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Baltic Cities

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- UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme - perfect and real success? -Editorial by Mr. Risto Veivo
- UBC Survey of Sustainable Development 2004 Results

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
- special theme edition



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Environmental bulletin



Perfect and real success?

It is quite seldom that there is almost perfect success to be reported. This is however at the moment the case with UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities.

First, UBC members have really taken the programme to their hearts and are very actively contributing to its activities. Second, project development and fund-raising within the programme have been extremely successful. To date, the whole budget goal of 10 MEUR of the six-year programme is mobilised, and nearly the whole UBC is involved in the implementation.

While congratulating ourselves, the Union and its members, for the current success, we should however also make some critical questions. The most relevant questions are related to the impacts of all those activities – what are the actual sustainability impacts on the ground? Are Baltic cities moving towards sustainability, or are the actions just slightly slowing down the negative trends? And are we addressing the right issues – are there important issues that we are not addressing? Could addressing some of such “new” issues actually bear a stronger sustainability impact on the ground?

When answering to such questions, we do need to keep in mind what is the potential of the UBC network to respond and which issues can be best addressed by the cities themselves and/or other actors. Each actor should put focus where the largest potential impacts can be reached.

While implementing and debating our own actions, let us also not forget the European and Baltic Sea Regional policy developments. The Thematic Strategy for the Urban Environment within the EU 6th Environmental Action Plan and the Aalborg Commitments are the most important policy developments on urban sustainability in Europe at the moment. The UBC has contributed strongly to both of them, and more work remains to be done.

Experiences and insights of UBC members are the most important knowledge base for UBC's activities. One good opportunity to discuss both our own work and the European co-operation will be the VIII UBC General Conference in Turku 29 September – 2 October 2005. I hope we will meet in Turku and at other UBC events in near future!

Risto Veivo

Head of Secretariat

UBC Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat

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UBC Survey of Sustainable Development: Air quality above European standards

By Kyösti Lempa, Niina Hakanpää and Mia Rahunen

The first round of the UBC Survey of Sustainable Development is in the final stage and it seemed to be very successful. The survey was remarkably comprehensive giving an overall picture of the true state of affairs in the member cities. It was also unique in its scope, as the return rate was as high as 72 %. Best results were achieved in good governance, air quality and waste water management.

The survey shows that previous work with Local Agenda 21 is producing tangible results in the UBC member cities. They take very good care of the most traditional areas of sustainability: for example with regard to Sustainable Management and Good Governance the UBC member cities are on the right track. Almost 80 % of the cities have already integrated sustainable development or participatory planning into their overall strategies. Most city administrations are also implementing and monitoring sustainable development supporting activities, such as purchase of environmentally friendly products, use of environmental management systems and capacity building possibilities. However, cities cannot reach the goals of sustainable development on their own – to be successful they need to mobilise citizens and stakeholders to co-operation, which is also the target of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme.

Results in the field of Good Living Environment and Nature Protection suggest major breakthroughs in air quality and waste water management. Most UBC member cities have air quality above European standards, which project coordinator Kyösti Lempa at UBC EnvCom Secretariat was very pleased with.

-This means that the majority of the UBC member cities are already now well prepared if more rigorous European air quality standards would take place.

Waste water treatment is an established practice in UBC countries, as large majority of the UBC member cities purifies over 80% of their waste waters in centralised plants. Based on these results more challenging indicators and



Laisves aleija in the city of Kaunas. It is a nice place to enjoy green of the boulevard, meet friends and do shopping in the small boutiques. An excellent example how to combine environmental, social and economical aspects of urban life in a sustainable way.

demanding targets are needed for the following rounds of the UBC survey in order to get more valuable information on these issues.

Fields to improve

Sustainable Use of Energy and Resources are fundamental factors for sustainable development. UBC member cities are dependent on non-renewable energy: the share of renewable sources, both in electricity and heating, is under 20 % of the total energy consumption in most cities. Majority of the cities recycle their waste to some extent, but it was concerning to find out that there are still eight member cities who do not even have plans to start recycling processes.

As far as Sustainable Economy and Transport are concerned, there is an evident need to further develop public transport, since the UBC member cities currently rely more on private than public transport. The low usage of public transport may originate in low accessibility, since only 28 % of the member cities can provide easy access to public transport for the considerable majority of the inhabitants. Nevertheless, almost one third of the cities report that the share of private transport is less than 40 %.

The most problematic focus area for the cities seems to be Social Integration and Health. Results of decision-making, population growth and migration rate give a good base for analysing social integration, but the answers of health

issues are mainly based on estimates. Besides that they are difficult to monitor and control at the local level, they are also often culturally depending and thus not easily comparable between the cities. Better data management and more specific indicators should thus be developed to monitor health aspects in the UBC member cities.

Successful co-operation with participants

UBC Commission on Environment Secretariat would like to express its warm gratitude to all participants. All cities taking part in the survey before the deadline have already got a confidential City Report of the results. The return rate of the UBC Survey of Sustainable Development was remarkably high, 72 %, though it may have been a challenging task for member cities.

-The participants really had a genuine interest in the survey and they did their very best to fulfil our demands. It was delightful to notice how much UBC member cities put emphasis on environmental questions and how devout they are to co-operate to reach common objectives, project co-ordinator Lempa states.

The survey partners were Åbo Akademi University and Turku Polytechnic, both institutions having considerable knowledge of sustainable development at the local level. Also Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung and member cities Riga and Gdynia were involved in the process. The next rounds of the survey will take place in 2006/2007 and 2009.

How and why to use indicators in local decision-making?

What? The UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 describes five thematic focus areas, which cover the overall objectives of urban sustainability: Sustainable Management and Good Governance, Sustainable Use of Energy and Resources, Good Living Environment and Nature Protection, Sustainable Economy and Transport, and Social Integration and Health. Indicators used in the survey represent these focus areas and can be seen both as a result of earlier decision-making and as the raw material for future political discussions on sustainability.

Why? Indicators ought to ease decision-making by simplifying the complex issues of sustainability. They give both qualitative and quantitative information of the trends that pose threats to sustainable development. They also contribute to goal setting, e.g. defining time limits and relevant target values.

How? The indicator list can be studied in parts, indicator by indicator to recognise the most critical issues in sustainable development. Many indicators and issues behind them are interrelated. Individual indicators and their targets can give mixed, even contradicting information. A good indicator system aims to identify best possible alternatives for the given set of indicators. It is up to political decision-making processes to decide which alternative is the best policy.

10 MEUR mobilised for UBC Agenda 21

With the recent project funding decisions from the European Commission DG Environment, BSR Interreg III B Programme and Finnish Ministry of the Environment, the overall budget goal of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities has been reached. 10 MEUR is now mobilised for the different projects and activities of the programme.

The latest projects, Managing Urban Europe – 25 and BUSTRIP (Baltic Urban Sustainable Transport Implementation and Planning), have added altogether 6,2 MEUR to the overall budget of the programme, thereby marking year 2005 as a real breakthrough in the volume of activities. This great success also implies that the focus of activity at the Programme

Management will now shift from project development and fund-raising towards excellent implementation.

UBC members have found the programme to be very useful. Numerous cities are taking part in the projects and meetings, and finding together inspiration and creating improved know-how and solutions for their own sustainable development work. The first assessment within the programme has been completed, with an answering rate of 72%. As the survey was really demanding for the cities to respond, this high rate strongly signals their interest and commitment towards the programme. Many cities are also contributing strongly as partners in the projects, hosts of meetings, and by active promotion of their good practices for others to learn from. Such contributions are at the heart of the whole undertaking.

The implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme is a joint effort of the whole Union. The five programme themes address issues of several UBC commissions, and several commissions are now contributing to the implementation. The focus themes are:

1. Good governance and sustainable urban management
2. Sustainable use of energy and resources
3. Good living environment and nature protection
4. Sustainable economy and transport
5. Social integration and health.

All of these five themes are crucial for sustainable development in cities, and the cities also have powers and means to address them. With the currently mobilised resources, the UBC has an exceptional opportunity to support its members at this work.

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Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment

Working Group emphasizes the linkage to the the Aalborg Commitments

By Mia Rahunen

Urban Environment is one of the seven Thematic Strategies outlined in the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme. These strategies are a new way of developing environmental policy for complex priority problems that require a broad approach. The focus of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment is on four key areas: Urban Environmental Management, Sustainable Urban Transport, Sustainable Construction and Sustainable Urban Design. The Strategy aims to promote an integrated horizontal approach across Community policies. It targets to reinforce the environmental contribution to sustainable urban development while taking into account the related economic and social issues. Technical Working Groups were designed to provide technical recommendations and they addressed the following topics: Urban Environmental Management Plans and Systems (referred as Working Group 1); Sustainable Urban Transport Plans (WG2); and Urban Environment Research and Training Needs (WG3).

