

SB WELL



European  
Regional  
Development  
Fund

# WELLBEING ASSETS OF THE SOUTH BALTIC

– Unique Natural and Cultural  
Heritage of Sweden,  
Denmark, Germany,  
Poland, and Lithuania

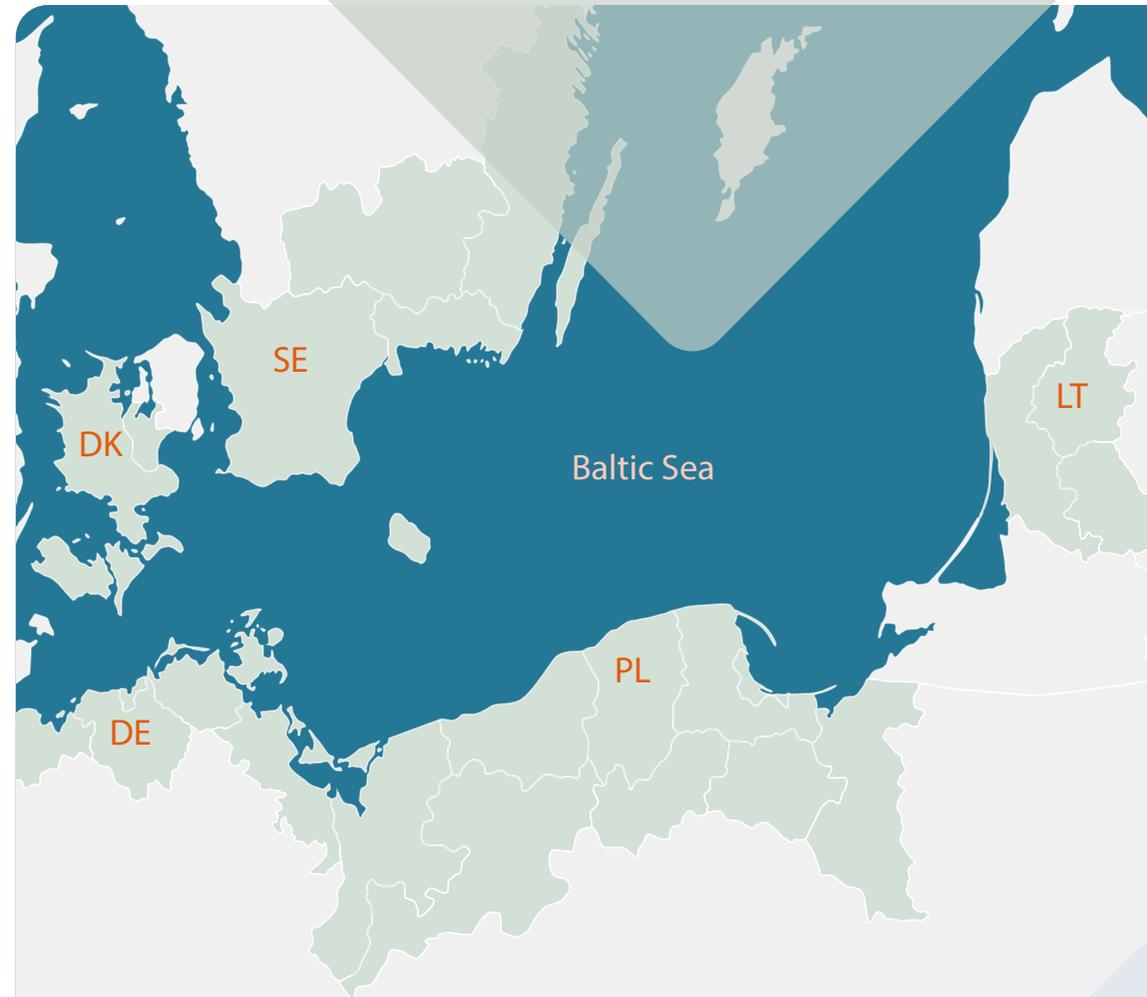
## The unique South Baltic

Wellbeing tourism is made up of the actual offer, accommodation, food, experiences, products, hosts, and the people you meet. Another very important aspect is the nature and culture of the destination.

The regions along the Baltic Sea in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Lithuania are united by nature and history. Together this forms the uniqueness of this destination as a Home of Wellbeing.

Incredible landscapes that are clean, peaceful and accessible. Cultural dimensions expressing beauty, creativity, and a friendly atmosphere.

The country specific characteristics show the variety of culture and nature that makes travelling around the Baltic Sea interesting and rewarding for the wellbeing tourist.



