

# ECO EFFICIENT TOURISM



## Information letter 1 October 2012

### Goal of the project

"Eco-efficient Tourism" project is aimed at making Euregio Karelia more attractive for tourists through gradual leveling of the quality of services provided to tourists on both sides of the border

- Promoting introduction of eco-efficient technologies of recreational area management and improving the quality of services offered in active tourism destinations in the Republic of Karelia in co-operation with adjacent Finnish areas.

- Making pilot areas more comfortable, safe, environmentally friendly and known for these features.

- Improving cross-border tourism transboundary practices and regional development co-operation.

### Project partners

- "Ecofoster Group Oy"
- "Karelia Expert" (Associate Partner)

#### Business

#### State and local administrations

- Ilomantsi Municipality
- Metsähallitus, Natural Heritage Services
- Sortavala Municipal District Administration
- Pryazha National Municipal District Administration
- Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Karelia

- "North-Centre" (Lead Partner)
- Energy Efficiency Centre

#### Non-profit organizations

#### Science and education

- Finnish Environment Institute, SYKE
- Karelian Research Centre of RAS
- Petrozavodsk Municipal Utility College

### Implementation of the project

#### Launch of the project

"Eco-efficient Tourism" project was officially launched on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012 within the seminar "Strategies and best practices for sustainable/green development of cities and regions" that was held in Petrozavodsk. Scientists and research students, representatives of authorities of different levels, business and international organizations got familiarized with the best Russian and foreign "green" development practices designed and implemented within international programs and projects.

#### Survey tour of pilot sites

Pryazha and Sortavala Municipal Districts were the destinations of the "Eco-efficient Tourism" project expedition that took place on July 16–17<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The expert team visited more than 20 potential sites. The partners were gathering data on issues of property, accessibility,

recreational appeal, popularity among tourists, amount of investments needed, etc. As a result, several sites for long stay on the shores of lakes Ladoga and Syamozero and for short stay along the "Blue Highway" were chosen.

#### Working meeting in Pryazha

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Pryazha hosted a working meeting of «Eco-efficient Tourism» project partners, which has become an important stage in the implementation of the project. Having analyzed the report on the survey tour of the project pilot areas, the partners selected the most attractive and convenient sites to develop as tourist stopovers, as well as preliminarily outlined management models for these sites. Corresponding Finnish experience proved to be essential in this sense. The territories will be developed with the reliance on existing infrastructure and focusing on local business and support from authorities. Special attention was paid to the travelers' demand for modern technologies: Wi-Fi or landline. All the technological solutions to be introduced will meet international environmental and esthetic requirements.

#### Upcoming events

- "Eco-efficient Tourism" project will be presented during the Nordic Green Day to be held on October 22–23, 2012 in the framework of the 11<sup>th</sup> All-Russian Forum "Strategic Planning in Regions and Cities of Russia". The project experts in cooperation with partners from the project "Nordic-Russian Green Growth Arena" will take part in a series of seminars "Green Solutions and the Technology of Sustainable Development for Regions and Cities: Green Planning Instrument and Strategies". [forumstrategov.ru](http://forumstrategov.ru)

- Representatives of target groups and the expert team of the "Eco-efficient Tourism" project will study Finnish experience in facilitation and maintenance of tourist sites during a study tour to Finland from October 30 to November 2, 2012. This visit will also be held in the framework of the unique conference "Pearls of the Coniferous Forest" which is going to take place from October 31 to November 2, 2012 in Joensuu and Ilomantsi. A presentation of the report on implementation of the eco-efficiency concept in the sphere of tourism will be made at the conference. [kareliabiosphere.fi](http://kareliabiosphere.fi)



"How often do we speak of environment, tourism, NGOs and energy efficiency at the same time? Another seemingly very different question is why don't we have equipped tourist sites or trash containers and toilets along roads here in Karelia — the land of lakes? If one goes on asking: when will it happen that tourists won't notice the difference in the quality of service provided in Finland and Russia? Or who is responsible for keeping beaches clean?"

That was roughly the set of questions behind the idea of the "Eco-efficient Tourism" project. A team of partners representing science and education, NGOs, local administrations, business are trying to find solutions for urgent problems of tourism infrastructure development. Site-specific technological and managerial solutions will be found for areas popular among tourists. And we hope that it will bring us closer to harmonious interactions between man and nature."

### Igor Shevchuk

*Project Leader, Director of "North-Centre"*

"The idea of the eco-efficiency concept in tourism envisages the combination of up-to-date green technologies with new organizational setups and institutional models that let them be successfully introduced locally. Wider application of these models and technologies in tourism can solve a number of problems connected with environmental risks, underdeveloped infrastructure, unemployment."



### Yuriy Saveliev

*Research Coordinator of the Project, Secretary General for Science, Karelian Research Centre of RAS, DSc (Econ.)*



"From Finnish perspectives we are happy to share experiences we already have to construct high quality services in remote areas for nature tourists. The Finnish team is devoted to making use of the project to raise the status of Karelian tourism and to finding new measures for eco-efficiency in both regions. Technical measures are known, but both sides need emphasis on taking into account the local inhabitants and communities to be able and willing to pursue the goal of eco-efficiency and also maintain the necessary societal and technical structures needed for this. We strongly believe this can be done, but it requires new thinking and mutual efforts to find the different measures for both societies. As Markku Litja, CEO of Karelia Expert puts it: 'Eco-efficiency is not only a promising option in tourism, it is a necessity'."

### Timo J. Hokkanen

*Centre for Economic Development, Transport and Environment for North Karelia, North Karelia Biosphere Reserve, Coordinator*

"Frequently or not, many of us travel by highways in Russia and other countries. And we can't always get all the necessary information about places for long- or short-term stay, tourist attractions, hotels, cafes, etc. along an unfamiliar highway. By participating in the "Eco-efficient Tourism" project we expect to increase the trust of tourists towards our district and enhance information supply. The project envisages the installation of informational signs and boards along federal highways in our district, the development of a tourist stopover in Kolatseŕga and Long beach in Essoila using up-to-date technologies."



### Oleg Ermolaev

*Deputy Head of Pryazha National Municipal District Administration*

## Cooperation with other projects and programs

- "Eco-efficient Tourism" project and its partners have become a part of the partnership network of the Nordic Council of Ministers Programme "Nordic-Russian Green Growth Arena" ([arena.leontief-centre.ru](http://arena.leontief-centre.ru))
- The eco-efficiency concept is an inherent part of programs and projects aimed at harmonious interaction of man and nature in the North that are implemented in Karelia and Finland. We can highlight such project as the "Green Belt of Fennoscandia", "New Infrastructural Model for Sustainable Development of Northern Territories", "Harmony of the North", etc.
- "Eco-efficient Tourism" project also cooperates with other projects of the Karelia ENPI CBC Programme: "Green Cities and Settlements — Sustainable Spatial Development in Border Areas", "Contemporary Old City", "Mining Road", etc.



Non-profit partnership  
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[www.kareliaenpi.eu](http://www.kareliaenpi.eu)

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