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# HERITAGE & FUTURE

The official DUNC Newsletter

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## Cooperation between South Baltic UNESCO sites set to continue

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### NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

#### A unique UNESCO network

Working together with a common vision

#### Jointly developed framework

Ensures continuity of project achievements

#### The final conference

A successful and 'distinguished' event

#### New online website

Showcase for new sustainable tourism products

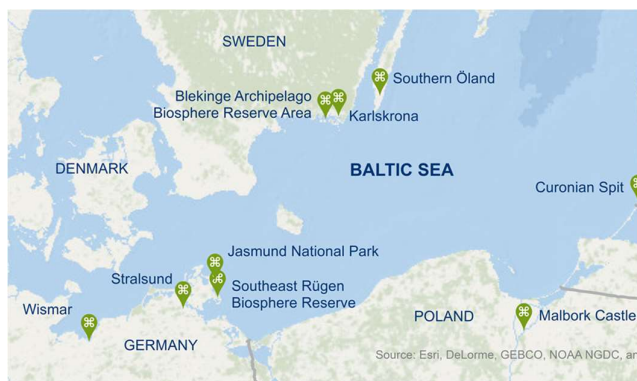
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## DUNC project comes to a close

For the past three and a half years (2017-2021), our unique DUNC partnership has been working together for the sustainable development of our South Baltic Region’s heritage. As the project comes to a close, we would like to share the achievements that have been made by this dedicated team and thank everybody who has supported our work, both on a local and cross-border level. Welcome to the DUNC journey ...

## PARTNER UPDATES

### EUCC - The Coastal Union Germany



We have believed from day one that a strong and long-lasting cooperation between the different UNESCO sites is beneficial for the whole region and that it can even help define the South Baltic on the global stage.

The main aim of the DUNC project was to develop the South Baltic’s UNESCO sites into sustainable tourist destinations by addressing some of the sustainability challenges of a growing tourism sector. We’ve also looked at the outwards portrayal of the South Baltic area as a single heritage destination. So that visitors to each site feel that they are seeing just one part of an interesting puzzle - a Baltic Sea Heritage puzzle.

Together, DUNC has focused on (1) the ‘identity’ of the South Baltic heritage as a single tourist destination – and the creation of a common vision, (2) it has raised awareness about the value of our sites (not only economic but also social and environmental value) and developed concepts for ambassadors, entrepreneurs and criteria for quality

products & services that respect these values, and (3) the DUNC partnership has worked to protect the integrity of our heritage by creating a long term sustainable tourism framework and individual strategies & action plans for the sites.

Within each interlinked focus area, we have worked in line with the “UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme and the UN Sustainable Development Goals”



A common Identity & Vision: Within the South Baltic Sea Region there is now an established UNESCO network with a common identity and vision. This network is not only made up of sites managers but also ambassadors & entrepreneurs with its own dedicated website [www.balticheritageideas.eu](http://www.balticheritageideas.eu) which will live on after the project as a dedicated portal of information and exchange for all stakeholders and interested parties. The outbreak of COVID-19 has been an evolving challenge to the tourism sector. Like others, we launched several initiatives and alternative ways to reach audiences. We used the power of photography to promote the South Baltic Sea heritage and to capture the essence of our common mission, i.e. cross-border, sustainability, ambassadorship, quality products & local pride in heritage. Physical exhibitions of the photos were not appropriate but we overcame this by developing an online 3D walk around exhibition (Link 3).



Awareness raising work also included the publication of an issue of the EUCC-D Coastal & Marine magazine (link 4) with a special focus on “Natural and Cultural Heritage of European Coastal Communities” including contributions from our UNESCO sites. This stunning magazine takes the readers on a journey among sites of natural beauty, old buildings and fine traditions along European Coasts.

**Ambassadors & Entrepreneurs:** An important part of our capacity building work was strengthening the knowledge and pride among local residents about their unique World Heritage. We started by building relationships with locals at each site. Active community involvement in heritage conservation is a big challenge: Our ambassador and entrepreneur concepts help people understand the obligations of living, doing business in a World Heritage site, the responsibilities that come with it, and demonstrate the opportunities that accompany the UNESCO designation.

**Product & services:** We know that only tourist products that fulfil certain environmental, social and economic criteria can help preserve sites and truly support local economies in the long run. So, the team has developed a set of criteria for products that meet local needs and serve the whole South Baltic Sea region. Cross-border cooperation and addressing seasonality were an utmost priority. Each UNESCO site developed a number of sustainable quality tourism products, from cycling infrastructure, guides, trails, an innovative virtual experience to theatrical excursions. The ‘Quality Criteria for Sustainable Products & Services’ developed in the DUNC Project works hand in hand with the entrepreneurship concept that promotes business opportunities created through the connection with UNESCO, whilst guarding their unique values.

