

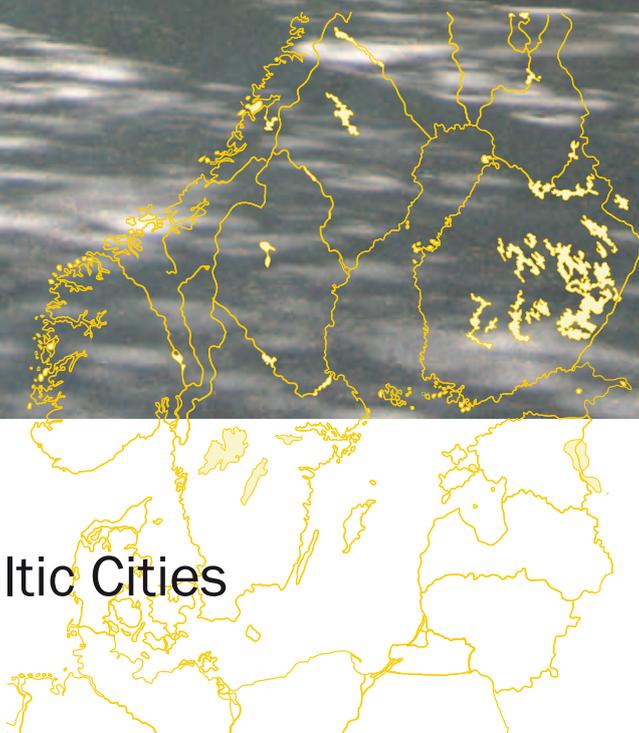


UBC Sustainability Action Programme



2010
2015

Agenda for Sustainable Baltic Cities





**UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 Agenda
for Sustainable Baltic Cities**

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UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015

**Agenda for Sustainable
Baltic Cities**

Adopted at the X UBC General Conference
Kristiansand, September 2009

FOREWORD

During the upcoming Programme period the Baltic Sea Region as well as the UBC cities will be facing several large scale challenges. The challenges are already well known and some first steps to conquer them have already been taken. Climate change and energy related issues are two large scale topics that are interlinked and influence a lot on each others. The third topic is the state of the Baltic Sea.

The state of the Baltic Sea is alarming and has become even more visible. It does not only influence the ecology but also more and more the business life and quality of life. The global financial crises started in 2008 will also increase the challenge on the development of the Baltic Sea region and our cities. On the same time several important activities and processes for the Baltic Sea region such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Baltic Sea challenges and action programmes are in the implementation phase for the moment.

Inspired and supported by these co-operation processes and policies, and building on good continued co-operation with other local government organisations, stakeholders and partners in the Baltic Sea Region, Europe and globally, the UBC is well placed to proceed further in its efforts towards sustainable development.

For our guidance in that work, UBC has designed the Action Programme for Sustainable Baltic Cities. Our main challenge will be to implement actions with concrete and large impacts on sustainable development.

This Action Programme has been produced through a two year long interactive process including several UBC Commission, many UBC contact and other persons and active UBC cities. We would like to thank you all for your efforts and look forward to implementing this Action Programme together.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Björn Grönholm'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large loop at the top and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Björn Grönholm
UBC Commission on Environment
Head of Secretariat

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1. STARTING UP THE THIRD UBC ACTION PROGRAMME ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

After successfully work with the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004 – 2009, we still see that there are many large scale challenges for the Baltic Sea Region and Baltic Cities. During the Action period 2004 – 2009 more than 20 projects have been implemented including more than 40 UBC member cities. The total project budget has been approximately 16 M Euros. A lot of improvements have been done but still neither the region nor the Baltic Cities are yet sustainable. Even though there are many positive changes and improved co-operation processes at all levels in the region, which strongly contribute for the shift to sustainable development, the task is still as important, huge and challenging as before. New social problems have been encountered following the rapid political and economic changes, overall material and energy flows, as well as day-to-day production and consumption in the region are far from sustainable.

During the last years three topics of discussion have been on all headlines; Climate change and energy related issues are two large scale topics that are interlinked and influence a lot on each others. The third topic is the state of the Baltic Sea. The state of the Baltic Sea is alarming and has become even more visible. It does not only influence the ecology but also more and more the business life and quality of life. The global financial crises started in 2008 will also increase the challenge on the development of the Baltic Sea region and our cities.

