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# Baltic Cities

## Environmental bulletin • No 2, 2000

- UBC Agenda 21 Proceeding
- Gender Equality Up-date
- Bicycle pilots, Street train, BEIDS, Water management, River Dane...





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# Baltic Cities

## Environmental Bulletin



Dear UBC Friends,

my city, the city of Klaipeda, is just finalising Municipal Environmental Auditing (MEA). It took us a lot of work to carry out the process, but I believe that the results are worth it.

We now have solid information of the environmental performance of our city, and proposals for improvements given by external experts. These recommendations will hopefully be useful for us when we plan further development and prioritise environmental investments.

The external experts, who evaluated the MEA information and gave the recommendations, came from the UBC, ECAT-Lithuania and our twin city Kotka. I would like to warmly Thank these partners and also the Nordic Minister Council which co-funded the project.

The voluntary expert work provided by our friends from Kotka was invaluable. This is probably one of the best examples of how twin cities can do beneficial work together! I know that many other UBC cities will soon start MEA, and on behalf of my city I promise that we will do our best to help them with our experience.

As the Vice President of the Union, I also had this year the pleasure to participate in the Pan-European Sustainable Cities Conference in Hanover as one of the plenary speakers. In my speech I brought up the points of view of CEE cities and emphasised the benefits of local Agenda 21 processes. Among the 1500 participants were also many of you. I do believe that by engaging our cities in European co-operation we can together share and utilise experiences of the whole continent. European integration has many effects on cities, and cities must also have influence on its development.

The co-operation of the UBC with the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign has been very beneficial so far, and I am happy that a larger co-operation forum has been created this year for European networks on the initiative of the five networks currently co-ordinating the Campaign. As our organisation is explicitly committed to advancing sustainable development by both its Strategy and Local Agenda 21 Action Program, and more than 70% of our members are working on local Agenda 21, we have good reasons to be involved in developing the Campaign.

I wish all of you Bon Courage with your undertakings also for next year. Many positive developments are taking place in our region. It is the duty and the pleasure of the UBC to be part of the development of the Baltic Sea Region - and to contribute to making it sustainable.

*Dr. Eugenijus Gentvilas*

UBC Vice President, Mayor of Klaipeda

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## Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)...

... is a network consisting of 99 cities from 10 different countries in the Baltic Sea Region. The UBC was founded in September 1991 to develop co-operation and exchange of experiences amongst its member cities. The main goal of the Union is to contribute to democratic, social, economic and environmentally friendly development in the Baltic Sea Region.

The UBC is open to all cities willing to join it. Today the member cities range from charming small towns to big cities such as St Petersburg, Stockholm and Copenhagen. In spite of the differences in size, language, location, economy, etc., the interest towards local level co-operation unites each of them.

The UBC initiates and co-ordinates projects involving its members and promotes the exchange of know-how and experiences amongst the cities by organizing courses, seminars and meetings, as well as publishing newsletters.

The UBC is led by an Executive Board and the Secretariat is located in Gdansk, Poland. The actual work is carried out by nine commissions in the following fields: business co-operation, culture, education, environment, social affairs, sport, tourism, transportation and urban planning.

Please contact us for further information!

# UBC Agenda 21 Action Program Proceeding

**During the first year (2000-2002) of implementation, several activities, projects and meetings have been carried out. Participation from member cities has been great, and several UBC bodies have contributed. The leading role of several member cities, as hosts and organisers of meetings as well as project co-ordinators, has been invaluable.**

## Latvian Cities for MEA

By Risto Veivo

After the pioneering cities Tallinn, Pärnu, Panevezys, Klaipeda, Marijampole, Ignalina and Trakai, now also cities of Liepaja and Jelgava have expressed their interest to implement Municipal Environmental Auditing according to the UBC MEA Model.

The representatives of cities actively took the matter up during the recent UBC LA 21 Working Group Meeting in Bützow, Germany. Also the Latvian city of Jekabpils has expressed its interest towards conducting MEA.

These new MEAs in Latvia are preliminarily planned to be started during 2001. The cities involved and the UBC EnvCom are currently investigating funding possibilities. One important success factor in MEAs is also involvement of partner cities which can offer external experts for evaluation. All cities interested in such a role are most warmly welcomed to contact the UBC EnvCom.

The intention with MEA is to offer a feasible tool for city management and environmental experts to analyse the current state of local environment and the environmental performance of the city, as well as evaluate the environmental management.

Several of the planned activities and projects of the program have been implemented or are currently going on. The LA21 and Gender Equality, and SAIL projects were finalised, several MEAs have been completed, BCP and SUFA projects have been started, Sustainable Harbour Policy, Sustainable Demonstration Areas, and Life After 2021 projects have currently either been started or are very far in the planning phase. Together these projects touch a large number of people and really have a considerable effect on sustainability in our region.

During 2000, The UBC Local Agenda 21 Working Group has had two meetings, where approx. 110 people participated. The UBC has also been actively involved in sustainable development policies and co-operation - both in the Baltic Sea Region and on

European level.

At the moment it seems very likely that the whole Action Program will be successfully implemented during the planned three-year period. In addition to active cities, this is possible thanks to our good partner organisations, and also the co-funders of our activities, like the European Commission and Nordic Minister Council, and national ministries and institutions. The first part of this bulletin is dedicated to reporting the activities of the Program.

The UBC LA 21 Action Program 2000-2002 was adopted by the General Conference 1999. The UBC Board will update the Program next time in its meeting in Cesis 17-18 March, and the next LA21 Working Group meeting will also be in March.

## Gender Equality in Local Agenda 21

By Hjördis Höglund

**The EU-project, Gender Equality in Local Agenda 21, is now finished and we are summarising our results. In the three participating cities, Lahti, Lübeck and Sundsvall, we have studied how the women, compared with the men, are influencing the local Agenda 21 work. We have tried to find out where it's visible that women's experiences have changed the results, or could have changed them, if gender analysis had been done before the decisions.**

### The 3R method

We have used a special method, named 3R, for our work. The R:s stand for Representation, Resources and Realia. We have started to analyse the decision-making groups, both politicians, managers and officials. How many women and how many men? Who is the chairperson? A woman or a man? Are the head manager, the officials in the working - and steering groups, and so on, women or men? It's questions about the first R, Representation.

The basis of our project work is, that women and men are living different daily lives, and have different experiences, needs and demands of the society. In their roles as politicians and experts they are then taking decisions and making proposals for solutions from their own personal experiences of the society as women and men. We have for many years discussed the need of gender equal representation in the politics, but it is necessary also to look at the persons making the practical work around, managers, officials, and other experts. They are also women and men, making priorities from their personal experiences.



## Analyse of the results

We have to analyse the results, how they are affecting the women and men in the society. It is the third R, Realia. We could also say Reality, but with Realia we mean a bit more, we are also including values and norms shown in the work.

We have found, that the second R, Resources, are rather difficult to find out when making the analyse afterwards. The most effective way is to make this when starting a project or other work. To notice in the planning processes and decisions, how the resources in form of money, space, and time, are allocated between women and men.

## Case studies

In Sundsvall we have, within the project, made four case studies, focused on issues of current interest in the city: waste management, development of the Inner Harbour, public transport, and the organisation of the labour market issues. In this article you will find a short description of the two of them.

In the next issue of the Environmental bulletin you will read about studies also from the other two participating cities.

## Public transport in Sundsvall

Our report describes how public transport is organised in Sundsvall, and how it's regulated. We have also analysed where the women and men are acting in this work

Between 1995 and 1999 Sundsvall City Council implemented a project called MOPS, Model Neighbourhood Project. The objective of the project was to increase the travelling by public transport among the citizens. The MOPS project was organised in three groups: a management, a reference and an executive group. Together in these groups there were 21 men and 2 women. 18 consultants were engaged in the work, 14 men and 4 women.

In the same way we have looked at all the different groups working within this field. Women are consistently underrepresented. This could be due to the fact that public transport is seen as a technical traffic issue. On the administrative level, there is a division of duties so that women deal with matters related with transportation services for the old and the

disabled, whereas men handle other public transport matters, including traffic planning. Women also use public transport to a larger extent than men do. Men, on the other hand, make decisions and plans. Studies of travelling patterns show, that women often travel several short distances connected in a chain, whereas men more often travel to only one single destination.