Link to the Aalborg Commitments

Key proposals of the Communication included a legal obligation for cities and urban agglomerations of more than 100 000 inhabitants to adopt an urban environment management plan with objectives to achieve a sustainable urban environment, and to implement an appropriate environmental management system to manage its delivery. The European Commission believes that there could be a requirement at the EU level to this effect.

Working Group 1 acknowledged that environmental management plans are an essential tool in ensuring the co-ordination, planning and implementation of urban environmental policy. However, it pointed out the need to specify the remit of such plans as principally environmental: they should be formulated within cities' overall sustainability or sustainable development plan. Almost 250 European local governments have already signed the Aalborg Commitments, which are designed to strengthen ongoing local sustainability efforts and to revitalise Local Agenda 21. Since they

The Communication "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment", adopted by the European Commission in February 2004, sets out the framework for the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.

The consultation process was established to further discuss the proposals made in the Communication. Three expert technical Working Groups have now considered the technical issues and finalised their reports with recommendations.

are this widely accepted, there are compelling reasons to link the Commitments closely to the Urban Thematic Strategy to secure synergies in policy formulation and implementation. The Aalborg Commitments should be utilised as the framework within which the elements and objectives of an urban environmental management plan could be identified.

Clear benefits for local governments

Working Group 1 was reluctant to view the environmental management system process as separate from the environment management plan. However defined, environmental management system should be part of the process of plan implementation. Working Group did not feel appropriate to recommend one preferred system – in most cases local governments will choose to utilise an established system such as EcoBudget or EMAS to implement their plan. The proposal in the Communication refers to cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants, which means approximately 450 cities in Europe. Working Group had reservations over the use of such a tightly defined threshold. Functional urban areas of this size and larger will often have boundaries that do not coincide with administrative borders. It means that member states themselves are best placed to define both the urban areas that should adopt environmental management plans and the competent authorities responsible for preparing the plans.

According to the Working Group 1, the adoption of the proposed environmental management plans would not conflict

with existing environmental or other related statutory plans, just on the contrary. It would provide local governments with a co-ordinating mechanism to both



meet existing European Directive commitments and facilitate achieving other nationally or locally agreed targets. Local governments would clearly benefit, since the advantages of adopting environmental management plans outweigh the incurred resource allocation and financial costs. Though there are many cities who already have adopted recommendations of the Technical Working Group, there are still many others who will need substantial support and guidance. Besides the European Commission and the Member States, it is clear that also the local government networks have a crucial role in disseminating information and nurturing good practices.

Sustainable urban transport plan

Another key proposal in the Communication was a legal obligation for cities with populations over 100 000 to develop and implement a sustainable urban transport plan. All Member States will be encouraged to set out a clear framework policy on sustainable urban transport, evaluate the impacts of new urban transport infrastructure projects on the sustainabi-

lity of the town's transport system and closely follow the guidelines on the use of structural funds. The Technical Working Group formulated recommendations for this potential directive and made a clear difference between elements that should be obligatory and elements that should have an advisory character only.

Working Group 2 underlines the crucial need for citizen participation, stakeholder consultation and actor and policy co-ordination. It recommends a five-step implementation mechanism and emphasises a crucial demand for several supportive actions by the European Union, Member States, regions and local authorities. They are necessary to ensure an efficient and effective implementation of sustainable urban transport plan. The establishment of a common evaluation framework, the provision of financial support, as well as guidance, training and dissemination activities are of particular importance. On top of that, the sustainable urban management plan should be successively integrated into present regulation and the potential directive should provide a timetable for transferring it into national legislation.

Code of urban research

The European Commission promises in the Communication to explore opportunities for training, exchange of experience and further research. Working Group 3 emphasises the importance of further urban research and training co-ordinated at the European level and remarks that cities are to be involved as significant players in research activities. Working Group also has expectations of questions of sustainable urban development once again being incorporated as an independent field in future European research, training and demonstration programmes. It recommends a code of urban research, which should be mandatory for future EU-supported research. According to this code, cities are both major actors and recipients of urban research, meaning that all relevant groups and disciplines have to be included and research needs to be both inter-institutional and inter- and trans-disciplinary. Dissemination and considerations regarding demonstration and transferability must be included in the concept and methodology of research projects.

Sustainability is a crosscutting concept demanding communication among all fields, so new training fields have to be opened to overcome professional segregation and to get beyond narrow and sectoral views. Working Group also points out the need for awareness raising. In some of those stakeholder groups, which are crucial for sustainable urban

development, there is a need for awareness raising and information concerning both sustainable urban development in general and the opportunities and instruments which are already available.

Active UBC participation

The European Commission works towards adoption of the final Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment by the end of 2005. The Union of the Baltic Cities has actively taken part in all stages of the consultation process. One of the many people involved is Laimonis Osis from the UBC member city Riga. He is the Project Director at the Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21 and has participated in the Expert Group meetings on Urban Environment as a consultant of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Latvia.

- When discussing the interim reports of the working groups and Communication "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment" in the Expert Group meetings, it seemed that the Strategy will be a very strong document in the future, with lots of obligations for cities. The final reports of the working groups now contain a lot of voluntary actions instead, which means that majority of Member States did not support the suggested obligations, explains Osis. He also points out that the linkage to the Aalborg Commitments is essentially important and hopes that the start of the new UBC project Managing Urban Europe - 25 will facilitate to implement the proposed actions.

The main discussions in the last Expert Group Meeting in May 2005 were about the research and training needs. Laimonis Osis says that research and training, when viewed as a continuum, and the code of urban research are good frameworks for increasing the relevance, outcome and impact of urban research in the European Union. However, he remarks that though it is mentioned that special attention should be given to research needs in the cities in the new Member States, it is not elaborated adequately. According to Osis, this kind of special attention can only be given to these needs if they have been identified and the implications to urban sustainability in Europe understood.

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Photo: City of Århus

Managing Urban Europe - 25

New environmental management system to local governments

By Mia Rahunen

Managing Urban Europe – 25 project (MUE-25) aims at developing an environmental management system, which addresses sustainable development in the whole functional urban area. Only very few cities in the world have been able to achieve this goal by applying the existing systems, which makes this undertaking very ambitious. MUE-25 is the largest European co-operation project in this field so far.

The state of urban environment has a crucial impact on citizens' quality of life as over 80 % of the EU citizens live in the urban areas. Environmental impacts of urban functions are also notably widespread, which means that environmental management generates considerable challenges to local governments. In some cases the responsibility has been fallen upon environmental authorities only, which is neither a sustainable nor a successful solution. Ameliorating the quality of environment requires intensified internal collaboration within different sectors of municipal administration and more efficient co-operation with civil society and private sector. MUE-25 will develop methods and tools to help municipalities to succeed in this process.

The project has altogether 23 partners, including 14 cities from all over Europe.

The cities play an extremely important role in the project, as they should both provide information on successes and failures so far, and carry out testing of the new solutions to be developed during the project. The Managing Urban Europe – 25 project starts by taking a closer look at the existing environmental management systems (EMS). During the current year, MUE-25 analyzes the success of EMS applications in European cities to find out possible shortcomings and to get important information regarding the further development of the existing systems and the methods of their implementation. MUE-25 will elaborate and test an integrated, community based, practical and efficient management system for local governments. This test implementation will take place in all participating cities during 2006-2007.

Potentially applicable to all European cities

The methods, toolkits and training material will be available for other cities too. Combined with extensive dissemination activities, this is expected to considerably strengthen the implementation of urban management systems in Europe. By the beginning of year 2008, the MUE-25 project should be able to propose an improved system and implementation methodology, which should potentially be applicable to all cities in the European member and acceding states. This system will also quite likely include more sustainable development dimensions than just the environmental one.

The goals of the project are closely linked to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment within the 6th Environmental Action Plan of the European Union. The project has a total budget of 2,9 million euros and it is co-funded by European Commission DG Environment and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. The Project Steering Group is formed by the UBC, ICLEI, University of the West of England, UNEP Grid Arendal and Lake Constance Foundation. UBC member cities Kaunas, Siauliai, Riga, Lahti, Turku, Karlskrona and Växjö are participating as partners and all other UBC members will receive the methodological and information materials developed by the project.



UBC member city Riga is one of the partners of the Managing Urban Europe – 25 project.

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New Hansa Project Finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding

By Mia Rahunen

There has been an evident need for increasing co-operation and concerted action in order to improve environmental, health and economic aspects of maritime transport, since all port cities are facing similar challenges of balancing between different interests. The New Hansa project aims at achieving concrete solutions to conflicts between ports, cities, shipping lines, citizens, tourists and environment. An extremely important outcome is the Memorandum of Understanding, which will set guidelines for the harmonized sustainable development strategies of all Baltic ports. This innovative undertaking provides basis for a voluntary agreement on common environmental practices dealing with ships' emissions to the air, handling waste and managing waste waters.