The EUCC-D hopes for the future are for continued cooperation with our region’s heritage sites on promoting sustainable tourism development along our fabulous Baltic Sea coastline.

*Jane Hofmann, EUCC-D*

## Curonian Spit, Lithuania

The Curonian Spit, is a narrow strip of sand which stretches 97 kilometres along the Baltic Sea. It was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List in December 2000. One part of the 50 kilometres peninsula belongs to Lithuania, while the other part belongs to the Russian Federation – Kurshkoja Kosa National Park. We are very proud that Kurshkoya Kosa National park Administration was also a DUNC Associated Partner and actively participated in project activities.



Photo: L.Diksaite

All of our DUNC partner World heritage sites have a common challenge – seasonality. The Curonian Spit is not an exception, as the site is mostly attractive during warm weather and has a very short peak summer season. One of the DUNC project aims was to create sustainable products or services that could in one way or another prolong the season. During the project’s lifetime, together with local stakeholders and entrepreneurs, including museums, businesses, hotels, restaurants and local inhabitants, we started to think about what we can do, tell or offer to the visitors, so they would want to come back at other times of the year and not just in summertime. The project activities gave us an opportunity to develop sustainable products, such as virtual tourism offers that include Curonian Spit’s promotional video of four seasons, Curonian Spit travel guide, renewable energy sources for improved infrastructure in natural places and last but not least, routes and excursions. Through these different offers we can now inspire people to visit our World Heritage sites all year round. Of course,



these are just some of the examples of sustainable products, which were developed by the partnership during the whole project's lifetime. We believe they will help us to reveal the genuine charm of all the partner sites in the off-season.



Moreover, three and a half years of the DUNC project for Curonian Spit National park Administration was a great chance to strengthen local community. With 33 Curonian Spit Ambassadors, we are now able to achieve more than ever: we can better communicate and share the site's values; create local pride in our natural and cultural heritage and to talk with youngsters about why it is worth living here. We hope, that our Ambassadorship network will expand and provide us with more inspiring ideas about how can we preserve UNESCO World heritage sites and improve sustainability for future generations.

### **Wismar Tourist Office, Germany**



For the Hanseatic City of Wismar, the project was an extraordinary success. In addition to the network created with the partner sites, the Wismar city

administration was able to build a closer relationship with schools, citizens and entrepreneurs.

Together with the sixth grade of a regional school, a children's guide book was successfully presented in Wismar. While creating the guide book, the children learned a lot about their own world heritage. This enabled them to become ambassadors for the Hanseatic city. This small initiative also revealed that cooperation between the city and schools should continue to take place in the future in order to use the available resources and educate the children about cultural heritage.

Another success was the training of the employees and entrepreneurs who contributed to this children's guide. Their knowledge could also be expanded in the field of World Heritage and thus they also became ambassadors.

The newly developed World Heritage Trail offers city visitors, as well as locals, the opportunity to take a walk into the World Heritage Site of Wismar whilst learning about the city and also other World Heritage Sites in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. By taking the trail walk, people act more sustainably by leaving their car outside of the town centre. Shortly after the opening of the trail, it could already be observed that people use the path more intensively than before and always stop at the information stations of the path with interest. This is also part of our success story. Another great success resulting from the DUNC project is our network of entrepreneurs and actors from the Hanseatic city of Wismar. It was together with sustainable entrepreneurs that we cooperated to build the World Heritage Trail. When it came to the question of costs, the entrepreneurs did not hesitate to become sponsors for this initiative and was one of the building blocks to be able to realize the path.

Another important component was the dedicated team of people involved, including students, professors, artists and companies that built the path - without them such a great result would not have been achieved. This team of different actors will

continue to cooperate in the future and offer help and good services to each other in the future.



The work on the World Heritage Trail has shown the value and importance of bringing together multi-discipline teams of people to create best possible results.

*Sibylle Donath, Wismar Tourist Office, Germany*

### **Municipality of Mörbylånga, Sweden**

Our World Heritage on southern Öland is a successful interaction between man and nature. The area was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in 2000.'