South Baltic . . . . .	page 3
Sweden . . . . .	page 8
Denmark . . . . .	page 12

Germany . . . . .	page 16
Poland . . . . .	page 20
Lithuania . . . . .	page 24



NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING  
ASSETS IN THE SOUTH BALTIC REGION

## The Baltic Sea

Between our regions in the south Baltic there is a unique and sensitive beautiful Sea, the Baltic Sea. The young and shallow Baltic sea is one of few brackish sea environments on Earth that is home for a mix of marine and freshwater species. The lower concentration of salt also gives us a unique feel when bathing and swimming, and there is no stinging jelly fish, and tides. The Baltic Sea is connecting us, its waves and currents travelling from one region to another. How we care for the sea in one region is transported to our neighbours. The Sea also connects us through our common history where the Sea played a major role in transport of goods and communication between the regions of the Baltic.

## Health through nature

In many South Baltic Regions there is a tradition and history of bringing health and wellbeing through nature that goes back hundreds of years in time. It has been a natural part of everyday life to spend time in nature for the people that live here.



People go on hikes, skiing, swimming in the ocean and lakes. In some areas there is a tradition of using natural resources such as salt, mud, algae, and sea water for health in sanatoriums, in other areas people have pilgrimaged to special spring waters to uphold and support health, using heat from wood (saunas) to cleanse and purify oneself, and in others swimming also during winter in so called cold bath houses lining the coast.

## Common pagan past

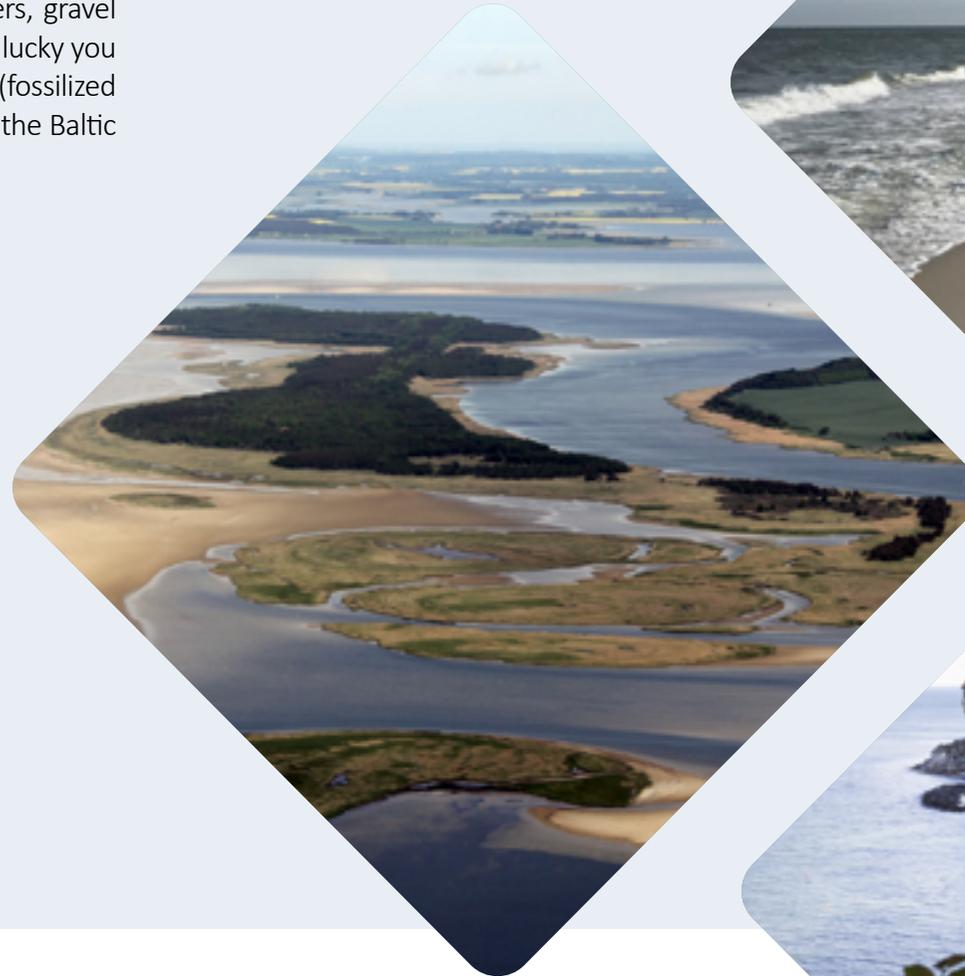
The Baltic Sea Region has a diverse culture and natural heritage. The flow of ideas, people and goods from the Mesolithic to the Modern Period (including for example an expansion of farmers from the southern Baltic to Scandinavia, realms in the Viking Age where Slavs, Balts, Scandinavians, and Finns lived together) created a Baltic culture zone, which is proved by archaeological materials, linguistic remains and common religious elements. The traces of this unusually rich spiritual and material past of the Baltic Sea are visible in the landscape in the form of megaliths, stone circles, and other places of worship such as sacred stones, hills, springs, and place names.

