



LATVIAN NATURE COMMON CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

Latvia's forests, rivers, lakes, sea, swamps, meadows and other environmental territories are open to anyone who appreciates their content and their beauty and respects their right to exist. The Code of Conduct offers advice to travellers, observers of nature, researchers, leisure seekers, berry pickers, mushroom hunters, enjoyers of active or passive leisure, or anyone else who goes out into nature.

HERE ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- ✓ Use what you have
- ✓ Respect and understand
- ✓ Don't bother things
- ✓ Cause no harm
- ✓ Be gentle
- ✓ Leave sites as you found them
- ✓ Take away what you brought
- ✓ Travel safely



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LEISURE,
ACCOMMODATIONS
AND COOKING

1.

IN VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

SPECIALLY PROTECTED NATURE TERRITORIES (SPNT)



Latvia has various types of SPNTs – national parks, a biosphere reserve, nature parks, nature reserves, etc., which all are meant to protect environments and species that live there.



SPNTs are created to protect valuable forests, swamps and other wetlands, meadows, rivers, lakes and coastal areas.



SPNT in Latvia can be visited at any time, except for nature reserves, as well as SPNTs with strict and regulatory regimes.



There are seasonal bans in some places to protect nesting birds, and visits there are banned during the relevant period of time.



EXTERNAL LINX

Latvia's SPNT



SPNT zoning



Environmental tourism, etc



LVM GEO





IN THE FOREST



Forests in Latvia cover approximately 46% of the country's territory, and this represents one of our country's greatest treasures.



Everyone has the RIGHT TO BE IN THE FOREST, to MOVE AROUND IN IT, to HUNT FOR MUSHROOMS, PICK BERRIES OR GATHER MEDICIAL PLANTS, except in designated or restricted areas, nature reserves and strict or regulatory regime zones in specially protected nature territories.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ If the owner of a forest wishes to limit the presence and movement of visitors in his forest, then he is obliged to fence in the relevant territory or to mark it with visible warning signs.
- ▶ FIRE SAFETY IN THE FOREST is the responsibility of the relevant local government and the State Forest Service, particularly in specially protected natural territories so as to defend the interests of flora and fauna, and that means that the right of people to be in the forest can be limited.
- ▶ When in the forest, you have DUTIES related to leisure and spending the night, protecting the rights of habitats and species during various activities, being concerned for the preservation of the quality of the environment, and for ensuring fire safety.
- ▶ During periods of INCREASED RISK FOR FIRES, pay particular attention to your surroundings. Never drop lighters, cigarette butts, cigarettes, glass or other objects that may be flammable. Always make sure that nothing remains behind when you leave a territory.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What to do if a **FIRE** erupts?

- If you spot a fire in the forest or elsewhere, **IMMEDIATELY RING 112** and then **TRY TO PUT THE FIRE OUT** by beating the flames with branches. Do so in a slanted direction toward the burning area.
- If you cannot put out the fire, immediately **WARN OTHERS AND LEAVE THE PLACE OF THE FIRE AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN**. Travel perpendicularly to the direction in which the fire is spreading along roads, forest paths, fields or the banks of a body of water.
- If you cannot avoid the fire and there is a water nearby, jump into it or cover yourself with dampened clothes. If you are in an open area in the forest, stay near the ground where there will be less smoke.

EXTERNAL LINX

INFORMATION ABOUT PERIODS OF FIRE RISKS

[FOREST SERVICE](#)



[METEOROLOGY CENTRE](#)



BEHAVE YOURSELF

[LATVIA'S STATE-OWNED FORESTS](#)



[to VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS](#)

ON THE BANKS OF RIVERS AND LAKES



Latvia has some 12,400 rivers and streams and 2,256 lakes.



There are PUBLIC and PRIVATE BODIES OF WATER.



Everyone has the right to be at, relax at, move through, row through, go fishing or observe the environment in PUBLIC bodies of water.



Owners of PRIVATE bodies of water must approve your visit in advance.



Everyone has the right to move through or spend a short period of time in the TOWPATH that is along the shores of rivers, lakes and the sea.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ If the owner of a private body of water wishes to limit the presence and movement of visitors (except in the towpath), then he is obliged to fence in the territory or mark it with visible warnings.
- ▶ The TOWPATH is a zone of land on the shores of bodies of water which is accessible to WALKERS who wish to use it for SHORT-TIME LEISURE.
- ▶ The WIDTH of a natural towpath:
 - 4 metres along the shores of private bodies of water
 - 10 metres along the shores of other bodies of water
 - 20 metres along the seashore
- ▶ The WIDTH of a towpath is MEASURED:
 - From the water line on the shallow shores of lakes and rivers
 - From the top of shoreline slope along rocky shores of rivers and lakes, with the towpath including the slope and the land between the water level and the slope
 - The place where the highest waves of the sea reach on the shore of the sea
- ▶ There is no towpath if the entire private body of water and the adjoining land belong to a single owner and fishing rights in the body of water do not belong to the state.

EXTERNAL LINX

A LIST OF PUBLIC
RIVERS AND LAKES

LIKUMI.LV



A COMPENDIUM OF
LIMITATIONS DEFINED FOR
BODIES OF WATER THAT ARE
ABOVE GROUND

DABA.GOV.LV



to [VARIOUS NATURAL
ENVIRONMENTS](#)



IN THE COASTLINE AND IN DUNES



Latvia's coastline is around 500 km long.



THE BALTIC SEA AND THE BAY OF RĪGA are public bodies of water and can be visited freely.



The coastline has a TOWPATH that is 20 m wide and is universally available.



Campfires are not allowed to be lit and tents are not allowed to be put in in the protected zone of coastline dunes except in specifically designated areas.



Mechanical forms of transport are not allowed in the protected zone of coastline dunes outside of roads, and the same is true on the beach.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ PROTECTED ZONES are meant to protect the environment, habitats, species and the landscape, as well as to preserve coastline forests and to reduce the erosion of the shore of the sea.
- ▶ THE PROTECTED ZONES OF THE BALTIC SEA AND THE BAY OF RĪGA involve:
 - THE PROTECTED ZONE OF COASTLINE DUNES, the width of which depends on the width of the dune zone, but no less than 300 m in the land direction (150 m in populated areas), counting from the place where natural flora first appears.
 - THE PROTECTED ZONE OF THE SEA includes the BEACH and the underwater part of the sea from where natural flora grows and up to a 10-metre depth in the sea.
- ▶ In places where the shore of the sea is steep, the width of protected zones is determined from the upper bank of the coastline.
- ▶ THE BEACH is the land along the shore between the water and the place where natural flora first appears.
 - The beach is freely available to one and all.
 - There may be signs of temporary restrictions during bird nesting season (April-August), and there may be restrictions in small parts of the beach and the coastline where protected species of birds and amphibians nest, live or breed.
- ▶ Tents can be put up for a short (one night) stay on the beach, except for specially protected natural territories, as well as urban beaches and swimming areas.

to VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

IN SWAMPS AND OTHER WETLANDS



Latvia has a wealth of wetlands. These include swamps, coastline and floodplain meadows, shallow coastal lakes, damp forests, the shallow coastline of the sea, etc. All told, swamps make up around 5% of Latvia's territory.