The DUNC project has been about creating awareness, with both ambassadors and entrepreneurs. An ambassador can be the person you meet in the street when you ask for the way. It can also be a shop owner, a nurse or a farmer working in an agricultural landscape. During the project, we have celebrated all our ambassadors by developing short videos about them from the different world heritage sites which can be viewed on the project's Facebook page @dunc-heritage.

In 2019 on Öland, the initiative 'Mini guides in the World Heritage' was started as a collaboration between the nature centre on the southern cape and Mörbylånga municipality. Alunskolan is a small school on southern Öland, with about 45 students in the entire school. The students at Alunskolan were trained as guides and conducted guided tours about seals and the Baltic Sea, birds and migration, the lighthouse Långe Jan and the surrounding area, Ottenby bird station and the nature centre as well as the world heritage site.



About 200 people visited the guided tours and the children were fantastic guides! The mini-guides of southern Öland, was on local radio, TV and in local newspapers. The situation with covid-19, has meant that the miniguide initiative in 2020 was adapted to follow the restrictions and recommendations - instead of guided tours for a lot of adults, the children experienced the southern cape on their own during a sunny day in September. The children also visited DUNC's photo exhibition in the nature centre "Naturum Ottenby".

Here on Öland, we have been very inspired by the World Heritage site 'The English Lake District' who presented the work they are doing with businesses during one of our project meetings in Karlskrona. This led to us creating a new type of branding for our site that all our business can use. The logo types will be translated into English too.



There are now five different logotypes with the messages: *Love the agricultural landscape, Produced in, Experience, Discover and Welcome to.* Together with the logotypes we have short texts



about southern Öland that businesses can use in Swedish, English and German. We also provide them with photos of the world heritage site. This has been a really interesting project and the miniguides and the branding will continue even after the project. I am looking forward to continue our cooperation in the future.

*Emma Rydner, World Heritage Coordinator, Mörbylång, Sweden*

#### **EUCC - Baltic Office, Lithuania**

##### ***Sustainable development of heritage tourism at coastal UNESCO World Heritage sites in the South Baltic Region***

Within the DUNC project we have elicited specific notions of coastal cultural World Heritage tourism sustainability:

- liveability of the sea-related practices;
- balanced use of coastal space and marine resources;
- avoiding large-scale coastal tourism development;
- caring for coastal and marine environment;
- maintenance of aesthetic quality of seascapes;
- low seasonality with emphasis on shoulder seasons;
- integrated coastal and maritime planning;
- mitigation of adverse climate change effects;
- sustainable management of cruise tourism.

Sustainability considerations increasingly influence the decisions of visitors if and how long they stay at the destination. The South Baltic World Heritage sites already serve as role models and have aspirations to increase their efforts towards sustainability. As a result, the DUNC project partners have elicited a set of joint tourism-related transboundary actions for the UNESCO-listed DUNC project target sites:

1. Reinforcing heritage-related service and product quality and diversity and generating true interest in heritage-based stories and experiences

2. Improving the World Heritage-related infrastructure and making it better accessible for all kinds of visitors
3. Expanding and diversifying the existing entertainment offer, particularly in the shoulder seasons aimed to enliven the World Heritage
4. Facilitating cultural experiences of the World Heritage through a wide array of activities based on interactive learning processes
5. Facilitating outdoor experiences of the World Heritage and the adjacent areas both on land and in water
6. Dedicated caring for environmental quality and integrity of the sites

*Prof. Dr Ramūnas Povilanskas, Director, EUCC Baltic States Office. Lithuania*

#### **Municipality of Karlskrona, Sweden**

Karlskrona has a history of finding innovative solutions to challenges. From Charles XI who built a naval town on islands, far out at sea and without drinking water, Fredrik Henrik af Chapman and his revolutionary shipbuilding to today's innovative companies.



Challenges breed new thinking and in DUNC we have worked together and inspired each other to find innovative ways to solve the challenges in creating sustainable tourist destinations.

In Karlskrona, the product Virtual World Heritage 360 (<https://vimeo.com/502201454>) came just in time when virtual tourism was needed the most, during the Covid-19 pandemic. It consists of three guided virtual film tours and one introduction movie, all filmed in 360-video technique and available in both Swedish and English. In the future, stations with VR-glasses will be placed around Karlskrona where visitors and inhabitants can enjoy the full virtual experience. The product makes parts of Karlskrona more accessible in a sustainable way.



