

## Germany diary of Russian group of students (May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup> 2008)

30.05.08. Our trip started at Irkutsk airport at 11 o'clock when all of us arrived at the airport and was waiting for check-in. Our group consisted of 8 people (a teacher, 3 post-graduate students and 4 students) from Irkutsk State University. We left our city for more than two weeks to study Environmental Management in Germany: Coastal Management on the Sylt island and Freshwater and wetland ecosystems in Kiel. Our flight was continued 6 hours and passed at height of 10600 meters above the land. The temperature over board was 58 degrees under zero. Our plane landed safely at Moscow airport and then we moved from one airport (Sheremet'ev the first) to another, international one (Sheremet'ev the second). After arrival all of us except Marianna and Katya who were staying at the airport and Alexey who went to his friends went to the city centre to see the Kremlin and the Red Square. Then we went back to the airport where we spent at about 12 hours before our flight was announced. So we should spend one night at the airport. All the night some of us were trying to sleep, but it was difficult. And so far we talked about a life, discussed our trip and thought about how many hours we should stay at the airport...



31.05.08. After 20-hours trip we arrived Hamburg. It was delightful to see the city from the airplane. At Hamburg airport we were met by Tatiana From, a student of Kiel University. She came to study Environmental management from Russia (Moscow) several months ago. She gave us money for future expenses while we were residing in Germany. We took a bus, then we got a train, at five minutes we transferred another one, the last bus and finally we reached the first destination of our trip the Sylt island, a place called List. We caught that Germans are very punctual! All transport arrives to stations in time. Along the way Tatiana told us about the Sylt and Kiel (a city of Kiel University location). On the way we enjoyed beautiful views from the windows.

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In List we were warmly received by a group of international students from different countries such as Germany, Ghana, India, Honduras, Poland, USA. We were placed to the rooms and then we were invited to kitchen, where we had a collective dinner. We were briefly presented each other and socialized.

1.06.08. This day we met our professor Karsten Reise up stairs and then we walked to Wattenmeer station to attend parenthesis lecture. Professor told us about the Sylt, the North Sea, the Wadden Sea, global warming, aliens invading the North Sea Coast. After this lecture



we went along the seashore and Karsten Reise describes species of marine inhabitants and their interaction. It was very interesting and useful for us. This was our first time being near the North Sea and we enjoyed it very much. Then we had additional lecture at the laboratory. After lunch we went on a tidal zone. Our footwear was rubber boots. Karsten Reise told to us about various sea organisms such as oysters, slipper limpets, algae, barnacles and others.

2.06.08. That day was full of interesting events since early in the morning. At 7 o'clock we went out. We walked 3 km along the tidal zone to the south of the island. We saw farming of *Grassostrea gigas* (oyster). That day all students were divided in 6 groups. We participated in three groups (Oysters (Cyril M Egar, Uli(ri)ch) J Breitenbach, Simone Beichler, Yulia Plotnikova), barnacles (Christine Ewers, Ekaterina Gabrikova, Marianna Kolotygina, Vitaly Kurdyukov) and Limpets (Olga Gumbina, Alexey Pan'kov, Anastasia Kholyavitskaya) for making presentations.



In the afternoon we went to the North Sea by research ship MYA to take samples of marine inhabitants from the bottom of the sea. We sailed near the island where were a lot of seals that look similar as our Baikalian seals - nerpas. Some of organisms we picked up and brought to the laboratory. After that we did calculations of the organisms, in order to make presentation. Karsten Reise gave us some materials about organisms. So far in the evening we read papers about them.

3.06.08. All the day was devoted to preparing our presentations and writing protocols. That morning groups went the tidal zone for describing, measuring and counting marine organisms. Then we should write a protocol. We read papers and wrote the text for presentation. Also we built various diagrams.

In the evening we discussed all together biological invasions and environmental management.

