

Baltic Cities

Environmental bulletin • No 1, 2008

VISIONS FOR
FUTURE

DO WE
PLAY THE
SAME TUNE?



Visions of sustainable future

The 20th century was the period of unprecedented economic development in the world, great fall of colonialism and totalitarian systems. However, it took place at the expense of depletion of non-renewable sources of fossil fuels, metal ores and destruction of Earth's natural wealth. It became commonly known at the end of the 20th century that the human being, in his uncontrollable expansion, reached the limits set by the planet where he lives and further development of this type became impossible.

Boundless consumerism typical of developed countries causes useless loss of great amounts of energy and raw materials for the production of goods which are not necessary for existence. Wasteful exploitation of natural resources and wealth in poor countries is just a struggle for survival. Maintaining such a model of development for next decades must lead to an escalation of global social, economic and environmental conflicts on an unprecedented scale. In order to provide all inhabitants of the Earth with decent standard of living, it is necessary to change dramatically the approach towards production, consumption and the environment.

Production processes must be optimised in such a way that it will be possible to produce high-quality, durable and necessary for human being goods with the use of as little energy and raw materials as possible. A series of analyses shows that there are capabilities to use a few times less raw material in the industrial production than it takes place presently. But technological progress alone, however necessary, is not able to protect the humankind against a disaster unless dramatic changes take place

in the model of consumption, especially in the case of developed countries. Currently, this model is being affected by fashion and advertising to a large extent, encouraging people to multiply goods not necessarily indispensable for their living.

Departing from the model of consumerism is also possible through the increase of the importance of non-material services, such as education, culture, art, healthcare or tourism. Through a lifetime education, passions and talents, which lie dormant in each human being but are effectively stifled in the current system, can be triggered. After all, everybody should have an opportunity to learn the beauty of nature, human thought and the beauty of works produced by humans. The one who will be delighted by the surrounding world will live his life in a valuable and happy way regardless his wealth. Wild nature will have a high standing in his hierarchy of values and therefore he will respect and protect it. He will also sympathize with the poorest countries, sparing no generous and effective help. Only such people can help in such development of developing countries which will be sustainable and will take place with respect to natural resources. Only then could the countries have an opportunity to develop for the good of all inhabitants.

Today, at the turn of the 20th century, the whole humankind is at the crossroads. Will it follow the current way, risking serious regional and even global conflicts or will it choose a way of sustainable development? Let us do all the best to make the Earth friendly fatherland for all its inhabitants.

Maciej Nowicki

Minister for the Environment, Poland

UBC member cities (as of February 2008)

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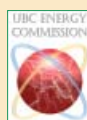


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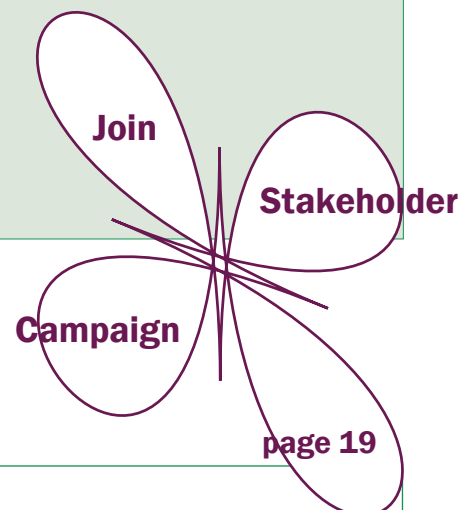


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Process for Sustainability

Notes for common

We challenge each UBC city to take a role as a pannist in the “Baltic Sea Region band”.

This is a call for innovativeness and determination for UBC cities to take significant actions towards sustainability. A strong Baltic Sea Region response is needed to face the challenges ahead. Keys to this include efficient communication of the ideas, tools and methods we already have. It is time to make our steelpans ready and heard!

Over 60 participants, representing 25 UBC cities, 12 different co-operation organizations and five UBC commissions attended the Commission on Environment (EnvCom) meeting 7-8 of February 2008 in Tampere, Finland. The meeting concentrated on the “Visions of Sustainable future in the Baltic Sea Region” and started the discussion for the next action programme of UBC. The current Action programme runs till the next UBC General Conference in 2009, so it is time to look ahead.

In the meeting the visions of Baltic Sea Region were addressed broadly, from the near history to development trends towards the future in the next years. Cities of Växjö and Gdansk introduced their visions and gave food for thought for the other participants on how their own city is working. The meeting used interactive methods which resulted in wide discussions about the different aspects for the next action programme.

The participants of the meeting evaluated the current activities and services carried out by the EnvCom. Majority of the participants were impressed of the scale of them. The activities that the EnvCom has taken in transforming research and tools into practice and in networking were highly evaluated. The participants also clearly stated that a new action programme and surveys supporting it are needed also in the future. For creating the programme a large process involving the entire UBC is essential. It was decided the national contact persons of the Advisory Board of the UBC EnvCom will further develop the results of the meeting as a basis for the next programme.

Profile the Baltic Sea Region!

The participants of the meeting analyzed the situation of the Baltic Sea Region from several perspectives, looking both at Baltic Sea Region level, as well as local level. It became clear that the role of the UBC as a mediator between different levels is very important and should be enforced in the future. This kind of platform where different actors, practitioners, politicians and stakeholders can exchange and develop actions together is vital in reaching the targets set by EU and National levels.

The participants call for a clear and strong Baltic Sea Region profile of which all the citizens feel proud of.

Steelpan (steeldrum) is made from a 55 gallon drum of the type that stores oil. The process of making a pan is challenging and the sizes vary from one pan to another. Nowadays steel pan artists, pannists, can play with steelpan variety of music styles and genres.



melody



We need to brand the Baltic Sea. The main strengths of the Baltic Sea Region are both the differences and similarities of the municipalities and we need to find ways to benefit from them. Together we need to address the three biggest challenges identified: climate change, state of the Baltic Sea and energy supply and efficiency. We need to join forces to reduce the growing consumption and guarantee skilled working force for future.

A clear message is that more cooperation is needed between different UBC commissions. All future projects need to focus more in pilot activities and in exchange of practical measures than on developing tools. It was stressed that the existing tools need to be analyzed and taken into use at all levels of municipalities. Help for this is needed and therefore the participating cities requested to get direct support and trainings to facilitate their own sustainability processes. This will be further stressed by UBC EnvCom.



More communication

Commission on Environment is strongly focusing in addressing the sustainability from all its dimensions. Last projects have concentrated on reinforcing the capacities of the local authorities to address the sustainability from management and co-ordination side. Further emphasis is still needed to communicate the outcomes of the processes to different target audiences. In many cases it is more a matter of communication than actually about inventing something new.

"Stronger emphasis is needed in matching the needs, resources and existing tools together. We are aiming to create synergy for the benefit of the entire Baltic Sea Region and therefore are very grateful for the good and active co-operation that we have. Future actions need larger participation and new approaches and therefore we welcome also new actors in our activities," says **Björn Grönholm**, Head of Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat.

In workshop discussions it became clear that there is a need to further develop the communication channels used by the EnvCom and to provide more communication on local languages. In the last projects the outcomes are available in 8-9 languages and this work was positively commented, as terminology is not easy to define in all of the languages. Currently EnvCom is working on a large improvement on communication channels and this will be launched in Autumn 2008. It seems that this is exactly what the cities are asking for.

Thank you for the city of Tampere for generously hosting the meeting.

The next Commission on Environment meeting will take place in Tallinn, Estonia 30-31 October 2008, where the process will be taken further. You are all very welcome to join the meeting!

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A model for local and regional sustainability

Today more than 80% of EU's population lives in urban areas and their quality of life is directly influenced by the state of the urban environment. With the rapid rate of urbanization over half of the urban areas in the world that will exist in 2030 do not exist yet – with efficient management these future urban areas can be made sustainable from day 1. But if urban Europe is to achieve sustainable development it requires efficient management practices and tools that support both existing and future urban areas.

