

An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, a rocky shoreline curves along a body of water. The land is covered in lush green grass and scattered trees. A small cluster of buildings, including a red-roofed house and a barn, is visible on a hillside. The background shows a vast expanse of water leading to distant, hazy landmasses under a clear sky.

# West-Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve and Lima Action Plan

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# Location on the globe and Europe



# The West-Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve

West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve is situated in the eastern Baltic Sea and comprises the islands of Saaremaa, Hiiumaa, Vormsi and Muhu, as well as numerous islets and marine parts.

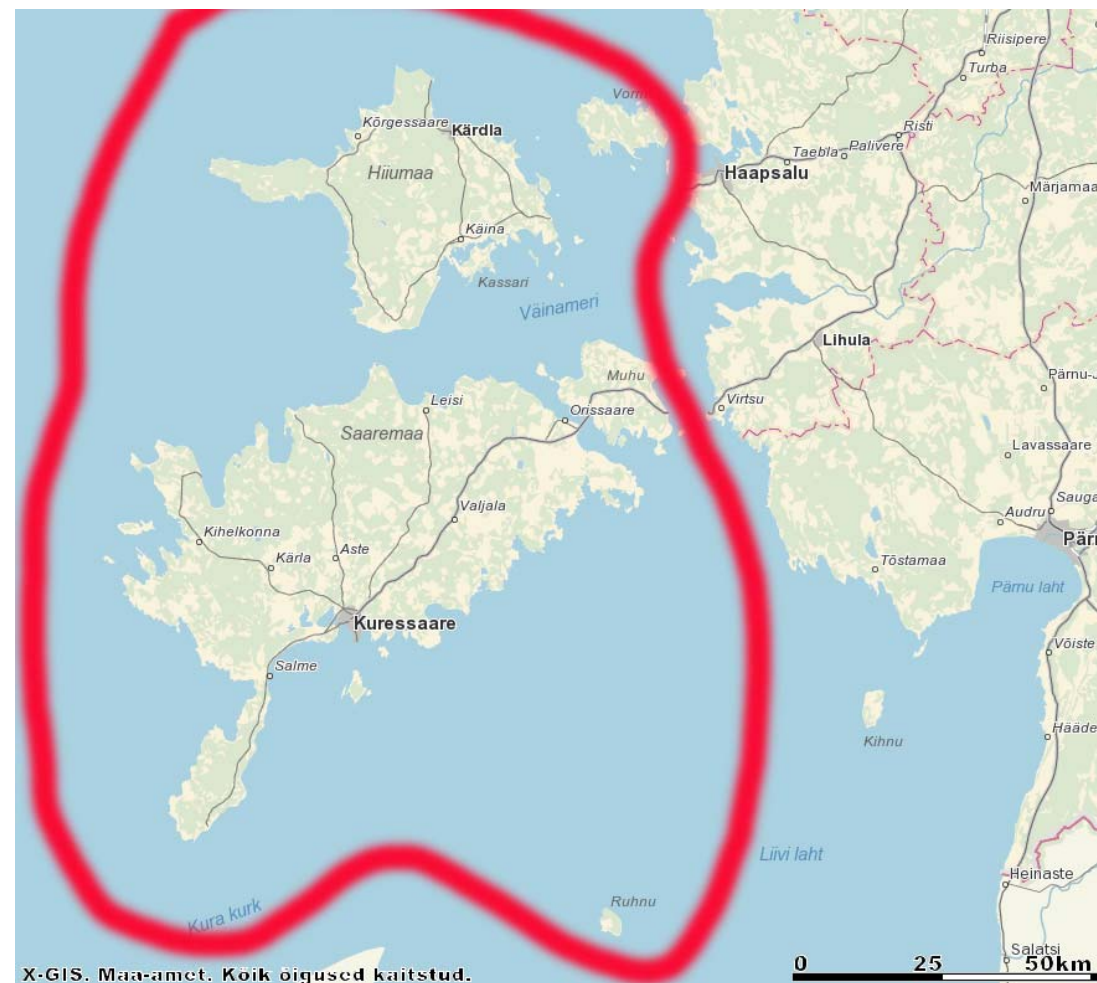
Parts of the area are designated as wetlands considered important according to Ramsar specifications.