4.06.08. That day groups presented their studies such as: The Alien Barnacle, Clams, Slipper Limpets, Oysters, *Rosa Rugosa*. After that a representative of a local press "Hallo Silt" Peter Sawallich came to our dormitory for making photos and interviewing us.

At three o'clock in the afternoon groups presented their works. They were both scientific and funny. And than we discussed our results.

Afterwards the photographer came for our lunch as he was invited by us. During our lunch we sang songs. He brought his professional, hand made 12string guitar. He played the guitar and sang German songs and Natalya played the guitar and sang Russian ones. Vitaly Kurdyukov sang Russian folk songs which impressed the international listeners very much.

In the evening we had free time and we went for a walk. The Sylt is a very beautiful place. Everywhere there are a lot of flourishing plants, a lot of *Rosa Rugosa* and poppies. And each house attracts more than the previous one. It was very fantastic evening!

5.06.08. We attended the lecture about birds. Our new lecturer was Philipp Stemmer. He told us about assessment methods of coastal birds. After that we walked to the dike for counting coastal birds during low and high tide. There was a strong wind.

We counted numbers of different bird species on two opposite sides: a pond and the sea using field-glasses.

Birds we could see were Tufted Ducks, Swans, Oystercatchers,



Avocets, Coots, Ringed Plovers, Lapwings, Shelducks, Redshanks, Mallards and other. We were divided into 4 groups. After dinner we did comparison of groups results and made one general presentation.



In the evening we had oysters for dinner (Cyril and Ulrich prepared oysters with garlic and cheese, we even tried raw oysters). It was very delicious!

6.06.08. It was a day of our departure the Sylt and arriving Kiel. We cleaned our cozy rooms early in the morning and say "Good bye" to the Sylt. It was really an adventure! We were really happy that we were to the island. We were impressed by the sea, nature, people and architecture very much. We went to Kiel by train, where we settled in a guesthouse. Every student had his/her own room. We were visiting local supermarket ALDI for bought some foods. In the evening our group took a short walk in the neighborhood.

We were in main streets, visiting Lake Schreventeich. There were many students socializing and relaxing. Also we were looking very beautiful chapel.

7.06.08. It was an excursion to the city. Tatiana was our guide that day. Firstly we went to main post office for calling our relatives and buying some souvenirs. Than we walked through old part of the city and visited St. Nicolas Church. It was very beautiful; at the church were two big organs. We walked along the embankment with amazing views to the Kiel fiord with launches, yachts and liners. There were even boats with rowing kids! We saw seals in public open-air swimming pool. They resembled us Baikal seals, but of course were different. And afterwards we visited the History Museum of shipbuilding; there were a lot of ship models, submarines and different interesting things in its. Also it was showed information about Kiel, his history in the museum.

There are a lot of nice green parks with beautiful flowers, trees, and interesting monuments in Kiel. We could see swans, ducks swimming in Kiel's lakes. We had very tasty dinner at a Fish Restaurant.

8.06.08. Sunday. We had additional rest day. We decided to visit magnificent old city Lubeck. It is situated in one hour train from Kiel. We found this city full of old buildings, bridges, monuments and narrow streets. We were impressed by the ancient Gateway of Lubeck (now it is the History Museum).

It was hot. All day long we walked in the city.



Lubeck is the “capital of marzipans”; we went to the central marzipan shop and bought marzipans for our friends and families. And another thing impressed us much: there were bands near market places! We fond of this old city very much!

*9.06.08.* Monday. We had a morning exercise by walking to Ecology Center. It took us one hour. And then our group and joined 7-8 students of Kiel University started another module about freshwater and wetland ecosystems. Our new lecturer was Professor H. Brendelberger. He told us about types of lakes, origin, lake morphometry, temperature conditions of lakes, light in lakes, trophic status, organisms in aquatic ecosystems and chemical composition of fresh water, about streams. The lecture was very useful and interesting. Farther more some information was known before in a Russian course so far listening the lecture in English was quite interesting. Almost all day we spent in a classroom of Ecology Center. In break in the middle of the lecture we visited dining-room, which located in other building. It was big and comfortable. After lecture we went shopping.