### **Long and diverse coastline**

The South Baltic is blessed with a long and diverse coastline. It offers hundreds of kilometres with uninterrupted soft and sandy dune lined beaches ranging in colour from white, yellow and brown, sandy, mixed with stretches of cliffs, solid rocks, boulders, gravel or pebbles, and occasional spits and bars. When you are lucky you may find pieces of tens of millions year old Baltic amber (fossilized resin of flooded pine trees) in and along several parts of the Baltic Sea.

### **Peaceful**

The South Baltic is known for its' peaceful atmosphere. Even in the peak tourism season you can find empty stretches of beach or coastal line to spend a moment in solitude if you are willing to head beyond the most known tourism areas. There are also many vast national parks or protected areas near the coast or further inland that may bring calm experiences in nature.



### **Maritime forests**

Along the shores of the South Baltic are areas of windswept, crooked, or leaning, low pine trees. Some even appear enchanted. It is a special feeling wandering through these forests, where the fresh and sweet smell of the trees meet the humid, salty air of the sea. Some of the near coastal forests are growing on sandy soils that may hold treasures of amber.



### **Migrating birds**

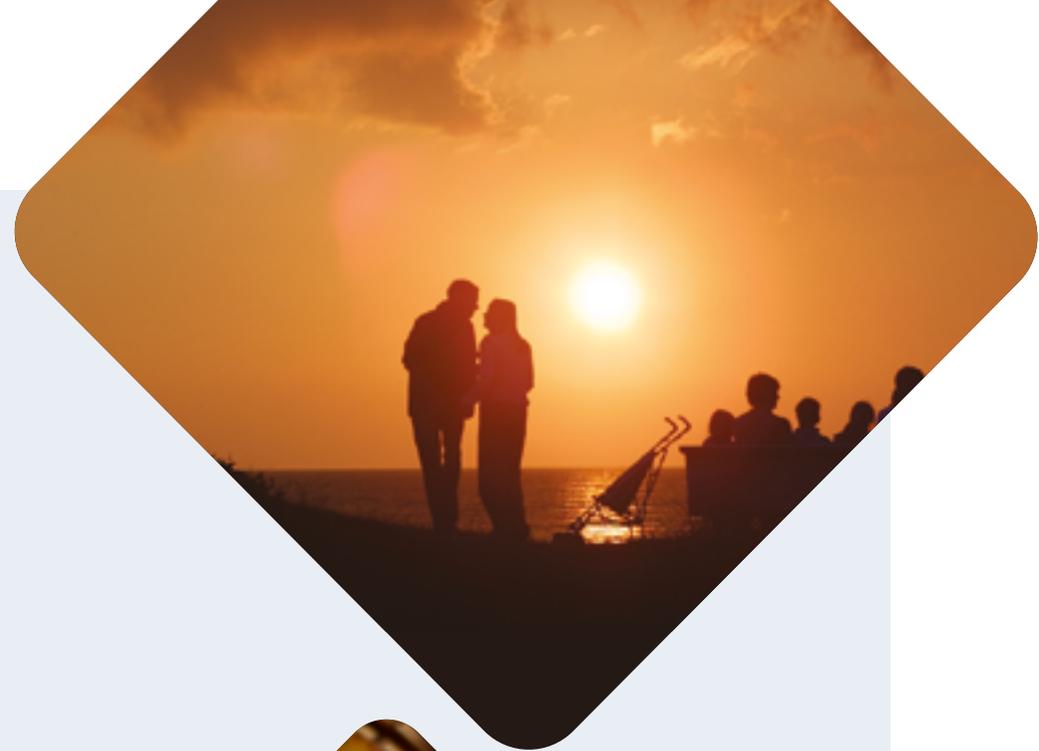
Tens of millions of birds travel through the South Baltic region every year. From the fertile wetlands and beaches around the coasts to the islands where birds can find rest and refuge on their global voyages, the entire region is bursting with birds. The dramatic and varying weather conditions where mild humid Atlantic winds from the west meet cold air from the northern Baltic regions and sometimes warm, dryer winds from the continent in the south mean that the bird migration is not only a spring and autumn phenomenon. All year around you can see a wide variety of birds – always on the move.

