



UBC Sustainable Cities Commission Meeting 19 – 20 March 2015 in Malmö, Sweden

Participants:

Per-Arne Nilsson, City of Malmö (co-chair)
Åsa Abrahamsson, City of Malmö
Lennart Erfors, City of Kristianstad
Eva Hjalmered, Municipality of Oskarshamn
Karin Larsson, City of Halmstad
Risto Veivo, City of Turku (co-chair)
Pekka Salminen, City of Turku
Anders Almqvist, Municipality of Kalmar
Jane Wågsäter, Municipality of Kalmar

Barbara Jackson, Zennström Philanthropies
Ann Häger, Consultant
Dace Liepnice, City of Liepaja (co-chair)
Solvita Lurina, City of Jelgava
Maija Rusanen, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission
Hannamaria Yliruusi, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission
Esther Kreutz, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission
Björn Grönholm, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission

Introduction

Co-chairman Per-Arne Nilsson from City of Malmö welcomes all participants to Malmö and the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting, the first one for the new Sustainable Cities Commission. The new UBC Commission can be seen as a merged Commission of the previous UBC Commissions on Environment, Energy and Transport.

UBC activities and projects

Head of Secretariat, Björn Grönholm gave an introduction to the UBC in general, the activities and achievements of the UBC Commission on Environment 2010 – 2015 as well as information about the current staff of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission running and planned upcoming projects, themes and events. See presentation attached.

Ann Häger, Consultant for City of Malmö, gave a short presentation of a new project proposal on “Circular economy in the BSR” with potential more concrete focus on “Nutrient recycling – Closing the loop for nutrients for waste and sewage sludge”, “Transport within the city – SUMPs” and “Prevent waste: cluster activities to minimize by-products/industrial symbiosis”. Funding for the project proposal has been applied from the Swedish Institute. Decision of funding is expected in beginning of April.

Situation with re-organizing UBC Commissions

The UBC is in the process of restructuring. The former structure of UBC with 13 thematic commissions is now merged into 7 new Commissions with new names. The new UBC Commissions are: Cultural Cities, Planning Cities, Safe Cities, Smart and Prospering Cities, Sustainable Cities, Youthful Cities, Inclusive and Healthy cities

The UBC President and Executive Board have asked all UBC member cities to appoint a representative or several representatives to the new UBC Commissions. So far, not all cities have indicated their wish of being a member of a commission yet. The UBC Board asked 11 March 2015 the UBC Commissions to reorganize themselves, in other words to appoint co-chairs and a board before the next UBC Board meeting 10 – 12 June 2015.

Next UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting: “Lunch-to-Lunch” 3 - 4.6. 2015 in Turku, Finland

Co-chairman Risto Veivo stressed, that we need to get more cities around the table to discuss the next Action Programme for the next 6 years, to update and adjust it and get their input. The main approach and main topics need to be agreed on together.

There is a good basis of UBC member cities and representatives (contact persons) for the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission (See attached contact list). It would be recommendable that all cities should nominate contact persons for environment, transport, energy and climate so that information can be send out to the right target person right away. Furthermore, those UBC member cities that previously have been active in the UBC Commission on Environment need to be contacted and made find out if they want to continue within the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission.

It is still an open question how the other UBC Commissions will operate in details. The UBC Planning Cities Commission has their own way of working with peer review –like Commission meetings twice a year, and they will most probably continue with these. The UBC Sustainable Cities Commission could strengthen the cooperation with them and also initiate cooperation with UBC Smart and Prosperous Cities Commission as some of the topics of interest might be close to this Commission.

Proposal from the meeting:

At the meeting in Malmö, with a limited number of UBC member cities present it was proposed to start this discussion, to continue with informing all member cities about the upcoming changes and to have a thorough discussion on an extra Commission meeting in Turku 3 – 4 June.

At this meeting 3 co-chairs will be appointed as well as an advisory board. The proposal was to have an advisory board member from every UBC member city country.

UBC Sustainable Cities Commission Budget + Activity Plan 2015 and 2016

At the meeting a budget proposal for the UBC Sustainable Cities Commissions was presented by Grönholm. The budget proposal concern only funding that is allocated from the UBC Executive Board and is UBC membership-related money that each UBC Commission receives (Not total budget including other possible funding like project funding or similar). The previous budgets have been between 10 000 - 14 000€ and has mainly been used for networking and communication tasks. The budget proposal will be decided only in June at the next UBC Executive Board meeting.

The requested resources are this time around three-times bigger than usual, because of the enlarged mandate and focus area of the commissions. Grönholm states that the UBC money is mostly allocated to communication activities with UBC member cities via different forums like UBC meetings, website, good practice database, publications and mailing of information and material.

Decision: It was discussed how to proceed with the budget proposal. Co-chairman Per-Arne Nilsson proposed that the budget proposal was good and should be accepted. The meeting participants agreed and the budget proposal was accepted.

The UBC Sustainable Cities Commission secretariat will send the budget together with the action programme 2015 - 2016 to the other member cities for information. The final decision on the budget will be taken by the Executive board in June 2015.

Discussion about the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020

Grönholm presented the draft version of the Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020, based on previous discussions and the last UBC Commission meetings in Örebro April 2014 and Riga September 2014.

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 is the thematic framework which sets the goals for the work of UBC Sustainable Cities Commission. It is the point of reference for all projects in the

next years. It is also foremost the framework for the sustainability activities in the whole UBC and our message to other organizations, cooperation partners and funding agencies about the intention of the UBC.

Comments on the draft AP:

Co-chairman Risto Veivo mentions that we need to reflect the policy environment in which we operate and refer to relevant policy documents. Additionally we need to refer to current challenges in member cities and global developments as well as global.