The UBC supports many European Union strategical processes such as the Environmental Action Programme of the European Union including the Lisbon process, the EU Territorial strategy and Leipzig Charter, and continuously support the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign and Towns Campaign but also the European Green Capitals initiative in co-operation with European Commission. The UBC has also strongly indicated the importance of voluntary local actions like the Aalborg Charter and Aalborg Commitments and has therefore been involved in supporting the implementations of Aalborg Commitments in UBC cities. The developments and reformation of the EU Cohesion Policy will also bring new elements influencing on cooperation, funding and activities. UBC need to be prepared and flexible to meet these upcoming possible changes on EU level.

Furthermore UBC is strongly dedicated to the development of the Baltic Sea Region much formulated in the new EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and Action Plan. UBC wants to take a concrete role and support the EU Commission in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Action plan and flagship projects. UBC also support Baltic Sea Region cooperation through different organisations and networks such as Council of the Baltic Sea States and Baltic 21, the Baltic Sea States Sub-region Co-operation, the VASAB 21, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan. These policy frameworks and co-operation processes continue to provide good basis for advancing sustainable urban development in Europe and in the Baltic Sea Region.

During the last years, private initiatives for concrete investments and actions for improving the state of the Baltic Sea have become new players on the arena. These initiatives with strong concrete focuses are influencing local authorities and also UBC cities. It will therefore be important to cooperate with these different groups and build up the best possible cooperation.

Inspired and supported by these co-operation processes and policies, and building on good continued co-operation with other local government organisations, stakeholders and partners in the Baltic Sea Region, Europe and globally, the UBC is well placed to proceed further in its efforts towards sustainable development.

For our guidance in that work, we have designed the Action Programme for Sustainable Baltic Cities. Our main challenge will be to implement concrete actions with concrete and large impacts on sustainable development.



2. THE AGENDA “NEW BUSINESS PLAN” FOR SUSTAINABLE BALTIC CITIES

During its almost twenty years active existence, the Union of the Baltic Cities has become one of the success factors in the rapid development and integration of the Baltic Sea Region. For the UBC a crucial task will be to modify and update the own activities in order to follow the development and needs of the UBC member cities and the whole Baltic Sea Region. A lot has been accomplished and much has changed since the foundation of the UBC. **Therefore the need for renewing practices and actions are needed in order to find good and efficient solutions for the challenges and problems our member cities are facing.**

During the upcoming Programme period the Baltic Sea Region as well as the UBC cities will be facing several large scale challenges. The challenges are already well known and some first steps to conquer them have already been taken. The main challenges the whole Baltic Sea Region are; *the poor state of the Baltic Sea, inefficient energy consumption and high energy dependency, increasing harm and costs related to climate change, ageing population and increasing migration out from the region, health and security related problems.* The global financial crises will also influence and will put additional stress on the UBC and its member cities. These threats are affecting the attractiveness and sustainability of the Baltic Sea Region, and many of the activities taken on during the programme period 2010-2015 will be addressed to above mentioned challenges.

Our objective and approach

A crucial and important task in the upcoming Action Programme will be to keep the ambition level of actions high enough. A clear message from many cities is that low moderate ambitions are a hinder for development. Therefore ambitious goals and well defined and measurable goals and targets are needed to solve the challenges and problems we are facing.

On the EU level it is important to closely follow ongoing development trends. The OECD has evaluated regional policies and launched a concept called “New paradigm of regional policy”, with the objective to reduce inefficiency and social exclusion. This concept will be one central element in EU regional and cohesion policies and must therefore be closely followed by UBC and its member cities.

The **overall objective** of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 is increased efficiency and attractivity through sustainable development in Baltic Cities and the whole Baltic Sea region.

The UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004 - 2009 was focusing of *five thematic focus areas; Good governance and sustainable urban management, Sustainable use of energy and resources, Good living environment and nature protection, Sustainable economy and transport, Social integration and health.* These thematic focus areas have been successfully addressed during the period and are still valid for the UBC and the whole region.