Wetlands are important for environmental diversity and for the everyday lives of people, because they support balanced circulation of water, particularly during periods of drought.



Wetlands are open to visitors, except for nature reserves and strict or regulatory regime zones in specially protected nature territories, but please be careful and do not leave behind any tracks which will take a long time to heal.



Learn about the wetlands by visiting many wooden swamp pathways.



Apart from well-appointed trails, wear BOG SHOES and find a knowledgeable guide, avoiding the area, please, when birds are nesting there.



If you visit wetlands in areas that have not been improved, do so in the WINTER, when the soil and the water will be frozen, and visitors will not disturb birds and other inhabitants of the swamp.



EXTERNAL LINX

BEST PRACTICE IN USING BOG SHOES

[BOG-SHOE](#)



to [VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS](#)



AT CLIFFS



There are thousands of cliffs which decorate Latvian river valleys and the banks of ravines for the most part, and the cliffs date back to the Devonian period 350 to 400 million years ago.



Damage to these cliffs is irreversible, so there is a ban against crawling, walking or climbing them (in winter, as well), engraving or other forms of damage.



Campfires and open flame are banned in caves (including smoking) when bats are spending the winter there from October until the end of April.



During all times of the year, do not touch bats and do not take pictures of them in caves with a flashbulb.

to **VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

ON FARMLAND, MEADOWS AND GRASSLANDS



Approximately 1/3 of Latvia is covered by farmland, and 1/3 of that is made up of grasslands. Only 5% of grasslands have high biodiversity.



Don't tromp through sown fields or fields with various crops.



If the farmland is surrounded by a fence, don't enter it, with permission to cross the land only if there is a special gate designated for perambulators.



Don't feed wild animals, animals accustomed to life in the wild, and unknown animals.



to **VARIOUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

CONTENT

WITH A TENT OR A HAMMOCK

CAMPFIRES AND FIREWOOD

PREPARING FOOD, KEROSENE STOVES, GRILLS

OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES

2.

LEISURE, ACCOMMODATIONS AND COOKING



WITH A TENT OR A HAMMOCK



Try to use places where tents are commonly set up, or look for tourist accommodations.



Put up your tent in places that are not fenced in or with restrictive signs.




If you want to spend the night on private property, contact the owner first.



Photo: Sigita Batraga

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Tents and hammocks are not allowed on nature reserves and other reserve zones.
- ▶ On the protected shores and dunes of the Baltic Sea and the Bay of Rīga, tenting is only allowed in places which are specifically meant for this purpose.
- ▶ Before putting up a tent in a specially protected environmental territory, study the rules and zoning of the territory where you are.
- ▶ You can put up your tent on the beach of the sea to spend the night, but not in specially protected environmental areas.
- ▶ Don't hang your hammock from trees that are protected environmental monuments (large trees, protected trees) – they may have this sign: 



EXTERNAL LINX

TENT LOCATIONS AT
JŪRTAKA (E9) AND
MEŽTAKA (E11)

[BALTICTRAILS.EU](https://www.baltictrails.eu)



LEISURE IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE

[CEĻOTAJS.LV](https://www.ceļotajs.lv)



SPECIALLY
PROTECTED
ENVIRONMENTAL
TERRITORIES

[DABA.GOV.LV](https://www.daba.gov.lv)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ When putting up a tent or hanging a hammock, be gentle with plants, mosses, lichens, the soil and the bark of trees.
- ▶ After spending the night, make sure that you are leaving the territory just like you found it.
- ▶ If there is a ban on tents on urban or populated area beaches, look for places where that is allowed.
- ▶ For safety's sake, don't spend the night on steep banks or cliffs which may collapse.



EXTERNAL LINX

LEISURE LOCATIONS AND
TENTING SITES IN STATE-
OWNED LATVIAN FORESTS, ETC.

[MAMMADABA.LV](https://mammadaba.lv)



AN APP TO TELL YOU WHO
OWNS THE FOREST AND
WHERE YOU CAN FIND
LEISURE LOCATIONS

[LVMGEO.LV](https://lvmgeo.lv)



ZONĒJUMS ĪPAŠI
AIZSARGĀJAMĀS
DABAS TERITORIJĀS

[OZOLS.GOV.LV](https://ozols.gov.lv)



[to LEISURE,
ACCOMMODATIONS
AND COOKING](#)



Photo: Sigita Batraga

CAMPFIRES AND FIREWOOD



No campfires when there is a **PERIOD OF DANGER OF FIRE.**



Outside of such dangerous periods, you can light a campfire in indicated locations, where you may find firewood; be responsible and save on the firewood.



If possible, buy firewood from the closest farm.



If you are gathering your own firewood, make sure that you don't harm environmental diversity, plants and animals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You **MAY NOT** light campfires

- ▶ In the protected zone of the dunes of the Baltic Sea and the Bay of Rīga, except for specifically indicated sites.
- ▶ In cities, villages, populated areas and swimming locations, except for specifically indicated sites.
- ▶ In caves, natural monuments, rocks, cliffs, big trees and protected trees, locations of protected species, nesting places for birds and habitats for animals.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ In specially protected environmental territories campfires may be made only in specifically designated places.
- ▶ Campfires are not banned on beaches (except in specially protected nature territories), but try not to do that. Trees and branches that have washed up onto the shore are places where young birds and amphibians live. Dry wood is an important living environment for insects. We are proud of our white-sand beaches. Don't spoil them.
- ▶ Use dry branches as firewood, but not wood that has washed ashore from the sea or other bodies of water, because these may be hiding places or living places for various organisms.
- ▶ Don't break growing trees, and do not tear off birch bark.
- ▶ Don't use fatter trunks which are home to plants, mushrooms and animals.
- ▶ You may not chop trees in the forest for the purposes of a campfire.

LEISURE AND CAMPFIRE SITES
ALONG LONGER HIKING TRAILS
SUCH AS JŪRTAKA (E9) AND
MEŽTAKA (E11),

[BALTICTRAILS.EU](https://www.baltictrails.eu)



ENVIRONMENTAL TOURISM IN SPECIALLY
PROTECTED ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS,
LEISURE AND CAMPFIRE SITES,
INFRASTRUCTURE, ETC.

[DABA.GOV.LV](https://www.daba.gov.lv)



LEISURE LOCATIONS
AND TENTING SITES IN
STATE-OWNED LATVIAN
FORESTS, ETC.

[MAMMADABA.LV](https://www.mammadaba.lv)



EXTERNAL LINX

THE ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPORTANCE OF DEAD
TREES IN THE FOREST

[PASAULES DABAS
FONDS](#)



INFORMATION ABOUT FIRE-
RELATED DANGER

[VALSTS MEŽA
DIENESTS](#)



[VIDESCENTRS](#)



[to LEISURE,
ACCOMMODATIONS
AND COOKING](#)

PREPARING FOOD, KEROSENE STOVES, GRILLS



Use local dining venues if you are hungry.



If you have to boil water or quickly cook food outdoors, use a KEROSENE STOVE, which will have less of an environmental impact than a campfire would do.



Don't use SINGLE-USE DISHES and tin foil GRILLS, because they are not environmentally friendly.