The local entrepreneurs DUNC have cooperated with regarding sustainable product development are ambassadors for Karlskrona's World Heritage. On the new web-based platform, developed in DUNC [www.balticheritageideas.eu](http://www.balticheritageideas.eu), entrepreneurs that have agreed to support DUNC's Sustainable Entrepreneurship Concept are presented. DUNC have also worked with ambassadorship in other forms, for example raising children's awareness, pride and knowledge of natural and cultural heritage. In Karlskrona, the puzzle book "Eli's Adventures in Karlskrona" was designed, 15 pages long with 24 fun challenges for children aged 6-11 years - a fun way to learn more about Karlskrona and its World Heritage and it also encourages sustainable living. More than 14'000 books have been distributed in Karlskrona and an English version is just finished. Both versions are available digitally.

Additionally, an ambassador training for adults was created by DUNC and local stakeholders during 2018/2019, and in April 2019 the first training was held. It was a success and even more participants signed up for the next one in 2020, which had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. The continuation of the training has been secured though thanks to

Karlskrona Municipality, The Naval Museum and Blekinge Museum and the next one will be held during spring 2022. This way, at least 50 new ambassadors will be educated in Karlskrona every second year also in the future. Incorporated in the training is the short movie made by DUNC called "Your World Heritage in 1 Minute", that was shown on local buses during the summer of 2019 to raise awareness, pride and engagement about Karlskrona's World Heritage among inhabitants and visitors.

"We are proud of the results achieved in the DUNC project", says Sarah Kristoffersen, Project Manager in DUNC.

*Sofie Dahl, Municipality of Karlskrona*

### **Stralsund Tourist Office, Germany**



Photo: Stralsund by Walter Krassow

Three years of the DUNC project are behind us. Three years of exchange of experience between partners in the Baltic Sea Region. Three years full of creative discussions on the topics of World Heritage and tourism in World Heritage sites and regions.

Despite the similarity of topics, problems and approaches in the different destinations, it was once again exciting to see how innovative activities were implemented by the individual partners.

For us in Stralsund, the project was an excellent opportunity to strengthen and expand our network in the Baltic Sea region. At the same time, it was an excellent opportunity to revitalise the cooperation between the World Heritage Sites, National Parks and the Biosphere Reserve in our own region.

In addition to the Stralsund Tourist Board, the Jasmund and Western Pomerania Lagoon Area

National Parks and the Southeast-Rügen Biosphere Reserve were associated partners in the DUNC project.

Together we focused on raising awareness of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and will continue to do so together even after the end of the project.

One of the first ideas we implemented was the creation of a children's colouring book in which each partner region is represented with a motif. The colouring books are available at places where families spend time. For example, children can colour in the motifs while waiting for their meal in a restaurant. By engaging with the motif, a connection to the corresponding region or world heritage site is established. The intention is to use the interaction between children and parents to arouse family interest in visiting the sites, or at least to communicate the values of the World Heritage Site in the form of images.

In addition, a network of 7 sustainably operating entrepreneurs has been established. The entrepreneurs and their businesses represent the ideal way of doing business in the World Heritage Site. They are also ambassadors of the World Heritage idea. The entrepreneurs were portrayed in a short image film, which is available to all project partners and of course to the companies themselves for marketing purposes.

The project strengthened the awareness of sustainable concepts and approaches among all participants. The knowledge gained and results achieved are incorporated into the daily work and employment of all participants.

*André Kretzschmar, Stralsund Tourist Office, Germany*

## Links

1. <https://balticheritageideas.eu/en>
2. <https://www.dunc-heritage.eu/>
3. <https://www.dunc-heritage.eu/photo-competition-and-exhibition/>
4. <https://www.eucc-d.de/coastal-and-marine.html>

## LAST FEW WORDS

To celebrate the DUNC project's achievements, the final conference was held on 26. January 2021 with over 60 participants and distinguished speakers. We would like to say a special thank you to HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden for her attendance and supportive words at the beginning of the event. Thanks also goes out to all participants and speakers for their inspirational talks and contributions. We were privileged to hear from Anna-Karin Johansson – Secretary General of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, Gunilla Ekelöf – Lord Mayor of Karlskrona, Anne Vollerthum from the Baltic Sea Tourism Centre in Germany, Khrystyna Bosovych from the Joint Secretariat (Interreg South Baltic Programme) and Carl-Martin Lanér – Karlskrona Municipality's Chief Executive Officer.



The final conference does not mean the end of the DUNC collaboration. We have established a strong South Baltic Heritage Network that will now live on after the project's lifetime with its own dedicated website. The DUNC partners are looking forward to cooperating with everybody in the future.

## Thank you for your support!

*Sarah Kristoffersen & Ulrika Fransson, Lead Partner, Municipality of Karlskrona, Swede*