The results of surveys of travelling patterns, in combination with the knowledge of chain travelling from many studies, point to the fact that women's needs for public transport are different from men's needs. It is rare, however, that the gender differences are visible in the results.

marginal, women as well as men should be represented in all groups. However, this is not enough if we do not have the relevant knowledge and understanding of the different life conditions which men and women still have.

We mean that all proposals should include an analyses of how they affect conditions for women and men respectively.

## The Inner Harbour in Sundsvall

In the case study on the Inner Harbour, we have gone through the planning during the latest decade. In 1997, and even 1999, the residents of Sundsvall, were given the opportunity to express their opinions regarding the harbour area.

By looking at the statistics from a gender perspective it is possible to see that women and men have the same preferences in many issues, but that women are more explicit and clear. The women much more clearly position themselves for or against.

In June 2000, a programme for a detailed plan for the Inner harbour was presented. The intention is to meet the demands of the public opinion. Our project has found that the programme proposal has not considered the wishes and requests of the residents enough, above all, not the requests of the women and the 3R method, that could have been a valuable tool in this analysis.



*Ms Hjördis Höglund representing Gender Equality up-date at the UBC LA21 meeting 14 October in Bützow, Germany.*

The 3R analyses shows that the MOPS project was dominated by men, and that little attention was paid to the fact that men's and women's travelling patterns are different. For the customers who are mainly women, it can be observed that their travelling needs are only partly reflected in the planning of the activities.

The traffic diversion in 1996, which meant bus traffic at 10-minute intervals during rush hours, was planned with the travelling patterns of a full-time employee. We know that about 40% of the women on the labour market are working part time!

The MOPS project is an example of how results and conclusions are affected when the gender perspective is not taken into consideration. To prevent women to be

Throughout the years, we have studied the whole 1990s, the planning of the Inner Harbour has been handled by groups and committees dominated by men. Very few women have been able to influence the work. All the consultants and the architects have been men. When all these groups consist of almost only men there is a risk that men's values and standards have the greatest impact.

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# UBC Agenda 21 Event in Bützow

By Risto Veivo

**The UBC Agenda 21 Event took place in Bützow, Germany, 12-14 October. Altogether about 50 people took part, representing member cities in almost every BSR country. The little city of Bützow (9000 inhabitants) was an excellent host and the event was very well organised.**

The first part of the event was the Best City Practices (BCP) Workshop on Thursday the 12th. Twelve good practices were presented and city couples formed for benchmarking activities on these good practices. This workshop was the first one in series of three workshops which will be organised within the BCP Project 2000-2001 (read more in the story on BCP).

On Friday the 13th, the day was started by official opening and welcome by the Vice Mayor of Bützow, Ms. Gabriele Behning, and this was followed by a presentation and an excursion of the Local Agenda 21 activities of the city. The presentation was given and the excursion planned by Dr. Mathias Alsleben, who also co-ordinated the whole event in the city. Among other things, the participants got to know where bats live in Bützow (former electricity transformer "renovated" for little animals) and how playgrounds are planned by kids - the users.

During Friday afternoon and Saturday, the UBC Local Agenda 21 Working group had its meeting which concentrated on the implementation and development of the UBC Local Agenda 21 Action Program 2000-2002. On-going projects of the program were presented and the development of these projects as well as brainstorming for new projects and activities was carried out in six workshops.

The City of Lübeck has made good progress with the Sustainable Harbour Policy Project, the Gender Equality and LA 21 Project so-ordinated by the UBC

Women's Network has brought good results, the Lifestyle 2021 Project co-ordinated by Gotland is proceeding, and the SUFA, BCP, and MEA projects co-ordinated by the EnvCom are going on well too. Currently, the UBC LA 21 Action Program comprises seven active projects and ten developed project and/or activity ideas.

As one outcome of the workshops, the Latvian cities of Jelgava and Liepaja announced their willingness to conduct MEA in near future. A very interesting outcome was also the result from the Gender Equality workshop that evaluation of representation, allocation of responsibilities and resources, as well as expected results of each new project should be evaluated from the Gender point of view. The group also created a very feasible brief set of questions for this purpose, and this set was immediately put to use in the BCP Project. In fact, all the six workshops made good results, and more information on these can be obtained from the meeting memorandum, which is available for all interested from the UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat.

The youth networking for sustainable development, carried out in practice by the Youth Concerning Sustainable Future (YCSF) Network, was also one of the topics at the event. It is also one of the activities mentioned in the UBC LA 21 Action Program, and the activists of the YCSF have been very actively involved in the work on the action program. In Bützow, one of the workshops was specially devoted to this topic.

Saturday afternoon, 14th, part of the participants left by bus back to their cities in the Baltic States, and the rest of the group visited "Eurawasser" Waste Water Treatment Plant in Rostock. The spirit of the whole event was very good. The Local Agenda 21 work of the UBC made good progress in Bützow, and it is also quite likely that this active little city will continue to be a bright spot on the UBC map.

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# LA 21 Training in SUFA Project

By Risto Veivo

**After the Baltic Roundtable on Local Environmental Policy, the SUFA Project is now organising a Training Course for Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinators and experts from the Baltic States and Poland. The altogether 20 participants will meet each other in the first training workshop in Kaunas, Lithuania, 22-25 November, and after Kaunas two more workshops will follow in 2001.**

In between the workshops, the participants and the training course facilitator Barbara Anton from the project partner ICLEI will be continuously in touch with each other via www to share problems and solutions. The intention is to plan the training on the basis of the needs of the participants and their home cities, and this demands, in addition to continuous communication, remarkable activity from the participants.

During 2001, also three publications on Local Agenda 21 will be made by the UBC. These will provide information on the Human Resources available for LA 21 training and development in the target countries, as well as information on good practices and on the reasons that make them so good. A fair part of this information will be based on research made within the project by Åbo Akademi University.

The SUFA Project (Success Factors on Local Environmental Policy for Local Agenda 21 Activities and EU Enlargement in the Baltic Sea Region) has received co-funding from the European Union and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. More information on the project can be obtained from the UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat, as well as from UBC website.

# Best City Practices Project

By Sanna Salminen

**Best City Practices (BCP) Project is based on fifteen good practices that took part in the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 1999. These practices were also presented in the first workshop, in Bützow, Germany, 12 October 2000. Cities started to form couples for benchmarking. Every couple includes a guiding city, with the good practice, and a partner city, interested in the particular practice.**

By 10 November, city couples sent their plans for benchmarking to the UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat. The city pairs will be chosen into the project according to the filled-in planning forms. The number of chosen pairs will depend on the number and quality of received plans.

In 2001 the city couples chosen to the project will start to study how to implement (=feasibility study) the good practice in the partner city. That includes a study visit during the spring, and a completion of the whole feasibility study and report by the autumn. The results of the study visits will be presented during the second workshop, spring 2001. The final feasibility report will be presented in the third workshop, in autumn 2001. After that the EnvCom Secretariat will publish a summary of the feasibility reports by the end of 2001.

For participating cities the BCP project gives lots of knowledge on the chosen good practice topic. On the basis of this new knowledge there are many possibilities for new projects. Well-done feasibility study gives also a good basis to apply further funding for implementation. In the point of view of the media, good project is a piece of interesting news, and

it gives positive image of the city. Also the new contacts and exchange of experiences are valuable for the participants.

The BCP-project is a two-year project, which is realised during the years 2000-2001. It is co-funded by Nordic Council of Ministers. This project is part of UBC LA 21 Action Program and Baltic 21 JO4. The project is realised between chosen UBC member cities and it is co-ordinated by UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat.

## BCP's first workshop

On 12<sup>th</sup> October the first workshop in the Best City Practices Project took place in Bützow, Germany. The aims were to introduce the good practices, to discuss on working methods, to get contacts and to start city coupling.



