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Building Latvia’s First Bioregion

Inese Suija-Markova, Deputy Mayor of Cesis Municipality


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parks
“Our economy, our livelihoods, our wellbeing all depend on our most precious asset - nature. We do not exist apart from nature; we are part of nature”
/ Dasgupta Review, 2021/

THE PLACE: PART OF NATURE, NOT APART FROM IT





PROTECTED NATURE



FARMING LANDSCAPE

FORESTS

LOCAL FOOD



PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES







CULTURAL HERITAGE

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A STRONG LOCAL FOOD FOUNDATION

Organic farming, short supply chains and a vibrant food culture

37,803 ha
ORGANIC FARMLAND

CĒSIS
37% · 19,505 ha

SIGULDA
27% · 5,243 ha

VALMIERA
15% · 13,055 ha











BOTTOM-UP STEWARDSHIP

Change starts with people who care for the place











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A little less conversation,

A little more action, please

BUILDING A SHARED VISION

The Gauja National Park Bio-Region Memorandum 2023







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A SHARED DIRECTION FOR THE REGION

Connecting nature, food, economy and people

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NATURE

- Wise and responsible use of natural resources

FOOD & HEALTH

- Healthy lifestyles
- Organic food consumption
- Short food supply chains

LOCAL & CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Circular business
- Waste reduction
- Sustainable tourism

PEOPLE & COMMUNITY

- Environmental education and awareness
- Community & youth engagement

CREATING DEMAND THROUGH PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Using public purchasing power to shape the local food system

- **COMMON PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES**
  Shared approach across the Bio-Region

- **BEYOND NATIONAL MINIMUMS**
  Higher targets for organic food

- **LOCAL + ORGANIC**
  Creating opportunities for local
- organic producers

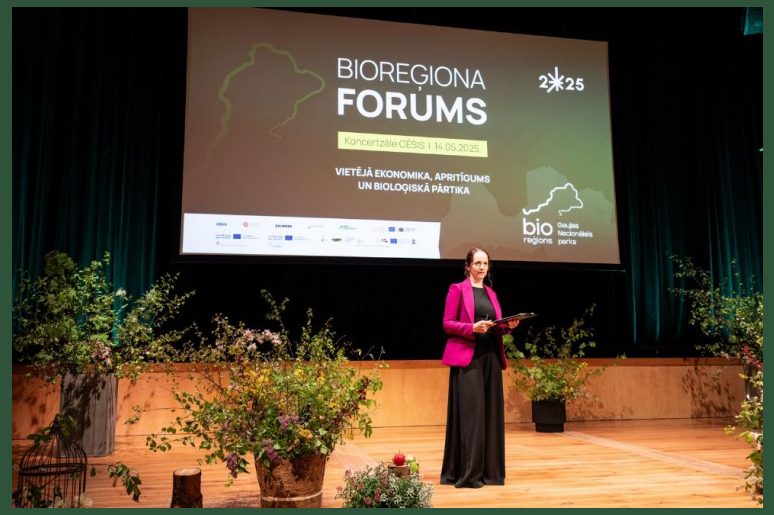




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STRENGTHENING SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS

Connecting producers, markets and local demand









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WHEN ORGANIC FOOD REACHES THE PLATE

From one pioneering school to a model for seven more

Latvia's first certified organic kitchen in a municipal school









TOURISM THAT GIVES BACK TO THE PLACE

The next step in our Bioregion’s journey and the focus of the 2026 Forum



Slow tourism · Regenerative tourism · Authentic experiences
Agritourism · Local & organic food · Gastronomy routes
Wild food & culinary experiences · Local economy
Nature & cultural heritage · Longer stays · Local businesses
Cooperation · EUROPARC Charter

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THE PROCESS IS TRANSFERABLE.
THE SOLUTION IS PLACE-BASED.

Feel the place → Connect people → Build a shared vision → Commit → Start with tangible action → Connect the system

Because everything is connected.

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