

ESTONIAN ECOTOURISM ASSOCIATION >>



AIVAR RUUKEL >>



SHORT BIOGRAPHY >>

Aivar Ruukel is the Chairman of the Estonian Ecotourism Association. (ESTECAS). He has sound experience in ecotourism development and organised an International Conference on Central and Eastern Europe and Baltic Sea region: "Ecotourism - Balancing Sustainability and Profitability" in Parnu, Estonia 22-23 September 1997. Aivar organises eco-tours in the Somaa National Park to teach local and visitors on traditional canoeing and conservation strategies. He also develops workshops, monitoring and networking programs, and has a number of publications on ecotourism.

"Ecotourism means responsible traveling, preserving nature and culture."

Estonian Ecotourism Association

ABOUT THE ESTONIAN ECOTOURISM ASSOCIATION >>

ESTECAS is a nongovernmental, non-profit membership organisation that promotes the development of tourism that contributes to the local communities and conserves the natural and cultural heritage of Estonia. The group develops and articulates the main principles of ecotourism appropriate for Estonia: from strategies and action plans, to industry guidelines and standards. The organisation collects, publishes and disseminates information about ecotourism, sustainable tourism, and responsible travel and tour operation. Group members also organise projects and activities promoting conservation of natural and cultural heritage, including training programs for ecotourism and initiatives aimed at monitoring social, ecological and economic impacts of tourism.

ESTECAS cooperates with: The Ecotourism Society; Swedish Ecotourism Society; Estonian Fund for Nature; Estonian Nature Conservation Society, and others.

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ABOUT ESTONIA >>

Estonia lies along the Baltic Sea, just below Finland. Tallinn, Estonia's capital city is only about 40 miles south of Helsinki, across the Gulf of Finland. Estonians have been living in this tiny portion of the Baltic lands since approximately 2,500 B.C., making them the longest settled of the European peoples. Estonia's pristine natural attractions include sandy beaches on beautiful islands, fishing, horse riding, cycling and hiking, canoeing, sailing and boating. (www.visitestonia.com)

