



Baltic Cities

Environmental bulletin • No 1, 2007



Active UBC cities



Choices that guarantee our children a better environment

Cities and urban areas play a central role in the well-being of European citizens, since eighty percent live in urban areas. Cities are a major source of prosperity. They are propellers of growth that radiate vitality far into the surrounding rural areas. The competitiveness of cities is a prerequisite for the European Union's success in global competition.

Many environmental challenges are concentrated in cities. Ambient noise, traffic congestion, poor air quality, polluted land and waste problems are among the first to spring to mind. These problems are the sum of various factors, not least because of a lifestyle that promotes squandering and the freedom of the individual. Even though the assessment of environmental impact is already an everyday occurrence, it does not yet guide our decisions sufficiently. That is why we need guiding mechanisms that guarantee a healthy environment with the help of international treaties, national norms and local government actions.

Recently, climate change and energy policies have held the top spots in environmental discourse. Cities also play an important role in solving these issues, that's why it is necessary to stop the urban sprawl, especially in large cities. We have to develop means for improving urban the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the use of private transport, means that also help to rationalise energy consumption. In addition to fighting climate change, we need to prepare ourselves for its effects. Floods, storms and heavy rain can cause extensive damage especially in cities.

Fortunately, the importance of the quality of urban environment can already be seen in EU strategies. For example, the thematic strategy of EU's 6th Environment Action

Programme emphasises the significance of comprehensive integrated environmental management and sustainable transport in solving the challenges concerning urban environment. It also recognises the fact that real changes to the current development can be brought about only with broad co-operation and local level actions.

In its various documents the EU promotes the role of Local Agenda 21- actions and of the Aalborg Commitments in supporting decisions that advance the sustainable development of cities. It is important that more and more cities commit to choices that guarantee our children a better environment than what current development foresees. Implementing LA21 and AC into principles that guide decision making will continue to be vital. I am happy to see that Germany emphasises urban environmental questions as a central aspect of urban policy in its presidency.

The status of city networks in promoting good policy is of the utmost importance. UBC has set a fine example over the past 15 years. Now, as the Baltic Sea is practically an inland sea for the EU, there are even more opportunities for advancing policies. I am proud that my home town, Turku, has been able to host the work of the UBC Commission on Environment and in this manner benefit the well being of the entire Baltic Sea region.

However, the good deeds of government and organisations are still not enough. Climate and energy policy as well as the objectives for the quality of urban environment can succeed only if citizens, too, realise the necessity of decisions and of personal choices. It is a challenge that concerns both national and local government as well as civic society. Even here the work of cities and city networks is vitally important.

Stefan Wallin

Minister for the Environment, Finland

UBC member cities (as of February 2007)

Aarhus • Baltijsk • Bergen • Cesis • Chojnice • Copenhagen • Elblag • Elva • Espoo • Fredericia • Guldborgsund • Gävle • Gdansk • Gdynia • Göteborg • Greifswald • Haapsalu • Helsinki • Horsens • Jekabpils • Jelgava • Jöhvi • Jurmala • Jyväskylä • Järvenpää • Kaliningrad • Kalmar • Karlskrona • Karlstad • Kaunas • Keila • Kemi • Kiel • Klaipeda • Køge • Kolding • Koszalin • Kotka • Kristiansand • Kristianstad • Kronstadt • Kuressaare • Krynica Morska • Kärđla • Lahti • Liepaja • Linköping • Lomonosov • Luleå • Lübeck • Leba • Maardu • Malbork • Malmö • Mariehamn • Marijampole • Moletai • Nacka • Narva • Naestved • Norrtälje • Nyköping • Oskarshamn • Palanga • Paldiski • Panevezys • Pärnu • Peterhof • Pori • PruszczGdanski • Reda • Rezekne • Riga • Rostock • Robertsfors • Sestoretzsk • Siauliai • Sillamäe • Sopot • Stockholm • St. Petersburg • Sundsvall • Szczecin • Tallinn • Tampere • Tartu • Tukums • Turku • Umeå • Vaasa • Viljandi • Vilnius • Visby • Vordingborg • Võru • Västervik • Växjö • Wismar • Örebro

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Co-chair Mikko Jokinen views the Baltic Sea Region from a distance

"We have an excellent cooperation culture"

The Co-chair of UBC Commission on Environment, Mikko Jokinen's current work on an environmental management project in South Africa's North-West Province, gives him a good opportunity to take a distant look at the Baltic Sea Region.

Mikko Jokinen is working altogether for two years with governance on a regional and municipal level. Financial support comes from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

"After 1992 when the apartheid came to its end, the white administration was replaced. This has been a huge change and also a challenge to find competent people." **Mikko Jokinen** sees a lot of similarities compared to the change in the Baltic Sea Region when the Soviet Union collapsed and new administrations had to be adapted in Eastern Europe.

South Africa has made a good progress. "The country has one of the most modern constitutions in the world regarding the environment as 'people have the right to have a good environment'. This is partly a result of global cooperation, for example Sweden has had a lot of influence on this."

However, the cooperation culture is loose and far from the strength that the Baltic Sea Region has. "In South Africa, municipalities are mandated to solve the problems themselves. Even if there would be opportunities to find solutions with others, it has not been easy to encourage people to do so." The country has a system where the regional authorities have the responsibility to help the municipalities, but most of them are still in the situation where only the minimum requirements of environmental laws are met.

Looking at the other side of the coin, sustainable development is a well-known concept and widely used expression in daily conversation. "The UN Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 had a positive impact on the legislation. As a result, the international agreements are quite often referred also in the local political debates", Jokinen says.

