



Long-term collaboration for cleaner beaches

There is no other stretch of coast in Sweden that is affected quite so badly by rubbish being washed ashore than Bohuslän. Thousands of cubic metres of plastic, ropes, fishing equipment, boxes and oil drums are washed ashore each year. Not only is it unsightly to look at, it is also a danger to animals and nature. Cattle grazing in shore-side meadows and birds, fish and organisms in beach environments get entangled in and ingest plastics and may also absorb toxic chemicals from the plastics into their systems.

Around half of the coast in northern Bohuslän is protected as nature reserves. There are also a large number of Natura 2000 areas. This stretch of coast has been singled out as being particularly important to tourism and outdoor life and is thus of major significance to expansion in the area.

Tourism is an important growth issue and if it is to be developed the beaches must be accessible – and clean. To achieve this, a permanent organisation is required involving collaboration between the local authorities, the region, the government and the EU.



The various local authorities in northern Bohuslän have joined forces to set up the Attractive Coast project together with the County Administrative Board and Region Västra Götaland. The project will run from 2009 to 2011. The aim is to find a sustainable solution to these problems in a broad, co-ordinated manner and with the involvement of a large number of committed bodies.

It is not just a matter of finding an organisation and funding to clean up the beaches; the volume of rubbish being washed ashore needs to be reduced. Contact has therefore been made with the government, central authorities and the EU for action to be taken on a national and international level.

■ Around 5,000 cubic metres of rubbish are washed ashore on the beaches of Bohuslän each year, approximately half along the coast between Lysekil and Strömstad.

■ Between 1992 and 2006, beach clearance took place with the aid of labour market funding. During the latter half of this period around 3,000 tonnes were gathered each year. Beach clearance had by this time become a labour market activity instead of a nature and environment issue. When labour market policy was changed, the financial resources were no longer available. Through the project the problem will acquire the correct perspective – rubbish washed ashore is a threat to both the environment and growth.

■ With efficient co-ordination of the work, the cost of cleaning the beaches in northern Bohuslän is estimated at approximately SEK 5 million per year.

The project is funded by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Region Västra Götaland, the Västra Götaland County Administrative Board and the local authorities.

The project is being led by a reference group and representatives from the local authorities and other organisations. Environmental and nature conservation measures are being co-ordinated through the West Coast Foundation. The project also includes finding a practical model for implementing measures and acquiring a better picture of how the cost can be divided between nature reserves and other land.

The cost of the project is estimated at SEK 16.5 million over a three-year period. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has contributed SEK 7.5 million, Region Västra Götaland SEK 3 million and the County Administrative Board SEK 1.5 million. The remainder will be met by the local authorities.

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Munkedal
Municipal
Authority



Lysekil
Municipal
Authority



Sotenäs
Municipal
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Strömstad
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Tanum
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Attractive coast – clean beaches

**Attractive Coast project.
Co-ordinated environmental
management and nature conservation
in northern Bohuslän.**