*Participants of first BCP workshop visiting the mud trap in Bützow.*

There were 40 participants from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. Among participants there were representatives of the cities, mainly from environmental departments and LA 21 projects, but also from city council, business sector and ports. Also Union of local and regional governments, ECAT-Lithuania, University of Vilnius and UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs, were presented.

During the first half of the day the basic information of the project was given and working methods of the project were represented, and also the planning form for benchmarking was distributed for further studying. In the afternoon eleven of the good practices, that took part in the En-

vironmental Award 1999, were presented. In addition, the Air Quality Monitoring assurance system of Turku was introduced. The city coupling started after the presentations.

The presentations of the good practices were accompanied on Friday by the good practice of the host city, Bützow. After the presentation there was an excursion in the city, to show some of the sub-projects of Bützow LA 21. The places seen, were for example mud trap in river Warnow, traffic lights installed of request of local pupils, old transformer house, which was changed to the home of small animals, and also some historical sight-seeing of Bützow were along the way.

## Results of the workshop

The first workshop was successful: all set tasks were done and city coupling started well. By 10<sup>th</sup> Nov there were several citypairs applying for the project and the cities will be chosen into the next stage of the project as soon as possible.

One additional result was achieved during the LA 21 workshops on Friday. Gender Equality and LA 21 –group suggested, that gender equality questions should be included in all UBC projects. All the BCP –cities agreed unanimously, and it was decided to add questions of 3R (representation, resources, realia) into the planning form for the benchmarking. (Read more on page 7, Gender Equality in Local Agenda 21 by H. Höglund).

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# European Platform for Urban Sustainability

By Risto Veivo



## **The second meeting of the European Platform of networks working on urban sustainability was organised 10 October 2000 in Brussels. The intention with the Platform is to create basis for better co-operation between European networks and possibly to help the networks to reach common positions in European policy issues.**

In the first two meetings, altogether 24 European organisations have participated, including the European Commission DG Environment and representatives from the Environment Committee of the European Parliament.

Since the Aalborg Conference 1994, a central forum for European level co-operation on local sustainable development has been the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign, and one of the ideas with the platform is to provide input for further development of the Campaign. UBC has been closely co-operating with the Campaign since the Turku Conference 1998, and the UBC EnvCom and Local Agenda 21 Working Group have been represented at the European Platform meetings by UBC Environmental Co-ordinator Risto Veivo.

The first Platform meeting took place already in June this year, following the announcement of the existing five partner organisations of the Campaign. The June gathering concluded that there is great interest amongst international municipal organisations to strengthen European-wide co-operation on sustainable development issues. As a result, a scenario paper was elaborated that provided the basis for discussions in October. This paper advocates the establishment of the Open Platform for Urban Sustainability (working title) and suggests how and where it could co-operate.

The discussion on the paper now in October again confirmed the great interest in a broader co-operation. It asked for further steps to clarify the scope of part-

ners to be involved. Also, proposals will be elaborated over the forthcoming time on how such a structure could be put into practice in the daily work. There is agreement that the Open Platform idea will provide much added value to the existing "urban sustainability landscape" in Europe. A co-operative structure of this scale would be unique; it would represent the world-wide biggest initiative of its kind.

Both the European Commission and the European Parliament take great interest in this development, particularly as the European Commission will provide financial support from 2001 through its envisaged "Community Framework for co-operation to promote sustainable urban development". In connection with this Community Framework proposal, the UBC has been mentioned as one of the networks suitable for carrying out implementation projects.

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## **Baltic Roundtable on Local Environmental Policy**

By Risto Veivo

**18-19 May 2000 in Turku, Finland, the UBC in co-operation with the Finnish Ministry of the Environment and other partners organised the Baltic Roundtable on Local Environmental Policy for forty representatives of environmental ministries, European Commission, and local authorities and their networks. The two-day event provided a set of very seminal discussions.**

On the basis of these discussions, there seem to be several reasons for slight optimism. At the national level, effective policies for supporting local level sustainability work are either being implemented or under construction and discussion in all of the countries on both sides of the Baltic Sea. There also seems to be a relatively wide consciousness that dialogue and co-operation between the different levels of administration and the different stakeholders of society is the key method to proceed. National commissions and support groups for sustainable development play an important role, as well as funding for pilot activities.

At the European level, the new policy developments, e.g., with regard to the 6th Environmental Action Program and the Framework proposal for Sustainable Urban Development, will most likely provide good chances for progress. As some of the roundtable presentations clearly reflected, work on sustainable development at the local level, e.g., on Local Agenda 21, contributes positively to the EU accession process by improving the policy processes and preparing ground for implementation of EC Environmental Legislation.

At the local level, many municipalities are actively implementing good pilot projects and developing the policy processes. There are also a great number of national and international networks that successfully support the municipalities by providing possibilities for exchange, co-operation and political support.



At least during the Baltic Roundtable on Local Environmental Policy, the spirit of co-operation between different BSR stakeholders was very good. It is this spirit, feeling and practice of partnership that we need to keep up in order to proceed in tackling all those difficult problems. The Roundtable was part of the SUFA (Success Factors in Local Environmental Policy for Local Agenda 21 Activities and EU Enlargement in the Baltic Sea Region) Project. The projects is co-funded by the partners, European Commission DG Environment and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. Other partners of the project, in addition to the UBC, are ICLEI and Åbo Akademi University. The roundtable report is available in print from the UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat, and downloadable in pdf-format from the UBC website.



# BASE 21

By Lars Wahlberg

**The goal for Base 21 was to investigate and set up the basis for local environmental organisations to develop Agenda 21 from a grassroots level. The idea is that these organisations will build networks on a national level and seek ways of establishing international co-operation.**

The project was expected to determine, if there are favourable conditions for an international environmental co-operation based on Agenda 21, at a local level within the area, which covers Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, eight northern provinces of Poland and three Russian regions (=SWE-BALTCOP). Even though the pilot project was limited to an operational area of two towns (Pärnu in Estonia and Tukums in Latvia), it was expected to function as a base for developing several networks within the rest of target area. Also concrete suggestions about management of possible continuation of the project were expected.

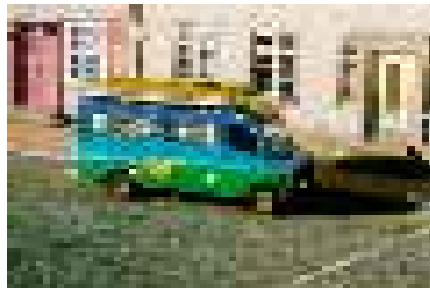
In practice, following tasks were done: Persons who are interested in working with environmental issues from a grassroots perspective according to Agenda 21 were indentified. Inventory of local environmental problems was done and information and experiences about how to solve them was changed. Already-existing networks were participating to encourage a sustainable development of the society in the region. Information about existing environmental schemes were distributed. The importance of in early age acquired environmental awareness (pre-school, elementary school) was emphasized. The production of locally adapted information material in the environmental field was assisted.

## On going and coming activities

A project aimed at developing the group competence has begun between the municipality of Gotland and the town of Pärnu. Through practical experience and theory, the project participants will gain further insight into and an opportunity

of developing their ideas on issues of environmental, social, educational nature as well as concerning local democracy, municipal administration and municipal technical affairs. In this project, project ideas are emerging among the participants, which clearly indicate that the aim and goals of BASE 21 have been reached.

A twin city project between Gotland and Tukums is also underway. It will be focused on nature- and environmental studies with the assistance of Gotland's Nature and Environment bus for students at the lower and middle elementary levels, for a start. The project is also aimed at developing the greenflag concept in Tukums' schools.



*Environmental bus is one way to spread the information on nature to all age groups.*

During the BASE 21 pilot project plans were laid to adapt the travelling exhibition "Sweden 2021" to Estonian conditions and display it at six places in Estonia over the period of a year, beginning in Pärnu in May 2001. The exhibition will form the base for a lifestyle project "Life after 2021", aimed at spreading information, stimulating discussions and developing ideas about the sustainable society from a grassroots perspective both locally and globally. The town of Tukums has also indicated an interest in carrying out a similar project in Latvia.