New environmentally friendly practices

The need for such voluntary arrangements and coherent procedures has been strongly recognized by the participating ports and cities, as well as by the main shipping lines operating at the Baltic Sea. Since common practices will make environmental improvements easier for all the parties involved, the Memorandum will be an important key for better living environments at the port cities as well as for improving the state of the Baltic Sea.

Data on the environmental practices implemented in the participating ports and cities has been collected during the New Hansa project and the Centre for Maritime Studies of the University of Turku has been carrying out the scientific analysis. Researchers are entering the final straight and the results of the feasibility studies will provide an overview of major differences between the ports and cities and suggestions for improvements. Good environmental solutions are analyzed and examples of good and concrete practices will be included in the Memorandum.

Through the Memorandum cities are committing to encourage their port administrations to implement measures for reducing air emissions from shipping and to harmonize their technical facilities and procedures for waste and waste water management and noise abatement with other port cities. Correspondingly, the ports engage themselves to effectuate these measures and practices in

The objective of the New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities project has been to harmonize and speed up the implementation of sustainable port policy around the Baltic Sea. This goal will be realized through the joint policy document Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy in the Baltic Sea Region. This kind of voluntary agreement is very novel, since the local participants - cities and ports - have on their own initiative wanted to improve their maritime policies to be stricter than the claims of the current international environmental regulations.



The partners of the NewHansa project are getting ready to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy in the Baltic Sea Region. Photo: TT-Lines, Travemünde.

order to reduce environmental impacts. Ship owners' task is to contribute to new procedures by using the best available technology.

Inspiration for European port policies

Common understanding and wide commitment to the Memorandum was sought through discussions and consultations among different stakeholders in the Baltic Sea region. The final Memorandum on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy in the Baltic Sea Region will be presented for endorsement at the VIII General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities in October 2005.

The process does not however end to the signing of the Memorandum but the participating ports and cities will report

their achievements at regular intervals. The New Hansa project is an important pilot activity that can provide inspiration also for European policy processes on maritime transport and have impacts on the development of European-wide port policies.

The New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities project is part of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 - Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. It is receiving co-funding from the European Commission Baltic Sea Region Interreg III B Programme and from the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

More information:
www.newhansa.net

UBC - LVRLAC Co-operation Makes Further Progress

By Sulev Nömmann & Anna-Sofie Holmberg

The Phase II of the development co-operation project between UBC and Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Co-operation (LVRLAC) was concluded at the end of September 2004. The project continues with what has been termed an inception period, which covers the year 2005 and is aimed at further strengthening specific capacities of LVRLAC to be able to meet the challenges which still lie ahead.

Lake Victoria is the second largest freshwater lake in the world and the region has a population of almost 40 million people. The livelihood of the majority of the inhabitants depends directly or indirectly on Lake Victoria. Lake Victoria region has rich natural resources and enormous potential for economic growth, but it faces several social, environmental and economic challenges. UBC – LVRLAC co-operation is part of the larger ini-

tiative of the East African Community – an intergovernmental organisation of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – and the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida). Sida is also funding the project.

The overall goal of UBC - LVRLAC co-operation is to enhance LVRLAC's capacities as a network organisation of local authorities to contribute effectively to the sustainable development of the Lake Victoria region. Concrete objectives of the Phase II of the programme included the establishment of a well functioning LVRLAC secretariat and improvement of internal communications of the organisation, establishment of a Women's Network as well as concrete development projects, such as Environmental Pedagogic Centres. The Phase II has produced several tangible results.

LVRLAC secretariat has been established and equipped, computers have been procured and installed in some member authorities and a LVRLAC webpage has been launched. These activities have considerably improved the administrative capacities and internal communications of LVRLAC as well as access to development related information through the Internet.

Strategic Plan ready

LVRLAC has also finalised a Strategic Plan for the years 2005-2008. The plan was adopted during an Extra Ordinary General Assembly of LVRLAC in February 2005. The Strategic Plan describes the current status of the organisation, its mission and strategic areas. It will also serve as a useful tool for the development of LVRLAC Action Plans. A Strategy Booklet has been printed and disseminated to stakeholders and is expected to serve as a good marketing instrument for the organisation.

LVRLAC Women's Network has been established and has been engaged in a number of activities including community action programmes along the shoreline of Lake Victoria in the three riparian countries. It is promoting gender equality, engaging children and youth and advocating for increased gender representation and participation in LVRLAC organs and development processes in the member councils.

The first Environmental Pedagogic Centre has been inaugurated in Kisumu, Kenya and three additional EPCs will be established in other member cities in 2005. Kisumu EPC has hosted exhibi-



LVRLAC Executive Committee (EXCOM) and Steering Group for LVRLAC - UBC Co-operation Project during Seminar on LVRLAC Strategic Plan for 2005-2008 held in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2004.



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tions, demonstrations and a scientific conference since November 2004.

LVRLAC has become a well-known network organisation in the Lake Victoria Region and established linkages with a number of relevant institutions both horizontally and vertically. It has obtained an observer status in the East African Community. The number of members in LVRLAC has continued to grow and to date up to 60 local authorities subscribe to the organisation as full members while a number of other organisations have applied for associate membership.

Future challenges

Despite positive results so far, further efforts are still needed to reach the overall objectives of UBC – LVRLAC co-operation. The main goal of the inception period is to strengthen – with the strong support of UBC – the structures and operational capacities of LVRLAC to begin to work independently as a network organisation. Sida has in principle agreed to provide financial support for the inception period to the tune of 660 000 Euros. Specific sub-goals have been targeted in order to reach the overall objective:

Administrative structures of LVRLAC should be further improved and internal and external communication capacities upgraded. A regular LVRLAC Newsletter will be published and ICT facilities and Internet connections of the member authorities improved to ensure a smoother, regular and timely flow of information.

LVRLAC invests in capacity building for both its staff and members. Section of participants and facilitators to a Logical Frame Analyses (LFA) for LVRLAC Women's Network Leaders held in Jinja, Uganda in November 2003.



LVRLAC will during this period work in close partnership with the UBC to set up and strengthen its financial management systems and practices as well as other organisational frameworks to enable it to work directly with different international funding agencies and other partners. LVRLAC will also be working on strengthening and building sufficient capacity to develop project plans, apply for funding and implement the projects independently.

LVRLAC's capacity to facilitate and co-ordinate the management of concrete development projects amongst its member authorities needs to be enhanced. This requires identification of the needs of the LVRLAC members and a capacity to respond to these needs by developing projects that produce tangible results.

The project has been co-ordinated by the UBC EnvCom since the beginning of October 2004. This global sustainable development project is also part of the UBC Agenda 21 Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities.

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Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2005

The Union of the Baltic Cities has the honour to invite your city to present a good practice in the field of Transport and Mobility for the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2005.

One of the great challenges that cities are facing is the creation of a sustainable transport and mobility system in the city. Our member cities have several good practices, for example in the fields of public transport, cycling, mobility management and traffic calming.

Let your good practice serve as a role model for others!

Criteria and guidelines

The UBC is calling for innovative practices, which cities have developed and/or implemented to meet local needs. The intention is to look for good innovative practices that support local environmental development, not to select the city with the best overall management. This approach secures that all UBC member cities can enter on equal basis: evaluation of good practices is based on the performance and is thus not dependent on size of the city or other similar factors.

The full announcement together with the application form is available at: www.ubc.net and ubc.net/commissions/environment.html.

BUUF Focuses on Integration of Strategies

By Anna Granberg & Lars Ryden



During the BUUF seminar in April 2005, city of Tartu showed not only its beautiful city center but also interesting practices integrating energy and waste water management. Photo by Malev Toom.

In order to approach sustainability, cities need to find strategies integrating several areas of sustainability, for example energy and waste management. This will be the focus of the Baltic University Urban Forum project during 2005, the third year of the project where 20 cities and 15 universities co-operate.

Energy, waste and water management were the topics of this year's first meeting held in Tartu and Tukums in April. The meeting's focal points were how to achieve and organise integration in the city. The host cities invited the participants to study the implementation of the integration projects on-site. City of Tartu presented their pilot plant for energy for-est fertilised by the city's wastewater.

The upcoming meeting will be held in Lodz in June and will deal with co-ordinated management of urban planning issues, traffic and transport, urban green structures and the built environment.

A third meeting will deal with integrated management of socio-economic, educational and urban-rural issues.

One important part of the project is the monitoring of the cities' improvements of their sustainability policies and implementation of them. During 2004 status reports were gathered from the cities. During the spring 2005, the city achievements will for the first time be monitored by a set of indicators. An advisory council of Baltic Sea Region experts within the ten themes are right now developing the cities' wish list of indicators into an adequate indicator system.

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Women's participation in fields affecting climate change

By Anna Granberg

National reports prepared during the Climate for Change - Climate policy and gender equality project show differences in partner cities' achievements in women's representation in the climate field but also many common challenges.

In some participating countries, the legal way was found the easiest way to change inequalities, whilst in others public discussion and lobbying are considered as best means of reaching the goal.

