

## Evaluation of study visit to Sweden

Evaluation of study visit to Sweden was done by asking all participants to fill in a questionnaire. The questionnaire is shown below in the shaded frame.

### **Questionnaire for evaluation of study visit to Sweden**

Study tour has been organised within a framework of project 'Strengthening Nordic-Baltic-Russia/Belarus partnership in farming for biodiversity' and took place from August 17, 2010 until August 19, 2010.

Answers to the first six close-ended questions should to be rated from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), whereas the next four open-ended questions encourage comments on the overall topic of the study tour. When rating answer in the table, please mark one with 'X'.

		1	2	3	4	5	
1.	Your objectives for participating in the study tour were:						1. - not met; 5. - extremely well met.
2.	The relevancy of places visited in relation to study tour objectives was:						1. - not relevant; 5. - highly relevant.
3.	To what extent do you find study tour topics relevant to topics you working with or to your organisation's goals?						1. - not relevant; 5. - highly relevant.
4.	Were you satisfied with your participation in study tour?						1. - fully unsatisfied; 5. - fully satisfied.
5.	How do you rate the logistics and accommodation of the program?						1. – poor; 5. – excellent.
6.	How familiar was Swedish practice and solutions in farming to you prior to your participation in this study tour?						1. - all new; 5. - very familiar.

7. Environmental technologies and solutions in farming seen during study tour; which was most useful experience for you and why?

8. For your point of view - what are issues for the future cooperation between your organisation and Swedish WWF? (or vice versa for Lennart – between WWF and organisations from other participating countries)

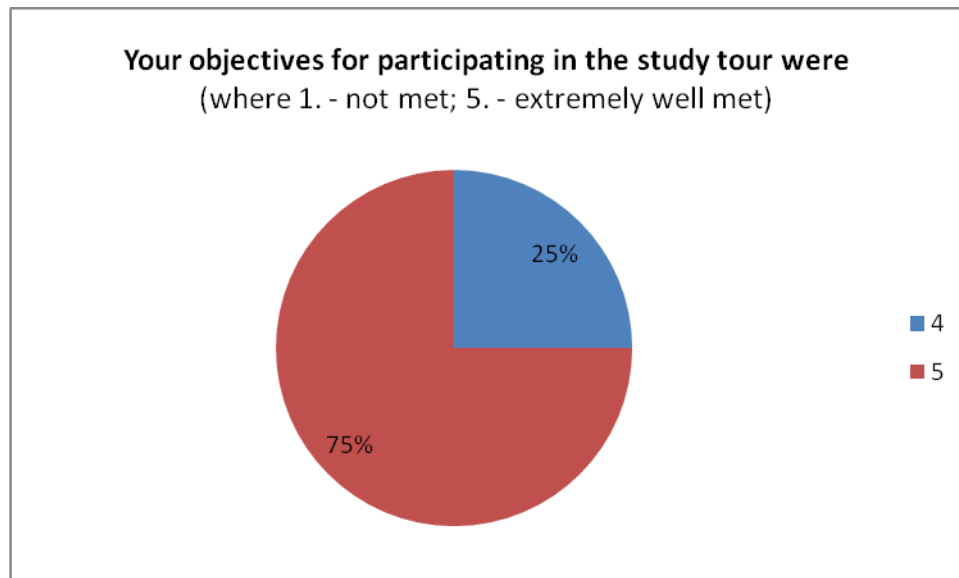
9. Do you consider it useful to continue transferring knowledge and experience between Nordic-Baltic-Belarus countries and to set up NGOs network for further cooperation?

Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; Comments:

10. Please give any additional comments not covered in the above questions:

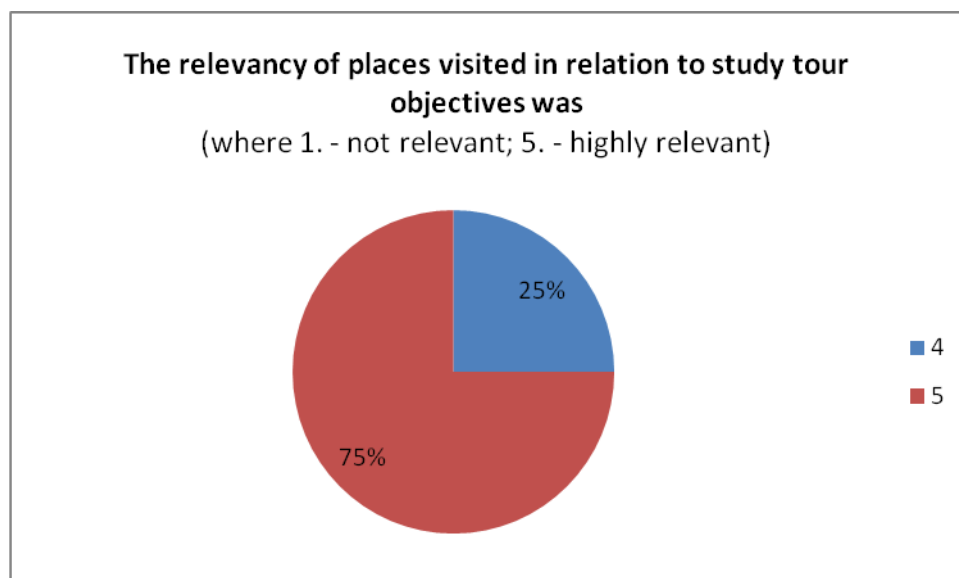
The participants' ratings are depicted in the following charts. In case there are no values indicated for certain ratings (e.g. 1 – lowest, 2 – second lowest, etc.), this means that there were no such values chosen by the participants.

### Question 1



All of the respondents expressed high level of positivity regarding the degree of meeting overall objectives for his/her participation in the study tour as their feedback was categorised as reflecting either highest or second highest ratings.

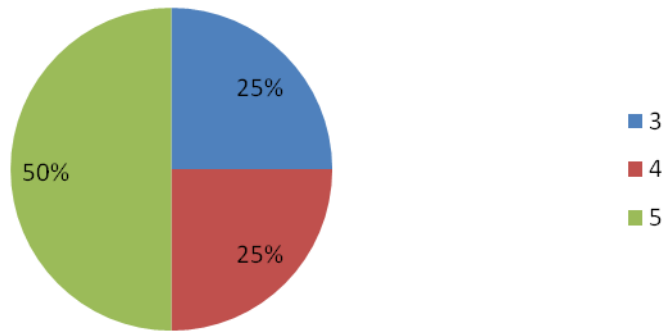
### Question 2



All of the respondents evaluated visited sites as very relevant to study tour objectives as their feedback was categorised as reflecting either highest or second highest ratings.

### Question 3

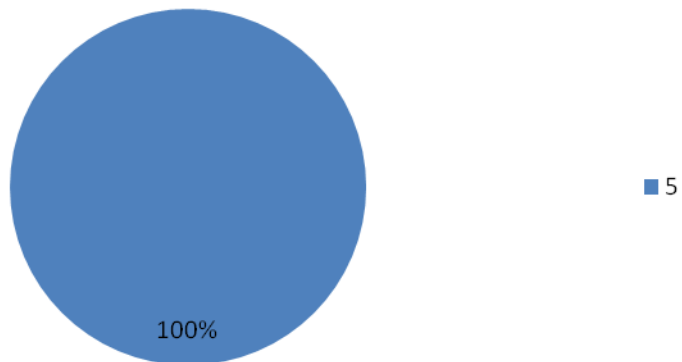
**To what extent do you find study tour topics relevant to topics you working with or to your organisation's goals?**  
(where 1. - not met; 5. - extremely well met)



A total of 75% of the respondents evaluated study tour topics as very relevant to topics they work with as their feedback was categorised as reflecting either highest or second highest ratings. A total of 25% of the respondents evaluated study tour topics as moderately relevant to topics they work with.