## Phase II

The project operations have led to results exceeding expectations, and a plan for continuing work with BASE 21 has been set up. Taking inventory of local environmental problems, exchanging information and experiences about them and finding possible solutions to them, have produced material for developing and following up BASE 21 in a Phase II.

The BASE 21 project is initiated and implemented by the municipal of Gotland and has been managed by the Regional Development unit. The Eco-group of the Regional Development unit has acted as the executive committee together with those responsible for the project in Tukums and Pärnu. Together with a project manager from Gotland, one person has

been responsible for the project in each geographic area. The organisation is spread across the wide area of municipal affairs, allowing it to reach a broad target group.

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## European Partner Search

By Peter Löffner

**Are you looking for partners for your projects on local sustainability? Or do you want to find events to which you could contribute?**

The European Partner Search engine can help you in both cases. It is located on the webpage of the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign on <http://www.sustainable-cities.org/partner.html>. On this page, you can submit an outline of your project and your contact details to an on-line database. Potential partners from across Europe and beyond can view your proposal and get in touch with you. Alternatively, you simply can search the database for projects and events in which you would like to participate.

There are no restrictions to the use of European Partner Search if you want to be a partner in a joint project or event for local sustainability. Whether you are a local and regional authority, a network, an NGO, research institution or company.

More than 90 submissions have already been made to European Partner Search. Amongst them there might be your chance to network and co-operate with other partners - to constitute EU funded projects, find contributors to conferences, come across sponsors, determine groups with similar interests, exchange experiences, discover companies or organisations with the know-how on local sustainability you need and much more.

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# Water Management in Gdansk

By *Jadwiga Kopec/Dagmara Nagorka-Kmiecik*

**This year the City of Gdansk can be twice as proud of its activities in water related topics. The city has been presented the "Swedish Baltic Sea Award" for the implementation of the project aiming at modernization of water treatment plant "Wschod" – one of the hot spots on South Baltic coast.**

The city received SEK 100 000, a diploma and a crystal statue. The modernized sewage treatment plant (STP) is the biggest one in Poland, thus having the capacity to provide services not just for the city's own needs but also for the neighboring communities. The second distinction was the Expo 2000 medal, which the city received for the project "Integrated Water Management in the City of Gdansk". This project was also one of the Expo 2000 Projects Around the World.

Water and sewage management in Gdansk is developed and its system is composed from the following elements: investments including development of the sanitary system in old districts and modernization of the STP, control over the quality of coastal water and pollution load discharged into the sea, protection of drinking water intakes, flood protection, and development of the recreation areas close to sources of water.

The water flow is controlled by computer system which helps to collect necessary data and information. The annual reports are helpful in the decision making process. It is good to remember while reading this, that back in the 80's Gdansk was considered as a region of ecological disaster because of water pollution in the Gdansk Bay.

## Cleaning of coastal water

The list of environment-related priorities specified in 1993 was headed by the objective of cleaning the coastal waters to an extent which would allow it's restoration for recreational use. A number of tasks were successfully carried out, and they have been presented in the descrip-

tion of our project. Today monitoring of the quality of the waters in the coastal zone is sufficient. Tests are done continuously all year round at 14 sites along the seashore. The monitoring includes also the rivers and streams falling into the sea. If the test results are poor, they are analysed, and the causes are eliminated, but in practice such instances are virtually non-existent.

On the basis of the size and quality of the water flows monitored throughout the year, the annual load of pollutants discharged to the sea is calculated. In comparison to the late 80's, it has been reduced by over 50%. If the current load increases in relation to the previous year the causes are analysed.

## Sustainable city development

Sustainable development of the city also implies improvement of the living conditions in old, neglected districts. The municipal water supply system in Gdansk serves almost the entire population. The sanitary sewage collects 96.5 % of the waste water. Still, about 4.000 buildings remain outside the system. The City runs records of those buildings and supervises their steady inclusion in the sewage system. The works are partially financed from ecological funds.

Implementation of the LA 21 consists of organising leisure spots close to inhabitants living quarters, revitalisation of old districts, and restoring their ancient, specific character. Water plays an important role in the process. Rivers, streams, ponds and reservoirs determine places of recreation and public meetings spots. A programme aiming at organizing the green spaces is also being implemented.

## Underground water protection

75% of the water supplied to Gdansk is obtained from deep-water intakes, 25% comes from a surface intake, 13% of the water provided from the deep intakes does not require any treatment. The inhabitants definitely prefer the potable water taken from underground sources. Most of the currently operated water intakes lie within the so-called lower terrace of the seashore zone. Those seashore intakes are located in urbanised areas extremely exposed to pollution. Around them protective green zones are established. For the time being this protection of the intakes proves to be sufficient. The pressure from traffic and investors, keen

to be allowed into the attractive shore adjacent area, causes permanent threat to shallow intakes under a layer of permeable sand. The intakes are surrounded with a network of monitoring piezometers.

In recent years we have observed the phenomenon of gradual rising of the ground water level. The areas, previously waterlogged, are now observed to be flooded.

## Water circulation model

To facilitate arriving at decisions relating to water management, a water circulation model has been developed. The model uses data on the amount of rainfall, the amount of water drawn from municipal and industrial intakes, the operation of pumping stations in the melioration system, the river flows, the readouts of the piezometer network reflecting the level of underground and ground waters, and the degree of their pollution. The model allows for simulating the situation under various assumptions as to the changed conditions of the water cycle.

All decisions related to water management should be taken on the base of studies of all the phenomena concerning water circulation. We should also use all the experience we have, our knowledge about the city needs, new technology and possibilities. Water is very important for all beings – we are aware of that fact, but we also know that it is only one of the components of the environment. We do not forget the importance of protecting the other ones.

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# Environmental Conference in Kaunas

By Marija Stanikuniene

Environmental Protection Department of Kaunas City Municipality organised an international conference "Environmental and Waste Management in Municipalities" on 9-10 June 2000, which was dedicated to the World's Environmental Day and the tenth anniversary of environmental activities in municipalities of Lithuania, as these activities started only after regaining the independence in 1990.

Today's municipal environmental policy is based on Lithuanian Environmental Protection Strategy and Action Plan, which was approved by the Parliament in 1996.

Environmental specialists, vice-mayors, chief executive officers and ecologists from over 40 municipalities of Lithuania as well as experts from Denmark, Sweden, Latvia, and Estonia participated in the conference which was mainly dedicated to the waste management issues.

National environmental strategy and the role of municipalities in it, waste management legislation and new tasks for municipalities were discussed in the conference. The participants also had an opportunity to see how several Kaunas environmental protection programs had been implemented in practice. Kaunas automatic ambient air quality monitoring system (stationary posts and a mobile laboratory), regional landfill site (leachete treatment plant, compactor etc.), and used oils collection system from individual vehicles were presented.

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Participants of "Environmental and Waste Management in Municipalities" 9-10 June in Kaunas, Lithuania.

# Public Opinions on Environmental Health surveyed in Kymenlaakso

By Liisa Repo

**Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health together with the Ministry of the Environment initiated a project of compiling a National Environmental Health Programme for Finland in 1995. Once an Environmental Programme was completed on a National level, it was decided that each municipality should compile a local Environmental Health Programme. These local programmes will also contribute towards the local sustainable development projects in terms of environmental healthcare.**

In the Kymenlaakso area, in the south-eastern part of Finland, the ground for the local Environmental Health Programme was laid by conducting a mail survey among the people in the area. The main objective of the survey was to assess public opinions and perceptions of various factors of environmental health. 2000 citizens of the area (towns of An-



jalankoski, Hamina, Kotka, Kouvola, and Kuusankoski, and the municipalities of Elimäki, Iitti, Miehikkälä, Pyhtää, Valkeala, Vehkalahti, and Virolahti) were sent a survey in August. The results of the study were published in November this year. The survey results are then used to ensure that the most important environmental health problems in the area, not only from the authorities', but also from the public's point of view, are included in the Environmental Health Programme.

In Finland environmental healthcare traditionally emphasises on aspects like nutrition, along with water and air quality. In Kymenlaakso, however, other aspects of the local environment may be perceived as more significant in terms of environmental health, than in the rest of the country.