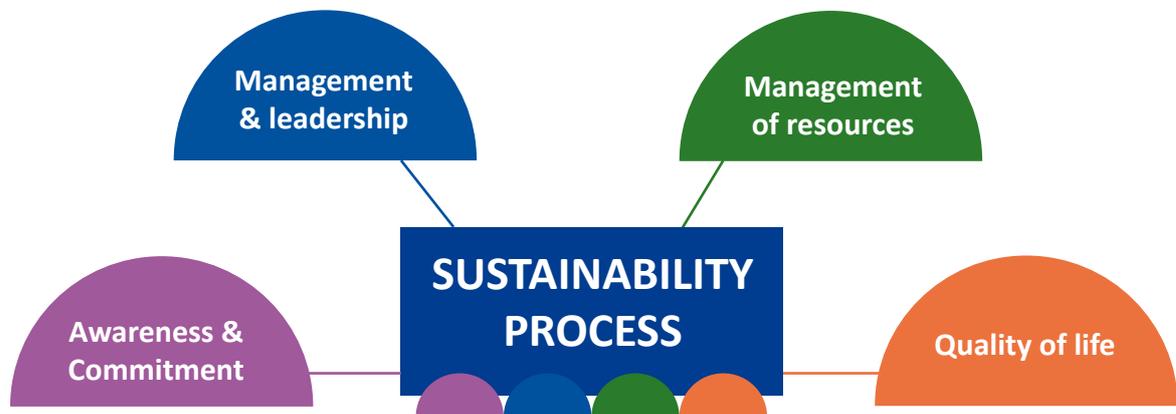
In order to improve the efficiency and to adopt the work to current needs an **evaluation process** has taken place including broad discussions with many stakeholders. Based on these discussions and evaluations, the UBC will in this upcoming Action Programme focus on four sustainability processes.

Awareness and Commitment

Management and Leadership

Management of Resources

Quality of Life



To work on each of these sustainability processes the UBC shall implement a number of projects, transfer of good practices, provide possibilities for exchange of personnel, organize training workshops and conferences and increase policy liaison. Utilising our strong network, emphasis will also be put on innovative development of new services and activities. The main activity will be implementation of different types of projects. They will mobilise the majority of member cities and several other partners and will also bring in necessary resources needed for the improvements and investments in the future.

The progress on the four Sustainability processes will be monitored two times during the Programme period by membership surveys.

Awareness and Commitment

A critical factor for **successful long-term sustainability process** is the integration of sustainable development into the overall strategies and goals of the city. This is a crucial step of good governance and urban management. **Awareness of current situation and sustainable actions is needed.**

Working alone is **not a good and efficient way for cities to reach sustainable development. Cooperation between cities has proofed to be a key for success.** Good governance aims at involving citizens and stakeholders in the sustainable development process – including all the generations and social groups. It increases fruitful co-operation and integrated approaches between different sectors and units of municipal administration, as well as between different levels of administration and government. **Openness, transparency, co-operation, partnerships and access to information are examples of its elements.** An enabling factor for good governance is a good culture of co-operation.

Surveys / assessment and comparability between cities and evaluation of progress in time give the UBC a good foundation for evaluation on ongoing trends and possible gaps or needs. The UBC has successfully been collecting data and will continue to follow the progress of our member cities.

Goals and targets

- » Active participation of UBC in BSR related policy work and EU Sustainability processes.
- » Active participation in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region through different actions such as offering the UBC as a network of sustainable cities, involvement in clean shipping and port activities and climate change related actions and projects.
- » At least 60% of UBC member cities involved in joint development projects.
- » More than 50 UBC cities have signed Aalborg Commitments or other similar sustainability programmes.
- » 100% of UBC member cities have sustainable development included into city strategy.
- » Organizing 3 major sustainability conferences in the region by UBC.
- » UBC Network of Nature schools for awareness raising and demonstration purposes established.
- » Increased cooperation with Universities and Green Flag schools in the Baltic Sea region

Management and Leadership

Integrated Management Systems models, sustainability indicators, monitoring systems and continuing and comparable reporting practices to evaluate results and progress are more commonly in use. Green procurement principles and other tools available for making the city more sustainable by means of management have more and more been used.

Good governance and sustainability management are crucial for enabling the cities' own activities to become more efficient and sustainable. Good governance and sustainability management support the city to mobilise citizens, companies and other stakeholder to co-operate for sustainable development and increased attractiveness of the city. When properly implemented, they make permanent change for local sustainable development possible and contribute in improving the city's environmental and also general performance.

Increase cross-sectoral work in organisations of local authorities is needed in order to find good and efficient solutions. Today too many issues are delegated to the responsibility of one sector only and do not reach all sectors and stakeholders needed for efficient and smart solutions.

Emphasis on analysing existing hot spots and potential risk areas in the urban areas are needed in the BSR cities. This requires an integrated and cross-sectoral approach in **risk management**. Risk management is important for minimizing unnecessary economical loss and improve the civil protection.

One of the central goals of local sustainable development is **viable local economy**. Balanced economic development is an important enabling factor for the environmental and social aspects of sustainable development. The Union of the Baltic Cities consider eco-efficiency and greening of municipal economic activities to play a key role in the future wellbeing of Baltic Sea Region and Europe.