"Climate change in focus of the UBC"

Looking at Europe from a distance, the situation in the

"The best and strongest regional network in the world", Mikko Jokinen describes UBC's potential. "And if anyone knows a stronger network somewhere else, we would like to learn more about it."



Baltic Sea Region looks positive. "We have a good culture of cooperation and the will to learn from others through practical cooperation. UBC has succeeded in implementing projects on a local level." Jokinen thinks the cooperation projects that the UBC member cities are running these days are closer to the practical needs of the cities than five or ten years ago. "We have learned to focus on the right issues", he remarks.

For the future, it is important to pay more attention to climate change and be more active at all levels. "For example, the changing climate seems to increase rains in such a way that the amount of nutrients washed into the Baltic Sea is bigger than before. It makes the situation of the sea more unstable. The climate change requires immediate actions from all stakeholders."

The Baltic Sea Region cities have successfully worked together more than 15 years to develop tools and channels to protect our common environment. "We should continue and strengthen our work to minimize the negative effects of the development which takes place in the region."

Climate change has also been discussed in South Africa. "It hasn't lead to major actions yet. Coal is the main source of energy and there have not been signs of interest in using renewable energy. For example, heating of water, which counts 50 per cent of the household energy need, could very easily be provided by using solar panels. This is already a common practice when building new houses in the poor neighboring country, Botswana, but not in the richer South Africa."

UBC sustainable development survey focuses on the

State of the Baltic Sea cities

The UBC Sustainable Development Survey 2006/2007 is under way. The active UBC EnvCom team has been calling around all 100 UBC member cities encouraging them to answer the study which is to be completed later this year. Collecting data has been a broad and challenging task for the cities.

One of the cities taking part in the survey was the city of Pruszcz Gdański in Poland. **Radosław Gucwa**, Main specialist of EU Funds in the city of Pruszcz Gdański, handed over their results while visiting Turku in January.

Gucwa said that even collecting the data for the survey was useful. "It has certainly raised a lot of interest within the city administration. Many people from different departments were involved in answering the questions. I think this will eventually have an impact in our policies and lead to some future actions."

"Our most important challenge regarding sustainable development is transport. It will be interesting to see how we stand in the survey compared to other cities. This may give us new ideas for the future", he says.

Modified indicators

The survey indicators were modified compared to the last survey. "The survey should now be easier to understand",

says researcher **Niina Hakanpää**. The state of the Baltic Sea, for example, closely connected to the waste water management, is now also included in the survey as a new focus area due to the actuality and specific importance of this issue.

Baltic Cities Sustainable Development Survey 2006/2007 is the second assessment within the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 - Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. The final assessment will be held during 2009-2010. These surveys are a continuation of the previous ones which were carried out in 1998 and 2001.

For UBC the survey is an important source of data when developing new projects and services for the member cities.

How sustainable are the Baltic Cities?

Read the previous survey 2004/2005 (in PDF-form)
www.ubc-action21.net/sustainability.htm

EnvCom cooperates with UBC Energy Commission

The Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat has started cooperation with UBC Energy Commission. First, the cooperation will be evident in the field of communication. For the time being, our readers will find content produced by Energy Commission in this Environmental Bulletin edition.

"We really look forward to this cooperation as energy issues are one of the key issues in our region for the near future. Our member cities have already been working with this topic and now we are able to support this work even more", says **Björn Grönholm**, the Head of Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat.

The focus areas of the Energy Commission are broad, namely energy efficiency, reduction of greenhouse emissions and striving for higher local self-reliance says **Sofie Gunnarsson**, the Head of Energy Commission Secretariat.



Specific projects within these focus areas will start during 2007 and will be open for UBC-members to take an active part in.

For the UBC member cities, energy is a question of making the right choices. The reduction of the greenhouse gases is a challenge the cities need to meet. "We are looking for the best practices to see how others have solved this problem", Gunnarsson says.

Read more on pages 16-17.

Text: Virpi Kaukavuori

World Watch Institute: West Harbour a model city for future

Former dump turns into a most desired area in Malmö

Malmö knows how to build an attractive living environment starting from a situation with a lot of economic and social problems. Now, a new residential area at West Harbour is the most exciting place to live and visit in the city.

The idea of building West Harbour was all about creating a better future for Malmö in 80's and early 90's. The shipyard and car industry had collapsed and the unemployment rate was high. A lot of people on lower socio-economic level were moving in. "Tax incomes decreased and we had huge problems", **Per-Arne Nilsson**, the head of the environmental strategy unit, says. "The economy based on manufacturing industry was not reliable. We needed to build something new based on knowledge."

Malmö succeeded in attracting a university to the city. It was also selected to be the host for the housing expo, Bo01. At the same time, discussions about sustainable development were going on at the political level.

"Our main idea was to build the expo on a brownfield, with the image of a Phoenix bird. Malmö wanted to become a symbol of green welfare city in Europe", Nilsson says. The city received altogether 250 million Swedish Crowns for the project from local investment program of the Swedish Government for the project at West Harbour, the land once used by Kockum Shipyard and car industry.

Environmental issues and new innovative ideas were the first priorities: renewable energy, waste management with separation of organic waste, biodiversity – even with details such as batboxes and butterfly restaurants - IT solutions supporting the environment, and sustainable transport. "It is easier to get to Western Harbour by public transport than by car", Nilsson notes.

World Watch Institute uses Malmö as a model city

At first, Bo01 was regarded as a failure. The expo didn't attract as many visitors as were expected. Only a small part of the whole area was built by 2001 and problems occurred with some of the private enterprises that were involved. "Some of the exclusive apartments were difficult to sell. But after a while, a growing amount of interest appeared, especially towards sustainability.", says Nilsson.



The project started with land reclamation and soil decontamination.

