

BSR INTERREG III B

Progress Report – Activity Report (general information)

Project name:	Seagull-DevERB		
Reporting period:	01.01.2005 - 30.06.2005	Number of the report:	6

Summary description of the project Please provide a brief overall summary of the project to be published on BSR INTERREG III B webpage. (maximum 2500 characters)	
<p>The structure and living conditions differ considerably between the member regions of Euroregion Baltic (ERB), which are Kronoberg, Kalmar and Blekinge Counties in Sweden, the Regional Municipality of Bornholm in Denmark, The Kurzeme Planning Region in Latvia, Klaipeda County in Lithuania, Kaliningrad Region of The Russian Federation, and the Pomeranian and Warmia-Masurian Regions in Poland.</p> <p>The creation of ERB in 1998 is an expression of the member regions´ mutual interest in closer and deeper long-term cooperation in all fields of society - aiming at developing the ERB into being an economically and environmentally sustainable and prospering region in Northern Europe and a front-runner in trans-national cooperation, including e.g. network building, knowledge transfer, competitive bench-marking and – not the least – best-in-class when it comes to implementing EU directives in especially the environment and energy fields that are of vital importance for the development of the whole Euroregion. This political cooperation is the framework within which the Seagull project operates. The project is a tool in the process of deepening and concretising the long term cooperation between the member regions of ERB.</p> <p>The Seagull project’s main objective is to contribute to the cohesion in the southeast Baltic Sea Region utilizing the increasing economic potential while taking social, environmental and cultural sustainability into consideration. The most central objectives of the project is to develop and politically decide upon a Joint Development Programme (JDP) for the region that will facilitate e.g. pre-feasibility studies and implementation activities concerning important investments for sustainable development, economic growth and cohesion.</p> <p>The Joint Development Programme is prepared and anchored through a process-oriented work including a long range of seminars and workshops, and input in the form of reports on for instance democracy and governance issues, the gender equality situation in the ERB member regions, environmental issues and studies concerning innovative environments and industrial clusters in the region. Also studies on regional strategies, prerequisites for building up a common ERB data base and to use GIS methods are carried out. Special emphasis is put on water management issues, building networks between innovative centres (Science and Technical Parks, etc.), promote entrepreneurship and cooperation between companies, and on the problematic situation in the vast rural areas within the region. Input to the development programme about transport issues is made through a close cooperation with the BSR Interreg III B projects Baltic Gateway, SEBTrans Link and South Baltic Arc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.eurobalt.org</p>	

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Achievements of the project so far

Please describe the main achievements of the project so far to be published on BSR INTERREG III B webpage.
(maximum 1500 characters)

- About 195 trans-national/regional seminars and workshops, and two big conferences have been carried out within the project's five work packages.
- Almost 5000 persons have participated in the meeting activities.
- An information brochure about the project has been produced and printed in 6 languages – totally 8000 copies.
- Roll-ups about the project as well as an A3-map (in 1000 copies) over the ERB have been produced. All copies of the map have been distributed to the member regions and to participants of bigger conferences such as the BSSSC's annual meetings.
- An Information and Communication Strategy for ERB has been worked out and adopted by the ERB Board and Council.
- An electronic newsletter – *Seagull News* – is from August 2003 issued and broadly distributed to all stakeholders and other interested organisations and persons – up till June 2005 in 20 issues.
- Eight project reports – (1) *Democracy in Euroregion Baltic*, (2) *The Lyckeby River-an attitude investigation about water issues*, (3) *The Lyckeby River-Nature, culture, environment and The Lyckeby River Water Association*, (4) *Innovative centres and SMEs as vehicles in regional development*, (5) *Gender Equality in ERB*, (6) *Rural Areas in ERB-Empirical description*, (7) *ATLAS-Euroregion Baltic and the Baltic Sea*, and (9) *A pilot study on Cruise Tourism in the Baltic* – are printed and published on the ERB web site.
Over ten more reports are compiled or under preparations for printing or publishing at the web site. One of the new reports is a study of regional industrial platforms and clusters in the ERB member regions. Others are about *Water Management*, *Indicators for Sustainable Development*, *Women's values and choice of place for settlement*, and *Good governance and Gender Equality in ERB – an interview survey*.
All reports will be published at the ERB web site. The reports should be regarded as important basic material for the work to form a JDP for ERB.
- A survey has been carried out about the nine ERB member regions' development strategies.
- A Tool box has been developed concerning triple helix cooperation – published at the ERB web site.
- Cross-sector partnerships for rural development have been initiated in four regions – Klaipeda County, Warmia-Masurian Region, Kurzeme Planning Region and Kaliningrad Region.
Rural development pilot projects are being implemented in Sweden, Denmark and Russia.
- Strong efforts have been put on information and anchoring activities about the project objectives, achievements and planned results to decision makers in the member regions, mainly within the public sector.
- A second draft of a JDP has been worked out, containing the background of the ERB cooperation and the Seagull project, a chapter with facts and figures about ERB, a brief SWOT analysis of the region, a chapter about ERB in a BSR, EU/European and Global context, a draft vision for the ERB situation in 2015, a strategy for the next 10 years' development of the region proposing five focus