Goals and targets

- » 50% of UBC cities use strategic sustainability city leadership and sustainability management systems by 2015.
- » UBC actively involved in mainstreaming a set of common sustainability Indicators including local, national and EU level.
- » All UBC cities to prepare local sustainability programmes and action plans.
- » All UBC cities should by 2015 have integrated risk management plans.
- » Increased use of benchmarking by help of peer review, more widely used between UBC cities.
- » 50 peer reviews implemented in the Baltic Sea Region in UBC cities.
- » More efficient exchange and promotion of Good Practices and success factors. Identification and compiling the UBC Good Practice Database of at least 500 good practice cases in the Baltic Sea Region serving all UBC members.



Management of Resources

The material and energy intensity of the current way of life in Europe is unsustainable and needs to be addressed by the Baltic Cities. Sustainable production and consumption are essential in this regard. They are also issues that cities can influence both directly in their own functions and indirectly by local regulations and awareness-raising campaigns made for citizens, businesses and other stakeholders.

Energy and natural resources are core factors of sustainable development on all levels. Cities have power over many decisions and plans of energy production and consumption and control of usage of considerable amounts of other resources. The Union of Baltic Cities represents the voice from the local government level, where energy is partly produced and mostly consumed.

Cities represent the actor with the significant impact on both climate change and the emerging new green energy economy. In order to support financial risk associated with investments in green energy production the Baltic Sea Region there is a need for a significantly increase in electricity market integration.

Strong change in favour of renewable energy is an important goal and critical for sustainability, and the Baltic Sea Region has good potential for this. Waste management and means to affect waste generation and re-usage of materials is also close to municipalities. Water is one very important resource that is provided to citizens mostly by municipalities. An energy revolution is needed not only for stopping the green house emissions causing climate change, but also for generating jobs and new economic growth.

A green New Deal will be needed for job creation and building up businesses after present financial crisis and the global economic decline. The Baltic Sea Region needs also green economy investments as a new growth driver. In order to speed up the process of decreasing green house gases in the Baltic Sea Region, structured and validated information about different available technologies has to be disseminated throughout the region. Best practices and demonstration sites showing new innovative ideas should be promoted.

Good environment is the pre-condition of life. Ecological impacts are of major importance for sustainable development strategies of cities. City politics have great influence on the everyday **living environment** of their citizens and possess considerable means to affect the state of the nature. Good city planning is a necessity. **Air quality** is an important issue for cities to monitor and be in charge of. Green areas and nature protection contribute to wellbeing of humans as well as to preserving nature and maintaining bio-diversity. Cities do have possibilities to affect emissions and pollution. Efficient collection of hazardous waste, good waste management and wastewater management are examples of issue where the cities play a major role. Clean soils and waters are important for the success of any city.

Transport and traffic planning is a burning sustainability issue on European level. In cities, mobility is a pre-condition for various key functions of the urban system. At the same time, traffic is a source of big spatial, social and environmental diffusion/problems. In Baltic Cities, traffic and transport planning are extremely important for the urban environment, day-to-day wellbeing of citizens as well as for economic livelihood. This is the case both for mobility within cities as well as for cargo and travel over longer distances. During the recent decade, many Baltic cities have experienced large increase in usage of private cars. At the same time, many of our cities have created and implemented new more sustainable transport solutions. Such innovative solutions and de-coupling of economic growth and increase of transport is increasingly important.

Urban spatial planning is of crucial importance for building sustainable cities and regions. Urban planning influence on a broad number of sectors like transport systems and modes, land use and constructions, biodiversity, economical efficiency and the attractiveness of the whole urban area.

An important principle is to **find combining solutions for handling energy, waste and wastewater processes** including effects of the State of the Baltic Sea. Combining solutions have shown to be good practices in many cities and has during its development innovated much in new good practices, technical solutions and less dependency of energy.

Goals and targets

- » All municipal water treatment plants in the BSR have reached the EU Urban Waste water directive levels on P and N in outgoing waste waters.
- » All UBC member cities are aware about the existing good practices and technical solutions to reach the HELCOM recommendations on reduced phosphorous and nitrogen emissions. All UBC cities committed to achieving the HELCOM recommendations.
- » No poor practice “waste water hot spot” cities among UBC member cities in year 2015.
- » Shore to ship electricity in all important UBC city ports before 2015.
- » All UBC cities should have clear CO2 reduction plans to meet the EU 2020 targets.
- » All UBC cities should support energy saving and efficiency.
- » Share of renewable energy in the energy use of UBC cities should increase with 20% by 2015 from the level in 2009.
- » All UBC cities should have a climate change mitigation and adaptation action plan adapted during the program period.
- » 50 cities have and implement successfully sustainable urban mobility plans and concrete long-term regional public transport development programs.
- » UBC cities should prefer environmentally friendly vehicles while procuring vehicles.
- » UBC cities should actively work on mobility management measures and improve the competitive ability of public transport in comparison to private cars.
- » UBC cities should increase the attractiveness of city centres as housing areas to decrease the need for transports.
- » All UBC cities shall invest in new smart environmentally friendly technology. UBC cities will invest in a green energy infrastructure that can meet the climate challenge, the future energy demands and a responsible security policy in the region.