One of the outcomes of the project is the toolbox that can be used by cities that are interested in improving the women's position in the climate field. The toolbox will be translated into Swedish, Finnish, Italian, English and German, and later disseminated to all the member cities of the networks of Climate Alliance and UBC. The toolbox gives hands-on information on how to investigate and engage more women to participate especially in the decision-making in the climate area in the city – i.e. energy, traffic and construction. The toolbox is currently being translated and can soon be obtained from the Climate Alliance European office.

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City representatives from Italy, Germany, Sweden and Finland gathered to think of the ways to improve equality in climate field in one of the project meetings in Lahti, in June 2004.

Guidelines for Good Practice Exchange for Cities

By Anna Granberg

The TBestC project reached conclusion in February this year. In this two-year project, ten Baltic Sea Region cities have co-operated to transfer a good practice from one city to another. The project has also prepared TBestC Good Practice Exchange Guideline package that is published on the UBC website.

Cities interested in working with systematic transfer of good practices to reach sustainable development are very welcome to use the guidelines and be inspired by the good practices.

The TBestC was a very successful project and the cities are now entering the implementation phase.

Through the co-operation with Turku, Liepaja has established an air quality

programme that will be implemented during the coming years. Riga, Sopot and Kaliningrad have studied the Eco-lighthouse project which is a "light" version of an Environmental Management System developed by Kristiansand. The partner cities have selected city departments and local businesses that will take part in the pilot implementation stage. Riga will also feed their TBestC experience into the UBC project Managing Urban Europe - 25 which is a new large European project on EMS.

Sillamäe has studied the successful environmental training scheme for business representatives developed by ECAT-Kaliningrad. Sillamäe is not only implementing the environmental training practice but the cities are also extending their co-operation to sustainable tourism.

Cesis, Jelgava and Malmö face same challenges within storm water management and securing bio-diversity in their municipalities. Malmö has addressed this challenge through an open storm water treatment system integrated into city greenery. The three cities are currently preparing an application that will be submitted at the end of June to Phare to continue the co-operation and implement the good practice in Latvia.

More information:

www.ubc.net/commissions/Projects/TBestC/index.htm.htm

UBC TransCom meets in Gdynia 20-21 October

The UBC Commission on Transportation will organise their next annual meeting in 20-21 October 2005 in Gdynia.

The first day will be dedicated to the seminar and after suggestions from the network members, it will focus on Public transport, and more specifically on Trolleybuses. Several examples from different cities will be presented followed by discussions on advantages and disadvantages, the future and other issues. The Annual meeting will take place on the second meeting day.



Trolleybuses are commonly used and a popular way of getting around in Gdynia.

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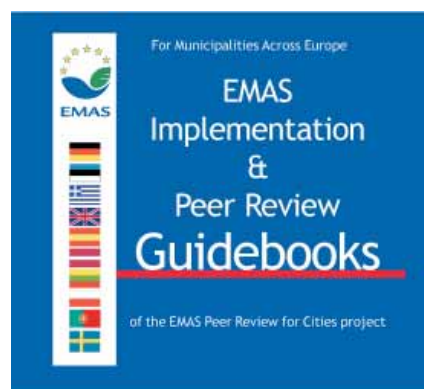
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EMAS Implementation and Peer Review Guidebooks on CD

The EMAS Peer Review for Cities project has produced two Guidebooks to help municipalities start, expand and accelerate their use of environmental management systems (EMS).

The EMAS Implementation and EMAS Peer Review Guidebooks have been developed in collaboration with all the project partners. The participating cities have tested and evaluated the guidebooks and shared their experiences. The Guidebooks have been translated into the languages of the project partner cities. They can be downloaded from the project's website at: www.emascities.org



EMAS Implementation Guidebook guides local authorities through the first challenging stages of implementing environmental management system. The identification of municipality's direct and indirect environmental aspects does challenge many beginner cities. The guidebook is providing an alternative classification for indirect environmental aspects, more relevant to the local authorities' functions.

EMAS Peer Review Guidebook provides guidance to carry out a Peer Review by 'a critical friend' at any stage during the implementation of EMAS. It may even be used before the decision is taken to adopt and implement EMAS.

More information:

www.emascities.org

Annika Joins the EnvCom Team

From 1st of June I have been working as the Project co-ordinator for the Managing Urban Europe – 25 project. I will be making sure that everything will run smoothly and according to plan.

Previously I have worked at a subsidiary of Swedish Standards Institute as a project manager of an international training programme on environmental management. I also worked closely with the Swedish committee working on the ISO 14000-series of standards.

My previous position at the Stockholm County Association of Local Authorities was as a project co-ordinator of an international environmental project in which some Swedish municipalities co-operated with their twin towns in Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Some of these cities/municipalities are



also members of UBC (i.e. Cesis, Jelgava, Keila, Nacka Municipality, Panevezys, Sestoretsk and Tallinn).

Since I have been working in different sectors I have experiences of the environmental work carried out both within the business sector and within local authorities in Sweden and internationally.

I look forward to this fresh and challenging task. I hope you feel comfortable to contact me if you would like to know more about the project or me.

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Commission on Urban Planning meets in Malmö, 5-9 October

Meeting of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning in the framework of the ABC project will be held in 5-9 October in Malmö. The topic concentrates on Renewal of City districts - Aspects of integration and Public Private Partnership in developing city districts.

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Commission on Education meets in Norrtälje, 9 September

The Commission on Education will organise a meeting on 9th September in Norrtälje. Topics of the meeting include future co-operation ideas with other UBC commissions, such as Commissions on Environment and Sport.

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BUSTRIP - Project on Sustainable Urban Transport

On European level, the vicious circle between economic growth and transport growth has been addressed for example during the creation of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment within the EU's 6th Environmental Action Plan. Much too often economic growth leads to intensive transport growth, congestion and traffic jams in cities, weakening the quality of life and causing considerable environmental impacts. It is this vicious circle that the BUSTRIP Project seeks to solve.

The EU Commission Communication on the Thematic Strategy for the Urban Environment has identified the preparation of Sustainable Urban Transport Plans (SUTP) as an important cornerstone in the decoupling of economic growth and transport growth in cities. The core objective of the project will be to develop in extensive city / peer co-operation SUTPs in 14 Baltic Sea Regional (BSR) cities. By doing this, the project aims at improving the state of the urban environment, and reducing urban sprawl, traffic and pollution.

Sustainable Transport and Economy is also one of the focus themes of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme. BUSTRIP project, with a total budget of 3,3 MEUR will be a considerable effort to work on this challenging theme. The partnership in the project consists of the Lead Partner UBC EnvCom Secretariat, UBC Transport Commission, Chalmers University (in Gothenburg) and 14 cities from all over the Baltic Sea Region. Funding will be a joint effort of the partners, BSR Interreg III B Programme

and Finnish Ministry of the Environment. The project duration will be August 2005 - December 2007.

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Research creates momentum in UBC network

By Kyösti Lempa

Research creates momentum. This was shown compellingly in the UBC survey of sustainable development. Research results from two prominent EU research projects were successfully utilized in the UBC SD survey.

UBC indicator system, having scientifically sound basis, is a strong tool for sustainable development. On the other hand, the projects benefited from the UBC survey. UBC survey was the first occasion to disseminate the project results and the survey was a rigorous test for usefulness of the proposed indicators.

The first research project, TISSUE (Trends and Indicators for Monitoring the EU Thematic Strategy on Sustainable Development of Urban Environment), identified the most important trends in urban design, transport and construction to be measured for Thematic Strategy for Urban Environment.

The second research project, STATUS (Sustainability Tools and Targets for the Urban Thematic Strategy) was to develop efficient on-line tool to utilize the TISSUE indicators. The key idea of STATUS is to promote sustainable development among European municipalities applying principles of Aalborg Commitments and using advanced information technology. The on-line tool helps municipalities to select issues and indicators of the sustainable development most crucial for their needs. Furthermore the tool helps cities to set tangible targets for the indicators and a realistic timeframe to reach the targets. The tool will include guidance for each of the issues, related directives and examples of the best practices implemented in the European cities.

More information on both projects is available at the following sites:

<http://cic.vtt.fi/projects/tissue/index2.html>

<http://www.sustainable-cities.org.uk/status/index.html>

Now is your chance to develop the Baltic Cities Environmental bulletin!

Dear Readers of the BC Environmental bulletin

The Baltic Cities Environmental bulletin has always aimed at spreading information about good examples of environmental initiatives and experiences in the UBC member cities as well as about the co-operation between cities. In the Baltic Cities Environmental bulletin 1/1996 the editorialist Mr Carl Nielsen states that aim well.

As the Environmental bulletin has been published for nearly a decade in the same format, it is time to stop for a moment and evaluate the current work.

It is time to develop the Environmental bulletin! It is not a scientific but rather an informative and innovative bulletin. The large reader group includes politicians, experts, project funders, as well as NGOs and other networks, too.