By 2007, the area is nearly built. The area relies on 100 per cent local renewable energy. It is possible due to the combination of conventional and new technology. This is also why World Watch Institute uses Malmö in State of the World 2007 as a model of building green future. "Not everything has gone smoothly and perfect. Several houses used more energy than we expected. But, we have learned from mistakes. Western Harbour proves that it is possible to create a city in a modern way dealing also with the climate change."

The work in Malmö will continue also with the UBC EnvCom, as the city is a partner in the SUSTAINMENT project. "Our first step was Local Agenda 21. We are now moving from agenda to action. The third phrase will be mainstreaming sustainability", Nilsson says. This includes using similar ideas also in other parts of the city. And this has already started.

More information:
www.malmo.se/english
www.worldwatch.org

Gdynia subsidizes ecological choices

It was in Gdynia - a Polish pioneer - where the first subsidy was granted already in year 1996 to a citizen who had replaced old coal-fired furnace with a modern gas-fired one. Since then, thousands of similar subsidies have been granted, thus reducing by hundreds of tonnes the emissions to the atmosphere produced by burning solid fuels.

Two years ago the rules for granting subsidies were changed and a system of grading desirable energy sources in the city, innovative on the national scale, was introduced. At the moment, each inhabitant who has replaced a less ecological energy source with a low-emission or non-emission one, will receive a subsidy. The best scored and, thus, the most cost-effective energy sources include the municipal heating network and electrical energy which do not cause any emission at the place of energy receipt.

'Sunny capital' co-finances solar collectors and heat pumps

Co-financing installation solar collectors or heat pumps, is one element of the new subsidy system. There are both more and more applications - and more solar collectors and heat pumps installed. Not only evident ecological reasons weigh in favor of the installation of renewable energy sources, but also savings which may be made in the long term. Data from the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management supports investing in solar energy in Gdynia.

Both economic subsidies and atmospheric factors make Gdynia a place with very good conditions for using re-

newable energy sources. The Gdynia local government promotes this idea among the inhabitants, so the city would soon become a real "sunny capital of Poland".

Support for asbestos and sanitary sewage

Each citizen of Gdynia can count on financial support from the city when wishing to change or replace the roofing or facades containing asbestos. Unfortunately, quite a substantial number of buildings in Gdynia, and over Poland, were built using this toxic material. It is our ambition to remove asbestos from Gdynia long before the year 2032, which is the deadline for removing asbestos in Poland.

Another ecological subsidy is granted for connecting a property to the municipal sanitary sewage system which currently serves 99 per cent of inhabitants. It is just the remaining one per cent that the city is interested in. These inhabitants are forced to use septic tanks which may leak and cause the waste to seep into rivers and streams and then to the Gulf of Gdansk. Septic tanks are more expensive than the municipal sewage system and below the living standard of a citizen of a modern city like Gdynia.



Gdynia is a "sunny capital of Poland", the city with statistically the greatest number of sunny days in the year, which gives the best possible reason for using the solar collectors for producing energy.

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Ecological storm water management in Malmö, Cesis and Jelgava

Text: Annika Kruuse, University of Malmö and Åsa Abrahamsson, City of Malmö

During 2006, Jelgava and Cesis in Latvia and Malmö in Sweden participated in a project concerning ecological storm water management. Experiences have been exchanged and a couple of important pilot projects have been carried out in Cesis and Jelgava. The next step is to spread the knowledge to other Latvian cities.

The project, "Sustainable management of the storm water treatment system for Latvia Municipalities", has been financed by the EU programme PHARE and is a result of the UBC project TBestC, where representatives from Jelgava, Cesis and Malmö met.

The project has included reciprocal study visits, knowledge sharing and implementation of pilot projects in Cesis

and Jelgava. Results from the project will be disseminated through a printed report: "Economical and ecological factors for sustainable storm water management", that will be distributed to all Latvian municipalities. The issue of storm water management has not previously been on the agenda in Latvia, neither on national nor local level, and the report is therefore expected to have a substantial influence in Latvia.

WEB

Read also how Climate change raises the risk of flooding and about the experiences from Augustenborg and Western Harbour in Malmö at www.ubc-action21.net.

Text: Laura and Lauri Järvillehto

Photos: Tero Pajukallio and Ekoarki/Pääkaupunkiseudun Kierrätyskeskus Oy



Happiness rap for sustainability!

What would you think about a local environmental motivator, an anti-advertisement exhibition or happiness rap? The EU projects carried out by Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse Centre Ltd., create new approaches and models of operation for environmental work.

The innovative and customer-centred approach of the projects Ecological Everyday, and New Life, reaches the centre of environmental problems. The Ecological Everyday established new means of activating residents; supporting environmental education work in schools and nurseries, and creating possibilities for hands-on environmental activity. Two employees were hired and a great deal was achieved with a relatively small investment.

According to the project review, the environmental interest of the residents and the local educators has increased. The participants' confidence in their own scope of influence has also been strengthened. They feel that they have gained environmental know-how and managed to apply new skills. The self-evaluation of the residents proved that consumer behaviour has become more environment-friendly.

Encouragement for teachers and residents

"We wanted to encourage the residents and educators to carry on the environmental work they were already doing. They have many ideas but what is needed is the the activity to get them started", says project co-ordinator **Hanna Lilja**. "The project managed to activate them better than

expected. Responsibility was given to people and their wishes were listened to."

The project was carried out in potentially unsociable suburbs, where environmental interest was feared to be scarce as other more pressing issues stole the attention. However, the environmental advice at schools, children's nurseries and housing associations received considerably more demand than expected. Thousands of residents and educators participated in the voluntary action groups, field trips, courses and other activities, while the expectations had only been for few hundred participants. "We discovered that working together works much better than educating or enlightening. And environmental education is everybody's business - babies and grand-fathers alike," Lilja carries on.

