**Education, Regulation and Collaboration for a Sustainable Future**

June 23 - 28, 2024 CEI Sweden, Landskrona stad as main partner, Sweden

**Conference Chair Karin Warlin**

The 38th Caretakers of the Environment International (CEI) Conference took place between 23rd  to 29 th of June 2024. It was the 2nd time it was hosted by Sweden and the first time it was hosted in the City of Landskrona.

Conference Host: Karin Warlin with help from CEI/SE board and Alumni, team leaders and volunteers.

CEI2024 was a hybrid conference.  The digital part was orchestrated by Senior Alumni and held 3 hours a day. Opening and closing ceremony and Cultural performance was streamed and the digital delegations participated on the Cultural performance.

On site: 169 delegates in 32 delegations from Turkey, Mexico,  Republic of North Macedonia, USA, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Hungary, Portugal, Taiwan and Sweden, participated on site and 75  participated digitally. Prior to the conference, an online course in environmental science and sustainable development, called the NYMP (New Young Masters Programme) was launched on a learning platform facilitated by Birgitta Nordén and Malmö University. 350 participated in NYMP. A digital preconference with presentations and discussions in breakoutrooms was held from a studio in March 2024.

**On site CEI2024**

**Accomodation** place: Mötesplats Borstahusen. This was also venue for social activities, cultural workshops, teacher sessions, as well as the Fun and Foodmarket and the Closing ceremony with dinner, entertainment and final disco.

**Venue**: Öresundsgymnasiet in Landskrona, where workshops and project presentations took place.

**Landskrona theatre**, the opening ceremony, the poster exhibition (outside theatre)  and cultural evening  took place here.

**Field trip**:  **Island of Ven**, with 6 activity stops: Alpackas on Ven, Tycho Brahe-Uranienborg, Fauna-erosion and swallows, Biodiversity – how to become active environmentally, Electric cars- Sun Drive, Öresund – its history, brackish water, algaes

**Study visits:**Tetra pak, Borg Warner, Oatly, Marint kunskapscenter, Helsingborg: Öresundskraft.

Global Forum for CEI2024 was released on the opening ceremony. Young reporters, taught by Senior alumni reported from the different session.

On the **opening ceremony**, where Anel Spahic was conferencier, there were welcome speeches, in memorandum  of  Dan Hoynacki, presentations about the history of swedish  branch CEI/SE, flagparade (also  with  digital participants), keynote speaker. For more detailed description of the conference, see below.

**More activities**:

Project presentations with discussions (at two locations)

Cultural  workshops , theme Midsummer  
Educational workshops: Upcycling of clothes, empowering youth to activism,  
Poster exhibition, open for the public  
Fun and Food market  
Debate battle  
Icebreaking activities  
Promenade with quizz  
Reflection and evaluation time  
Closing ceremony with speeches, diplomas, dinner with entertainment, party with disco.

**Reports**

**CEI2024 – International Conference in Landskrona This Summer**

Two years of preparation went into the grand CEI2024 conference, which took place in Landskrona from June 24-28 this past summer. So much happened—here  is some information to recap how it all went, day by day.

In addition to our team at Caretakers of the International’s Swedish branch—CEI/SE—international alumni were also involved in preparing for CEI2024, helping plan a full schedule for the digital conference running alongside the one held live in Landskrona.

The first phase of the conference actually began earlier. We developed an online environmental course called NYMP, launched in December 2023, which had 335 participants from 17 countries. In March 2024, we held a fully digital pre-conference, where participants discussed topics from the course and attended a lecture by a researcher on the importance of biodiversity. BorgWarner, a company, also shared insights into their work towards sustainable development. This pre-conference, broadcast from a TV station in Landskrona, included instructions for the CEI2024 event itself.

So, what happened at CEI2024?

On **Sunday, June 23rd**, delegations began arriving from a total of 10 different countries. Our fantastic team of 24 volunteers—most with connections to Landskrona—picked up more than 160 international delegates from Landskrona station (Photo 3) and brought them to their accommodations for the week: Meeting Place Borstahusen. CEI/SE and alumni welcomed and registered them, handing out backpacks (Photo 4) containing stationery, rain ponchos (thanks, Landskrona city!), and personalized name tags. These name tags included important information on the week’s schedule, their cross-group assignments, team leaders, and housing arrangements—everything carefully organized in advance.

After settling in, it was time for a “cultural workshop” to make traditional midsummer flower crowns. We had gathered buckets of wildflowers the day before, and MajLinda Balija had created a detailed instructional video that everyone downloaded onto their phones (Photo 5). Next, delegates participated in a group quiz walk ( made by Birgitta Nordén)  and after that traditional midsummer games, and team competitions. Team leaders and alumni, along with volunteer support, ensured that all activities ran smoothly throughout the conference week. A huge thanks to them!

