**ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2016**

**UBC Sustainable Cities Commission activities 2015 - 2016**

**General situation**

The UBC SCC is active in several large scale processes and different development projects, policy-, networking-, and capacity-building activities prepared and supported by the UBC SCC secretariat in Turku.

The re-organized UBC Sustainable Cities Commission has further developed the activity of the Commission work. Close participation with the general UBC re-organization process has taken place. Special focus has also been on the UBC Communication strategy process where the UBC Sustainable Cities Commissions had a big role in planning and implementing of the UBC Communication seminar 14 – 15 April 2015 in Turku.

Re-organization of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission (UBC SCC) with focus on improving the service to the member cities, improving the knowledge of cities in the Baltic Sea region locally regionally and globally. Throughout the years the UBC Commission on Environment and UBC cities have gained a strong reputation for being forerunners in several topics. With the re-organization of the UBC Commissions and the broader concept of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission it is a good momentum to raise the ambition of the goals of the Commisson. The new UBC Commission contact persons as well as the already established active key persons make a strong fundament for upcoming activities.

**New UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020**

UBC SCC will finalize the implementation of the current UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 and has started the work with planning the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 together with the UBC Executive Board and other UBC Commissions. The new Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 will give the UBC SCC a mandate and clear direction for the work in the upcoming years. The proposal of the new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 will be presented in the UBC Executive board meeting in Dolina CharlottyPoland from 10 – 12 June and finally presented and accepted in the UBC General Conference in Gdynia in October 2015. The new UBC Sustainability Action Programme has as a strong ambition to bring up UBC cities with well-known excellence in fields of Water management, climate change or sustainable urban mobility to global reputation and awareness. Several planning meetings have taken place and the programme is a good example of an interactive process between UBC member cities and the UBC SCC secretariat.

**EUSBSR implementation**

The UBC SCC is strongly involved in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The UBC SCC has received flagship status for several projects and has been actively involved in several actions and flagship activities. This strategy goes hand in hand with the new UBC Strategy and UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 and therefore there has been a close follow up including both processes. UBC SCC has been asked to participate in the EUSBSR Annual meeting in Jurmala 15 – 16 June 2015. In 2016 UBC SCC will continue to participate in the implementation and close cooperation of the EUSBSR.

**New EU Funding period 2014 – 2020**

Engagement of UBC member cities in international cross-border cooperation will be one of the main goals of the internal UBC SCC activities. The UBC SCC will also put focus on engaging more cities in the operative activities. The new EU funding period puts focus on the implementation of the EU 2020 Strategy and in particularly on the transformation of the EU towards a sustainable economy and promote a transition to a low carbon society. UBC and our member cities will have huge tasks with the EU goals and tasks of the EU 2020 Strategy. The economic situation puts pressure on investments but one key issue in the upcoming EU budget will be on building on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth!

The new EU funding period 2014 – 2020 has started and the UBC SCC is involved in several project applications together with a big number of UBC member cities and other partners from the member cities. Applications with focus on brownfield development, sustainable urban mobility, energy efficiency in urban real estate and buildings, storm water management, waste water management (reduction of nutrients from rivers and water bodies), research of Mandate and responsibilities of local authorities in the Baltic Sea Region are in different phases of application stage.

Table 1: Running UBC SCC projects in 2015 and 2016

**Focus area Name Funding**

Urban wastewaters PRESTO BSRVB

European sust. mobility CH4LLENGE Intelligent energy

Sustainable urban mobility CIVITAS DYN@MO 7th Framework Prog.Energy, Mobility, Awareness raising Green Citizens Life+

Gulf of Finland Year GoF Ministries

Smart electro mbility ÄSL TEKES

Table 2:Project applications (decicions during autumn 2015)

**Focus area Name Funding**

**WATER MANAGEMENT**

Urban flood management, hazardous subst. CLIMURBAN BSR VB

Improved urban wastewater management IWAMA BSR VB

Improved capacity in WWTP WATERNETS BSR VB

Stormwater management iWaters Central Baltic Prog.

**URBAN MOBILITY**

New Urban Mobility for Europe NUME Horizon

Sustainable UrbanMobility CIVITAS Eccentric Horizon/Civitas

Efficient urban mobility in BSR Cities. Multimodal BSR VB

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning SUMPs UP Horizon

**CLIMATE SMART CITIES / ENERGY EFFIENCY**

Rebuilding brownfield areas Baltic Urban Lab Central Baltic Prog.

Energy efficency Smartify Horizon Smart Cities

Climate smart district Climate district Skanssi National funding

Resource efficient cities Resource efficiency SITRA

Circular economy Circular Economy in the BSR Swedish Inst./BSRVB

The UBC SCCis ready to **s**upport the UBC member cities with expertise and recommendations for upcoming project funding period. This UBC member service has already taken place and can be enlarged depending on the needs in the UBC cities and seem to be really needed in many UBC cities.

In 2016, there will hopefully by several running UBC lead development projects in several field.

**Meeting and events**

In 2015 the UBC SCC arranges the first Commission meeting back to back with the Urban Magma Conference in Malmö in 18 – 20 March 2015. The Urban Magma conference focus was on Circular economy in the BSR and UBC SCC was one of the co-organizers of the conference. A second Commission meeting of the UBC SCC will take place in Turku 3 – 4 June in Turku. In the Turku meeting the focus will with focus on re-organizing the Commissions, elect Co-chair and an Advisory Board, further develop the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 -2020, present actualities from UBC cities and start a project application process on “Circular Economy in the BSR”.

The UBC SCC will also be present in the UBC Executive Board meeting in Dolina Charlotty Poland in 10 – 12 June 2015 and in the UBC General Conference in Gdynia in October 2015.

In 2016 the UBC SCC is planning to arrange two Commission meetings, preferable in the Baltic States, Germany and Denmark.

**EU Policy co-operation sustainable development and Global activity**

In line with the working principles of the UBC, UBC SCC has also contributed strongly to Baltic Sea Regional and European policy co-operation processes on cities’ regional governance and sustainable urban development. The commission is representing the UBC at the CBSS/Sustainable Development Expert Group and the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM). UBC SCC participated in the evaluation and development meeting of the CBSS/Sustainable Development Expert Group 9 April 2015.

The close cooperation with these organizations as well as other similar organizations such as Baltic Development Forum, Baltic University Programme, VASAB, Nordregio, and Nordic Council of Ministers will take place in 2015 and 2016.

With the new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2015 – 2020 there is also a clear intention to strengthen the activity on the Global arena. This can be done in close cooperation with the UBC member cities and their ongoing processes. The World Business Council on Sustainable Cities, the UN Climate policy process, the UN Smart City process are examples of global processes with potential interest of the excellence of UBC cities.

**UBC internal communication activities**

As a general and ongoing task are the improvements of our communication activities. The UBC SCC has renewed its web pagesin the beginning of 2014. Please see <http://www.ubc-sustainable.net/>

The first UBC Sustainability eBulletin was published in May 2015. The intention is to have a quarterly, electronic eBulletin with updates from the commission and the secretariat, projects and events. Additionally there will be one printed UBC Sustainability Bulletin per year, where member cities can contribute with their own stories.

The UBC Good Practice Database has been an operative database of good practises in the BSR. In 2015 and in 2016 there is a need to further develop the database in order to better serve UBC cities, collect information, data, good practises etc. from projects, meetings and UBC member cities. The intention is to develop the Good practice database with a new structure and information. As part of this a UBC Sustainability survey will be planned in 2015 and carried out in 2016.

**Björn Grönholm**

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