During three years, 25 European cities and regions have cooperated to develop a model for local and regional sustainability in the project Managing Urban Europe-25. The model is a response to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment initiated by the European Commission (2006). The MUE-25 model of an integrated management system has been taken up in the recently published guidance in relation to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.

A model for sustainable cities

"The model of an integrated management system facilitates a holistic management and the integration of different sectors which are prerequisites for sustainable cities" says Björn Grönholm, Head of the Secretariat for Environment and Sustainable Development within Union of the Baltic Cities. The model is the key for cities and regions to fulfil EU policies such as Lisbon Agenda, EU Sustainable Development Strategy, Leipzig Charter on European Sustainable Cities, as well as to implement the Aalborg Commitments of the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign. It builds on existing environmental management systems such as EMAS, ISO 14001 and ecoBUDGET but widens the scope to include all sustainability dimensions and operates at the heart of a city's strategic planning processes.

Commitment for a sustainable urban future

The model of an integrated management system was presented and discussed in a conference held in Berlin, 12-13 February, 2008. The event gathered 150 participants and key persons responsible for the urban issue from 25 European countries.

"The connections and the complexity of the local actions became obvious and as a result the administration optimized its work."
Martin Scheuermann, Ludwigsburg, Germany.

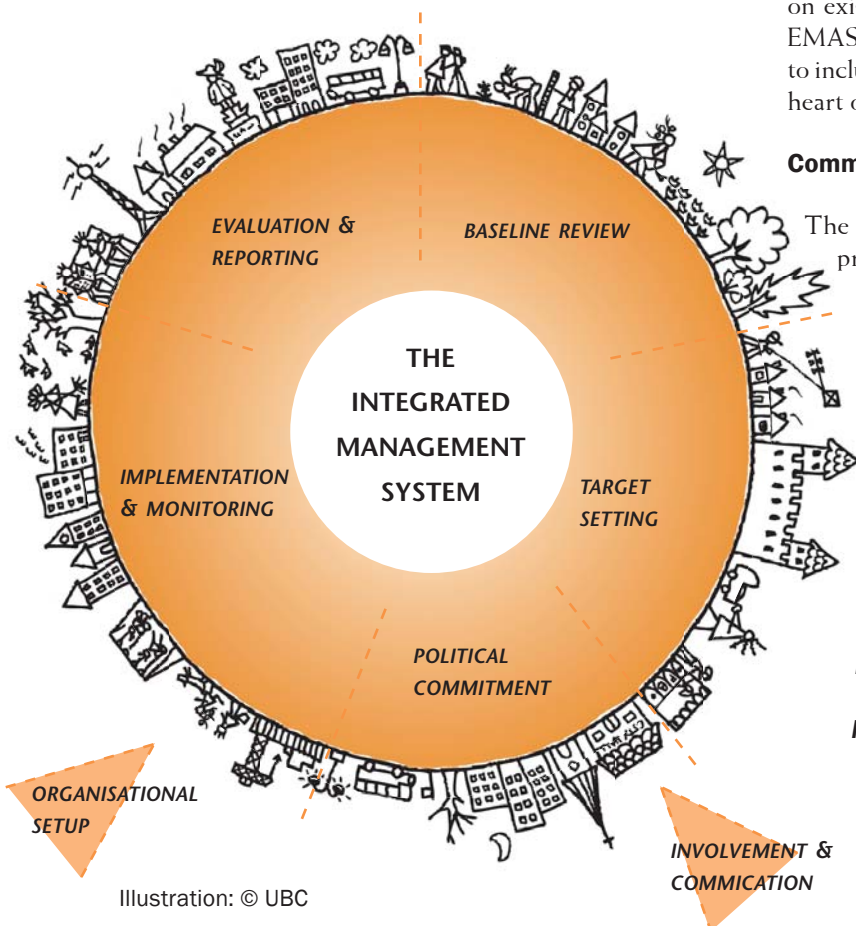


Illustration: © UBC



„The biggest benefit has been that the different departments involved in the city management processes started to work together.” Vilija Guzyte, Kaunas, Lithuania.



It included representatives from the Local Governments, Regional Authorities, National Governments, the European Commission and the EU Parliament. The *BerlinForum* served as discussion platform for a variety of issues around urban integrated management for a sustainable future of cities & regions - from climate change to equity, from the EU Lisbon Strategy for Growth to the Aalborg Commitments. At the conference, the local coordinators of the 25 project cities and regions issued a statement declaring a commitment to continue their pathway with integrated sustainable management practices. They also agreed to meet in five years time in Leeds (UK) for a follow-up forum.

Involvement needed between all levels

The coordinators of the MUE-25 cities and regions declared that they are committed to continue their journey towards sustainability but also stated that they cannot get there alone. They need national governments to support their efforts by liaising local authorities nation-wide, and by providing a platform for exchange of solutions, ideas, experience. They also encourage the EU Institutions to enforce the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment through innovative legislation including consistent budgetary allocations to cities and local communities. A direct dialogue with the European Commission is needed to build a more sustainable future.

Launch of supporting tools

As the project draws to an end, the 25 project forerunner cities and regions are now ready to share their experience and motivate their peers to follow them on the path to sustainability. A manual *“Integrated Management – towards local and regional sustainability”* has been launched in 9 languages. In- depth guidance and more city cases on how to work with the model will also be found on www.localmanagement.eu.

***„Simplified planning has resulted in more efficient actions in Siófok. The city will be cleaner and healthier, we can offer quality services in tourism and the economic situation is growing.”
Rita Fazekas, Siófok, Hungary.***

From the Berlin Statement delivered by MUE-25 cities in Berlin 13 February 2008

“We, the cities of the Managing Urban Europe-25 project, are committed to continuing our pathway towards integrated sustainable management practices in our local administrations and in the urban areas we are responsible for. Only with an integrated management system are we equipped to face the challenges imposed by the need to change our societies into a less resource-intensive way of life and an equitable distribution of wealth. The predominant discussion on the global climate crisis and the urgent need to act on all possible levels – from individuals to nations – only reinforce our commitment to sustainable urban management.”

“We need National Governments to support our efforts by liaising local authorities nation-wide, by providing a platform for exchange of solutions, ideas, experience.”

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The reason for why we should act on reducing the climate gases released to our atmosphere and reducing the number of car and truck rides in our cities of today is rather obvious. Twenty five percent of the climate gases derive from transports and it is one of the few sectors where the emissions are still increasing. The question is how to get all of us to understand the connection between the extinction of the coral reefs and driving to work. The list of species and environments mostly endangered due to the global warming is just one of the heart breaking news that we have seen in different media more frequently during the last year. However, it is still a fact that the majority of planners, policy and decision makers and citizens of our cities are not doing enough concrete decision and actions to change the situation.

One concrete tool to assist cities to plan and move towards more climate friendly transports is a model for making a Sustainable Urban Transport Plan (SUTP) that was developed in the Baltic Urban Sustainable Transport Implementation and Planning project, BUSTRIP, during 2005-2007. The SUTP takes an integrated approach on all the drivers causing urban transport problems. Making a SUTP involves all relevant city departments, the whole urban area and involves different public and private stakeholders into the process.

SUTP in Örebro

In the project, 12 Baltic Sea Region cities developed their own SUTPs. City of Örebro, one of BUSTRIP partner cities, provides a good example of the SUTP process. In

Örebro, as the first stage of the process a cross-sectoral working group was put up and a coordinator was appointed. The coordinator was positioned at the newly formed unit for Sustainable Urban Transport which includes city officers from different departments. In this cross-sectoral working group the framework for the SUT-planning process was drawn up, including capacity scanning, stakeholder involvement, policy coordination, public communication and dissemination of the process.

