

The Local Newspaper „Saarte Hääl”: <http://www.saartehaal.ee/2012/06/28/kaalis-raagiti-saaremaa-miljoovaartustest/>

**An international conference, which focused on the Islands' Silurimaa Geopark, wind-mills and valuable landscapes, took place at the Kaali's Visitor Center on 27/06/2012.**

**The conference was organized by the Association of Municipalities of Saaremaa in the context of Interreg IVC project HISTCAPE.**

Silurimaa Geopark covers the entire island of Saaremaa. Its mission is to prospect natural and cultural values, to exhibit geotourism development, to promote environmental education and research assignments. The goal is to join the European Network of Geoparks, created by the UNESCO.

"It is now working on a project developing training guides for local tourists would be able to introduce the area," said Viktoria Bubukin from Islands Silurimaa Geopark project, adding, that research work has not started yet as the NGO has been operating for only two years. On the island, there has built three geopark routes: the east-west, north-south route and the southern coast of Saaremaa Island. The center of the Geopark is planned to found at Kaali Visitors Centre, because it is located in the center of the island.

"Geopark must serve a particular local interests and contribute to local economical development," explained a senior geologist of the Geological Survey of Estonia Krista Täht-Kok. Geoparks have to be lead by the local community and local government, and they should not interfere with the business.

Today there are over 70 geoparks in the world. The network of geoparks was established in the year of 2000 by German, Greek, Spanish and French cooperation. Creation was motivated by the fact that young people have left the country and the concern of how to preserve valuable areas.