Slowlier, nearer, fewer, better, fairer!

The New Life project challenges to ask new questions. While the traditional approach looks at how to consume in an environmental-friendly way, New Life encourages discussing on living moderately. It is a question of what is really needed. While we produce goods in eco-efficient way, we still burden the nature due to the amount of consumption. The habits of the West are most encumbering to the Third World and the environment. The Earth could not endure every human being consuming as much as, say, an average Finn.

The key word is 'happiness', which doesn't lie with abundance of goods, but with family, friends, health, or meaningful activities. Unfortunately, many people will compromise on these to be able to work and consume more. The New Life project urges us to step off the treadmill. It gives communality, control over one's life, peace of mind and new experiences.

"Moderateness has not been formerly substantially emphasised in the western environmental thinking", says **Eija Koski**, the project co-ordinator of New Life. "On the project's courses people have now embraced this idea enthusiastically. It seems there's a demand for getting rid of unneeded stuff and for the space and time thus freed. Our mission is to encourage discussion about moving towards a post-materialistic society."

More information about projects and funding:

Ecological Everyday (Ekoarki):

www.kierratyskeskus.fi/ekoarki (Only in Finnish)

New Life (Uusi Elämä) www.uusi-elama.info





Boatfulls of people are interested to listen to the 'night singers' on one of the bird excursions the Environmental Protection Office has organised.

Text: Seppo Salonen

Photo: Jari Lampinen

Raising environmental awareness through excursions

Birds attract the public in Pori

Raising environmental consciousness is not always an easy task. The relationship between man and nature has changed due to the fact that most people are living in urban areas and only a minority lives from primary production. People are more and more uncertain how to manage in nature. On the other hand, the need to get positive experiences from nature and landscape is increasing all the time.

The city of Pori, located in the West coast of Finland, has tried to enhance environmental awareness by encouraging people to use surrounding nature by lowering the mental and physical barriers in various ways. Pori is known as a "bird city". A total number of 333 bird species has been observed in the area of the city, which can be considered a Finnish record among municipalities in Finland. It's no wonder, that the oldest Finnish local ornithological society was founded in Pori in 1959.

The Pori area is an ideal area for migrating and resting birds. The reason for this is the diversity of nature. In a relatively small area you can find marine coast, estuary, small lakes, large field areas etc. The estuary of River Kokemäenjoki and the Preiviikinlahti Bay, two large Natura 2000 areas in the Pori coast, are considered as most important bird sites in Southern Finland. The city of Pori has been active in introducing these remarkable sites to local residents.

Hiking routes for birdwatch and other recreation

Since the beginning of the 90's, the city has established over 30 kilometres of hiking routes and 12 nature towers and platforms in the most valuable nature areas. The starting point of creating this network has been very much bird watching based. Now the city authorities will put more

emphasis also on increasing the awareness that hiking routes are not only for skilled nature enthusiasts, but also for joggers, strollers, berry pickers and other people who want to use their own muscles when spending their leisure time in the nature.

More emphasis has also been put to constructing nature towers with large ramps, which can be easily visited by disabled people or people with small children. Pori has also realized that the constructions that have been called "bird towers" actually should be called "nature towers" or "landscape towers", because especially citizens near densely populated areas largely use towers for admiring the beauty of their own local landscape during an evening walk. Nevertheless, this helps them in seeing the values of their environment in a new way and commits people more to take care of their environment, although they cannot necessarily recognize a single bird specie.

WEB

Seppo Salonen tells what sort of tours the Environmental Protection Office of the city of Pori has arranged. Read more at www.ubc-action21.net

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Text and photo: Tonu Karu

Initiative from Tallinn to introduce

European Green Capital

Tallinn's idea of founding the title of European Green Capital was first introduced in January 2006 to various organizations from Tallinn and Estonia and to a possible initiative group. The feedback was entirely positive and Tallinn started to introduce the idea to other European cities.

Numerous responses from cities across Europe confirmed their support for the idea. The prepared Memorandum proposes awarding the title of European Green Capital and giving recognition every year to an environmentally friendly and innovative European city.

On May 15th 2006, the representatives of 17 European cities met in Tallinn to sign the Memorandum (picture below). In addition, over 40 European cities organizations and networks, including UBC, have expressed their support. In June, the Mayor of Tallinn, **Jüri Ratas**, introduced the Memorandum to the European Commission. Ratas met the Commissioner for Regional Policy, **Danuta Hübner**, and Environment Commissioner, **Stravos Dimas**, who also supported the initiative.

It was agreed to start a working group of the representatives of the European Commission and 4-5 cities, headed by Tallinn to start the work on the statute. The President of the European Commission **Jose Manuel Barroso** expressed his support in a letter to the Mayor of Tallinn on 14.07.06. Since the idea is based on the European environmental principles, the President recommended Commissioner Stravos Dimas to coordinate the development.

In September, all the signatories were invited to Tallinn to discuss the statute of European Green Capital, which was drawn up by the city of Tallinn in cooperation with Stockholm Environmental Institute in Tallinn. The workshop was attended by representatives from seven European cities, who contributed to the elaboration of the initial statute. Mayor Jüri Ratas handed over to Commissioner Dimas the initial statute that the working group had prepared.

Early November, Deputy Mayor **Olga Sõtnik** and **Nicholas Hanley**, the head of the European communication and administrative unit, met in Tallinn. They elaborated on the statute of European Green Capital. According to the agreement, the amended statute would be sent to the signatories for inspection. The next meeting is scheduled for the first months in 2007 in Brussels.