Quality of Life

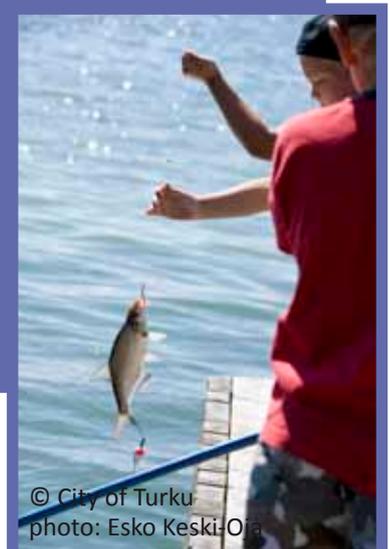
On global level, **promoting well-being and equity** which includes tackling with social issues like poverty and exclusion are **at the core of sustainable development** and state of affairs. Social wellbeing and health are also inter-linked and social poverty correlate remarkably with increased health risks. At city level, work for **better health** goes hand in hand with work for sustainable development. Making cities healthier also means making cities more sustainable. People who have a stake in the society, as opposed to being excluded, have higher motivation and better possibilities to influence health and sustainable development.

Gender equality is one of the issues strongly present in Agenda 21 document (adopted in Rio de Janeiro in 1992) and an important part of promoting equal opportunities for all. UBC strongly promotes gender equity in all actions. Equity is a cross-cutting challenge that is relevant to all fields of this Action Programme and need to be highlighted continuously. Preventive measures are important for promoting **health and social well-being** of the cities and their inhabitants. Improved and continuing education and capacity building is a central element for a vital and prosperous region and city. Much focus needs to be put on education particularly in solving large scale problems. **Accessibility** should be improved and a main goal for a levels of the society.

Attractivity is a common interest of all UBC cities and the whole Baltic Sea Region. In order to reach attractivity a wide range of issues need to be met and many sectors must be included in broad cooperation. The principles of sustainable development promote good planning and decision making with the clear goal in safe, secure and attractive living surroundings. Attractivity is also closely linked to the concept of quality of life. Ensuring high quality of life is a key element in the development of attractive cities in the BSR. However quality of life is also an individual concept that different people determine in different ways, depending on their own preferences. For this reason promoting the quality of life demands an active involvement of people living the BSR all the way from planning to the implementation and monitoring of sustainable cities in the BSR.

Goals and targets

- » Improved attractiveness in the Baltic Sea Region and UBC cities.
- » Focusing on pedestrian /cycle roads, school yards make people more physically active and increase their objective health as well as subjective well-being.
- » Sustainable health programmes and plans interlinked and/or included in the sustainable development programmes in more than 50 UBC cities.
- » Tackling public health/lifestyle problems of obesity in all UBC cities.
- » Taking elderly and youth as specific target groups in all UBC cities.
- » Generation management. "Vision and Action Programme for using sustainable managers (skilful persons) after 10 – 15 years" ready in 2015.
- » Involvement in education programmes focusing on good regional practises and specific elements in all UBC cities.
- » All UBC member cities implementing participatory planning methods/systematically involving the citizens in the city development and planning.
- » All UBC member cities having the quality of life included in the overall city development/planning.
- » All UBC member cities should monitor people's quality of life.



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photo: Esko Keski-Oja

3. HOW SHALL UBC IMPLEMENT THE ACTIVE PROGRAMME?

The main strength of the Union of the Baltic Cities are our **member cities** that make the network active, useful and efficient for all its members. Other remarkable strengths are the **effective decentralised organisation, good contact surface for partnerships and political liaison, and proven performance in running strategic sustainable development programmes and projects, as well as the large resources of know-how and experiences available** in the member cities. By fully utilising all these strengths – mobilising our whole potential – we are in a position to create permanent change for sustainable development in our cities and region. During the programme period, we will work through at least following types of activities:

- » Mobilise our whole network organisation and its basic services to promote and raise awareness, study and analyse, and build city partnerships for sustainable development actions.
- » Implement co-operation projects on different types of thematically content based on sustainability principles.
- » Implement tailor made training and consultations for UBC member cities for reaching urgent and specific challenges and tasks.
- » Build partnerships and synergy with other organisations and contribute to Baltic Sea Regional and European policies and co-operation processes on sustainable development, and
- » Take an active role as a Baltic Sea Region policy actor.