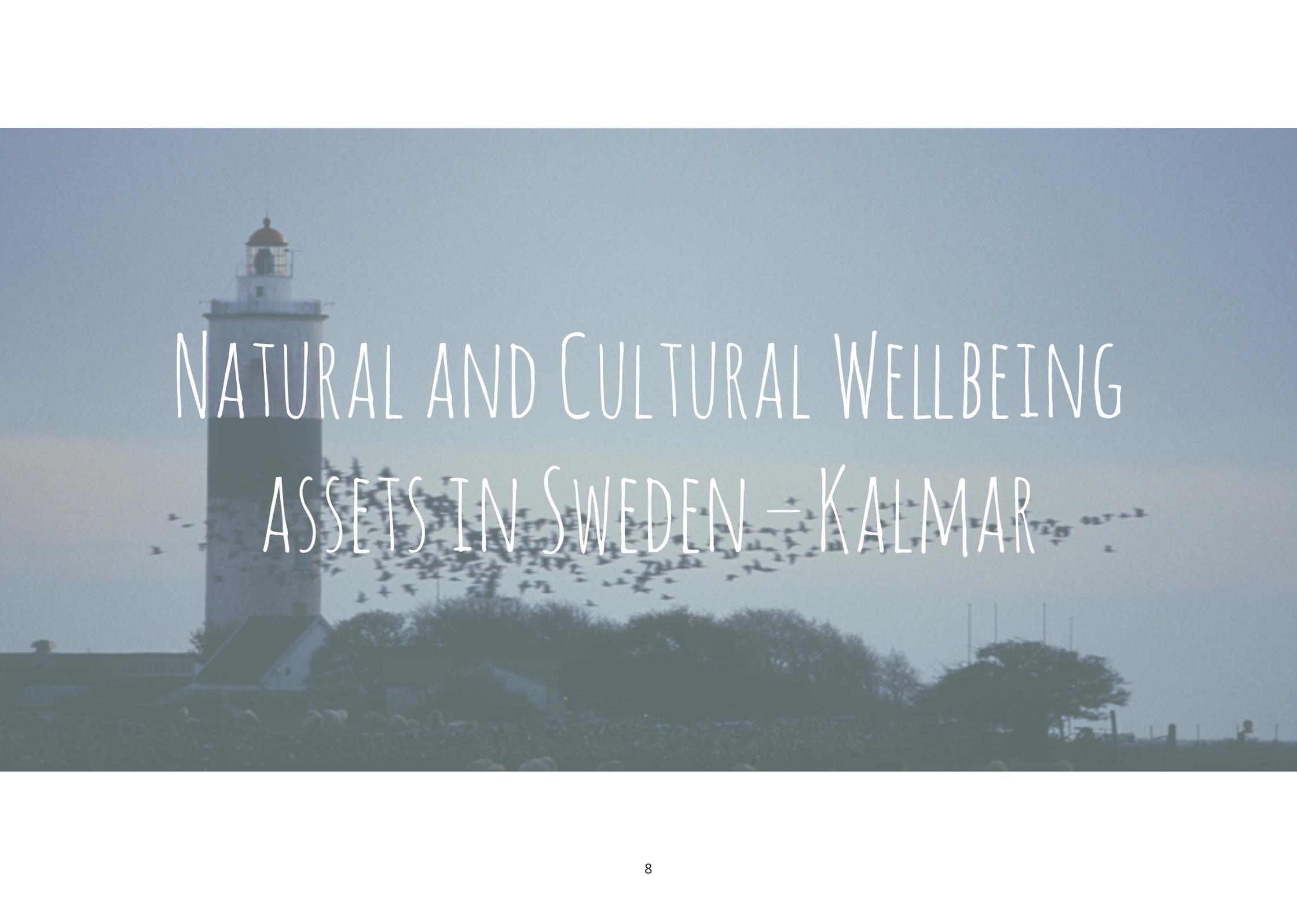
### **Long summer nights**

The sun over the South Baltic rises early and sets late in summer giving rise to very long days and long and light summer nights. The opposite prevails in the winter and in between summer and winter is a gradual change in season and light over time. The bright evenings, nights and early mornings in the summer gives the opportunity to enjoy actively being and exploring the outdoors also during this time of day.

### **Accessible and pure nature**

The South Baltic natural heritage is highly accessible and well preserved compared to many other places in the world. Nature is protected and appears pristine and clean. It is easy to access and free of charge. There is an abundance of public beaches, parks, trails, forests, and other nature areas, and most of the land is either under the governance of the state or if privately owned, still accessible to the public. Thus, visitors can enjoy the nature easily, free of charge, and on their own.



A photograph of a lighthouse on a hill, with a large flock of birds flying in the sky. The lighthouse is white with a dark top section and a red lantern room. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The foreground shows the silhouettes of trees and a fence.

# NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING ASSETS IN SWEDEN – KALMAR



### **The coastal trail of Kalmarsund – Kalmarsundsleden**

Experience natural and cultural sights through the coastal trail along the Kalmarsund. This accessible trail offers you stunning views of our coastline and fantastic opportunities for one or several days of hiking, with overnight stays in the open air in windbreaks and with possibilities to cook your food outdoors, all year around. Along the trail you can discover the varied flora and fauna.

