

## Baltic Compact seeks examples of insightful multi-benefit local initiatives

Baltic Compact project ([www.balticcompass.org/balticcompact](http://www.balticcompass.org/balticcompact)) launches a film production process to attract decision-makers' and stakeholders' attention of to the synergies between environment and economy in the rural setting. In particular, the film attempts to raise awareness on how one can adopt a long term vision for management of agricultural production and landscapes and maintain a competitive business. To find the most interesting and filmable examples of innovative farms and local projects, Baltic Compact project welcomes all stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region agro-environment network to come forward to nominate innovative examples of existing environmentally motivated local initiatives, which extend the traditional agro-environment measures and bring value added to the farm and the local economy. The examples to be featured in the film should reflect the following criteria, in that they

- are connected to agricultural production
- are seen as 'win-win', as to bringing benefits across the private-public domain alike
- rely on a central role by full-time farmers
- initiate from bottom-up, from the local farmer level or jointly with other local stakeholders and authorities
- illustrate importance of cooperation or collective action
- are financed and sustained by combining different public and private sources, with or without support from the Rural Development Programme
- have a long term perspective and couple a vision for the future with everyday practice

In concrete terms, the examples could feature innovative solutions and arrangements in nutrient recycling, water management, waste management or agro-environment measures, possibly involving cooperation between different actors. The projects can also extend to the landscape level and demonstrate how farmers and other rural actors can initiate a positive upward spiral with environmental, economic and social benefits on the local scale, between the farm and the adjacent municipality. Based on the amount of examples received, the project will make a pre-selection of candidates to be invited to participate in the film project before contacting and interviewing the candidates. Ideally, the 10-minute film would tell the story of 4-5 farms or local projects in different Baltic Sea Region countries.



Around the Baltic Sea Region, there exists individual initiatives on the level of single farm, municipality, river catchment or lake, but these are quite poorly known internationally. This is particularly true for the environmentally motivated initiatives, apart from the WWF Baltic Sea Farmer of the Year competition which highlights exceptional agro-environment management on individual farms. The situation is somewhat different within the LEADER system, where there is an existing international network and good projects are highlighted on the international level. However, very few LEADER projects address environmental issues as such. Through better acknowledgement of the synergies between the environment and social and economic well-being of the rural population, we could expect to see the environmental benefits to be highlighted also in LEADER projects.

To drive change requires a little extra effort, perseverance and courage to try things which have not been tested before. Fundamentally, it is a question about attitudes and how one views one's place in the society, with respect to the environment and the past and future generations.

Baltic Compact project invites information about projects responding to the above description to be sent to Research Assistant Sofi Sundin at Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), [sofi.sundin@slu.se](mailto:sofi.sundin@slu.se). The project welcomes good examples on a continuous basis, however, to be considered for the film project, the examples should be sent in by **end of November 2013**. For more information about the Baltic Compact film project, contact Project Coordinator Kaj Granholm, [kaj.granholm@slu.se](mailto:kaj.granholm@slu.se), telephone +358 46 85 09 208.