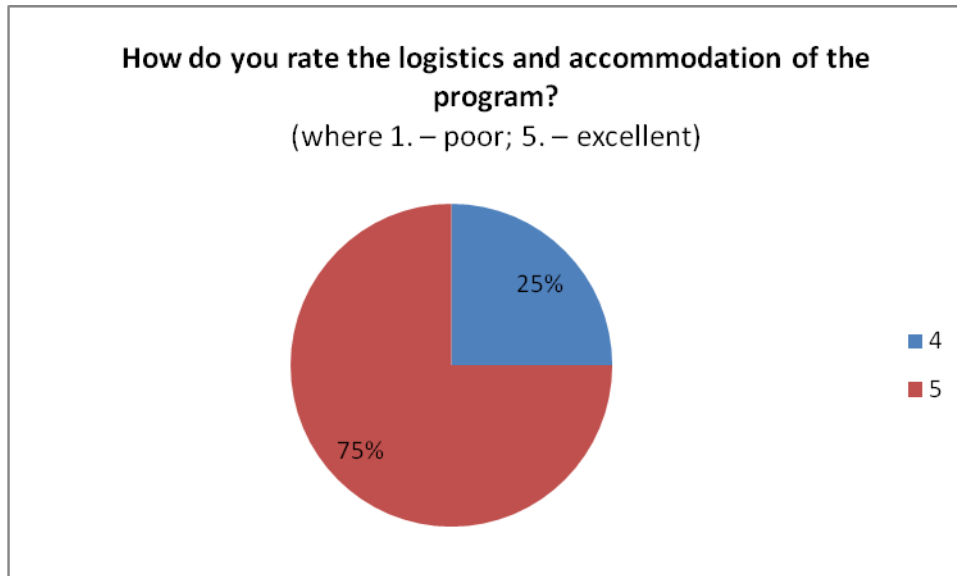
#### Question 4

**Were you satisfied with your participation in study tour?**  
(where 1. - fully unsatisfied; 5. - fully satisfied)



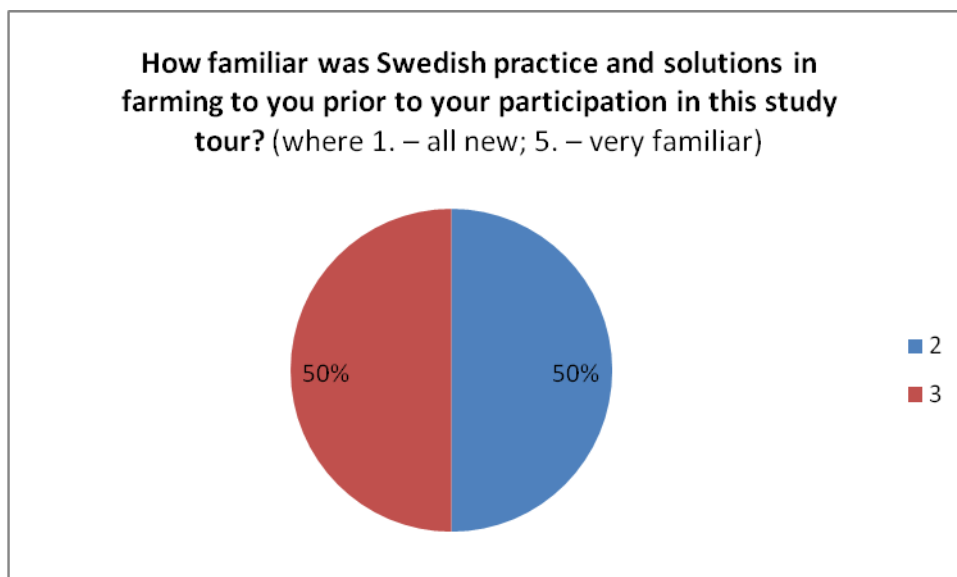
All of the respondents were highly satisfied with participation in study tour.

#### Question 5



All of the respondents expressed high level of positivity regarding the logistics and accommodation of the program as their feedback was categorised as reflecting either highest or second highest ratings.

