

Fund Report of the Clean Baltic Sea projects 1/2015 (4 April 2015)

Status as of 31 December 2014	€
Donations	MEUR 11.1
Expenditure	MEUR 8.6
Ongoing projects	MEUR 1.7

Objectives of the Clean Baltic Sea projects

The Clean Baltic Sea projects of the John Nurminen Foundation prevent eutrophication of the Baltic Sea and reduce phosphorus discharges. **The objective is to implement by the year 2025 those cost-efficient measures that will significantly improve the status of the Baltic Sea.**

All in all, the projects and their support activities employ six people, two of them part-time.

Project progress

The phosphorus removal system projects in the cities of Gatchina and Vyborg in Northwestern Russia are moving forward. Equipment for chemical phosphorus removal, i.e. the first equipment delivery to Gatchina, was made in March 2015. In Vyborg, the project has acquired the registration from Russian authorities that is needed for importing the equipment. The Foundation is responsible for equipment procurement in Vyborg and Gatchina, while the water utilities take care of installation and construction costs.

In September 2014, the Baltic Sea Action Plan Trust Fund granted additional funding for the joint project of the Foundation and the Udarnik poultry farm. The funding will be used to purchase a filtering system for the farm: with the system, runoff waters from manure pools can be treated, reducing nutrient discharges to the surrounding waterways. In 2015, the poultry farm will acquire a filtering system for treating phosphorus-containing runoff waters from the fields, and in 2016, filters will be introduced for treating runoff from manure pools.

The autumn of 2014 saw the closing of PRESTO (Project on Reduction of Eutrophication of the Sea Today), the Foundation's other project financed by the EU Baltic Sea Region Programme. This project invested in boosting the efficiency of nutrient removal at the wastewater treatment plants of the three Belarusian cities of Grodno, Vitebsk, and Molodechno.

The Foundation has also continued its cooperation with the water utility of Brest, working together to improve the steering system of the phosphorus removal process and to assess the efficiency of the phosphorus runoff treatment system of the Phosphorit fertilizer factory in Kingisepp. The consultancy company Atkins will publish a final report on the efficiency of the Phosphorit treatment system in the spring of 2015.

In addition to reducing eutrophication, the Foundation has also been the coordinator of the Tanker Safety project, which reduces the risk of oil accidents in the Gulf of Finland and has also developed and piloted the ENSI navigation service. Together with the Finnish Transport Agency, the Foundation has monitored the progress of the ENSI service in 2014.

New projects

In March 2015, the Foundation established the project Local Fishing in the Archipelago Sea, which reduces nutrients in the Archipelago Sea through fishing. Fish patties from cyprinid fish will be made for the municipalities in the Turku region, thus providing the consumers with an ethical source of protein, and improving the wellbeing of the Archipelago Sea.

The loads of nutrients and harmful substances generated in Poland and the Baltic countries will be reduced with the BEST (Better Efficiency for Sewage Management) project, currently in the planning phase. Also being planned is the NutriTrade project, where the goal is to build a functioning nutrient trade system for the area of the Baltic Sea, and to enable the 'phosphorus neutrality' of various stakeholders (such as municipalities). EU funding is sought for both projects.

The Foundation is also involved in studying a new and promising method of reducing discharges from agriculture through spreading gypsum, which absorbs nutrients, on farmed fields.

Fundraising and objectives reached

By 31 December 2014, funds raised for the Clean Baltic Sea projects amounted to a total of approximately €11.1 million, of which roughly €8.6 million has been used in project implementation. €1.7 million has been reserved for projects that are currently ongoing or being planned.

In 2014, profit generated from fundraising amounted to €1,000,709, of which 74% was donated by companies, 10% by private individuals, 15% consisted of public funding, and 1% of profit from investment. The total amount of donations is approximately at the level it has been in previous years, not taking into account the share of public funding.

The Clean Baltic Sea projects have reached a turning point both in terms of fundraising and of their objectives. Nevertheless, the work has to go on. The target is to raise a total of €20 million in 2015-2025: this would enable the Foundation to implement the cost-efficient projects that will improve the status of the Baltic Sea. In order to reach this goal, fundraising from private individuals will be developed further. The new website www.puhdasmeri.fi, where everyone can save their own part of the Baltic Sea, was launched in February 2015.

Project target	tonnes of phosphorus
Wastewater treatment plants in St. Petersburg	1,000
PURE project (six targets)	500
PRESTO project (7 targets)	500
Gatchina wastewater treatment plant (ongoing)	30
Vyburg wastewater treatment plant (ongoing)	20
Udarnik poultry farm (ongoing)	20
Total	2,070

So far, projects have been implemented at 17 sites, of which 14 are now finalised. Moreover, the John Nurminen Foundation has provided technical expertise to a fertilizer factory in Kingisepp and the wastewater treatment plant in Warsaw, thereby contributing to the reduction of phosphorus discharges. The measures that have had the greatest impact on the improvement in the status of the Gulf of Finland, observed in the summer of 2015, have been nutrient removal from the wastewaters of St. Petersburg, and ending the phosphorus discharges from the gypsum waste piles in Kingisepp.

Annamari Arrakoski-Engardt
Secretary General
John Nurminen Foundation