Photo: Sigita Batraga

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ If you will be gathering your own ingredients, only pick those plants and mushrooms that you are familiar with.
- ▶ After the meal, clean up your trash, because if you leave it there, it will harm animals.



to LEISURE,
ACCOMMODATIONS
AND COOKING

CONTENT

OBSERVATION, PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING OF NATURE

MUSHROOM AND BERRY HUNTING, COLLECTION OF PLANTS

FISHING

GEOCACHING

GATHERING SOUVENIRS

ON FOOT, BY BIKE, BOAT, SKIS, HORSE

WITH A DOG

BY CAR OR OTHER MECHANISED FORM OF TRANSPORT

HYGIENE AND WASTE

3.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

OBSERVATION, PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING OF NATURE



When observing and taking photos of living beings, don't disturb them – be quiet and keep your distance.



Wear clothes that are not bright in colour and make no noise.



Don't bother birds and animals when they are coupling, nesting or resting (particular during migration seasons), and don't do anything to cause flocks of geese or cranes to suddenly fly.



Don't visit or popularise the places where specially protected birds have their nests, whether you are a tourist or a guide, because disturbed nests mean that birds will leave them and leave behind eggs or chicks that will be eaten by other birds.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Watching BIG ANIMALS is a long-lasting process which requires a lot of patience. You should do that individually or in small groups in a blind or with a knowledgeable guide.
- ▶ When watching birds and animals, take nothing other than good emotions and photos.
- ▶ Make the “click” of your camera silent.
- ▶ To watch birds, use natural or manmade elevations, blinds, towers, etc.
- ▶ During the winter, feeders can attract birds, and please make sure that you provide feed all winter long.
- ▶ Make and hang birdcages.
- ▶ Make a list of the birds and animals that you have spotted in a specific place.
- ▶ If you find the YOUNG of an ANIMAL or a BIRD
 - Leave it alone, don't photograph it and don't livestream it on the social media;
 - Quickly go away;
 - Don't try to take the young with you or “rescue” it!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ If you find a BABY SEAL washed up on the shore
 - Leave it alone and don't go any closer than 50 metres;
 - Don't try to chase the seal into the sea, because it is resting and warming up;
 - Keep your dog on a leash;
 - Don't tell others about the place.
- ▶ When using a DRONE, observe all requirements, and don't bother animals.
- ▶ Don't tell others about where there are specially protected plants, animals or mushrooms (the specific location, point or co-ordinates) – the nest of a predatory bird or a black stork, etc. You can share the information at dabasdati.lv, because that will be of use to researchers.

EXTERNAL LINX

DON'T KILL THE YOUNG OF WILD ANIMALS

NEIZDZESDZIVIBU.LV



CIVIL AVIATION AGENCY

CAA.GOV.LV



USE OF DRONES IN SPECIALLY PROTECTED ENVIRONMENTAL TERRITORIES

DABA.GOV.LV



LATVIAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AGENCY

AIRSPACE.LV



BASIC PRINCIPLES WHEN OBSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

CELOTAJS.LV



PRINCIPLES FOR BIRD WATCHING

LATVIJAS ORNITOLOGIJAS BIEDRIBA



RULES ABOUT DRONES

LIKUMI.LV



[to OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES](#)



MUSHROOM AND BERRY HUNTING, COLLECTION OF PLANTS



You can pick WILD BERRIES in Latvia – blackberries, lingonberries, cranberries, snowdrops, wild strawberries, wild raspberries, blueberries, etc., but not in nature reserves, nature reserve zones or the regulated and restricted zones of the Slītere National Park.



Only pick and eat what you are familiar with.



It is illegal to pick protected plants.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Cut the mushrooms with a knife or “screw” the stem out of the ground. In both cases, this will not harm the area where the mushrooms grow.
- ▶ When picking berries, other plants and mushrooms, be gentle with the soil and surrounding plants.
- ▶ When collecting a bouquet of flowers, prefer their invasive kinds.
- ▶ Specially protected plants must not be collected for flower bouquets.



EXTERNAL LINX

LATVIA'S SPECIALLY PROTECTED
NATURE AREAS

DABA.GOV.LV



ZONING OF SPECIALLY PROTECTED
NATURE TERRITORIES

OZOLS.GOV.LV



LVM GEO APPLICATION AND MAPS

LVMGEO.LV



POISONOUS MUSHROOMS IN LATVIA

SENES.LV



PROTECTED, LIMITED AND SPECIALLY
PROTECTED TYPES OF MUSHROOMS,
LICHENS, PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN
LATVIA WHICH MAY NOT BE PICKED OR
OTHERWISE OBTAINED

LIKUMI.LV



POISONOUS PLANTS IN LATVIA

DABASMUZEJS.LV



INVASIVE PLANTS

DABA.GOV.LV



[to OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES](#)

FISHING



If you're planning to go fishing in Latvia, purchase a **FISHING CARD** (not required for people younger than 16 or older than 65 or for differently abled people), making sure that you have **PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION** when you do so.



At places with organised and licensed fishing, purchase a **PERMIT (LICENSE)**.

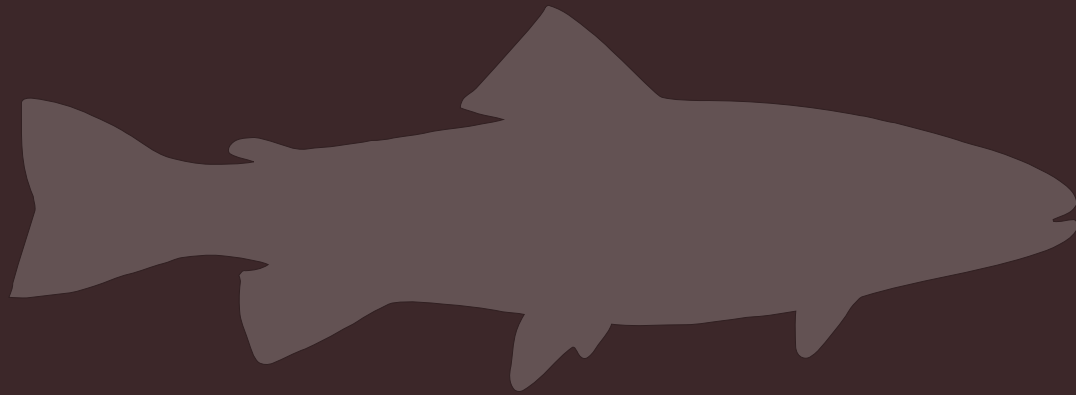


When fishing, take care of the cleanliness of rivers, lakes and the coast of the sea, as well as the welfare of fish.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

▶ You can purchase a fishing card and licenses on the Internet



EXTERNAL LINX

FISHING CARD

MAKSKERESANASKARTE.LV



FISHING LICENSES

MANACOPE.LV



CATCH, BUT BE CAREFUL: GUIDELINES
FOR FISHERMEN, CRABBERS AND
UNDERWATER HUNTERS

CELVEDIS



THE BALTIC SEA FISHING ETHICS
CODE:

BALTICSEAFISHING.COM



FISHING, CRABBING AND UNDERWATER
HUNTING REGULATIONS

LIKUMI.LV



[to OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES](#)



GEOCACHING



Place blinds so that they don't endanger environmental values or the geocachers



EXTERNAL LINX

THE GEOCACHER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

[GAGB.ORG.UK](https://www.gagb.org.uk)



[to OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES](#)

GATHERING SOUVENIRS



The best collection is made up of memories, photographs and drawings.