Now you, dear readers, have a chance to give us feedback on this important task: how to make the Environmental bulletin even better?

In each of the last four issues, we have concentrated on a special theme. Have you found these special theme editions informative and inspiring? Should we continue to have them also in the future?

Is there something missing - would you find it useful to have some new sections in the Bulletin? Columns? Interviews? Something else? And what about the layout - are you happy with the current one or would you have good ideas for modifying it?

Some new ideas were introduced already last autumn in the meeting of the Commission on Environment in Turku. Some city representatives hoped for summarised language versions and some suggested country theme issues for example. Also continuous news on the latest developments in the European Union were wished for.

To help you with the feedback we have prepared a special form for it. This feedback form can be found at our website at www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.html or obtained from the EnvCom Secretariat. Please, fill in this form and send it back either by e-mail (to Sari: sari.bowie@saunalahti.fi) or by fax (to +358 2 262 3450). If you wish, you can also send your comments and opinions directly by email without using the special feedback form.

We sincerely hope that the improvement of the Environmental bulletin can inspire us all to further environmental initiatives and co-operation among cities. All feedback is welcome and will be taken into consideration. We are looking forward to hear from you!

BC Environmental Editorial Board and EnvCom Secretariat

Kindly e-mail your feedback to sari.bowie@saunalahti.fi or fax it to +358 2 262 3450.

The feedback form can be found at:

www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.html

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- special theme edition

Dear Reader,

Air quality management is both an important responsibility and an environmental concern for all of the cities and municipalities in the Baltic Sea Region. In February this became even more important when the Kyoto Protocol came into force.

On the following pages you will find articles on air quality management projects. These articles present good practices implemented in Baltic, and also in other European cities, as we have some guest authors from the INTEGAIRE project. The stories will hopefully inspire and encourage you, as many of them report innovative approaches and considerable improvements.

One explicit and important aim of the Union of the Baltic Cities is to disseminate such good practices for inspiration and learning. We believe that this will help UBC member cities in their efforts to improve the environment.

We warmly thank all cities and other authors that contributed to this special theme edition of the Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin.

Hopefully you will have interesting and informative moments with it!

Editorial Team

Bio-indicators are used in Air Quality Monitoring in Turku

By Tiina Hartman

In Turku region, ambient air quality has been monitored since 1981. Turku Region Air Protection Co-operative Group has been working since 1988. Through this group, ambient air quality monitoring was initiated in 1989 in seven monitoring stations, using sulphur dioxide analysers. Today, the Turku Region Air Protection Co-operative Group consists of four municipalities together with the six largest energy production and industrial plants in the region. Components monitored are nitrogen oxides, fine (thoracic) particles, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone.

The nature effects of the impurities in ambient air have been studied by means of bio-indicator studies in Turku region. The dispersion of air pollution is examined, e.g., on the basis of lichen mapping and sulphur concentrations in the needles. The impact of air pollution on the trees is studied by monitoring the state of the coniferous trees. In bio-indicator studies, the soil is examined by studying the chemical factors.

In 2000-2001, a bio-indicator study was carried out within a large area in Turku region. The study was published by the University of Turku/Satakunta Environmental Research Institute. The study was focused on the vitality of the coniferous

trees, prevalence of lichens on the trunks and the chemical properties of the plant and soil samples. The bio-indicator study was carried out earlier from 1990 to 1991 as well as from 1995 to 1996. Needle cast was at its minimum in 1995. The sulphur concentration in the needles has declined as of 1990, while the nitrogen concentration increased between 1995 and 2000. In pine trees, the incidence of lichens on the trunks increased from 1990, but strong signs of air pollution were still found in the lichens. In the loaded area, the humus layer is acidificated as of 1990.

On the basis of the pine trunk lichens, the index of atmospheric purity (IAP) is

calculated. The IAP shows that loading in Turku region declined from 1990 to 1995. Locally, the IAP rose (loading decreased) a little in Turku and Kaarina areas, and the IAP lowered (loading increased) in Naantali and Raisio areas between 1995 and 2000.

The next bio-indicator study will be carried out in 2005-2006. The study will focus on the vitality of the coniferous trees, the accumulation of heavy metals in moss and the prevalence of lichens on the trunks. The index of atmospheric pollution will also be calculated.

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Photo: City of Turku

Liepaja develops an Action Plan for its air management system

By Mara Zeltina & Tiina Hartman

The need to develop an Action Plan for the reduction of air pollution is set out both in the EU Directive on ambient air quality assessment and management (96/62/EC) and its daughter directives, as well as in Air Quality Normative Acts of the Republic of Latvia. Air quality management is particularly crucial in the cities with irregular location of industrial, green and residential areas in order to secure dynamic and sustainable development.

Development of an Action Plan for improving air quality in Liepaja was initiated in January 2004 by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Environment Ltd. in co-operation with Environmental Department of Liepaja City Council. The Action Plan was developed in several stages and is now approaching its final phase. During the preparation phase of the Action Plan, experience gained during the implementation of the UBC project TBestC was used as the good environmental practise relating to air quality was found from the City of Turku. In Turku, the air quality monitoring is done in co-operation with nearby municipalities and the largest energy production and industrial plants in the area.

Initial assessment

First stage of the Action Plan's development *Initial Assessment of Air Quality in Liepaja* was aimed at providing initial appraisal of air quality in the city. Initial air quality analysis was made in several stages, which were to study the present and appraise the possible level of priority substance pollution, and define areas exposing the residents to danger of sustained elevated pollution. In addition, air pollution management units were established.

Initial assessment included analysis of sulphur dioxide, thoracic particles PM_{10} , lead, ozone, benzene, and carbon dioxide. The results of the appraisal show that of the mentioned priority substances, the level of sulphur dioxide, lead, ozone, benzene and carbon dioxide, does not exceed critical level of air pollution, considering the permissible limits. Projected level of

Action Plan for improving air quality in Liepaja was initiated in 2004 by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Environment Ltd. in co-operation with Environmental Department of Liepaja City Council. The preparation of the Action Plan is now approaching its final phase. During the preparation phase, experience gained from the UBC project TBestC was used. In TBestC, good environmental practise relating to air quality was found from Turku.

pollution from these substances in 2008 (programme time: 2004-2008) will not exceed norms set in Latvia. Therefore, the municipality does not need to develop and implement an action plan for reduction of pollution caused by these substances. At the same time, it is advised to pursue a repeated assessment of benzene pollution in the future, on the grounds of precise data about industrial emissions and quality of fuel.

Regarding nitric dioxide and thoracic particles PM_{10} , the initial air quality analysis, based on calculations of dispersion, showed potential problems. In case of nitric dioxide, it has been advised to pursue pollution monitoring in the areas of arterial streets prior to implementation of real measures for pollution reduction. For thoracic particles PM_{10} , experts recommended to define major sources of pollution.

In the framework of initial assessment, the gathered and analysed data indirectly indicates odour disorders in Liepaja, although neither analytical nor by calculations approved data are available at the moment.

Action Plan for air quality improvement

The second stage of the programme included two basic components. One was the preparation of a programme for detailed air quality assessment, and second was the development of proposals of possible measures for air quality improvement and

establishment of air pollution management units in the city.

Activities planned for acquisition of a detailed air quality assessment prescribe, for example, NO_2 monitoring, registration and analysis of traffic flow, widening of PM_{10} monitoring, systematic assessment of odours, and establishing air pollution management units.

The proposed solutions or measures for improving the air quality have been divided by spheres. These are transport, Liepaja Special Economic Zone territory and the port, industry, public utilities and public information and awareness building indicating possible influence on air quality, possible costs and preconditions for successful performance.

Approval of Action Plan

The Action Plan is being discussed by representatives of different authorities and entrepreneurs, who will be affected directly or indirectly by the approval of the Action Plan, as well as residents of Liepaja. Following the approval of the programme next year, it is planned to start its implementation by using resources allotted by the city for environmental protection and by attracting EU funds.

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Increased traffic flows cause concern in Kaunas

By Marius Mockus

City of Kaunas, as many other European cities, is facing a problem of poor air quality. Particularly growing transport flows cause an increase in air pollution and traffic congestion. The situation was acknowledged also by Kaunas city municipality.

In the City of Kaunas, transport pollution causes 70% of ambient air pollution. Also the quantity of vehicles has grown considerably during the past years. The situation was acknowledged by the Kaunas city municipality and followed by a decision to establish a public enterprise *Kaunas city environmental quality research*.

Continuous air quality observation system was built to monitor air quality in real time, and different air quality management scenarios were predicted. The enterprise was also equipped with automated monitoring stations, mobile laboratory, meteo-mast and special software. Currently, air quality is monitored in downtown, residential area and near industrial area with heavy traffic.

For prediction purposes, an air quality modeling system AIRVIRO from Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute was used. Pollution from street transport and point sources was taken into account and a database on Kaunas vehicle stock and streets was developed. Modelling results were verified by measurements with three monitoring stations.