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areas for the cooperation, a chapter discussing how to implement the development programme, and a main chapter describing 13 prioritised actions within the five focus areas to be implemented during the next few years. This second draft is published at www.eurobalt.org, and the focus areas and prioritised actions are summarised in Seagull News no. 18.

- The second JDP draft was in April 2005 sent to the member regions for comments and the regions were asked to prioritise between the proposed actions.
- Comments from all member regions except the Kurzeme Planning Region have been delivered to the project management. The comments were discussed and evaluated by the Steering Committee at its meeting in late May 2005, and the Steering Committee concluded on the direction of the finalising work with and the structure of the Joint Development Programme. The final JDP will consist of three documents: (1) The Strategy with focus areas, (2) the prioritised actions in order to implement the strategy, and (3) a background document with facts and figures about ERB, summaries of the reports, analyses, etc. The Strategy will contain four focus areas and the Action Programme eight prioritised actions. A summary of the SC decision is published in Seagull News no. 20.
- The project implementation status has been reported and discussed at *every meeting of the ERB Board and Council* since the project started – totally 16 times up to June 2005. The implementation status has also been reported to the member regions' decision bodies at several occasions.

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Are there any changes on the general project conditions/project set-up? (e.g. partnership, key persons, schedules ...)

There are no changes concerning the partnership or key persons in relation to progress report 5. The participation of the Kurzeme Planning Region has though been very limited during the reporting period due to uncertainties concerning the political leadership in the region as result of general elections during spring 2005.

Through decision by the Programme Secretariat in Rostock, the implementation period of the project is prolonged with 3 months – the new dead line is November 20 2005.

In spite of earlier reported problems and bottlenecks, and thanks to efforts from the eastern partners – even if participation from all of them have not been possible at all our trans-national activities – the implementation situation is under control. The attached Financial report IV – *Changes of the non-eligible budget* – shows that the eastern parties trough Phare, Tacis and NCM funding and own national financing have fulfilled 94 % of the planned co-financing according to the approved Seagull-DevERB application.

Please describe the main co-ordination activities that have taken place during the reporting period. (e.g. partnership contracts, organisational arrangements, meetings...)

- The most essential coordination activity during the reporting period has been the process of sending out the draft II of the JDP to the member regions for comments, the connected information activities about the draft and the work to take the comments under consideration and get the Steering Committee to decide how to continue the process towards a final JDP draft.
- Steering Committee meetings have taken place in Klaipeda in January and in Budapest in May in connection to a study visit to Hungary and Slovakia.
- All transnational expert meetings within WP 1, 2, 4 and 5 have included coordination issues.
- Three coordination meetings with and continuously close contacts over phone and the Internet between the project management and all WP leaders.
- Continuously close contacts over phone, the Internet and at meetings with the national secretariats of the ERB organisation (there is one such secretariat in respectively Sweden, Denmark, Poland, the Kaliningrad Region, Lithuania and Latvia that represent the main partners of the Seagull project) and the international secretariat of ERB in Elblag, Poland.
- Special coordination activities between the project management and the administration of the Marshal's office of the Pomeranian Region concerning the Polish Phare financed Seagull project.
- Special coordination activities between the Seagull project management and the management of the Tacis funded Seagull RC project.
- A third meeting between the managements of the Seagull-DevERB, SEBTrans Link and Baltic Gateway projects.