More information:

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Promoting innovative processes

The Best
Environmental Practice
Award in Baltic Cities



We asked the previous winners how the positive development has continued since they received the award.

2005 City of Kaunas, Lithuania

Kaunas modernized public transport and modified the route layout. The renewed bus and trolleybus fleet has reduced gas emissions according to European standards. Microbuses and taxi vans operated by private companies were integrated in the same control system with municipal transport, improving co-ordination of public transport.



Mindaugas Kucinovas, Transport Specialist: "The award itself was very useful for changing the quite negative point of view of the citizens towards the city, and it of course helped us, and our politicians, to prove that we are on the right path. In the future, we are also interested in even closer cooperation with the Baltic Sea Region cities in sharing experience in the field of alternative fuels."



2003 City of Cesis, Latvia

Cesis has involved citizens and other stakeholders in the planning process and practical work for improving the biodiversity and the green areas. It formed a basis for a long-term participatory process with the Environmental Development Board (EDB) taking part not only in the greenery area but also influencing policy areas like territorial planning.

Inta Adamsone, Environmental Officer: "We used the award for a study visit for the participants of EDB. EDB will pay greater attention to local protection areas, such as the Cesis Nature and cultural park. Also, the nature protection plan has been elaborated by EDB and adopted by politicians. We plan to involve more participants in environmental protection work such as teachers, youth and non-governmental organizations."

2001 City of Gdansk, Poland

The Sobieswska Island on the Baltic Sea coast, suffered from severe environmental problems, such as polluted soil and

surface and air pollution caused by coal heating. The change for more ecological direction boosted both the economy and the wellbeing of local people. The new spatial plan for the Island (EWS), landscape preservation and modernisation of infrastructure, green tourism as well as ecological education were new areas of implementation.

1999 City of Tartu, Estonia

The city has carried out projects for sustainable environmental development within the framework of Tartu Agenda 21 since 1995. There have been several years of hard work with logical and realistic aims concerning sustainable development.

Kersti Aro, Urban Sociologist:

"In 1999, the awarded money was used as the founding money for the Agenda 21 Fund for high school students. Following the Agenda 21 process, action plans of different fields of the local government have been formulated and carried out considering the future development of the city which, in turn, also serves as the basis for budgetary policy."

WEB

Read more opinions from the awarded cities from www.ubc.action21.net. More information about the award can be found at www.ubc.net.

From Local Action to Sustainable Development

It is time to apply for the Best Environmental Practice Award 2007! More information can be found on the back page of this Bulletin.

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The pedestrian area in the city of Jyväskylä is very popular.

Sustainability training started in Jyväskylä

Text: Mervi Saukko

Photo: City of Jyväskylä

The city of Jyväskylä is a lively city with 85 000 inhabitants, located in Central Finland. The city has just recently joined UBC. As a start for the year 2007, the city had an extensive training day for 200 school teachers on topics concerning sustainable development.

In March, the city will organise an environmental training for cleaners. Raising the awareness is a very logical step, since during the last five years Jyväskylä has been developing a model in order to find out the best way for continuous environmental improvement in the city. Linked to that, the city is carrying out environmental audits.

Special features: water, energy and waste

The city is built around the lake Jyväsjärvi. The story of the lake is comforting: once it was a dump, but nowadays the water in the lake is quite clean. There are bathing beaches and good opportunities to fish, for example pike perch. The lake is also known as a resting place for gulls during the migratory season.

Jyväskylä uses 260 litres water per day. The amount also includes water used by the M-Real Kangas paper mill situated in the middle of the city. 70 per cent of the water for household use comes from an artificial groundwater plant.

The main heating sources in Jyväskylä are peat (50%), wood (30%) and oil (10%).

Energy production and traffic are the main sources of greenhouse gases. To avoid that, the city has built over 250 kilometers of pedestrian and bicycle paths maintained by the city.

Jyväskylä is a pioneer in having introduced a general obligation to sort waste. The utilization of waste is 57 per cent. Also, the city is known as a forerunner in developing and using the environmental criteria for the public purchases.

Management to be further improved

The main tools to improve sustainable development in Jyväskylä are the environmental management system, the environmental policy and the climate strategy. The city has also undersigned an agreement of energy conservation.

The next most challenging task is to make sure that the local politicians and members of municipal boards know enough of EMS, environmental policy and environmental agreements, and to ensure that the awareness of environmental management issues in the political decision making processes is sufficient. That will be the main theme in the year 2007. Furthermore, the question of how to add the social dimension to the management system has to be solved. The ecological and economical dimensions have already been included.

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Siauliai focuses on children and youth

Environmental education begins in kindergarten

Environmental education of the community is one of the most significant environmental targets and the main guarantee of the community's participation fulfilling the environment protection objectives. In order to educate energetic and conscious members of the community, children and youth are engaged in finding solutions for environmental issues.

This community group is keen on education, can easily change its habits, and can motivate their parents as well. It should be noted that each year more and more Siauliai City education institutions and NGO's are engaged in household management and resolution of environmental issues through the different projects.

Fruitful results in co-operation with twinning cities

In cooperation with the twinning cities of Kristianstad (Sweden) and Fredericia (Denmark), special containers have been installed for sorting of plastics, paper and glass in the Rekyva Neighborhood in Siauliai. This is an excellent educating activity to form a favorable approach towards environment.

In association with the Kristianstad pre-school education expert **Lana Bertilson**, an international conference-seminar, *Solution of Environmental Issues at Pre-school Education Institution: Environmentally Friendly and Healthy Future Perspective*, has been held in the kindergarten to enhance the partnership ties and as well to enrich the already available experience. Lecturers of Siauliai University, representatives from schools, and the stock company Putoksnis have shared their environmental education ideas and best practice experiences.