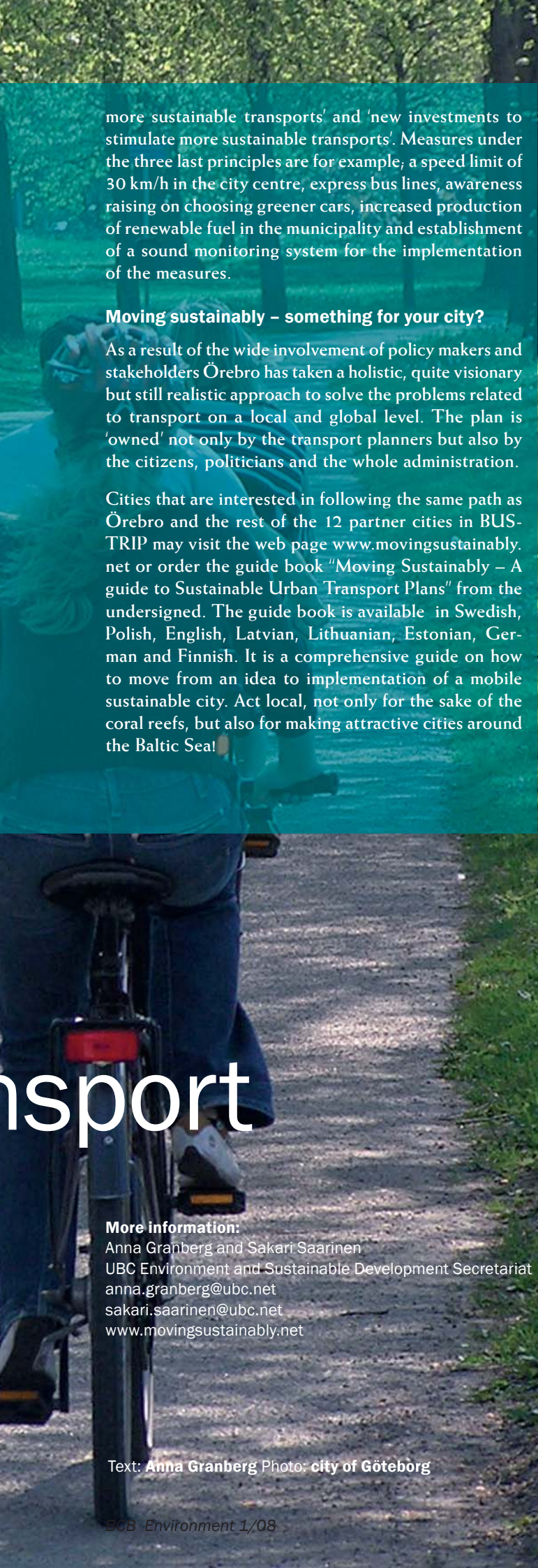
In order to get a common understanding and to make an analysis of the current situation of urban transports a baseline review was conducted in the municipality. The resulting documents, self-assessment and peer review reports were used for informing all relevant actors in the city. The first step of the planning process was to involve all relevant stakeholders in different working groups. The outcomes of the working groups were compiled by the coordinator and sent out for commenting to all stakeholders and citizens. Throughout the process the coordinator presented the ideas behind the process to politicians, administrators and stakeholders.

The document sent out for consultation – the proposed SUTP for Örebro - lays on four principles. The first one implies 'reducing the need for transport' and includes: a parking policy that supports a pleasant and safe city centre, making an impact on travelling in companies and organizations and sustainable travels to school. The other principles are 'to stimulate a smarter usage of existing infrastructure', 'changes in existing structures to enable

How should cities make Sustainable Urban Transport Plans

The five places/animals in the world that are most endangered by global warming. 1) The glorious Cape Botanic province in South Africa, particularly the succulent Karoo flora. 2) Amphibians everywhere (a third of all species are already gravely endangered or extinct). 3) Coral reefs. 4) Species on mountaintops (many populations are already extinct. 5) The tundra (Ref: Times online, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/>).





more sustainable transports' and 'new investments to stimulate more sustainable transports'. Measures under the three last principles are for example; a speed limit of 30 km/h in the city centre, express bus lines, awareness raising on choosing greener cars, increased production of renewable fuel in the municipality and establishment of a sound monitoring system for the implementation of the measures.

Moving sustainably – something for your city?

As a result of the wide involvement of policy makers and stakeholders Örebro has taken a holistic, quite visionary but still realistic approach to solve the problems related to transport on a local and global level. The plan is 'owned' not only by the transport planners but also by the citizens, politicians and the whole administration.

Cities that are interested in following the same path as Örebro and the rest of the 12 partner cities in BUS-TRIP may visit the web page www.movingsustainably.net or order the guide book "Moving Sustainably – A guide to Sustainable Urban Transport Plans" from the undersigned. The guide book is available in Swedish, Polish, English, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, German and Finnish. It is a comprehensive guide on how to move from an idea to implementation of a mobile sustainable city. Act local, not only for the sake of the coral reefs, but also for making attractive cities around the Baltic Sea!

nsport

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Text: Anna Granberg Photo: city of Göteborg

Future prospects for UBC activities with Lake Victoria Region

UBC has for several years been involved in cooperation with the Lake Victoria including Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and in particular with the LVRLAC organization (Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Co-operation). This co-operation has aimed to strengthen organizational capacity building of both organizations but also real concrete actions like establishment of Environmental Pedagogic Centers and City Twinning activities with cities in Lake Victoria Region. In other words the activity has been both on the network level and directly between local authorities and their active people involved.

As a strong acknowledgement the former president of UBC Mr Anders Engström from city of Kalmar has been honored by LVRLAC for his contribution towards LVRLAC with a plaque, while the Municipality of Entebbe Municipal council in Uganda has made him an honorary councilor in a grand function.

The cooperation between LVRLAC and UBC will continue as a result of mutual interest and as a concrete example of global cooperation between local level authorities. This cooperation and activities have a good basis to stand and build further cooperation and activities on. We are two regions with a lot of differences but with lots of similarities, common interests and challenges!

Through a decision to focus on supporting and increasing the number of City twinning activities between cities in the Baltic Sea Region and Lake Victoria Region we hope to increase concrete cooperation between different stakeholders in local authorities. This work is not always easy but extremely rewarding. If your city is interested to establish city twinning, please, contact the undersigned.

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Aalborg Commitments

– framework for sustainable future

Baltic Sea region is lacking behind in scoring commitments – was the message of the Environmental Bulletin 1/2006. Where are we now and have the Aalborg Commitments gone further?

Text: **Stella Aaltonen**

The Aalborg Commitments (AC) are nowadays a generally accepted guideline and a thematic base for sustainability. Several EU documents recognize the value of the commitments, such as the Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy, Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities and the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Since the 2004, when the ACs were accepted in the fourth European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns in Aalborg, Denmark, more than 510 local authorities have signed the ACs. Majority of the signatories are still from the Mediterranean cities, but Baltic Sea region is slowly catching up, the current number of signatories being 30.

The ACs provide a practical and flexible tool for local action and achievements. They are composed of ten different commitments that give a framework for sustainability. Each of the commitments has five objectives towards which the signatories should work. On signing the Aalborg Commitments, local governments enter a baseline review and a target-setting process in dialogue with local stakeholders and incorporating existing LA21 or other sustainability action plans. Signatories agree to produce

an integrated AC baseline review and a target setting document. So far 30 baseline reviews and 2 target setting documents are available in the AC website.

The most active cities in this respect have been Botkyrka and Göteborg from Sweden.

UBC Commission on Environment is actively taking part in the development of the commitments further at many levels. The latest big European sign of the movement was in Seville in 2007 at the Fifth European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns. This resulted in the "Spirit of Seville" that in turn resulted in the recommending to take the commitments to the streets.