Leave plants, rocks and shells where they are, because they all have a role in the surrounding ecosystem.



Don't try to organise collections of insects, animals or eggs.



Avoid souvenirs that are made of animals or parts thereof.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ It is illegal to obtain, collect or keep representatives of protected or limited species or parts thereof – adult specimens, eggs, larvae, pupae, etc.
- ▶ Don't gather fossils by digging, drilling or cleaning sandstone, dolomite and moraine cliffs on the shores of the sea, rivers and lakes, in ditches, in caves or in valleys.
- ▶ Don't gather or move rocks which have the status of a cultural monument.

EXTERNAL LINX

SPECIES LISTED IN THE CITES
(WASHINGTON) CONVENTION

[CITES](#)



CULTURAL MONUMENTS IN LATVIA

[MANTOJUMS.LV](#)



PROTECTED, LIMITED AND SPECIALLY
PROTECTED TYPES OF MUSHROOMS,
LICHENS, PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN
LATVIA WHICH MAY NOT BE PICKED OR
OTHERWISE OBTAINED

[LIKUMI.LV](#)



[to OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES](#)



ON FOOT, BY BIKE, BOAT, SKIS, HORSE



Try to use existing trails, historical roads or places were train tracks used to be, because newly trampled trails may not renew themselves over the course of decades or even centuries.



During bird nesting season, walk as close to the water as possible to protect nests and baby birds on the part of the shore that is not affected by the waves; this does not apply to restricted areas which you are not allowed to visit at all.



During the season of bird migration in the spring and particularly the autumn, walk closer to the dunes on the beach so as not to disturb birds who are feeding on algae that have been washed ashore.



If you are in a group, walk in single file and stay on the trail.



If you are riding a BICYCLE, UNICYCLE or SCOOTER, avoid fragile soil, mosses, dunes, the slopes of ditches, valleys and dunes, as well as any other place where your vehicle would leave deep tracks.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Do not WALK or SKI in restricted areas or in places where owners have put up signs to keep visitors away.
- ▶ During the winter, don't walk along trails which are used by cross-country skiers.
- ▶ If you are BOATING, spend the night at places which are meant for water tourists.
- ▶ If you are RIDING A HORSE, avoid hiking and biking trails that have natural ground cover, as well as wooden walkways.
- ▶ Respect other people.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Use LOCAL SERVICES such as accommodations, restaurants and shops that are meant for hikers  and bikers.
- ▶ Purchase COUNTRY GOODIES at farms and SOUVENIRS from the workshops of craftspeople.
- ▶ Make use of the services of LOCAL GUIDES.
- ▶ If possible, take PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.
- ▶ Greet people who are approaching you.

EXTERNAL LINX

RIVERS IN THE BALTIC STATES
FOR BOATERS, LEISURE
LOCATIONS, RENTALS, ETC.

[UPESOGA.LV](https://upesoga.lv)



LATVIAN STATE FORESTS –
INFRASTRUCTURE,
DESTINATIONS, NATURE TRAILS,
PLACES FOR LEISURE, ETC.

[MAMMADABA.LV](https://mammadaba.lv)



COUNTRYSIDE LEISURE, FARMS
(COUNTRY GOODIES),
ACCOMMODATIONS, RESTAURANTS,
TOURISM ROUTES, DESCRIPTIONS OF
DESTINATIONS, A MAP OF
DESTINATIONS, ETC.

[CELOTAJS.LV](https://celotajs.lv)



PROVIDERS OF TOURISM
SERVICES FOR HIKERS

[BALTICTRAILS.EU](https://baltictrails.eu)



SPECIALLY PROTECTED
ENVIRONMENTAL TERRITORIES,
INFRASTRUCTURE, NATURE TRAILS,
VISITOR CENTRES, ETC.

[DABA.GOV.LV](https://daba.gov.lv)



TRAFFIC RULES

[LIKUMI.LV](https://likumi.lv)



[to OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES](#)

WITH A DOG



Your dog is a family member and must behave responsibly when outdoors.



The owner must make sure that the dog does not cause harm to people, wild animals or pets.



When you are in a city, village, a populated area and the seashore that is alongside it, your dog must be on a leash.



You cannot walk your dog on official beaches and swimming locations in cities.



Dogs do not have to be on a leash in forests, swamps and other outdoor territories, but you must constantly keep them in your range of vision so that you can monitor and control what the animals do.



Keep your dog on a leash on the seashore during bird nesting and migration season, because dogs easily find the eggs and young of various types of birds.



If you are walking or strolling along the beach during the season when seals are born (March-April) or birds are nesting (May-July), keep your dog on its leash so that it does not disturb seal pups, scare nesting birds, or destroy their nests.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Birds migrate in April and May during the spring and from August to October in the autumn, and they nest in May and June.
- ▶ Avoid children's playgrounds, stadiums and sports facilities with your dog.
- ▶ In populated areas, clean up after your dog defecates.
- ▶ If your dog is dangerous, put a muzzle on him in public areas and use a leash with a red ribbon.
- ▶ When staying in a tent, it is recommended to let your dog sleep inside the tent.

EXTERNAL LINX

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE WELFARE OF
PETS, THE SALE OF PETS, THEIR
PRESENTATION AT PUBLIC
EXHIBITIONS, AS WELL AS TRAINING
DOGS

[LIKUMI.LV](https://www.likumi.lv)



BE SURE TO REVIEW BINDING
REGULATIONS WHICH LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS ISSUE FOR THEIR
TERRITORIES.

[to OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES](#)



BY CAR OR OTHER MECHANISED FORM OF TRANSPORT



Cars and other mechanised vehicles may only be used on road.



It is **ILLEGAL** to drive mechanised vehicles on forest or farmland, dunes, swamps, rivers, streams and beaches.



When visiting protected shorelines and dune areas, leave your vehicle at car park facilities that are meant for this purpose.



Pay attention to road signs and informational signs.

TRAFFIC RULES

LIKUMI.LV

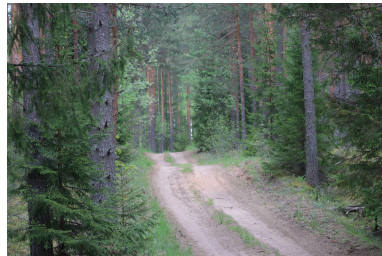


HOW CAN YOU KNOW WHETHER YOU ARE OR ARE NOT ON A ROAD

to **OUTDOOR**
ACTIVITIES



A nice, curvy and gravelly road in the forest. Drive carefully, because an animal may suddenly appear in front of you. If you see a hiker or biker, put on your brakes, because you don't want to cover the person with a cloud of dust or hit him or her with a bit of gravel.



Roads of this type are known as natural thoroughfares. In pine forests, they are often sandy. Drive slowly and be careful so as to protect your car and the environment. **It is forbidden to drive on natural thoroughfares in protected zones of coastal dunes and specially protected nature territories.**



There are two well-tamped lanes on hard gravel or earth, and this is seen as a road. Drive slowly to protect your car and the environment.



This ploughed zone in the forest is meant to keep fire from spreading in the case of a forest fire. It is necessary for fire safety, so don't drive on it!