- Many of our member cities are leaders in the region and the world in sustainability. How can we demonstrate leadership in these topics and how can we use the potential?
- How can we add aspects of leadership to the programme?
- The new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020 needs a leading edge, we need to create a more active network! Now we have a broader scope with the commission with three topics linked closely together.

Veivo wants that climate has a strong focus in the Commission's work.

Co-chairman Per-Arne Nilsson brought up the importance of strong partnerships. It was discussed if we should include a paragraph about strategic partnership into the programme and how UBC Sustainable Cities Commission could enhance the cooperation with the private sector. Furthermore Per-Arne Nilsson proposed the Baltic University Programme and other networks in the region as cooperation partners.

Hannamaria Yliruusi also mentioned that we also should involve more different municipal companies like municipal water companies and municipal energy companies.

General discussion on the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020:

Grönholm presented the previous UBC Sustainability Action Programmes starting from year 2000. The current UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 was adopted at the UBC General Conference in Kristiansand 2009. This current UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 has very concrete, partly very technical goals and targets. The new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 should have a new and up to date approach.

The new draft was presented in detail and discussed with all participants present.

Part I: Vision part of the Action Programme

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020 could contain an introduction chapter with a SWOT analysis on BSR cities which shows the strengths and challenges we face.

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020 needs to link more to other strategies like the EUSBSR, UN Goals on sustainable development and other international programmes. We should emphasize that we aim to implement the UN goals on local level and take an active role in that.

It should also be clear to whom the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 is targeted for. We have to have clear who are the target groups for this document and for what it is used. The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 also needs to refer to relevant policy documents to be embedded in the regional policy context.

It was discussed that the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 should have a more visionary approach, which sets the framework for the future work and then a more concrete work programme for 1-2 years, that will be regularly updated and also communicated to member cities. The vision should be made more concrete and better reflect the strengths in the region and the leadership of the cities in sustainable development. The vision could go further than 2020, could be symbolized by 2020+.

The role of strategic partnerships was discussed: it has to be clear whose strategic partnerships we talk about (the Commission's of UBC's) and this should only be 5-6 relevant actors that have the same goals as we do. Partnerships mentioned in the programme should be those of the whole UBC network that are also approved by the board

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 is also used as dissemination material, printed nicely with pictures etc. to show off the sustainability work of the UBC and showcase the current topics we address in our projects.

How to address better the benefits that UBC offers? Values like open house approach should be addressed clearly. It should be added that the secretariat is the Programme management agency that will give a wider mandate on the implementation.

Part II Content topics/Actions

Comments

The meeting liked the structure with a short list of themes. The headlines are quite general so the text part needs to be informative.

Some key words to be added to the document perhaps more. For example: Circular economy (mentioned in the text or goal of green urban economies), sharing cities, industrial symbiosis, innovations connected to sustainable urban development, ecosystem services, blue-growth (should the water be addresses more clearly although water protection a too narrow topic on its own, related to resource efficiency, energy, sludge → green urban economies and blue growth), low-tox city, fair trade and social aspects

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 should be crossed-checked with different strategies, that which buzz-words are mentioned there

Bring in Education on sustainable development, awareness raising and capacity building.

Many actions are technical; should there be more soft measures and about changing attitudes? Should horizontal topics as participation and lifestyle change be added? Should social aspects be added so that other commissions could feel the action programme address better their activities as well (e.g. diversity and minority questions, social sustainability, mention justice in the programme, integration). On the other hand, the themes now reflect the work UBC Sustainable Cities Commission is doing and the topics the commission works with. Too many social aspects cannot be brought in. Perhaps added in the end that the vision will be implemented in a participatory way and everyone in the cities should be part of the discussion on these topics.

Lifestyle comes back to consumption, changing lifestyles is needed to live within the limits of world's carrying capacity, life in BSR cities have to be within these limits

Part III Ways of working

Survey

It was discussed to plan a comprehensive survey to establish a baseline for comparison in the future, but the question is if we have the resources to do this. One option could be to develop a project or include it into a project application to the BSR programme, NCM, BONUS, CBSS that could give resources for such a survey.

Targets and evaluation

It is still a question how the old programme will be evaluated, what are the most important successes and lessons learnt. Grönholm mentioned as main overall successes that we got resources to our mem-

ber cities via projects, created new partnerships, close work with EUSBS and receiving flagship status for projects (PURE, PRESTO, InnoShip) that have been listed in an evaluation report to UBC Executive Board.

Veivo: One idea is to base our targets on indicators for sustainable cities the UN Sustainable Development Goals <http://citiscope.org/story/2014/comparing-mdgs-and-sdgs#SDGs>

The goals in the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015 need to be set in a way that they will not be outdated after a few years. It does not serve our work to have very technical goals. The targets need to be realistic and achievable.

We need to set objectives for each topic and make clear how to support cities on the way towards sustainability. We need to be clear with the wording and define goals, targets and objectives!

Networking activities in the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020

It was discussed that we should set targets for the networking activities as well:

- commission meetings
- how do we disseminate tools, info etc. in the network
- project development on the topics
- Good Practice Database
- Award (if started again)
- Survey

SUMMARY: How we proceed

Based on the discussion and comments the secretariat will draft a new version of the AP that will be circulated to all UBC member cities.

The next UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting with the focus on further developing the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 will take place from Lunch-to-Lunch on June 3 - 4 2015 in Turku, Finland. An invitation will be send out together with the new AP draft, the draft budget, activity plan and the list of commission and contact persons after Easter

Still to consider: Should the new draft include examples of different target types for the three topics e.g. more general ones and more specific ones.

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 - 2020 will be approved by the Executive Board in June, but small changes can be also done afterwards before the general conference.