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A very constructive workshop was held in Gdansk, February 26 on the theme "Long Term Strategy for ERB and planned contents of the JTDP". About 20 experts representing Poland, the Kaliningrad Oblast and Sweden participated. Many valuable inputs and comments were presented that will contribute to the more precise contents of the ERB Long Term Strategy.

The ERB 6th Annual Council meeting was held in Elblag February 27. The Seagull project manager informed about the general implementation situation of the project, and made a more extensive presentation of the draft Long Term Strategy for ERB. The ERB parties promised to react on some questions about the Strategy within one month to the project management.

The chairmanship of the ERB Board and Council is Polish from the end of February 2004 and one year ahead. The new Polish chairman, the Marshall of the Pomeranian Region, declared that the implementation of the Seagull project and its main products – the Long Term Strategy and the JTDP – are the top priorities for the Polish chairmanship.

The third Seagull Progress report (covering the second part of 2003) has now been delivered to the BSR Interreg III B secretariat in Rostock. Some of the achievements and results of the project so far, as presented in the Progress report, are:

- Over 100 transnational seminars and workshops, and one big conference have been carried out within the project's five work packages. Over 2000 persons have participated in the meeting activities.
- An information brochure about the project has been produced and printed in 5 languages – totally 8000 copies. An *Information and Communication Strategy* for ERB has been worked out and adopted by the ERB Board and Council.
- The *Seagull News* is from August 2003 issued every 2-4 weeks and broadly spread to all stakeholders and other interested organisations and persons.
- Two project reports – *Democracy in Euroregion Baltic* and *The Lyckeby River – an attitude investigation about water issues* – have been printed. Nine other project reports are drafted and will be printed during spring 2004 – about *Gender Equality, Water Management, Innovative Centres and Rural Development*. All these reports should be regarded as important basic material for the further work in the project to form a Long Term Strategy and a JTDP for the entire region.
- A study of industrial and other production clusters in the ERB member regions has started.
- Cross-sector partnerships for rural development have been initiated in two regions (Klaipeda County and Warmia-Masurian Region).
- Transfer of experience and best practices between the regions concerning Good Governance have been made. Understanding of the importance of regional and interregional cooperation as one fundamental prerequisite for development of Good Governance in municipalities and regions – in view of restricted own resources and of being part of the European Union.

- Better knowledge and understanding by a great number of representatives of the ERB member regions of the different member regions' preconditions for regional and sustainable development through all meetings and workshops carried out, all project reports compiled up till now, the newsletter Seagull News and other dissemination activities within the project.
- Evident strengthening of networks of experts from the different ERB member regions, especially within WP 3 and 4.
- A close cooperation has started between the Seagull project and the Interreg III B projects Baltic Gateway, SEBTrans Link and South Baltic Arc.
- The central objectives of the project – to work out a Long Term Strategy and a JTDP for ERB – are following the implementation schedule and the work is functioning better than expected. The understanding of added values of such a strategy and JTDP for the member regions' own development opportunities is rapidly growing. From such points of view, the progress of the project is very satisfactory.

The full Progress report is available at www.eurobalt.org.

Other activities carried out since previous Seagull News:

- Workshops on democracy and gender issues with the aim to discuss input to the ERB Long Term Strategy and JTDP have been carried out in Gdansk (February 5) and Kaliningrad (February 18).
- A workshop was held in Nexö on Bornholm February 16 with Danish stakeholders about regional development issues and a long term strategy for ERB.
- A coordination meeting between the Polish parties of ERB (and the Seagull project) has been held in Elblag for preparations of a new Polish Seagull Phare funded project.
- A WP 5 meeting has been held in Gdansk about a new website for ERB

Planned activities during the coming month:

- WP 2: Swedish working group March 12, regional workshop about the Water Framework Directive in Kaliningrad on March 23, international expert meeting in Kaliningrad, March 24-25.
- Note the dates 27-28 May. Then an International conference – Water within ERB – is arranged in Karlskrona. Invitation will be sent out in the end of March.
- The 5th WP 3 seminar and exhibition about Innovative centres and SMEs as vehicles in regional development will be carried through in Kaliningrad on March 16. The event is a mutual arrangement between the Interreg Seagull and Seagull Russian Component projects.
- Three WP 4 meetings will be carried out in Latvia March 8-10: an international expert meeting in Liepaja and seminars on the Leader+ model in Talsi and Liepaja districts.
- A brief Seagull Half Time Report will be produced and distributed to all project partners.
- The draft ERB Long Term Strategy will be re-drafted, based on comments from the above mentioned workshop in Gdansk and incoming comments from the ERB parties (see ERB Council meeting above). Preparatory work will also start concerning the JTDP contents.
- Partnership meeting for Swedish Seagull partners in Kalmar March 18.
- Further preparations for implementing a new ERB website.
- A study tour will be carried through for 6 Latvians to south-east Sweden April 5-8 about Innovative centres, Local development centres, Triple Helix cooperation and Entrepreneurship support – the study tour is a part of the implementation of the Phare-financed Seagull-Latvia project.

Seagull is a project for the Euroregion Baltic (ERB) with the main purpose of developing and anchoring a long-term strategy and a joint transnational development programme (JTDP) for the region. The programme will form the basis for future investments in the environment and infrastructure, etc. It will thereby contribute to social, economic and environmentally sustainable development throughout the region.