There was once a road or rail track here, but it is not a road anymore. Don't drive down it, because it is covered with natural vegetation and characteristic species of plants and animals.



Someone with a motorcycle or quadricycle has ridden down this forest zone, which was not used before. **This is illegal, and you are not allowed to drive down** such "newly established roads".

CONTENT

LAVATORIES AND HYGIENE

WASTE

SAFETY IN
NATURE

4.

HYGIENE AND WASTE



LAVATORIES AND HYGIENE



If there is no LAVATORY, do your business so that nothing remains visible.



Try to do your LAUNDRY in washing machines at tourism accommodations.



If you are WASHING YOURSELF or DISHES outdoors, do so as naturally as possible.



Avoid chemical washing substances when you are outdoors.



Don't wear cosmetics, because these have a deleterious effect on water ecosystems.



If there is no lavatory and you have to do your business outdoors

- ▶ Choose a location at least 200 m from water and >50 m from a path or road, campsite or other improved objects (>100 m).
- ▶ Use a trowel or your fingers to remove a piece of sod.
- ▶ Use a trowel, stick, piece of bark or your heel to dig a hole that is 10-15 m deep.
- ▶ Be sensible with loo paper, perhaps choosing moss or leaves.
- ▶ Put the used paper in the hole, fill it with earth and tamp it down.
- ▶ Put the sod back and make sure everything is clean.
- ▶ Put hygienic products which require a long time to disintegrate in a plastic bag and take them with you.

If you are washing yourself or dishes

- ▶ During the summer, the best place to wash is in the sea, lake or river.
- ▶ If you don't know the place, don't wade more than a metre or 1.5 metres into the water.
- ▶ Don't wash yourself, dishes or laundry in small lakes or streams in which the water is clear and pure.
- ▶ Use natural materials to wash your dishes – sand, ashes, evergreen branches, etc.
- ▶ Don't throw away food waste and don't pour water that you have used for washing back into the sea, river or lake, because that will promote eutrophication of the body of water. Dump your water at least 200 m from the shore of the body of water.

to HYGIENE
AND WASTE

#DABĀEJOT



KO ATNESI
TO AIZNES



WASTE



TAKE AWAY everything that you have BROUGHT ALONG!



It would be nice if you picked up waste left behind by others so that the environment can be enjoyed.



Use WATER BOTTLES that can be utilised repeatedly.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Avoid packaging.
- ▶ Bring along hygienic products which take a long time to disintegrate.
- ▶ Food waste will attract and accustom wild animals, and that will hurt them.
- ▶ Put butts of cigarettes in a container, because they take forever to disintegrate, and they contain environmentally harmful substances.
- ▶ Throw away electronic cigarettes where you are meant to do so, not in general waste containers.
- ▶ Close the lids of trash bins so that animals cannot access them.
- ▶ Don't burn waste, particularly plastic, which exudes harmful smoke.

EXTERNAL LINX

THE "ENVIRONMENTAL SOS" APP TO
REPORT WASTE THAT HAS BEEN
DISCARDED OUTDOORS

[VIDESSOS.LV](https://www.videssos.lv)



INFORMATION, METHODOLOGIES,
ETC., ABOUT WASTE IN THE
ENVIRONMENT

[DABA.GOV.LV](https://www.daba.gov.lv)



[to HYGIENE
AND WASTE](#)

A photograph of a deer with small antlers peering from behind a tree trunk in a forest. The deer is looking towards the camera. The background is filled with green foliage and trees.

[CONTENT](#)

[FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES](#)

[ORIENTATION IN NATURE](#)

[WEATHER FORECASTS](#)

[POTABLE WATER](#)

[CONTACTS WITH ANIMALS](#)

[CONTACTS WITH MUSHROOMS AND PLANTS](#)

5.

SAFETY IN NATURE



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES



When planning your ROUTE or simply GOING in the direction that you have chosen, find out who owns the land and the region which you are planning to cross.



Latvia has fairly good mobile network coverage, and the Internet is available outdoors, though not everywhere and at all times.



If you are in trouble, ask local people for help.



If you are LOST, ring 112 and tell the rescuers where you are

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Tell others where you are going, what route you are taking, and how long you plan to be away.
- ▶ Make sure that you have personal ID and the phone numbers of your relatives.
- ▶ Load your phone battery and bring an external battery if you need to charge it outdoors.
- ▶ Bring along water, food, a lighter, a flashlight and warmer clothes.
- ▶ Monitor where you are going and remember the route that you are taking.

EXTERNAL LINX

LANDOWNERS

AN APP WHICH WILL TELL YOU WHO OWNS AREAS OF FORESTLAND

[LVMGEO.LV](https://lvmgeo.lv)



TYPES OF PROPERTY (STATE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INDIVIDUAL, LEGAL ENTITY) IN LATVIA

[KADASTRS.LV](https://kadastrs.lv)



ADVICE FROM THE STATE FIRE FIGHTING AND RESCUE SERVICE ABOUT NOT GETTING LOST

[VUGD.GOV.LV](https://vugd.gov.lv)



[to SAFETY
IN NATURE](#)

ORIENTATION IN NATURE

- ✓ If you are geocaching along a previously planned or unplanned route, it is important to know where you are so that you can inform others where you are.
- ✓ Orientation is assisted by Internet resources, applications and paper maps.

International map resources:

[GOOGLE MAPS](#)

[OPEN STREET
MAP](#)

[GOOGLE EARTH](#)

[MAPS.ME](#)



LATVIAN MAP RESOURCES:



CELOTAJS.LV

Countryside leisure, farms (country goodies), accommodations, restaurants, tourism routes, descriptions of destinations, a map of destinations, etc.



BALTICTRAILS.EU

Long distance hiking trails – E9, E11



LVMGEO.LV

An app from Latvian State Forests to show state-owned and other types of forests, specially protected environmental territories, infrastructure, the user's location, LIDAR layers, etc.



BALTICMAPS.EU

A map of Latvia, various layers, route planning, traffic jams, etc.



DOM.LNDB.LV

Thematic and historical maps from various eras (from the digital resources of the Latvian National Library)



DABA.GOV.LV

Specially protected territories in Latvia, infrastructure, nature trails, visitor centres, etc.