Support for Nordic and Baltic cities

A Nordic-Baltic Aalborg Commitments network (NBACN) was established in 2005 to support the local authorities in carrying out the Aalborg Commitments process in all the sectors to exchange and benefit from the experiences of the other cities/municipalities in the network. Since the establishment, the network has organized five meetings targeting the different aspects of the ACs. The last meeting was held in February 2008 in Tampere. That meeting gave an introduction to all the ACs and an excellent opportunity to get practical input for the processes in the cities. The meetings of the NBACN have been part-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Several local authorities are working towards signing the commitments and it is expected that the ACs will become stronger in the Baltic Sea Region. Further work is still needed to support the local authorities in fulfilling the commitments on practical level. The network has turned out to be a good platform for politicians, officers and stakeholders to support each other and to get inspiration for their own work. More local authorities are welcomed to join the network and to express their needs in relation to Aalborg Commitments.

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Nordic-Baltic Aalborg Commitments Network

A voluntary network open to all Nordic or Baltic local authorities that have signed the Aalborg Commitments or are considering to do so. The number of signatories in the Nordic and Baltic cities has now reached 30. The Association of Finnish local and regional authorities, together with UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat are hosting the network in 2007-2008. All the network meeting presentations and reports can be downloaded from: <http://www.aalborgplus10.dk/default.aspx?m=2&i=379>.





Spreading the word for Sustainability Management **URBAN**works

Does our city have a strategy for sustainable development? Do we have the political support and mandate for the work to promote sustainable development? How can we raise the awareness among citizens? How do we facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation?

These are the kind of questions that cities' sustainable development teams are most likely tackling with. To support their efforts, an interactive toolbox – URBANworks, has been developed by Union of the Baltic Cities in the SUSTAINMENT project.

Cities' work to promote sustainable development varies, but each city continuously makes decisions that affect the direction of its future development. Urban sustainable development requires resources, skills, understanding, good communication and commitment, and most of all - an organizational structure to manage the efforts. The toolbox supports the development and the establishment of a sustainability management unit by providing city administrators with situation specific guidance, tools and concrete city examples. It also gives them a detailed framework for creating a Development Plan for the establishment and operation of this management unit.

By comparing the establishment of the unit to a construction of a house, the guide identifies the basic elements necessary for managing sustainability. Further developing an existing office starts with a solid foundation: in other words with the creation of a common understanding of sustainable development within the city. A house, as well as a city's sustainability management unit, also needs a sufficient amount and optimal mix of construction materials: financial resources, but also the sufficient number of staff with the right skills!

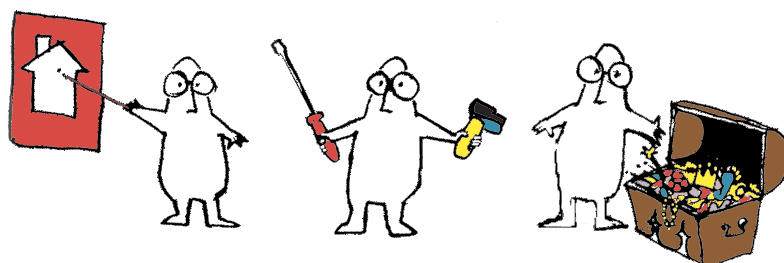
What else would your unit need to be able to effectively manage the city's development? And how could you achieve what is needed? Find out at <http://www.urbanworks-toolkit.eu>!

The English version of the toolbox was launched during the project's Final conference in Gdansk 12-14 November 2007. The toolbox is available in English, Estonian, Finnish, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and Swedish. It is available as a CD, online and a paper version.

URBANworks is developed by the Union of the Baltic Cities during the SUSTAINMENT project (www.sustainment-project.net). The project is part financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund) within the BSR INTERREG IIIB Neighbourhood Programme, TACIS, Finnish Ministry of Environment and the partner cities. This project is co-ordinated by Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat and it is part of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 - Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. SUSTAINMENT is endorsed by Baltic 21 as a Lighthouse Project advancing regional sustainability.

More information:

www.urbanworks-toolkit.eu
www.sustainment-project.net





Text: **A.G. Esipenko** Photo: **Stella Aaltonen**

Condition of the atmospheric air, ponds and channels, waste products and waste water management are considered to be the major ecological problems of the city of Kaliningrad. The City Hall is engaged in solving the ecological problems.

Contamination of atmospheric air in Kaliningrad is primarily associated with transport, boiler installations and industrial emissions. The assessment of air quality in the city is carried out by evaluating the instrument samples taken from five stationary observation stations.

The zone of high-level air contamination, developed mainly due to transport emissions (86%), is being formed in the central part of the city. As a result of sharp increase of transport during the last years, the existing city road system does not bear the burden of traffic and the existing network of observation stations does not provide full information regarding the contamination of atmospheric air in different city districts. Therefore, the activities aimed at improving the condition of atmospheric air are associated with renovation, construction of the road system as well as the alternative transport lanes which would remove freight and transit traffic out of the central part of the city and dwelling zones, optimization of traffic.

Advancement of the monitoring system of air condition presupposes the increase of a number of observation stations as well as the establishment of an automated observation system of air condition.

Sewage disposal

Nowadays the city sewage disposal plants provide only mechanical treatment of sewage, since they are morally and physically outdated. Due to the overload of a main sewage collector, a number of household and domestic sewers flows into the city channel. Inadequate condition of channels and ponds is also accounted for unauthorized sewage disposal.

The solution of the indicated problems is associated with the implementation of the project on construction of sewage disposal plant of biological treatment as well as the construction of a new collector which is larger in its diameter. It will lead to the elimination of untreated sewage disposal to the ponds of the city. Alongside with this construction, the work on advancing the analytical control over the condition of channels is being carried out.

Moreover, the sustainable ecological future of Kaliningrad is linked to development of green zones, parks and public gardens. The program *Green city* is elaborated for the realization of these objectives up to the period from 2008 till 2010. The development of ecological education and raising of awareness among the youth also play an important role. Ecological seminars, contests, projects and ecological camps are organized for this reason every year.

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WEB

Read more about Kaliningrad's waste management in the web-edition at www.ubc-action21.net.

Efforts and Expectations for Sustainable City in Siauliai

Today, the sustainable urban development is one of the greatest challenges of the local authorities. The local authorities have to find a synergy between the social, economic, ecological and cultural dimensions through timely transformation of the urban environment.

At the present moment, the local authorities, politicians, stakeholders and the community of the city of Siauliai have fully taken the responsibility for working together towards sustainable development and therefore have committed themselves to implement the City Sustainable Development Program for the period 2007-2016. The program has envisaged long-term objectives, targets and measures to be taken in 3 priorities area - competitiveness of city economy, quality of living environment and open, creative and responsible community. The key concept of the long term City Strategy for the Siauliai administration is based on engagement of the city institutions, enterprises and community into strategic planning process and to attain the approved City Vision: - Siauliai is the City of Sun: Open, Dynamic and Safe.

Investment project paving the way

Today, a lot of city activities are focused on the implementation of the largest investment projects promoting the sustainable city development, strengthening the industrial potential and creating favorable investment environment. Activities such as:

The Siauliai Arena, one of the largest projects within the city and in Lithuania, funded by the EU Structural Funds, was accomplished last year. It aimed at developing sports planning and service infrastructure, creation job opportunities in private and public sectors. Photo of the Siauliai Arena at the bottom of the page.

Establishment of the Industrial Park with the aim to promote economic city development, to increase the Siauliai Region competitiveness and to contribute to the city and community welfare.

Rehabilitation of the Lake Talksa, located within the city, for the promotion of regional sustainable development, creation of favorable conditions for tourism and business infrastructure.

Many other smaller scale projects are being implemented in the city in line with the city sustainable development strategy to ensure the harmonization of environmental, economic and social objectives.

The city Administration believes that the engagement of all interested parties will strengthen the alliance and partnership attaining the goals anticipated in the long term City Strategy towards the City Vision.