The projects are our largest undertaking and are expected to have the biggest impact with regard to the themes of the programme. However, these types of activities are inter-related and will be implemented in good synergy with each other. UBC as an organisation should be as flexible as possible in arrangements and actions in order to meet the needs of UBC member cities.

Mobilising the network

The UBC is a very successful network of cities. During its activity since 1991, the amount of members has more than tripled and the activities have continuously developed. This network provides plenty of channels to advance sustainable development. The largest potential to address the themes of our Sustainability Action Programme is in the thematic commissions as they deal with practical co-operation between the member cities and provide access to large numbers of leaders, experts and practitioners in all Baltic Cities.

During the programme period, special emphasis will be put on the involvement of all UBC commissions and networks. All UBC commissions organise meetings and exchange of information and experiences. Another important task will be to arrange UBC political forums every second year. Many also run projects, produce publications and use web-sites and other e-communication. These regular services and activities provide an excellent channel for awareness raising and promotion of sustainable development actions. During the programme period, they will be extensively used and mobilised for this.

Sharing of problems, experiences and solutions plays a central role. Exchange of good practices is one of the most powerful activities that a network of cities can undertake. The UBC is aiming at fully mobilising its potential to provide learning opportunities for its members. Our more than 100 member cities provide plenty of excellent implemented practices to learn from. Such examples have a great demonstration value as they show what is possible to do in the cities. In parallel with good practice activities, the UBC will also regularly work on other demonstration techniques, like environmental information centres, nature schools and modern interactive exhibitions aiming at capacity-building through practical on-site learning, and new ecological and efficient technology. The UBC Good Practice database (www.ubcwheel.eu) will serve the UBC members with good experiences and smart solutions.

Partnerships and policy liaison

The UBC wants to be “an open house” on sustainable urban development. All members as well as external partners and stakeholders are welcomed to join in our effort of making Baltic Cities sustainable. At the same time, we are willing to contribute to Baltic Sea Regional, European and Global partnerships and co-operation processes to advance sustainable development. Our conviction is that such an Open House approach is critical for bringing about a long-term change for sustainability. In applying it we are implementing principles of good governance to our own work.

UBC is as earlier mentioned currently contributing to several important co-operation processes on sustainable development. These include EU green and blue book communication and comments, integration of new EU member states, participation in different EU working groups on different aspects of sustainable development, Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (Baltic 21), the Baltic Sea Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), active involvement in the implementation of the Aalborg Commitments and the Nordic Baltic Aalborg Commitment Network and involvement in the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign. At the same time, through our involvement in these processes as well as through partnerships in projects and other activities, we are co-operating in good synergy with a considerable number of partner organisations, i.e., other local government networks and organisations advancing sustainable development. This co-operation is very fruitful, and we will continue it during the programme period with the aim to identify and engage also new partners with good capacities to contribute on four sustainability processes of our programme.

Implementing projects

Projects are the largest set of actions to be launched for the implementation of this action programme. Our strong network with its active members, the Open House of partnerships, our good capacities, experiences and results in implementing projects, as well as the trust and continuous support of co-financing organisations make the UBC extremely well placed to implement effective projects on sustainable development.

During the programme period, we will seek to fully mobilise this potential and implement a considerable number of projects addressing all the four sustainability processes of the programme. This is the most effective action that we can take to advance our objective of sustainable development in Baltic Cities and implement the sustainability processes of our programme. Each of the projects will be addressing one or several of these sustainability processes of the programme.

The projects will seek to utilise the experiences of our members, the expertise of our partners, the potential of our network and the funding instruments available. All the projects will be network projects: they will benefit wide amounts of member cities – either directly or through dissemination of pilot cases. The methods of the projects include capacity-building, evaluation and benchmarking, exchange and dissemination of good practice, research and development of pilot models, and policy development.

Strong policy and implementation actor

The UBC will strengthen the role and position as a well-functioning and wanted partner in the Baltic Sea Region and Europe representing local authorities. UBC will also be a watch dog regarding EU policies that affects cities in the BSR and will actively communicate and influence on the preparations in the policy making. The role of UBC needs to be broadly and continuously discussed. Common policies and strategies needs to be developed and new UBC member cities need to get orientation on these. Actions aiming to network UBC with other organisations in the Baltic Sea Region and Europe are welcomed in particularly in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and Action Plan. UBC should also stress the importance to involve and integrate Russian cities more in the Baltic Sea political agenda and arena by increasing the capacity in Russian cities.