Bioclimatic zone: Boreal

Total Area: 15601 km<sup>2</sup>

Including onshore: 4038 km<sup>2</sup>

The number of population is about 40 thousand and the average population density is 10 p/km<sup>2</sup>



## Vision until 2025

Estonia's MAB programme has achieved the development of the W-E Archipelago into a leading Estonian region for innovation and pilot projects in the field of sustainable use of the natural resources in local natural and semi-natural land and marine communities. The awareness of sustainable development principles in the region is high and the attitude supports this. The islands' communities, business people and public support broad-based development of a green economy and acknowledge it as a functioning cooperation model for achieving social and economic success in the region.



# Today's priorities and their reflection in the Lima Action Plan



## A – The World Network of BRs consisting of effectively functioning models for SD

- W-E Archipelago BR has become a pilot area for a sustainable economy and use of natural environment and natural resources
- A1 – BRs recognized as models contributing to the implementation of SDG and Multilateral Environmental Agreements
- A1.1. Promote BRs as sites that actively contribute to achieving the SDGs

- Biodiversity has been preserved – maintaining biodiversity is the original main objective of the MAB programme. Protection of biodiversity is quite advanced in Estonia – both for valuable habitats and endangered species – due to which the BR can provide indirect support for this by placing value on biodiversity in its educational function and contributing to making human activity more sustainable.

- A1.3. Establish alliances at local, regional, international levels for biodiversity conservation and benefits to local people

- W-E Archipelago BR is a centre for research, monitoring and training that supports the green economy – sustainable development in today’s dynamic society requires linkage with scientific applied research and development as well as constant conveying scientific knowledge and know-how to BR stakeholders and more broadly to all of the local community.
- A1.5. Promote green/sustainable/social economy initiatives inside BR
- A4.2. Establish partnerships with educational and training institutions to undertake education, training and capacity building activities aimed at BR stakeholders, including managers, taking into account the SDGs



- W-E Archipelago BR has preserved and showcased the islands' cultural heritage – the cultural heritage of the West Estonian Archipelago is intertwined with the traditions, skills and experience with regard to traditional sustainable use of the natural environment and natural resources .
- A2.3. Ensure processes for implementing, managing, monitoring and periodic review of BRs are open and participatory and take into account local and indigenous practices, traditions and cultures

- The W-E Archipelago BR action plan for 2014-2020 sets out the preparation and implementation of a BR communication plan

- A2.4. Ensure that BRs have clear communication plans and mechanisms to implement these

## B – Inclusive, dynamic and result-orientated collaboration and networking within the MAB Programme and the World Network of BRs

- From the standpoint of the MAB programme, one of the most important cooperation partners is the EuroMAB regional network. Estonia has taken part in EuroMAB conferences and has also been a conference organizer. In addition, Estonia engages in cooperation with NordMAB, which is a network of BRs in the Nordics.
- B6 – Transnational and transboundary cooperation between BRs
- B6.1. Create and implement twinning arrangements between BRs in different countries
- B6.2. Designate and implement transboundary BRs

## C – Effective external partnerships and sufficient sustainable funding for the MAB programme and the World Network of BRs

- The Hiiumaa Roheline Märk label was developed in Hiiumaa County and awarded to products and product groups or services obtained as a result of sustainable management that values and enhances the value of local nature or human resources, traditional skills and local culture.
  - The quality label “Saaremaa Ehtne toode” (Genuine Saaremaa Product) was issued; it helps value local producers and local food.
  - The BR has a number organic agriculture companies whose products have been awarded a Mahemärk (Organic Label) showing that they were produced and processed in line with ecological rules.
- C7
  - C7.1. Establish a strengthened global BR brand with associated national guidelines
  - C7.2. Use of the brand in products and services in line with national guidelines

# Photos of West-Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve























