



**NOVA-BOVA**

**Nordic-Baltic cooperation  
between agricultural universities**

**Aret Vooremäe,**

**Head of the Department of Academic Development,**

**Estonian University of Life Sciences**

# BOVA??? NOVA???

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- BOVA is The Baltic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University Network established in 1996. In 1996-2000, BOVA actively participated in the NOVABA programme with focus on short MSc courses. BOVA has also promoted establishment of professional contacts among academic staff of its member universities.
- Outside the Baltic countries, the major BOVA's partner is the NOVA University Network - The Nordic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University. In the course of decade, NOVA has initiated a high number of activities, where organisation of Nordic PhD courses of high quality was the most prominent.

# Opportunities in networking

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- **Problem:** Despite the declared possibilities for credit approval across Europe, the actual recognition of merits is still unsatisfactory, being an important hindrance for collaboration between higher educational institutions. **Solutions:** different cross-approval procedures and agreements within NOVA and BOVA
- **Problem:** Limited number of MSc/PhD students in specific study areas in the Universities. **Solutions:** Common MSc/PhD courses
- **Problem:** Lacking competence in some areas. **Solutions:** Common courses, visiting lecturers/professors, recruitment of international teaching staff, Joint Degree Programmes

# Benefits for the universities

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- Number of international study programs is increasing
- Quality of courses and programs is increasing
- Number of foreign students is increasing
- Students gain wider experiences and personal contacts while studying in international groups.
- Increasing possibilities for student mobilities

# Joint Degree Programs

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- Joint Degree Program (JDP) - program which is to be implemented jointly on the basis of an agreement between local and foreign universities, where there is to be jointly awarded academic degree which takes legal effects in the countries of all partner institutions.
- There are several JDP activities in NOVA-BOVA network: “EuroForester”, NOVA MSc in Horticulture, etc.
- EU SOCRATES/ERASMUS curriculum development project BIOLANDMAN – Joint MSc Program “Management of Biodiversity and Multifunctional Landscapes”. The only ERASMUS CD project submitted and coordinated by one of the Estonian universities.

# Major concerns

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- Missing legal frames for JDP,
- Quality assurance on institutional level (admission requirements, content/quality of courses given by partner institutions, logistics and housing). Need for Quality Assurance Agreement and approved quality standards in BOVA
- Differences in educational systems and study periods within BOVA
- Financial issues

# Lessons learned

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- Diversity is good, but in inter-university collaboration it is not always a positive thing.

Diversity in research and study areas promotes international cooperation, whereas its further development may get entangled in the diversity of academic administration, jurisdiction, grading schemes and financial possibilities.

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**THANK YOU!**

*Aret.Vooremae@eau.ee*



**Eesti Maaülikool**  
Estonian University of Life Sciences

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