Information and dissemination to be improved

At the end of November 2006, Siauliai citizens were invited to the international conference on *Information Dissemination on Environment: Challengers, Expectations, Significance and Experience* which was held in line with the project of the Environment Department funded from the EU Structural



Day activity in kindergarten "Bangele" in Siauliai.

Funds. It aimed at the promotion of motivated communities' activities, participation in the decision making process in environmental issues, strengthening active cooperation and partnership engaging all responsible institutions for common performance and shaping the concept of environment values, knowledge, skills and behavior.

Hanne Greve Dall, the expert from the Fredericia Environment Department, has been sharing a great deal about the dynamic partnership between the Fredericia Municipality and its community. She has highlighted the targeted activities of volunteers assisting the municipality in resolving different environmental issues.

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Text: Guldbrand Skjönberg and Heidi Tuhkanen

Chairman Guldbrand's Checklist for Cross-sectoral Collaboration

To be responsible for the process of Sustainable Development is a big and important challenge since this issue impacts most of the activities in which a municipality is involved. Though it is not hard to reach the conclusion that collaboration between different sectors is crucial to the Sustainable Development process, it is much more difficult to put this concept into practice.

The traditional sectors within government are quite separated in their working structures, issues and methods. Additionally, they have their own sector-specific training and career goals (at local, regional and central levels), jargon and culture. These differences cannot be overlooked when planning for collaboration.

However, since cross-sectoral cooperation IS required for bridging the famous Implementation Gap that so many UBC cities face when it comes to Sustainable Development, we need to find ways and models that address these issues.

Our chairman, **Guldbrand Skjönberg** has made a little checklist that he always keeps in his mind when organizing sustainability work between the traditional sectors. He uses this in his work to run the Municipality of Nacka's (Sweden) Sustainability Management Center which has management of Nacka Municipality's Sustainable Development as one of its main processes.

For more information about SMCs (Sustainability Management Centers) see <http://www.sustainment-project.net>.

Chairman Guldbrand's Checklist for Cross-sectoral Collaboration

- What are the cultural differences in each of the municipal sectors involved? How can I deal with them?
- What is the added value of co-operation for the different sectors?
- How can the results of cooperation be seen to benefit the participants in cross-sectoral group?
- Never remove responsibility from someone. For example, responsibility for traffic safety must remain in the traffic sector and not be taken over by a central safety group.
- If people contribute to an cross-sectoral group, they must be rewarded in the same way as they would in their own sector.
- All responsibilities and roles in the cooperation must be clear.
- All those involved in collaboration must have the same targets and visions.
- It is important to build up confidence among the members.



12 active BUSTRIP cities

You are invited to a 'taster' of different pro-active processes taking place in the transport field in the cities.

Örebro – creating an attractive city

Örebro is developing its city area to be more attractive for the citizens. One of the aims is to find solutions for coordinated local goods deliveries that is economically beneficial for the local businesses and in the same time improving the urban environment. Walking, biking and using the public transport are also looked upon as ways to substitute private cars for short distance travels in the city.



Gdynia – first with ITS in Poland

By the end of April 2007, Gdynia will have implemented one of the very first Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in Poland. Public transport will be prioritised by ITS on one of Gdynia's main transport routes and main communication arteries of the whole Tri-City region. Gdynia has also converted one of its central streets into a vibrant pedestrian area contributing to environment, local businesses and quality of life for its citizens.



Tartu – awareness on sustainable mobility

Tartu is raising the citizens' awareness on how to change urban travelling patterns from car based to sustainable modes like walking, biking and public transport. Tartu uses some unconventional methods for raising their citizen's awareness. For example during the Car Free Day one of the city buses were covered with a huge BUSTRIP-project sign as an eye-opener for the campaign.

Sundsvall – 100% synthetic

Sundsvall has in a short time radically improved the air quality in the city centre through measures in the energy field. During the last years emissions caused by transport have been tackled through changing the fuel used in the public transport vehicles. The long term goal is to run all buses on synthetic diesel made from forest residues.



Göteborg – personal mobility

Mobility management has gone from a pilot project to mainstream in Göteborg. As a complement to its "hard"

investments, the city is also putting a lot of effort into changing citizens behaviours. One of their projects is personal mobility coaching, where hard core car drivers are being personally coached to walk, bike or use the public transport.

Kouvola Region – efficient and compact

The Kouvola Region has created a compact structure in the settlements in the region. The compact city structure serves as an excellent base for sustainable mobility. The region is now putting its efforts on how to serve the citizens with comfortable and efficient public transportation.

Pärnu – Biking Spa city

Pärnu is a pearl by the Baltic Sea and it attracts a lot of tourists in summertime. In order to keep the good image of the city, it is important to maintain the safe and calm atmosphere while the city and tourist volumes are growing. Pärnu is encouraging sustainable mobility, especially biking, as a mean of urban transport. Recreation is an important measure to reach this.

Liepaja – actions on air quality

Liepaja is implementing an action programme on air quality. The city has acknowledged the influence of transport on the city's air quality and is therefore assessing hot spots in the city to be able to develop sustainable transport.

Bremen – shared future

In Bremen the future is shared – at least when it comes to cars. Car sharing is one of the focus areas when creating sustainable transport in the city. Bremen is also looking into how to green the urban logistics through special loading zones for low-emission vehicles.

WEB

Read more at www.ubc-action21.net about
Turku – promoting biking and walking
Kaunas – improved safety for sustainable mobility
Vilnius – on the right track

More information:
www.bustrip-project.net

Policymakers and energy experts have to combine their efforts

Diversity and knowledge accumulation

The European Commission proposes an integrated energy and climate change package that is aiming at cutting greenhouse emissions by 20% by the year 2020. The proposal also includes a comprehensive package of measures to establish a new Energy Policy for Europe to combat climate change and boost the EU's energy security and competitiveness. EU policies will eventually boil down to implementations on the local and individual level, sooner or later, if there should be any effect.