Examples of such aspects include the relatively high incidence of indoor air radon, pollution of the river Kymijoki and, especially in the coastal areas, the pollution of the Finnish Bay. Water pollution is typical to an area where paper and pulp processing have for a long time been the main industry. But also the newly expanded ports of Kotka and Hamina, and the increased transportation and marine traffic on the Finnish Bay, might be a cause of concern in the future. All of these are also topics of the environmental health survey. Questions about the hygiene of the local foodstuff businesses, the state of the local water systems, and the quality of both ambient and indoor air were also included in the survey.

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# Bicycle Pilots and Ambassadors in Växjö

By Johan Jareman



**In April 1999, the Municipality of Växjö signed contracts with 9 willing people and provided them with new bicycles and other necessary equipment. Five people were established as "bicycle pilots" and the other four people as "bicycle ambassadors". This campaign was part of a Fossil Fuel Free Växjö project designed to stop the increase in car traffic.**

The pilots and ambassadors had different missions, but all had a common goal: the conscious shift from driving cars to using bicycles on short trips in to Växjö. After reading our recruitment advertisements in the local newspaper these 9 people had applied and been selected for their missions.

For the pilots, the hardest part was changing accustomed travel patterns. All were formerly routine car drivers but had recognised the value of better health, saved money, and an improved environment by shifting to biking. Becoming a "bicycle pilot" gave them the motivation they needed to change their lifestyles. The ambassadors, as one might guess, had the objective of persuading other people to use bicycles instead of cars. All ambassadors had been avid bikers for many years.

The contract with the pilots demanded that they shift from cars to bikes for the majority of their daily transportation. Their incentive was (besides the benefits listed above) that they could buy the equipment after one year for an 80% reduction in price. The ambassadors had a similar incentive with the hopes that it would encourage them to convince as many people as possible to bike instead of drive. The difference was that the reduction in price they received was directly related to the number of people they could "enlist".

The campaign was planned as a learning project for those who managed it, and

we found along the way that there were many details that could be improved. It was also meant to be a marketing tool for bicycle use. A number of articles were published in the local newspaper, and we also paid for a number of advertisements.

And what were the environmental results from the campaign? Well, the evaluation stated that each of the pilots shifted from driving to biking for a total of over 2000 km of travelling in one year. The results from the work of the ambassadors were more difficult to evaluate, but all together we made a rough estimation that the campaign resulted in the following emission reductions:

CO <sub>2</sub>	4,6 tonnes,	HC	1,3 kg
CO	13 kg,	NOx	4,6 kg

All the pilots also stated that they experienced a significant improvement in their health status. The avoided car trips can also be translated into substantial economic savings.

If funding is available, we are interested in launching a new campaign with 200 bicycle pilots. The potential result has been calculated to be a savings of approximately 80 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. We believe that with the experiences from the campaign we carried out, we have a good possibility of future success on a larger scale.

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## Bicycle Routes in Kaunas

By Jurga Sirtautaitė

**The Scheme of Kaunas City Bicycle Routes was presented on European Car Free Day, on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000, in Kaunas City Municipality.**

This scheme was prepared for Environmental Protection Department by the company "Kauno planas". Their work was based on the solutions of the existing and of the new, prepared general plans of

Kaunas City Municipality, as well as on the results of two public interrogations. The aim was to develop an optimal scheme of bicycle routes network in Kaunas City, co-ordinated with the solutions of the new general plan.

There are about 150 thousand bicycles in Kaunas, which means that every third citizen has an access to a bicycle. However, cycling is not very popular. Some of the main reasons for that are:

- Complicated relief of land, big differences of ground level (40 meters)
- Short warm season, prevailing cold and rainy weather
- Undeveloped network of bicycle routes, added to lack of equipped parking places and bicycle storage
- Common opinion about cycling is 'unprestigious kind of transport' - more suitable for teenagers
- Unsafe conditions for biking.

### The network joins new and old

The new developed bicycle routes scheme is based on the solutions of the new general plan. The main principle of this plan is harmonization of three area types: active, compensative and stable. The network of transport joins these areas together. The very crucial part of the transport network is the system of the bicycle routes. The general plan gives a priority to the bicycle traffic in the sensitive areas, like the Old Town and the City Center, valuable natural areas, and pedestrian and recreational zones. The forecast is that the amount of short distance cycling will increase numerously.

The main aim of the strategy of the development of bicycle routes is to build well-paved, equipped and lighted bicycle tracks, resting places, and parking and storage buildings. The main links of the structure join the city center, the other city areas and green areas. The total length of the existing bicycle routes is approximately 30 kilometers. The system of bicycle routes in Kaunas consists of three types of routes:

- The main routes which join the City Center with the other parts of the city, as well as the most important parts together;
- The secondary routes, which join together the other parts of the city, as well as the suburbs with the city area
- The recreational routes, which join the areas of the city with the main green areas.

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# First Fully Pan European Car Free Day

**On Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> September the first genuinely pan-European Car Free Day was taking place. It was organised in some 800 cities around and also outside Europe.**

This was a great progress compared with last year's pioneering project in France and Italy with total of 158 cities. This progress achieved was made possible by the active involvement of the key partners in this European initiative, such as national ministries and energy agencies, networks of local authorities, NGOs and the European Commission.

By organising a Car Free Day, all participating cities enabled their citizens to benefit from a day without the congestion, the pollution and the dangers caused by the presence and use of cars. Furthermore, car free day provided the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of environmental action. It aimed to draw the attention of the public and decision makers to the negative impact of the dominance of cars on the quality of life in our cities (80% of the European population live in urban areas).

It is estimated that around 30% of car journeys in the EU involve distances of less than 3 kilometres. Car free day was therefore an opportunity to test alternative mobility concepts such as park & ride, expanded "pedestrian zones" and cycle friendly schemes amongst others.

This kind of days help to raise the interest towards other related subjects as well. It highlights our over-reliance on road transport and our unsustainable dependence on one source of non-renewable energy. It guides also to think larger patterns around the subject as EU's Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström has commented: "Car Free Days, as awareness raising events with a high degree of direct involvement of citizens, can play a part in helping to achieve our objectives on climate change, air quality, noise and quality of life in urban areas. It is extremely encouraging, this year, to see so many people join forces across Europe and beyond for a healthier urban environment."

# Sweden's First Street Train on the Road

By Trevor Graham

**It would appear that the future is electric in Augustenborg. 'Kommunteknik', Malmö's Direct Works Department, based in Augustenborg's industrial estate, now has Sweden's largest electric vehicle fleet, residents have started up an electric car pool, and the world's first electric street trains glide quietly through the streets, powered by eco-labelled electricity.**

All this is part of 'Ekostaden' Augustenborg, a major programme of ecological adaptation of an existing housing estate. The Green Line's electric trains link a number of peripheral housing areas in Malmö and provide easy access for residents to services such as bank, post-office, health centre and chemists that otherwise may be hard to reach within the earlier public transport system. Businesses along the route have sponsored the trains and see them as a way of keeping and attracting new customers to small shopping areas under pressure from out of town centres.

The two street trains currently in service were designed and manufactured by a newly started local business with support from Lund University's Industrial Development Centre. 15 new jobs have been created in Street Train Sweden AB which has now interest from a number of other local authorities, transport companies and other organisations.

Electric train stops linked by broadband to a GPS system will in the near future offer real time travel information to travellers at home or waiting for the trains. Other plans for the future include delivering service so that elderly residents



*The street train can easily go through narrow lanes which helps for example elderly to make the journey to the city centre.*

from Augustenborg can get their prescriptions delivered by train rather than making the journey to the chemists themselves.

The trains capacity is 28 passengers in two carriages, they have a maximum speed of 30 kmh and have rubberised wheels. With their battery unit and unique steering system the trains can be used flexibly without the need for infrastructure such as cables or rails. The narrow gauge enables the trains to drive on cycle tracks for short distances, providing a better service to residents by getting into the heart of the communities.

