



INTERNATIONAL WATERS RESULTS NOTES

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Development and Implementation of the Lake Peipsi / Chudskoe Basin Management Programme

GEF ID#: 1444, PIMS ID#: 2296

Project Status: Completed



Key results:

1. A Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) completed for the lake basin; a management plan developed and adopted, and implementation of the management plan begun, including demonstration projects.
2. Capacity, communication, and networking strengthened between transboundary, national, and local basin protection institutions.
3. An information and education system developed and launched including a website, publications, museum, and school curricula.

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the project which was to provide an effective framework, through cross-border cooperation, for the prevention, control and reduction of transboundary impacts on the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe basin environment. Developing and implementing the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Basin Management Programme envisioned facilitating nutrient load reduction and prevention, and sustainable conservation of habitats and ecosystems.

The lake, called 'Peipsi' (or Peipus) in Estonian and 'Chudskoe' in Russian, is situated between the two countries and is the fourth largest lake in Europe. It is drained by the Narva River, which empties into the Baltic Sea. The Lake Peipsi drainage basin is almost 45,000 km², approximately 12 times larger than the lake surface itself. The basin is shared by Russia (59 %), Estonia (33 %), and Latvia (8%), though Latvia was not a part of this project.

The lake has faced a number of challenges including eutrophication from nutrient pollution, overfishing, mining pollution from oil-shale activities, and threats to its sizeable underground aquifers, used for drinking water.

RESULTS: PROCESS

INDICATOR #1: A Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Basin Management Programme developed and started. [Target: *Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) completed; Management Program adopted; implementation begun.*]

- A TDA was completed and adoption of the Management Programme was finalized in 2006.
- A program for coordinated surface water monitoring in the two countries using UN ECE guidelines was prepared and agreed to in principle. Implementation was begun with activities such as two joint monitoring expeditions and two winter samplings.
- A Nutrient Load Reduction Plan was completed, with wastewater discharge reduction targets set for 2015.
- Two feasibility studies were conducted: one on ecological farming in the Basin; and another on water and ecological tourism around the lake.

INDICATOR #2: National and local institutional capacity to implement the Management Plan strengthened. [Target: *Capacity raised and support provided.*]

- Governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders became fully engaged in preparation and implementation of the Management Programme.
- Via more than 20 events, the Joint Water Commission, two national water authorities, five monitoring entities, and four regional and ten local environmental bodies were trained.
- More than 30 NGOs and local grassroots groups have received project support.
- Networking, cooperation, and communication of the Joint Commission with other relevant commissions and organizations have been increased.
- The Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Forum was supported as an institutional network that incorporates agencies and stakeholders at different levels of governance across the border to promote a dialogue on water management and transboundary cooperation issues.

INDICATOR #3: An information, education and communication system developed and launched. [Target: *Disseminate information via Internet, project publications and special events; create a Lake museum.*]

- The Peipsi portal and project web-site were created in 2003.
- More than ten publications, including ones on the lake's fishes, birds, wildlife, eutrophication, etc., were distributed with total reprints of up to 5000 copies.

- Educational programs have been integrated into Estonian and Russian curricula.
- The Lake Peipsi museum has been established, with a building in Estonia and a virtual museum in Russia.

RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION

INDICATOR #1: Pilot/demo projects demonstrating stress reduction measures completed. [*Target: Implement up to two projects.*]

- Two pilot projects on eco-tourism (a camp-ground in Estonia and a springs' restoration in Russia) finalized.
- An infrastructure project in Estonia was completed demonstrating eutrophication reduction through planning water systems in a small community.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- Coordination with other in-region projects requires a lot of time and demands extra resources – so, it is highly recommended to allocate special resources in GEF projects for cooperative activities and plan relevant time for executing such tasks.
- Experience exchange with other transboundary water basins (including UNDP/GEF projects) is very useful in terms of networking and lessons learned and best practices from colleagues.
- Relevant stakeholders' involvement and active public participation in the decision-making processes are essential for efficient project implementation.

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