Gained improvements

To achieve better air quality results, several different transport schemes were adjusted. For example, the circular traffic flow scheme replaced the conventional bidirectional traffic scheme, that considerably improved transport throughput and traffic congestions. Subsequently, most of the parking lots were made paid parking

and the parking fee was also gradually raised. In addition, dynamic traffic regulation equipment was installed in the most problematic places of the street network and parallelly, speed limitation measures were implemented.

The improvement of transport scheme has already improved the air quality, acoustics, traffic density and general quality of living in the central part of the city. However, the task to manage transport flows and reduce smokestack emissions during unfavorable meteorological conditions remains, and that is the next main challenge for Kaunas city municipality in the field of air quality management.

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Photo: City of Sundsvall

EcoPar buses in Sundsvall

By Christer Tarberg

EcoPar is a pure synthetic diesel fuel and unique in Europe. So far it is only available in Sweden.

EcoPar is now made from natural gas, but can also be produced from biomass. EcoPar has been tested since January 2001 in ordinary diesel vehicles in Sweden without any problems. In Sundsvall, a test with two buses started in June 2003.

The EcoPar is cleaner than diesel with up to 8 % less of NO_x, 30 % less of particles and 90 % less of harmful substances. It is also fully mixable with ordinary diesel. It works in ordinary diesel vehicles without increased fuel consumption and has the same power as diesel. This means that no changes of the engine are needed.

The first two buses running on synthetic diesel fuel in Europe are being used and tested in Sundsvall. The buses are also currently being evaluated by Scania. The buses will keep on rolling in Sundsvall up to June, probably longer. After 18 months in traffic there has not been any problems with them.

The city of Sundsvall is working for a cleaner environment and in the long run to minimize the green house effect. This is why the city has chosen to use EcoPar to run two buses. Their hope is that, as soon as possible, the whole bus fleet will be driven on EcoPar.

Växjö promotes cycling

By Åsa Nilsson and Maria Johansson

Cycling is one way to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide in the transport system. The Mobility Office project is part of Växjö Municipality's environmental work, started with the aim to reduce the emissions from transport. The focus lies in promoting cycling and attentive and economical driving.

The Mobility Office's mission is to decrease the emissions of carbon dioxide in the transport system by reducing unnecessary car journeys and increasing the bicycle use. The goal is to change people's attitude and behaviour towards environmentally friendly transportation.

The aim is to stimulate, inform and to encourage people to choose other means of travelling. The focus lies in promoting bicycle use and attentive and economical driving, so-called *Eco-driving*. Traffic safety is also a vital element in the project.

The Mobility Office functions as an umbrella with a variety of smaller projects, for example openings of new cycle paths and health-peddlers. The Mobility Office works with long-term projects such as cycle to school campaigns and a safety project. Since 2002, the Mobility Office has been seen in different activities in connection with campaigns and exhibitions.

The project ended in January 2005 but the work towards environmentally friendly transportation will continue for at least three more years. Cycling promotion is the main focus in this work.

Starting the work

The work of the Mobility Office started in 2002 with a study of travelling, behaviour and attitudes in Växjö Municipality. The results showed that car journeys were the main means of transport. A follow-up study was made in March 2004. The new findings indicated that car is still the main



Photo: Lars-Olof Hallberg

mean of transport as 45 % used the car to get to school or work. This study plays an important role in the future work towards politicians, clerks and the general public.

Cycling guide and hotline

There have been two major accomplishments in the cycling policy in Växjö Municipality. One is the overview of the bicycle transport system made in 2000, which is central when investments are being considered. The second one is the work with the cycling guide.

Twice a year a cycling campaign runs in the media encouraging people to use the bicycle as a means of transport within the city. Furthermore, the Mobility Office promotes a hotline, a service to inform the public about obstacles on the bicycle paths such as broken glass or snow.

One of the most noticeable information products produced is the improved cycle map in addition to the cycling guide. The cycle map has soon been printed in 22 000 copies to meet the demand.

Much of the promotion consists of face-to-face communication. One of the most interesting aspects of the work is the great response from foreigners and organisations working in integration. Mini-projects have been directed towards foreign women who lack skills in riding a bicycle and newly arrived foreign women and their children in day nurseries.

Challenges for the future

As the transport issue is quite difficult to work with, Växjö Municipality is always interested in exchanging experiences with other cities. In 2003, Växjö joined BYPAD+ (Bicycle Policy Audit) project to work to increase the bicycle use.

The most interesting aspects of this experience-exchanging project were to develop, improve and highlight the local work with changing people's attitudes and behaviour towards environmentally preferred transportation. The focus was on bicycle transports, including target marketing, and building attractive infrastructure for cyclists.

The BYPAD+ highlighted and mapped the short term and long term success and failure factors in the promotion of bicycle transportation. It also helped to create a tool to more successfully measure the environmental effects created by journeys by car being replaced by those on bicycles.

The BYPAD+ project revealed also major gaps in the cycling system. The many future challenges include the implementation of the bicycle policy in the organisation and further increasing the traffic safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements are needed also in bicycle parking areas and redesigning the traffic environment for disabled persons, elderly people and children.

Promotion of positive behaviour in traffic

By Åsa Nilsson



A traffic safety campaign *I am looking for Eye-contact in the traffic* promotes a positive attitude and habits in traffic behaviour in Väjö. Also this project has been a success and will go on for at least three more years.

Since 2001, Väjö Municipality and the Swedish Road Administration (SRA) have been working together with a traffic safety campaign called *I am looking for Eye-contact in the traffic*. The aim is to increase people's positive attitude and traffic behaviour.

The traffic campaign runs throughout the media such as the local press, radio

and TV. Brochures and reflector tags are available in the Municipality reception, at the library and local schools.

At the same time, as more and more people start to use bicycle the need for traffic information increases. One way to work with decreasing the emissions from the transport systems and at the same time increasing the traffic safety thinking is to encourage schools to work with traffic issues.

Since 2002, the Mobility Office project and the Traffic Department have co-operated in a long-term project called *Traffic in school*. The traffic safety campaign forms an important part in this work. A website www.vaxjo.se/rastplatsen for children, parents and teachers was introduced in 2003.

Traffic safety measures

During the past couple of years, Väjö Municipality has successfully concentrated

the work on the combination of "hard" and "soft" traffic safety measures. To date, the Traffic Department has received three awards for the efforts undertaken in the city, e.g. with speed limits of 30 km/hour.

Väjö Municipality is one of the few municipalities in Sweden who is fortunate to be able to work with traffic safety information. In the end of 2004, it was decided that the two projects *I am looking for Eye-contact in the traffic* and the follow-up project to the Mobility Office, will continue at least for three more years.

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Air quality monitoring improved in Lahti region

Katja Harle & Johanna Saarola

A project concentrating on the air quality monitoring increased knowledge of the air quality in Lahti region.

The purpose of this project (2000-2003) was to obtain a regionally comprehensive picture of concentrations of air pollutants and of the need for future measurements in the projects' participating cities of Lahti, Heinola and Nastola.

Several monitoring tools and measuring systems were used during the project. Constructing a new monitoring station in Lahti in 2000 for measuring thoracic particles and nitrogen oxides expanded the existing air quality monitoring system significantly. In Heinola, continuous air quality monitoring was started in 2002 in order to measure nitrogen oxides, thoracic particles, total reduced sulphur (TRS) and sulphur dioxides. New methods were

developed for the identification and measurement of the concentration of unknown volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and for the long run monitoring of the already known VOCs. The purpose of these measurements was to form a picture of typical VOC concentrations in urban areas and the major interest was especially the investigation of the concentration of benzene.

Industrial plants in the region were invited to discuss the implementation of the air protection goals set in the updated *Päijät-Häme Agenda for Air Protection in 2000*. In Lahti, greenhouse gas emissions were predicted until 2010 and the energy production until 2015. This project made it also possible for the citizens to get real time information on air quality either from the billboard standing in the city or from the city's website.

During the project, the measurements resulted in an increasing knowledge of the air quality of the region and simul-

taneously more specific information was gathered on the impact of certain pollution sources on the air quality in the surrounding environments. Air quality monitoring will continue by applying the renovated air monitoring system and the new methods of measurement. This kind of information regarding air quality can be used to support communal decision-making: particularly in zoning but as well in planning energy and traffic solutions.

The Health Control and Environmental Protection Centre of the City of Lahti coordinated the project. The project partners, Finnish Ministry of the Environment and Area Development Fund of the European Union co-funded the project.

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Riga improves air quality management

By Janis Kleperis

Action Plan on air quality improvement was finalised in Riga in 2004. Some recommendations from it are implemented already. A special network was also established to monitor the concentrations of air pollutants.

Also Riga has problems with its air quality. Fast growing traffic flows in the narrow streets and lack of spaces on the three bridges across the River Daugava cause regular traffic jams. Air pollution with high concentrations of nitrogen oxides and particles are most acute problems.