### **STF Signature trail Öland – Mörbylångaleden**

Experience the truly unique world heritage site, the great Alvar, via the Mörbylånge trail. This hiking trail is built upon four sections, each offering accommodation and food. Experience activities and points of interest along the trail such as nature reserves and the lighthouse Långe Jan. Take the opportunity to visit second-hand shops, art galleries and local farm shops

### **Naturum – The portals to protected nature areas**

The island of Öland is truly unique with its supreme biodiversity. Explore and learn about the animals, plants, geology and cultural heritage that shaped the landscape by visiting a Naturum. Here exciting activities, guided tours, exhibitions and events are offered for nature and animal lovers and for families with kids. The areas are accessible all year and equipped with maps, signs and marked hiking routes.



### **The great Alvar – world heritage site on southern Öland**

A journey through the great Alvar offers you a truly cultural experience. The beauty and outstanding universal values of the landscape are successful results from the interaction between human and nature. Grazing animals and farming shaped the landscape for Millenia. Meet locals, farmers and artisans in their shops along the picturesque villages and get inspired by the cultural heritage.



### **Ancient remains, relics and sacred places**

The landscape of Kalmar and Öland is rich in ancient remains and relics. The cultural heritage and history from prehistoric times to the middle age, is present all over in the whole region. Along the famous castle of Kalmar and old towns, there remains an abundant amount of farmyards, stone walls, mills and other ancient monuments to discover.

### **Local food culture Småland & Öland – the edible country**

Restaurants and cafés take their inspiration from what nature has to offer, they bring local and seasonal products from our sea, lakes, meadows and greeneries into their dishes. Creative producers and chefs make it possible for you to follow the products from the ground to the table. Experience traditional and international food in creative versions based upon seasonal and cultural raw products.





**The right of public access –  
Allemansrätten**

The freedom of roaming enables you to freely wander and discover the diverse and beautiful nature of Sweden. This unique right, Allemansrätten, makes fantastic sceneries, nature camping, collecting berries and mushrooms, pathways, and coastal trails accessible for you to explore. As long, as you are mindful about others and treat the nature with care you are free to enjoy nature as much as you want.

**Swedish Fika – not just any coffee break**

To fika means to set work or study aside, to sit down and dedicate a moment to yourself, preferably together with colleges, friends, or family. Fika means to take a break to enjoy a beverage together with a snack, to give your body, mind, and soul a moment of peace. Reconnect to your inner self, contemplate on your surroundings, or discuss things that inspire you.



A scenic view of a harbor at sunset. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues. The water is calm, reflecting the colors of the sky. In the foreground, a dark metal railing runs across the frame. Behind the railing, the silhouettes of several bicycles are visible. In the background, the harbor is filled with numerous masts and rigging of boats, suggesting a busy marina. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

# NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING ASSETS IN DENMARK – REGION ZEALAND

**Møn UNESCO Dark Sky Park & Biosphere Reserve**

The eastern part of the island of Møn is a UNESCO Dark Sky Park – at present the only one around the Baltic Sea. You will understand the magic of preserving darkness when you see how many stars are in fact visible. The island is also a biosphere reserve, demonstrating a balanced relationship between people and nature. Famous for the Cliffs of Møn.



**National Park Skjoldungelandet – Roskilde and vikings**

The National Park Skjoldunge-landet features unique scenery and cultural heritage for you to discover on bike or on foot. Paths, shelters, and tours offers a close-up experience. The amazing cultural heritage includes the town of Roskilde founded year 980 by the Vikings. Here, the handicraft and original ships of the Vikings are preserved and can be explored, as can the cathedral of Roskilde, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Odsherred Geopark – beaches and Ice Age landscape**

Long, wide, and unspoiled beaches with fine white sand, forests, and biking and hiking trails in the spectacular landscape formed by the Ice Age. The outdoor experiences are plenty in the Odsherred UNESCO Global Geopark that works to protect the unique landscape and geology of the area. Surrounded by 160 kilometres of coastline, the sea is never far away, and you will find it easy to find your own peaceful spot.



### Forests

The Faxe-area is the place in Denmark with most trees per inhabitant. Here is a.o. the forest, Svenskekløften, which is a natural forest grown without forestry. Large fallen branches, felled trees and old hollow trees create a rich and varied bird and animal life. Insects, woodpeckers, bats, starlings, owls, and much more thrives here. In the bottom of the 25 meters deep gorge formed in the Ice Age runs one of Zealand's cleanest streams.



### Biking trails

Denmark is known worldwide for its biking culture. Numerous biking trails passes through the region's varied landscape: along the sea, pass fields, through woods and small villages. Choose a short round trip or a longer cycling holiday for instance on the Copenhagen-Berlin route. The flat countryside, good infrastructure, and rarely too hot temperatures makes biking an enjoyable wellbeing activity for all ages.