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Progress Report – Activity Report (activities and outputs)

Title of WP1	ERB strategy and Joint Transnational Development Programme (JTDP)	
Strategic focus of WP1	Transnational, cross-sectoral approach to form a strategy and a JTDP for ERB in line with compreh. EU policies. JTDP as base for investm.	MILESTONE
Planned results of WP1	A long-term strategy and a JTDP for the whole ERB region.	6

Planned activities and outputs	Main activities that have taken place during the reporting period	Outputs produced during the reporting period and related output indicators
<p>(1) Third joint seminar in SE between representatives of the Seagull project and central infrastructure corridor projects affecting ERB. (2) Redrafting of the JTDP based on earlier seminars and results and conclusions from WP2-4 and from the transport corridor projects. (3) Summary conference in Kaliningrad about the JTDP. Final discussions and decisions by the ERB bodies. Main outputs: Two seminars carried through. A final JTDP for ERB decided and disseminated.</p>	<p>(2) The Joint Development Programme (JDP) redrafted into a draft II. The work with a final third draft of The Strategy and the Action Programme has also started (see above).</p> <p>(4) An interview survey has been carried out about Good Governance and Gender Equality in ERB. It is a follow up survey of the findings presented in earlier published reports about democracy and gender equality. The survey is replacing some follow up seminars that were planned according to the project application.</p>	<p>(2) Draft II of the JDP, published at the ERB web site.</p> <p>(4) Report produced. Printing during autumn 2005.</p>

Deviation from the planned activities and outputs as well as their reasons/justifications
<p>(1) The third joint seminar was implemented on August 11 in Karlskrona, Sweden.</p> <p>(3) The summary conference in Kaliningrad has been replaced by a second opportunity for the member regions' decision bodies to comment on a new draft (III) of the JDP (the Strategy and the Action Programme). The period for comments is September-October 2005. Such an opportunity is more essential for the anchoring of the JDP than a summary conference. The JDP will instead be presented at the final conference of the Seagull RC project and at the kick-off conference of the Seagull II project as well as for the ERB member regions' decision bodies and the ERB Board and Council.</p> <p>(4) An interview survey was considered as a more effective way than seminars of finding trends and tendencies in the ERB regions concerning good governance and gender equality.</p>

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Progress Report – Activity Report (activities and outputs)

Title of WP2	Management of Water resources	
Strategic focus of WP2	Improved management with water resources and local/regional preparedness for participation in the implementation of the EU Water Frame Directive and the HELCOM Joint Compreh. Action Programme.	MILE-STONE
Planned results of WP2	Input to and impact on the JTDP. Conclusions about local/regional preparation needs for implementing the WFD. Methods for enhanced water quality and dialogue with citizens in water management issues.	6

Planned activities and outputs	Main activities that have taken place during the reporting period	Outputs produced during the reporting period and related output indicators
(1) One seminar in each pilot area about the report findings. Dissemination of experiences. (2) Summary reporting to the Euroregion Baltic bodies about the results of the WP 2 activities. Main outputs: Report publication and dissemination. Reports carried through to the ERB bodies.	(1) See deviations beneath. (2) See deviations beneath. Two international meetings. Five Swedish meetings. Three reports.	Seagull Water. Input to the JDP. Key actors database. Europakontor Kronoberg. Inventory of key persons and key projects within the ERB area. The Lyckeby River Day.

Deviation from the planned activities and outputs as well as their reasons/justifications
(1) As reported several times, there have been big difficulties in implementing this part of the project. As described in the last report (milestone 5) the money allocated for these seminars will be used for a water conference in October 2005. This conference is planned to take place in connection to the international Lagoon Conference in Klaipeda, with a partly joint programme. (2) Ongoing activity. Will be reported in the final project report.

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Progress Report – Activity Report (activities and outputs)

Title of WP3	Innovative Centres and SME:s as vehicles in regional development	
Strategic focus of WP3	Develop networks in line with the Triple Helix model. How to develop Innovative Centres. Methods for supporting entrepreneurship, especially female ones. Spatial dimensions.	MILE-STONE
Planned results of WP3	Better understanding of the role of cities/regions in dev. Innovative Ctrs. A consistent network between and within the Centres in ERB. Enhanced understanding of how cities can support female entrepreneurship.	6

<u>Planned activities and outputs</u>	<u>Main activities that have taken place during the reporting period</u>	<u>Outputs produced during the reporting period and related output indicators</u>
No planned activities.	Input to draft II of the Joint Development Programme. Continued work with development of the tool box for triple helix cooperation.	The tool box developed and presented at www.eurobalt.org

<u>Deviation from the planned activities and outputs as well as their reasons/justifications</u>
More activities than planned.