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Text: **Mervi Saukko** Photo: **city of Jyväskylä**

Through commitment

towards sustainable Jyväskylä

The city of Jyväskylä in Finland is attaining the commitment of the staff towards Environmental Management System (EMS). This is evaluated through questionnaires for personnel. Another important step has been taken in centralizing purchasing and city contracts taking into use the green products and services.

Building the EMS for the city of Jyväskylä has taken nearly ten years. After the environmental impacts of the city's operational activities were identified, programs were drawn up to reduce them. Even after this, there are still parts that have to be developed, this means continuous improvements. In 2008, the city council will approve an updated environmental policy program.

Questionnaires for personnel

At the moment, particular attention has to be paid in the results related to the city's objectives and targets. To measure the outcomes of the city's environmental policy, there is a set of common indicators. One of these indicators is the environmental attitude of the employees.

In 2007, a project was carried out to create a questionnaire measuring the personnel's environmental attitude and activity. This was done together with the cities of Espoo, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Oulu, Tampere, Vantaa, Turku and the Turku School of Economics / Finland Futures Research Centre. 1044 employees in Jyväskylä (21% of the staff) answered the questionnaire, altogether 11 024 answers in Finland. The report and results of the survey will be available in early 2008.

During 2008-2009, the city's environmental report will be developed together with FCG Efeko Ltd and seven Finnish cities. The report will have the same indicators and economical parameters as the city accounts. The same structure will be used to see the connections between them.

Developing the environmental management system

In the field of centralised purchasing and city contracts green products and services (green electricity, carpets, eco-cassettes) have been taken into use. In certain product groups there is also a possibility to choose green products (cleaning products, household papers). The personnel of the city usually don't know about this possibility and the challenge is to improve the awareness of sustainable products and services by offering more training.

The climate change is the environmental concentration topic for the year 2008. For example, in construction services (architects, building surveyors) the knowledge of low energy houses can be improved, as well as the knowledge of energy saving techniques and effective use of energy. In social welfare and health care the environmental management system was weakly developed during the year 2007.



In educational services the "Pupuhuhta" elementary school received Environmental Certificate of Schools and Educational Establishments last year. Our goal is to have more schools equipped with the Green Flag –label and environmental certificates in the future. In 2008, environmental groups are working in every sector of the city.

More information:

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Comprehensive studies explored the influence of the development of the city of Vilnius in Lithuania on individual species of flora and fauna and their diversity. On these bases protection regulations were drafted and distribution maps of individual species of flora and fauna drawn up. Also an indicator system and a video film on the city's biodiversity were created to attract awareness.

With a view to raising ecological awareness of the community, two environmental protection forums were organised in 2007, during which the exhibition of work of environmental protection organizations, reporting conferences of ecological projects and environmental protection seminars were held. Participants included children from kindergartens, school pupils, representatives of research bodies, and companies dealing with waste management and landscape improvement.

In implementing the EU environmental protection directives in Lithuania and raising ecological awareness of the public, the Environment Protection Division organizes international seminars and conferences. In the period of 2005–2007 over 10 international conferences and seminars were organized in co-operation with others for municipality politicians, employees of eldercares' and companies, and teachers. The environmental protection problems of the city and issues of ecological awareness raising of the public were thoroughly discussed in them.

Insights through research

The Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University carried out research about the status of the city's biological diversity and forecasted the tendencies of biodiversity change in 2006-2007. The research revealed that 46 species of mammals live in Vilnius city. About 100 species of egg-laying birds live in Vilnius and about 200 species are observed during migration in the city and its suburbs. Even 35 species of fish and 2 species of lamprey (70 percent of freshwater fish of the country) permanently live or spawn in the waterbodies of the city. The research was ordered by the municipality of Vilnius.

Vilnius and its surroundings are a habitat of 9 species of amphibians, of which 2 species *Triturus cristatus* (Great Crested Newt) and *Bufo viridis* (European Green Toad) are included in the Red Data Book of Lithuania (RDBL). Amphibians in the city suffered greatly from habitat transformation and fragmentation, transport, especially during their migration. Also almost 5000 species of invertebrates, which constitute one-fourth of all known species in Lithuania, inhabit Vilnius and its surroundings.



Vilnius preserves unique nature and biodiversity

More information:

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Dr Aloyzas Burba, Senior Researcher of Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University

Further information (in Lithuanian) also at: <http://aplinka.vilnius.lt>

WEB

Detailed information about the different species found in the research can be found at: www.ubc-action21.net.

Text: **Daniel Nilsson** Photo: **Henrik Ahldin**

Malmö campaigning for sustainable transports

As a result of the two large campaigns, *No ridiculous car journeys* and *Which road to take*, Malmö city has brought attention to environmentally adapted transportation and the problems associated with cars as a result of CIVITAS SMILE. This has resulted in much debate and many suggestions from the people of Malmö.

During the late spring of 2007, the people of Malmö witnessed film extras cycling around town bearing large advertising banners. In the newspapers, it was stated that half of all car journeys in Malmö are ridiculously short and that those who drove their cars risked being overtaken by a cyclist at the same time as adverts on the radio related that ridiculously short car journeys should be replaced by bike journeys. The results were better than expected – 50% of the people in Malmö were aware of the campaign.

But perhaps even more impressive is that a total of 23% of the people of Malmö admitted that they had started to give their travel habits some consideration as a result of the campaign. The evaluation of the campaign also shows that 10,000 people drive their cars less than before the campaign.

"*No ridiculous car journeys* received a lot of attention, and it is something that we still feel the effects of. The reason why

we received such a good response is most likely that we made a big effort through so many channels at the same time," says **Sara Forslund** at the Parks and Streets department.



Suggestions from the public

During the autumn of 2007, the first campaign was followed up with *Which road to take* campaign the people of Malmö were asked "which road should we take to reduce the amount of cars on the roads in Malmö?" This campaign included a development of a forum on the Internet where the citizens could send in their suggestions. In total, 1000 contributions with suggestions have been received and there are still more coming in.

The *Which road to take* campaign was approximately half the size of its predecessor, but was most present in the city through its brochures, advertising and pretend road signs on the pedestrian walkways. The new road signs pointed to different possible routes which Malmö could take such as City Bikes (which people loan for short periods of time), free buses, car tolls or 1000 Swedish crowns per hour as a parking fee.

"The *Which road to take* campaign was noticed by 25% of inhabitants and between 50% and 60% admit that they have started to reconsider how they travel after having seen the campaign," says Forslund.

Some of the suggestions that have come in via the forum are of the opinion that Malmö should make their cycle tracks wider or purchase electric cars in bulk to bring down prices.

Another example of a contribution suggests that Malmö's city centre should be closed completely for car traffic so that bus journeys are speeded up. Currently all the points of view are being collected and then they will be introduced to the politicians.

Unexpected communication

The two campaigns were both very much based on a dialogue with the public. Special representatives have been available at weekends to discuss traffic and environmental issues. The evaluation from *No ridiculous car journeys* has also shown that as many as 94% of citizens think that it is positive that Malmö city is investing in campaigns to reduce the amount of car journeys.

"Both campaigns clearly show that we benefit from doing the unexpected. For example by asking a question to the citizens of Malmö, to dare to be a little non-municipal in our communication has been looked upon as very positive," concludes Sara Forslund.

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Forest Folk

Text: **Saara Leinikka**
Photo: **Lahti Region Environmental Service**

in the city centre of Lahti

Normally the rolling of drums and guitar solos during concerts capture the visitors of the Lahti city's youth hall. In the end of November 2007, the hall was filled with different kind of noises, namely the trip of children's feet when children together with their parents and grand-parents came to spend Children's Environmental Day to the youth hall.