### Active outdoor

Danes enjoy outdoor activities all year round. Hiking on signed trails cross country and along the coast – for instance on the 175 kilometer long friendly Camøno-route. Mountain biking in the woods, wind- and kitesurfing on shallow water, sailing, canoeing, sea kayaking, tree top walking- and of course, bathing in clean sea water at the unspoiled, sandy beaches.





### **Happiness**

Denmark has several times been ranked the happiest country in the annual UN World Happiness Report. Among other things, this has to do with the fact that Denmark enjoys high levels of trust. As a tourist you will notice this by the fact that you can find unmanned roadside stalls in the countryside where you are trusted to pay for your fruit and honey without a cashier looking over your shoulder.

### **Hygge**

Hygge is a way of life meaning being relaxed and enjoying the simple things preferably in good company. It has become a worldwide phenomenon. It's the feeling of wellbeing and a warm atmosphere. You can experience hygge in a cosy indoor or outdoor environment when you have a friendly attitude and appreciate the moment and the people you share it with.

### **Organic food**

Denmark is the country globally where organic food has the largest market share. Enjoy ecological and innovative variations of fresh local produce of the season. A Danish movement called The New Nordic Kitchen has led the way for restaurants on all price levels to combine the demand for quality food with modern knowledge of health and well-being.

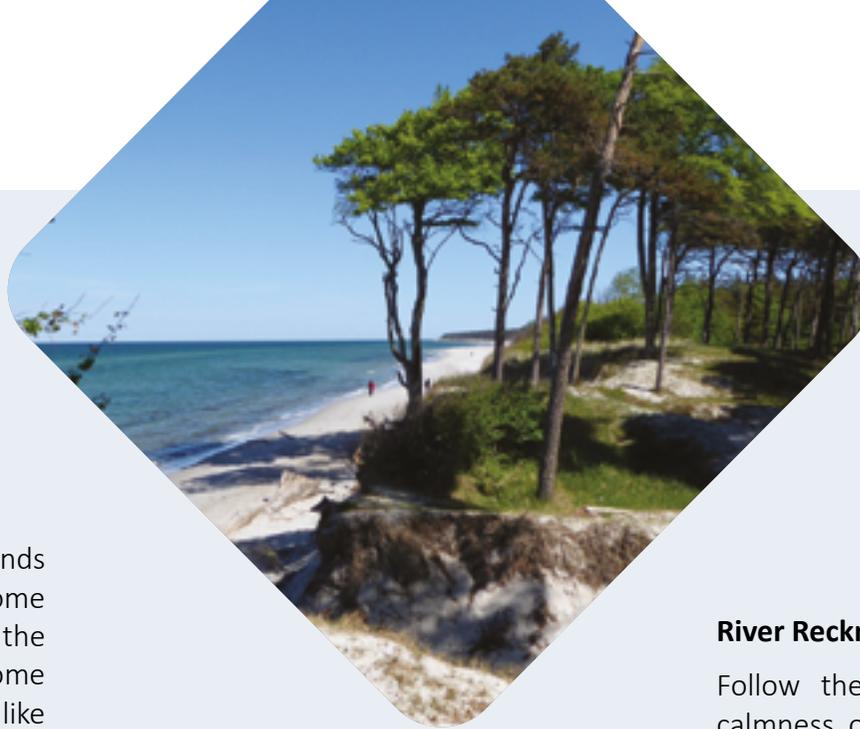




NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING  
ASSETS IN GERMANY  
— VOGELPARKREGION RECKNITZTAL

### Variety of bird species

Explore the variety of bird sounds in nature and try to discover some of the 150 bird species living in the Vogelparkregion Recknitztal. With some patience, you might spot rare species like the lesser spotted eagle or the Eurasian Kingfisher. Especially during spring, you hear extraordinary natural concerts. And in fall, swarms of cranes stop on their flight to the South to rest and eat.



### Nationalpark Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft

The national park at the Baltic Sea coast in Vorpommern includes waterscape as well as coastal landscape. Bodden, spits, beaches, dunes, and cliffs make the coastal line very dynamic. The forest ecosystems vary in their appearance. Enjoy a sustainable and mindful trip into the beauty of nature and be aware of the small beauties at the roadside.

### River Recknitz & Trebel

Follow the river lines and enjoy the calmness of nature. Contemplate while floating with a canoe through beautiful landscapes and enjoy the rich flora and fauna on your way. A few strokes with the oars and you enter a peaceful world completely different from daily life.



### Historic salt road

The history of salt in our region traces back into the 13th century. In Bad Sülze, salt was gained via vaporization of the salty ground water. The dried salt was transported on the river Recknitz, until the boats entered the Baltic Sea. Today, you can visit museums, cafés, a salt manufactory, jewelry ateliers – they will show you the diverse appearances of salt.



### Relaxation in salty air

A walk at the Sea is a treat for your lungs – if you want to heighten the healthy effect of salty air, you can visit a graduation tower. Salty water rinses through blackthorn branches and evaporates in a salty haze. You can taste the salt and your body, mind and soul can relax. Enjoy the special atmosphere either indoor or outdoor in harmony with nature.

