake-peipus.net>

### **Transboundary Environmental Information Agency, St. Petersburg**

The Transboundary Environmental Information Agency (TEIA), information and Internet resource providers of the Lake Peipsi Project, sought to develop several aspects of transborder environmental cooperation during 1996. Alexander Shkrebet and Nathaniel Trumbull are the co-directors of TEIA.

TEIA's first event of the year was the seminar "Transborder Environmental Problems" in St. Petersburg held in March, which was attended by environmental experts and NGO representatives from northwestern Russia and Estonia. Participants discussed some of the most critical transborder environmental problems of the region.

In August, the website for the Lake Peipsi Project came on-line. The site contains the contents of the Lake Peipsi Quarterly, other information about Lake Peipsi Project activities, and also information about TEIA.

Through the course of the year, TEIA published and distributed twice a month by e-mail the news bulletin Transboundary and Environmental News. Subscription to the bulletin is offered free-of-cost. Distribution of the bulletin grew from 500 addresses to 1,500 by the end of the year. In order to subscribe to Transboundary and Environmental News, please send e-mail to <[majordomo@teia.org](mailto:majordomo@teia.org)> with the words "subscribe ten your\_e-mail\_address" in the contents of your message.

### **Pskov Information Center**

On the initiative of the Lake Peipsi Project, the Transboundary Education and Information Agency, Pskov Volny University, and St. Petersburg University, the Pskov Information Center was opened in 1996. The basic goal of the Center is to provide the opportunity for electronic communication with any other Internet users in the world for non-commercial organizations in Pskov, including educational and non-government organizations

The Center is the first institution to offer free-of-cost Internet access in the city. In the past, Internet access in Pskov has been prohibitively expensive for non-commercial organizations. Internet access for such organizations provides a highly valuable opportunity to increase awareness of their work outside of local region, and to gain information about the activities and experiences of similar organizations elsewhere in the world. As fundraising becomes

increasingly critical for such organizations, use of the Internet can provide an essential source for information about funding and other opportunities.

In addition to Volny University, six non-profit organizations in Pskov have been provided with modems free-of-cost in order that they are able to dial up the Center at Volny University from their own office computers. (The city's Ecological-Biological Center and the Pskov Oblast Committee for Environmental Protection are recipients of the modems.) The users of the Center were invited to participate in free-of-cost training seminars on how to use electronic mail and how to gain access to Internet resources, including electronic conferences devoted to as many as 10,000 different topics.

A series of homepages will be established on the Pskov Internet server in order that other Internet users will have free access to information on NGO activities in Pskov.

### **The World of Water in the Eyes of Children**

At annual public ceremony held in the Russian city of Pskov in June, prizes were awarded to Estonian and Russian school children participants in "The World of Water in the Eyes of Children" art competition and exhibition. The international art competition and exhibit have played a visible role for local residents in raising the problem of environmental protection of Lake Peipsi. Most of the works by Estonian and Russian children depict scenes from the shores and waters of Lake Peipsi, through which the international border of Estonia and Russia runs. The award ceremony was the first time many of the Estonian children had travelled to Russia. More than 300 works of art were entered into the competition and were on display at the main exhibition hall in Pskov. An international jury judged the works of art. The Pskov Ecological-Biological Center and the Lake Peipsi Project organized the competition and exhibition.

### **Sociological Study of the Estonian-Russian Border Region**

One of the dark sides in the Estonian-Russian relationship today is the border between the two countries. Many of the questions dealing with the border are also linked closely to the ethnic identification of those living near it. The purpose of the sociological study of the summers of 1995 and 1996 was to examine the roots of ethnic identification on both sides of the present-day Estonian-Russian border.

Over the course of the study, residents on both sides of the border and of a variety of ethnic backgrounds were interviewed. Respondents were selected randomly and their participation was voluntary. Long interviews were also made in order to evaluate the quality of the study and its accompanying surveys. Teams of specially trained students from Pskov and from Tartu conducted the surveys for the study.

Preliminary results from the surveys showed that the Russian population on both sides of the border is suffering from a demographically aging population and high unemployment. The Russian residents exist for the most part on traditional means of economic subsistence.

The Estonian-Russian mixed population living on the Western coast of Lake Peipsi (for example, in the shore town of Mustvee), has preserved a distinct ethnic identity in which four different denominations co-exist: Old Believers, Orthodox, Lutheran, and Baptist and has achieved levels of relative economic stability. The Estonian population around the lake has found itself more closely aligned with Estonian policies as defined by Tallinn.

