

## OPENING SPEECH

*William Hogland  
University of Kalmar, Sweden*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to sit here again and open the third Kalmar Eco-Tech conference. We have during these years, since the first conference, created a tradition and also developed a fine network of person, companies and institutions around the Baltic Sea.

The First conference was Kalmar Eco-Tech "Waste Management and the Environment" and was held in November, 1997, here in Kalmar in order to Establish sustainable cooperation between countries in the Baltic Region and exchange knowledge between universities, companies, consulting groups, contractors and administrators. The conference ended up in a cooperation agreement between Kalmar University and St. Petersburg State Technical University in Russia. Together we are now running the International Youth Environmental Forum of Baltic Countries "ECOBALTICA" and this conference was held for the third time in the year 2000. At that time the Youth Conference was held parallel to the first Baltic Test Team Meeting, which also was held in St. Petersburg and was dealing with the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA) Methodology Testing in the Baltic Region for which I was the chairman. The first conference also ended up in an award consisting of a stay at Kalmar University for a student from Tartu University, Estonia. Ms Pille Kängsepp was selected to come Kalmar University and later she made a Masters degree in Sweden and some days ago she also got her research application approved that make it possible for her to within 4 -5 year make her doctoral thesis at Kalmar University. She will make research on Local Disposition of Leachate from Stena Metal AB Landfill.

Cooperation with the Technical University of Gdansk, Poland has also been initiated and an annual workshop on Biomass for Energy is organised by Professor Piotr Kowalik.

The second conference was Kalmar Eco-Tech '99 – Ecological Technology and Management held in September 1999.

Since then the First International Symposium on Environmental Problems in the Baltic Region States - Environmental Friendly Treatment Technology for Waste Water in the Baltic Region, 17-18 September 2001, Šiauliai, Lithuania in Cooperation with Kristianstad University by Dr Lennart Mårtensson, Mr Dahn Rosenquist; and Ms Vida Motiekaityte, Šiauliai University and others. The First Baltic Symposium on Environmental Chemistry, 26-29 September, 2001, Tartu was held and led by Professor Toomas Tenno, Tartu University, Estonia. Another PhD student from Tartu has joined the research group in Kalmar, Mr Mait Kriipsalu from Estonian Agricultural University and he is working with Remediation of Soils. Ms Vilmante Vyšniauskaite from Lithuania recently join the research group in Kalmar and she has got a scholarship from the Swedish Institute to work on nitrogen removal in wetlands. Mr Viatcheslav Moutavtchi from Russia and Mr Diauddin Nammari from Palestine are working with leachate from different types waste separation activities are also included in Group in Kalmar.

The activities within the network have increase rapidly during this year that is very important for the Environment in the region.

The Baltic Sea drainage basin encompasses 14 countries: Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovak Republic, Sweden and Ukraine (Belarus, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Ukraine are situated upstream in the drainage basin and do not participate in the formation of the coastal line with the Baltic Sea but contribute to the pollutant situation).

During the last 100 years, the nitrogen and phosphorous loads on the Baltic Sea have increased four and eight times respectively. However, today we are also focusing upon other anthropogenic pollutants as heavy metals and persistent organic compounds as PCB and flame-retardants (PBDE). The Region comprises more than 100 Million people and several of these countries within the basin are Members of the EU or have applied to be a Member. The main waste management method in the region is and through history has been landfilling or dumping. It is likely there are about 70,000-100,000 old landfill in the Baltic Sea region. In Sweden there exist about 6.000 old landfills of which about 20-25% are considered as immediate threat to the environment. In 1999 about 300 landfills were active in Sweden, in Finland 366, Estonia 371, Latvia 550, Lithuania 800 and Germany 2984 and both active and old landfills must be treated in accordance with the EU Directive. Leachate treatment and wastewater treatment are and will be of great importance in the Baltic Sea Region.

The economic and technical development is going fast in some of the countries in the region. New technologies and industries from different parts of the world are invading many of the countries and the generation of waste increase some times very fast even if measures for avoidance are implemented as sorting and recycling program for waste material. High tech in combination with natural systems are of great interest for the environmental management in the region.

I was telling how the cooperation has developed since the first Kalmar Eco-Tech but haven't we forgotten the very young generation or what are you saying Ms Carolina Lindh.