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Progress Report – Activity Report (activities and outputs)

Title of WP4	Development Programmes for Rural Areas	
Strategic focus of WP4	Focus local, transnational and cross-sectoral cooperation between partners active in rural development issues. Combining public, private and voluntary actors to find joint solutions.	MILE-STONE
Planned results of WP4	Compile (1) a joint summary report/analysis, and (2) development programmes in order to formulate visions and methods for future cooperation. Initiate pilot projects elaborated by formed Local Action Groups.	6

<u>Planned activities and outputs</u>	<u>Main activities that have taken place during the reporting period</u>	<u>Outputs produced during the reporting period and related output indicators</u>
Sum-up and evaluation of the work package. The final findings, outcomes and agreed programmes will be reported to the ERB bodies and transferred to constitute an important input to the JTDP for ERB, see work package 1.	Input to the draft ERB JDP. Input to the continued cooperation activities. Several meetings and dissemination activities carried out.	Input to the ERB JDP. Rural Development Projects in the Euroregion Baltic – Database.

<u>Deviation from the planned activities and outputs as well as their reasons/justifications</u>

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Progress Report – Activity Report (activities and outputs)

Title of WP5	Information, communication and evaluation	
Strategic focus of WP5	Good dissemination of the project and its results. Creating channels for such dissemination. Fair evaluation of the project activities and outcomes.	MILE-STONE
Planned results of WP5	A communication strategy and a developed web site for the ERB. Printed information about the project and its results. Information and discussions with representatives of the private sector and NGO: s.	6

<u>Planned activities and outputs</u>	<u>Main activities that have taken place during the reporting period</u>	<u>Outputs produced during the reporting period and related output indicators</u>
(1) Finalising of the Report package. Printing and distribution. Information activities directed to the private sector, NGO:s and other citizen´s groups about the JTDP and other project results. (2) Compilation of the final evaluation report. Main outputs: Report package disseminated. Final evaluation report presented.	(1) Ongoing activities during the report period. (2) Evaluation report under implementation.	(1) Draft II of the JDP.

<u>Deviation from the planned activities and outputs as well as their reasons/justifications</u>
(1) Printing and distribution of the JDP documents will be carried out during autumn 2005. (2) A draft evaluation report will be presented during September 2005. Published in November 2005.

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Progress Report – Activity Report (project implementation status)

Please describe the accumulated results of the project from the start of the project until now.
If you have defined result indicators, please use them in this description.

- Transfer of experience and best practices between the regions concerning Good Governance, Gender equality, sustainable development actions and the use of GIS techniques in planning and evaluation activities.
- 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, the newsletter Seagull News and other dissemination activities within the project.
- Evident strengthening of networks of experts from the different ERB member regions in issues concerning regional planning, sustainable environment, triple helix cooperation and rural development planning and actions. The network of experts interested in further development of Science Parks, IT Soft Centres, cluster cooperation, etc. consists of more than 300 persons. A tourism working group has been created and has started activities through Seagull and special Danish funding. A Water Forum will have its first meeting during October 2005.
- Strengthening of the political networks in the region. The project has in general strengthened the ERB cooperation.
- A close cooperation between the Seagull project and the Interreg III B projects Baltic Gateway and SEBTrans Link.
- 12 project reports printed and published at the ERB web site. About 8 more reports compiled and under preparations for printing/publishing at the web site.
- The central objective of the project, to work out a Joint Development Programme (JDP) for ERB, is close to be achieved:
 - A second JDP draft is processed among and commented by the ERB member regions.
 - The comments have been discussed and evaluated by the Steering Committee and the Committee has concluded on the direction of the finalising work with and the structure of the JDP. Final drafts of the JDP documents are under compilation.
- The understanding of added values of such a JDP for the member regions' own development opportunities is growing. Much effort has been put on overcoming language barriers, differences in cultures and resources, differences in apprehending the idea of working process-oriented and involving/committing as many decision makers and other stakeholders as possible in the project implementation, different interpretations of concepts as "vision", "strategy" and "development programme", etc. From such points of view, the progress of the project is very satisfactory.