Many new questions were raised by the study, including perhaps most importantly, the nature of local political culture and its correlation with economic and ethnic background. The growing awareness of local residents to their own role and possible influence in the decision-making process of their local communities and state is also of the greatest interest for our future work.

### **International Conference on Social Aspects of Local Development in the Lake Peipsi Region**

The conference was organized by Lake Peipsi Project in cooperation with Pskov University and was held in Pskov on the 18 of January. At the conference the result of the Lake Peipsi Projects anthropological and sociological study was presented. The study was conducted in 20 villages along the coast of Lake Peipsi during the summer of 1995. Local governments around the lake, researchers and students were invited to the conference. Based on the results of the study as well as on the expertise of the researchers and policy-makers, the conference discussed the social transformation of Estonia and Russia specifically as it affects their transborder region and the problems of development which have arisen as a result. The participants formed proposals for the local and regional governments of the Lake Peipsi region on local social and economic development and education.

### **International Conference on Environmental Governance of Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe and other Transboundary Waterways Held**

More than one hundred participants from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Russia, Sweden, Finland and the USA, met in Tartu on April 15-18 to take part in a four-day conference on the governance of transboundary waterways between Russia, Belarus and the Baltic states.

The purpose of the conference was to facilitate communication between governments, researchers, non-governmental organizations, and business community of the Baltic States, Belarus, and Russia concerning environmental governance of their transboundary water bodies (lakes and rivers) and their watersheds. The conference represented one of the first attempts in the region for the combined participation of government officials and non-government organizations in a constructive dialogue. In addition to international experts, local and regional authorities of the Lake Peipsi region, researchers, representatives of the Estonian Ministry of the Environment, the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other Russian officials and representatives of non-government organizations participated in the conference.

The conference organizers devoted special attention to an analysis of the implementation of multinational environmental conventions and bilateral agreements signed by the Baltic states and Russia, particularly the Estonian-Russian bilateral environmental framework agreement signed in January 1996 and a draft bilateral agreement on the protection and use of natural resources of the Narva River and Lake Peipsi watershed. This second crucial agreement has been prepared and the parties intend to sign it during this year. It will make possible much greater cooperation in the field of the environment in the transboundary waterways of the region.

One important result of the conference has been the proposal for a project by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency for financing of a high-quality monitoring project of water quality on Lake Peipsi.

Second, the conference's recommendations on which all participants of the conference had the opportunity to comment were distributed not only to members of the conference but also local and national press. Because all conference participants were given the opportunity to revise the recommendations throughout the course of the conference, the recommendations represent the participants' best efforts at reaching a consensus for governance of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe and other regional transboundary waterways.

The conference was organized by the Tallinn office of the Stockholm Environment Institute, the NGO Lake Peipsi Project, and the United Nations Development Program in collaboration with the environmental ministries of Estonia, Russia, Latvia and Lithuania.

#### **AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR LAKE PEIPSI PROJECT NO EST/95/Q08 FOR 1996**

We have audited the attached financial statements of the Support for Lake Peipsi Project, project number EST/95/Q08 for 1996.

These financial statements are the responsibility of management of the Project; our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, which require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, and evaluation the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, subject to our detailed Memorandum on Examination, we certify that:

- The Project financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the results of its operations for the year 1996;
- Project disbursements had been made in accordance with the Project Document;
- Project disbursements were valid and supported by adequate documentation;

- An appropriate management structure, internal controls and recordkeeping systems were maintained by the project manager and could be relied upon;
- Project monitoring and evaluation was undertaken and reports were prepared as required; and
- Project non-expendable equipment, use, control and disposition were in accordance with the requirements.

Tallinn, 12 May 1997

AS KPMG Estonia  
Taivo Epner  
Authorized Public Accountant

### **Lake Peipsi Project supporters**

Lake Peipsi Project thanks the following foundations and governmental agencies for their support:

- Eurasia Foundation
- Royal Netherlands Embassy
- Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- United Nations Development Program

### **Annual Budget 1996, in Estonian kroons (1 US dollar equal to 12 Estonian kroons)**

	<b>UNDP</b>	<b>MATRA</b>	<b>REC</b>	<b>MacArthur</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Salaries and consultance</b>	224245	3591	99051	57925	<b>384812</b>
<b>Travel</b>	53683	7639	11425	58986	<b>131733</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	24067		10891	17221	<b>52179</b>
<b>Equipment</b>	269878	20111	37554	16434	<b>343977</b>
<b>Telephone, mail</b>	27976	3665	18199		<b>49840</b>
<b>Printing and translation</b>	61531	7456	13111	16120	<b>98218</b>
<b>Other</b>	8540	174	14284		<b>22998</b>
<b>Total 1996</b>	<b>669920</b>	<b>42636</b>	<b>204515</b>	<b>166686</b>	<b>1083757</b>

**Gulnara Roll**, 31, Director, completed Cand. of Science degree in Human Geography and Environmental Studies at St. Petersburg university and Post-graduate course on Environmental Studies at the Central European University (Budapest, Hungary, 1991). In 1992 she was a Visiting professor at Brown university, RI, USA, where she conducted research on transboundary environmental management and negotiations. Gulnara has been the Director of the Lake Peipsi Project since 1993.