VESTURE.DODIES.LV

Maps at various scales, from different historical periods and thematic maps



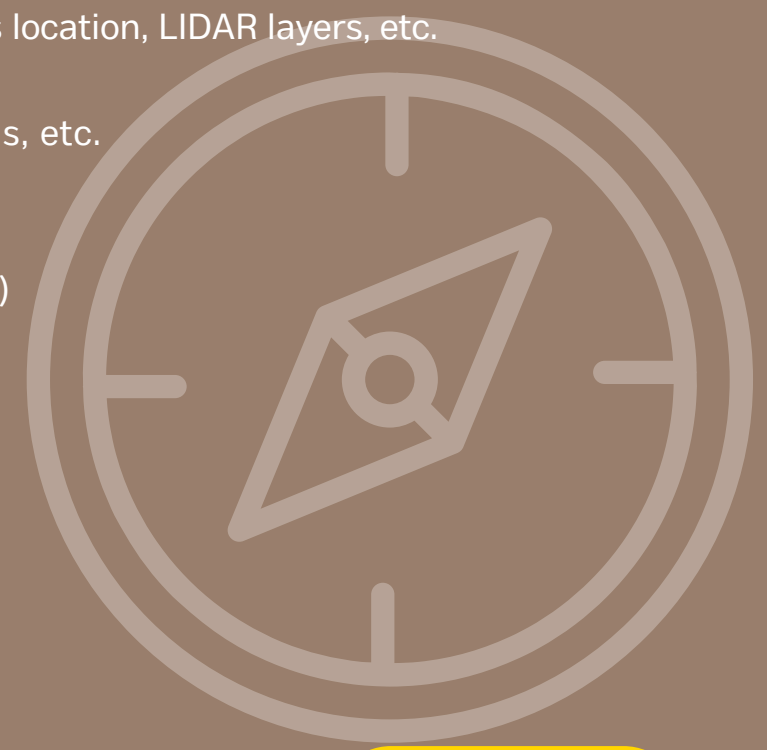
KARTES.LGIA.GOV.LV

Maps at various scales, terrain, topographic, orthophoto, toponyms, addresses, etc.



KARTES.GISNET.LV

Topographic and terrain maps,



to **SAFETY**
IN NATURE

Tourism, route and thematic maps on paper can be purchased at Latvian tourism information centres



WEATHER FORECASTS



Learn about WEATHER CONDITIONS so that you can better prepare for your trip.



The existing situation (whether there is snow, whether it has melted, whether there is a storm in the sea, etc.), including online cameras in the relevant region



WEATHER FORECASTS



[WINDY.COM](https://www.windy.com)

The windspeed and direction of wind are important on the coastline and in open areas (there are available Webcams)



[WINDGURU.COM](https://www.windguru.com)

The height and strength of waves, the direction of the wind, cloud cover, etc., are particularly important when on open water



[METEOUNRADARS.LV](https://www.meteounradars.lv)

The direction of clouds and precipitation in the next few hours, short-term and medium-term weather forecast in Latvia



[VIDESCENTRS.LV/GMC.LV](https://www.videscentrs.lv/gmc.lv)

Weather forecasts, air quality, the risk of floods, fire risks, etc.



[LIGHTNINGMAPS.ORG](https://www.lightningmaps.org)

Real-time lightning strikes



[GISMETEO.LV](https://www.gismeteo.lv)

[ACCUWEATHER.COM](https://www.accuweather.com)

Weather forecasts for a specific day or a longer period of time

to SAFETY
IN NATURE

POTABLE WATER



Precipitation in Latvia has more water than the amount that evaporates from the land, and that is why we have lots and lots of STREAMS, RIVERS, LAKES, SWAMPS and other WETLANDS.



POTABLE WATER in Latvia can come from a tap, purchased at a country store, or requested at a farm from a tap or a well.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ Plan the amount of water that you will need and the places where you will be able to supplement it.
- ▶ You can take potable water from streams, but the quality cannot be guaranteed (bacteria, dead organisms, etc.).
- ▶ When you take water from nature, boil it, add a purification tablet or filter it before drinking it.
- ▶ There may be signs pointing to places where potable water can be obtained at populated areas or farms.



EXTERNAL LINX

A DATABASE OF STREAMS IN
LATVIA AND ESTONIA

[AVOTI.INFO](https://avoti.info)



[to SAFETY
IN NATURE](#)



CONTACTS WITH ANIMALS



If you are hoping to spot wild ANIMALS, be quiet.



If you don't want to encounter them, talk to others.



Animals seek to avoid contacts with people, but they must hear, see or smell them in a timely way.



There is one poisonous snake in Latvia and a few toxic arthropods.



There are no poisonous animals in Latvia's rivers, lakes and the sea.



Don't touch anything that you are not familiar with and also are familiar with

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you encounter an
ELK, WILD BOAR or **BROWN BEAR**

- ▶ Don't approach it, don't look into its eyes, don't turn your back.
- ▶ Step back slowly, but don't run and don't block the route of retreat for the animal.
- ▶ Use natural cover such as trees, bushes, fallen trees and stumps.
- ▶ If the animal approaches, try to scare it away by yelling, standing on your tiptoes and raising your arms so that you look larger.
- ▶ If the animal attacks, try to jump aside, using an incline or a tree.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ If you are SPENDING THE NIGHT IN THE FOREST, **don't leave food outside** that would be easily available to animals.
- ▶ NESTING BIRDS or birds with chicklets (swans, for instance), can cause serious injury, so stay away from them.
- ▶ If A TICK ATTACHES ONTO YOU – there are various types of ticks in Latvia which feed on the blood of warm-blooded animals. If you are outdoors, check yourself regularly. Use tick repellent. Upon coming home, check yourself, and wash the clothes that you've been wearing. Also check your pets. If a tick has attached itself, yank it off. If you experience flu-like symptoms in 2-7 days (fever, headaches, nausea, a high body temperature or muscle cramps), that may signal TICK-BORNE ENCEPHALITIS. Contact a doctor immediately! If you find red spots with a darker or thicker middle between a few days and three weeks, go see your doctor, because you may have come down with Lyme disease (Laima boreliozi)!
- ▶ WASPS, HORNETS AND BEES are the only poisonous insects in Latvia. They usually don't attack unless they feel threatened. Most people will not feel any effects from being stung, but more sensitive people can use a compress or an anti-itch cream. Carefully remove the stinger of a bee if it is still in your skin. If you feel an allergic reaction, seek immediate medical assistance!
- ▶ MOSQUITOES, HORSEFLIES and other TWO-WINGED INSECTS. If you are not allergic to stings, bring along an appropriate repellent. Use mosquito netting over your sleeping bag or body.
- ▶ IF YOU ARE BITTEN BY THE COMMON EUROPEAN VIPER. This viper is the only poisonous snake in the Baltic States. It usually does not attack and usually bites people only if they step on it. DO NOT rinse, suckle or rub the snakebite location, do not use a tourniquet, and do not use alcohol. All of these things will make the situation worse. If the victim is not alone, others should limit his or her movements. Seek help from a doctor!

to SAFETY
IN NATURE

CONTACTS WITH MUSHROOMS AND PLANTS



Like any other country in the world, Latvia has poisonous MUSHROOMS and PLANTS, but if you use your common sense, you can avoid them!



Never touch or taste anything that you are unfamiliar with!



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ▶ **POISONOUS MUSHROOMS.** Never eat wild mushrooms that are unfamiliar to you or ones with a questionable origin. Don't eat old mushrooms. If you feel sick after eating mushrooms, seek medical assistance immediately by ringing 112!
- ▶ **POISONOUS PLANTS.** Don't eat plants or parts thereof – leaves, berries, seeds, roots, teas, concoctions, extracts oils, etc., if you are unfamiliar with them or they have questionable origin. If you feel sick after eating such plants, seek medical assistance immediately by ringing 112!
- ▶ **THE COW PARSNIP** (*Heracleum sosnovskyi*). If you see a patch of this plant, avoid it at all costs. Any encounter with this plant will create serious burns and ulcers under the influence of sunlight. You may encounter weakness, nausea, headaches, dizziness and stomach-aches. If you have touched the plant, wash with water and soap, don't expose it to light and go see a doctor!