### Farmshops & manufacturers with local produce

Do you know how mustard is produced? Or cold-pressed oil? Or how coffee beans are roasted? Go and visit our regional producers and have a closer look into the production. The secrets of production are revealed in guided tours. And if you like what you see, you can buy fresh, regional products in their little farmshops.



### **Manor houses with parks & gardens**

Feel like a lady or lord of the manor – visit one of our old manor houses and enjoy the special atmosphere. The houses were carefully restored and today, passionate hosts invite you to discover the historic buildings. Take a walk through the beautiful old parks, originally planned by famous historic landscapers like Gustav Meyer – one of the landscape architects of Castle Sanssouci in Potsdam.

### **Sustainable nature experience**

Enjoy nature the sustainable way: take a canoe or bike and use your own strength to explore the hidden treasures of nature. Accompany a nature guide and benefit from the expert knowledge: What are those plants? Which of them are edible? Which rare animals live here? You might very well lose track of time while discovering things you have not paid attention to before.



A photograph of a traditional wooden boat, possibly a fishing boat, on a calm body of water. The boat is made of light-colored wood and has a small sail. The water is still, reflecting the boat and the sky. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

# NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING ASSETS IN POLAND – POMORSKIE REGION

### **The Słowiński National Park**

The Słowiński National Park is one of the 23 national parks in Poland, full of valuable marshes, coastal lakes and forests. Its biggest attraction is moving dunes. The influence of wind shifts sand up to several meters per year, making the dunes to “wander”. Tourists may choose from a range of routes leading to observation platforms, lighthouses and the open-air museum of the Slovincian Village.



### **Sobieszewska Island and the Vistula Mouth**

The Sobieszewo Island is a place where the largest of the Polish rivers- the Vistula connects to the Baltic Sea. Sobieszewska Island and the Vistula Mouth are the true enclave of wildlife, especially water fowl. It is also an attractive place to relax. Nature, as well as educational and bicycle routes encourage walks, bicycle trips, admiring the beautiful landscapes or watching birds.

### **The Vistula Spit**

Vistula Spit separates the Vistula Lagoon from the Gulf of Gdansk. There are wide beaches surrounded by dune and forests. The air is saturated with iodine and aroma of pine, which makes it an ideal place to relax. It is also a wonderful area for water sports, hiking and bird watching. There are ornithological reserves including the largest colony of the black cormorant in Europe.





### Maritime heritage

Proximity to the sea has influenced the inhabitants of coastal regions, their heritage and way of life for centuries. It manifests itself in buildings, crafts, local arts and regional cuisine. Restaurants and bars offer delicious food based on fish. Colourful fishing boats, small ports, specific fishermen's houses, as well as the Lighthouses Trail encourage tourists to visit charming destinations and discover the South Baltic region.

### Kashubian old traditions and folklore

Located in Pomerania, the Kashubia region is one of the most beautiful in Poland. In addition to the lakes and forests, the Kashubians have a great cultural and tourism potential. They cultivate the region's heritage and their own language. Some of the tourist attractions are embroidery, craft related to plaiting and Stolems- legendary giants that according to folklore stories have influenced the shape of the current landscapes.

### Minerals

Minerals contained in the groundwater can penetrate deep into the skin and alleviate numerous ailments. They also improve the appearance of the skin. The Pomerania region boasts rich deposits of curative mineral waters such as chloride-sodium, bicarbonate, sulfide-sulfhydrogen, radon, and thermal waters. They are ideal for therapeutic baths and inhalations, irrigation, and drinking cures.





### **Amber heritage**

On the beach, in the museum, in the church, on street stalls – you can find “Baltic gold”. Amber has grown strongly in the local culture, medicine, and art. The geologist calls it fossilized resin, the archaeologist shows its history that has accompanied the culture of the South Baltic Sea. There’s only one thing no scientist can explain- the magic of amber.

### **Healing amber**

Amber is traditionally used as a healer and cleanser of the body, mind, and spirit. It is perceived to cleanse the environment, renew the nervous system, absorb pain and negative energy, and help alleviate stress. Amber has been observed to clear depression, promotes self-confidence, creative self-expression, to encourage decision-making, spontaneity, and bring wisdom, balance, and patience. In the Pomerania region, you can find many manufacturers producing cosmetics, pillows, and other products based on amber.



# NATURAL AND CULTURAL WELLBEING ASSETS IN LITHUANIA – KLAIPEDA REGION



### **Curonian Spit**

The Curonian Spit is a unique and vulnerable, sandy and wooded cultural landscape on a coastal spit which features small Curonian lagoon settlements. The Spit was formed by the sea, wind and human activity and continues to be shaped by them. Rich with an abundance of unique natural and cultural features, it has retained its social and cultural importance. UNESCO Heritage Site since 2000.