**Toomas Gross**, 25, was born in Tartu. He graduated as a zoologist, studied cultural anthropology at University of Helsinki, got his MA from the University of Tartu in Sociology and M. Phil. from the University of Cambridge in Social Anthropology. In Lake Peipsi Project he works as manager of anthropological fieldwork and coordinator of South-Estonian projects.

**Anna-Liisa Lutsar**, 26, was born in Tartu. Anna-Liisa went to school there and graduated from the department of biology of the University of Tartu in 1993. The following year she studied cultural anthropology and the Sami language in Helsinki. Back in Tartu, Anna-Liisa started to work on her master thesis. After several transformations the theme of her research closely coincides with the academic discipline of human geography. Since autumn 1995 she has been working with projects of environmental sociology at LPP.

**Galina Kapanen**, 29, the Mustvee municipal project manager, was born in Mustvee. Now Galina lives in Tallinn. She is a computer expert by education. Working during the last two years for the LPP, Galina gained lots of experience in community organizing work and she plans to continue to assist the local communities in the local development and specifically to advise them in organization of ecotourism projects.

**Pavel Goncharov**, 20, Narva Project manager, was born in Narva and lived there all the time until entering Tartu University. Pavel is studying law at the University of Tartu and he is since beginning of 1996 working for the Lake Peipsi Project. In 1995-1996 he participated in a Conflict Resolution program organized by Carter Center and Virginia University, which had the goal of helping two communities of Estonia co-exist peacefully and also whose aim was to improve relations between Russia and Estonia. In 1996, in the framework of the same program he visited Carter Center and Virginia University in USA, where he studied Conflict Resolution and Human Rights.

**Alexander Shkrebet**s, 35, is a computer consultant and systems administrator of the Lake Peipsi Project server. He is a graduate of St. Petersburg University. He has taught computer science in the Conflictology Department of St. Petersburg University. He has been working for the Lake Peipsi Project for the past three years.

**Nathaniel Trumbull**, 29, is editor of the Lake Peipsi Quarterly and of Transboundary and Environmental News. He is a graduate of Harvard College. He received a master's degree in history at Columbia University. He previously worked as a journalist in St. Petersburg. He has been with the Lake Peipsi Project for the past two years.

**Dmitry Antonyk**, 24, studied history at Pskov Pedagogical Institute. He founded the NGO "Fond ECO" which deals with Pskov town environmental pollution problems. In 1996 Dmitry assisted Lake Peipsi Project in organizing events in Pskov and was a coordinator of the "Civil Forum" project.

**Victoria Grigorieva**, 25, the LPP coordinator of Educational Programs. She was born and lives in Pskov, Russia. Viktoria is a chemist by education, graduated from Pskov

Pedagogical Institute and has completed courses on “Peoples of the Baltic” and “The Baltic Sea Environment” through the Baltic University.

**Eiki Berg**, 27, was born in Tartu and has studied and worked there most of his life. He graduated as a human geographer from Tartu University. He also received his Master Degree there. He works as the social science research coordinator of the Lake Peipsi Project. He seeks to apply an inter-disciplinary approach in his work.

**Ene Muistna**, LPP accountant, graduated from Võru technical college in Accounting and worked for the last 27 years as an accountant for a number of commercial organizations. Ene has been working at the Lake Peipsi Project from Spring 1996.

**Eha Sügis**, technical support. Eha worked all her life as a professional volleyball player and later as a trainer of volleyball at Tartu sportschool. Currently she is retired and is working for the Lake Peipsi Project.

**Cara Abercrombie**, a Bachelor student at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA. Cara worked at the Lake Peipsi Project during Fall – Winter 1996 on organization of the international project on implementation of international environmental agreements in the Lake Peipsi Watershed.

**Dorrie Bright**, a student at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA. Dorrie worked at the Lake Peipsi Project during Winter – Spring 1996 on the development of the LPP Internet homepage and organization of Pskov Information Center.

**Lake Peipsi Project Senior Advisors**

Gail Osherenko, Senior Institute Fellow, and Oran R. Young, Director, Dickey Center Institute for Arctic Studies, NH, USA.