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Is there anything else you would like to report (problems, highlights etc.)?

Information on written material about the project:

We are not attaching any Appendices to this progress report (as for the three earlier ones). The reason now is the same as earlier – all such material is available at the ERB web site www.eurobalt.org, e.g. printed and drafted reports, all issues of Seagull News, agendas and notes from Steering Committee and secretariat meetings, as well as from all WP seminars, workshops and expert meetings.

If the Rostock Programme secretariat is interested in this material, please visit the web site. Also working material is available on the web-site, but not open for others than the project partners. The reason is that the working material is not quality checked by the project management. If representatives of the Rostock Programme secretariat would like to get access to this working material, please contact the project coordinator or Mr Erik Ciardi (contact coordinates are available at the web page and in the Seagull News).

Highlights:

- The JDP process has been complicated with all parties involved, the cultural and linguistic barriers, etc. Still the process so far has been very positive and promising when it comes to consensus about a JDP, approved by all ERB member regions' decision bodies and the ERB Board and Council.
- The Ozersk Municipality in the Kaliningrad Region has been very active within work package 4 – Rural Development. The activities within the project have strengthened the leadership of the municipality and have resulted in fundamental changes of the municipal organisation and administration.

Please describe the activities that have been carried out in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland (1st – 4th round projects with the exception of upgraded projects), and in Russia and Belarus.

- More than 50% of all Seagull-DevERB meetings have been located to Latvia, Lithuania, the Kaliningrad Region or Poland in order to make it easier (cheaper) for our eastern partners to participate. The preparations for each of these meetings have been made jointly between the responsible Swedish WP leader and partner representatives in the actual region for the meeting.
- From the project start in August 2002 up to the end of 2004
 - 18 meetings have taken place in the Kurzeme planning region in Latvia,
 - 24 meetings carried out in Klaipeda County,
 - 21 meetings taken place in Kaliningrad region, and
 - 36 meetings and one big conference carried through in the two Polish ERB member regions.
- The eastern project partners have also contributed with material about the regional development plans for their respective regions, and with material to the main part of the project reports that have been mentioned earlier in this report, e.g. the democracy report, the gender equality report, the statistics/GIS report and the descriptive report about rural areas in ERB.
- The Polish Phare funded Seagull project has contributed with interesting written reports about the situation in Polish Euroregion Baltic Regions in Joint Transnational Development Programme Priority Areas, Long-Term Objectives and Priorities of ERB in the context of JTDP, Analysis of Water Management in the Polish Euroregion Baltic Regions in the context of the EU Water Directive, and Concept of Common Statistical Database for ERB Member Regions.
- As can be understood from the Financial report VI, a considerable part of the eastern partners' costs for participating in meetings and contributing to the reports, etc. have been covered by the eastern partners themselves (national financing). A small part has been covered by NCM funding (for Lithuania) and a considerable part of the costs during mainly milestone 4 by Phare for Latvia. Costs for Russian and partly Polish participation in the meetings during milestone 5 and 6 have been covered by Tacis and Phare funding respectively.

All eastern parties have made considerable efforts to prepare applications for Phare/Tacis funding of their participation in the Seagull project.

- The Russian preparations of the approved Seagull-RC have been very extensive – including input from the Seagull-DevERB management and the Governor's Administration in Klaipeda County that is lead partner for the project. The project's implementation period is January 2004 – June 2005 (prolonged to November 2005)..

- The preparations of the approved Seagull-Latvia project were professionally made by Latvian consultants on behalf of our Latvian partner. The project was closed in the end of August 2004.

- Our Lithuanian partner has made applications both during 2003 and 2004 to the Lithuanian Phare CBC programme, but both proposals were rejected.

- Also our Polish partners have made Phare applications both 2003 and 2004. The first application was rejected. The second one was approved during autumn 2004, but with a limited budget – 25 156 euro. The Polish partners have been very active during milestone 5. This is to a great extent explained by the fact that the Marshall of the Pomeranian Region has been chairman of the ERB Board and Council during 2004, and that a permanent ERB secretariat located to Elblag in the Warmia-Masurian region, financed by the member regions, was created in 2004 and started its work in August. The preparations of the Conference in Gdansk was mainly done by our Polish partners, financed from the approved Phare project.