Additional service is now available to local residents in the form of Sweden's first electric car pool. Augustenborg has an extremely low car ownership rate of approximately 17%, and whilst this is of great benefit from an environmental viewpoint, it is also important for residents to have access to the same services as the majority of Malmö's population.

The first car is now in use on a trial basis by the local enthusiasts at the core of the car pool. The final plans are being put into place for the arrival of two more vehicles with a rapid charge station and two other charging points in parking spaces at the heart of Augustenborg. Residents will then be able to go into the local supermarket to pick up the car keys and borrow one of the vehicles at a low cost. The electric car pool is open for all residents living in MKB's 1600 flats in Augustenborg, and is run by local people with a start-up support from the MKB housing company, and a number of other partners.

Further information about Ekostaden is available from [www.ekostaden.com](http://www.ekostaden.com)

# Preparing Lithuanian Municipalities for EU Accession

By Ruta Bubniene

**The role of Lithuanian local authorities in the implementation of transposed EU environmental legislation was made by "Cities for Accession", a project performed by the Center for Environmental Policy. It included also development of a national strategy and action plan for involving regional administrations and local authorities into implementation of the EU requirements**

Implementation of EU requirements should be a well designed process based on a clearly formulated environmental strategy providing for realistic and economically feasible objectives and targets. Environmental strategy should establish and define long- and short-term priorities, schedule for attainment of set targets, and criteria for evaluation of the progress. It should also transmit the vision of the environmental development to the public and encourage public participation.

So far, these efforts were concentrated mainly on the national level, while most of the activities aimed at implementation of EU requirements will take place on the municipal level, especially in areas requiring major financial resources such as waste management, water supply and wastewater treatment.

The aim of 'Cities for Accession', made 1999-2000, was to help Lithuanian municipalities in development and implementation of cost-effective approximation strategies on local and regional level in order to meet the requirements of EU environmental legislation. The specific objectives were to clarify the role of local authorities, to develop a national strategy and action plan, and to prepare, in co-operation with the Lithuanian Association of Municipalities, guidelines for the design and implementation of municipal/regional environmental policy in line with EU requirements.

## Local authorities' duties

The basic legal acts regulating environmental protection in Lithuania are already in place. These acts were taken as a basis for defining the functions of local authorities in the process of implementation of EU requirements. The review showed that the main responsibilities of local authorities are to manage, use and protect natural resources and environmental objects in accordance with conditions issued and controlled by the Ministry of Environment. Local authorities are responsible also for drawing up, approval and implementation of programmes, schemes etc.

Municipal employees responsible for solving environmental and EU integration problems should have appropriate skills such as ability to think strategically, to identify key opportunities and to take initiatives as well as good negotiating, project management and foreign languages skills and skills of collaboration and networking.

## Strategies

Municipalities should cultivate traditions of strategic analysis, planning and management of integrated economic, social and urban issues related to urban development. Environmental issues should not be treated as separate problems. Look Chapter 8 of the EU Fifth Environmental Action Programme.

The analysis of available and potential financing sources show that they are sufficient for covering municipal environmental investments. However, financing of investments is only a part of successful implementation of environmental requirements. Repayment of loans and covering operation costs of the newly developed infrastructure will place a substantial burden on municipal finances.

The local authorities should make careful evaluation of investment projects paying a special attention to the assessment of related costs and ability of the population to cover. It is obvious that certain municipalities will not be able to take additional loans and will face serious problems in the process of implementation of environmental requirements.

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# A Baltic Sea Centre for Sustainable Development

By Helena Eriksson

**When the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, Baltic 21, was adopted in 1998, the already existing idea of a centre for sustainable development for the region got wind in its sails. The centre, referred to as Optimanova, was lively discussed among environmentalists, architects and people at the Municipality of Gotland.**

The establishment of an Agenda 21 support centre in the region could act as a clearing house for information on sustainable development, be a demonstration site for best-practice projects and facilitate a pro-active dialogue between business, politics and individual consumers. Furthermore, existing networks and organisations could use Optimanova to disseminate and receive information from local level actors, municipalities and NGOs.

Since December 1999 seven persons have been involved in the production of a feasibility study, funded by the Swedish regional development funds for Gotland County and European Structural Funds/ Objective 5b. In February, at the European Conference for Sustainable Cities and Towns in Hannover, the concept of Optimanova was presented to the visitors. The next step is to investigate the viability of the project and make up a business plan for Optimanova. Financial aspects, identification of a physical site for the centre, interfacing national, regional and European authorities, and formulate and launch the concept, are important cornerstones in the ongoing work.

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# BEIDS - Information for Environmental Decisions

By Pekka Tenhonen

**Today the BEIDS project has been working for one year. It offers city planners useful and up-to-date environmental information from the Baltic Sea Region, but it is also meant to be of help for the governmental sector, public administration, industry sector, educational sector and voluntary sector. Being free and open it will serve all citizens in the member countries.**

BEIDS stands for Baltic Environmental Information Dissemination System. The project disseminates news of environmental interest, and it concentrates above all on energy, transportation and sustainable development issues as their relevance to the region is likely to grow in the next few years.

The members of BEIDS are Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden of the EU countries, and Lithuania and Poland with other funding. At the moment work is done to broaden the area to cover the rest of the Baltic Sea region, and therefore BEIDS is trying to find funding for Russia, Estonia and Latvia.

## Six countries and seven web sites

BEIDS maintains a web site in each country, and updates the site with environmental news of the issues mentioned above. BEIDS also publishes newsletters, which can be subscribed for.

Subscribers also receive notices of other interesting issues, the BEIDS team reports environmental disasters and sends news even on a daily basis. Subscribing for the letter is done by surfing to the web site and asking the webmaster to put you on the mailing list. In Finland the newsletter is published in Finnish and in Swedish.

Each country runs its own web site and takes care of the national newsletter. But

that is only half of what BEIDS is aiming at. The information is not only spread within countries but between the countries as well. The first international newsletter in English will come out in the beginning of November containing news from each of the countries. Besides the six national web sites BEIDS runs an international site as well.

The BEIDS teams in each country work independently, but the whole project is co-ordinated by the City of Hamburg, and is partly funded by the Interreg II C programme.

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*Kandalaksha bay on the road to Umbla*

## Municipal Co-operation on LA21 in the Barents Region

By Bente Christiansen

### The second meeting in the Barents Local Agenda 21 Network was held in Umbla and Kandalaksha in Murmansk oblast 4-8 September.

Twenty municipalities were present at the meeting, together with representatives of regional and national environment authorities, indigenous people, environmental NGO's and others.

## The aim of the network

The network is established for the municipalities to help each other implementing Local Agenda 21 (LA21). The municipalities co-operate in pairs on concrete themes, and participate in the larger network to exchange experiences and ideas, and to get inspiration for future work

The municipalities in the Barents region are in different stages in their work with LA21. Some have been active for several years and have achieved much, while others are just starting. The differences are not only between the countries, but also inside the countries. Local Agenda 21 ranges over so many different topics that everybody has something to learn from others.

Today the municipalities are co-operating on issues concerning waste, management of natural resources, increasing environmental awareness among children and young adult and improving quality of drinking water. During the meeting, new municipalities agreed to start LA21 co-operation, while others discussed how to continue their co-operation.

## Umbla meeting

The participants at the meeting agreed to meet again next spring/summer. From Russian side it was said that the Barents Local Agenda 21 Network is important also because it is the only forum

where Russian municipalities can meet to discuss issues on environment and sustainable development.

The network is supported by among others the Norwegian Barents Fund, Finnish Ministry of the Environment and the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment. The Head of the Department of Environmental Affairs at the Finnmark County Governor is currently leading the network, but all regional environmental authorities in the Barents Region back the initiative.

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# Assessment of Opportunities for Sustainable Development of Baltijsk

By Mikhail Durkin

## The Municipality of Baltijsk, Russia, has undergone streamlined auditing of its environmental performance with overall objective of assessing opportunities for sustainable development in April 2000.

