



UBC COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN 2011

Focus on the Environment and Sustainable Development of Baltic Sea cities

The UBC is running the large cross-sectoral action programme on sustainable development, the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015. Environmental and sustainability related work of the UBC is organized at the Commission on Environment.

The UBC EnvCom secretariat has actively started new cross-sectoral UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 approved in the General Conference in Kristiansand September 2009. The basic resources provided by the host city and the UBC combined with the successful project funding have enabled the secretariat to carry on a strong coordination role with a current staff number of 17 full-time professionals (Finnish-Swedish-Polish-Russian-German, Lithuanian). The secretariat is located in the Baltic Sea House in the old centre of Turku.

UBC Commission on Environment activities in 2011 -

The commission is activated in different development projects, policy-, networking-, and capacity-building activities. However, the most important resource of the commission are the active UBC member cities who contribute with their knowledge, experiences, motivation and strong involvement for the mutual benefit.

The biggest action during 2011 will be the arrangement and hosting of the *Solution 2011 Conference*. UBC EnvCom has the coordination responsibility of this mayor sustainability conference in the Baltic Sea region. The Conference takes place during 31.1. – 2.2. 2011 in City of Turku and the goal is to have approximately 600 conference participants. This Conference is supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, 10 different ministries in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. Also several Associations of Municipalities and Regions in several countries are strongly involved. For more info see www.solutions2011.fi

The *UBC Good Practice Database* is working to better serve and collect information, data, good practises etc. from projects, meetings and UBC member cities. More than 460 Good Practice cases are already listed in the database (see www.ubcwheel.eu). These cases and pages have been visited by more than 1 million visitors!

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin has been further developed and thematic editions on “Sustainable Solutions for cities” 1/2010, with the editorial written by the Danish Minister of Environment Mrs Karen Ellen Ellemann, has been published. The Bulletin is made together with UBC Commission on Energy and discussions with other UBC Commission take place for the moment. The electronically version of the Environmental Bulletin is more and more requested. The Commission website has continuously been developed. Please see www.ubc-environment.net.

European Union Policy co-operation on environment and sustainable development

In line with the working principles of the UBC, the Commission on Environment has also contributed strongly to Baltic Sea Regional and European policy co-operation processes on cities' environmental governance and sustainable urban development. The commission is representing the UBC at the CBSS/Baltic 21 and the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM). UBC Commission on Environment has had an active role in the planning of the 6th Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns in Dunkerque France in 20 – 21 May 2010 and similar tasks is under preparation.

The implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has started and the UBC Commission has actively been involved in several actions and flagship activities. This strategy goes hand in hand with the new UBC Strategy and UBC Sustainability Action Programme and therefore there has been a need to combine the development of both processes simultaneously. The UBC Commission on Environment has evalu-

ated the different EU BSR Strategy Flagships and is for the moment closely involved in following flagship processes;

Priority area 1 “To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels”

1.2 “Cleaner wastewater

UBC EnvCom and UBC Energy. How; Follow the policy development, Implementation via following projects, PURE project (by UBC EnvCom) and ITEST project (by UBC Energy)

Priority area 4. “To become a model region for clean shipping”

4.1. “Promote measures to collect ship generated waste”

4.2. “Promote measures to reduce emissions from ships and enhance the development”

4.3. “Introduce differentiated port dues depending on the environmental impact of ships”

4.4. “Eliminate the discharge of sewage from ships”

4.5. “Improve the waste handling on board and in ports”

UBC EnvCom involved in an application called INNOSHIP (with Flagship status) addressing above mentioned issues and tasks. How; Follow the policy development, Implementation via possible upcoming development projects,

Priority area 5. “To mitigate and adapt to climate change and”

5.3 “Create a network of sustainable cities and villages”

UBC EnvCom. How; Follow the policy development, cooperation with responsible country and organisation (Request by the Swedish Ministry of Environment and Boverket).

Priority area 8. “Implementing the Small Business Act: to promote entrepreneurship, strengthen SMEs and increase the efficient use of human resources”

8.4 “Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region”

Appointed by the UBC Executive board the UBC EnvCom is following the policy development and discussion in a project called Ecoregion project. Similar tasks are handled in the UBC EnvCom project New Bridges

In connection to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region we should promote the UBC Baltic cities Political Forum as an important Forum for policy development and building political commitment!

Main Projects of the UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat

- **CHAMP** – Combating Climate Change. LIFE+ funded project including Finland, Germany, Hungary and Italy. 2009 – 2011.
- **NEW BRIDGES** – Strengthening Quality of Life through improved Management of Urban Rural Interaction. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighborhood programme. 12 partners and 13 associated partners. 2009 – 2011.
- **BaltCICA** – Climate Change: Impact, Costs and Adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region. UBC EnvCom partner in the project. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighborhood programme. 2009 – 2011.
- **PURE Phosphorous Reduction in Baltic Cities.** 7 UBC cities. 11 partners and 18 associated partners. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighborhood programme. 2009 – 2013.
- **Coordination activities Russian neighborhood, Awareness Raising in Russia, Blue Pack and NEAT.** Several Awareness and neighborhood involvement projects between UBC and Russian cities. Ministry On Foreign Affairs and Environment in Finland. 2010 - 2011
- **Solution 2011 Conference.** Coordination and responsibility of a mayor sustainability conference in the Baltic Sea region. To take place during 31.1. – 2.2. 2011 in Turku.
- **SNOOP project.** Ship exhaust emissions effects on marine environment and human health. Central Baltic BSR INTERREG IV A, Neighborhood programme. 6 partners. 2009 - 2013
- **ELTIS + project in starting phase.** EU IIE funding
- **GREENCITY project in starting phase.** Project together with City of Umeå. Life + funding
- **Innoship Project – Sustainable Ports and Cities.** 6 UBC cities. 19 partners. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighborhood programme. 2010 – 2013.

Applications in the field of regional development, sustainable transport, reduction of nutrients from rivers, Mandate and responsibilities of local authorities in the Baltic Sea Region is under preparation.

Evaluation

The Commission on Environment has an effective secretariat with good resources, hosted and located in the City of Turku. The secretariat has an international staff of 17 full-time professionals. The purpose of the sec-

retariat is to serve the commission and to manage and co-ordinate the implementation of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015. The activities and services of the UBC Commission on Environment are closely tied to funding possibilities and the secretariat is therefore dependent of external funding programmes.

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