Air quality monitoring with remote automatic monitoring stations started in 1994. In 2004, there were six remote air quality monitoring stations connected in one monitoring network. The monitoring was supervised by the Environmental Department of Riga City Council and the Latvian Hydrometeorological Agency. Monitoring network includes two traffic site stations, three background and three industrial site stations. Particle concentrations regularly

exceed guideline values in the city centre, especially in springtime when the dust on the streets is at worst.

Evaluation of the quality of the ambient air is based on the European Common Indicators Towards a Local Sustainability Profile.

Unlike European long-term plans, the Action Plan on air quality improvement in Riga is elaborated only for five years including 2009, because from January 1 2010 all national tolerances for the air quality guidelines will be decreased till zero and a new Action Plan would be necessary. This is the first Action Plan for the City of Riga in an environmental area and will help municipality in their future work.

The manager of the realisation of Action Plan is the Riga City Environmental Centre Agenda 21 by assistance of Environmental Department of Riga City Council. All levels of responsible officials in municipality and state organizations, as



With nearly 750 000 inhabitants and constantly increasing traffic flows, the City of Riga faces a big problem with air quality management. The implementation of the city's Action Plan on air quality improvements has already started.

well as the public, will be informed about the achievements and drifts of the Action Plan implementation using internet, newspapers, TV and radio.

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Automatic monitoring network monitors air quality in Gdynia

By Danuta Zgoda

In the Gdansk agglomeration, an automatic air monitoring network has been operating since 1997. This type of network is a unique tool in the environment management in Poland.

The network consists of ten local and one communication stations where the air pollution concentration is measured every 30 seconds. After the data has been submitted to a central unit responsible for

steering the network, it is processed and verified. The final phase consists of making the information available in the Ecological Education Centre in Gdansk and on the website www.armaag.gda.pl.

The processes of designing and constructing the network fell on the transformation period in Poland. The processes were successfully completed because of perseverance and financial support of municipalities, Regional Environment Protection Fund as well as some production plants operating in the agglomeration.

The design phase was based on the Decision Support System MoNet which had been worked out in the Milan Technical

University. The system establishes the number and location of measuring stations within a given area by means of different databases.

Recent results

The measurements made by ARMAAG in 2003 show that there are problems with keeping the PM10 annual norm in a station located in the city centre. The air quality of this district is conditioned upon the closeness of port and a few shipyards. Also other ARMAAG stations face the same type of difficulties. As far as remaining emissions are concerned, their rates do not exceed acceptable norms, which allow classifying the condition of Gdynia air as a good one.

The network is run by the Agency of Regional Atmosphere Monitoring of Gdansk Agglomeration (ARMAAG) which was set up in 1993 by four local governments from the Pomeranian Region, namely Gdansk, Gdynia, Sopot and Tczew as well as a company Niderpol.



Given to the society and state administration institutions, information on air quality helps to assess the air quality as well as to make location decisions. In the future it will be used to monitor the implementation of air protection programmes. Additionally, databases on air pollution as well as meteorological information are a valuable source of information for various researches.

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Environmental work proceeds in Kaliningrad

By Silvia Gourova

Development work on air quality management has been carried out in Kaliningrad since September 2002. Today, good results include improvement of quality of environment and living conditions through the reinforcement of Kaliningrad local authorities.

For the City of Kaliningrad, air pollution is one of the biggest environmental problems. Poor air quality threatens not only the environment but also the health of the inhabitants and the economic development in the region. In recent years, Kaliningrad has tried hard to tackle the most important environmental problems by developing and implementing related projects. The LIFE project *Capacity Building of Kaliningrad City Hall in Environmental Performance* is one of the successful examples on good development work on air quality management which has been carried out in Kaliningrad since September 2002. The project was implemented in co-operation with the cities of Aalborg, Bremerhaven and Southampton.

The overall objective of the project was, and still is, to improve the quality of the environment and living conditions through the reinforcement of Kaliningrad Local Authorities. The reinforcement applies to new environmental policy and legislation, using European experiences and know-how based on strategies for sustainable development.

The project duration is 30 months. The Foreign Relation Department of Kaliningrad City Hall carries out the overall project management.

So far, comprehensive analysis of current environmental situation, current legislation, administrative structures and man-

agement of environmental issues in Kaliningrad within four project components have been summarized and important conclusions for further implementation of the project have been made.

Several recommendations

During the project, many significant documents and recommendations have been elaborated. These cover for example, the new environmental policy and legislation and guidelines for the improvement of landscape planning. Kaliningrad has also its own development strategy up to year 2010.

A draft provision on citizens' involvement in the discussions and decision-making processes in the city development have been developed and discussed with NGOs. The draft was approved by the sitting relevant commission of the City Council (2004) and it has been prepared for the final adoption by the City Council. Plan of priority measures and activities for the green areas and parks of Kaliningrad have been updated.

Training of staff

The project has organised a number of important training events for municipal officers on subjects such as the effects of land-use planning on the city development. Officers have also learned spatial and landscape planning and management, and have had some training on GIS.

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INTEGAIRE's suggestions for European cities

By Eva Banos

Air quality is a major concern for many European cities and is one of the fields where the European Union has been most active in. Cities are working towards a sustainable situation in which all citizens enjoy a good quality of life as well as clean air.

A project INTEGAIRE was designed to respond to this particular need of cities. Throughout its life (2002-2005), the project allowed cities to efficiently influence the European agenda on air quality and a trustful cooperation has been built between the European Commission and the cities. The project partners have shared experiences, compared achievements and managed to elaborate a set of recommendations for future regulatory approaches, for particular research and funding needs as well as a guidance tool for cities with concrete examples in air quality related issues. It is hoped that these good instruments will support cities to achieve their aims and objectives as regards air quality management and assessment.

INTEGAIRE partners believe that joint research, effective environmental techno-

logies, active collaboration and awareness rising are key elements to achieve optimum levels of air quality without risks to human health or the environment. All stakeholders need to act at different levels in order to reduce exposure to air pollution: through legislation, through work at the wider international level in order to reduce cross-border pollution, through working with sectors responsible for air pollution, with national, regional, local authorities, NGOs and through the research community.

The INTEGAIRE partners will set up a European platform for air quality professionals in order to continue this life-long learning process on air quality and ensure the involvement and collaboration of all interested stakeholders within cities and at European level. We welcome any support of interest for this particular action.

INTEGAIRE network consisted of urban air quality professionals, air quality scientists and researchers. The network developed recommendations on urban governance, on integration of air quality management with land-use and transport planning and on the implementation of the new EU air quality legislation. The network also gives recommendations to cities on good practice, to the EU Clean Air For Europe (CAFE) Programme on policy needs and to the research community, in particular DG Research, on research needs.

Clean air - necessity for a long life!

Air pollution from transport can be seen as a threat to physical integrity, as it causes severe effects in terms of overall health.

Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution as it is one of the factors affecting the development of the lung function when children grow up. Links between air pollution and asthma, childhood cancer and neurodevelopmental and behavioral effects are now studied by many scientists.

About twice as many people are killed annually in Europe by air pollution as die in road traffic accidents, according to a research sponsored by WHO (2000).

Exposure to ambient air pollution has been linked to a number of different health outcomes, starting from modest transient changes in the respiratory tract and impaired pulmonary function, continuing to reduced performance, emergency room visits and hospital admissions and to mortality. There is also increasing evidence for adverse effects on the cardiovascular system. This evidence stems from studies on both acute and chronic exposure. The most severe effects in terms of the overall health burden include a significant reduction in life expectancy of the average population by a year or more, which is linked to the long-term exposure to high levels of air pollution.

Young lives at risk

Children are particularly vulnerable to respiratory conditions because of their developmental stage and physical differences from adults. Children's lungs and airways are immature and especially susceptible to harm from pollution. The developing lungs present a large surface area through which pollutants may be easily absorbed. In most countries in the European Region, from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, the prevalence of asthma symptoms in children was reported to increase by 200%.

Source: European Mobility Week, European Handbook for Local Authorities 2004



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Venice works on several governance levels to achieve a good air quality

By Anna Bressan, Alessandro Tasinato, Arianna Zancanaro, Jane Wallace-Jones, Laura Susanetti

The Municipality of Venice has played an important role working on the vertical integration of air quality policies together with provincial and regional governance levels.

Several initiatives have been launched over recent years by the City Administration of Venice aiming at reducing the emission of urban traffic pollutants. One of these initiatives is the periodic inspections of vehicles, the so-called *blue sticker* initiative dealing with the certification of cars emissions. The city has also promoted the use of non-conventional fuel for public transport, and made an agreement protocol between seven Veneto provincial capital cities to control PM₁₀ daily exceedances.

These initiatives do not shadow the awareness that real benefits can only be achieved subsequent to structural changes performed in the area, such as the Urban

Traffic Plan implementation and structural interventions like the two tram lines developed along the main urban lines and the Regional Metropolitan Railway System.

