



2003 BALTIC FLOATING UNIVERSITY CRUISE

IOC UNESCO – RSHU

In July and August 2003 the Russian State Hydrometeorological University (RSHU) organized and carried out the research cruise of the Baltic Floating University (BFU). It consisted of two stages – 1) onboard the research vessel and 2) onboard the sailing catamaran.

1) The cruise was held within the framework of BFU international project and Federal Target Programme “Investigations of the nature of the World Ocean”. Apart from professors, teachers and students from RSHU and specialists from scientific-research institutes of St.-Petersburg, the students from Spain, Portugal, Poland, United Kingdom and Sweden took part in this expedition. This interdisciplinary expedition was carried out in the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea with the objective of providing education and training in the fields of oceanography & ecology through lectures, data collection, data analysis & interpretation. This cruise created a unique opportunity for a healthy exchange of ideas between the youth of different nations.

Several days before the start of cruise foreign students have had a possibility to go sightseeing around St.-Petersburg, visiting RSHU, theatres and museums. Students of RSHU have held several excursions to the most beautiful places of the city, entered on the UNESCO World heritage list. By this, through the intercultural exchange, BFU project contributes to the UNESCO programme “World culture”.

Marine expedition has been held onboard the Russian hydrographic vessel “Sibiryakov”, investigating four areas: Gulf of Finland, Baltic Proper (HELCOM stations) and Gotland deep. Under supervision of the specialists students have taken direct part in taking the samples, have worked in onboard laboratories, getting the experience and practical skills in methods and technique of the marine research, they also have taken part in processing and preliminary analysis of the data. During the lectures onboard “Sibiryakov” professors have

told the students about the main problems of the Baltic Sea and the ways of their solution to reach sustainable development and conservation of the environment of the sea.

The important element in the BFU work is holding the annual Mid-cruise scientific seminar, which is carried out in those cities of the Baltic region, which the vessel had called, including Stockholm, Tallinn and Helsinki. This time the seminar took place on August, 12 onboard research vessel “Sibiryakov” during the stay in Stockholm. On the basis of the material collected during the cruise students have made several reports. The invited guests were director of the Baltic University program Lars Ryden (from Uppsala University); Leif Litsgard, Chairman of EUrora – the environmentally orientated secondary school in Sweden and Dr.Savchuk from Stockholm University. They made their presentations for students.

The expedition has started in St.-Petersburg on July, 30 and has finished the same place on August, 16. The scientific-educational programme has been completely fulfilled. The students participated in the cruise have taken with them the unique materials, which will serve as a basis for their articles for the usual issue of the annual research bulletin “Baltic Floating University”.

2) The two cruises of the sailing catamaran CENTAURUS-II has been conducted within the framework of IOC/UNESCO “Baltic Floating University” Facility being performed by the RSHU.

The main task of the first cruise was to study the effects produced by an intensive inflow of saline waters from Kattegat into the Baltic, which occurred between January 16-26, 2003. Also the catamaran for the second time was invited to take part in one of the largest North Europe summer arrangement – *Kieler Woche* (Kiel Week) – on June 23-30.

The programme of the catamaran’s and its staff’s participation in the Kiel Week was focused on environmental knowledge dissemination and local inhabitants (above all the pupils) acquainting with methods of environment studying and protection. This programme was developed together with the Hohe Tied and the representatives of the Cadiz University (Spain).

Another cruise of the sailing catamaran “Centaurus-II” was held on July 19-August, 05, 2003, when the coastal zone of the Gulf of Finland has been investigated. The main objective of the cruise was the complex study of the state of the marine ecosystem on the basis of hydrophysical, hydrochemical, hydrobiological characteristics, including the data on sediments state and the level of their pollution and also the level of pollution of the water

environment. 10 students from RSHU and 8 students from University of Cadiz (Spain), Plymouth (UK), Stockholm and Uppsala (Sweden), Szczecin, Lublin and Lodz (Poland) took part in this cruise.

We hope that you have enjoyed this cruise and that you have found new friends among the participants and that you will keep the memory of this cruise fresh in your heart and mind for many years to come.

On behalf of the project organisers and managers, the scientific team and all cruise participants, we thank you for your interest and kind assistance in making this cruise a great success.

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