4. MONITORING PROGRESS

In order to monitor the success of this action programme and the state of sustainability in the member cities, the UBC will during the programme period 2010-2015 carry out two assessments. The first one will be carried out in 2012 and the final one in 2013- 2015. The purpose of these monitoring rounds will be to get overall information of the state of affairs and the trends on the level of all UBC members. For making this possible with the resources available, the indicators to be chosen will be as uncomplicated to use as possible, and will be largely based on existing data readily available in most cities. This pragmatic choice means that the chosen indicators may not give the most correct or whole picture of affairs in one single city. However, they will allow for cost-efficient monitoring on Baltic Sea Regional level.

It should also be noted that in addition to monitoring its own Sustainability Action Programme and the state of affairs in its member cities, the UBC will continue to contribute actively to different other initiatives for development of indicator systems for monitoring urban sustainability.

In order to monitor the impact of UBC activities on the implementation of the new Business plan for Sustainable Baltic Cities, a specific set of questions will be prepared for the cities and linked with the thematic indicators.



5. ORGANISING OF WORK

The implementation will start following the decision of the X UBC General Conference, the first programme assessment will be carried out in 2012 and progress will be reported to the XIII General Conference in 2015.

The results of the interim assessment will provide input to further development of the programme and maybe already for longer-term planning also beyond the program period. The programme will be continuously adjusted and up-dated on the level of projects, but the interim evaluation is expected – if need be – to give input for larger adjustments and follow-up planning.

The second programme cycle will start after the interim evaluation. Possible remarkable alterations and further developments of the programme will then be introduced at the XIII General Conference in 2015.

Responsibilities and co-ordination of implementation

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 is a strategic programme of the UBC, aiming at implementation of the UBC strategy with regard to sustainable development. The main responsibility for its implementation between the general conferences is in the Executive Board and Presidium.

Practical responsibility for implementing actions, fund-raising and contributing to the programme is in all UBC bodies as well as in all member cities. Successful implementation requires a concerted effort of the whole network and its members. The commissions and the UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat will provide for venues to discuss and report on the implementation, create new approaches and ideas, as well as partnerships for new projects.

For the co-ordination and management of the programme, the UBC will utilise its Commission on Environment (EnvCom) Secretariat. The EnvCom Secretariat will be the programme agency responsible for planning, evaluation, co-ordination, and management and reporting. It will also carry out fund-raising, be responsible for liaison with external partners and for representing the UBC in Sustainable Development co-operation processes. On the implementation of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme and on the responsibilities related to this, the EnvCom Secretariat will report directly to the Executive Board and Presidium.

6. FUNDING

The total foreseen budget of the programme is 15-20 million Euros. The UBC and its member cities and other partners will contribute core resources for the different projects and basic network activities. Most of the funding will come from different EU funding instruments. Nordic Council of Ministers, National Ministries and agencies, as well as other sources of funding available for sustainable development activities in the Baltic Sea Region will also be very important for the programme implementation.

The programme agency (UBC EnvCom Secretariat) will be hosted for the whole programme period by the City of Turku. The city will provide for the secretariat basic funding, venue, as well as basic technical, financial and administrative services. The UBC shall also allocate annually funds to support the co-ordination.

7. BACKGROUND; UBC COMMITMENTS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development - balanced democratic, economic, environmental and social development enables the current human generation to live meaningful and healthy lives without compromising the possibility of future generations to do the same. This is and has always been part of the basic purpose of the Union of the Baltic Cities, as expressed in the Statute of the Union.

The Strategy of the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC), as approved by the X General Conference in Kristiansand, September 2009, further commits the UBC to advancing sustainable development.

The UBC Strategy declare that the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 is an expression of common values of the Baltic Cities, and that the implementation of Sustainable Development and the Action Programme is part of the basic purpose of the Union and belongs to its Mission.

The Union of the Baltic Cities and its member cities continuously recognise their responsibility for making our future a sustainable one and commit to undertake all the efforts that this requires. We have already taken many steps together and we will continue to dedicate our work with our member cities to continuously improve our capacity and practices all around the Baltic Sea Region and build societies with high quality of life!



UBC GOOD PRACTICE DATABASE

The UBC Good Practice Database was developed to answer to the need of local authorities to find practical examples complemented with suitable tools. The practices in the database cover sustainable development in cities including all topics from transport to health and from social aspects to economic instruments - all dimensions of the Aalborg Commitments.

