

TURKU – HAI PHONG FOR CAT BA

Coordinator: Turku University of Applied Sciences

Partners: Hai Phong University (and Cat Ba Biosphere Reserve)

Study areas: Sustainable development

What are the main aims of your network?

The aim of the consortium is to build expertise of network institutions for sustainable development and active involvement in local development and to develop environmental management and sustainable livelihoods on Cat Ba Island.

What kind of activities are there in your network?

In the beginning the exchange of students and staff are the main activities. Through student and teacher exchange we can develop environmental knowledge and know-how in the universities and build local partnership by linking the University of Hai Phong and the Cat Ba Biosphere Reserve in project cooperation.

The students will participate in the courses of hosting university but also apply their knowledge in practice through practical training and research activities. The teachers' exchange provides the project with experience and expertise sharing within the international project organisation and adds value to the educational operations of the universities through visiting lecturers. There will also be one intensive course organised on Cat Ba Island, which focuses on sustainable development as trans-disciplinary field of knowledge.

Administrative Visits and Network Meeting support the project cooperation and the fluency of the practicalities of the network operations. Network meetings are very important for the success of the project and building genuine partnership. A seminar will be held in the end of the last network meeting to disseminate information to the public.

What sort of successes and challenges have you encountered during your project?

It has been quite challenging to keep up with the schedule. We were a bit too optimistic when planning the schedule. I believe it was a wise move to postpone the student exchange a bit and start with the staff mobility. We are still in the beginning of the cooperation but it has been nice to see how genuinely eager all partners are to work with the project.



Your advice to forthcoming networks

Particularly if you have not done any cooperation with the partner university before, it is good to bear in mind that the process will be rather slow in the beginning. So it is good to have some time to get to know each other and the ways of working (and bureaucracy) in each country and participating organisations.

