

Trans-boundary conservation issues in the Vistula Lagoon (Southern Baltic Sea)

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Vistula Lagoon is one of the three largest lagoons located along the southern coastline of the Baltic Sea. It is a trans-boundary inner coastal waters shared by Russia (Kaliningrad Oblast, 471 km²) and Poland (367 km²). The state border divides the lagoon into two parts, and the only connection with the Baltic Sea is the Baltiysk Strait located in the Russian part. Lagoon is separated from the Baltic Sea by a stable sandy barrier. The Polish part of the Vistula Lagoon has been designated the NATURA 2000 area (both habitat as well as bird one).

Lagoon was historically formed as an estuary of the Vistula River. In 1916 after regulation, when the Vistula runoff was mostly directed to the Baltic Sea, hydrological and sedimentation regimes of the lagoon changed dramatically and the lagoon evolved from freshwater plain estuary toward estuarine lagoon with significant influence from the Baltic.

The presentation will describe and discuss the major environmental and anthropogenic issues from the ARTWEI Project trans-boundary cooperation perspective: eutrophication, high fishing pressure, appearance of alien species, development of harbors, overuse of some areas, recreation and resources capacity, and danger of flooding of low-laying areas caused by climate changes.

Presentation from the ARTWEI project