The team of M.Sc. candidates (Environmental Management & Policy) from the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics at Lund University (Sweden) performed this study in cooperation with Russian students, post-graduates and environmental experts from Kaliningrad and Baltijsk. Each year the Institute carries out such a municipal audit in one of the Eastern European countries and this time it has been initiated upon request from Russian environmental authorities. The Baltijsk Audit became the first in the circle of similar municipal audits to be financed by the *Svenska Institutet* in the Baltic countries and Kaliningrad for years 2000-2003.

The aim of the audit was to look at the vision of the municipality in relation to its plan for sustainable development and to try to fill the gap between the current situation and the visions, using Cleaner Production alternatives. At the same time, a closer look was taken at the environmental problems that resulted from the operations of the municipality, and cleaner production alternatives, that could help the municipality to reach the goal of sustainable development, were developed.

Russian experts proposed MEA manuals and procedure to be used for the audit, and they were utilised by the team to the most possible extent. However, due to time-constraint, the real work was done in streamlined way, with much attention being paid to initial gathering of information before the actual on site audit began. The audit team has performed extensive benchmarking with the twinning municipality of Karlskrona in Sweden, trying to understand how similar environmental aspects are handled there. The audit team has approached following focus areas, both in Sweden and Russia:

- Municipality Management (administrative structure, decision-making, logistics, etc.)
- Public Sector (social security, public health and education, NGOs, equity, etc.)
- Water Management (water balance, waste water treatment, water-saving practices, etc.)
- Energy Management (sources, type of fuels, energy-saving measures, etc.)
- Waste Management (sources, categories and quantities of waste, waste utilisation)
- Mobility Sector (public transportation, transit transport, i.e. port activities, etc.)
- Business Sector (business development and prospects)
- Tourism and use of natural resources (development of tourism and utilisation of recreational capacities of the municipality).

Summary of findings, benchmarking with Karlskrona and recommendations for improvements were provided for each of these focus areas and compiled in English and Russian.

Baltijsk is an area of restricted access as it is the main home-base for the Russian Baltic Navy. Environmental situation is complicated by significant negative impact of military activities, while no specific polluting industry is located within the municipality. Natural values of the place and its unique location as a transport hub provide very good start-up for environmentally sound development of the municipality along with diminishing role of military as main employer of local residents.

The Municipality of Baltijsk has started utilization of the audit results from improvement of municipal solid waste management practices and invites all interested stakeholders to an open dialogue on the matter and will be grateful for any kind of contributions to this process.

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# An Ecology Lesson in Gdynia

By Sylvia Strzalkowska

## A festive closing of Polish edition of Cleaning up the World took place in Gdynia, 9 September 2000. Every year thousands of children, youngsters, and adults participate in this big ecologic campaign.

In this 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Cleaning up the World, aimed at waste segregation, a record number of people took part: a whole 12 thousands! Young ecologists, equipped in bags and gloves, set in city areas, mainly Tri City Landscape Park, as well as municipal forests and parks.

This year Gdynia was chosen as the central ceremony place of the Polish edition of Cleaning up the World. In Gdynia, like all over the country, cleaning of city areas took place on Friday. Saturday, in turn, was a day of sports and recreation picnic which was organized in Kodciuszki Square – the city centre. The picnic entitled The Run Race for the Earth was a common undertaking of Ecobaltic Foundation, as well as the City Hall of Gdynia.

During the picnic, ecological, art, and sport competitions were organized. Each competitor received a coupon, which entitled him or her to take part in a lottery. The prizes were very attractive. Among the guests was Ms Mira Stanislawski-Meysztowicz, an initiator of Polish edition of Cleaning up the World. According to her the objective of the whole undertaking is to shape attitude and behaviour which become our lifestyle.

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# Cleaning of River Dane

By Dalia Zukiene

**The river Dane crosses the coastal region of Lithuania, the City of Klaipeda, and falls into the Baltic sea. The 64 km long river with the river basin of 595 km<sup>2</sup> was already known in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The town of Klaipeda grew on its banks.**

There are people who still remember its water, clean, full of fish and crabs. It is a great pity, that for over three decades the Dane has been heavily polluted. Bathing is forbidden, especially in the low reaches of it. On the initiative of Klaipeda City Nature Protection Department and Action Plan for Reduction of Pollution in the river Dane was prepared.

The Association of Swedish Municipalities and Karlskrona City Municipality assisted in the work. They helped to prepare a special plan for the banks of the river, which will reduce pollution there. A lot of various waste and junk had been thrown into the river. In summer 2000, four km of the river, situated in the most beautiful landscape,



*River Dane runs through central Klaipeda. Thus it has great potential also for recreation of the inhabitants.*

were cleaned from large-scale junk. Divers pulled out several tons of waste – old tyres, furniture, parts of cars, bottles, and metal.

## Information about the event

Information about such a special project was widely distributed. Also a video was made of the event. It's goal was to tell the public that polluting the river is so easy, but it is more complicated to clean it. A lot of work still needs to be done to make the waters of our only river in the city clear. But the first steps towards that have already been taken.

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## Vital Vaasa - Project

By Anne Uddfolk

**Vital Vaasa is a pilot framework and action programme for the revitalization of the water cycle within the structure of urban landscape of Vaasa. It is a focused project forming part of the Vaasa Vista general programme (1997). The City Planning Office of Vaasa has, in co-operation with the Technical Department, established the programme and the agenda for the Vital Vaasa project action plan.**

## Objectives and methods

The main target of the Vital Vaasa Pilot Framework Project is to revitalize the urban water cycle. Natural rainwater resources can be utilized more actively in order to strengthen the landscape structure in an urban area and protect the vitality of the nature found there.

1. The primary aim is to revitalize the natural ecosystem, its tolerance and polymorphism, by increasing the infiltration, so as to delay rainwater in an urban city area.
2. A healthy and qualitative urban built environment can be provided, along with its ecological rejuvenation, by re-using and purifying rainwater more efficiently.
3. The results and applications of the project will provide better urban indoor air quality and better urban storm water control. This in turn will also lead to an improvement in the quality of water in the Baltic Sea.

The revitalization of urban nature will be created with the help of new technologies (absorption, regulating the outflow of main drains, underground basins for purification, filters etc.), by providing and implementing new planning methods and working practices. The co-operation between the project partners and experts will provide new opportunities to use and organize the working environments.

The European Commission has granted a financial support of FIM 2,27 million for the project through the Life-Environment Programme. The financial responsibility of the partners totals FIM 1,21 million from the total budget, and the City of Vaasa has responsibility to provide FIM 2,15 million. The overall budget of the Vital Vaasa Project is FIM 5,63 million. In addition, the University of Abertay Dundee and Urban Water Technology Centre in Scotland will be contacted through Vaasa Polytechnic.



## Vital Vaasa tasks

1. Digital terrain model; examination of the bedrock, soil and groundwater table
2. The revitalization plan for the littoral valley
3. Restoration of the watercycle in two urban catchment areas.
4. Education of authorities, planners, constructors, city councillors and inhabitants.

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# Local Authorities' Self Assessment of Local Agenda

By Marko Joas

## The main objectives with Local Authorities Self-Assessment of Local Agenda (LASALA) project are to examine and evaluate eco-efficient urban management and new models of urban governance.

In particular the project registers progress made through Local Agenda 21 processes in regional and local government. The evaluation is done with the help of a tele-guided concerted self-assessment methodology utilising a web-based virtual training centre.

The LASALA project is co-funded by the European Commission's Research and is co-ordinated by ICLEI. Åbo Akademi University is the responsible for the project while there are seven other universities as project partners.

Table: A Regional Division of LASALA Participants

	N	%
Baltic Sea Region	75	32,9
CEE-countries	38	16,7
Mediterranean Region	74	32,5
Atlantic Europe	41	18,0
Total:	228	100,0

As the project is a contribution to the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign, the main source for possible local authorities to participate were cities that already had signed the Aalborg Charter. Therefore, during Spring 2000, more than 700 local authorities across Europe were initially invited to take part in LASALA. However, the project is not limited to these cities and additional sources of possible participants were also used, for example active UBC members. Information about LASALA was also delivered by international and national networks, local government central organisations and other similar organisations.