### **Karkle and the Dutchman's Cap**

The cliff of the Dutchmans Cap is a parabolic dune emerged 24 metres from the sea. The top of the cliff is a good place to watch birds flying above the sea. Karklė village, settled by the Baltic Sea in the end of the 15th century and beginning of the 16th century is one of the oldest and biggest historical coastal settlements.



### **Šaukliai Tundra – Boulders**

Tundra of Šaukliai is one of the largest clusters of boulders in Lithuania, which belongs to the landscape reserve of Šaukliai. It stands out for unusual unique landscape reminiscent of the tundra. Those, who wish to familiarize with such a landscape and peculiar local flora and fauna can travel through the cluster of boulders between junipers on the exploratory serpentine path for about 2 km.

### Palanga Botanical Park

Palanga Botanical Park is the park, surrounding Palanga Amber Museum. It is one of the most beautiful, richest parks in Lithuania. Founded in 1897 in the territory of the sacred Birutė forest and for a long time, locals called it Birute's Park. The trees were brought from Berlin, Kaliningrad and other European botanical gardens. The park has a wide variety of views and moods.



### Autumn equinox feast in Neringa

In Curonian Spit we have a celebration to escort The Sun for the winter season, celebrated as Autumn Equinox and Baltic Unity Day. This Feast invites to admire the reed sculptures specially created for the Autumn Equinox, which come alive in the flames of fire at night. Festival music invites guests to a colourful musical journey that combines folk songs with variations of contemporary music.

### Wellness and Awareness Festival “Sounding Stones” in Mosėdis

The idea of the festival is to bring together, in an exclusive stone environment, positive participants who wish to share knowledge and experience, various health and awareness practices with other people. During the festival there are lectures on self-education and self-healing practices, creative workshops, opportunity to see and touch the collections of minerals, sessions of sacred healing sounds, presentation of the art of retotrepathy.



### **Phytotherapy**

Phytotherapy is one of the natural treatment methods with local medicinal herbs and herbal remedies. Phytotherapy is used in cosmetology - organic creams and masks based on organic substances are created, also in traditional sauna where birch, oak, maple, and linden are used to bind whisks. In summer, we use strings made of maple, aspen, curlew and hardwood. Different whisks give a different aroma..

### **Apitherapy – bee therapy**

Bees are very important in Lithuanian culture. We offer an alternative therapy – apitherapy, that uses honeybee products. It offers a unique opportunity to relieve stress, balance your thoughts and emotions in a special hut with thousands of bees roaring beneath you. It is experienced by many to be soothing and also to restore damaged biological fields, strengthen immunity, improve blood circulation, and help people with respiratory problems.



# Colophon

Produced by: Danish Tourism Innovation & Linnaeus University

Editor: Karin Melbye

Text written by: Manuela Steimle, Joanna Kohnen, Kasia Kucharek, Egle Hidri, Karin Melbye, Lina Lindell, Stefan Lagrosen.

Acknowledgements: Thank you to SB WELL project partners for contributions & review.

Wellbeing concept based on: Lindell et al., 2021. DOI: 10.1080/24721735.2021.1961077

Layout: Joanna Kohnen, Administrative Board of Kalmar County & FHU Arkada Michał Twórz.

Photo credits: Tage Klee, Camp Møns Klint, Dansk Turisme Innovation, Thomas Ix, Visit Denmark, Niclas Jessen, Werner Karrasch – Vikingeskibsmuseet Roskilde, John Olsen – Geopark Odsherred, Joanna Kohnen, Naturum, Mostphotos – County Administrative Board of Kalmar, TMV/Andreas Duerst, L. Zust, Tourismusverein Vogelparkregion Recknitztal e.V., ostsee-kuestenbilder.de, Pomorskie.travel, W.Woch, Salantai Regional Park Administration, Shutterstock, A. Feser.

Language versions: English, Swedish, Danish, German, Polish, Lithuanian.

Available on: [wellbeingtourism.com](http://wellbeingtourism.com). Copyright: SB WELL, version 1, 2021.

## Project



This booklet is produced in the project SB WELL – *Wellbeing Tourism in the South Baltic Region – Guidelines for Good Practices & Promotion* – with support from the EU Interreg South Baltic Programme. Project period 2018-2021. [www.wellbeingtourism.com](http://www.wellbeingtourism.com)

The main goal of the project is to increase the awareness about wellbeing, create wellbeing in the tourism sector and promote the South Baltic Region as an attractive wellbeing destination. The project defines wellbeing tourism as tourism that supports harmony and balance of body, mind, and soul for guests and hosts in a sustainable interaction with the local community and environment.

*The contents of this booklet are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, the Managing Authority or the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020.*

Lead Partner



Partners