EXTERNAL LINX

POISONOUS MUSHROOMS
IN LATVIA

[SENES.LV](https://www.senes.lv)



POISONOUS PLANTS
IN LATVIA

[DABASMUZEJS](https://www.dabasmuzejs.lv)



[to SAFETY
IN NATURE](#)

Drafting of the Code of Conduct

At the end of 2022, the Latvian country tourism association launched a new project – **“Common Code of Conduct for Green Belt coastal nature territories in Latvia”**. One of the goals of the project was to come up with a unified explanation for people so as to regulate the use of coastline environmental territories by tourists and leisure seekers – the common **Code of Conduct (CCC)**. This term refers to people who go out into nature for various reasons and with different motivations. People may wish to study nature, conduct research, be fans of active (hiking, biking, boat rides, etc.) or passive leisure, people who go outdoors to take part in sports, berry picking, mushroom hunting, fishing or geocaching.



The methodology of the CCC. In 2023, the Latvian country tourism association partnered with the Department of Spatial Planning and Land Management of the Ministry for Environmental Protection and Regional Development (VARAM). A working group of professionals was set up to prepare the CCC. The group met twice, and there were also public hearings about the code. Although it was meant specifically for coastlines, the fact is that it also applies to the rest of Latvia. During the preparation of the CCC, there was analysis of **some 80 legal acts, including laws, Cabinet of Ministers regulations, mandatory local government regulations, etc.** All told **53 experts** took part from state and local government institutions, environmental and tourism NGOs, etc.

The following people helped to draft this Code of Conduct and shared their advice

1. **Agnese Reķe**, expert, Baltic Environmental Forum
2. **Agris Buzēns**, senior expert, Local Government Oversight Division, Environmental and Regional Development Ministry Local Government Department
3. **Aleksandra Stramkale**, director, Jūrmala Tourism Communications Division
4. **Andris Valerts**, acting director, Ventspils Tourism Information Centre
5. **Asnate Ziemele**, board chairwoman, Latvian Country Tourism Association
6. **Aija Neilande**, project director, Kurzeme Planning Region
7. **Alla Kudiņa**, project director, Kurzeme Planning Region
8. **Alvis Birkovs**, board chairman, Latvian Fishermen's Association
9. **Andris Soms**, environmental tourism and education expert, Environmental Protection Board
10. **Dace Granta**, senior expert, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry Spatial Planning Policy Department
11. **Dace Kalsere**, Ventspils Tourism Information Centre
12. **Dace Kolāte**, business support and tourism expert, Ventspils Administrative District
13. **Diāna Rāzuma**, director, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry Spatial Planning Policy Department
14. **Egita Murauska**, Talsi Administrative District Culture and Sports Development Department
15. **Edgars Ražinskis**, tourism specialist, Rīga Planning Region
16. **Ilze Opermane**, senior expert, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry, Nature Protection department
17. **Elīna Svence**, deputy director, Ventspils Tourism Information Centre
18. **Ērika Kļaviņa**, biotope cultivation events director, Environmental Protection Board
19. **Evija Andžāne**, "Zaķukrogs"
20. **Ginta Roderte**, director, Ventspils Administrative District Development department
21. **Helēna Skuja**, project director, Talsi Administrative District
22. **Ieva Skabārde**, director, Southern Kurzeme Administrative District Tourism Centre
23. **Ilona Apele**, Limbaži Administrative District
24. **Ilze Grīnfelde**, lector, Vidzeme University College Faculty of Social Sciences
25. **Ilze Millere**, director, Limbaži Administrative District "LAUTA" agency
26. **Ineta Umbraško**, senior specialist, Urban Management and Improvement Department, Jūrmala
27. **Inga Belasova**, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry, Nature Protection department
28. **Ingrīda Smuškova**, director, Tukums Administrative District Tourism and Heritage Development Department
29. **Inguna Tomšone**, Kurzeme Planning Region special development planner
30. **Jānis Galakrodznieks**, consultant, Carnikava Tourism Information Centre
31. **Jānis Remess**, Limbaži Administrative District
32. **Juris Smaļinskis**, tourism and environmental expert, LLTA "Country Traveller"
33. **Kristīne Mickāne**, senior project director, Latvian Investment Development Agency Tourism Department
34. **Kristīne Voldemāre**, director, Roja Tourism Information Centre
35. **Laura Cielēna**, tourism specialist, Saulkrasti Tourism Information Centre
36. **Laura Seile**, senior specialist, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry, Nature Protection department
37. **Lauris Laicāns**, planning director, Talsi Administrative District Developmental Planning and Project Development Management Department
38. **Lienīte Priedāja-Klepere**, tourism expert, Vidzeme Planning Region
39. **Līva Maķe**, tourism specialist, Talsi Administrative District
40. **Madara Brāle**, Talsu Parish Council
41. **Mārcis Laksbergs**, Tārgale Parish Council, Ventspils Administrative District
42. **Mārtiņš Grels**, chairman, Tārgale Parish Council, Ventspils Administrative District
43. **Rūta Zunde**, senior tourism specialist, Carnikava Regional Research Centre
44. **Sabīne Skudra**, spatial planning specialist, Rīga Planning Region
45. **Sandra Bērziņa**, environmental protection advisor, Latvian Association of Local Governments
46. **Sanita Behmane Baibakova**, museum educator and tourism director, "Miķelis" leisure centre
47. **Sarmīte Melne**, sustainable planning expert, Latvian State Forests
48. **Tatjana Židele**, deputy director, Swimming Hole and Active Leisure Zone Sector, Rīga City Council
49. **Toms Štāls**, "My Map"
50. **Toms Ziemelis**, project expert, Latvian Country Tourism Association
51. **Vilnis Bernards**, senior expert, Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry, Nature Protection department
52. **Zaiņa Kaire**, "Learn and Study!"
53. **Zane Gailīte**, environmental education consultant, Rīga City Council