## Interest in participation

By mid October, LASALA has 228 participants from 29 countries, which is fully in accordance with the project expectations. Of these cities, 164 (72 per cent)

are situated within 13 European Union member countries, and 64 (28 per cent) within 16 other European countries.

All in all, the regional division of participants is very satisfactory. Regionally the most active LA21 region at least concerning LASALA participation is the Baltic Sea Area – defined as the area where UBC member cities come from. A third of all participating cities, i.e. 75 cities and municipalities come from this region. Mediterranean countries follow, however, very closely with 74 local or regional government units participating.

Within the Baltic Area, Germany has most participating cities (23), followed by Sweden (15) and Finland (9). Also Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have showed a rather high level of interest bearing in mind the size of these countries.

The country division of participants is generally satisfactory, but some active LA21 countries could be better represented in the material, as for example the Netherlands and Denmark. However, this is not to be considered problematic, as the overall division of more and less active countries is sufficient.

The LASALA project has by mid October entered into a phase where participating municipalities and cities are undertaking their self-evaluations. The training of self-assessment co-ordinators has also been running since August when the training modules were opened the specific LASALA Distance Training and Project Page.

Further work in LASALA will include:

- Evaluation of the self assessments (mid December 2000-June 2001)
- Identification and documentation of Best practices (March-August 2001)
- Evaluation of the Self-Assessment method and procedure (July-August 2001)
- Dissemination of results; conference in London (Autumn 2001)

Further information:

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<http://iclei.org/europe/lasala/>

# How to Make a Successful Environmental Project?

By Sanna Salminen

## In Ota Eco'00 Man, Environment and Technology –Congress in Helsinki 18.-20.10.2000 there was, in many lectures, discussion about conditions of successful environmental projects. It may be useful to summarise some of them.

In general, realistic thoughts about own wishes and capabilities as well as the right dimension of the project are essential. The project should make sense technically, economically and ecologically in long term, and the step-by-step approach is often the best way to reach the hoped results. The commitments made for project should be firm and from sufficiently high level. When project is small, it is wise to group your project with other similar ones to ease the funding and practical matters. Also enough time and patience are important.

Special financial aspects were also mentioned. It is important not to be afraid of private sector involvement, but to choose right mixture of donor and loan money. Loans should be an argument to the project funding, not a substitute of local financing. Adequate co-financing from donors should be guaranteed before bidding the loan money. When bidding the loan money, the bid should be prepared in accordance with asked documents. The existence, conditions and the amount of all internal as well as external funds should be secured before implementing the project. After completion of the project, the customer should be able to pay for the services – this assures the possibilities to pay the loan back.



Further information:  
<http://www.dipoli.hut.fi/org/otaeco/>

## Exhibition on Anti-fouling Paints Seeking for Partners

The Baltic Sea Center, Project Office, in Vordingborg, Denmark, is looking for partners to show a travelling exhibition on the initiatives to change the use of biocides and poisonous metals in anti-fouling paint for small boats, yachts and merchants vessels.

The theme of anti-fouling paint will be dealt with in an exhibition arranged by the Baltic Sea Center (ØCV) in Vordingborg. A special target group will be authorities, organisations and individuals working with Agenda 21 in harbour areas and marinas. The exhibition is expected to begin early summer 2001.

The exhibition will come in a Danish version. Number of versions on other languages depends on funding and number of interested parties. Baltic Sea Center will seek funding for translation, copying and transport to destinations in Poland, the Russian Federation, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

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## BLA21F Activities in Estonia

In August the national Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum (BLA21F) seminar was organised in Pärnu, Estonia. Estonian Ministry of the Environment, Association of Local Authorities and various actors of communal level participated. Participants were committed to promote the Baltic 21 at the local level by national BLA21F working group. National co-ordinator is Ms. Ille Alsaar from the Association of Local Authorities another contact person is Ms. Irja Alakivi from Tartu.

The meeting also decided to make a proposal to form a local level sub-commission for Estonian Sustainable Development Commission. The proposal was given to the Prime Minister in September.

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## Willow as Energy Producer

By Alicija Kostecka

In a year, 50- 70 m<sup>3</sup> of timber mass from one hectar of willow plantation can be produced which equals 10-15 tons of a dry matter. The energetic value of one ton of dry timber matter equals 4.5 MWh, which is 1 ton of coal dust or 0.5 ton of fuel oil. The production cycle of willow lasts for 4 years. Willow might not be used only as renewable energy source, but also for sewage sediment and liquid manure management. It can be also used for reclamation of polluted and industrial areas, landfill sites, etc.

Wierzbinek, with a population of 8.3 thousand, is a rural gmina in the Konin Poviát. There is no industrial activity, therefore the unemployment rate is high. In 1998 the Council decided to add willow fairs called SALIX, into the agenda. Apart from promotion of the willow plantation, products made out from willow, hay, straw, wood, and souvenirs, were exhibited in the first SALIX fairs in 1998. The well-developed fairs resulted in willow seedlings cultivation managed by the Wierzbinek Municipal Enterprise.

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## Baltic Meeting Point

Baltic Meeting Point is a forum for the frequent discussion of sustainable community development in the BSR. Its aim is to bring together the people who have the knowledge and means to initiate new management, technology and business opportunities within the region, and to help them keep regular contact with each other.

On 6-9 May, 2001 there will be Forum on Sustainable Community Development in Uppsala, Sweden.

UBC is one of the partners of the event. One workshop is going to be organised by the UBC. The topic will most likely be related with co-operation between the cities and the universities. Also a short working meeting of UBC EnvCom is organised in the same occasion.

More information:  
[www.balticmeetingpoint.com](http://www.balticmeetingpoint.com)



## Read about LEAP

The Guide to Implementing Local Environmental Action Programs in Eastern and Central Europe is a comprehensive resource book, distilling over 8 years of Institute for Sustainable Communities' (ISC) local environmental action program (LEAP) experience. It is designed to assist municipal government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), citizens, and others to better manage local environmental problems while strengthening democratic processes at the local level.

The Guide is intended to serve as an introductory reference on basic planning methods and tools that have been used by some local governments and NGOs in the region. It provides a clearly outlined step-by-step approach in LEAP development and implementation, encouraging readers to consider each community's unique circumstances, needs, and priorities. It includes also numerous case studies from communities in the region.

To obtain a copy:  
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More information on LEAP:  
Mr. P. Markowitz or Ms. G. Hallsmith  
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*We Would Like to Thank Our Partners and Readers for the  
Past Year and Wish You All the Best*



# Season's Greetings

*UBC Commission on Environment*

## Coming Events

### **BLA21F Working Group**

Meeting will be held in January in Russia. The exact date is not known at the time of editing this bulletin. During the spring meetings will be held also in Sweden and in Norway.

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paivi.hippelainen@lahti.fi.

### **UBC Local Agenda 21 Working Group and Baltic 21 JO4 Meeting**

These meeting are planned to be held 8-10 March in Liepaja (to be confirmed). All interested are welcome to participate.

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### **UBC Board Open Meeting**

The meeting will be held 17-18 March 2001 in Cecis, Latvia. On the agenda are up-date of UBC Agenda 21 Action Program, and proposal of Gender Equality analysis of new UBC activities by 3R method. All interested member cities are welcome to participate.

More information can be obtained from UBC Secretariat in Gdansk.

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### **SUFA and BCP Workshops**

will be organised for project participants in April. Exact dates and locations will be decided in January.

### **Baltic Meeting Point (BMP)**

The Baltic Meeting Point Conference will be organised in Uppsala, 6-9 May. The UBC is involved in the planning of the event, and will most likely be responsible of one of the workshops. The exact topic is still under consideration, but the general theme will be connected to co-operation of cities and universities.

On the occasion of the BMP, the UBC Commission on Environment will also organise a working meeting (half a day).

More info from:

[www.balticmeetingpoint.com](http://www.balticmeetingpoint.com), and  
from the respective UBC Secretariats.

### **VI UBC General Conference**

will be organised in Rostock in October. All UBC commissions will meet on the occasion of the Conference, and also the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award Ceremony will take place - now for the second time.

For more information, see [www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net).