**Monday June 24th**

Using local buses, everyone (with the help of volunteers) made their way to Landskrona Theater, where the opening ceremony was to take place. Everyone was in awe of the beautiful theater building. Anel Spahic – a former student at Öresundsgymnasiet – was the emcee and introduced welcome speeches from (Karin Warlin – host of the conference), Annie Begg – chair of the international board, and the chair of the Municipal Executive Board, Torkild Strandberg. Alongside this, the magazine *Global Forum* was released – covering CEI2024, including all the environmental projects that would be showcased later. The Global Forum can also be seen here : <https://www.ceisweden.org/global-forum>

Birgitta Norden and Ingrid Adolfsson, who started Caretakers in Sweden in 1994 and Andreas Feuk, a long-time participant and Landskrona resident, shared the history of CEI/SE. The opening ceremony continued with welcome messages (via video) from Minister of Schools Lotta Edholm and Minister for Climate and Environment Romina Pourmokhtari. This was followed by a ceremonial flag parade (photo 6) featuring delegates from Turkey, Mexico, North Macedonia, the USA, Hong Kong-China, Indonesia, Hungary, Portugal, Taiwan, and Sweden, with background music by Peterson Berger – powerful! (Photo 6) There were also films shown from participants who joined digitally.

Frances Sprei, a professor at Chalmers, gave a short lecture on the importance of youth engagement in environmental issues, and a memorial tribute was given for former CEI president Dan Hoynacki, who passed away six months ago. Anel Spahic then provided information on the week’s upcoming events.

Back at Öresundsgymnasiet, participants joined various workshops in mixed groups, including upcycling clothing, becoming active in environmental work, and tips for nature photographers. Those delegates training to become young reporters attended a lesson on the subject.

Ahead of each CEI conference, students create posters about their local environmental projects, and on Monday afternoon, all these posters were put up outside the theater, allowing Landskrona residents to view them and interact with CEI participants. The sun was shining, and all students proudly presented their projects. The evening concluded with icebreakers, swedish games like kubb, and competitions.

**Tuesday, June 25th**

One of the highlights of the CEI conferences is always the project presentations – when all students share the environmental projects they have done in their home countries with powerpointpresentations, followed by discussions led by a moderator. This year, these presentations took place at Öresundsgymnasiet. The technology worked very well, and many interesting projects were presented, such as how to treat seeds so that they can sprout in salty soils (after seawater has flooded land areas due to climate change) or about PFAS in artificial turf and everyday products (by one of the Swedish groups). Others worked on protecting white dolphins in river deltas, created video games about climate change, or made children's books to teach young kids about different types of environmental challenges. (After the conference , on Thursday september 12, some of these posters were displayed at Landskrona Library in conjunction with the screening of the film of *Outgrow the System*.)

Most lunches during the conference week were served in the beautiful dining hall of Öresundsgymnasiet. All meals were vegetarian for the whole wweek. After more workshops, Tuesday ended at the Bath Colony at Meeting Place Borstahusen, where all delegations contributed to a colorful *Fun and Food Market*, sharing local delicacies, sweets, and demonstrating games and activities. It was a wonderful evening against a beautiful sunset (Photo 2-2).

**Wednesday, June 26 th**

A field trip was scheduled for this day, organized by Andreas Feuk together with Jan Bensefelt and others (Photo 2-3). The group headed to Ven, and after a lovely boat ride offering beautiful views of Landskrona from the sea in radiant sunshine, alumni and volunteers led six mixed groups around parts of the island to six different stations. This way, everyone had the chance to visit the Tycho Brahe Museum (Uranienborg) (Photo 2-4) and learn about Sweden's distinguished astronomer. They also visited Christel at Ven’s Alpaca farm (Photo 2-5), and at another station, Per Magnuson spoke about Ven’s unique plant life and ways to get involved in environmental organizations. Peter Bäckström from Sun Drive (Photo 2-5b) discussed the future of electric vehicles, and earlier in the week, Johan Thelander from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation had led a well-received workshop on local wildlife around Landskrona, providing practical tips for nature photography. On Ven, participants learned more about sand martins, and many put their new skills to use, eagerly photographing the island’s nature (Photo 2-5c). Finally, one station offered insights into the Öresund’s brackish waters and the ecological significance of certain algae.

Before returning to the mainland with the Ven ferry, Torkild Strandberg announced a treat – ice cream for everyone at the harbor, which was much appreciated by all.

In the evening, it was time for another highlight. Each delegation had prepared a three-minute presentation showcasing something from their culture. There was beautiful singing, folk dances, trivia, hip-hop dancing, country dancing, Indonesian shadow theater, and much more. The perfect venue for these performances was, of course, the Landskrona Theater (Photo 2-7, Mexican dance). Landskrona locals Anel Spahic and Dalila Osmanovic (Photo 2-8) were outstanding emcees, and everything ran smoothly thanks to the skilled theater technicians. Before the whole show began, Timo Julku took a beautiful photo of all the participants (Photo 2-9). This is a day we will all remember fondly – with smiles on our faces.