*10.06.08.* That day we had another lecture. It was about indexes of species diversity, species abundance and methods of their counting.

In the evening we had a party. And farther more it was a surprise for us: this day was a football match between two national teams Russian and Spanish. Students brought devises and a screen to the lecture room and so we could watch the game. Also they were cooking some food for all of us and we had some beer. Unfortunately our team has lost that time. So far we had collective dinner and socialized.

*11.06.08.* We started our field studies. We went to see three lakes: Plubsee, Pepersee, Selentersee. Professor K. Dierssen told us about various types of plants which grow there. After that with guidance of Professor H. Brendelberger we took a boat for rowing to Lake Plubsee. We measured temperature and quantified oxygen each meter beginning from one to 12 m, measureB water transparency using Secchi disk. Some of us saw bottom organisms using special equipment (net). Another one couldn't because suddenly became rainy and a boat should leave the lake immediately. After our boat expedition Professor H. Brendelberger suggested watching eagles using binoculars. Then we were visiting another two lakes. We were surprised that two of these lakes were private.

*12.06.08.* Early in the morning one our student (Vitaly) was going out Germany to Moscow and then to Irkutsk.

We went to see two streams. Firstly we were visiting stream Scheerensee, which connected 2 lakes. It was located in the forest (very beautiful). We measured stream speed, collected some macro invertebrates such as snails, mussels, leeches, grazers and other creatures with a net. It was very cold in forest.

Second stream was narrow, and we barely recognize it in grass. Professors explained us this situation unusual lacking of rains this summer in northern Germany.

At 15 o'clock was a final lecture at Ecology Center where we discussed our future plans about writing protocols and a final work devoted any types of organisms we saw at the excursions.



13.06.08. We went to excursion on a lake and a bog. The lake we observed was oligotrophic. In the lake we saw white swans. Professor K. Dierssen told us about lake's and bog's flora and soil formation in bogs. We could see soil horizons. We saw there bilberry-bushes and cranberry, it seemed to be like we have in Irkutsk region.



After a dinner we had an excursion at the Zoology Museum. Professor Dirk Brandis told us about history of the museum, famous scientists who worked here such as Johan Major, Carl Linney, Victor Hensen, Fredric Dali and others. In this museum we were impressed by collections of mussels, snails, oysters, bones of birds, collection of marine organisms, collection of butterfly and others insects, skeletons of different marine organisms, such as whales. At the first hall there was a skeleton of a whale kid, which was 50 tons in his weight and 22 meters in length. There were presentations of famous expeditions, such as "Galatea" (1845-1847), "Albatross" (1876-1885), "Deutsche Plankton Expedition" (1889), Tiefsee expedition "Valdivia" (1898-1899), "Gauss" – South Pole (1901-1903) and information about these expeditions. Scientific and educational laboratories are located at the museum. We saw Baikalian amphipods and organisms of the Baltic Sea at the laboratory. It was very interesting.

After our returning to the dorm Olga and Anastasia went to local shop for exchanging our glass and plastic bottles for money. In Germany shops accepting bottles for money, it is grate!

At night we had a disco-party in the club Tuholskey with our international friends (Sam, Cyril, Rashed). Tanya Also joined us. We had a great time!

14.06.08. That day we had a day-off. A few of us went to Labe; it's a very beautiful place. In Labe we visited the Tower, where we could enjoy fascinating views of neighborhood. In the evening we packed our bags and made farewell dinner. It was final our evening in Germany.



15.06.08. It was our departure day. We got up early in the morning. It was hard and long trip from Kiel to Irkutsk.

We'll miss Germany and our new friends. We hope that we'll return there someday. It's is fantastic country!