This is why the UBC energy commission is gearing up for a close encounter with the real world issues. The public sector is a major energy consumer and if the targets are to be realized, they have to be part of the solution. Central heating grids, local transport systems as well as initiatives for promoting and supporting energy efficiency schemes for local industry are, of course, a part of the solution. But instead of talking about the different sectors one by one, we ought to look at the energy complex as an integrated system. How can different energy sources be mixed in order to support each other and facilitate reuse and repurposing of energy flows? If you apply this approach to energy, it has been proven that the consumption within the industry can be reduced by over 60%. This is not only a matter of energy efficiency, but also a matter of competitiveness for our respective industries as prices go higher and higher.

When energy markets are deregulated and the grids are interconnected across Europe, it tends to result in a situation where the highest price per KW/h at any given instance will also be the best price you can get anywhere in Europe. In Sweden, it costs about 0,5 €cent to produce 1 KW/h hydro power but the market price is around 5 €cent. Over 40 billions SEK are transferred as profits alone from the consumers of electricity to the three giant energy conglomerates that dominate the national market. This is the same amount the Sweden spends on its national defense budget.

The only way to protect yourself from the tyranny of oligopoly is to be self-sufficient and produce your own electricity. This is also a solution to the hazards of being too dependant on the so often failing power grids. There is new technology around the corner just waiting for the prices of electric energy to increase a little bit further before they will start their marketing campaigns. For example, a Danish company has engineered a CO2 neutral Combined Heat and Power plant based on a biomass fired Stirling Engine that can be installed in a private home. It produces both electricity and heat for the household and can be fuelled by pellets.

This kind of installations will probably be more frequent in areas where there are no district heating systems or the dependence on electricity is vital for the comfort or income of a family. Farms, summer houses, residents of islands and other isolated areas, as well as small scale industries might consider this as an option in the near future. Surplus electricity can be sold to the market and will then give extra return on the investment. In the future when the technology has developed further, these might even be installed by the municipality in the residential areas.

To find practical solutions that will be the most economical, and at the same time, help us reach the emission targets for green house emissions is the challenge. The competence board of UBC energy commission is composed of independent scholars and experts. Policymakers and experts have to combine their efforts in order to reach the goal. We have just started on that route, and we need more participation from other municipalities and cities around the Baltic region in order to become successful. Diversity and knowledge accumulation can be the key factors in the future if we really want to contribute towards the common goals.

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UBC Energy Commission started its work in November

Energy efficiency, reduction of greenhouse emissions and self-reliance

The UBC Energy Meeting in November 2006 was the official start for the concrete work of the commission. Together with the elected board of the commission experts and professors in the energy field will now take the lead in forming the research and development program for the energy commission.

What is the most important energy related issue that should be the focus of the UBC Energy commission? This was the most essential issue for the Energy Meeting and was discussed during the group sessions. The delegates gathered around three focus areas for the Energy Board to proceed working with: energy efficiency, reduction of green house emissions and striving for higher local self-reliance.

Commission open for all UBC members

The Energy Commission is open for all UBC city members to contribute to and the secretariat in Oskarshamn will coordinate the work with the other commissions, cities and organizations both within the Baltic Sea region and the EU. Please contact the secretariat for more information and to give your input.



Photo: Daniel Svensson, Fotomix

The UBC Energy Commission Board was appointed during the UBC Energy Meeting. The appointed board members are as follows;

Co-Chairman:

Mr. Stefan Windh, representing Oskarshamn

Board member: Pekka Sihvonen, Representing Kotka

Board member: Mats Brantsberg, representing Örebro

Board Member: Jan Westerberg, representing Mariehamn

Chairman: pending

Competence Board gathers knowledge from science

Text: Bengt Karlsson

An important strategic function for the energy commission is the competence board. The tasks are to acquire knowledge from relevant branches of science. The persons in the group can act as contacts to find the right competences for different projects. They can also contribute to forming a holistic view of the strategies for energy related issues and bestow with contacts for critical inspection of a coming energypedia.

The persons in the competence board are well qualified in their branches of science and represent different parts of the region, and different fields of knowledge, and needed competences representing those issues we are working with for the actual moment. (Not life time – competences)

The board is appointed by the Energy Commission Board and is coordinated by NOVA, the university platform of the city of Oskarshamn, an arena for different universities. Its profile areas are energy and health. NOVA offers a wide range of sought-after university programmes and courses and also Advanced Vocational Education Training. NOVA also coordinates R&D projects in cooperation with different universities.

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More information:

Stefan Windh – Co-Chairman

Sofie Gunnarsson – Head of Secretariat

Bengt Karlsson – Responsible for research and development strategies

UBC Energy Commission

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UBC Energy Commission Spring 2007

March 20 2007 Swedish National Energy Convention in Stockholm

March 2007 Competence Board Meeting in Stockholm

March 7-9 2007 Participate at the Meeting of the Commission on Environment in Liepaja

February – May 2007

Initiation and start up phase of Energy related projects within the UBC Energy Commission. Partners in these projects are the UBC Commission on Environment, other UBC Cities and professors from universities in the Baltic Sea region.

June 1 2007 Board meeting for the UBC Energy Commission in Mariehamn

Nordic-Baltic Aalborg Commitments network

Since the beginning of the year 2007, UBC Commission on Environment together with the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities has been supporting the Nordic-Baltic Aalborg Commitments Network. The aim of the Network is to support and activate the work of the local authorities who have signed or are about to sign the Commitments in the Nordic and Baltic region.