The third consecutive Children's Environmental Day was held in connection to the Universal Children's day. The event was organized by the city of Lahti, more specifically the Lahti Region Environmental Service that wanted to offer families an opportunity to prepare for the up-coming Christmas season in an environmental friendly way. The idea was to offer children experiences and insights of nature in comparison to the Christmas hustle going on in the shops nearby.

Approximately 300 visitors spent a peaceful afternoon in different craft shops making use of recycled materials and enjoying activity workshops. The workshops were lead by the Environmental Fairy and the inhabitants of forests: squirrels, hares, owls and many other tamed creatures representing fairytale characters and forest folk.

Own experiences doing the trick?

In the craft shops people got to make bird tables, decorate old glass jars into lovely candle lamps and create beautiful Christmas cards out of old ones. From time to time a white coated mountain hare appeared to invite children into Miss Snow's birthday celebrations. In the youth hall's corridors wound an activity path in which children together with forest folk helped a forgetful squirrel to find his pinecone hides. In the Lake Vesijärvi workshop people got to know fish species, try out canoeing and explore aquatic micro-organisms trough microscopes from which the images were reflected to a screen for everyone's marvel!

Old toys were given a new life in a toy exchange market. One could bring his or her toy into the marketplace and trade it for a toy that had become needles for its previous owner. For adults a small-scaled Christmas sale was organized. Also present in the event were Mama Mouse and Forest Elf who offered environmental counselling to all those interested.

The event was organised by Lahti Region Environmental Service and the Vanamo –project together with Lahti city's youth centre. In addition, several social and educational organisations, as well as NGO's took part in the event. The Children's Environmental Day serves as an example of an event in which joined forces add up to be more than the sum of their components. Children are a fruitful sowing ground, especially when they keep educating their own parents. Making your own bird feeder together with your dad might just do the trick, don't you think?

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Text: **Agnieszka Ilola** Photos: **Stella Aaltonen & Tero Wester**

New participatory processes started in eight cities

Stakeholders - welcome!

Participation of the citizens and stakeholders is a precondition for best quality in planning and implementation. Eight pioneering cities around the Baltic Sea Region have now taken stakeholder involvement under serious work in MATRUSCHKA project which focuses on integrated working methods in municipal decision-making and planning.

How to implement integrated management? Who are the stakeholders? Why should our city care about them and how does it happen in practice? These are some of the questions the MATRUSCHKA project concentrates on.

Cities are further developing their competence in linking the participatory elements more systematically to their administration and management routines, especially under their selected themes. Altogether eight cities from Russia, Sweden and Finland started their work towards a common goal - the testing of systematic participation in the framework of integrated management system. Currently the cities are preparing their baseline reviews and analyzing their stakeholders in selected themes. This process will eventually benefit all the member cities of UBC through the project outcomes.

Integration, participation, communication...

Stakeholder involvement is seamlessly linked to the management process, but this opportunity is not fully used by the cities themselves. For cities it would be important to analyze the relevant stakeholders in each of their processes and increase the use of different stakeholder methods. The level of involvement can vary from gathering information all the way to an equal partnership. The

very minimum level includes gathering information from the internal stakeholders (eg the departments) and external stakeholders (NGO's, trade unions etc.) The more ambitious the cities get, the higher the level of involvement will eventually become.

"All of the project cities have some experiences on this field and find the area very challenging. Therefore it is vital to share these experiences among the cities. As a side product of this project we are actually structuring a knowledge management database on sustainability. It will radically increase the information flow across the borders of EU countries and Russia, which is rather unique in this field", says project coordinator **Stella Aaltonen**.



The outcomes of the actual project will be disseminated in the form of stakeholder involvement toolkit, encouraging other cities to take the good governance principles and participatory elements to more systematically and regularly into their daily work – supporting also the legitimacy of the decisions made eventually at the political level. All UBC member cities are challenged to improve their stakeholder involvement through a campaign that is launched in this bulletin at page 19.



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Neighbourhood trustees – the voice of residents

Text: **Sari Knuuti**

City of Lahti has an excellent resource among it's repertory of participatory methods: the network of neighbourhood trustees and city official trustees.

Neighbourhood trustees work as a linkage between city officials and residents. The work of a trustee aims at activating residents into participating the local decision-making processes as well as at getting people involved in maintaining their surroundings through i.e. voluntary work. The trustee activities in Lahti started in the year 2000 as an EU funded project and have been going on as part of Lahti Region Environmental Service working program ever since.

Who and what is a neighbourhood trustee?

Almost anyone interested in his or her surroundings or having common interests is welcomed to be a neighbourhood trustee. A neighbourhood trustee is typically someone who is considered trustworthy in his or her residential area and who is inspired to improve local conditions. The role of a neighbourhood trustee is to listen to what people have on their minds and then try to act and solve the issues. Neighbourhood trustees are not alone in their efforts; they receive a lot of backup from official trustees working within the city organization. In addition, there is also a sustainable development co-ordinator working as a contact person

and having a supportive role in all matters concerning the neighbourhood trustee activities. The co-ordinator also arranges joint meetings of neighbourhood trustees and city official trustees on current themes.

Involvement is realized as district events and shared activities

Neighbourhood trustees organize several kinds of activities. For instance as the city of Lahti celebrated it's 100th birthday in 2005 a range of events was organised where public spaces where cleaned and cleared of litter by voluntary work. The events proved to be so successful that similar kinds of activities have been arranged yearly. The number of volunteers has exceeded several hundreds every year and the contribution of volunteers is highly appreciated by the city.

Neighbourhood trustees co-operate with several instances and organizations. For several years now an orienteering event aimed at people with physical disabilities has been organized together with sports organizations. The idea behind the event is to pay attention to town planning and unrestricted access to public spaces.

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Stakeholder Campaign

JOIN

STAKEHOLDER

CAMPAIGN

NOW

All UBC cities and municipalities are challenged to join in the stakeholder Campaign.

Log into www.matruschka-project.net click on Campaign, registration code: 6287.

The cities/persons that submit the most good practices on how they have involved stakeholders will receive surprise gifts and good reputation.

Deadline 31 May 2008.



Turning vision into reality in Sundsvall

The town vision of city of Sundsvall is to expand and become more compact in order to create activity and movement and to encourage people to meet. All town planning shall encompass quality of life and public health issues at an early stage. The citizens are taking part in the ongoing dialogue about the development of the city.

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The ten missions how Sundsvall will build on the vision by making strategic choices:

- Build a stronger city centre
- Develop the people's routes
- Let the Stone City meet new development
- Enlarge the traditional town quarters
- Let the town meet the water
- Weaving a green network across the city
- Allow traffic in a people-centred way
- Bring communications together
- Sustainable city development
- Keep the Town Vision alive

New policy of sustainable development in Panevezys

The Policy and Action Plan of the Sustainable Future for 2008-2013 was approved by the City Council of Panevezys in January 2008. The aim of the policy of sustainable development is to ensure healthy and safe environment for the inhabitants in promoting sustainable economical and public development, decreasing the negative impact to the environment and saving natural resources. The environmental education plays an important role in raising the awareness of the public, decision makers and other interest groups towards the topics and stressing their responsibilities and possibilities to influence.

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WEB

Read more on the Policy and Action Plan of the Sustainable Future for 2008-2013 in Panevezys at www.ubc-action21.net.

Joint efforts to reduce sewage carried to the Baltic Sea

During 2005-2007, Gdynia Municipality together with five partners implemented a project *Improvement in water purity of the Baltic Sea through development of water management systems – stage 1 (RAINNET)* that concentrated on the reduction of sewage amount carried to the Baltic Sea with rain- and meltwater from the area of the south-eastern part of the Baltic Sea Region. The project partners are now ready to take complex infrastructural actions in the field of rebuilding and development of water management systems in order to reduce the amount of sewage carried to the Baltic Sea.

The main activities undertaken within the project included preparation of development concepts of water management systems as well as preparation of technical documentation of investments as key importance for the improvement of

the Baltic water purity. The technical documentation prepared within the project will provide a basis for applying for available external funds.