Two framework agreements aimed at easing the pressure put on the surrounding environment by local industries have been encouraged by different levels of accountable bodies such as the national and provincial government. A plan for environmental clean-up and regeneration of a industrial centre of nearly 4000 h is also under process.

Over the last seven years, in the field of land use planning, the city has been investing in a massive and widespread urban regeneration programme. More than 80 projects by public and private promoters are currently going on. The involvement of private resources in the transformation process is an example of the City's planning policy. This best practise of governance is now being turned into an operational rule by the City's Strategic Plan 2002-2015.

An important lesson

A great effort in monitoring and informing and involving the public has been done in the last 10 years. There is need now to elaborate effective plans and programmes to reduce air pollution, having the Regional Authority a coordination role in this. The Municipality of Venice believes in the need of better vertical integration between different governance levels and to invest in financial and human resources in order to ensure the accomplishment of municipal competencies as regards air quality. Air quality issues need to be focused also in land use and traffic and transport planning by improving horizontal integration between different policy fields.

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Leipzig uses ring and tangent roads to better air quality

By Frank Trepte

In its urban development plan on traffic and public space, Leipzig has adopted a strategic objective to redesign its traffic infrastructure.

As the streets to the city centre are too narrow to host public transport, individual motorised traffic, bicycles and pedestrians at once, the city of Leipzig has adopted a system of ring and tangent roads. An *inner city ring* surrounds nearly car-free city centre, a *medium ring road* leads traffic through less sensitive town quarters with a city-limit speed and without single-level intersections, and a *outer city ring* with high speed roads for traffic that is not coming to the city itself. Also, tangent roads connect the different ring roads and the suburbs.

Such a traffic infrastructure leads to a higher quality of life for citizens because



of less noise and air pollution, and more space. Trees are planted, parking lots for residents are provided, priority lanes for public transport and bicycle lanes are created and sidewalks are enlarged. Such measures have many benefits: public transport becomes more time-reliable and faster as buses or trams are no longer hindered by traffic jams, commercial traffic has better access to shops along residential roads and individual traffic is edged out

towards the ring and tangent road but remains attractive.

Inside the inner city ring, pedestrians and bicycles receive a clear priority. Shop suppliers and other necessary transport are restricted to certain hours. Parking will be replaced in a medium-term by parking garages directly located at the city ring. A parking lead system will guide drivers to the nearest free parking.

Whereas more radical measures to displace or decrease the individual motorised traffic can't usually be as effective and the public appreciation for such solutions is lacking, the measurements of model split at Leipzig reflect the success of the strategy. Within finalisation of its new traffic infrastructure, the city expects even further improvements as the targets for 2015 demonstrate.

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Århus Measures Road Traffic Noise

As part of an overall measurement programme to monitor road traffic noise in Århus, the Local Authority set up a noise measurement station on one of the major approach roads to Århus Harbour. This station continually measures noise levels and can give around-the-clock picture of noise level variations.

In addition to the noise measurement station, the monitoring programme comprises a comprehensive noise survey of the noise levels on all building facades in the district, random estimates of noise levels, and measurements and estimates of air pollution and traffic volume.

The station was designed to continually measure noise levels and store the information in a database. The results are measured per hour and per 24 hours in accordance with the new Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC on assessing and controlling external noise in the daytime, evenings, and at night. The station has been constructed mobile, and is equipped with a modem which makes it easier to move the data on the computer which stores and analyses it.

The plan is to extend the noise measurement with the addition of a permanent counting station to classify the vehicles, so that measured noise levels can be compared with information on traffic volume and composition. It is also possible to compare the results with meteorological data from an air measurement station that is also part of the Local Authority's environmental traffic survey.

Intension is also to inform the local residents on the noise situation, and so help them to gain a greater understanding of the concept of noise. This will become easier when the correlation between measured noise levels and actual traffic volumes at a known locality can be shown.

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Kyoto Protocol Into Force

The Kyoto Protocol has finally come to force in 16 February. In his letter to ICLEI members, Mr Yorikane Masumoto, the Mayor of Kyoto, emphasised the common responsibility to urgently and specifically promote the involvement of all countries and municipalities in the world, and each and every one of us, to solve global environmental problems.

Source: www.iclei-europe.org

Climate Star 2004 Award to 22 European Cities

In February, Climate Star 2004 Award was granted to 22 European cities and municipalities in recognition of their commitment to climate protection. The winners included projects in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Switzerland. The Award concentrated on renewable energies; solar, wind, hydro, biomass and geothermal.

Over 200 local authorities from 17 countries submitted their projects. The scheme, operated by the Climate Alliance, aims to document experience and successes and to draw attention to the key role played by local authorities in efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

More information:

www.klimabuendnis.org

Women and Democracy

International Conference "Women and Democracy" will be held 6-8 October 2005 in St. Petersburg with the aim to be a venue for establishing new contacts and develop old ones, contribute to new projects development in the sphere of gender equality, and involve men more into the activities.

A web-site will be launched in the autumn at: www.women&democracy.spb.ru.

Baltic Countries Exceptional in Renewable Energy

For this year's Green Week the Eurostat, the statistical Office of the European Commission, has made a statistical view of the state of art in the areas of energy consumption, waste management and freight transports in EU 25 today compared to 1995.

The general trends in the field of energy are the following: Natural gas is the fastest growing energy source on the cost of the less environmental friendly source coal. The renewable energy consumption has also increased since 1995 with over 30 per cent. Households account for more than a quarter of final energy consumption and the transport sector is the fastest growing energy consumer.

Within the field of waste management the review shows that incineration is increasing in Europe but landfill still remains the most common option. For freight transports the road transport is still the dominant mean of transport and the share has also increased since 1995 whilst railways and water transports are decreasing. The total freight volume has also increased during the eight years 1995-2003 covered by the study. The number of passenger cars per 1000 inhabitant has increased with 15% in Europe.

The study gives interesting information about the Baltic Sea Region Countries. The largest share of renewable energy of energy consumed among European countries you can find in the three BSR countries Latvia (33%), Sweden (26%) and Finland (21%). The Baltic Sea Region countries still have good figures when it comes to freight transport per rail way. In some countries there is a majority of the freight that is transported by rail way. The figures for car ownership per 1000 inhabitant there is a substantial increase in the new EU member states. The increase is a natural cause of the economic development but addresses challenges to the decoupling of economic development and increase of transports in the region.

Source: Eurostat



www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.html

UBC

Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat

Network is a 'net' that 'works'. Partnerships are invaluable and best solutions can best be learnt from others. In the work of the UBC such practical co-operation has always been essential.

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

You are most welcome to join! Two meetings are organised every year. It is in these meetings that you are also most likely to find partners for your own initiatives, or use the opportunity to join projects in the pipeline!

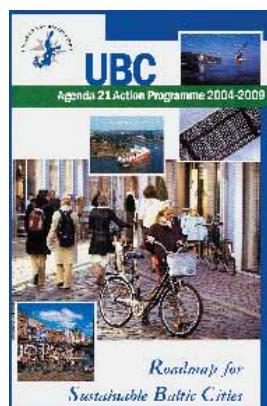
In addition to the meetings, we organise several Environment and Agenda 21 workshops and seminars every year, as well as publish the Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin and website. The bulletin offers you an excellent forum to publicise your activities and initiatives on environment and sustainable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



The secretariat staff currently consist of nine professionals working fulltime for the UBC. They are (front row) Head of Secretariat Mr. Risto Veivo, Financial Manager Mrs. Sanna Erkkö and Publications Officer Mrs. Sari Bowie. Back row from left: Project Assistants Ms. Anne-Sofia Holmberg and Ms. Mia Rahunen, Project Co-ordinators Mr. Kyösti Lempa, Ms. Anna Granberg and Mr. Sulev Nömmann, and Project Assistant Niina Hakanpää. The latest team member, Project Co-ordinator Ms. Annika Claesson is introduced on page 14.



UBC EnvCom organises numerous meetings and events every year. These participants are taking part in the New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities projects' Partner meeting in Szczecin, Poland, in May 2005.



The UBC Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat acts as the Programme Management Agency for the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 - Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. The Programme includes several big and excellent projects that concretely implement sustainable development actions in the cities. The overall budget goal of 10 MEUR has been reached and is now being mobilised for the different projects and activities of the programme.

**Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 -
Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities**

The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2005

Best Practice on

Sustainable Transport and Mobility

The UBC invites your city to present your good practice in the field of Transport and Mobility to the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2005. One of the great challenges that the cities face is to create a sustainable transport and mobility system in the city. Our member cities have several good practices for example in the fields of public transport, cycling, mobility management and traffic calming.

Let your good practice serve as a role model for others!

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www.ubc.net or

www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.html

Deadline is 15 August!

The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities
Award 2005 Ceremony will be held on the occasion of the

UBC VIII General Conference

29.9.- 2.10.2005 Turku, Finland

Towards a New Baltic Sea Agenda

More information on the Conference:
www.turku.fi/ubc