Currently UBC Environment Commission is looking into different possibilities for strengthening the Aalborg Commitments process and identifying resources for the actions carried by the Nordic-Baltic Aalborg Commitments Network.

Fifth European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns, March 21 – 24 in Sevilla, Spain

The upcoming Conference for Sustainable Cities and Towns is in the last phase of preparations. Viewing at the Conference agenda we can see that the representation of the Baltic Sea Region is strong and visible. Key note speakers, facilitators of workshop sessions, workshop presentations, UBC stand and wide participation in general are evidence of the broad presentation of UBC EnvCom in Sevilla. The Baltic Sea Region Forum meeting on Friday 23rd of March, will gather the actors from our region to discuss our common future. See you all in Sevilla!

Matruschka - project

A project concentrating on stakeholder methodologies in the Integrated Management System is about to start once the negotiation period with the BSR INTERREG III B NP authorities is over. Through the project the entire UBC network will be challenged to improve their stakeholder involvement. The project will directly engage following project partners: St.Petersburg, Novgorod, Kaliningrad, Vyborg region, Kotka, Stockholm, Oskarshamn, Malmö, the Centre for Continued Education at Åbo Akademi University and the UBC Commission on Environment as the lead partner.

Active Living - promoting health by means of physical activity

In 2006, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region published a book of best practices and the successful health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) products of Turku in the "Active Living - promoting health by means of physical activity". The book is a kind of a cook-book: what are the necessary preparations, which ingredients should be combined for best results, and how does a successful result in Active Living looks like. Also comments and thoughts of the citizens - children, working-aged and ageing population are included.

More information:

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WEB

Heini Parkkunen tells more on how the schools play an important role on the way to healthy living.

Read more at: www.ubc-action21.net.

MUE-25 City Spotlights

Text: Annika Claesson

Cities in Managing Urban Europe-25 are taking actions for sustainability by using the integrated management system developed in the project. The integrated management system plays the role of a bridge between vision and implementation.

More MUE-25 cities are planning to sign the Aalborg Commitments during 2007. (Lewes, Siauliai, Lahti, Oslo, Ascha, Tübingen)

Oslo and Stockholm carried out peer reviews in November / December 2006 to evaluate their current environmental work.

Turku is considering linking their sustainability work to the budget process. Växjö is providing one good example working with ecoBUDGET.

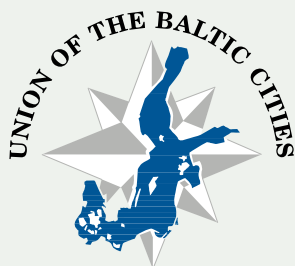
For more case studies, visit www.mue25.net

"Action without a system is a good intention but it is only a vision with an action and a system that can sustain the change". (MUE-25 philosophy)

Some MUE-25 cities performed their baseline reviews according to the Aalborg Commitments. Find some of them on the Aalborg Commitments website (Riga, Växjö, Siena and Ancona) and some more on the www.mue25.net.

Siofok in Hungary is meeting EU legislation by implementing the integrated management system. LBDCA* supports Siofok and Balatonfüred and also implements an integrated management system for the whole micro-region Lake Balaton.

*Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency



UBC

Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat

The UBC Agenda 21 work is a joint initiative of 100 cities and other partners. The forum for joint work of these cities, their representatives and other partners, are the UBC Commission on Environment and the Agenda 21 Working Group. They are open to participation of all member cities, and also many partner organisations are regularly present at the meetings.

You are most welcome to join! In addition to the Commission on Environment meetings, we organise several

Environment and Agenda 21 workshops and seminars every year, as well as publish the Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin and website. The bulletin offers you an excellent forum to publicise your activities and initiatives on environment and sustainable development. If you have an idea for a story, just contact us!

The staff of Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat currently consist of 15 professionals working fulltime for the UBC.



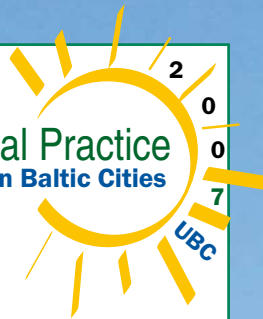
Front row (left) Head of Secretariat Björn Grönholm, project officer Katarzyna Bogucka (MUE-25), project officer Sakari Saarinen (BUSTRIP). **Back row (left)** Editor Virpi Kaukavuori, publications officer Sari Bowie, project officer Heidi Tubkanen (SUSTAINMENT), project coordinator Anna Granberg (BUSTRIP), project coordinator Annika Claesson (MUE-25), project officer Sanna Erkko (SUSTAINMENT), management assistant Agnieszka Ilola, project officer George Enkelinen, the substitute director of the Environmental Protection Office in City of Turku Olli-Pekka Mäki, project coordinator Kyösti Lempa (SUSTAINMENT), financial manager Jussi Välimäki, Network Manager Stella Aaltonen. Project coordinator Sulev Nömmann was on a work trip when the photo was taken.

More information about the projects and staff members at www.ubc-action21.net.

"Enjoy the beautiful winter in the Baltic Sea Region", encourages Björn Grönholm. Photo: Sari Kotila.



The Best
Environmental Practice
Award in Baltic Cities



The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2007

From Local Action to Sustainable Development

Practice categories are: **Sustainable energy management**
Use of sustainable economic instruments/incentives
Communicating /reporting the state of environment

Winner of each category will be rewarded with a gift and a diploma. In addition to this, one city will be presented with a grant of 5000 euros.

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**Deadline for
application is
31 May 2007!**

Download application form at: www.ubc.net