In the Good Practice Database you find examples, experiences and inspiration of what other cities and municipalities have done. These examples tell how the cities succeeded, sometimes with small effort, but great creativity, to speed up the sustainable development in their area, e.g by involving the citizens in the decision-making or creating huge campaigns about how to travel to school safely and environmental friendly.

In the database, further information, links and contact details are provided so that further exchange is easily possible.



www.ubcwheel.eu

Since it was launched on 18th March 2009, over 400 cases have been published in the UBC Good Practice Database. (March 2010)

Meant for cities

The database is for the cities and from the cities! Every city is able to share their own experiences through inserting their own cases.

What has your city done to face climate change effects? How is your city solving problems with traffic in the centre? What projects, strategies, plans or campaigns have been very successful? Do you want to help others with similar challenges?

SOME UBC ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS FROM THE UBC LOCAL AGENDA 21 ACTION PROGRAM PERIOD 2004 - 2009

The signing of **Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy in the Baltic Sea Region** (MoU) in addition to **improved cooperation between ports and cities** in the 'New Hansa for Sustainable Ports and Cities' project have led to awareness raising on, for example emissions in ports, and how the activities of ports influence the life in cities. The project has been furthermore an innovator for further development of EU Maritime policies and actions for the Baltic Sea. **Participating UBC cities:** Lübeck, Rostock, Kolding, Malmö, Stockholm, Mariehamn, Pori, Turku, Helsinki and Szczecin. (www.newhansa.net)

Concrete changes and improvement on **urban transport plans** in several UBC cities are results of the 'Baltic Urban Sustainable Transport Implementation & Planning' (BUSTRIP) project. The project developed '**Moving Sustainably - a Guide to Sustainable Urban Transport Plans**'. **Participating UBC cities:** Gdynia, Göteborg, Kaunas, Liepaja, Pärnu, Sundsvall, Tartu, Vilnius and Örebro. (www.bustrip-project.net).

An European wide **model for cities working with Integrated Urban Management Systems** was result of the 'Managing Urban Europe-25' (MUE-25) project. Several cities started or continued their work with integrated management and leadership with the focus to build more sustainable European cities. **Participating UBC cities:** Kaunas, Lahti, Riga, Siauliai, Stockholm, Turku, Växjö. (www.mue25.net)

Integrated management and stakeholder involvement especially in Russian cities were addressed in 'Integrated Management system for Russian cities - MATRUSCHKA' project. The project resulted a '**Stakeholder Involvement Toolkit for Local Authorities**' and the '**UBC Good Practice Database**'. **Participating UBC cities:** Kotka, Kaliningrad, Malmö, Oskarshamn, St Petersburg, Stockholm. (www.matruschka-project.net)

UBC Commissions

Business Cooperation - Kaunas

Culture - Vaasa

Education - Norrtälje & Kärdla

Energy - Oskarshamn

Environment - Turku

Gender Equality - Umeå

Health & Social Affairs
- Kristiansand & Gdynia

Information Society - St Petersburg

Sport - Gdynia

Tourism - Koszalin

Transportation - Gdynia

Urban Planning - Helsinki

Youth Issues - Tallinn

EXAMPLES OF NEW UBC PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN THE UBC SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PROGRAMME PERIOD 2010 - 2015

Climate Change: Impacts, Costs and Adaption in the Baltic Sea Region (**BaltCICA**) and Climate Change Response through Managing Urban Europe 27 Platform (**CHAMP**) projects support cities to **adapt and solve climate change related actions in an integrated way**. This is done by joint actions and building up national support and training hubs for efficient climate change work. (www.baltcica.org and www.localmanagement.eu)

Improved nutrient removal, sustainable sludge handling and increased cost efficiency for wastewater treatment plants and cities via **PURE** (Project on urban reduction of eutrophication and **ITEST** (Increased Technology and Efficiency in Sewage Treatment projects. (www.purebalticsea.eu and www.nova.artisan.se/ITEST.aspx).

Improving urban rural interaction and regional development and attractiveness via **NEW BRIDGES** (Strengthening of Quality of Life through improved Management of Urban Rural Interaction) project. (www.urbanrural.net)

UBC Sustainability Action Programme

Agenda for Sustainable Baltic Cities

2010 2015



FOCUS AREAS FOR 2010-2015

Awareness and Commitment

Focus on the importance of good knowledge, long term planning, critical evaluation of work, and cooperation between cities.

Management and Leadership

Focus on good governance and leadership, increase on cross-sectoral work in organisations, risk management, and viable local economy.

Management of Resources

Focus on sustainable planning and production, use of natural and other resources used in local authorities, transport and traffic planning, air quality, and urban spatial planning.

Quality of Life

Focus on health and social well-being, gender and age equality and attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region cities.