This guidebook was prepared and edited by Juris Smaļinskis and Asnāte Ziemele

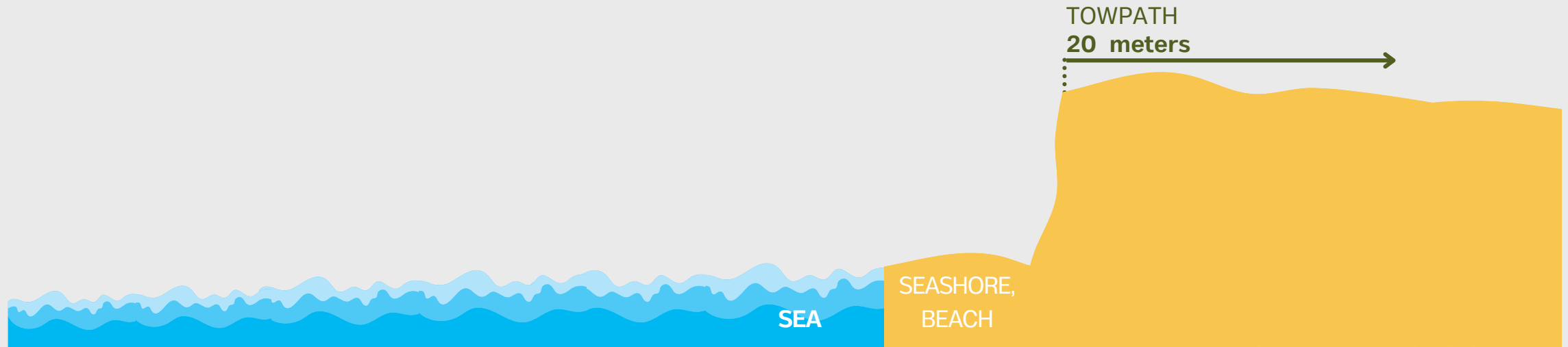


TOWPATH ALONG COASTLINES

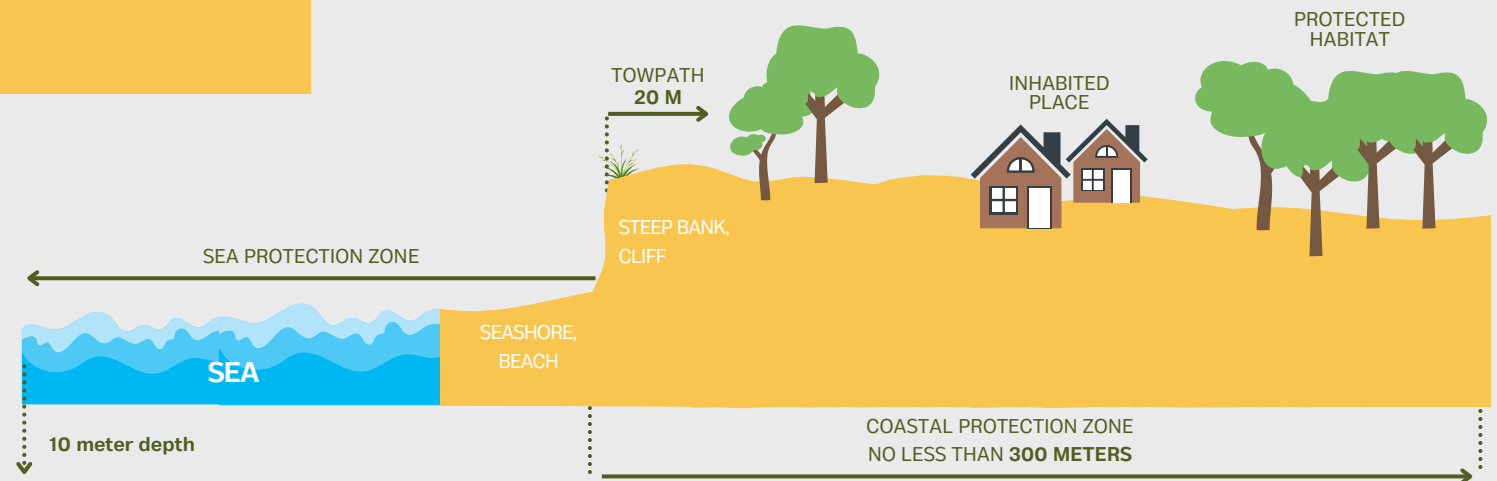
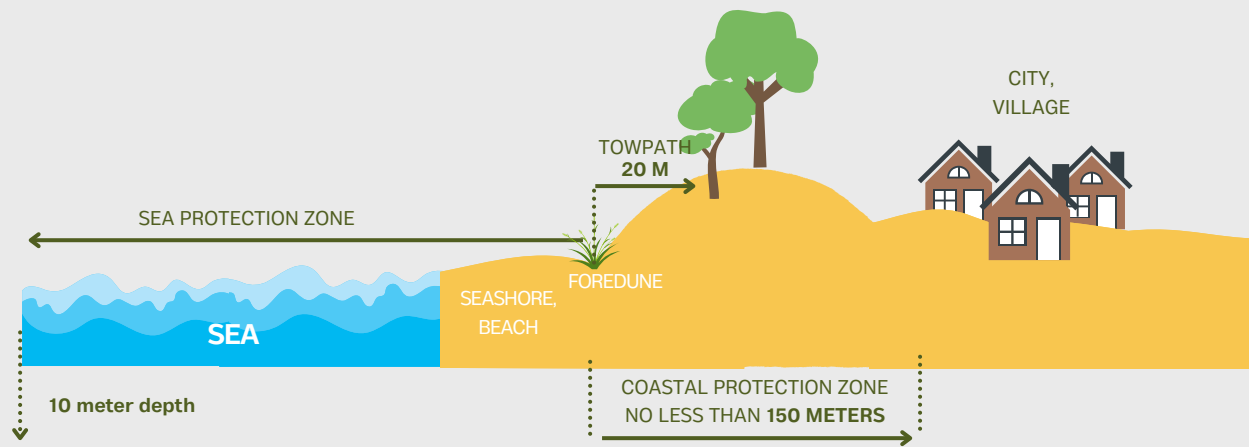
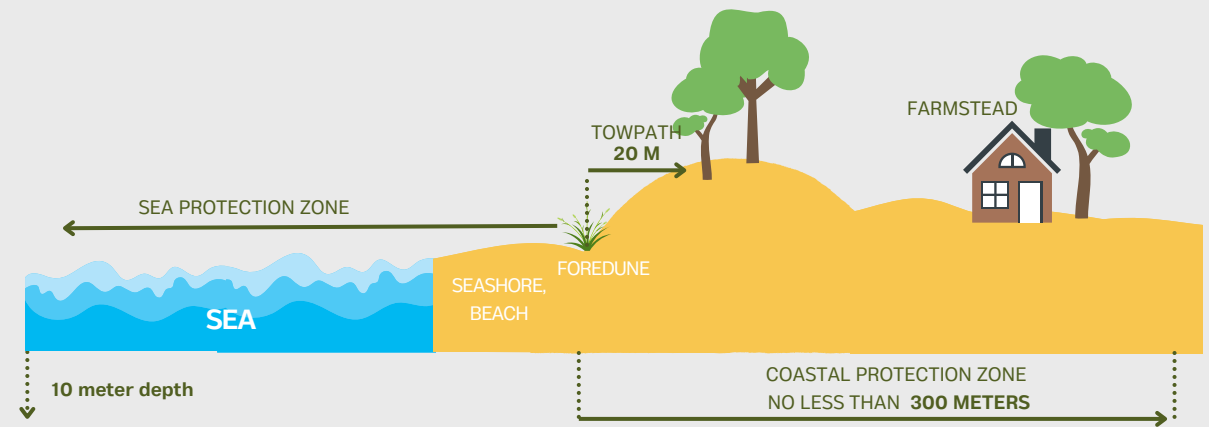
FLAT BANKS



STEEP BANKS



THE BALTIC SEA AND GULF OF RIGA COASTAL PROTECTION ZONE



Examples of codes of conduct and ethics elsewhere in the world

Baltic Sea Fishing ethical code. Respect Fish, Humans and Nature



Best practice in bog-shoe tourism



Everyman's right. Legislation and practice. Ministry of the Environmental of Finland



Geocachers' Code of Conduct



"The laws of nature"



Guidelines for nature tourists in Estonia



Code of Ethics when going outdoors. World Wide fund for Nature



Environmentally friendly leisure by the sea, State Environmental Service



Rules on good behaviour in Latvian state forests





More information about **Common Code of Conduct** - www.celotajs.lv



Lauku Ceļotājs
www.celotajs.lv