

OPENING SPEECH

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the University of Kalmar I wish you welcomed to this seminar, Kalmar Eco-Tech'99. I am very glad to see that so many participants from all countries around the Baltic Sea have assembled to exchange knowledge and ideas and discuss on topics related to environmental problems in our common region. The objective of Eco-Tech'99 lies well in line with the profile of our University.

(About the University)

The University of Kalmar was founded in 1977, but the history of two of its parts, the maritime academy and the teacher training school, reach back some 150 years, to the 1840s.

The department of education formed the basis for the University when established 1977. Courses and programmes in natural sciences and tourism were established early on. Since then programmes in economics, social sciences, technology and media studies have been added. Also programmes in the field of health and caring sciences have recently been added to the University.

Today, the University has about 6500 students and 500 employees, who have resulted from a significant, grow during recent years.

As more than 50% of the students are found in the priority areas of technology and natural sciences, Kalmar University has a unique educational profile compared to other new universities in Sweden.

During the last five years, research has grown rapidly at our University. Research has been strongest in the natural science area.

The excellence of this research has recently been acknowledged by the fact that our Faculty of Natural Sciences has been given full university status with right to award the doctors degree.

A number of groups forming our research profile are closely related to issues of this seminar, namely the groups in:

Natural Resource Management
Environmental Science
Environmental Chemistry
Marine Ecology
Marine Microbiology, and
the Coastal Waters Ecology group

At the Department of Technology, a research platform called "Environmentally driven industrial development" is gradually built up. The central idea of this research platform is to further the

interaction of industrial/technical development and environmental awareness. The platform will be based on six research fields. The fields are:

Technical Environmental Science
Environmental Engineering and Recycling
Eco-Design
Automation
Applied Computer Science, and
Industrial Measurement Technology

The research will address the problems of industry, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. A number of projects are already operating in co-operation with local industry.

One most important element in the development of our University is, just the thing we are doing in this seminar, that is building contacts and networks with universities, industry, business life and governmental institutions on local, regional, national and international scale.

During recent years, the University of Kalmar has developed into an important centre for matters concerning the Baltic Sea Region, in fields as the environment, maritime affairs, tourism and democracy.

As an example in this course, the University of Kalmar is currently planning to establish a Baltic Business School. The aim is to, in a few years time, upgrade the current department of economics into an international business school with focus on trade and tourism in the Baltic Sea Region.

The goal is ambitious both when it comes to undergraduate courses and master programs as well as the research programme. To support external activities, there will also be groups operating in the fields of Business Development and Environmental Management.

A project of this type needs of course some creative and devoted persons, but when it comes to realisation it is heavily dependant on a good network and support from the surrounding society.

Baltic Business School will be realised thanks to the interest shown and grand support from industry and business life as well as from the Municipality of Kalmar and the Regional Council in Kalmar County.

With this I will emphasize that this seminar, Eco-Tech'99, is a very important opportunity for all of us to build new contacts and links across the Baltic Sea Region in order to promote future projects!

Finally, I want to thank all the supporting institutions that made this seminar possible. Thank you very much! You will find the names of these in the program pamphlets and also on posters around.

Once again, very welcome,

I wish you pleasant days in Kalmar, interesting sessions, fruitful discussions and good networking!