The RAINNET project was launched within Neighbourhood Programme INTERREG III A Poland-Lithuania-Kaliningrad District, with a budget of 1.4 MEUR. Partnership consisted of Klaipeda in Lithuania and Polish partners: Gdynia (LP), Kosakowo, Reda, Rumia and Wejherowo.

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Improved cycling in the Baltic Sea Region

Twenty-two partners entered the Interreg IIIB project "Baltic Sea Cycling" to come closer to each other and create new inspiring policies concerning cycling in the urban environment. Between 2004-2007 the project participants co-operated to increase the political and public awareness of cycling and its benefits.

At the final conference in Kalmar in May 2007, the Mayors from each project city signed the common declaration for the Baltic Sea Region Cycling Strategy. The best ideas and pilot actions from the BSC-project were published in our Cycling Inspiration book.

In the future it is planned to continue the cooperation amongst the BSR cities to deepen and widen the network of bicycle and transport experts on a transnational base. There it is planned to keep in contact with similar European initiatives and networks related to urban sustainable mobility & cycling issues as e.g. UrBike, BUSTRIP and MOCUBA. The Hanseatic City of Rostock is now preparing the application for a follow up project called "Baltic Cycling Network" in the Baltic-Sea-Region-programme 2007-2013. It is going to be a strategic network-project with roundabout 30 partners from all BSR-countries.

If you'd like to order a copy in English language please contact the author. The German language issue can be ordered www.inspirationsbuch.de.



"Blue helmets" in their tireless struggle for sustainable cities (Latvian BSC-partners in Rostock in 2005).

For further information about Baltic-Sea-Cycling-project please see www.balticseacycling.com or contact Mrs. Carinne Lancereau (Örebro/Sweden)
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For further information about Baltic-Cycling-Network-project please contact Mr. Steffen Nozon (Rostock/Germany)
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Text: Miina Mäki Photo: Jukka Nurminen



The Baltic Sea is the most polluted sea in the world

– what can we do?

The most severe threat to the Baltic Sea environment is the overload of nutrients, mainly nitrogen and phosphorus, which has continued for decades. The increased amounts of nutrients enhance the algal growth which slowly suffocates the sea through a process called eutrophication. It has resulted in a vicious circle called internal loading, an ecological impasse that can be solved only by quick and drastic action.

Phosphorus is the limiting nutrient for the growth of blue-green algae. Therefore, in order to combat the mass occurrences of the blue-green algae reducing phosphorus emissions is of primary importance.

Is the Baltic beyond recovery? The main problems of the Baltic Sea are not local but widespread in space and time. The countries surrounding the Baltic Sea seem ready to invest resources in marine conservation and start addressing the problems as a unified front. Clear evidence of shared concern emerged from the Krakow meeting of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) in November 2007. The countries around the Baltic Sea made a commitment to reverse the trend and bring the dying sea back to life.

The Clean Baltic Sea Project

The mission of the John Nurminen Foundation of Finland is to preserve the Finnish heritage in maritime culture and

seafaring. In 2005, the Foundation initiated the Clean Baltic Sea project. The project has, in close cooperation with the Vodokanal and the City of St. Petersburg, successfully introduced the chemical phosphorus removal process at the biggest wastewater treatment plant of St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg was selected as a target because it was the biggest point source of phosphorus to the Baltic Sea. In addition, reducing phosphorus emissions by implementing chemical phosphorus removal at wastewater treatment plants in St. Petersburg was the most cost-effective single action to reduce eutrophication and the occurrence of blue-green algae in the Gulf of Finland. According to an ecological model of Finnish Environmental Institute, the project is expected to demonstrate a visible effect on the condition of the Gulf of Finland within few years.



Answers provided by
Olli-Pekka Mäki,
acting Environmental
Director, city of Turku
and **Pekka Kansanen**,
Environmental Director,
city of Helsinki.

Text: **Esther Kreutz**

The Baltic Sea Challenge

What is the Baltic Sea Challenge?

The challenge was initiated by the mayors of Turku and Helsinki who showed concern about the state of the Baltic Sea and thought about what the cities could do to respond to the negative trend of the Baltic Sea Environment. It is a voluntary programme and should lead to concrete action of the actors.

How do Turku and Helsinki challenge other actors?

Letters to all Finnish municipalities, universities and organizations have been sent. So far over 600 actors in Finland have been challenged. So far over 90 actors have joined in. In the future the challenge will be brought to the whole Baltic Sea region. The actors can answer on the challenge in any concerned field from waste water management to awareness raising activities.

How is the challenge met, what do the cities do?

The cities are supposed to create action plans for concrete actions to meet the challenge and to work in their own

field for the protection of the Baltic Sea. An evaluation will take place about the actors who have joined in, what kind of action plans are created and in the end, what kind of actions have taken place.

What are the next steps?

A Baltic Sea challenge coordinator starts to work in March. Communication about the challenge will be enhanced and improved. Furthermore the challenge will be taken to Tallinn, Estonia and Stockholm, Sweden by the Mayors to suggest the same model there as well. Hopefully, Stockholm and Tallinn will then start to challenge cities in Sweden and Estonia and in that way the challenge will be taken further around the Baltic Sea Region.

More information:

www.balticseachallenge.net



In this Questions & Answers' Corner we bring interesting issues into discussion.

Future cooperation around the Baltic Sea

One of the corner stones of the St. Petersburg project has been intensive cooperation cross borders. The Foundation has proven to be a trustworthy and efficient partner to carry out this kind of a new cooperation between public and private sectors and between countries. The Foundation finds the Union of Baltic Cities an important channel for spreading information and also an interesting platform for future cooperation between different actors. As all the member cities already work together for better environment, why not combining forces to work for the well-being of our common sea?

Encouraged by the successful project in St. Petersburg the Foundation has decided to continue its work for a cleaner Baltic Sea. The Foundation supports actions to implement the new HELCOM recommendations on wastewater treatment by improving phosphorus removal at wastewater treatment plants around the Baltic Sea. Currently the Foundation is, in cooperation with a Swedish Baltic 2020 Foundation, preparing a project for

Poland. The Polish water utilities have already taken important measures in phosphorus removal. The challenge is to speed up the process, because the Baltic Sea cannot wait any longer.



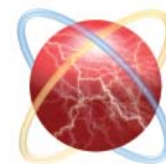
"I hope that the practical project initiated by the John Nurminen Foundation will encourage others to join in the work of protecting the Baltic Sea", wishes **Juha Nurminen**, the Chairman of the Board of the John Nurminen Foundation. "Where there is a will, there is a way."

More information:

www.johnnurminenfoundation.fi
www.cleanbalticsea.fi

WEB

More about the chemical treatment at web-edition at www.ubc-action21.net.



A new year with new goals and new strength

New year has come and it is time for us all to step up and take responsibility for climate changes. Mariehamn town has clear visions, goals and strategies for the environmental development. How does your city work with these issues? What can you do? We have an idea, a project that aims to reduce the use of electrical energy. You are invited.

We are glad to invite you to participate in the UBC Energy Commission's Power Edge Programme that aims to reduce the use of electrical energy. The programme is created to meet up with the strong public and political demands on energy savings.

The main objectives are:

1. To reduce the energy consumption with up to 60 % and get additional reduction of CO2 gases.
2. To reduce the cost of energy for the participating cities.
3. To improve the competitiveness and strengthen the local industries and business by more efficient use of electrical energy.

Expected results

The objective of this programme is to train and educate key personnel in the participating cities. At the end of this programme the participants will have achieved both the capacity and the motivation to develop and implement effective energy saving plans.

Methods for savings of electrical energy, in cities, public operated undertakings, such as schools and office buildings as well as private enterprises, industries and offices will be developed and implemented at a local level. The key personnel that will be trained within the programme will create a network that will keep on exchanging experiences and improve their skills in using new methods for energy saving.