**Thursday, June 27th**

Thursday brought more project presentations, but in different groups. As the students rode the buses from Meeting Place Borstahusen to Öresundsgymnasiet on Thursday morning, they felt less nervous—they had already done it once and were eager for the exciting discussions the presentations would spark. And once again, the presentations went excellently (Photo 3-1, Emilio). After lunch, a new program activity awaited. Making a difference and having a voice—invaluable for work focused on sustainable development—requires not only knowledge but also skill in discussion, argumentation, and debate. The next activity was a Debate Battle, organized by Dalila Osmanovic. First, there was an overview on debating, followed by a discussion topic. Students were given a position for the upcoming debate battle, where a panel listened and selected a winner—the one who debated most skillfully. This well-liked event was first held at CEI2019 in Turkey (Photo 3-2).

**Friday, June 28th**

The final conference day had arrived, and now it was time for study visits. Participants were divided into five groups that, with the help of volunteers and alumni, traveled by bus and train to various locations to see real-life examples of sustainable development efforts: Tetra Pak in Lund (Photo 3-3), BorgWarner in Landskrona, the Marine Knowledge Center in Malmö (Photos 3-4 and 3-5), Oatly (Malmö), and a group that went to Helsingborg to visit Öresundskraft NSR and the Environmental Workshop.

* Once back in Landskrona, there was time to explore the city and reflect on how to continue raising environmental awareness and tackle the major challenges of the future (Photo 3-6). The day ended with a look back on the week. Teachers had another session to discuss future cross-border collaborations and exchange ideas. The closing ceremony was held on a small stage set up in front of the outdoor seating area at Kvarteret Erikstorp, where the celebratory dinner took place. The international board and Mexico announced that the next CEI conference would be held in Mexico City in 2025 (Photo 3-7). During dinner, there were two distinct types of entertainment: Kerstin Tufvesson, who worked at the Landskrona high school for many years, and her husband wore beautiful folk costumes as they demonstrated Swedish folk dances and shared about Swedish folk costumes and dance traditions over the years (Photo 3-7). The next entertainment group, the phenomenal Freestyle Phanatix, performed incredible beatboxing and acrobatic stunts to the audience's great delight (Photos 3-8 and 3-9).

The evening concluded with speeches, diploma presentations, and group photos with diplomas, taken by Timo Julku. The finale of the evening and the entire conference was a disco in and outside the decorated Bath Colony (arranged by our on-call nurse Anneli Svanström). Tim Svanström was the DJ, and the atmosphere couldn’t have been higher (Photo 3-10).

The next day marked the end of the conference, and it was time to say goodbye to all the new friends and head back home. Some delegations decided to do a bit of sightseeing in Sweden before returning. As organizers, we could finally relax, feeling that all our efforts had paid off. We said goodbye to so many young people who left with new knowledge, skills, friends, joy, confidence, and the energy to make a difference. What happened here in Landskrona at the end of June 2024 was something truly special that we’ll never forget.

*written by Samuel*

**The Digital Portion of the CEI2024 Conference**

The virtual portion of the CEI2024 conference, held at the end of June 2024, brought together around 75 participants from across the globe. Throughout the week, attendees enjoyed a range of educational, cultural, and social activities, creating an engaging and memorable digital conference experience.

The week kicked off with a warm welcome, where participants were introduced to Swedish midsummer traditions. They crafted their own midsummer flower crowns and learned the Swedish dance "Små grodorna." As a collaborative project, participants created a video of these activities, which was later showcased at the opening ceremony of the in-person conference.

On the second day, virtual attendees had the opportunity to view recorded clips from the in-person opening ceremony and present their posters to each other. The day also included a series of educational workshops led by junior alumni Vanja and Aysegul, offering insights on various current topics.

During the third day, participants collaboratively wrote a song, joined a virtual food and fun market, and enjoyed a cultural evening. On Wednesday, they presented their own projects, and Thursday was filled with inspiring keynote speeches and an engaging debate battle.

The week concluded with a collaborative GeoGuessr activity and an evaluation of the conference. Feedback was largely positive - participants particularly appreciated the three-hour daily conference length, and many highlighted conference host Karin, who sang to them each morning, as a memorable and cherished aspect. The content was considered well-planned and relevant, though some wished for stronger connections to the in-person portion of the conference and a more structured format for the poster presentations.

The digital portion of CEI2024 contributed to an inclusive and inspiring experience, engaging participants from different parts of the world and setting a high standard for future conferences.

**CEI 2024 website:**[**https://www.ceisweden.org**](https://www.ceisweden.org/)

**Conference Program**