

# **Establishment of Network for Sustainable Wastewater Decision-making in Coastal Transition Areas**

## ***Project Summary***

This project is aimed at the establishment of a Baltic Region Users' Association for Sustainable Wastewater Decision-making. Increasing challenges of urbanization and stricter environmental regulations are forcing decision-makers to take a more holistic view of the complex dynamics of wastewater systems. There is an increasing need for systems thinking and tools to help decision-makers manage their wastewater more sustainably, especially in coastal zones where the consequences of actions are felt on a large scale. However, this type of thinking requires a change in perspective and new approaches to planning. At the same time, decision-support tools can assist in making this transition easier.

The objectives of this project are to establish a network of practitioners working with a comprehensive view of urban water management in transition areas within the Baltic Region. The network will share experiences and knowledge of work within transition areas which will be documented and posted on an internet forum to expand the reach of the project. The decision-support tool (VeVa) will be introduced as a means of increasing the effectiveness of their work. Training sessions on VeVa will be held that will both develop knowledge of the use of the tool and provide participants with the opportunity to share experiences face-to-face.

The project will be structured around two work packages aimed at creating a network of users working with a systems perspectives on wastewater management (Work Package 1), and providing the tools to assist them in this type of decision-making (Work Package 2).

### **Work Package 1 (WP1) – Network interaction**

Formal interactions of the network – (4) meetings will be held and efforts will be made to connect each meeting to actual/potential applications of the VeVa tool and/or particular challenging transition area so that learning will be connected to actual work in the field.

- Kick-off meeting – shaping the challenges
- VeVa training sessions (2) – designing and comparing options. Linked to case studies
- Hand-over meeting– choosing sustainable options, linking back to reality of decision-making, sharing experiences and strengthening network to provide support for each other...

### **Work Package 2 (WP2) –Communication of tools**

Development and dissemination of decision-support tools and communication channels for users. (Communication will be done in English so that network outcomes and membership can be spread to other countries in the region)

- Translation of the VeVa decision-support tool and related pages from Kunskapscentrum's Små Avlopp homepage ([www.smaavlopp.se/](http://www.smaavlopp.se/)) into English
- Adaptation of VeVa for local context in Estonia
- Creation of an on-line forum for the Users' Association linked to Kunskapscentrum.

## **Role of Project Partners**

This project will establish a Baltic Region Users' Association for Sustainable Wastewater Decision-making. As an initial step the network will focus on collaboration between Sweden and Estonia, formalizing the network in this context before spreading it to other Baltic countries. The project is supposed by the following key partner organizations. These partners are founding members of the association and their role will be to:

- Further the development and continuation of the network by recruiting new members and actively participating in network communication.
- Play an active role in the organization and preparation of network meetings. At each meeting one or more of the partners will present a local scenario for discussion.
- Provide critical input into the adaptation and development of decision-making tools which will then be communicated to a broader network in the Baltic Region.