The UBC Energy Commission will develop and provide computer-based software solutions that will be used to facilitate and monitor the implementation and evaluation on energy efficiency. A group of scientists will closely follow the project and work on research for finding and evaluating new and improved methods for the savings of electrical energy. Great efforts will be taken to develop tailor made solutions for the participating cities. This will result in a considerable reduction of CO2 emissions and a strengthening of the competitiveness of the industries as well as improved quality of life in participating cities.

We are looking forward to discuss this programme, in detail, with you at a time and place that is convenient for you. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any inquiries regarding the UBC Energy Commission or our Programmes.

Best Regards
Mr Stefan Windh, Co-Chairman

For more information and details about the project please contact the UBC Energy Secretariat:

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The UBC Energy Commission is part of the Union of Baltic Cities, for more information please visit www.ubc.net.

INVITATION TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE UBC
ENERGY COMMISSION
POWER EDGE
PROGRAMME

Mariehamn Town – Vision, Goals & Strategies

Mariehamn Town is the capital of about 27,000 people living in the Åland Islands, the autonomous part of Finland, in the middle of the Baltic Sea. With a limited town area, its population density of 930 p/km² is rather high for a Northern European city. As a consequence of the Ålandian exemption from European tax union regulation, the town has frequent diesel-fuelled cruising and ferry connections by sea with Sweden, Finland and Estonia. With low fares, communication by sea has become a self-evident asset for the people of the Islands.

Almost 1.5 million people a year visit the Islands, most of them arriving by ferry at the Port of Mariehamn that counts about 6000 ship arrivals per year. Some 260,000 yearly visitors stay for at least one night and tourism has for a long time been economically important for the town. In summertime a large number of holiday vessels visit Mariehamn and there is, generally, a heavy pressure on communication infrastructure. Car traffic load is heavy all over the year.

Electric energy is imported by cable mainly from Sweden (85%). In 2006, in the islands 16 wind power units produced 7% of electricity demand. In 2007 six new 2 MW windmills became operative producing not less than 23 % of the total demand. For district heating fossil fuel and bioenergy have been used. In 2006 total energy consumption - both electricity and district heating - of buildings used by the municipality of Mariehamn including offices, school etc., was produced by fossil fuels (48%), electricity from Swedish suppliers (22%), local wind power (2%) and biofuels (logging-waste) (23%). With the 6 new wind power units, the share of locally produced electricity is expected to increase to about 7% of the towns total energy demand. Further, with the expected increased use of waste from forest cutting, the use of fossil fuels will decrease further.

Municipal sewage treatment with high performing nitrogen and phosphorous reduction has been operating for a while. Biowaste separation from garbage was introduced in 2006. Seaport services include waste handling and recycling. Further, environmental seaport charging to reduce ship air pollution engine emissions has been used since several years.

Environment management of town administration follows ISO14001 and EMAS. Environmental performance has been published yearly in the annual financial report of the town and continuously on the town's internet website (<http://www.mariehamn.ax/miljokontoret>).

Vision - of Mariehamn includes, of course, like the visions of many other cities, optimistic future outlooks for welfare. However, the vulnerability of the island community to climate change and increasing energy costs has been recognised. Necessary measures by using city planning will be taken to avoid future degradation of welfare and isolation caused by high transport costs and exhausted energy sources.

Goals for Environment and Sustainability - were established by the Municipal Council of Mariehamn in 2007. The town's emissions of greenhouse gases shall in 2012 be reduced by 25% compared to corresponding emissions of the reference year 2002, which is the first year with reliable emissions estimates. In 2012 at least 90% of the towns purchase shall meet standards for ecolabels. All wastes shall be free from biowaste and at least 90% of renewable waste shall be separated. At least 75% of food offered at facilities for education and care of elderly, shall be produced according to sustainable methods.

Strategies - The goals will be achieved through detailed follow up of environmental performance aiming to expose weakness in the town's infrastructure. Possible cooperation between energy producing units, sewage treatment and consumer facilities will be considered. Planning process will be adjusted to create basic conditions for citizens of Mariehamn to maintain welfare without deteriorating environment. Prerequisites for sustainable internal and external transportation will be established.

Commitments - Mariehamn Town signed the Aalborg Commitments in 2007 and has, also, decided to meet the Challenge for Actions by the cities of Turku and Helsinki for improving the state of the Baltic Sea. The NewHansa Memorandum of Understanding concerning sustainable sea transports and seaports was signed in 2005. The city also joined the ICLEI in 2006.

More information:

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How do we get the message across?

During year 2008, the secretariat aims to improve several of the communication channels used to serve better the needs of the member cities. In order to make a user-friendly change, we would like to get input such as website, bulletin, e-mail lists etc. from all of you in a form of giving suggestions or becoming a test user/advisor. For this, please, contact stella.aaltonen@ubc.net.

A launch of the communication improvement will take place at the next Commission on Environment meeting in Tallinn, Estonia 30-31 October 2008.

Work on HIV/AIDS and youth in Russia

A new project "We Choose a Life – Youth against HIV/AIDS", lead by the WHO Healthy Cities network, is starting in March 2008. The project concentrates on reducing risky healthy behavior among young people in Russia by raising their awareness of healthy lifestyle and sexual health. UBC EnvCOM will support the project by enhancing the capacity of the local leaders and decision-makers to execute proactive decisions concerning sexual health promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention in the partner cities.

Trainings on sustainable planning and management

The Union of the Baltic Cities Commission on Environment offers to its members trainings that are envisioned to empower local government units, local stakeholders and people in the community on the concepts, principles, applications and models for sustainable development and especially on integrated management. These tailor-made trainings can serve as a venue for sharing experiences and developing new cooperation.

Training on Sustainable Urban Transport Planning focuses on solving local sustainability challenges in the transport field in an integrated way not only focusing on transport but also including urban planning, health, social issues, education, economy and other relevant sectors into the transport planning. The SUTP process builds on

New projects on the way

At the moment the Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat is working on preparing next projects that will support the work UBC cities/municipalities carry out. Several project applications are on development phase. The topics cover city-harbor and also shipping industry co-operation, development project on sustainable transport and integrated management for cities but also on the interaction between urban and rural areas, to mention a few.

These projects have been initiated either through direct contacts from cities or as findings from the UBC Sustainable Development Survey 2006.

If you are interested to take part in the project or would like to develop a project – you are welcome to contact us at: environment@ubc.net.



Illustration: Liisa Kanerva

a participatory process involving all parts of the society making the plan more transparent and efficient.

URBANWORKS – Sustainability Management Centre training offers participants better understanding on different models and recommendations for organising the responsibilities, practical arrangement and building up support for the Sustainability Management Centres (SMC) within local authorities.

More information:

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Illustration: Liisa Kanerva



Photo: city of Turku

UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat



Björn Grönholm

The UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat is the coordination and service unit for the implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme. Its services for the cities include for example organizing meetings and policy work, preparing documents and publications, and initiating and running projects.

The current staff of Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat consists of 14 professionals working fulltime for the UBC. The Secretariat is run by the Head of Secretariat Björn Grönholm.

If you are tackling with a problem/challenge – we are at your service to find solutions to it. We have a good network and knowledge about the different ongoing processes. We hope that you feel welcome to contact us on any issue concerning sustainable development of your city.

The UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat has moved to new premises in the old market square of Turku in the beginning of March 2008. The Secretariat will be part of the recently established Baltic Sea House where offices working on sustainable development issues around the Baltic Sea are gathered under the same roof.

Our new postal address is:

UBC Environment and Sustainable
Development Secretariat
Vanha Suurtori 7
FIN -20500 Turku, Finland

The telephone and fax numbers as well as e-mails remain the same.

www.ubc-action21.net

environment@ubc.net Tel: +358 2 262 3179



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