**Question 6**



Most of the respondents evaluated their knowledge on Swedish practice and solutions in farming for biodiversity prior to this study tour as moderate or rather low as their feedback was categorised as reflecting either moderate or second lowest ratings.

**Question 7**

Survey participants were asked – “*Environmental technologies and solutions in farming seen during study tour; which was most useful experience for you and why?*”

The responses given were very positive indicating that demonstrated Swedish solutions in environmental technologies and solutions in farming for biodiversity have provided valuable experience and practical knowledge for participants of study visit. Some of key answers and comments are given below:

- Most useful was obtained experience on how grazing is organized on floodplains (*"as I am a farmer"*).
- Cooperation among farmers, local authorities, scientists and local people. It has been clearly demonstrated how that cooperation is beneficial for each participant in this joint activity. This approach would be applicable in our country (*Belarus*).
- Most useful experiences were - Natural grasslands/wetlands maintenance; Complex development of rural area (by Daniel Green); Recreation + nature in harmony (Örebro - Rynningeviken restored waste dump, places for bird watching); Nature schools.

### **Question 8**

Survey participants were asked – *"For your point of view - what are issues for the future cooperation between your organisation and Swedish WWF?"*

Responses given showed high interest of participants of study visit to continue further cooperation with hosting organization. The cooperation between all organizations involved in project also was pointed as mutually beneficial approach as there are different but valuable experiences accumulated in each country. Some of key answers and comments are given below:

- It is necessary to continue cooperation in ecological farming.
- Issues for the future cooperation can be: study visits, common projects on natural grasslands/wetlands maintenance and complex development of rural areas, trans-border cooperation.
- People working with organic agriculture in Belarus have much to learn from Sweden.
- Common project based on "pasture beef" idea – habitat management, demonstrational farms, etc. Marketing of "pasture beef" to secure economical viability of *farming for biodiversity* concept.
- Cooperation related to agro-environmental issues like biodiversity, eutrophication etc.

### **Question 9**

Survey participants were asked – *"Do you consider it useful to continue transferring knowledge and experience between Nordic-Baltic-Belarus countries and to set up NGOs network for further cooperation?"*

All of the respondents answered that further transferring of knowledge and experience between Nordic-Baltic-Belarus countries would be useful as well as setting up NGOs network for further cooperation among these countries would be a tool for doing that.

Some of key comments are given below:

- We have similar climatic and some other conditions (rather large areas of agricultural land per capita). We really need to transfer methods for maintaining natural grasslands and wetlands.
- Network of NGO is necessary; it'll make cooperation, common projects more effective.
- Yes, but it depends on time and other resources.

### **Question 10**

At the end survey participants were asked to give any additional comments not covered in the above questions. These comments mostly covered acknowledgements to organizers, hosting organizations and colleagues from other project NGOs.

It was also pointed that for further implementation of *farming for biodiversity* practice in Belarus there is a need to establish consulting, advisory or educational centre, where farmers can get informational support.

### **Conclusions from evaluation of survey findings**

Overall, the study visit was a great success as the comments and feedback obtained from the evaluation survey showed a positive impact on the participants' understanding on farming methods, evaluation of biodiversity and best practices in maintenance of biodiversity in rural areas.

High assessment in Question 1 and Question 2 shows that the program has been made in accordance with objectives planned within the project. Results of the survey also show that participants were satisfied with the program's content and organization.

However, some participants have responded that certain topics were not highly relevant to them. It is important to note that this is related to different backgrounds of participants- some were involved in NGOs active in political lobbying, some were farmers practising ecological farming and others more involved in straw-bale building. Since this study tour covered a wide spectrum of rural and biodiversity fields, it is inevitable that some topics were more relevant and others were less relevant to the participants.

It is interesting to note that study visit participants had moderate or rather low preliminary knowledge on Swedish practice and solutions in farming for biodiversity. This is due to fact that special focus have been paid to inviting in study visit more participants from Belarus.

From these results and from the discussions we had during the study visit, it is obvious that the participants were able to gain a lot of new information which can be used in further cooperation or applied in participants' own countries, thus securing good example of knowledge transfer.